

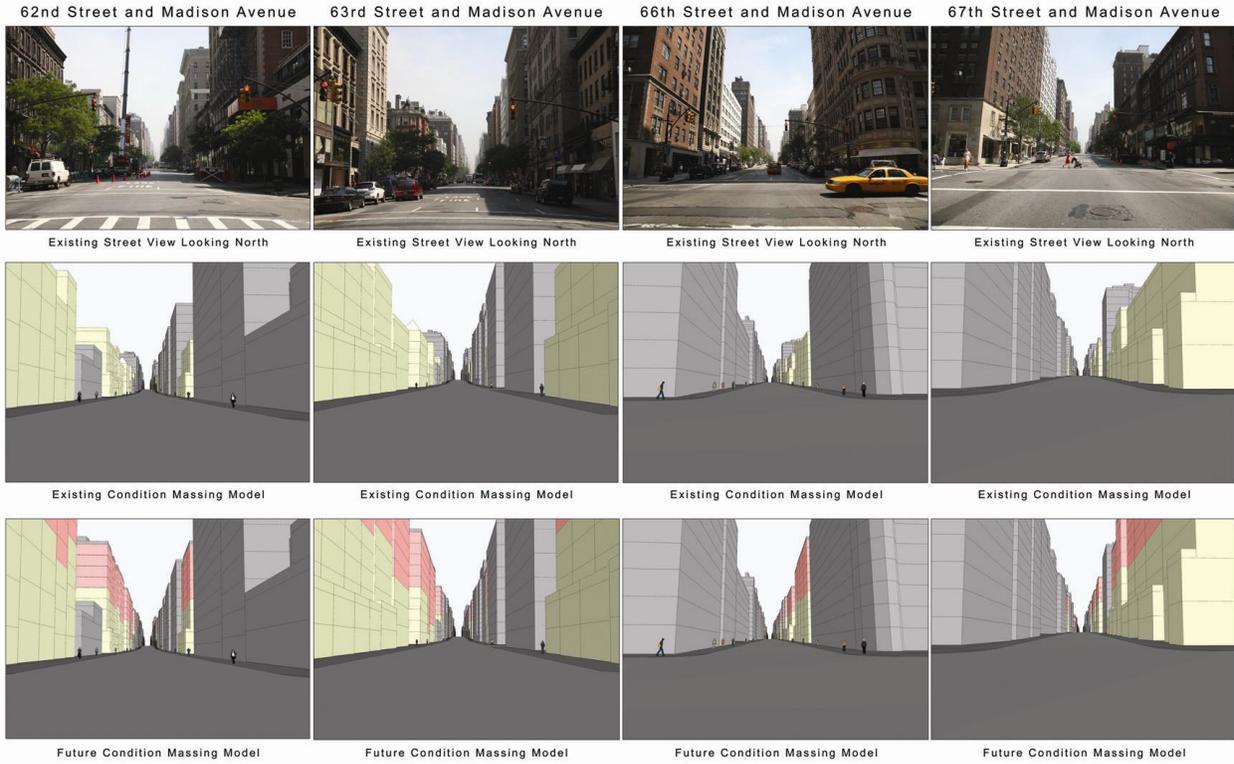
(This testimony was given to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission on June 17<sup>th</sup> 2008 regarding the proposed addition to the Park Bernet building)

Good evening. My name is George Janes. I am appearing here on behalf of New Yorkers for Responsible Development.



Not including houses of worship, there are currently 99 properties along Madison Avenue in the Historic District that are lower than the Park Bernet Galleries. (Noted in yellow on this map) Madison is much lower than Park and Fifth, but there is a diversity to the built form. It is not exclusively low, but alternates between high and low.

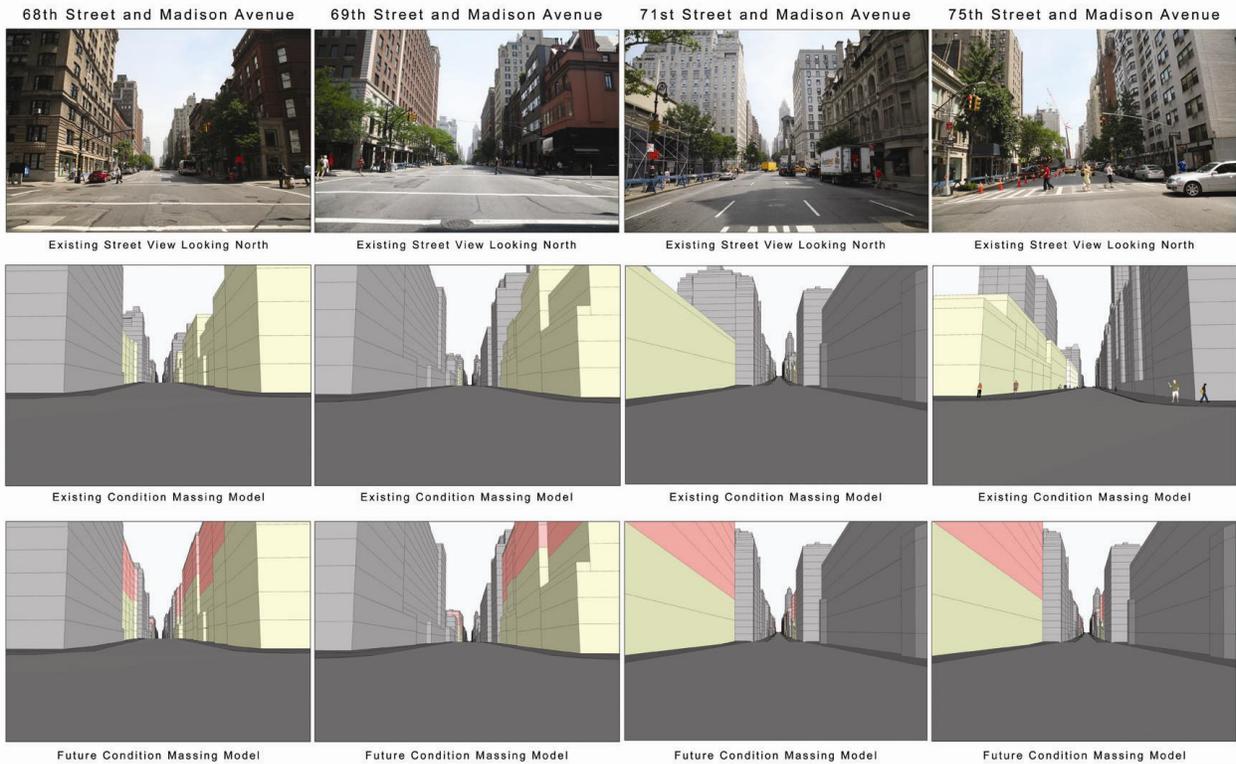
Using our 3D model of Manhattan, we asked the question, what would happen to the historic portion of Madison Avenue if the addition proposed for the Parke Bernet became the standard? In brief, the answer is there would be a dramatic change to the character of the street and pedestrian experience.



The data we prepared for this hearing include photographs of existing conditions on top, existing conditions massing in the middle, showing buildings smaller than the Parke Bernet, and then finally massing should these small buildings be built out as the Parke Bernet.

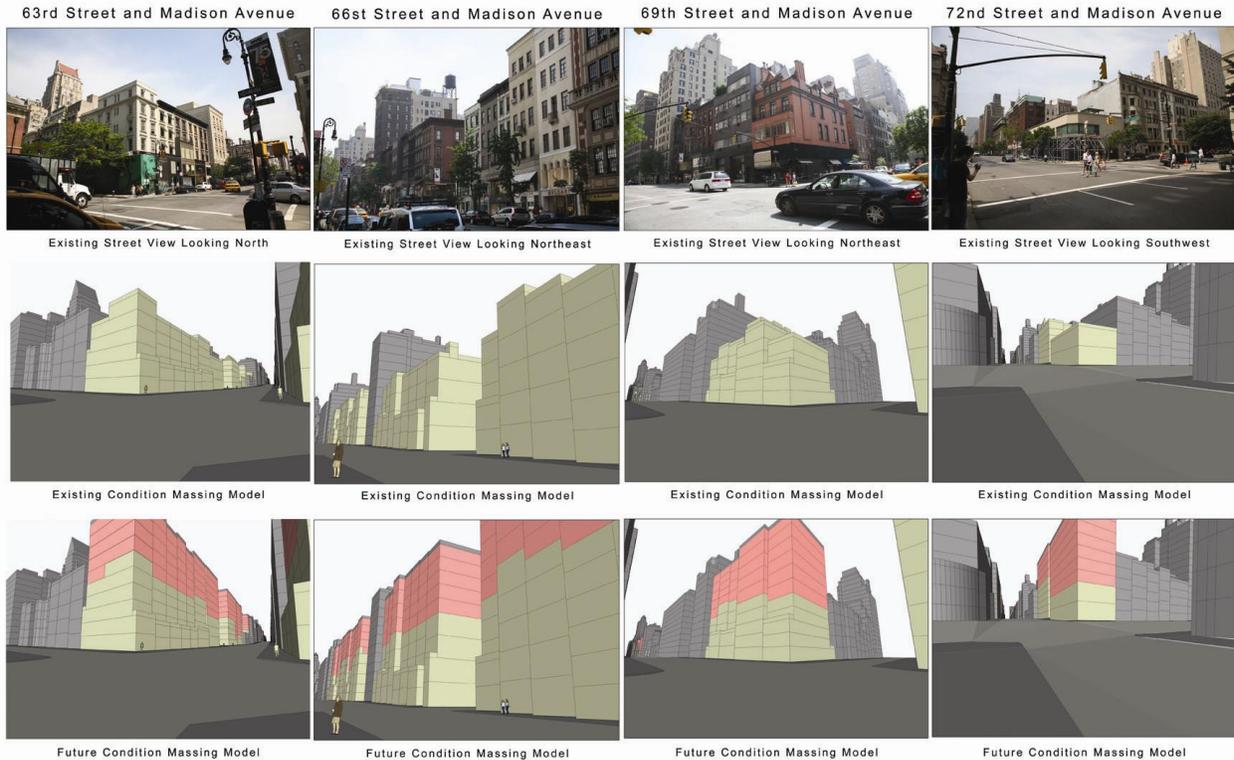
Snapshots have been taken from street level so that change can be seen from a human perspective. We start our walk at 62<sup>nd</sup> Street, which is a real mixture of low and high on both sides of the street. Low buildings are shown in yellow in the massing model. The additions modeled after the Parke Bernet are in pink. The effect on the streetscape will be to enclose the street and block access to a portion of the sky.

As we walk up Madison, at 63<sup>rd</sup>, 66<sup>th</sup>, 67<sup>th</sup> St, the pattern is repeated. While the current urban form alternates between high and low--giving considerable access to the sky even near tall buildings--the additions narrow the view corridor and would make a narrow street like Madison Avenue measurably darker.



The walk continues up to 68<sup>th</sup>, 69<sup>th</sup>, 71<sup>st</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> Street. If the additions don't affect one side of the street, they affect the other.

On some blocks the change in the character would be dramatic.



Instead of looking straight north, this board shows looks at street fronts along 63<sup>rd</sup>, 66<sup>th</sup>, 69<sup>th</sup>, and 72<sup>nd</sup>, all of which would show a dramatic change from their existing rowhouse character.

On the Parke Bernet site itself, the addition will fill the only low portion of the block that gives considerable access to the sky from street level and will enclose and narrow that portion of Madison Avenue.

In conclusion, we understand that Landmarks evaluates each case before it on its own merits. Granting this addition to the Parke Bernet does not necessarily mean that it is making a new policy that would apply to each building in the historic district. But I'd like to ask the committee a question, what makes the Parke Bernet so different than the other low, high coverage buildings in the district? What about it requires a change from the typical 1 and 2 storey additions that have been allowed in the district? I submit that you need to be comfortable with your answers to these questions before making a decision regarding this application.

Thank you for your time and attention.