



## CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

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May 12, 2010 / Calendar No. 10

N 100280 HKM

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**IN THE MATTER OF** a communication dated March 31, 2010, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Brill Building, 1619 Broadway (Block 1021, Lot 19), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on March 23, 2010 (Designation List No. 427/LP-2387).

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Pursuant to Section 3020.8(b) of the City Charter, the City Planning Commission shall submit to the City Council a report with respect to the relation of any designation by the Landmarks Preservation Commission, whether of a historic district or a landmark, to the Zoning Resolution, projected public improvements, and any plans for the development, growth, improvement or renewal of the area involved.

On March 23, 2010 the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the Brill Building at 1619 Broadway in Manhattan as a city landmark. The landmark designation consists of Block 1021, Lot 19.

The Brill Building at 1619 Broadway is located on the northwest corner of West 49<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway in Midtown Manhattan. The building was designed in the Art Deco style by architect Victor A. Bark, Jr. and constructed in 1930-31 on a commission by Abraham Lefcourt.

The building is typical of Art Deco, which was popularized by developers in the mid-1920s and early 1930s and which grew out of the Beaux-Arts and other European styles. As a contrast to subsequent, and particularly postwar, architectural trends, Art Deco buildings are frequently distinguished by low decorative reliefs, vivid colors and unusual materials. The Broadway and West 49<sup>th</sup> Street facades of the Brill Building were designed with three distinct sections: a three-story base, a seven-story shaft and a penthouse. These elevations primarily feature a white-brick facade, but the base, central window bays and top story also incorporate light-colored terra-cotta

reliefs. The building also has two niches that prominently display portrait busts that most likely portray the developer's son, who died as the building was being planned.

Also of significance is the concentration of music publishers who historically served as tenants in the Brill Building, as well as a number of prominent songwriters, agents, vocal coaches, publicity agents, talent agents and performers. As the popularity of big band music and jazz increased, the building's occupants became increasingly well known and influential; among these were Tommy Dorsey, Duke Ellington and Nat King Cole. Later, the "Brill Building Sound" of the 1950s and 1960s, with which the building became associated, produced some of early rock and roll's most beautifully crafted and memorable songs.

The landmark site is located in a C6-7T zoning district, in the Theater Subdistrict of the Midtown Special District. With an allowable floor area ratio (FAR) of 14.0, the zoning lot could be developed with approximately 182,700 square feet of floor area. The Brill Building contains approximately 130,073 square feet of floor area. Therefore, there are approximately 52,627 square feet theoretically available for transfer.

Pursuant to Section 74-79 of the Zoning Resolution, a landmark building may transfer its unused development rights to a lot contiguous to the zoning lot occupied by the landmark or one which is across the street and opposite to the lot occupied by the landmark building, or in the case of a corner lot, one which fronts on the same street intersection as the lot occupied by the landmark building. As modified in the Special Midtown District by Section 81-211 of the Zoning Resolution, the increase in floor area as part of a transfer from a landmark is unlimited for a receiving site in a C6-7T zoning district. There are approximately six potential receiving sites available for the transfer of the landmark's unused floor area.

All landmark buildings or buildings within Historic Districts are eligible to apply for use and bulk waivers pursuant to Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution.

There are no projected public improvements or plans for development, growth, improvement, or renewal in the vicinity of the landmark building.

The subject landmark designation does not conflict with the Zoning Resolution, projected public improvements or any plans for development, growth, improvement or renewal in the vicinity of the landmark.

**AMANDA M. BURDEN, FAICP, Chair**  
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