



IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated July 8, 2016, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family, 401 – 403 West 125th Street (Block 1966, Lot 67) by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on June 28, 2016 (Designation List No.488/LP-0303), Borough of Manhattan, Community District 9.

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 June 28, 2016, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family, located at 401 – 403 West 125th Street (Block 1966, Lot 67), as a city landmark. The landmark site is located on the northwest corner of West 125th Street and Morningside Avenue, within Manhattan Community District 9.

Founded as a "national" parish by and for the German residents of Manhattanville, the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family was dedicated in 1860 and is the oldest church building in continuous use in Manhattan, north of 44th Street. St. Joseph's building design reflects both the ethnic makeup of its original congregation and the rural nature of its surroundings in the 19th century. The design, known as "*Rundbogenstil*," was developed in the early 19th century as an authentic German style and is characterized by round-arched openings, broad, smooth expanses of wall surface and simple ornament typically concentrated at the cornice and around windows and doors.

The Church has a tripartite facade with a single square bell tower. Seven bays of round-arched windows set between piers extend down the east side and six down the west side. A cross-gabled extension, with irregular roofline designed by the Herter Brothers, was added to the north of the church in 1889-90, and likely replaced an 1871 addition. The areaway fence and stone curb on

Morningside Avenue and gate across the west areaway are historic to at least 1906. Early alterations to the church including the creation of entrances in the side bays, the niche with statue of St. Joseph, the replacement of the stained-glass windows and the removal of decorative finials on the gables and piers of the extension were done prior to the church's Diamond Jubilee in 1935.

The original c.1860 section of St. Joseph's is elegantly simple; its single, central tower and the round-arched openings at the front and sides are set within a framework of brick piers and bands. The Herter Brother's addition of 1889-90 retains the piers, bands and arched openings of the original in a more elaborate design that adds greater dimensionality through irregular massing, a gabled porch, projecting piers, decorative stringcourses and sawtooth banding at the gable, in lieu of the traditional articulated corbel table, that compliments the original structure.

The church remains largely unchanged. Prior to 1935, the stained-glass windows were replaced and the niche created above the entrance for a statue of St. Joseph, more recently the side entrance was altered to accommodate an accessibility ramp. Today St. Joseph of the Holy Family, serves a largely African-American and Latino congregation.

The landmark site is located within an R7A/C2-4 zoning district. With a maximum allowable floor area ratio (FAR) of 4.0, the 11,950-square-foot lot could be developed with approximately 47,800 square feet of floor area. The existing building on the lot contains 5,599 square feet, resulting in 42,201 square feet of unused development rights available for transfer to eligible receiving sites under the existing zoning.

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 building or one which is across the street and opposite to the zoning 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. There are six (6) potential receiving sites available for the transfer of the landmark's unused floor area, as all eligible lots comprising the potential receiving sites are currently underbuilt.

Pursuant to Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution, landmark buildings or buildings within Historic Districts are eligible to apply for use and bulk waivers upon application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

The subject landmark does not conflict with the Zoning Resolution. In addition, the Commission is not aware of any conflicts between the subject landmark designation and projected public improvements on any plans for development, growth, improvement or renewal in the vicinity of the landmark building.

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