



March 8, 2017 Calendar No. 15

N 170252 HKM

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated January 27, 2017, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the United Nations Hotel, First Floor Interiors (Block 1337, Lot 7502 & 14), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on January 17, 2017 (Designation List No. 493 LP-2588), Borough of Manhattan, Community District 6.

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 the designation by the Landmarks Preservation Commission of the subject property to the Zoning Resolution, projected public improvements and any plans for the development, growth, improvement or renewal of the area involved.

On January 17, 2017, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated United Nations Hotel, First Floor Interiors (1 and 2 United Nations Plaza, aka 783-793 First Avenue, 335-343 East 44th Street and 323-333 East 44th Street, 322-334 East 45th Street) as a New York City interior landmark. The hotel is located on the west side of First Avenue between East 44th Street and East 45th Street within the Turtle Bay neighborhood of Manhattan Community District 6.

The first floor interiors of the United Nations Hotel are important examples of late 20th-century modern and postmodern design by the architectural firm Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo and Associates. The interior landmark consists mainly of two components, the Ambassador Grill and United Nations Hotel Lobby, specifically including the hotel lobby reception area, entrance foyer and hallway, the Ambassador Grill dining and bar area, and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including the columns, wall surfaces, ceiling surfaces, floor surfaces, mirrors, light fixtures, attached furnishings, doors, railings, balustrades, decorative metalwork and attached decorated elements.

The Ambassador Grill was opened in 1976. It is located on the north side of the first floor in the United Nations Hotel in a windowless space. The restaurant has a U-shaped plan with a west entrance serving the dining area and an east entrance serving the bar area. The areas are divided by angled walls, freestanding walls, serving counters, and several piers, with most elements clad with mirrors that expand and complicate what diners see.

The hotel lobby was completed in 1983. The lobby is located parallel to East 44th Street frontage. It features a sky-lit entrance foyer and reception area crowned by stepped multi-level light fixtures, and a ramped hallway flanked by polished green marble columns that incorporate abstracted capitals and mirrored sides. Both interiors suggest the growing influence of postmodern aesthetics during the 1980s.

The interior landmark site is located in a C5-2 zoning district within the Special United Nations District. There are two subject buildings which are joined at the first floor and linked by an enclosed sky bridge. Given that the buildings are located within the Special United Nations Development District, pursuant to Section 85-04 of the Zoning Regulation, the maximum allowable floor area ratio (FAR) is 15.0 across the entire special district.

With an allowable FAR of 15.0, the 17,556-square-foot area of Lot 7502 could be developed with 263,340 square feet of floor area, while the One United Nations Plaza building contains approximately 586,305 square feet of floor area. Similarly, the 30,125-square-foot area of Lot 14 could be developed with 451,875 square feet of floor area, while the Two United Nations Plaza building contains approximately 600,000 square feet of floor area. Therefore, both the Lot 7502

and the Lot 14 are overbuilt.

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 (“adjacent lot”). Because all of the allowable square footage is built, there are no unused development rights available for transfer from the sites under the existing zoning.

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. Furthermore, the Commission is not aware of any conflicts between the subject landmark designation and projected public improvements or any plans for development growth, improvement or renewal in the vicinity of the landmark building.

KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, ESQ., *Vice Chairman*
RAYANN BESSER, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E.
ALFRED C. CERULLO, III, MICHELLE DE LAUZ,
JOSEPH DOUEK, RICHARD W. EADDY, CHERYL COHEN EFFRON,
HOPE KNIGHT, ANNA HAYES LEVIN, ORLANDO MARIN, LARISA ORTIZ, Commissioners
MARISA LAGO, *Chair, abstaining*