



## **CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

---

September 10, 2008/Calendar No. 12

N 090045 HKM

---

**IN THE MATTER OF** a communication dated July 24, 2008 from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of Morningside Park Scenic Landmark, Morningside Park, including the Lafayette and Washington Park triangle, bounded by the eastern curblineline of Morningside Drive, the northern curblineline of Cathedral Parkway (West 110<sup>th</sup> Street), the western curblineline of Morningside Avenue, the southern curblineline of West 123<sup>rd</sup> Street, the eastern curblineline of Amsterdam Avenue, the southern curblineline of Morningside Drive, to the point of the beginning (Block 1850, Lots 1 and 2, and Block 1849, Lot 1), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on July 15, 2008 (List No. 404/LP-2254), 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 July 15, 2008, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated Morningside Park Scenic Landmark, including Lafayette and Washington Park triangle, as a city landmark. The landmark designation includes the massive buttressed masonry retaining wall with parapet, overlook bays, and entrance stairways, natural rock outcroppings; carefully worked-out designed rockwork and plantings; curvilinear walk system; and small open meadows along the southern and eastern sides.

Morningside Park is a significant park in New York City designed by the renowned landscape designers Frederick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux, whose work also included Central Park, Prospect Park, and Riverside Park and Drive. The park was built during the 1883-1895 period.

Originally, the site was a rugged rocky ledge separating Morningside Heights from the Harlem Plain, and because of the terrain, was excluded from the original street grid. Olmstead and Vaux, through their revised plan in 1887, transformed the long narrow, and rather difficult and unusual site into a picturesque park by respecting and enhancing its inherent beauties and possibilities, including the views both eastward and westward, and creating areas of varying

character.

The surrounding neighborhood is typified by low and mid-rise row houses, high-rise residential buildings, institutional and community facility uses. A number of important institutions selected locations facing the park along Morningside Drive on the heights: the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine; Saint Luke's Hospital and Columbia University. Ground floor retail uses are located along Amsterdam Avenue and Broadway. The area is well-served by several bus and train lines.

The designated scenic landmark is designated parkland. Therefore, Sections 74-79 and 74-711 of the Zoning resolution are not applicable.

The Commission notes that since the scenic landmark is city-owned, the Landmarks Preservation Commission would issue an advisory report rather than a permit for any proposed alteration to the park.

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

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**  
**KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, Esq., Vice Chair**  
**ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA, ANGELA CAVALUZZI, AIA, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E.,**  
**ALFRED C. CERULLO, III, BETTY Y. CHIN, MARIA M. DEL TORO,**  
**RICHARD W. EADDY, NATHAN LEVENTHAL, SHIRLEY A. McRAE,**  
**KAREN A. PHILLIPS, Commissioners**