



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

September 19, 2007/Calendar No. 11

N 080034 HKM

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated August 1, 2007, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Henry Seligman Residence, 30 West 56th Street aka 30-32 West 56th Street (Block 1271, Lot 55), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on July 24, 2007 (List No. 394/LP-2227), Borough of Manhattan, Community District 5.

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.

The Henry Seligman Residence is located in Midtown Manhattan on the south side of West 56th Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. The building was designed by C.P.H Gilbert and constructed between 1899-1901. Gilbert built a number of townhouses in Manhattan for prominent families including a number of homes in both the Upper East Side and Riverside-West End Historic Districts.

The Henry Seligman Residence, a well-preserved example of the fashionable townhouses that lined the 50s side streets off Fifth Avenue, was executed in the neo-French Renaissance style. The residence was one of several built for bankers at the turn of the twentieth century on the

street that became known as “Bankers’ Row.” Henry Seligman, the original owner of the house, was a senior partner in the prestigious investment banking firm of J & W Seligman & Company and financed railroad projects, helped underwrite the formation of U.S. Steel and General Motors, and provided support and backing to the construction of the Panama Canal.

The Henry Seligman Residence is forty-one feet wide and five stories tall which gave the townhouse an imposing presence on a street where narrow houses prevailed. The tripartite division of the façade that includes the rusticated limestone base, the smooth limestone midsection, and the setback mansard roof, evokes a European Renaissance palazzo with a pronounced French character.

The landmark site is located in an C5-P zoning district in the Preservation Subdistrict of the Special Midtown District. With an allowable floor area ratio (FAR) of 8, the zoning lot could be developed with approximately 34,800 square feet of floor area. The Seligman Residence contains approximately 21,530 square feet of floor area. Therefore, there are approximately 13,270 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 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 building. 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.

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, AICP, Chair
KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, Esq, Vice-Chairman
ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E.,
ANGELA R. CAVALUZZI, R.A., ALFRED C. CERULLO, III,
BETTY CHEN, RICHARD W. EADDY, LISA A. GOMEZ,
NATHAN LEVENTHAL, JOHN MEROLO, DOLLY WILLIAMS, Commissioners