



## **CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

December 17, 2014, Calendar No. 12

N 150158 HKM

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**IN THE MATTER OF** a communication dated November 6, 2014, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of Mills Hotel No. 3, 485 Seventh Avenue (Block 812, Lot 1), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on October 28, 2014, (List No. 475/LP-2424).

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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 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 October 28, 2014, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated Mills Hotel No. 3, located at 485 Seventh Avenue (Block 812, Lot 1), as a city landmark. The landmark site at 485 Seventh Avenue is located on the easterly side of Seventh Avenue between W. 36th Street and W. 37th Street in the Garment Center neighborhood of Manhattan Community District 5.

The Mills Hotel No. 3 is a 16-story building was designed by the architects Harry Lewis Copeland and William Herbert Dole (Copeland & Dole) in the neo-Renaissance style and constructed between 1906 and 1907. Described by the New York Times as the "world's biggest hotel" and the "finest for the use of men of limited means," it was the third and largest of the three model residential hotels for single working men erected by Darius Ogden Mills at the turn of the 20th century. The building was noted in journals of the day for its restrained design that conveyed the dignity of its mission, and its architectural expression was described as "a pride to the city." Mills was a banker and philanthropist particularly concerned with the problems of housing the urban poor.

Mills Hotel No. 3 originally had 1,885 small single bedrooms each with a window opening onto the street or courtyard. The building incorporates two light-court units linked by central elevator hall. The unprecedented scale of the project together with the "utmost economies in administration" allowed Mills to significantly lower costs per room and offer the men residing in the hotel "a larger equivalent for their money" than heretofore possible.

Conveying "a simple but dignified appearance," the building's facades are clad with limestone, light-colored brick, and terra cotta. The end bays are slightly projected and the windows are grouped in rhythmic patterns to provide visual interest. The stories are arranged into a three-story rusticated limestone base (the first and second story have been extensively altered), nine-story brick-clad mid-section, and four-story terra-cotta-clad attic. Molded string courses and cornices, fielded panels, cartouches, lion heads, and a richly embellished Renaissance copper cornice also contribute to the design. Aside from the alterations to its lower stories, its facades remain largely intact and the building retains its historical and architectural significance as a reminder of the Housing Reform Movement and the Progressive Era

The landmark site is located in an M1-6 zoning district within the Special Garment Center District. With an allowable floor area ratio (FAR) of 10.00, the 19,312 square foot lot could be developed with approximately 193,120 square feet of floor area. Mills Hotel No. 3 contains 244,858 square feet of floor area. Therefore, the site is overbuilt by 51,738 square feet of floor area.

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. As the site is overbuilt, it is not eligible to transfer development rights 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. 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.

**CARL WEISBROD**, Chairman  
**KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, ESQ.**, Vice Chairman  
**RAYANN BESSER, ALFRED C. CERULLO, III,**  
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**CHERYL COHEN EFFRON, BOME E JUNG, ANNA HAYES LEVIN,**  
**ORLANDO MARIN, LARIZA ORTIZ**, Commissioners