



IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated December 2, 2016, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Shelton Hotel (Block 1303, Lot 53), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on November 22, 2016 (Designation List No.490/LP-2557), 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 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 November 22, 2016, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the Shelton Hotel Lexington, located at 525 Lexington Avenue (Block 1303, Lot 53), as a City landmark. The landmark site is located at the southeast corner of East 49th Street and Lexington Avenue, within Manhattan Community District 6.

The Shelton Hotel is a 31-story-plus-penthouse building, located at the southeast corner of Lexington Avenue and East 49th Street. At its base, the Shelton is basically square in plan, except for a 15-story, 40-foot wide wing that extends through the block to East 48th Street. At the third story, the main building sets back at the rear into a u-plan with a long center light court facing eastward. The other façades have shallower recessed light courts framed by pavilions. There are additional setbacks at the 15th, 21st and 31st stories, with a hipped-roof penthouse capping the tower.

All of the building's street façades are faced with limestone at the first and second stories. The Lexington Avenue and 49th Street façades incorporate two-story arcades. The upper stories are clad with multi-hued greyish brown bricks trimmed with limestone and terra-cotta. Other design features include alternating projecting and recessed bays, decorative brick projections arranged both in files to provide vertical accents and in random patterns, arched corbel tables inspired by medieval machicolations, and details (including sculptures) loosely drawn from North Italian

Early Christian, Romanesque, Gothic and Renaissance sources.

In 1935, the ground façades were modified by the introduction of new doorways and a storefront was installed at the north end of the Lexington Avenue façade. These changes were largely reversed in a 1977-1978 alteration, but some doorways that were not original to the 1923 design remain, the windows have been lengthened, and a fenced area was created in the center bays of the 49th Street façade.

Openings for through-wall air conditioners have been introduced in some areas of the façade. Most of the windows (originally multi-sash), French doors, and transoms at the base of the building have been replaced. Originally, the 15th-story setbacks and the 48th Street wing were capped by roof gardens and pergolas. Many of these rooftop terraces and structures survive, but have been altered. Some decorative finials and sculpture were replicated and the loggia columns were stabilized and repaired during an alteration undertaken between 2000 and 2002.

The landmark site is located within a C6-6 zoning district. With a maximum allowable floor area ratio (FAR) of 15, the 22,425-square-foot lot could be developed with approximately 336,375 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. The zoning lot on which the landmark building is located contains 406,261 square feet of floor area; accordingly, it has no unused development rights available for transfer to eligible receiving 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 landmark is located within the proposed East Midtown Subdistrict. If the proposed East Midtown Subdistrict text amendment (N 170186 ZRM) is approved, landmarks located within the proposed subdistrict will be permitted to transfer their unused development rights to any eligible building similarly located within the proposed subdistrict. The Shelton Hotel Lexington, located at 525 Lexington Avenue, does not have any unused development rights.

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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