



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

January 7, 2009/Calendar No. 15

N 090213 HKM

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated November 24, 2008, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of (Former) Fire Engine Company No. 54, located at 304 West 47th Street (Block 1037, Lot 37), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on November 18, 2008 (List No. 404/LP-2299), Borough of Manhattan, Community District 4.

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 development, growth, improvement, or renewal of the area involved.

The former Fire Engine Company No. 54 building, located on the south side of West 47th Street between Eighth and Ninth avenues, is a city-owned building, currently used as a theater and offices for the Puerto Rican Traveling Theater Company.

Erected in 1888, Fire Engine Company No. 54 was designed by the prominent firm of Napoleon LeBrun & Sons, architects for the Fire Department between 1879 and 1895. Fire Engine Company No. 54 is an excellent example of N. LeBrun & Sons' numerous mid-block firehouses, reflecting the firm's attention to materials, stylistic detail, plan and setting.

Like most late 19th century New York City firehouses, Fire Engine Company No. 54 has a large central opening at the ground level, flanked by smaller doorways. The design incorporates elements of the Queen Anne and Romanesque Revival styles. The building was in use as a fire

station until the late 1970's, when it was leased by the City of New York to the Puerto Rican Traveling Theater Company for use as a theater and offices.

The landmark is located in a C6-4 zoning district in the Perimeter Area of the Special West Chelsea District. With an allowable floor area ratio of 10.0 for residential, commercial and community facility uses, the zoning lot could be developed with approximately 20,000 square feet of floor area. The zoning lot containing the landmark site has 5,500 square feet of floor area. Therefore, there are approximately 14,500 square feet 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. There are seven 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, upon application by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

An application by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (C 090072 PPM) for the disposition of a negative easement to facilitate the sale of development rights from the subject site is currently pending before the City Planning Commission.

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

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

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
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