August 5, 2015 / Calendar No. 9 N 150446 HKK

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated June 25, 2015, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office Building and Engine Room, 584 Myrtle Avenue (Block 1909, p/o Lots 1001 and 1002), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on June 16, 2015 (Designation List 482/LP-2519), Borough of Brooklyn, Community District 2.

> 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 June 16, 2015, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office and Engine Room buildings as a city landmark. The landmark designation consists of 580-584 Myrtle Avenue, aka 192 Classon Avenue (Block 1909, Lot 32 and p/o Lots 1001 and 1002), on the southwest intersection of Myrtle and Classon Avenues, in the Clinton Hill neighborhood of Brooklyn Community District 2.

The M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office and Engine Room Buildings are two structures with a unified design located at the corner of Myrtle and Classon Avenues in Brooklyn's Clinton Hill neighborhood.

German immigrant Martin H. Renken founded his dairy in 1888; around 1903, it moved to the block on which these buildings stand, and by 1914, the company had built up an impressive dairying complex. In the 1930s, Renken was at its peak; the third-largest dairy in New York City, it pasteurized and bottled more than seven million quarts of fresh milk annually, operated 300 delivery routes, and owned several creameries in Upstate New York and Pennsylvania. Reflecting its prosperity, in 1932, the company erected a new office building at 582-584 Myrtle Avenue designed by the prolific Brooklyn firm of Koch & Wagner. Four years later, Koch & Wagner renovated the circa-1860 building at 580 Myrtle Avenue to contain an engine room and storage space, with a new front facade that matched the design of the Office Building and gave both buildings the look of a single structure.

“Modernistic” in design and faced in tan enameled brick to convey a hygienic and efficient image, the Renken buildings are primarily Art Moderne in style, featuring patterned and dark-brick “speed lines” and bracketless, streamlined cornices, as well as Art Deco touches. The buildings also incorporate International Style influences, which are visible in the buildings’ balanced asymmetry and creative interplay of projecting and receding rectangular planes. At its opening, the Office Building housed a “model Renken dairy store,” the storefront of which remains essentially intact.

Renken ended milk processing at this location in 1959, and both buildings housed a variety of businesses afterward. Remarkably well-preserved, these buildings are strikingly early examples of American architecture incorporating International Style influences, and distinguished remnants of a once bustling dairy complex. Dating from the period in which New York was renowned for having “the best milk supply of any large city in the world” following decades of innovation and reform, they also recall the city’s leading role in improving milk’s safety and quality, and in making fresh cow’s milk a major part of the American diet.

The proposed landmark is located in the Clinton Hill neighborhood on the southwest corner of Myrtle and Classon Avenues, about ½ a block from the Pratt Institute campus. Myrtle Avenue is a Wide Street and local mixed-use retail corridor with older 3-5 story row-houses and newer 7-12 story apartment buildings, both usually with ground-floor commercial uses serving the surrounding neighborhoods. The neighborhood character changes moving north and west and consists of larger industrial uses, historically industrial loft buildings, and newer residential conversions and new construction of between 5-10 stories. Closest subway service is provided via the G-train’s Classon Avenue station about three-blocks to the south.

The site is situated in an R7A/C2-4 zoning district mapped with Inclusionary Housing (IH). This zoning allows a maximum commercial FAR of 2.0, a base residential FAR of 3.45 and up to 4.6 for the provision of affordable housing, and up to 4.0 FAR for community facility uses.

In 2008, Block 1909, Lot 32 (approximately 2,887 square feet) was converted into ground-floor retail with 8 dwelling units above, for a total approximately 8,235 square foot development (2.85 FAR).

In 2013, Block 1909, Lot 31 (approximately 3,464 square feet) was divided into two new condominiums, 1001 (ground-floor retail) and 1002 (multiple residential) to allow the development of a new 6-story, 7-unit residential enlargement on the same tax lot. The commercial condo consists of approximately 2,838 square feet and the residential condominium consists of seven units occupying approximately 9,067 square feet, for a total building area of approximately 11,905 square feet (3.44 FAR).

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 intersections as the lot occupied by the landmark.

For the purposes of computing transferrable floor area pursuant to 74-792, the maximum FAR for a lot located in an R7A/C2-4 zoning district mapped with inclusionary housing is 4.60. Because the two tax lots which make up the proposed landmark are not one zoning lot, they have different potential receiving sites:

> Lot 32's resulting on-site maximum allowable floor area for the computation of transferrable development rights is approximately 13,280 square feet. The site is already developed with approximately 8,235 square feet of area, therefore the maximum amount of unused development rights for transfer from this site under existing zoning is approximately 5,045 square feet and has three potential receiving sites.
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> Lot 1001-1002's (formerly Lot 31) resulting on-site maximum allowable floor area

for the computation of transferrable development rights is approximately 15,934 square feet. The site is already developed with approximately 11,905 square feet of area, therefore the maximum amount of unused development rights for transfer from this site under existing zoning is approximately 4,029 square feet and has five potential receiving sites.

As stated in 74-79 of the Zoning Resolution, the increase in floor area may not exceed the maximum allowable floor area by more than 20%. Under existing zoning, all potential receiving sites are eligible to receive a transfer.

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 or 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, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E., ALFRED C. CERULLO, *III*, MICHELLE R. DE LA UZ, RICHARD W. EADDY, CHERYL COHEN EFFRON, ANNA HAYES LEVIN, ORLANDO MARIN, LARISA ORTIZ, *Commissioners*