



## CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

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June 23, 2004/Calendar No. 16

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**IN THE MATTER OF** a communication dated May 20, 2004, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding **the landmark designation of the Brooklyn Public Library, DeKalb Branch**, 790 Bushwick Avenue (aka 1176 DeKalb Avenue), (Block 3241, Lot 18), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on May 18, 2004 (List 353/LP-2054), Borough of Brooklyn, Community District 4.

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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 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 Brooklyn Public Library's DeKalb Branch, located in Bushwick, was constructed in 1904-05 as one of the first branch libraries built in the Borough of Brooklyn with money provided by Andrew Carnegie's multi-million dollar gift. The neighborhood's tremendous population growth during the last decade of the nineteenth and first decade of the twentieth century necessitated a variety of civic services including a public library. The DeKalb Branch was the first of five library designs by noted architect William B. Tubby, who served on the Architects' commission for the Brooklyn Carnegie branches. The building followed the stylistic guidelines agreed upon by that group: a free-standing, brick and limestone building in the Classical revival style. Its double-height windows provided much light and air for the users of the building while the rounded apse at the rear allowed for a spacious, two-story area for book stacks. Except when closed for renovations, the library has served this densely populated area of Brooklyn for a

century, and with its recent refurbishing, continues to contribute a distinguished civic presence to the neighborhood.

The DeKalb Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library is a free-standing brick and stone building set on a corner lot. The building is rectangular in plan, except for a rounded apsidal projection at the center of the rear facade. It is capped by a shallow hipped roof covered by standing seam metal roofing fronted by a brick and stone parapet. Set on a high basement with windows visible on the sides and rear, the building has a stone watertable marking the first floor level. All the windows have multi-pane wood sash and are covered by non-historic metal grates. The front facade is three bays wide with a prominent central entrance reached by a series of steps and terraces.

The landmark site is located in an R6 zoning district. With an allowable floor area ratio (FAR) of 2.43, the zoning lot could be developed with approximately 32,562 square feet of floor area.

Brooklyn Public library, DeKalb Branch contains 11,340 square feet of floor area.

Therefore, there are approximately 21,222 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, or one which is across a street and opposite to the lot occupied by the landmark building, or in the case of a corner lot, one which fronts on the same intersection as the lot occupied by the landmark

building.

There are approximately 6 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.

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

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.

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