



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

August 10, 2011 / Calendar No. 12

N 110404 HKM

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated June 29, 2011, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Cities Service Building, 70 Pine Street, (Block 41, Lot 1), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on June 21, 2011 (List No. 443/LP-2441), Borough of Manhattan, Community District 1.

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 21, 2011, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the Cities Service Building at 70 Pine Street, (Block 41, Lot 1), as a city landmark.

The Cities Service Building is located on Pearl Street, between Cedar and Pine streets, in the Special Lower Manhattan District of Community District 1. The Cities Service Building is a 66-story, 952-foot Art Deco style commercial office building and was occupied by the Cities Service Company. When it was completed in 1932, it was the tallest structure in Lower Manhattan and the third tallest in the world (behind the Empire State and Chrysler buildings).

Built under the regulations of the 1916 zoning resolution, it has a wedding cake style with setbacks leading to a spire. It is clad with white brick, limestone, speckled granite, and stylized reliefs of the company's logo and sunflowers. On the front of the building is a scale model of the tower, and the building entrances are distinctive with four-story tall archways leading to multi story vestibules.

The Cities Service Company controlled over 150 energy firms in 38 states, including numerous oil and power suppliers. The building was completed during the Depression but still managed to achieve 90% occupancy by 1941. In 1965, the company was renamed CITGO and the building was sold to the American International Group in 1976. In 2008, following AIG's collapse and bailout by the US government, the tower was acquired by a private entity, Sahn Eagle LLC, in 2009.

The landmark site is located within a C5-5 3 zoning district and the Special Lower Manhattan District with a maximum FAR of 15. The 31,722 square foot zoning lot could be developed with approximately 475,830 square feet of floor area. The Cities Service Building contains approximately 918,919 square feet of floor area. Therefore, it does not have unused development rights to 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 the 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 street intersection as the lot occupied by the landmark building. In this case, the maximum FAR is 15, but the existing subject building has an FAR of 28.97. Thus, it does not have unused development rights to transfer.

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 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.

AMANDA M. BURDEN, FAICP, Chair

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