



IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated December 23, 2016, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Bergdorf Goodman Building (Block 1273, Lot 33), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on December 13, 2016 (Designation List No. 492/LP-0735), Borough of Manhattan, Community District 5.

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 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 December 13, 2016, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the Bergdorf Goodman Building as a City landmark. The landmark site, at 754 Fifth Avenue (Block 1273, Lot 33), fronts Fifth Avenue between East 57th and East 58th Streets in Midtown Manhattan, Community District Five.

The site was previously home to Cornelius Vanderbilt II's mansion, which was purchased by real estate developer Frederick Brown in 1926. The existing retail building was built by Brown between 1927 and 1928 to read as separate, but aesthetically unified, buildings. Designed in the Modern Classical by Ely Jacques Kahn, the building incorporates elements of French architecture, and harmonizes with other buildings on the Grand Army Plaza.

The building is significant for its association with Bergdorf Goodman, which was an original tenant of 754 Fifth Avenue. The well-known department store began as a tailor shop at Fifth Avenue and 19th Street and revolutionized the women's clothing industry by becoming the first American couturier to offer ready-to-wear clothing. Like many other stores, Bergdorf Goodman following the retail migration north along Fifth Avenue, ultimately occupying the site's northernmost building on 58th Street and Fifth Avenue. The new location proved to be successful and Bergdorf Goodman began to expand, first by leasing additional space in the complex and late by purchasing all of the buildings on the site.

Today, Bergdorf Goodman occupies all but the southeast corner of the complex, which is leased to Van Cleef & Arpels. Alterations to the first two stories have sought to unify the façade, reflecting the success of Bergdorf Goodman. Kahn's original design remains largely intact above the second story and continues to read as separate, but aesthetically unified, buildings.

The landmark site is located in a C5-3 zoning district within the Fifth Avenue Subdistrict of the Special Midtown District, which allows a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 15. The 26,100-square-foot zoning lot could be developed with 391,500 square feet of floor area. The Bergdorf Goodman Building contains approximately 211,669 square feet of floor area (8.1 FAR). The site, therefore, has approximately 179,831 square feet of unused development rights.

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 six potential receiving sites for the transfer of the landmark's unused floor area.

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. Furthermore, 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.

CARL WEISBROD, Chairman
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