



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

September 4, 2012 / Calendar No. 2

N 130002 HKM

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated July 5, 2012, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Riverside – West End Historic District Extension I, designated by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on June 26, 2012 (List No. 457, LP No. 2463). The district boundaries are:

The Riverside-West End Historic District Extension I consists of the property bounded by a line beginning at the northwest corner of Broadway and West 79th Street, extending westerly along the northern curbline of West 79th Street to a point on a line extending southerly from the western property line of 307 West 79th Street (aka 307-313 West 79th Street), northerly along said line and the western property line of 307 West 79th Street (aka 307-313 West 79th Street), easterly along the northern property line of 307 West 79th Street (aka 307-313 West 79th Street), northerly along the western property line of 411 West End Avenue (aka 409-411 West End Avenue; 302-304 West 80th Street) to the northern curbline of West 80th Street, easterly along the northern curbline of West 80th Street to a point on a line extending southerly from the western property line of 425 West End Avenue (aka 301 West 80th Street), northerly along said line and the western property line of 425 West End Avenue (aka 301 West 80th Street), westerly along part of the southern property line of 433 West End Avenue (aka 431-439 West End Avenue; 300-302 West 81st Street), northerly along part of the western property line of 433 West End Avenue (aka 431-439 West End Avenue; 300-302 West 81st Street), easterly along part of the northern property line of 433 West End Avenue (aka 431-439 West End Avenue; 300-302 West 81st Street), northerly along part of the western property line of 433 West End Avenue (aka 431-439 West End Avenue; 300-302 West 81st Street) to the southern curbline of West 81st Street, westerly along the southern curbline of West 81st Street, northerly along the eastern curbline of Riverside Drive, easterly along the northern curbline of West 85th Street to a point on a line extending southerly from the western property line of 355 West 85th Street (aka 351-355 West 85th Street), northerly along said line and the western property line of 355 West 85th Street (aka 351-355 West 85th Street), westerly along part of the southern property line of 340 West 86th Street (aka 340-346 West 86th Street), northerly along the western property line of 340 West 86th Street (aka 340-346 West 86th Street) to the northern curbline of West 86th Street, easterly along the northern curbline of West 86th Street to a point on a line extending southerly from the western property line of 349 West 86th Street, northerly along the western property line of 349 West 86th Street, easterly along the northern property lines of 349 through 305 West 86th Street (aka 303-307 West 86th Street), northerly along part of the western property line of 545 West End Avenue (aka 541-551 West End Avenue; 301 West 86th Street) and the western property line of 555 West End Avenue (aka 553-559 West End Avenue; 300 West 87th Street) to the northern curbline of West 87th Street, easterly along the northern curbline of West 87th Street to a point on a line extending northerly from the eastern property line of 552 West End Avenue (aka 264 West 87th Street), southerly along said line and the eastern property lines of 552 West End Avenue (aka 264 West 87th Street) and 550 West End Avenue, easterly along part of the northern property line of 540 West End Avenue (aka 540-546 West End Avenue; 261-263 West 86th Street) and the northern property line of 257 West 86th Street (aka 255-259 West 86th Street), southerly along the eastern property line of 257 West 86th Street (aka 255-259 West 86th

Street) to the southern curbline of West 86th Street, easterly along the southern curbline of West 86th Street, southerly along the western curbline of Broadway, westerly along the northern curbline of West 83rd Street to a point on a line extending northerly from the eastern property line of 470 West End Avenue (aka 470-472 West End Avenue; 262-270 West 83rd Street), southerly along said line and the eastern property line of 470 West End Avenue (aka 470-472 West End Avenue; 262-270 West 83rd Street), westerly along part of the southern property line of 470 West End Avenue (aka 470-472 West End Avenue; 262-270 West 83rd Street), southerly along the eastern property line of 460-466 West End Avenue (aka 253-257 West 82nd Street) to the southern curbline of West 82nd Street, easterly along the southern curbline of West 82nd Street, southerly along the western curbline of Broadway, westerly along the northern curbline of West 81st Street to a point on a line extending northerly from the eastern property line of 424 West End Avenue (aka 424-436 West End Avenue; 278-280 West 81st Street), southerly along said line and the eastern property lines of 424 West End Avenue (424-436 West End Avenue; 278-280 West 81st Street) and 251 West 80th Street to the northern curbline of West 80th Street, westerly along the northern curbline of West 80th Street to a point on a line extending northerly from the eastern property line of 412 West End Avenue (aka 252-256 West 80th Street), southerly along said line and the eastern property line of 412 West End Avenue (aka 252-256 West 80th Street), westerly along part of the southerly property line of 412 West End Avenue (aka 252-256 West 80th Street), southerly along the eastern property line of 410 West End Avenue (aka 408-410 West End Avenue), easterly along part of the northern property line of 400 West End Avenue (aka 400-406 West End Avenue; 267-269 West 79th Street) and the northern property line of 265 West 79th Street (aka 2221-2229 Broadway) to the western curbline of Broadway, and southerly along the western curbline of Broadway, to the point of beginning.

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 26, 2012, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the Riverside-West End Historic District Extension I (the “Historic District Extension”) (List 457, LP 2463). The Historic District Extension encompasses part or all of 16 blocks located between Broadway and Riverside Drive and between West 87th Street and West 79th Streets. The original Riverside-West End Historic District was designated in 1989 and is located just to the north of the proposed Historic District Extension. To the south is the smaller Riverside Drive – West 80th – 81st Street Historic District, designated in 1985.

According to the LPC’s report, the 194 buildings that comprise the Historic District Extension

were constructed starting in the mid-1880s. The buildings include residential, institutional and commercial buildings designed by some of the more prominent architects of the time including McKim Mead & White, Clarence True, George Pelham and C.P.H. Gilbert.

The initial development of the Upper West Side in the second half of the 19th Century was influenced by several factors: the Eighth Avenue horse car line was extended to West 84th Street in 1864, Broadway was opened in 1869, by 1879 the Ninth Avenue elevated train was running, and Riverside Drive and Park were completed in 1880. The buildings within the Historic District Extension represent the various phases of development that transformed a rural area into the dense urban enclave that it is today.

Starting in the mid-1880s, row houses began to be constructed in several architectural styles including neo-Grec, Romanesque Revival, Renaissance Revival, Queen Anne and Beaux-Arts. Many architects designed in brownstone, but others combined different textures of stone and brick and often created a rhythmic pattern with specific architectural elements such as bow fronts, bays, dormers and balconies. Some of the most prominent examples of these houses were 307-315 W. 82nd Street and 316-326 W. 85th Street (Romanesque Revival), and 329-337 W. 85th Street (Romanesque Revival and Queen Anne Styles).

Starting in the 1890s on Broadway, West End Avenue, and some of the side streets, small multiple dwellings began to be constructed. The construction of the buildings, called “French Flats” at the time, coincided with the spreading acceptance of apartment living among the upper and middle classes of New York. Several factors influenced this change in opinion, notably the rising costs of land and construction, the advancement in design of multiple dwellings, and also the stronger enforcement of the existing housing laws. Also, with the advent of the smaller, more practical electric elevator, designers were able to increase the size of their buildings. The apartments were built in scale with the existing single-family dwellings in the area, often with similar materials and generally ranged between six and nine stories. Buildings of this style constructed at this time include the Red House at 350 West 85th Street (built in a French Gothic Revival style), Euclid Hall at Broadway between West 85th and West 86th Streets (E-shaped residential building) and 412 West End Ave. (built in the Beaux-Arts style).

After passage of the Tenement House Act of 1901 (known also as the “New Law”), all rooms had to have a window overlooking a street or a yard. Many apartment buildings were built with deep light courts within the primary façade of the building. As a result of the growing diverse groups of residents, four prominent religious buildings in a range of architectural styles were built at this time, including the First Baptist Church (in Romanesque Revival style) at the corner of Broadway and W. 79th Street and the Church of St. Paul and St. Andrew (incorporating elements of Early Christian, German Romanesque and early Italian Renaissance styles) at the northeast corner of West End Avenue and W. 86th Street.

During the early part of the 20th Century the character of the Historic District Extension changed from predominantly single-family town homes and small multiple dwellings, to large apartment houses and apartment hotels (a hybrid type of building considered a commercial building and therefore not regulated by the tenement law). Buildings tended to rise to 12-14 stories with flat roofs, no setbacks, limestone bases, brick upper stories and white terra-cotta trim. The Hotel Wayne (Renaissance Revival) at 309 W. 86th Street and Selkirk (Elizabethan Revival) at 308 W. 82nd Street were examples of apartment hotels and 90, 98 and 100 Riverside Drive and 505 & 515 West End Avenue were examples of apartment houses. During the “inter-war period”, the buildings built in the 1920s and 1930s on Riverside Drive and West End Avenue attracted prosperous tenants, mostly East European Jewish merchants who had moved to the Upper West Side from Harlem following the expansion of the subway in 1918. As a result, several of the buildings in the extension were converted to use as synagogues beginning in the 1940s, including Congregation Ohay Shalom (in a row house at 270 W 84th Street) and Congregation B’nai Israel Chaim (in a row house at 305 W. 79th Street). Very little construction in the district was done between the 1940s and 1970s, but in the last 35 years three large-scale residential buildings have been completed, including West River House at 424 West End Avenue, the Claremont at 255 W. 85th Street and 535 West End Avenue.

The Historic District Extension is within the area of Community Board 7. This Historic District Extension is zoned R8B in the midblocks between Riverside Drive and West End Avenue, R10 on both sides of West End Avenue and C4-6A along Broadway. R8B zoning district allow

residential and community facility uses with a maximum FAR of 4.0, the R10A district allows residential and community facility uses to a maximum FAR of 10.0 and a commercial floor area to a maximum of 2.0 FAR and the C4-6A district allows commercial uses to a maximum FAR of 3.4 and residential and community facility uses to a maximum FAR of 10.0.

On March 22, 2011, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Historic District Extension (Item No. 7). Thirty-two witnesses spoke in favor of the designation as proposed, including the Manhattan Borough President, the Councilperson for New York City Council's 6th District, and representatives of the Congressman for New York's 28th United States Congressional District, the State Senators for the 29th, 30th, and 31st New York State Senate Districts, the State Assemblymember for the 67th New York State Assembly District, the West End Preservation Society, the Historic Districts Council, Landmarks West, Manhattan Community Board 7, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the West 80s Neighborhood Association, the West Side Federation of Neighborhood and Block Associations, as well as residents and neighbors. An additional three people testified in favor of including a building in the district without otherwise stating support for designation. Nine witnesses spoke in opposition to the designation including the Real Estate Board of New York and five owners and/or their representatives who were opposed to including their specific properties in the proposed extension. The commission received several letters in support of the proposed designation and one letter in opposition to the designation.

Pursuant to Section 74-79 of the Zoning Resolution, no transfer of development rights is permitted from any structure within an historic district. All landmark buildings within historic districts are eligible to apply for use and bulk waivers pursuant to Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution.

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to Section 3020.8(a) of the City Charter, the City Planning Commission held a public hearing on August 22, 2012, (Calendar No. 24). There were 13 speakers in favor of the designation

and one opposed. Speakers in favor included representatives of the West End Preservation Society, The Coalition for a Livable West Side, the Historic Districts Council, Landmark West!, and the 565 West End Avenue co-op. Speakers in favor also included the Councilperson for New York City Council's 6th District, and representatives of the State Senators for the 29th and 31st New York State Senate Districts, the State Assembly Member for the 67th New York State Assembly District, and both the co-secretary and the former chair of Manhattan Community Board 7. Two unaffiliated citizens also spoke in favor.

The one speaker who was opposed was a representative of the Council of New York Cooperatives and Condominiums who stated that recently designated historic districts have included too many buildings without historic value, and that such buildings often defer improvements, such as window replacements, that would improve tenant comfort and energy efficiency because of the additional cost and delay involved in compliance. Testimony was also received via letter from the Real Estate Board of New York. Their letter stated that this historic designation (as well as the proposed designations of Riverside-West End Historic District Extension II and the West End-Collegiate Historic District Extension) would "severely restrict" development rights with "little analysis from city agencies from an economic development or planning perspective". The letter requested that actions by the Landmarks Preservation Commission be subject to greater scrutiny by this Commission and the City Council.

CONSIDERATION

The City Planning Commission has evaluated the Riverside – West End Historic District Extension I in relation to the Zoning Resolution, projected public improvements and plans for the development, growth and improvements in the vicinity of the area involved. The subject Historic District does not conflict with the Zoning Resolution. In addition, the Commission is not aware of any conflicts between the subject Historic District Extension designation and projected public improvements or any plans for development, growth, improvement, or renewal in the vicinity of the Historic District Extension.

The Commission has also reviewed written testimony of the Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY) in opposition to the designation. REBNY proposes that historic district designations

be subject to a broad-based economic development impact analysis, and encourages the Commission to “begin that type of review with this historic district and all that follow.” The Commission notes that this approach towards review of historic district designations is not currently provided for under City Charter Section 3020, and that REBNY has proposed legislation to require such analysis in connection with designations.

AMANDA M. BURDEN, FAICP, Chair

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