



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

July 26, 2006 / Calendar No. 2

N 060547 HKM

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated June 15, 2006, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Claremont Theater Building, 3320-3338 Broadway, aka 536-540 West 135th Street, (Block 1988, p/o Lot 1), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on June 6, 2006 (List 375/LP-2198), Borough of Manhattan, Community District 9.

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 Claremont Theater building is located on the east side of Broadway between West 134th and West 135th streets. Designed by Gaetano Ajello, the theater was built during the 1913-1914 period, and opened in 1914.

The Claremont Theater is one of the city's oldest structures planned specifically to exhibit motion pictures. The two-story theater was designed in the Renaissance Revival style and has three distinct fronts, including a clipped corner facade and auditorium on the first floor. The building's second floor was used as a ballroom and dance hall. In the 1920's the building's storefronts were leased to auto-related businesses. By 1933, the theater was closed and converted to commercial use. However, despite such changes, the exterior is well-preserved and remains a symbol of the growing popularity of motion pictures in the early twentieth century.

The landmark site is located in an M1-2 zoning district. With an allowable floor area ratio (FAR) of 2.0, the zoning lot could be developed with approximately 35,968 square feet of floor area. The Claremont Theater Building contains 50,452 square feet of floor area.

Since the landmark site is built at or above the allowable floor area ratio, there are no development rights, which may be available for transfer pursuant to Section 74-79 of the Zoning Resolution.

All landmark buildings or buildings within a historic district are eligible to apply for use and bulk waivers pursuant to Sections 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution.

There are no projected capital improvements in the vicinity of the landmark. The designation is consistent with Community Board 9's 197-a Plan.

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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