



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

March 10, 2010 / Calendar No. 10

N 100224 HKM

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated January 21, 2010, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of West Park Presbyterian Church, 165 West 86th Street a.k.a. 165-67 West 86th Street, 541 Amsterdam Avenue (Block 1217, Lot 1) by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on January 12, 2010 (List No. 425/LP No. 2338), Borough of Manhattan, Community District 7.

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 January 12, 2010 the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated West Park Presbyterian Church, located at 165 West 86th Street in Manhattan, as a New York City landmark.

West Park Presbyterian Church is located on the Upper West Side of Manhattan in Community District 7, at the northeast corner of Amsterdam Avenue and West 86th Street. The church building was constructed in 1889-90 as a new home for Park Presbyterian Church, which had been founded on the Upper West Side in 1852 and later merged with West Presbyterian Church, then located in Midtown, in 1911 to form West Park Presbyterian Church. The new church building incorporated and modified a small brick chapel, designed by the prominent New York architect Leopold Eidlitz, which was built on the eastern end of the site in 1883-85. During the 1880s, the population of the Upper West Side grew dramatically following the expansion of horse car and elevated railway lines in the area and the paving and widening of local streets, including Broadway. The congregation of Park Presbyterian Church also grew during the decade, quickly outgrowing the chapel and necessitating construction of a new, 900-seat church building.

The architect of the new church building was Henry Kilburn, another prominent New York architect who was responsible for a number of other churches in New York (including Saint

James Episcopal Church in the Bronx, a City landmark) as well as many residences, factories, stables, and theaters in Manhattan, some of which are now included in various historic districts. The design of the church was apparently inspired by the work of Henry Hobson Richardson, a major 19th-century American architect and exponent of the Romanesque Revival style that characterizes West Park Presbyterian Church. The church's rugged stonework, heavy, round arches, and earth-toned materials evince a Richardsonian interest in medieval Romanesque forms and palettes.

With its high tower rising sheer from the corner of Amsterdam Avenue and West 86th Street, the church is a powerful anchor for the intersection of two major thoroughfares. Its prominence is accentuated by its bold forms, which are clad in an especially deep red sandstone. The LPC designation report for West Park Presbyterian Church notes that "Kilburn's design remains remarkably intact" and calls the church "one of the Upper West Side's most important buildings." Sections of the church's stone cladding, some of its windows, and many of its decorative elements are presently in a state of decay.

The landmark site is located in an R10A zoning district, and most of the site also lies within a C1-5 commercial overlay district. With a maximum allowable floor area ratio (FAR) of 10.0, the zoning lot could be developed with approximately 101,570 square feet of floor area. West Park Presbyterian Church contains approximately 16,000 square feet of floor area. Therefore, there are approximately 85,567 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 that is across the street and opposite to the lot occupied by the landmark building, or, in the case of a corner lot such as the subject site, one which fronts on the same street intersection as the lot occupied by the landmark building. There are approximately six 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.

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.

AMANDA M. BURDEN, FAICP, Chair

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ALFRED C. CERULLO, III, BETTY Y. CHEN, RICHARD W. EADDY,

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