



IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated December 2, 2016, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Graybar Building (Block 1280, Lot 7501), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on November 22, 2016 (Designation List No. 490/LP-2554), 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 November 22, 2016, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the Graybar Building as a City landmark. The landmark site, at 420 Lexington Avenue (Block 1280, Lot 7501), is located on the west side of Lexington Avenue, between East 43rd and 44th Streets, within the East Midtown neighborhood of Manhattan Community District Five.

The Graybar Building was constructed in 1927 and was designed by architectural firm Sloan & Robertson. The 30-story building was developed on property situated above railroad tracks owned by New York Central Railroad and incorporates multiple train platforms and a public passageway that connects the Grand Central Terminal with Lexington Avenue. The Graybar Building is clad in limestone and tan brick and has decorative elements that blend Art Deco and Byzantine-style aesthetics, most notable the stone reliefs that frame the three portal entrances. Each stone relief depicts robed figures that clutch symbols of air, water, earth and fire. The south portal, which leads to the Graybar passage at East 43rd Street, is also adorned with rats on limestone reliefs above the gridded windows that seem to be climbing the metal struts that support the center marquee.

The Graybar Building was fully leased upon completion, encouraging subsequent commercial development east of Grand Central Terminal along Lexington Avenue. Notable tenants of the Graybar Building included, the Graybar Electric Company, J. Walter Thompson Company, Turner Construction Company, the Young Men's Christian Association and Remington Rand. The S.L. Green Realty Corporation undertook a major restoration, including construction of a

new entrance canopy and storefronts, after acquiring a long-term lease on the building in 1998.

The landmark site is located in a C5-3 zoning district within the Grand Central Subdistrict of the Special Midtown District which allows a maximum FAR of 15. The 68,302 square foot zoning lot could be developed with 1,024,530 square feet of floor area. The Graybar Building contains approximately 1,044,054 square feet of floor area (15.29 FAR). The site, therefore, is overbuilt and has no 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. As there are no unused development rights to transfer from the Graybar Building, no additional analysis has been conducted.

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 Graybar Building is located within the proposed East Midtown Subdistrict. If the proposed East Midtown Subdistrict text amendment (N 170186 ZRM) is approved, landmarks located within the proposed subdistrict will be permitted to transfer their unused development rights to any eligible building similarly located within the proposed subdistrict. The landmark designation does not conflict with the proposed East Midtown Subdistrict text amendment.

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.

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