



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

August 19, 2009 / Calendar No. 30

N 100003 HKM

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated July 1, 2009, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the John Peirce Residence, located at 11 East 51st Street (Block 1287, Lot 10), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on June 23rd, 2009 (List No. 414 /LP- 2327), 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 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 23, 2009, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the John Peirce Residence, located at 11 East 51st Street as a city landmark.

The John Peirce Residence is located in Midtown Manhattan on the north side of East 51st Street between Fifth and Madison Avenues in Community District 5. The building was constructed between 1904-1906 and designed by John H. Duncan. John H. Duncan is most famous for his design of the Soldiers and Memorial Arch in Brooklyn's Grand Army Plaza as well as Grant's Tomb.

The John Peirce Residence, a well-preserved example of the fashionable townhouses that lined the 50s side streets off Fifth Avenue, was executed in a mixed Italian Renaissance/ Beaux-Arts style. The residence was located in one of the most prestigious residential neighborhoods at the turn of the twentieth century commonly referred to as Vanderbilt row for the family's involvement in maintaining the character of the neighborhood. John Peirce was one of the largest stone contractors in the country. He later became involved in the construction of large

scale civic infrastructure projects including New York City's first subway system.

The John Peirce Residence constructed of ashlar stone is five story building. Notable details of the house include the full rustication of the first three floors which terminates in a projecting cornice at the fourth floor. The upper floors are faced with a smooth ashlar stone with a deeply projecting cornice at the top of the building. The prominent balcony with iron railing at the second story and the ornamental wreaths at the second and fifth floors are flourishes typically associated with the Beaux-Arts style.

After the John Peirce Company went into receivership in 1909 and again in 1914 the house was foreclosed upon. Subsequent owners included the Gardner School for Girls and a series of commercial uses including the current owner, Mercantil C.A. Banco Universal. In spite of the changes to the use in the building it remains nearly perfectly intact.

Situated in a C5-2.5 zoning district (max. FAR, 10 for residential, 12 for community facility, and commercial), the subject building's zoning lot contains 13,349 square feet of floor area on a 2,761 square foot lot. The block and the surrounding neighborhood are of a mixed character with large commercial buildings on Fifth and Madison avenues, mid-rise row houses and apartment buildings and office buildings on the side streets.

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. The maximum amount of unused development rights available for transfer from this site is approximately 22,544 square feet. There are approximately three potential receiving sites available for the transfer of the landmark's unused floor area.

All buildings on the same zoning lot as a landmark building 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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