



## CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

---

January 6, 2010 / Calendar No. 13

N 100166 HKM

---

**IN THE MATTER OF** a communication dated November 25, 2009, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Aschenbroedel Verein Building (later Gesangverein Schillerbund/now La Mama Experimental Theatre Club), 74 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street (Block 459, Lot 23), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on November 17, 2009 (Designation List No. 423/LP-2328), Borough of Manhattan, Community District 3.

---

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 landmark site at 74 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street is located on the south side of East 4<sup>th</sup> Street between the Bowery and Second Avenue in the East Village neighborhood in Manhattan. The building was constructed in 1873 to the design of architect August H. Blankenstein, for the German-American professional orchestral musicians' social and benevolent association known as the Aschenbroedel Verein.

Founded informally in 1860, the Aschenbroedel Verein had grown large enough by 1866 for the society to purchase the site and construct this purpose-built structure. At a time when German-Americans dominated the orchestral scene, the society counted a number of the city's most important musicians as members. After the Aschenbroedel Verein moved further uptown, the building was occupied and owned by one of the city's oldest and leading German singing societies. Beginning in 1895 the building changed ownership several times and held a range of uses including a public meeting hall, the Newsboys' Athletic Club and a meatpacking plant.

Since 1969 the building has been the home of the La Mama Experimental Theatre Club, one of the city's most influential off-Off-Broadway theaters.

The building's main façade combines elements of the German Renaissance Revival and neo-Grec styles with folk motifs. Primarily executed in red brick, the building was altered with the addition of cast-iron ornament when the Gesangverein Schillerbund acquired the building. Among the building's original architectural features are a variety of pedimented lintels, quoins, composers' busts over the second-story windows and a prominent cornice with a broken pediment.

The landmark site is located in an R8B zoning district. With an allowable floor area ratio (FAR) of 4.0, the zoning lot could be developed with approximately 9,300 square feet of floor area. The Aschenbroedel Verein Building contains approximately 7,000 square feet of floor area. Therefore, there are approximately 2,300 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 which is across the street and opposite to the 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 building. There are approximately four 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**  
**RAYANN BESSER, ALFRED C. CERULLO, III, BETTY Y. CHEN,**  
**MARIA M. DEL TORO, RICHARD W. EADDY, SHIRLEY A. McRAE,**  
**KAREN A. PHILLIPS, Commissioners**