



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

May 11, 2011 / Calendar No. 14

N 110276 HKM

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated March 31, 2011, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Neighborhood Playhouse, 466 Grand Street House (a/k/a 466-470 Grand Street; 8 Pitt Street) (Block 336, part of Lot 28), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on March 22, 2011 (Designation List No. 440/LP-2433), 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.

On March 22, 2011, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the Neighborhood Playhouse Building, located at 466 Grand Street (Block 336, part of Lot 28), as a city landmark.

The Neighborhood Playhouse was established as an artistic effort as part of the Henry Street Settlement to serve the community of the Lower East Side. A theater group under the same name, which was founded by the Lewisohn sisters, called the building its home until 1927. The Neighborhood Playhouse provided an experimental theater environment and was among the city's earliest representatives of the emerging "Little Theater" movement, which itself would eventually give rise to the city's Off-Broadway scene.

The building was designed by the architectural firm of Ingalls and Hoffman, whose early commissioned work included the 1912 Little Theater, now Helen Hayes Theater (also a NYC Individual Landmark, 238-244 West 44th Street). The Neighborhood Playhouse was designed in a modest neo-Georgian style, which was a departure from the more formal Classical Revival and Beaux-Arts style designs of Broadway theaters. The Neighborhood Playhouse remains remarkably intact, and features Flemish bond brick cladding at the front facade over a granite base with a set-back stucco-covered third story; paneled wood doors with a fanlight and sidelights at the western entrance; splayed keystone lintels above the center and eastern

entrances; multi-pane, double-hung sash windows with keystone lintels and shutters at the second story windows; and a corbeled cornice above the second story.

The Playhouse was taken over by the Henry Street Settlement in 1927 and continues to be one of the most important cultural institutions on the Lower East Side, presenting a range of theatrical, musical and dance performances.

The landmark site is located in an R8 zoning district. With an allowable floor area ratio of 6.02, the zoning lot could be developed with approximately 144,004 square feet of floor area. The proposed landmark site contains approximately 38,000 square feet of floor area. Therefore, there are approximately 106,004 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 six potential receiving sites available for the transfer of the proposed 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.

The subject landmark does not conflict with the Zoning Resolution. In addition, 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 building.

AMANDA M. BURDEN, FAICP, Chair
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