

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

August 27, 2003/Calendar No. 16

C 040008 HKK

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated July 3, 2003, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of Erasmus Hall High School (Block 5103, Lot 10) by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on June 24, 2003 (List No. 348/LP-2130), Borough of Brooklyn, Community District 14.

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.

Erasmus Hall High School, originally called Erasmus Hall Academy, a private institution of higher learning founded in 1786 by Dutch settlers in Flatbush, was the first secondary school chartered by the New York Regents. The clapboard-sided, Federal style building, constructed in 1787 on land donated by the Flatbush Dutch Reformed Church (designated a New York City Landmark in 1966), continued in use and was donated to the public school system in 1896.

In 1904, the Board of Education began a new building campaign to house the growing student population at Erasmus Hall. Superintendent of School Buildings, C.B.J. Snyder designed a series of buildings to be constructed as needed, around an open quadrangle, while continuing to use the old building in the center of the courtyard. Erasmus Hall, designed in the Collegiate Gothic style that Snyder used on many of his buildings, was constructed in four sections, in 1905-05,

1909-11, 1924-25 and 1939-40, with the two later buildings supervised by William Gompert and Eric Kebbon, respectively. Its buff brick facades have limestone and terra cotta trim and feature central entrance towers with oriel windows and crenellated parapets, Tudor-arched entrances, label moldings and large window groupings. The style of Erasmus Hall evolved over they years so that the most recent buildings are simpler, with less ornamentation, but retain the general characteristics of the earlier ones, giving a sense of unity to the entire composition.

The landmark site is located in a C4-2 zoning district. With an allowable floor area ratio (FAR) of 2.43, the zoning lot could be developed with approximately 459,002 square feet of floor area. Erasmus Hall High School contains 247,400 square feet of floor area.

Therefore, there are approximately 211,602 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 a 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 intersection as the lot occupied by the landmark building.

There are approximately 23 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.

The Commission notes that since this landmark is city-owned, the Landmarks Preservation Commission would issue an advisory report rather than a permit for any proposed alteration to the building.

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.

KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, ESQ., Vice Chairman
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