

400 MADISON AVENUE BUILDING

400 Madison Avenue (AKA 394-408 Madison Avenue,
23-25 East 47th Street, 24-26 East 48th Street), Manhattan
Tax Map Block 1283, Lot 17

Built: 1928-29

Architect: H. Craig Severance

Style: Neo-Gothic

Actions: Item Proposed for the Commission's Calendar on May 10, 2016

400 Madison Avenue was constructed as a speculative office building during a period of substantial commercial development in the East Midtown neighborhood. Built after the passage of the 1916 zoning, the romantic tiered massing of the building represents the early evolution of skyscraper design.

It was designed by noted skyscraper architect H. Craig Severance and financed by George I. Ohrstrom, with whom Severance later worked on The Manhattan Company Building at 40 Wall Street (1929-30, a New York City Landmark). Occupying an entire blockfront along Madison Avenue but extending less than 50 feet deep, the design of the narrow building allowed all of the interior spaces to face an exterior wall and offered tenants access to light and ventilation.

The facade of 400 Madison Avenue is clad in white terra cotta with intricate neo-Gothic ornamentation. The setback massing, with its distinctive "Wedding Cake" profile, reflects the requirements of the City's 1916 zoning ordinance, while the verticality of the structure is enhanced by the rhythmic vertical piers and recessed windows and spandrels. The building is intact and has recently undergone restoration work, including continuing maintenance of the terra-cotta cladding.



