



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

November 4, 2013 / Calendar No. 15

N 140116 HKK

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated September 27, 2013, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Long Island Business College, 143 South 8th Street (Block 2132, Lot 30), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on September 17, 2013 (Designation List 468/LP-2544), Borough of Brooklyn, Community District 1.

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 September 17, 2013, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the Long Island Business College, located at 143 South 8th Street (Block 2132, Lot 30), as a city landmark. The landmark site is located midblock on the north side of South 8th Street between Bedford Avenue and Driggs Avenue, in the South Williamsburg neighborhood, Brooklyn Community District 1.

The Long Island Business College is an institutional building that was constructed between 1891 and 1892. Architect William H. Gaylor, who worked throughout Brooklyn, designed the four-story Long Island Business School using a diverse architectural vocabulary. Seeking inspiration from contemporary public school designs, the building is predominantly in the Romanesque Revival and Second Empire styles and accented with elements of the Queen Anne, Italianate and early Romanesque styles. The red brick building has a five-bay façade, which features rough-hewn brownstone trim, foliate ornament and other classical detail. The main entrance is flanked with twisted engaged columns and classical adornment and the building is topped with slate-covered mansard roofs on the three middle bays. The building has remained in excellent

condition, with only a few significant alterations that include replacement sashes and removal of pyramidal roofs and finials on the end bays.

Built as an expansion of Wright's Business College, founded by Henry C. Wright in 1873, the building was used to train men and women for careers in banking, insurance and other industries that were emerging throughout Brooklyn. The Long Island Business School building was also used by the Brooklyn Philosophical Association, once considered one of the nation's leading freethought organizations, and featured lectures by anarchist Emma Goldman, labor leader Eugene V. Debs and future mayor William J. Gaynor. Later, the building was sold and converted into the Beth Jacob Teachers Seminary of America, and after World War II, the Seminary became an educational center for young Holocaust survivors. In 1984, the Seminary sold the Long Island Business College building to a group of artists, and the space has since been used as a live/work co-op.

The building is located in South Williamsburg, two blocks south of the Williamsburg Bridge. Uses on the subject block and surrounding neighborhood are typified by attached three- to four-story rowhouses and larger five- to six-story apartment buildings, with some ground-floor retail uses on Broadway to the north, which is in a C4-3 zoning district.

Situated in an R6 zoning district (max. 2.43 FAR for residential uses), the college building has 29,700 square feet of floor area on a lot that has 9,494 square feet of lot area (3.13 FAR). The property is therefore currently overbuilt.

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. However, since the site is overbuilt, there are no unused development rights available for transfer.

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.

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