



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

August 5, 2015 / Calendar No. 8

N 150445 HKK

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated June 25, 2015, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Henry and Susan McDonald House, 128-132 Clinton Avenue (Block 1887, Lot 82), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on June 16, 2015 (Designation List 482/LP-2543), Borough of Brooklyn, Community District 2.

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 June 16, 2015, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the Henry and Susan McDonald House as a city landmark. The landmark site is located at 128-132 Clinton Avenue, aka 128 Rear Clinton Avenue (Block 1887, Lot 82) in the Wallabout neighborhood of Community District 2, Brooklyn.

This unusually well-preserved and rare free-standing Italianate style frame house with Greek Revival style elements was erected for Henry and Susan McDonald in 1853-54. It was built in a period when this area of Wallabout was undergoing rapid development following an expansion of the Brooklyn Navy Yard and the opening of several new streets. Located at the crest of a hill with excellent views of the East River and Manhattan, Clinton Avenue was the neighborhood's premiere residential street, a wide tree-lined boulevard lined with the villas of wealthy merchants.

The house's cubic form, low-hipped roof, strongly projected bracketed eaves, molded window surrounds, wood-and-glass double doors with segmental-arched transom and wood reveal, and columned portico enriched with dentils and paired brackets are characteristic of the Italianate style. Greek Revival style elements include the fluted porch columns with Tower of the Winds Corinthian capitals and first-story windows with eared surrounds. The house was occupied by

Henry McDonald, a prosperous baker with a business on Catherine Street in Manhattan, and his family until the mid-1870s. Subsequent owners included merchant David S. Jones, attorney Edgar J. Phillips, and physician Domenick Candella. The McDonald House remains unusually intact and survives today as an important reminder of the early development of Wallabout.

The proposed landmark is located in the Wallabout neighborhood on Clinton Avenue, between Myrtle and Park Avenues. Clinton Avenue is a Wide Street consisting of primarily 3-5 story row-houses and apartment buildings. The site itself is mapped with an R5B zoning district (1.35 residential FAR, max 33' building height) and an R6B zoning district (2.0 residential FAR, max 50' building height) is mapped directly across the street. The site also backs up against the Wallabout Historic District (LP-2445) which was designated in 2011 and runs along Vanderbilt Avenue. The neighborhood character changes from low-density residential to medium- and high-density industrial uses moving northward towards the elevated Brooklyn-Queens Expressway and the Brooklyn Navy Yard, only 1 ½ blocks to the north. Closest subway service is provided via the G-train's Clinton-Washington station about four-blocks to the south.

The Henry and Susan McDonald House is situated on an approximately 6,000 square foot lot located within an R5B zoning district, which permits a maximum residential FAR of 1.35 and a maximum community facility FAR of 2.00. The existing building is approximately 2,658 square feet, leaving approximately 5,442 square feet of unused residential development rights available on this site. However, pursuant to Section 74-79 of the Zoning Resolution, the transfer of development rights from landmark sites are not applicable in R5 zoning districts.

Pursuant to Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution, landmark buildings or buildings within Historic Districts are eligible to apply for use and bulk waivers upon application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

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.

CARL WEISBROD, *Chairman*

KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, ESQ., *Vice Chairman*

RAYANN BESSER, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E., ALFRED C. CERULLO, III, MICHELLE R. DE LA UZ, RICHARD W. EADDY, CHERYL COHEN EFFRON, ANNA HAYES LEVIN, ORLANDO MARIN, LARISA ORTIZ, *Commissioners*