



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

August 10, 2016/Calendar No. 24

N 170009 HKM

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated July 8, 2016, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the (Former) Firehouse, Engine Company 29 (Block 137, Lot 25), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on June 28, 2016 (Designation List No. 488 / LP-2564), Borough of Manhattan, 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 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 28, 2016, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the (Former) Firehouse, Engine Company 29 as a City landmark. The landmark site at 160 Chambers Street is located on the south side of Chambers Street between West Broadway and Greenwich Street, in the Tribeca neighborhood of Lower Manhattan.

The (Former) Firehouse, Engine Company 29 at 160 Chambers Street was originally constructed in 1832-33 as a three-story residence, and attained its present appearance as a result of several alterations to reflect its role as one of the City's earliest police stations. The building was used as a residence, and later a hotel, until the City purchased it in 1861 for use as a new station house for the police precinct for the 3rd Ward of New York, who moved into the building in 1863. In order to address space constraints for the police force and prison, the New York Police Department's architect, Nathaniel D. Bush, directed work including the enlargement of the building to a full five stories with a mansard roof, the extension to the rear lot line with the existing rear façade remaining in place, and alterations to the interior and exterior. The building, as enlarged and altered by Bush, is a very fine but simplified example of the French Second Empire style, which was at the height of its popularity in the 1860s and 1870s. Although some of the characteristic features of the style could not be utilized on a façade that is only 25-feet wide, the building does have the defining characteristic features of the style, the mansard roof, as well as other characteristic details such as projecting window lintels and pediments, an elaborate cornice below the mansard, and dormer windows.

By 1875 the 3rd Police Precinct relocated to 19 Leonard Street and the building operated as a hospital (The House of Relief, a/k/a the Chambers Street Hospital and the Hospital for Accidents) by the New York Hospital until 1894. In 1897, Fire Engine Company 29 moved to 160 Chambers Street and remained until it disbanded in 1947. The entrance to 160 Chambers Street was widened with new brick piers from the foundation to the second story to prepare the building to house the fire engine company. The fire engine company sign above the entrance (“29 Engine 29”) remains. The Uniformed Fire Officers Associated occupied the building until 1962 when the City sold the building, which was then used as a lumber yard at the cellar, first and second stories while the third through fifth stories remained vacant. The site became used for residential use with commercial on the ground floor in 1983, when a penthouse with skylights was added above the mansard roof.

The landmark site is located in a C6-3A zoning district within the Special Tribeca Mixed Use District (Area A3) with a maximum FAR of 7.52. The 1,789 square foot zoning lot could be developed with 13,453 square feet of floor area. 160 Chambers Street contains approximately 9,565 square feet of floor area (5.35 FAR). It, therefore, has approximately 3,888 square feet of unused development rights to 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 building or one which is across the street and opposite to the zoning 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. There are four potential receiving sites for the transfer of the landmark’s unused floor area.

Pursuant to Section 74-11 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. Furthermore, 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.

CARL WEISBROD, Chairman

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