



July 26, 2023 / Calendar No. 13

N 230362 HIM

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated June 1, 2023, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the (Former) Colored School No. 4, 128 West 17th (Block 792, Lot 53), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on May 23, 2023 (Designation List No. 532/LP-2659), Borough of Manhattan, Community District 4.

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 May 23, 2023, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designated (Former) Colored School No. 4 an individual New York City landmark. The site is located at 128 West 17th Street (Block 792, Lot 53) on the south side of West 17th Street, between Sixth and Seventh avenues in Chelsea, Manhattan Community District 4.

The former Colored School No. 4 is Manhattan's only known surviving example of a racially segregated school from the Civil War and post-Reconstruction era. This highly significant former public-school building was built in 1849-50, became a segregated school in 1860, and continued to serve Black students until it closed in 1894. The former Colored School No. 4 is an important reminder of the African American community's commitment to education as they faced rampant discrimination in all areas of their lives. Its enduring presence illustrates how New York City's public educational system served African American students during the city's period of mandated racially segregated schools.

The former Colored School No. 4 is historically significant for its association with notable teachers and students. Many made their mark in education, music, transportation, public service, and social

justice. Sarah J. Smith Tompkins Garnet, first a teacher and later the last principal for the school, was one of the first Black women to become a principal in the New York City Public School system and also an important leader in the women's suffrage movement.

Since the school closed in 1894, the building has remained under city ownership. In the early 20th century, it was leased to various veterans' associations. By 1936, the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) was using it as Section Station No. 14 and it remains under the jurisdiction of DSNY today.

The three-story, brick-clad building was constructed in 1849-50 in the Greek Revival style, which was popular at the time and is reflected in the remaining two- and three-story row houses in the neighborhood. The Public School Society, which was responsible for public education at that time in Manhattan, constructed the school using the Model Primary School House Plan. The design was said to date from 1844 and provided the prototype that the Society used to erect their primary schools, using a typical 25-foot-wide lot. Exhibiting an overall simplicity, the building's four-bay facade retains a short stone base and historic rectangular openings for the doors and windows. The first story's two separate entries, one at each side of the front facade, was a common feature in 19th-century school buildings, separating boys and girls.

The site is located in a C6-2A zoning district, which allows a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 6.5; the 2,300-square-foot lot generates approximately 14,950 square feet of development rights. The existing building contains approximately 6,900 square feet of built floor area (approximately 3.0 FAR), resulting in approximately 8,050 zoning square feet of unused development rights.

Pursuant to Section 74-97 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 that is across the street and opposite to the zoning lot occupied by the landmark building, or in the case of a corner lot, one that fronts on the same street intersection as the lot occupied by the

landmark building. There are five 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 subject landmark does not conflict with the Zoning Resolution. The Commission is not aware of any conflict with the Zoning Resolution, projected public improvements or any plans for development, growth, improvement, or renewal within the landmark site or the surrounding area.

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