

200 Madison Avenue First Floor Lobby Interior

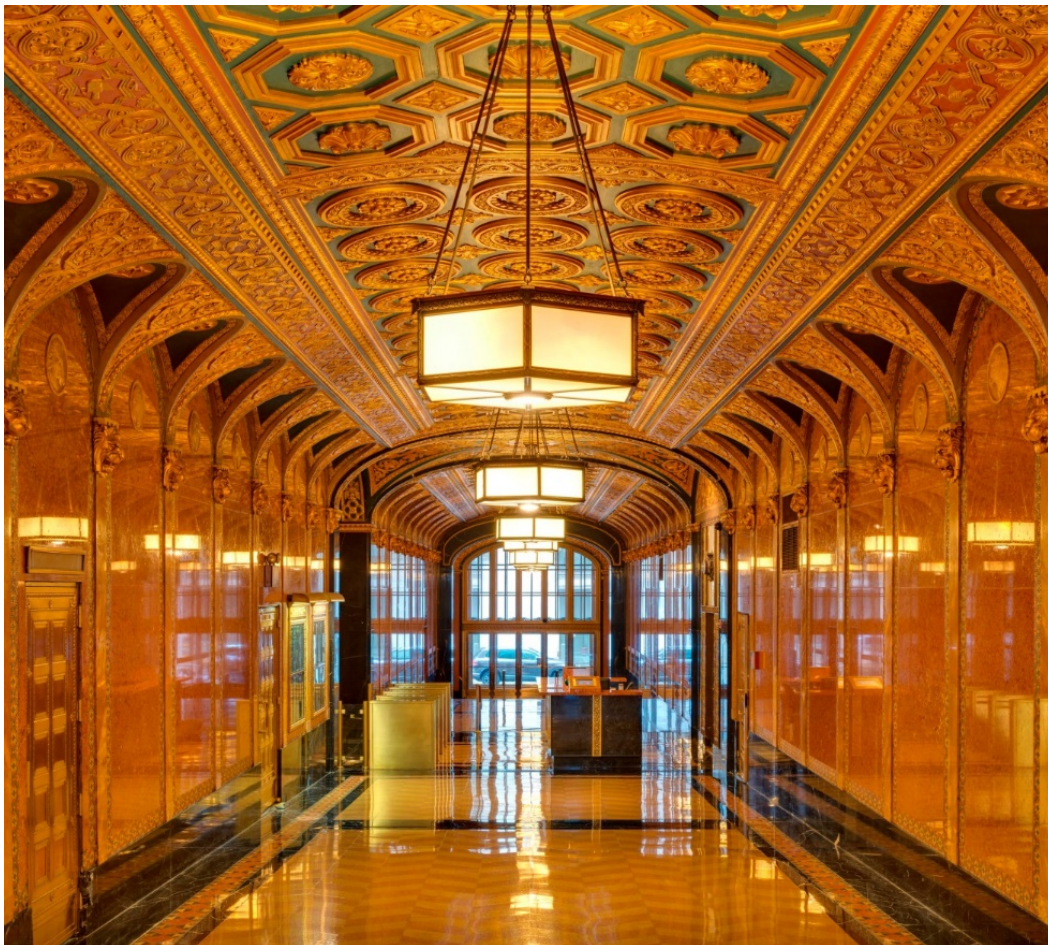
200 Madison Avenue
(aka 200-214 Madison Avenue, 11-19 East 35th Street,
10-20 East 36th Street), Manhattan
Tax Map Block 865, Lot 14

Built: 1925-26

Architect: Warren & Wetmore

Style: Neo-Renaissance

Proposed Action: Calendared July 20, 2021; Public Hearing
September 28, 2021



200 Madison Avenue first floor interior, view south, courtesy George Comfort & Sons

200 Madison Avenue was constructed in 1925-26. Located in Murray Hill, between East 35th and East 36th Streets, this understated red brick structure by Warren & Wetmore contains one of the most ornate office building lobbies in midtown Manhattan. To conform to current zoning regulations, 200 Madison Avenue was originally divided in two sections. The nine-story base facing Madison Avenue contained an apartment hotel, while the 25-story set-back tower contained commercial showrooms and offices. The hotel was converted to commercial space in 1939-40.

Designed in the neo-Renaissance style, the T-shaped lobby originally served the office tower. It incorporates a two-hundred-foot-long, north-south, arcade and a central elevator hall that extends east towards Madison Avenue, where a secondary elevator hall, originally separate from the historic lobby, is located at the Madison Avenue entrance. Meeting at right angles, the impressive interconnected spaces of the historic T-shaped lobby share lavish materials that have a golden brownish pink palette. The north-south arcade was originally intended to be entered mid-block, from East 35th and East 36th Streets, through wide glazed foyers that incorporate two sets of five brass-framed doors at each end. Most of the block-long arcade has a shallow vaulted ceiling bordered by continuous bands of low plaster relief and multiple round-arch coves that frame highly polished marble walls trimmed with floral mosaic inlay. Near East 35th Street is a delicate saucer dome and at East 36th Street are steps framed by a black marble arch. At mid-block, aligned with the central elevator hall, is richly embellished groin vault. Similar in character to the arcade, this east-west space has a shallow vaulted ceiling decorated with rosettes, a yellow terrazzo floor with chevrons and geometric marble inlay, polished marble walls, and nine elevators. Of particular interest are the elevator and service doors, the ventilation grilles, letter boxes, and animal reliefs – mostly executed in gleaming brass.

200 Madison Avenue was designed by Warren & Wetmore. Based in Manhattan, during their prolific career from 1900 to 1930 they were consistently inventive interpreters of the classical tradition, producing a great number of New York City landmarks and landmark interiors, such as Grand Central Terminal, Steinway Hall, and the New York Central Building. The ornate lobby of 200 Madison Avenue is among the firm's least known and best-preserved interiors. Aside from the installation of a non-historic reception desk, complementary lighting fixtures, security turnstiles and minor modifications, this memorable public space looks much as it did when the building opened in 1926.

