Landmarks Preservation Commission
June 25, 2013, Designation List 465
LP-2530

140 BROADWAY, originally the Marine Midland Bank Building (aka 71-89 Cedar Street, 54-74 Liberty Street, 27-39 Nassau Street), Manhattan. Built 1964-68; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, architect; Gordon Bunshaft, partner in charge of design; Roger N. Radford, lead designer

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 48, Lot 1

On April 2, 2013, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of 140 Broadway and the proposed designation of the Landmark site (Item No. 1). The hearing was duly advertised according to law. Four people spoke in favor of designation, including representatives of Docomomo US/New York Tri-State, the Historic Districts Council, and the New York Landmarks Conservancy. A second hearing was held on May 13, 2013 (Item No. 1) in which three representatives of the owner spoke in support of designation.

Summary

A critically-acclaimed example of mid-20th century modernism, the former Marine Midland Bank Building at 140 Broadway was completed in early 1968. Architect Gordon Bunshaft, of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, was the partner in charge of the minimalist design – a matte black aluminum and bronze-tinted glass skyscraper that *The New York Times* architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable later described as "not only one of [the] buildings I admire most in New York, but that I admire most anywhere." Erwin S. Wolfson assembled the trapezoidal site by 1961, covering an entire block between Nassau Street and Broadway, and following his death, a revised 51-story scheme was commissioned by developers Harry Helmsley and Lawrence A. Wien, covering about 40% of the block. This approach conformed to a new zoning ordinance, effective December 1961, resulting in a dramatic free-standing trapezoidal tower adjoined by spacious plazas and wide sidewalks. Construction began in late 1964 and the principal tenants, such as the Marine Midland Grace Trust Company, started to occupy the structure three years later. Many of the initial tenants were involved in financial, banking and accounting services. During the post-World War II era, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill became one of the leading architectural firms in the nation and the smooth mullion-less skin was singled out for its remarkable simplicity and color. In the spacious plaza that adjoins Broadway, "Cube," a 28- foot-tall abstract sculpture by the celebrated Japanese-American artist Isamu Noguchi was installed near Liberty Street, in early 1968. Precariously balanced on one corner, the contrasting reddish cubic form animates the space and helps underscore the dark elegance of the elevations. Though renovations in 2000 brought significant changes to the plaza and public entrances along Cedar Street, 140 Broadway retains much of its original character, as well as a commanding presence in lower Manhattan, visible from Broadway, Zuccotti Park, and the reemerging World Trade Center.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The Site

Two blocks north of Wall Street and Trinity Church, on the east side of Broadway, 140 Broadway is a striking mid-20th century high-rise office building. Completed in early 1968, this 51-story structure was one of the financial district's first skyscrapers to conform to the 1961 zoning law, which encouraged owners to erect slab-like towers in plazas. It stands near the center of a trapezoidal block, bordered by Broadway, Liberty, Nassau and Cedar Streets.[1] Each side has a different length: Liberty Street, at 318 feet, is the longest, while Broadway, at 144 feet, is the shortest.

Developer Erwin S. Wolfson purchased the site from the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York in August 1961.[2] Organized in 1891, this trust company was one of the largest in the nation, merging with J. P. Morgan & Company in 1959.[3] The site was assembled in three stages between 1952 and 1962 and incorporated six lots with structures that had been previously owned or occupied by the Guaranty Trust Company, the National Bank of Commerce, and the New York Clearing House. Wolfson was a prominent New York City builder and developer, responsible for building 100 Church Street (1957-58), the Bankers Trust Building at 529 Fifth Avenue (1959), and the Pan Am (now Met Life) Building (1960-63). In addition, he was one of the founders of the Diesel Construction Company, which erected 140 Broadway. Wolfson died unexpectedly in June 1962. At this time, a 36-story tower was planned for the site and Carl A. Morse, president of Diesel, asked Harry Helmsley to form the 140 Broadway Development Corporation.[4]

Developer

Harry Helmsley (1909-97) began his real estate career during the late 1920s, working for Dwight, Voorhis & Perry. When he became a partner in 1938, the company was renamed Dwight, Voorhis & Helmsley. He headed the firm during the 1940s and began an informal business partnership with lawyer Lawrence A. Wien. Initially, they invested in undervalued properties, acquiring small buildings in less desirable sections of New York City. After the Second World War, however, he and various partners began to purchase better-known structures, such as the Flatiron Building, the Lincoln Building, and the Empire State Building. Helmsley would develop an extensive investment portfolio that included the real estate firm Brown Harris Stevens. In the 1960s, he expanded his business strategy and began to commission new structures. One of Helmsley's earliest projects was 140 Broadway, followed by office buildings at 22 Cortlandt Street (Emery Roth & Sons, 1971) and 1 Penn Plaza (Kahn & Jacobs, 1972).[5]

To finance the construction of 140 Broadway, Helmsley secured a $34 million mortgage from Chase Manhattan Bank in November 1964, which had its headquarters (a designated Landmark) directly across Nassau Street, one block east. A year later, in October 1965, the Marine Midland Grace Trust Company signed a contract to lease ten floors, as well as two subfloors, for 25 years. As the building's principal tenant, the new tower would be called the Marine Midland Bank Building. Marine Midland was a major American financial institution. Established in Buffalo, in western New York, in 1850, it grew to operate 229 offices in New York State, as well as five offices in Europe.[6] In New York City, it had 14 branches by 1965, including multiple locations in the financial district. The bank's annual report described 140 Broadway as the "new headquarters . . . This fine modern structure now rising in the dynamic Downtown Manhattan area offers Marine Midland Grace a splendid opportunity to serve its customers more efficiently through the consolidation at one location of all its downtown headquarters facilities."[7]

Skidmore, Owing & Merrill

Wolfson selected Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) to design 140 Broadway in 1960 or 1961. According to the partner in charge of the project, Gordon Bunshaft, it was Morse who persuaded Helmsley to set "higher standards somewhat – not up to what Chase would do but more than an Emery Roth building would have."[8] At this time, SOM was at the height of its success. Founded in Chicago in 1936, SOM opened a New York City office in 1937. After the Second World War, it attracted a wide and

varied clientele, ranging from the United States government to major corporations and financial institutions. In the years immediately leading up to the 140 Broadway commission, it designed major buildings for Pepsi Cola (1960, a designated Landmark), Union Carbide (1960), Chase Manhattan Bank (1956-64, a designated Landmark), and Banque Lambert (1964) in Brussels. These corporate commissions shared an approach to design that reflected the influence of 20th century European modernism, particularly the work of architect Ludwig Mies van de Rohe, who immigrated to the United States from Germany in the late 1930s and was currently active in Chicago.

Gordon Bunshaft (1909-1990) headed the project. A graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M. Arch., 1935), he joined SOM's New York office in 1937. He was promoted to senior partner and chief designer in the late 1940s, overseeing various commissions simultaneously. Bunshaft was associated with SOM for 42 years, retiring in 1979. For 140 Broadway, he asked Edward J. Mathews to coordinate the project.[9] An architect and city planner, Mathews helped plan Rockefeller Center in the early 1930s and worked with the Downtown-Lower Manhattan Association, Inc. to develop an early proposal for a "World Trade Center."[10] The latter scheme prepared him to work on One Chase Manhattan Plaza and 140 Broadway. Mathews was also involved in designing the IBM Headquarters (1964) in Armonk, New York, and the performing arts library at Lincoln Center (1965).

Roger N. Radford (1927-2009) managed the design team.[11] Born in England, he attended St. John's College at the University of Cambridge (1944-49) and received a master's degree in architecture from the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University (1952-53). Radford joined SOM's New York office in 1953 and worked closely with Bunshaft on many projects, such as the Reynolds Metal Company Headquarters (1958) in Richmond, Virginia; the John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company Building (1962) in New Orleans; the American Republic Life Insurance Company Headquarters (1965) in Des Moines, Iowa; the American Can Company Headquarters (1970) in Greenwich, Connecticut; and the Haj Terminal (1981) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Radford became an associate partner in 1960 and after working in the Chicago and London offices in the 1980s, retired in 1990. Allan Labie, who also had a lengthy career with SOM, served as project manager. Bradley B. Sullivan acted as job captain.

James Ruderman (1899-1966) was the building's structural engineer.[12] In 1964, as the project was beginning, the metropolitan section of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) named him "civil engineer of the year." A leader in the field, his office reportedly designed "about half" of the high-rise office buildings erected in New York City after 1945, including a dozen lining Park Avenue. When reinforced concrete gained popularity in the 1960s, Ruderman advised clients to continue using welded steel, as was done at 140 Broadway. He contended that such construction techniques needed significantly less materials, were lighter and faster to build, and could be easily altered, when modifications to the interiors became necessary.[13]

A New Zoning Code

In October 1960, a revised zoning code was approved by the New York City Department of Planning. This resolution encouraged developers to erect free-standing office buildings with plazas. Also known as incentive zoning, the new code permitted additional bulk in exchange for providing open space at street level, resulting in slab-like structures with increased floor area. Though the revised code became effective in December 1961, several years would pass before these rules started to reshape Manhattan's skyline.

When Wolfson announced his plans in August 1961, a preliminary design for a 32-story tower was published in *The New York Times*:

> The skyscraper planned by Mr. Wolfson will be known as 140 Broadway. It will be erected under the new zoning law and will have broad plaza areas extending from Nassau Street to Broadway along the Liberty and Cedar Street frontages . . . [it] will have an unbroken vertical rise, as permitted under the new zoning regulations.[14]

SOM pioneered this approach in the late 1950s, particularly at One Chase Manhattan Plaza (1956-64) and the Union Carbide Building (1958-60), which rise without interruptions or setbacks. Among the first buildings to conform to the 1961 zoning code were 777 Third Avenue (William Lescaze, 1961-63) and the CBS Building (Eero Saarinen, 1961-64, a designated Landmark).

A revised scheme was presented in May 1963. The new scheme was forty stories tall and 20% larger but covered just 40% of the block. *The New York Times* reported that it would "harmonize" with One Chase Manhattan Plaza, using the adjacent open space (as well as part of Cedar Street) to create a "pedestrian mall."[15] Though SOM filed plans (NB 79-64) for a 47-story office building in early 1964, in subsequent months, changes were made to the general design and the $22-million tower's relationship to the surrounding streets.[16]

Initially, a rectangular floor plan was contemplated, but in the end a trapezoidal footprint was adopted to maximize the interior square footage and create exterior spaces that would complement the massing. In a 2008 interview, Radford recalled:

> . . . the size of the building was determined by the zoning, but the setbacks were also. And that led to the shape, which to the layman is not apparent . . . I have known people who've worked in that building, and when I've said, "Well, you know, it has this funny shape," they've said, "Well, what funny shape? This is a perfectly ordinary building."[17]

At street level, the 87 (minimum) by 209 (maximum) foot building covers about 21,000 square feet, or about a total of one million square feet. The narrowest facade, with three six-window bays, adjoins Broadway, while the side facing Nassau Street is wider and has four bays. On Broadway, the setback from the curb is 80 feet, while Cedar Street is 30 feet, and Liberty Street is 25 feet. According to Radford, 140 Broadway closely conformed to the new zoning requirements, which "tend to force the mass of the building toward the center of the site."[18]

Design and Materials

The initial design had a light-colored elevation, either a concrete or aluminum grid. Raised on a recessed transparent base, the six-bay Broadway facade was to have a flat roof that disguised the mechanicals. It would have resembled several SOM projects from the early 1960s, particularly the First City National Bank Building (Houston, 1961), the John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company Building (New Orleans, 1962), and on a smaller scale, the elevations of the aluminum and glass Pepsi-Cola Building (1958-60, a designated Landmark) on Park Avenue in Manhattan.

By 1965, 140 Broadway had been redesigned. In addition to a new shape and footprint, the exterior had been transformed. In *Architectural Forum*, John Morris Dixon observed: "the contrast was probably deliberate; a little brother to Chase [One Chase Manhattan Plaza] in the same shiny finish surely would have looked like a poor relation."[19] The skin was now exceptionally smooth, accentuating the tower's volume and mass. There are no projecting mullions or joints and the dark bronze glass panels appear flush with the black matte aluminum. Only the aluminum window trim and window-washing tracks interrupt the surface. For some observers, this was part of larger cultural trend. While the dark skin relates 140 Broadway to the venerated Seagram Building (1955-58) and the CBS Building (1961-64), Museum of Modern Art architecture curator Arthur Drexler also found aesthetic parallels in current graphic design, as well as in the recent "black" paintings of Ad Reinhardt, who enjoyed a career retrospective at the Jewish Museum during the building's construction.[20]

In designing 140 Broadway, Bunshaft also demonstrated considerable sensitivity to the immediate architectural context. Beginning with Lever House in 1950-52, he had designed a succession of buildings in New York (and elsewhere) that incorporated generous public spaces. For instance, at One Chase Manhattan Plaza, the recently-opened 2½-acre plaza provided users with dramatic and unfamiliar views of Manhattan Company Building (1929-30) and the Cities Service Building (1930-32), both are designated New York City Landmarks. Likewise, 140 Broadway is flanked by several distinctive historic structures, a group of mostly light-colored masonry buildings that date from the early 20th century. They

include, to the south, the block-long Equitable Building (1913-15), and to the north, the former Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York (1900-01) and Liberty Tower (1909-10).[21] In combination with the original travertine plaza, these structures isolate 140 Broadway and make the dark skinned elevations appear especially dramatic. This approach recalls SOM's celebrated addition (1958-62) to the Albright Knox Gallery in Buffalo, New York, where Bunshaft positioned the gray-tinted-glass and aluminum pavilion atop a white marble wall that extends from the base of the neo-classical museum (1905). Rather than using complementary materials or forms, this restrained addition functions as part of a larger architectural composition. Juxtaposing old and new design strategies, these projects were unusual because they simultaneously respect *and* stand apart from their historic neighbors.[22]

To enhance the minimalist character of the elevations, signage and other necessities were kept as simple as possible. People entered from Cedar Street, through revolving doors that were recessed from the facade.[23] Opposite these entrances were four evenly-spaced circular benches (removed c. 2000). Like the original pavement, they were made of travertine that matched the plaza.[24]

The building's address and principle tenant were originally identified by a blocky font with a thin silver outline. The text "Marine Midland Grace Company Trust" was attached to the spandrel between the first and second floors at the north end of the Broadway facade, as well as over the Cedar Street entrances, and the number "140" was attached to the spandrel between the first and second floors at the southeast and southwest corners of the building, facing Broadway, Cedar Street and Nassau Street. In addition, at the southeast corner of the plaza, where Cedar and Nassau Streets meet, a subway entrance was opened.[25]

Construction

The Thomas Crimmins Construction Company served as the excavation and foundation contractors. Work began in 1964 and the site was ready for construction by the summer of 1965. The Diesel Construction Company served as general contractor. In addition to erecting the Pan Am Building (1960-63) and various Helmsley hotels during the late 1970s, this firm built the former Sears Tower (now Willis Tower, Chicago, 1970-73) and the East Wing of the National Gallery of Art (Washington, D.C., 1974-78).

Six hundred workers, representing 26 trades, were employed. According to Diesel, it was "designed to make it one of the quietest and most efficient assembly jobs in the city." To accomplish this goal, not only did demolition take place during evenings and Saturdays but "special steel wire mesh blankets . . . weighing several hundred pounds each" were used to absorb noise and contain debris.[26] In addition, 140 Broadway incorporates a "butt-welded structural frame," reducing the need for loud construction techniques, such as bolting and riveting.[27] It was said to be the first structure in New York City to benefit from this technology. Forty of the 109 ironworkers were welders who worked from suspended gondolas to fuse the beams. The 14,000-ton frame was erected at about one floor every two days and the tower was topped off by a crew from the United States Steel Corporation, which supplied the steel, in June 1966. A temporary certificate of occupancy was approved in March 1967 and the Department of Buildings considered 140 Broadway complete, six months later, in October 1967.

Isamu Noguchi's "Cube"

140 Broadway covers approximately 40% of the site. It rises near the center of the block, surrounded by plazas and sidewalks (except for the loading dock on Liberty Street) that are mostly paved with identical materials. Among these spaces, the largest plaza faces Broadway and extends 80 feet to the curb. Isamu Noguchi's sculpture stands close to the north edge of the building, silhouetted against the facade. Impressive in terms of color and size, the sculpture at its highest point measures 28-feet. Like the tower behind it, the cube sits almost directly on the plaza, with no base or pedestal. Though a 1965 rendering shows a still-to-be-determined artwork aligned with the Liberty Street sidewalk, Dixon reported that Noguchi's cube "stands at a spot on the Broadway plaza where a sculpture was indicated in early drawings."[28]

Noguchi (1904-88) was born in Los Angeles to a Japanese father and American mother. Raised in Japan, he settled in New York City in the 1920s. Following the Second World War, he and Bunshaft started to collaborate on various projects and became friends. Though their first project, a raised sculpture garden and seating for Lever House (1950-52, a designated Landmark), was not executed until after their deaths and only partially, they worked closely on many subsequent projects, including enclosed sculpture courts for the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company (1957) in Bloomfield, Connecticut; the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library (1960-63) at Yale University; One Chase Manhattan Plaza; and the IBM Corporation in Armonk. In 1961, Noguchi moved to Long Island City, Queens, to be closer to stone suppliers and metal fabricators, where a museum devoted to the artist's work was later established. A retrospective of Noguchi's career was held at the Whitney Museum of American Art in spring 1968, shortly after the sculpture's installation.

In early discussions, Noguchi proposed to carve a single "megalith" or a "cluster of primitivisitic monoliths."[29] Had it resembled his "Unidentified Object," an 11-foot-tall black basalt sculpture from 1979, installed outside the Metropolitan Museum of Art, it would have formed a kind of visual bridge between the tower's dark facade and the original travertine paving. Though some sources claim his initial proposals were rejected due to cost, Bunshaft also expressed reservations. Radford, his associate, recalled:

> And Noguchi came up, first of all, with a series of rocks – that's the only way I can describe it – and he had a model of these things, and he put these rocks in there. It didn't really – I was just an observer – but it didn't really do much. And Gordon, actually, said, "You know, Isamu, why don't you pick up all these rocks, and put them in one block?"[30]

Noguchi responded with a large geometric form that recalls some of the outdoor pieces featured in the "Sculpture in the Environment" exhibition, held at various locations in New York City during October 1967. It brings to mind Tony Rosenthal's *Alamo* (1966-67), a 15-by-15 foot black cube that also stands on one corner and animates the busy intersection of Astor Place and Lafayette Street. Noguchi was particularly sensitive to the urban implications of his work. In 1968, he commented:

> . . . a sculptor is not merely a decorator of buildings but a serious collaborator with the architect in the creation of significant space and of significant shapes which define this space.[31]

To achieve this, rather than place the sculpture in the center of the Broadway plaza, as a Beaux Arts architect might have done, it was installed asymmetrically, to the left, increasing one's awareness of the surrounding void. Furthermore, by employing a strong color, Noguchi created an additional counterpoint to the dark surface of 140 Broadway and the older buildings that flank it. Though hardly unique in 1960s sculpture, such as in the colorful work of Donald Judd and John Chamberlain, it was rare occurrence in Noguchi's oeuvre.[32]

Two earlier Noguchi-Bunshaft collaborations anticipate 140 Broadway. For instance, at the Beinecke Library, the sunken rectangular court incorporates several carefully-placed white marble sculptures including a large tilted cube, which Noguchi described as signifying "chance, like the rolling of the dice."[33] These sculptures can be viewed from above or through the lower level windows, as well as in reflections on the dark glass that surrounds them. Noguchi and Bunshaft also collaborated on two interior sculpture courts for IBM's Armonk headquarters (c. 1963). In the so-called "Garden of the Future," Noguchi juxtaposed an etched black dome with a red circular fountain, representing science and mankind's future. As at 140 Broadway, the red and black forms are silhouetted against a light-colored ground.

Noguchi's cube, however, is neither truly red, nor a cube. As pointed out in essays by John Morris Dixon and Ada Louise Huxtable, it is more accurately a rhombohedron – a cube with sides that are not square but slightly distorted and elongated, suggesting a diamond. According to Carol Krinsky, who authored a monograph on Bunshaft's career:

> The sculpture's detailing had to be done by the SOM architectural staff "as if it were a building," says Bunshaft . . . Its internal welded steel structure is clad in aluminum (like 140 Broadway itself) and has a thick plate that withstands wind.[34]

Set somewhat precariously on end, it appears almost weightless. The bulk is further diminished by the circular hole. Painted light gray, this was Noguchi's idea and the cylindrical core is ringed by vertical slats. In doing so, the eye is directed upward and towards the tower. Though most publications identify the paint color as red, the actual color is vermillion, which falls somewhere between orange and red on a color wheel. Installed in early 1968, Bunshaft praised his collaborator, declaring: "it will really stop traffic. It works beautifully with the building, aesthetically, formally, every way. Noguchi understands relationships."[35]

In 1970, this sculpture was discussed in *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*. Thomas Hoving, the museum's director, saw the cube as representing a "change of public taste." He praised corporations for commissioning contemporary art and the technological skill such works require. Furthermore, he viewed Noguchi's cube as a new and original subject, in which the installation "on one corner is a source of delight, the apparent defiance of the law of gravity producing a pleasing tension."[36]

Reception

In late March 1968, a reception and press party was held to celebrate the building's completion. Ada Louise Huxtable, architecture critic for the *New York Times*, was probably the first writer to publish a review. She called it "one of the handsomest in the city … New York's ultimate skin building." Huxtable admired it on many levels, particularly the "brilliant accent" of Noguchi's cube and the way the public spaces would eventually connect pedestrians to the World Trade Center.[37] Six years later, her opinion remained unchanged, if not stronger – she described it as "not only one of [the] buildings I admire most in New York, but that I admire most anywhere." [38]

John Morris Dixon published "A Down To Earth Tower" in *Architectural Forum* in April 1968. He addressed design and construction issues, concluding that 140 Broadway ranked with the firm's "earlier corporate showplaces" and was "one of the handsomest offices buildings in the U.S.A."[39] Critic Paul Goldberger, who followed Huxtable as *The New York Times* architecture critic, wrote in 1979 that it was SOM's "best" work in New York City:

> . . . the glass curtain wall is dark and refined, it is discreet. This is a soft building, in spite of the sharp and technological feeling of its materials, and there are almost no other glass buildings in town about which that can be said.[40]

Author-cartographer John Tauranc agreed, writing the same year that it was "Manhattan's most elegant tower."[41] Such praise would inspire two similar dark aluminum-faced buildings by SOM in Manhattan: 919 Third Avenue (1970-71), at 56th Street, and 1166 Sixth Avenue (1974), between West 45th and 46th Streets.

Tenants and History

When the building opened in 1968, Marine Midland Bank was the principal tenant. Depositors entered the bank from near the west end of Cedar Street or through entrances at either end of the lobby. The main banking hall, as in SOM's Manufacturers' Trust Company Building (1953-54, a designated Landmark and Interior), occupied the second floor, where the windows are noticeably taller.

Many prestigious tenants also leased space in 140 Broadway, such as the accounting firm of Ernest & Ernest, as well as the financial firms Morgan Stanley & Company and Clarke, Dodge & Company. In the 1980s, tenants included owner Helmsley Spear, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the City Mid-day Club, which occupied the 50th floor until 1997.

On the evening of August 20, 1969, a bomb explosion did extensive damage to the seventh and eighth floor offices of the Marine Midland Bank. The detonation generated a fire and injured approximately 20 people. The blast blew out windows on three sides of the building and the eighth floor partially collapsed into the floor below. It was one of eight attacks on mainly office buildings plotted by Samuel J. Melville, who was arrested in November 1969 and sentenced in 1970.[42]

Silverstein Properties and Morgan Stanley became the primary owners in January 1998. Of more than a dozen buildings sold following the death of Harry Helmsley, 140 Broadway reportedly "attracted the most attention from prospective buyers."[43] With the building half vacant, a major renovation program was commenced in 1999 that included repaving the plaza with granite. At this time, the low circular benches on Cedar Street were replaced with raised tree planters and low benches that parallel the south facade. In addition, more conspicuous revolving doors, each with an illuminated address sign on top, were placed outside the building's footprint in the south plaza. To accommodate these doors, some of the window bays on the ground story were altered. The new owners also installed an outsized polished black granite monument, dedicated to Helmsley, near the corner of Broadway and Cedar Street.[44]

The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation purchased a 51% share in the Marine Midland Bank (renamed HSBC in 1998) in 1980. At this time, a recessed entrance with a revolving door was added to the middle bay of the Broadway facade. When Brown Brothers Harriman became a major tenant in 2001 the entrance was moved to the southernmost bay and new signage was added to spandrel between the first and second stories on Broadway, Cedar Street and Nassau Street. The Ownership Union Investment Real Estate GmbH, a Hamburg-based investment firm and developer, acquired 140 Broadway in April 2004.

Description

140 Broadway is located in lower Manhattan on a trapezoidal block bounded by Broadway, Cedar Street, Nassau Street and Liberty Street. Fifty-one stories tall, the slender tower rises without setbacks to a flat roof. The elevations are matte black aluminum and the tinted windows are bronze-colored glass. The entrance to the elevator lobby is located on Cedar Street. The plaza paving, except for sections of Cedar and Liberty Street, extends to the curb.

Historic: Black matte aluminum elevations with bronze-tinted windows and ventilation panels, two flagpoles (in-kind replacement 2013), strip metal grating above drain runs north-south through plaza on Broadway and around base of building, "Cube" sculpture by Isamu Noguchi on Broadway plaza; *Liberty Street (north)*: loading bays, emergency exits, ventilation grilles, rectangular grate set into sidewalk.

Alterations: Small rectangular granite pavers set with staggered courses in plaza (c. 2000, some patching), brass plaques set into granite paving (c. 2000); *Broadway (west)*: black granite Helmsley monument with gold lettering (c. 2000), signage (metal letters) in southernmost bay between first and second floors, address signage (metal letters) in southernmost bay above second floor, stainless steel entrance doors in southernmost bay, granite and marble paving in recess of revolving door, cameras attached to flagpoles; *Cedar Street (south)*: stainless steel revolving doors with illuminated signage on top and polished stainless steel window bays, pairs of glass doors with black matte aluminum frames (c. 1980) and single down light in third bay from Broadway and first bay from Nassau Street, black granite benches and four raised granite planters (c. 2000), concrete sidewalk paving on south side of planters; *Nassau Street (east)*: recessed entrance with revolving door in southernmost bay, door infill (c. 1980?), signage (metal letters) between first and second floor in southernmost bay, white security camera in spandrel between first and second floor; *Liberty Street (north)*: three white security cameras, concrete paving at loading bays, citibike racks (2013).

Researched and written by
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Notes

[1] To the north of 140 Broadway, a portion of Block 48, Lot 1, functions as part of Liberty Street.

[2] "Intellectual Builder: Erwin Service Wolfson," *New York Times*, September 8, 1960, 30; "Erwin S. Wolfson Is Dead at 60; Leading Builder of Skyscrapers," *New York Times*, June 27, 1962, 35.

[3] *Trust Companies*, Vol. 15 (July 12), 255, viewed at Googlebooks.com.

[4] "Carl Morse, a Builder, Dies at 83; Helped Shape New York's Skyline," *New York Times*, November 16, 1989, viewed at http://www.nytimes.com; "Company Realigns Executives," *New York Times*, January 4, 1957, 34,

[5] Harry Helmsley also built three midtown hotels: the Park Lane on Central Park South (Emery Roth & Sons, 1971), the Palace on Madison Avenue (Emery Roth & Sons, 1981), and the Helmsley on East 42nd Street (Emery Roth & Sons, 1981). See "Harry Helmsley Is Dead at 87; Amassed Billions in Property, *New York Times*, January 6, 1997, A1.

[6] The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) purchased a controlling interest in Marine Midland in 1981. It was "rebranded" as HSBC Bank USA in 1998. See "Marine Midland Bank," *The Encyclopedia of New York City*, edited by Kenneth T. Jackson (Yale University Press and New-York Historical Society, 2nd edition, 2010), 798.

[7] *Marine Midland Bank Annual Report* (Buffalo, New York, 1965), 13.

[8] Carole Herselle Krinsky, *Gordon Bunshaft of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill* (New York: Architectural History Foundation and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1988), 161.

[9] See "Edward J. Mathews, Retired Architect," *New York Times*, March 31, 1980, D11. For a list of SOM projects and the roles played by specific members of the staff, see Krinsky, 335-38. For a study of major works by SOM, see Nicholas Adams, *SOM Since 1936* (Milan: Electra Architecture, 2007).

[10] "A World Trade Center of Trade Mapped Off Wall Street," *New York Times*, January 27, 1960, 1.

[11] "Oral History of Roger Nicholas Radford," interviewed by Sharon Zane (Art Institute of Chicago, 2008), viewed at http://www.artic.edu/research/archival-collections/oral-histories/roger-nicholas-radford-1926-2009.

[12] "James Ruderman is Dead; Designer of Largest Buildings," *New York Times*, January 28, 1966, 47.

[13] "Welding of Steel Replaces Bolting," *New York Times*, December 15, 1963; "Flexibility Noted in Steel Frames," *New York Times*, August 9, 1964, R1; "When It Comes to a Skyscraper, Ruderman's the Man for the Job, *New York Times*, July 21, 1963, 187.

[14] "Block to Be Sold in Financial Area," *New York Times*, August 3, 1961, 37.

[15] As late as in April 1968. John Morris Dixon wrote: "The south plaza (left), from which the building is entered, will hopefully be expanded (by closing Cedar Street) to form a 70 ft. wide promenade leading east toward the Chase Manhattan Plaza." See "Down to Earth Tower," *Architectural Forum* (April 1968), 39. This early plan also proposed building escalators to the IRT and BMT subway stations. Also see "Broadway to Get New Skyscraper," *New York Times*, May 28, 1963, 76.

[16] "Manhattan NB Database 1900-1986," viewed at http://www.MetroHistory.com; for information on the size of the plazas, see the records of the Department of City Planning, November 12, 1964 and January 12, 1965, Department of Building files (Block 48, Lot 1), Municipal Archives.

[17] Oral History, 87.

[18] Dixon, 39.

[19] Dixon, 43.

[20] Cited by Krinsky, 162.

[21] These buildings are designated Landmarks. 150 Broadway, aka the Westinghouse Building, was completed in 1923. The architects were Starrett & Van Vleck.

[22] In a 1957 interview on WNYC radio the English architect Hugh Casson said that glass buildings like the Seagram Building "depend very largely for their beauty on the contrast which they have with more permanent buildings." See Robert A.M. Stern, Thomas Mellins, David Fishman, *New York 1960: Architecture and Urbanism Between the Second World War and the Bicentennial* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1995), 347.

[23] There was also an entrance on Nassau Street. Located in the south bay, it was the only entrance from the east end of the lobby.

[24] SOM installed a similar row of four extant circular benches in One Chase Manhattan Plaza, near William Street.

[25] This subway entrance was probably removed in the 1999.

[26] "Construction Crews Muffling Sounds of Work on Broadway," *New York Times*, May 29, 1966, R1.

[27] Butt-welding is a technique that joins two pieces of metal or plastic together without any overlap along a single edge in a single plane. A metal filler is then melted between the pieces. See "Construction Crews," R1.

[28] Dixon, 41.

[29] Margot Gayle and Michele Cohen, *Manhattan's Outdoor Sculpture* (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1988), 27.

[30] Oral History, 88.

[31] Isamu Noguchi, "The Sculptor and the Architect" (1968) reprinted in *Isamu Noguchi: Essays and Conversations* (Harry N. Abrams, 1994), 52-53.

[32] See Sarah Hammill, "Polychrome in the Sixties: David Smith and Anthony Caro," at http://www.getty.edu/museum/symposia/pdfs_stark/stark_hamill.pdf

[33] Noguchi, 65.

[34] Krinsky, 163.

[35] Harold C. Schonberg, "Isamu Noguchi, A Kind of Throwback," *New York Times*, April 14, 1968, 28.

[36] Thomas Hoving, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, New Series, Vol. 28, No. 5 (January 1970), 203.

[37]Ada Louise Huxtable, "Sometimes We Do It Right," *New York Times*, March 31, 1968.

[38] Huxtable, quoted in *New York 1960*, 180.

[39] Dixon, 44.

[40] Paul Goldberger, *The City Observed: New York* (New York: Random House, 1979), 9.

[41] John Tauranac, *Essential New York* (New York: Holt McDougal, 1979), 225.

[42] "Blast Rips Bank in Financial Area," *New York Times*, August 21, 1969, 47; "Bank Blast Laid to Bomb; Clues to Motive Sought," *New York Times*, August 22, 1969; and "1969, a Year of Bombings," *New York Times*, August 27, 2009, viewed at http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/08/27/1969-a-year-of-bombings.

[43] Helmsley owned a 55% share and the Marine Midland Bank owned the rest. See "Investor Agrees to Pay $190 Million for Helmsley Skyscraper on Broadway," *New York Times*, January 39, 1998, B8.

[44] "Remembering Helmsley," *Daily News*, September 2, 1999, viewed at http://artices.nydailynews/1999-09-02. For a discussion of the plaza, see Matthew A. Postal, "In Full View: Manhattan's Postwar Lobbies and Plazas," *Docomomo Journal*, September 2004.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, architecture, and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that 140 Broadway, the former Marine Midland Bank Building, has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, history, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

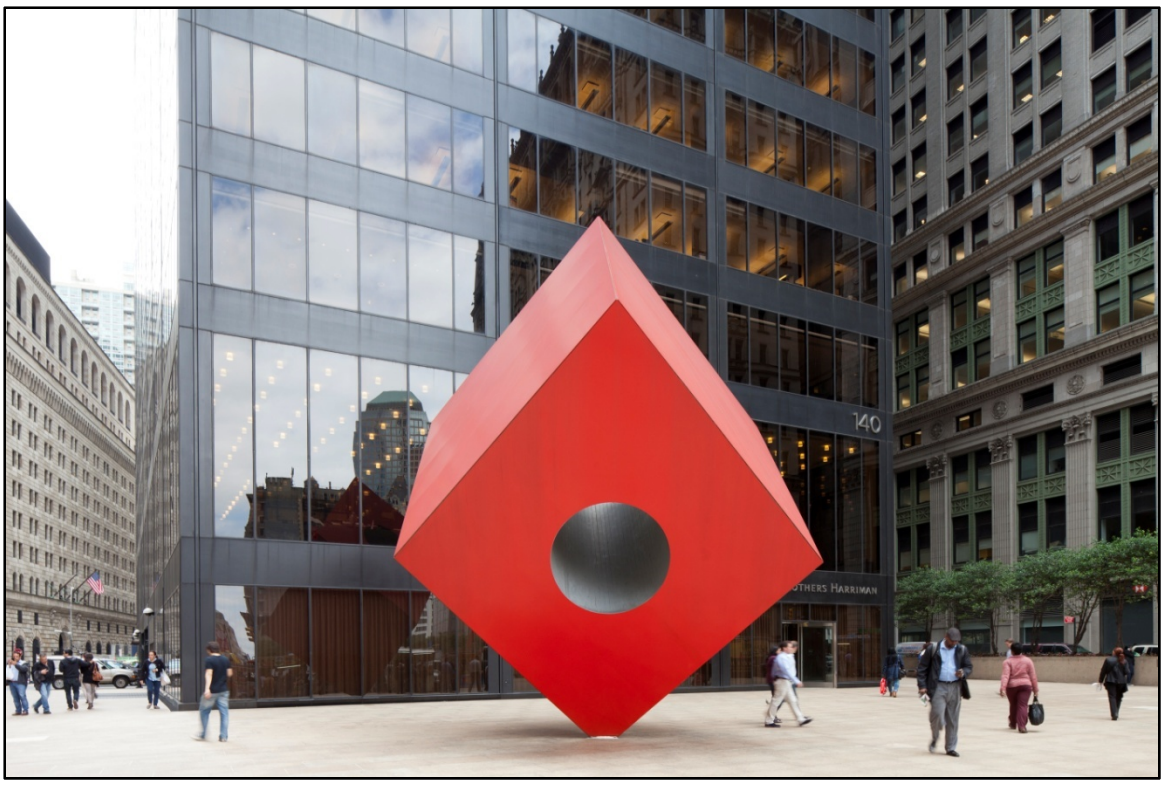
The Commission further finds that 140 Broadway, the former Marine Midland Bank Building, is an acclaimed example of mid-20th century modernism; that it was completed in early 1968; that architect Gordon Bunshaft, of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, was the partner in charge of the project's minimalist design; that this matte black aluminum and bronze-tinted glass skyscraper was later described by *The New York Times* critic Ada Louise Huxtable as "not only one of [the] buildings I admire most in New York, but that I admire most anywhere"; that by 1961 Erwin S. Wolfson had assembled the trapezoidal site, covering an entire Manhattan block between Nassau Street and Broadway; that following his unexpected death a revised 51-story scheme, covering 40% of the block, was commissioned by developers Harry Helmsley and Lawrence A. Wien; that this approach conformed to a new zoning ordinance, effective December 1961, resulting in a dramatic freestanding trapezoidal tower adjoined by spacious plazas and wide sidewalks; that construction began in late 1964 and the Marine Midland Grace Trust Company, the principal tenant, started to occupy the structure three years later; that many early tenants were involved in financial, banking and accounting services; that during the post-World War II era, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill became one of the leading architectural firms in the nation and the building's smooth mullion-less skin was singled out for its remarkable simplicity and color; that in the plaza facing Broadway a 28-foot tall abstract sculpture by the celebrated Japanese-American artist Isamu Noguchi was installed near Liberty Street in early 1968; that this tilted reddish cubic form animates the space and helps underscore the sober elegance of the dark elevations; and while renovations brought significant changes to the plaza in 2000, 140 Broadway retains much of its original character, as well as a commanding presence in lower Manhattan, visible from Broadway, Zuccotti Park, and the reemerging World Trade Center.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark 140 Broadway, the former Marine Midland Bank Building, and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 48, Lot 1, as its Landmark Site.

Robert B. Tierney, Chair
Frederick Bland, Michael Devonshire, Michael Goldblum, Christopher Moore,
Margery Perlmutter, Elizabeth Ryan, Roberta Washington, Commissioners

140 Broadway, originally the Marine Midland Bank Building
(aka 71-89 Cedar Street, 54-74 Liberty Street, 27-39 Nassau Street), Manhattan
Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 48, Lot 1
View east from Liberty Street
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013

140 Broadway, originally the Marine Midland Bank Building
Broadway facade (Cedar Street on right)
Photo: Matthew A. Postal, 2013



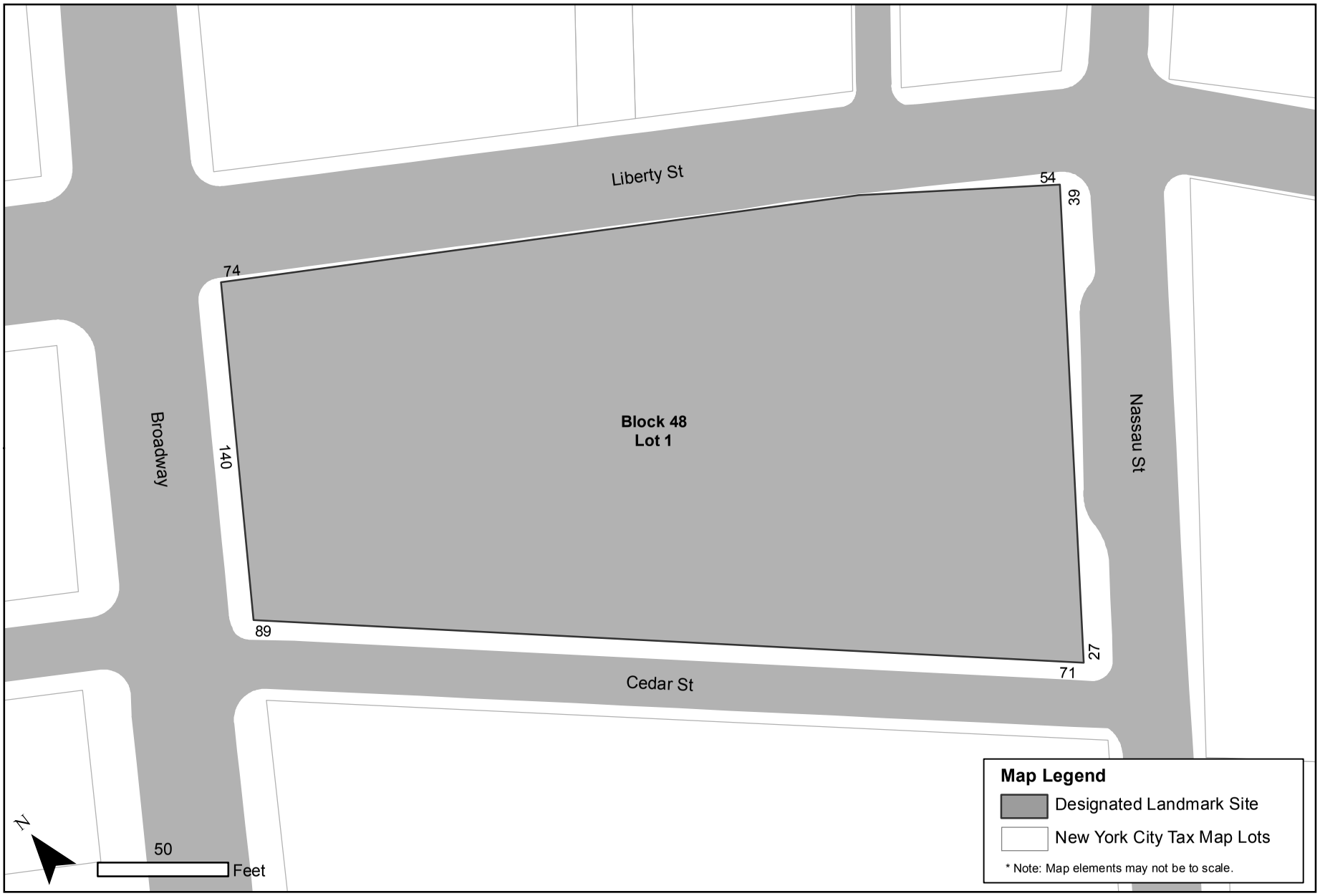
140 Broadway, originally the Marine Midland Bank Building
Broadway plaza and facade; corner of Broadway and Cedar Street facades
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013

140 Broadway, originally the Marine Midland Bank Building
Corner of Cedar Street and Nassau Street; Nassau Street facade
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013

140 Broadway, originally the Marine Midland Bank Building
Nassau Street facade, looking south towards Cedar Street
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013

140 Broadway, originally the Marine Midland Bank Building
Corner of Nassau Street and Liberty Street; corner of Liberty Street and Broadway
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013

140 Broadway, originally the Marine Midland Bank Building
Cedar Street planters; view of plaza from corner of Broadway and Liberty Street
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013



140 BROADWAY, ORIGINALLY THE MARINE MIDLAND BANK (LP-2530), 140 Broadway (aka 71-89 Cedar Street; 54-74 Liberty Street; 27-39 Nassau Street) Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 48, Lot 1

Designated: June 25, 2013

Graphic Source: New York City Department of City Planning, MapPLUTO, Release 11v1, 2011. Author: New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, JM. Date: June 25, 2013