Landmarks Preservation Commission
September 24, 2013, Designation List 466
LP-2537

HOLLAND PLAZA BUILDING (now ONE HUDSON SQUARE), 75 Varick Street (aka 73-93 Varick Street, 73-99 Watts Street, and 431-475 Canal Street), Manhattan
Built 1930; architect, Ely Jacques Kahn

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 226, Lot 1

On June 11, 2013 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Holland Plaza Building (now One Hudson Square) and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 3). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. There were two speakers in favor of designation including the owner and a representative of the Historic District Council.[1]

Summary

The Holland Plaza Building is a large, modern-classical style manufacturing structure, constructed on an irregularly-shaped lot facing the entrance to the Holland Tunnel in 1929-30. The building location was chosen to take advantage of the new transportation hub then developing at the entrance to the newly-constructed tunnel linking New York and New Jersey. One of the most significant buildings by celebrated architect Ely Jacques Kahn, the Holland Plaza displays a modern, functional architectural vocabulary influenced by the contemporary expressionist brick buildings of Germany and Holland. Kahn popularized this style in his numerous remarkable, commercial buildings built throughout New York City. Positioned on a prominent site, the Holland Plaza Building displays a dramatic style that emphasizes the structural grid without applied ornament. Its strong vertical piers are balanced by horizontal, textured spandrels and their meeting point is emphasized by projecting corner blocks and a layered plaque, creating a dynamic surface tension that is quite unusual in this district of utilitarian warehouse structures. The two main facades, on Canal and Varick Streets, feature pedestrian entrances that are emphasized by a central group of projecting, over-scaled rusticated piers while the center of the Watts Street facade has a series of vehicular loading bays, to serve the needs of the building's commercial tenants. The building's developer was Abe Adelson, one of the garment manufacturers who took part in the creation of the original Garment Center Capital Building in 1920-21 and later became one of Kahn's most consistent and supportive employers. As an immigrant and entrepreneur, Adelson did not have preconceived ideas about classical architecture and encouraged the development of Kahn's creativity in the service of good buildings that attracted many commercial clients. In the Holland Plaza Building, the combined requirements of client and architect resulted one of Kahn's great masterpieces.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Area Development[2]

New York City, as the leading port in the United States, profited greatly from the expansion of manufacturing and shipping at the beginning of the 20th century. The port, however, by the nature of its widely scattered facilities and multiple jurisdictions, was laced with obstacles to the smooth and timely transfer of goods. Nearly all of the freight rail systems approaching New York from the west, which carried around two-thirds of the port's total freight tonnage, terminated at the Hudson River in New Jersey. The only way to get cargo across the river was to transfer it to ships or barges, and the shoreline of Manhattan was taken up with innumerable ferry terminals that clogged the shoreline. Bad weather and crowding often created traffic back-ups in lower Manhattan as well as shortages, such as the coal and food crisis that occurred during the severe winter of 1917-18. At the same time the need to transfer war materials before and during World War I created a crisis in shipping in New York.

For years before this, there had been attempts to plan for the orderly expansion of the transportation system. Beginning in 1903-05, the New York City Improvement Commission, an aldermanic committee, was formed to investigate the need for a union freight terminal. The legislatures of both New Jersey and New York created bridge commissions in 1906 to study the feasibility of constructing a bridge over the Hudson River to handle the ever increasing freight traffic. Passenger railroad tunnels had been built under the Hudson and East Rivers (by private companies) as early as 1908 (by the Hudson and Manhattan Railroad Company, that later became the PATH trains). By 1913, it became clear that a vehicle tunnel should be constructed rather than a bridge, since this would not disrupt the heavy flow of shipping traffic along the river during its construction. The reasons for building a tunnel were: to shorten transit time between the two sides, unaffected by weather; to relieve congestion in the trip; to accelerate the movement of supplies into Manhattan, which were sometimes delayed; to increase the tax value of property near the terminals; to pay for itself within twenty years; to reduce the high costs of shipping; to increase facilities for other types of commerce in the port by removing so many docks for this type of transport; and to make it easier to transport troops and supplies in and out of New York if it was ever needed.[3] The site for the tunnel was to be located between "a point in the vicinity of Canal Street, on the island of Manhattan and a point in Jersey City."[4] Chief Engineer Clifford M. Holland was put in charge of the project in 1919, and construction began with a large public ceremony in October, 1920.[5] The original opening date was projected to be 1924. The project turned out to be much more complicated than predicted, but when it did open in November, 1927, the Holland Tunnel was "the longest and largest vehicular tunnel in the world, and the first with a ventilation system specifically designed to accommodate the motor-vehicular traffic."[6] It was intended to carry 15,000,000 vehicles annually, but by 2011, more than 34,000,000 vehicles passed through it every year.[7]

Canal Street was chosen as the eastern terminal area for several reasons, including the fact that there were already five busy ferry terminals located in the immediate vicinity. A wide street that could handle the greater traffic volume, Canal was seen as the gateway to lower Manhattan and also provided a direct access route to the bridges over the East River to Long Island. Additional transportation improvements put in place at the time included new stops on the Seventh and Eighth Avenue Subways and the construction of the elevated West Side Highway, which started at Canal and West Streets.[8]

This section of lower Manhattan changed dramatically during the early years of the 20th century. Although the area's earliest buildings had been residential structures, just as in so many other sections of New York, it had been rapidly converted to a commercial district in the late 19th century. By that time, it had become the site of numerous small warehouses and storage facilities, factories, and small shops, as well as scattered older residential buildings remaining from its earlier residential development.

In the years before and after the tunnel opening, the immediate area surrounding the Manhattan terminal underwent a huge transformation. "Between 1925 and 1929, millions of square feet of industrial and office space were added in this area."[9] In the process of preparing for the opening of the tunnel, many of the existing buildings were purchased by the tunnel authority to create broad roadways and plazas where the vehicles could enter or exit the tunnel. Developers saw tremendous potential in this convenient location for a greatly enhanced movement of both finished and raw goods. There were other reasons for this growth as well, including the fact that for the first time since the Colonial period, Trinity Church, which owned large tracts of land in this section, began to make some of its property available for development.[10] This became one of the few areas in Manhattan where it was possible for developers to attain large blocks for improvement. For all these reasons, a booster in 1920 maintained, "Wide streets, open squares, unrivalled vehicular and transit facilities will make this center a most modern and economical place for both retail and industrial firms."[11] Others agreed, so that by 1929, there were 14 new industrial buildings in the vicinity, each providing between 100,000 and 350,000 square feet.

Development of the Holland Plaza Building

One of the largest and most prominent of these new buildings, directly opposite the entrance to the Holland Tunnel, was the Holland Plaza Building, filling the entire block bounded by Varick, Canal and Watts streets. This block had been occupied by small rowhouses, but the developers, the York Investing Corporation (Abe N. Abelson, president) were able to obtain a long-term year lease on the property from Trinity Church who owned the land.[12]

Abe Adelson had come to the United States from Russia about 1880 and, like so many of his countrymen, he worked in the garment trade. By 1909 he and Edmond Uhry had formed a partnership to manufacture hats, occupying a factory on Broadway, near Houston Street. After World War I, a new garment center began to take shape between 7th and 8th Avenues, north of 34th Street. Adelson joined with 17 other manufacturers to develop the Garment Center Capital Building in1920-21. This cooperative building was the first large structure constructed in this area and after this experience, Adelson like many others from this group left garment manufacturing and devoted himself to the development of other buildings in Manhattan. These included: Maritime Exchange Building (1931, Sloan & Robertson); 345 Hudson St (1930-31, Benjamin H. Whinston); Film Center Bldg (1928-29, Ely Jacques Kahn); 2 Park Ave (1930, Ely Jacques Kahn); 550 7th Ave (1925, Buchman & Kahn); 29 Broadway (1931, Sloan & Robertson); 745 Fifth Ave (1929, Ely Jacques Kahn); and the Holland Plaza Building (1930, Ely Jacques Kahn).[13]

Adelson hired Kahn to work on many of his projects and Kahn appreciated the patronage of this practical businessman because Abelson was "completely free of the slightest desire to produce a formal image of classic character and he left me to my own resources."[14] Kahn preferred to work for such commercial clients rather than on residential or public buildings because he felt these clients simply wanted a building that responded to the specific requirements

of the project and had fewer preconceived ideas of what the building should look like. Kahn wrote that "The theory of the modern designer consists very simply in the answering of a problem… the result should be no other than an honest solution."[15]

Ely Jacques Kahn (1884-1972)[16]

Ely Jacques Kahn was born in New York and originally intended to become a painter. He soon realized that he could make a better living by pursuing architecture and began his training at Columbia University. He left in 1907 to study at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, where he joined the atelier of Gaston Redon (brother of painter Odilon Redon), because this teacher was known to be especially interested in decoration.[17] During this time he traveled widely, including trips to Spain and North Africa where he first became aware of Moorish architecture and the geometric forms of Middle-Eastern designs. His travels also took him to Germany and Austria where he was exposed to the work of architects and designers such as Josef Hoffman and Joseph Maria Olbrich. Kahn earned his diploma at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in 1911 also becoming the first non-French student to win the competition for the school's prestigious "Prix Labèrre."

Upon his return to the United States, Kahn worked as a draftsman in several different architectural offices, helping to design traditionally-styled houses and hotels, and was finally awarded his degree from Columbia University. In 1915, he was appointed to a teaching position at Cornell University and designed a residence for his father-in-law, Joseph Plaut, in Elmsford, NY. It was through him that Kahn was introduced to Albert Buchman and Mortimer J. Fox, partners in the long-established firm of Buchman & Fox.[18] Kahn was invited to join the firm in 1917 and by 1919 Fox retired and Kahn was given a leading roll both in the design and business end of the partnership, while the name of the firm was changed to Buchman & Kahn. By 1929 Buchman also retired and Kahn took complete control of the organization, changing its name to Ely Jacques Kahn, Architects. Still later, from 1940 until 1966, Kahn took another partner, Robert Jacobs, and the firm name was again changed to Kahn & Jacobs.

By the 1920s, with greater travel opportunities and the circulation of numerous professional periodicals, new architectural ideas were widely dispersed among designers. Many architects in Europe, especially those in Darmstadt, Germany and Holland were experimenting with new ideas that did not derive directly from historical precedent and were using bricks in a new and expressionistic manner. Kahn travelled to the Exposition des Arts Decoratifs in Paris in 1925, where he saw displays of many of these new ideas. The trip was transformative and he returned to New York believing that "the pompous sterility of 1900 with white lines of columns was over."[19] Kahn helped publicize and popularize the new type of design that had been introduced in Paris. He arranged an exhibit at the Lord & Taylor department store to show modern furniture purchased in Paris. In 1928 and again in 1934 and 1940, the Metropolitan Museum mounted an exhibit entitled "the Architect and the Industrial Arts," in which Kahn participated, along with others such as Raymond Hood, Ralph Walker, Eliel Saarinen and John Root. Kahn worked with many of these same architects on the Chicago World's Fair of 1933, for which he designed the pavilion and exhibit of Industrial Arts. His work at this time also included the design of shops and domestic interiors. During this same period Kahn was involved with several of the annual exhibits of the Architectural League in New York.

During the1930s, when there was little new building going on, Kahn traveled around the United States and the Far East conducting a survey of art and architecture education for the Carnegie Corporation. This resulted in the publication of a book describing his impressions, *Design in Art and Industry* (1935). He also helped found and then directed the architecture

department of the Beaux Arts Institute of Design in New York. Later in his career, and prompted by his partner Robert Jacobs, who was a great admirer of Le Corbusier, the firm designed housing and commercial projects, including the Municipal Asphalt Plant (1944, a designated New York City Landmark), that were generally consistent with ideas of the International Style. Kahn was a Fellow with the American Institute of Architects and served as president of the Municipal Art Society. During the more than fifty years of Kahn's career he became one of New York's leading and most prolific architects.

Kahn's Designs

Kahn's early training at the Ecole des Beaux Arts emphasized the importance of planning in architectural design, an idea he continued to stress in his later work. The use of classical ornament to embellish modern buildings, which was also promoted at the school, struck him as unreasonable, however. It was mere "copying some prototype" rather than "designing buildings in a functional manner."[20] He always considered planning to be the most important aspect of his work, stating that, "Ornament will never compensate for a poorly planned structure."[21] Partly because they functioned so well, his commercial projects were successful investments and led to more such commissions.

When Kahn first returned to New York after school, he found that most of the big, aristocratic architecture firms were designing important public and private work, but he was more attracted to the commercial developments of the period. Kahn admired the "quite competitive group of architects" who were working on commercial structures, rather than the established firms that were getting the large public commissions.[22] Kahn felt that business owners could be innovative and were more likely to be open to new design ideas. He thrived under the constraints imposed by commercial clients and concentrated on creating buildings to meet the specific needs of the program, without imposing any pre-conceived ideas.

> Public buildings unfortunately are the results of efforts to produce work that would satisfy the large mass of people…an important commercial building has the stamp of an individual, an architect, an owner with precise ideas and objectives.[23]

Kahn's early work was typical of the period and of the type for which Buchman & Fox were well known: commercial loft buildings with simplified, but classically-derived ornament. In Kahn's work of the late teens and early twenties, it is possible to see a gradual simplification and a movement away from the historicism that dominated American design for so long.[24]

After his visit to Paris for the 1925 Exhibition, Kahn was finally was able to make a break with the past and his style evolved into a distinctive language of abstract, geometric designs that emphasized the surface of the building and its massing. He was particularly impressed with the Austrian and German Pavilions that he saw at the exhibit. His buildings began to reflect the expressive brickwork of the German and Dutch Expressionists of the late teens and early 1920s in the way he manipulated brick and terra cotta to give a strong sense of texture to his facades.

At the same time, Kahn never abandoned a classical organizational framework for his buildings. In his Edward Pinaud Factory Building (1927, 214 East 21st Street), Kahn was able to successfully integrate the entire composition within a monumental classical structure, keeping the surface tension between the base, cornice and the intervening floors. Many of his most successful buildings in the following years were of this same type: a distinctive base, somewhat solid end piers that frame a more open center area, with some sort of strong articulation at the

top, in the form of an unusual cornice or decorative band. This type of modern-classical approach can be seen at the Film Center Building (1929, Ninth Avenue, a designated New York City Interior Landmark), the Indemnity Building (1928-29, 111 John Street), and here at the Holland Plaza Building. Within the overall frame, the tension between the horizontal and vertical members of the composition keeps the visual emphasis on the surface of the building.

> The interlocked massing of the building is held together by the design and detailing of the exterior wall . . . Horizontal brick bands and major and minor verticals . . . keep the surface in tension: it is as if all the strands are always there just below the surface but weave in and out of view to produce the desired emphasis.[25]

By the time he designed the small office building at 136 East 57th Street, Kahn had perfected this system to achieve a highly simplified grid that clearly met the requirements of the building, what he defined as the primary goal of the architect. Between 1924 and 1931 Kahn designed more than 30 office and commercial buildings and his designs changed the look of both the midtown garment district and the insurance district in downtown Manhattan.[26] He used his imagination in the details of the design and created a unique place each time, one that appealed to owners and leasees alike.

Design of the Holland Plaza Building

The Holland Plaza Building, constructed on an almost-triangular lot, is an excellent example of the way Kahn met the needs of the developer and the specific building project, using a combination of modern design elements on a classically-organized facade. Many of his earlier buildings were tall loft structures built in areas of office towers and the goal was to make the buildings fit in with those surroundings. The Holland Plaza building, however, is unequivocally an industrial building, with interior floors able to carry large loads and provide large expanses for manufacturing.[27] The Watts Street elevation, facing a fairly narrow road, is punctuated by numerous freight loading bays to supply those industrial tenants. Central pedestrian entrances are located on each of the other heavily-traveled streets (Canal and Varick). The building shows 15 stories on the street,[28] with only a few setbacks (none on the Canal Street facade) on the Varick and Watts Street elevations (unlike his tall office towers) and this gives a sturdy effect to the structure.

Kahn's designs of this period were "increasingly abstract and chaste"[29] without the color details that figured in his earlier work. He was most concerned with the surface of his facades, especially his choice of materials and textures. Here Kahn used a monochrome palate of tan brick and stone and the exterior facade displays a regular grid of piers and window openings. This building is a particularly fine example of Kahn's concern with "pattern-making as a way of subtly organizing the field of punched windows and composing the individual masses into a coherent whole."[30] The windows provide an organizing point for the large facades, with textural variation supplied by contrasting lintels and spandrels, slightly projecting corner blocks at each window, and raised stone panels where the vertical and horizontal lines meet. Kahn wrote in an article of the same year this building was being constructed, "Ornament becomes entirely a matter of relationship of solid and void- window openings, roof projection, band courses..."[31] This design philosophy can be readily seen at the Holland Plaza Building.

History of Holland Plaza Building

The York Investing Company headed by Abe Adelson, was a subsidiary of the Bank of the United States, and was established to develop new buildings. This bank was located on Seventh Avenue in the Garment District and many building projects in this area were financed through this bank. The executive vice president of the bank was Saul Singer, one of originators and investors in the Garment Center Capitol building.[32] In 1930, the Bank of the United States was closed due to improper use of funds, involving Saul Singer and Abe Adelson. Adelson's company went into default and assigned the lease on the Holland Plaza Building to the Lortray Corporation in 1933.[33] The Lortray Corporation also defaulted on its lease in 1940, and it was repossessed by Trinity who has held it since that time.

Among the early tenants of the building were many firms in the printing and related trades. Royal Typewriter Company leased a large space to consolidate its operations, as did the American Book Bindery, the Chesterfield Press, The MacMillan Company, the National Process Company (lithographers) and the International Printing Ink Company.[34] Additionally, Montgomery Ward & Company leased several floors of the Holland Plaza building for its New York offices, showrooms and distributing stations.[35]

Description

18-story (15 stories visible from the street with three recessed penthouse stories above), multi-colored brick, cast stone, and limestone structure that completely fills the irregular lot bounded by Canal, Varick, Watts and Hudson Streets. Irregular setbacks on Varick Street above the eleventh story and on center of Watts Street above the seventh story. Central pedestrian entrances on Canal and Varick streets with a series of shipping bays in the center of the Watts Street facade. Short facade on Hudson Street, with only fire exit. Numerous large display windows on Canal and Varick and Watts Streets. All windows replaced, some with louvered grilles. Entire building has been repointed.

Canal Street Facade

Historic: 19 bays wide, with the central seven bays defined by continuous, projecting piers through the tenth story; lower and upper stories of central piers have rusticated stone; ground story faced with limestone around double-height show windows divided horizontally by metal spandrels; main entrance in central bay topped by two-story transom faced with ornamented metal panel; transitional third story with rusticated limestone piers between bays; spandrels of central section have panels of tightly-banded brick; projecting stone blocks at each corner of windows; layered stone panels at center of intersection of horizontal spandrels and vertical piers; continuous stone sills within bays; lintels on all but central section formed of varied-colored footer bricks; top two stories have projecting piers with layered bricks forming rustication; cornice runs across entire top and is formed into squared arcade of layered bricks; piers project slightly above edge of 15th story, topped by stone caps; chamfered corner from Canal Street to Varick Street with light brick course and projecting blocks at each story.

Alterations: Entrance replaced by plain metal and glass doors and surrounds; westernmost five bays at ground story filled with brick and small windows or vents; ground-story stone painted; non-historic fan outlet; flagpoles flank main entrance; one bay on fourteenth story has louvred grille replacing window; cameras on all corners; HVAC and mechanical equipment visible on roof, flagpole rises over corner of Canal and Varick Streets.

Varick Street Facade

Historic: 15 bays wide; stone rustication on piers of third, transitional story; central seven bays have continuous projecting piers through fifth story; two central piers rusticated from base through fifth story while others rusticated third through fifth story; spandrels in central section have panels of footer-end brick; brick treatment and ornamental details same as on Canal Street facade; three bays on south end rise without interruption to 15th story; three northernmost piers rise to 12th story before setback; central section sets back above 11th story; brick ornament on top stories same as on Canal Street facade.

Alterations: Pedestrian entrance in central three bays; entrance recessed behind large square piers at lot line; entrances replaced with multiple metal-and-glass doors and surrounds; non-historic lights; non-historic signs; top of central setback has iron railing at front facade.

Watts Street Facade

Historic: 15 bays wide; six central bays have entrances to vehicle loading docks within building; two bays on east side have display windows as on Varick Street; end bays on both sides have plain spandrels above ground story while those in center are faced with brick; metal piers between bays on ground story; central bays have projecting, rusticated piers as on other facades, through fourth story; three bays on each side rise straight to 15th story with setbacks in central section between them; masonry patterns same as on other facades.

Alterations: Numerous windows replaced by fixed louvered grilles; non-historic doors on vehicle bays; third bay from east is bricked in with small vents and non-historic entrance; six bays on western side altered with various non-historic replacement pedestrian entrances, fixed louvered grilles, and plain brick infill; handicap access ramp added; HVAC equipment visible above setback; cameras mounted on corners; signs fixed to wall above vehicle entrances.

Hudson Street Facade

Historic: Four bays wide; similar motifs on upper floors; no setbacks before 15th story.

Alterations: Ground story of each bay has two clerestory windows and two grilles near ground within brick infill; plain stone piers between; doorway in second bay from north replaced; non-historic light fixtures, cameras mounted on corners.

Researched and written by
Virginia Kurshan
Research Department

NOTES

[1] The Landmarks Preservation Commission voted to designate the Holland Plaza Building on August 6, 2013. Due to an administrative oversight, the designation reports were not forwarded to the required parties within ten days. Consequently the Commission has re-voted.

[2] Much of this section was adapted from the following sources: Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), *Starrett-Lehigh Building Designation Report* (LP-1295) (New York: City of New York, 1986), report prepared by Jay Shockley; Carl Gray, *The Eighth Wonder* (Boston: B.I. Sturtevant, 1927) , 9-12; "Great Vehicular Tunnel," *New York Times*, May 30, 1926, 3; LPC, *486 Greenwich Street House Designation Report* (LP-2225) (New York: City of New York, 2007), report prepared by Jay Shockley. Information about the Holland Tunnel came from numerous news sources, as well as Robert W. Jackson, *Highway Under the Hudson, A History of the Holland Tunnel* (New York: NYU Press, 2011).

[3] Gray, 12-13.

[4] Gray, 12.

[5] "Ground Broken for Vehicular Tunnel Under Hudson," *Real Estate Record & Guide* 106 (Oct. 16, 1920), 540.

[6] Jackson, 4.

[7] Jackson, 217.

[8] "Tunnel Zone Still Growing," *New York Sun*, Jan. 12, 1929, B5.

[9] Jackson, 214.

[10] Jackson, 215.

[11] *New York Sun*, Jan. 12, 1929, B5.

[12] New York County Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 3697, page 92, December 26, 1928. The original lease was for 20 years, five months, renewable for 3 terms of 21 years. According to Jewel Stern and John A. Stuart, *Ely Jacques Kahn, Beaux-Arts Modernism in New York* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2006), p 144, Louis Adler, one of Adelson's co-developers on the Garment Center Capital building, had previously (1926) optioned this site from Trinity Church to build the United States Appraisers facility. Ultimately that project was built six blocks north on other Trinity property.

[13] Adelson's work on another large commercial structure in the Tunnel Zone, at 345 Hudson Street, was begun in 1930 as the Holland Plaza Building was well under way. "Building Project for Trinity Block," *New York Evening Post*, Feb. 3, 1930, 15.

[14] Kahn manuscript, 2:3.

[15] Francoise Bollack & Tom Killian, *Ely Jacques Kahn, New York Architect* (New York: Acanthus Press, 1995), Introduction, vii-xii.

[16] Information about Ely Jacques Kahn comes from the following sources: Kahn's unpublished autobiography at Columbia University; Bollack & Killian; "Ely Jacques Kahn, Leading Architect, Dies at 88," *New York Times*, Sept. 6, 1972; Henry H. Saylor, "Ely Jacques Kahn," *Architecture* 64 (August, 1931), 65-70; Robert A. M. Stern et al, *New York 1930*: *Architecture and Urbanism Between the Two World Wars* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987),"Three Modern Masters," 551-558.

[17] Autobiography, Chap. II, p.31.

[18] The firm had been established in 1860 and had contributed designs to the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia among many other projects. The firm had a series of name changes, depending on the current partners, just as its name changed again when Kahn became involved.

[19] Autobiography, Chap.II, p.31.

[20] Autobiography, Chap. II, p. 9.

[21] Autobiography, interview with Richard Chafee, n.p.

[22] Autobiography, Chap II, p.18.

[23] Autobiography, Chap. I, p.2.

[24] Kahn's earliest buildings for Buchman & Kahn include the Jay Thorpe Building (1921) and the Hospital for Joint Diseases (1925). By the time he worked on the Arsenal Building (1925, Seventh Avenue and 35th Street) his work was bolder and stronger that anything he had created to this point. Bollack & Killian, Introduction, vii-viii.

[25] Bollack & Killian, Introduction. xi.

[26] Stern, 552.

[27] "Rising on Varick Street," *New York Times*, March 17, 1929.

[28] There are 15 stories visible from the street with three recessed stories above that house penthouse offices and mechanical equipment.

[29] Stern, 557.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ely Jacques Kahn, "Sources of Inspiration," in *Architecture* LX (Nov. 1929), 253.

[32] Andrew Dolkart, "The Fabric of New York City's Garment District," *Buildings & Landscapes* 18 (Spring 2011), 23.

[33] "Holland Plaza Building Sold," *New York Times*, July 20, 1933. The *Times* article was incorrect since the building had a ground lease from Trinity Church and the transfer consisted of a transfer of the lease. Liber 3868, page 275, recorded July 21, 1933.

[34] "Rents in Tunnel Zone," *New York Evening Post*, Dec. 31, 1931, 15; "Printing Firm Leases," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 16, 1930; "Enlarges Varick Street Quarters," *New York Times*, Aug. 21, 1930; Book Bindery Leases at Tunnel Entrance," New York Times, Oct. 31, 1929

[35] "Big Downtown Lease Closed by Adelson," *New York Times*, Jun. 18, 1929. Additionally, the agreement that assigned the ground lease to the Lortray Company listed the tenants in the building as of June 30, 1933.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Holland Plaza Building (now One Hudson Square) has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, the Holland Plaza Building (now One Hudson Square), constructed in 1929-30, was designed by prominent architect Ely Jacques Kahn; that it is an exceptionally fine example of an industrial building in the modern-classical style designed to meet the needs of its client; that it was built for Abe N. Adelson, a developer who appreciated Kahn's forward-thinking designs and for whom Kahn designed several other projects; that the building was constructed on Canal Street, opposite the entrance to the newly-built Holland Tunnel; that the location was chosen because of the new development occurring in the area in response to the tunnel and the availability of land for large-scale projects; that this building was designed to be read as an industrial building, without extraneous added ornament, but that it nevertheless has a decorative scheme that is completely integrated with the skin of the structure; that by the time this building was designed, Kahn had moved away from classical, applied ornament, instead using variations in the façade materials and the regular grid patterns of window openings to create a strong sense of rhythm across all facades; that the central, pedestrian entrances on Canal and Varick Streets are emphasized by continuous piers marked by rusticated stone blocks; that variations of texture are created by using different bricks and varied methods of laying them along with contrasting materials; that the pattern of the grid created by vertical piers and horizontal spandrels is made stronger by projecting blocks at the corners of each window and layered plaques at the vertical and horizontal intersections; that Kahn was a master of early modern design and significantly changed the face of New York architecture in the late 1920s; that the Holland Plaza Building continues to function in this busy part of Manhattan and is a major work of one of New York's finest early modern architects.

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 the Holland Plaza Building (now One Hudson Square), 75 Varick Street (aka 73-93 Varick Street, 73-99 Watts Street, and 431-475 Canal Street), Manhattan, and designates as its Landmark Site Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 226, Lot 1.

Robert Tierney, Chair
Diana Chapin, Michael Devonshire, Joan Gerner, Michael Goldblum,
Christopher Moore, Elizabeth Ryan, Roberta Washington, Commissioners

HOLLAND PLAZA BUILDING (now ONE HUDSON SQUARE)
75 Varick Street (aka 73-93 Varick Street, 73-99 Watts Street
and 431-475 Canal Street) Manhattan
Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 226, Lot 1
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013

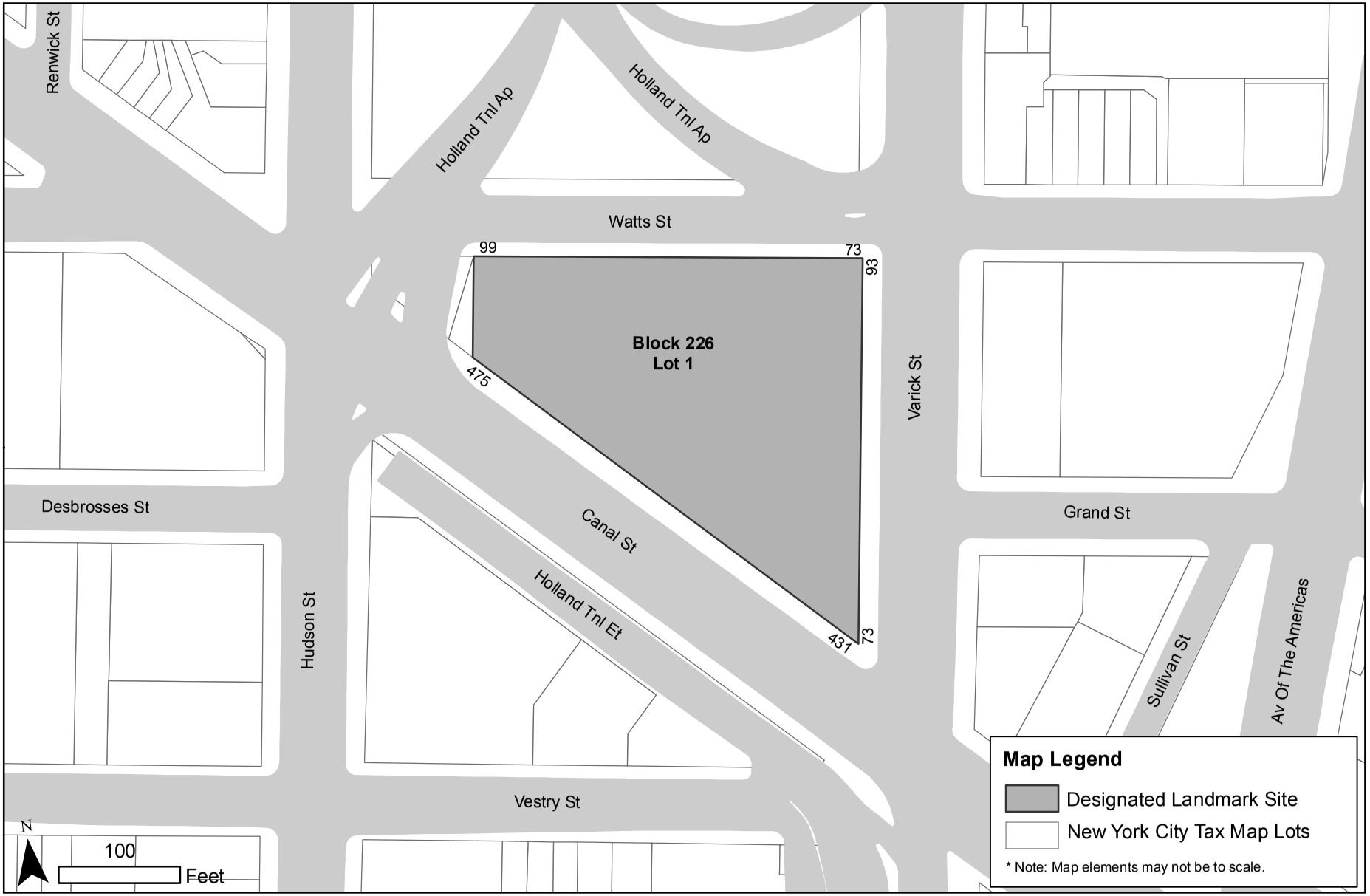
Holland Plaza Building
Canal Street Facade
Photo: Virginia Kurshan, 2013

Holland Plaza Building
Top: Varick Street Facade
Bottom: Watts Street Facade
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013

Holland Plaza Building
Top: Varick Street Entrance
Bottom: Canal Street Entrance
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013

Holland Plaza Building
Top: Hudson Street Facade
Bottom: Watts Street,
lower stories
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013

Holland Plaza Building
Facade details
Photos: Virginia Kurshan, 2013



HOLLAND PLAZA BUILDING (now ONE HUDSON SQUARE) (LP-2537)
75 Varick Street (aka 73-93 Varick Street; 73-99 Watts Street; 431-475 Canal Street)
Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 226, Lot 1

Designated: September 24, 2013

Graphic Source: New York City Department of City Planning, MapPLUTO, Edition 09v1, 2009. Author: New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, JM. Date: September 24, 2013