

Alida Camp
Chair

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Community Board 8 Manhattan

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February 20, 2020

Honorable Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
Municipal Building
One Center Street, 9th Floor
New York, New York 10007

RE: 405 East 59th Street — INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK. *Michael Leocata, Greenberg Farrow, architect.* Application is for interior and facade renovation including sidewalk alteration, freight and ADA elevator installation, HVAC systems, interior lighting.

Dear Chair Carroll,

At the Full Board meeting of Community Board 8 Manhattan held on February 19, 2020, the board **APPROVED** the following resolution by a vote of 34 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention, and 0 not voting for cause.

WHEREAS the Queensboro Bridge is a Beaux Arts-style bridge designed by preeminent bridge engineer Gustav Lindenthal who commissioned architect Henry Hornbostel to add artistic details to the bridge;

WHEREAS the space under the bridge, enclosed in 1915, is not an interior landmark;

WHEREAS however, the vault area of the space is the most important aspect of the interior which is topped by a magnificent Guastavino tile ceiling which presents in the unique basket-weave style the firm was famous for;

WHEREAS since the space is not an interior landmark, the way the Landmarks Preservation Commission deals with it is a little different from the way the commission deals with other interior spaces—the role of the commission is to maintain a sense of the “cathedral-like” feel of the space;

WHEREAS the space has been divided into two parts — one part is now used as an event space and the applicant is proposing a Trader Joe’s for the second part. [The space was formerly occupied by Food Emporium and has now been vacant for 5 years.];

WHEREAS the applicant proposes a minimal amount of intervention on the 59th Street side of the space;

WHEREAS at the 60th Street side of the space the intervention will be greater: the applicant plans to change the signage and to create new by-fold doors, leading to new freight elevators;

WHEREAS at the 60th Street side of the space, to access the freight elevators from the street and to introduce a viable loading situation, the applicant proposes a drop curb at the street; the sidewalk will be manipulated so that the drop curb can be constructed;

WHEREAS the applicant proposes that the by-fold doors leading to the new freight elevators be moved 2 bays to the west; the vertical and horizontal muttons will match exactly the rest of the glazing;

WHEREAS the applicant also proposes to remove the existing interior mezzanine and replace with a back-of-the-house unit so that the verticality of the interior with its vaults is maintained. [The concept is to reorient the interior space and re-introduce large low-lying vistas that will emphasize the verticality of the space.];

WHEREAS the applicant proposes to introduce high-efficiency lighting that is minimally invasive and that will provide direct and indirect lighting for the ceiling tiles in a way that exposes the Guastavino arches/vaults;

WHEREAS the applicant proposes that all of the mechanicals will be integrated into the fixture plan and will be minimally visible and won't require spandrel ducts;

WHEREAS every condition the applicant proposes will be entirely reversible;

WHEREAS the applicant's proposals for the interior space are deferential and respectful of the space; the design highlights the beauty of the interior space, respects the Guastavino tiles, provides for thoughtful signage on the exterior and provides for thoughtful mechanical distribution;

WHEREAS the work the applicant is proposing is contextual and appropriate for the celebrated interior space of the INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK, the Queensboro Bridge;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this application is **APPROVED** as presented.

Please advise us of any action taken on this matter.

Sincerely,



Alida Camp
Chair



David Helpen and Jane Parshall
Co-Chairs, Landmarks Committee

cc: Honorable Bill de Blasio, Mayor of the City of New York
Honorable Carolyn Maloney, 12th Congressional District Representative
Honorable Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Honorable Liz Krueger, NYS Senator, 28th Senatorial District
Honorable Dan Quart, NYS Assembly Member, 73rd Assembly District
Honorable Rebecca Seawright, NYS Assembly Member 76th Assembly District
Honorable Ben Kallos, NYC Council Member, 5th Council District
Honorable Keith Powers, NYC Council Member, 4th Council District