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**The City of New York**  
**Community Board 8 Manhattan**  
**Landmarks Committee Meeting**  
**Monday, February 8, 2021 – 6:30 PM**  
**This meeting was conducted via Zoom**

**PLEASE NOTE:** When evaluating Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, the Landmarks Committee of Community Board 8 Manhattan ONLY considers the appropriateness of the proposal to the architecture of the building and, in the case of a building within a Historic District, the appropriateness of the proposal to the character of that Historic District. All testimony should be related to such appropriateness. The Committee recommends a Resolution to the full Community Board, which votes on a Resolution to be sent to the Landmarks Preservation Commission. These Resolutions are advisory; the decision of the Landmarks Preservation Commission is binding.

Applicants and members of the public who are interested in the issues addressed are invited, but not required, to attend the **Full Board meeting on Wednesday, February 17, 2021 via Zoom**. They may testify for up to three minutes in the Public Session, which they must sign up for no later than 6:45PM. Members of the Board will discuss the items in executive session; if a member of the public wishes a comment made or a question asked at this time, he or she must ask a Board Member to do it.

**Minutes:**

**CB8 Members Present:** Elizabeth Ashby, P.Gayle Baron, Michele Birnbaum, Alida Camp, Sarah Chu, Anthony Cohn, Christina Davis\*, Harrison Pierson-Panes, Kimberly Selway\*, Marco Tamayo

\*Public Members

**Resolutions for Approval:**

**Item 1 — 45 East 70<sup>th</sup> Street Disapproval (Unanimous)**

**Item 2 — 900 Madison Avenue Approval (Unanimous)**

1. **45 East 70<sup>th</sup> Street (Upper East Side Historic District)** – *Todd Ernst, Architect* - A neo-French classical five story residence designed by Aymar Embury for Arthur S. Lehman and constructed between 1928-1929. Application is for installation of new marble clad steel Juliette balconies.

**WHEREAS** 45 East 70th Street is a neo-French classical five story residence designed by Aymar Embury II for Arthur S. Lehman and constructed between 1928-1929;

**WHEREAS** Aymar Embury was known for his country houses and country clubs of the early to mid-twentieth century; he is best known for commissions from the City of New York from the 1930s through to the 1950s and frequently worked with Robert Moses when Moses was New York City Parks Commissioner;

**WHEREAS** 45 East 70th Street was built for the investment banker Arthur Lehman;

**WHEREAS** 45 East 70th Street is 43' wide and stone-faced, sparsely decorated with delicate urns and similar neo-classical elements; the center opening at the second floor is ornamented with exquisite, understated carved draping;

**WHEREAS** the applicant proposes work at the rear yard area of the house; the rear yard is approximately 40' wide x 30' deep;

**WHEREAS** at the rear the applicant proposes 1) removing the two existing metal balconies and decorative guardrail, 2) removing the existing open-riser steel rear yard access stair at the garden level, 3) installing a new marble rear yard access stair, 4) installing new balconies with marble balustrades, and 5) installing a 2' lattice fence above the east and west walls;

**WHEREAS** additional rear yard renovations, including new pavers, perimeter wall and stone fountain feature, have been approved at the staff level of the Landmarks Preservation Commission;

**WHEREAS** none of the work at the rear yard is visible from the public way;

**WHEREAS** the rear yard is now framed at the property line by a decorative lattice fence; the lattice is being replaced by a 6' brick wall; the proposed north-facing wall at the property line will have an ornate fountain in the center which has been already approved at the staff level of the LPC (see above);

**WHEREAS** the brick wall will be made of a taupe-colored brick with red added, so that the new brick will appear to have an antique hand-made finish;

**WHEREAS** the applicant proposes adding a decorative 2' lattice fence to *the east and west sides of the proposed brick wall*; the proposed overall height of the brick wall plus the added decorative lattice fence at the east and west sides of the rear yard is 8'[permitted by Building Code] [The proposed north-facing wall at 6' will be 2' lower than the proposed *east and west flanking walls* at 8'.];

**WHEREAS** the lattice will present as compatible with the brick and will have an antique, weathered look;

**WHEREAS** the applicant feels that France limestone is sympathetic and visually appropriate to the design style and aesthetics of the existing house;

**WHEREAS** the applicant was not able to confirm that the existing Juliette metal balconies were original to the house;

**WHEREAS** the existing wrought iron Juliette balconies present as elliptical; the proposed new stone balconies present as semicircular;

**WHEREAS** the existing metal elliptical balconies are close in character to the elliptical metal balconies hugging the front elevation of one of the most significant houses within the Upper East Side Historic District, with its restrained detailing and wonderfully flat front elevation;

**WHEREAS** the proposed French marble for the balconies and the access stair is too heavy and presents as too much masonry; the proposed masonry is incompatible with the grace and simplicity of the rear elevation;

**WHEREAS** Aymar Embury was a serious architect; the house, as he designed it, is a flat building, not a sculptural building;

**WHEREAS** the applicant's proposal to replace the metal work at the rear with masonry presents as too massive and lacks the grace and delicacy of the current composition of the wrought iron Juliet balconies and staircase and stair railing;

**WHEREAS** the Landmarks Committee of Community Board 8 Manhattan regrets that the proposed brick wall, an important element in the overall composition of the rear yard and approved at the staff level at the LPC, was not part of this application;

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

**VOTE:** 10 in favor (Ashby, Baron, Birnbaum, Camp, Chu, Cohn, Helpen, Parshall, Pierson-Panes, Tamayo)

**TWO PUBLIC MEMBERS IN FAVOR:** Christina Davis, Kimberly Selway

2. **900 Madison Avenue (Upper East Side Historic District)** –Cynthia Eng, Architect – A neo-Grec style thirteen story apartment building with some classical detail, designed by Sylvan Bien and erected in 1939. Application is for ground floor partial limestone cladding at corner retail tenant with new signage plaques and recessed halo lit signage at corner.

**WHEREAS** 900 Madison Avenue is a red brick apartment house with punched in windows and little embellishment;

**WHEREAS** the lower level has display windows on both Madison Avenue and East 73<sup>rd</sup> Street;

**WHEREAS** the exterior material on the first floor is stucco;

**WHEREAS** the applicant proposed to cover the stucco with limestone with projections of different dimensions at base, upper portion of first floor façade, and piers;

**WHEREAS** the applicant proposed to cover the existing vertical mullions and interior piers at about the same widths as the interior piers;

**WHEREAS** the limestone at the upper façade and about halfway down the corner will step out beyond the typical projection of the limestone cladding to create what appears to be an over-sized corner of a three-dimensional frame, a play on "Frame," the name of the store;

**WHEREAS** the typical limestone will have a honed finish and the corner frame will have a hammered finish;

**WHEREAS** each face of the corner frame will have a sign incised into the limestone;

**WHEREAS** the incised signs will have sufficient depth to enable a halo lighting effect to be created using warm white LED lamps;

**WHEREAS** the stainless-steel frame of the two glass entry doors will be refurbished;  
**WHEREAS** there is a primary door and a narrower secondary door;  
**WHEREAS** the doors are centered between the piers;  
**WHEREAS** the larger door will be the operating door and the narrower door will typically remain in the closed position -- the active leaf and the inactive leaf;  
**WHEREAS** the doors will receive a new stainless-steel plate with operating hardware for the larger door;  
**WHEREAS** there will be a rectangular stainless-steel plaque on each of the piers framing the display windows either side of the entry doors;  
**WHEREAS** the stainless-steel plate and stainless-steel plaques will have a brushed finish;  
**WHEREAS** the plates for the Siamese connections will be changed from bronze to stainless steel;  
**WHEREAS** security cameras will be relocated and made less visible by having a color similar to the limestone;  
**WHEREAS** the stucco entrance for the apartment house will be retained;  
**WHEREAS** there are precedents on Madison Avenue for contemporary storefronts to be juxtaposed against older landmark buildings;  
**WHEREAS** limestone is a traditional material for the base of apartment houses, often in combination with red brick, as in the case of 900 Madison Avenue;  
**WHEREAS** the limestone is a more beautiful and durable material than the stucco that is being covered;  
**WHEREAS** the penetrations anchoring the limestone into the façade of the building are of minimal depth and repairable should the storefront design be changed in the future;  
**WHEREAS** the proposed limestone storefront marries traditional materials with a contemporary flair appropriate to the retail use;  
**WHEREAS** the proposed storefront is contextual within the historic district;

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

**VOTE:**10 in Favor: (Ashby, Baron, Birnbaum, Camp, Chu, Cohn, Helpern, Parshall, Pierson-Panes, Tamayo)

**TWO PUBLIC MEMBERS IN FAVOR:** (Christina Davis, Kimberly Selway)

3. Old Business
4. New Business

**David Helpern and Jane Parshall, Co-Chairs**