

400 MADISON AVENUE BUILDING, 400 Madison Avenue (aka 394-408 Madison Avenue, 23-25 East 47th Street, 24-26 East 48th Street), Manhattan

Built: 1928-29; architect H. Craig Severance, Inc.; builder George A. Fuller Company

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1283, Lot 17

On September 13, 2016, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the 400 Madison Avenue Building and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 8). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Four people spoke in support of the proposed designation, including representatives of Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, the Historic Districts Council, the Municipal Art Society, and the New York Landmarks Conservancy. State Senator Brad Hoylman submitted written testimony in support of the proposed designation. The Real Estate Board of New York submitted written testimony in opposition to the proposed designation. The Commission received three other written submissions, all in support of the proposed designation.

Summary

With its dramatic massing, intricate neo-Gothic detailing, and bright, expansive terra-cotta facade commanding a full Madison Avenue blockfront, the 400 Madison Avenue Building is one of East Midtown's most striking prewar skyscrapers. Designed by H. Craig Severance and constructed by the George A. Fuller Company—one of the nation's most experienced skyscraper builders—it was completed in 1929 as the area surrounding Grand Central Terminal was experiencing a boom in skyscraper construction and transformation into one of the country's leading financial centers.

Sited on a narrow lot less than 45 feet deep, 400 Madison Avenue was described as “an unusual structure both in appearance and as a real estate renting proposition” and as a “distinct ornament” to Madison Avenue. Its unconventional footprint made for a remarkably efficient plan consisting of a small rear service core wrapped by a brightly illuminated “veneer” of offices, and it was notable in that essentially all of its offices had street frontages and commanded first-class rents. Although smaller than most East Midtown skyscrapers of its time, the building's well-lit offices and prestigious Madison Avenue address made it attractive to “business or professional men desiring small but impressive offices.”

Like other “setback skyscrapers” of its era, the building's massing, which includes a sheer 14-story rise from street level with multiple setbacks above, was guided by provisions in the city's 1916 zoning resolution that required tall buildings to taper as they rose. Because Severance believed that skyscrapers should brighten their surroundings, he sheathed 400 Madison in cream-colored terra cotta that reflected sunlight to neighboring buildings and the streets below. Its abstracted neo-Gothic ornament, which includes tracery, grouped chimneys, and crockets on its lavishly decorated crown, reflects the emerging influence of the Art Deco style at the end of the 1920s. Following its completion, Severance and its chief financier, George L. Ohrstrom, collaborated on the Manhattan Company Building at 40 Wall Street, which briefly reigned as the world's tallest building. Continuing in use as an office building, 400 Madison Avenue remains a well-preserved, visually engaging representative of East Midtown's 1920s skyscraper boom.



BUILDING DESCRIPTION

The 400 Madison Avenue Building is a 21-story-plus-attic neo-Gothic style skyscraper designed by the architectural firm of H. Craig Severance, Inc. and built in 1928 and 1929. Extending for 188 feet along the entire west side of Madison Avenue between East 47th and 48th Streets, it is a narrow structure, less than 45 feet deep. The ground stories of the three street facades are faced in pink granite, while the upper stories, from the second story to the building's crown, are faced in cream-colored terra cotta. The building rises straight upward from its base for its first 14 stories before stepping back at the 15th, 17th, and 20th floors and attic. Storefronts and the building's main entrance occupy the ground story of the Madison Avenue facade. The second through fifth stories of this facade contain large window openings approximately triple the width of the openings of the floors above.

Primary East (Main) Facade

Historic: Pink-granite facing at ground story, with cream-colored terra-cotta facing at second through attic stories; eight ground-story storefront openings, with two additional window openings; pink granite bulkhead at (reading south to north/left to right) second storefront; metal frame composed of slender pilasters with projecting bases, quatrefoils, chevron patterning, foliated colonnettes, and finials, two-part sign band divided by horizontal molding, and foliated crown molding at second, fourth, and sixth storefront openings; heavy bullnose molding crowning first story; nine sets of tripartite windows at each of second through fourth stories, square-headed at second and third stories and segmental-arch-headed at fourth story, with elaborate frames featuring chamfered mullions with buttressed bases and crockets, and spandrel panels containing trefoils and quatrefoils; narrower second-through-fourth-story windows in the third and ninth bays, square-headed at second and third stories and segmental-arch-headed at fourth story with paneled spandrels, flanked by three-story engaged columns with foliated capitals; nine wide, tripartite windows and two narrower windows, all square-headed, connected by heavy continuous sill, at fifth story; elaborate abstracted fifth-story Gothic ornament including, flanking the seven central windows, empty tabernacles with abstracted crockets, joined by a horizontal band, above the fifth-story windows, composed of abstracted pointed arches, buttresses, shields, tracery, and other Gothic motifs; thick paneled bands above outer four fifth-story windows; plain piers between sixth-through-14th-story window openings; recessed panels below seventh-through-14th-story window openings (paired below 14th story), except below outer eight 13th-story bays, which have projecting panels with Gothic tracery; panels with Gothic tracery and quatrefoils above 12 central 14th-story window openings; four panels, two with Gothic tracery and two without, over each window opening in eight outermost 14th-story bays; two-story pavilions at fourth and 15th bays of 15th and 16th stories featuring paneled spandrels between 15th- and 16th-story windows, stylized lancet arches, chevrons, trefoils, and quatrefoil panels over 16th-story windows, similar ornament on north and south faces of pavilions, and empty tabernacles at corners; stylized lancet arches, chevrons, trefoils, and panels filled with Gothic tracery over ten central 16th-story window openings; paired diamond panels over outer six 16th-story window openings; recessed panels below 18th, 19th-, and 20th-story window openings; stylized Gothic tracery above outer six 19th-story bays; stylized crockets at corners of this story; projecting lancet hoods with incised ogee moldings over eight central 20th-story window openings; abstracted Gothic gables crowned by simplified crockets over two outermost 20th-story window openings; paired 21st-story windows crowned by horizontal bands

containing disks and by Gothic tracery; crown with buttresses, ogee moldings above blind openings, grouped chimney-like corner piers, crockets at roof corners, and Gothic tracery at attic and roof.

Alterations: Monumental main-entrance portal removed prior to 1983; portions of terra-cotta facade above main entrance replaced with cast stone; replacement main-entrance doors; stainless steel panels and glass-and-metal canopy over main entrance installed circa 2000; doorbell, card reader, and metal signs (“400 MADISON”) at main entrance; replacement infill within (reading south to north/left to right) first, third, fifth, seventh, and eighth storefronts and ground-story window openings; storefront frames within these openings replaced or possibly partially concealed behind metal paneling; foliated crown moldings removed from second and sixth storefront frames; lower half of historic sign band removed at sixth storefront; grille between sixth storefront and adjacent window; grille and Citibank sign north of eighth storefront; ground-story standpipes; four flagpoles at third story; one-over-one windows above fifth floor replaced with single-pane sashes.

Primary South (East 47th Street) Facade

Historic: Pink-granite facing at ground story; former entrance portal surrounding large opening flanked by engaged colonnettes and crowned by large segmental arch; portal composed of engaged columns with polygonal bases and shafts, supporting heavy balustrade with polygonal newels, quatrefoil reliefs, and repeating trefoil arches; shop window opening at eastern end of ground story; heavy bullnose molding crowning most of ground story; two sets of tripartite windows at each of second through fourth stories, square-headed at second and third stories and segmental-arch-headed at fourth story, with decorative mullions similar to those on main facade; narrower second-through-fourth-story windows in central bay, square-headed at second and third stories and segmental-arch-headed at fourth story; spandrel panels below third-story windows containing quatrefoils set within lobed fields; repeating trefoil ornament within spandrel panels below fourth-story windows; two wide, tripartite windows and one narrower window, all square-headed, with heavy molded sills, at fifth story; thick paneled bands above fifth-story windows; rest of facade similar to main facade.

Alterations: Entrance converted to display window after 1940; replacement infill within shop-window opening; standpipe and louver at ground story; one-over-one sashes above fifth story replaced with single-pane sashes; pipe railing at 16th-story roof; stainless steel rooftop flue visible over this facade.

Primary North (East 48th Street) Facade

Historic: Pink-granite facing at ground story; three ground-story window openings; ground-story freight entrance opening with granite pier; heavy bullnose molding crowning ground story; two sets of tripartite windows at each of second through fourth stories, square-headed at second and third stories and segmental-arch-headed at fourth story, with decorative mullions similar to those of main facade; narrower second-through-fourth-story windows in central bay, square-headed at second and third stories and segmental-arch-headed at fourth story; spandrel panels below third-story windows containing quatrefoils set within lobed fields; repeating trefoil ornament within spandrel panels below fourth-story windows; two wide, tripartite windows and one narrower window, all square-headed, with heavy molded sills, at fifth story; thick paneled bands above fifth-story windows; rest of facade similar to main facade.

Alterations: Non-historic ground-story doors; water meter reader on pier between paired doors; conduit above ground-story door opening; louver, sign, and standpipe connection at ground story; replacement ground-story window infill, including automated teller machine; one-over-one sashes above fifth story replaced with single-pane sashes.

Secondary West Facade

Historic: Brick facing above fifth story; square-headed window openings at south end of facade, most containing two-over-two double-hung windows.

Alterations: Second through fourth stories pared; some replacement sashes; stainless steel flue at upper stories.

SITE HISTORY

Evolution of East Midtown¹

In 1831, the recently established New York & Harlem Railroad signed an agreement with New York State permitting the operation of steam locomotives on Fourth (now Park) Avenue, from 23rd Street to the Harlem River. Five years later, in 1836, several important street openings occurred in East Midtown. These included 42nd Street, Lexington Avenue and Madison Avenue. Initially, trains ran at grade, sharing Fourth Avenue with pedestrians and vehicles. In 1856, locomotives were banned below 42nd Street—then the site of a maintenance barn and fuel lot. Though rail passengers continued south by horse car, this decision set the stage for East Midtown to become an important transit hub.

Cornelius Vanderbilt acquired control of the New York & Harlem, Hudson River, and New York Central Railroads in 1863-67. Under his direction, a single terminal for the three railroads was planned and built, known as Grand Central Depot (1868-71, demolished). It was a large structure, consisting of an L-shaped head-house inspired by the Louvre in Paris, with entrances on 42nd Street and Vanderbilt Avenue, as well as a 652-foot-long train shed. The area immediately north, mainly between 45th and 49th Streets, served as a train yard. Traversed by pedestrian and vehicular bridges, this busy facility occupied an irregularly shaped site that extended from Lexington to Madison Avenue.

The earliest surviving buildings in Midtown are residences in Murray Hill, directly south of 42nd Street. An 1847 covenant stipulated that all houses be built with brick and stone and many handsome ones survive, particularly east of Park Avenue. Following the Civil War, residential development continued up Fifth Avenue, transforming the area between St. Patrick's Cathedral (James Renwick, Jr., 1853-88) and Central Park (Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, begun 1857).² Though most of the large mansions—many owned by members of the Vanderbilt family—have been lost, other impressive residences survive on the side streets, between Park and Fifth Avenues. New York City Landmarks in the East 50s include: The Villard Houses (McKim, Mead & White, 1883-85), William & Ada Moore House (McKim, Mead & White, 1898-1900), Morton & Nellie Plant House (Robert W. Gibson, 1903-05), and the Fisk-Harkness House (Griffith Thomas, 1871/Raleigh C. Gildersleeve, 1906).

In 1902, 15 railroad passengers were killed in a rear-end collision in the Park Avenue Tunnel, near 56th Street. In response to this tragic accident, William J. Wilgus, chief engineer of the New York Central Railroad, proposed that not only should steam locomotives be eliminated from Manhattan but that the terminal be expanded and completely rebuilt. The city agreed and

Grand Central Terminal (Reed & Stem and Warren & Wetmore) was completed in February 1913.³

Wilgus envisioned the new terminal as part of a city-within-the-city, knitted together by more than two dozen buildings constructed above the newly submerged rail tracks. Faced with tan brick and limestone, these handsome neo-classical style buildings formed an understated backdrop to the monumental Beaux-Arts style terminal. A key example is the New York Central Building. Erected by the railroad in 1927-29, it stands directly above the tracks and incorporates monumental archways that direct automobile traffic towards the Park Avenue Viaduct (1917-19).⁴

The new terminal and subway attracted considerable commercial development to East Midtown, especially near 42nd Street, the original route of the IRT subway. Most of these buildings date to the 1910s and 1920s. In contrast to the neo-classical, City Beautiful, aesthetics that shaped Terminal City, these distinctive skyscrapers frequently incorporate unusual terracotta ornamentation inspired by medieval (and later, Art Deco) sources. Memorable examples include: the Bowery Savings Bank Building (York & Sawyer, 1921-23, 1931-33) and the Chanin Building (Irwin S. Chanin with Sloan & Robertson, 1927-29).⁵

In 1918, subway service was extended up Lexington Avenue, north of 42nd Street. Though Terminal City had been planned with several hotels, such as the Biltmore and Commodore (both have been re-clad), additional rooms were needed. A substantial number of new hotels would rise on Lexington Avenue between 47th and 50th Streets, including the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel (Schultze & Weaver, 1929-32) and the Summit Hotel (Morris Lapidus, Harle & Liebman, 1959-61).⁶

Following the end of the Second World War, the New York Central Railroad struggled with debt and entered a significant period of decline. In response, it began to terminate lot leases and sell off real estate properties. The impact of the situation was most powerfully felt on Park Avenue. Apartment buildings and hotels were quickly replaced by an influx of glassy office towers, with such pioneering mid-20th-century Modern works as Lever House (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1949-52) and the Seagram Building (Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, with Philip Johnson and Kahn & Jacobs, 1954-56).⁷ The success of these and other projects helped make Park Avenue (and East Midtown) one of Manhattan's most prestigious corporate addresses.

Planning and Construction of the 400 Madison Avenue Building⁸

By the 1920s, the area surrounding Grand Central Terminal was developing into one of the city's and country's major banking and financial centers, a position it continues to hold. As developer Irwin Chanin explained in 1929—the year in which he completed his namesake skyscraper at the corner of 42nd Street and Lexington Avenue—the neighborhood had many advantages over the older Wall Street district from which it was drawing tenants. Over time, Lower Manhattan had become “widely separated from railway terminals, hotels, clubs, theaters, and such important centers as the garment, fur, furniture, millinery, and jewelry industries,” making the area surrounding Grand Central much more appealing to “our typical big businessman [who] lives in the Park Avenue district, in Westchester County, or on Long Island.” New luxury apartment houses and apartment-hotels in nearby Tudor City, on Sutton Place, and along Lexington and Park Avenues in the East 50s added to its appeal as an office location, according to Chanin.⁹

The transformation of the Grand Central area into a leading financial center was accompanied by an unparalleled boom in skyscraper construction there. Nearly three million

square feet of office space was added in 1927 with the completion of several new skyscrapers including the Graybar (Sloan & Robertson, 1925-27) and Fred F. French (H. Douglas Ives and Sloan & Robertson, 1926-27) Buildings.¹⁰ More than a dozen towering office structures were completed in 1929 and 1930, including the New York Central and Chanin Buildings, the 53-story Lincoln Building (J. E. R. Carpenter and Associates, 1928-30), and the 77-story Chrysler Building (William Van Alen, 1928-30), adding nearly six million square feet of space within a few blocks of Grand Central in just two years.¹¹ In this heated construction climate, a new investment syndicate, the 400 Madison Avenue Corporation, was founded in 1928 to construct a new office building extending along the west side of Madison Avenue from East 47th to 48th Street. Its president—and the building’s main financier—was 34-year-old George Lewis Ohrstrom, a Michigan native who had arrived in New York in 1919, working for the securities firm of P. W. Chapman & Company before starting his own company specializing in real estate development and the financing of public utilities.

In September of 1928, the 400 Madison Avenue Corporation announced that it was acquiring the ground leases for two properties comprising the western blockfront of Madison Avenue between East 47th and 48th Streets. Each parcel was identical in size, almost 45 feet in depth and running for a little more than 100 feet along Madison Avenue. Each also held a six-story apartment house—the Ritz Chambers and the Carlton Chambers, which would be demolished—with leases running for 90 and 91 years, expiring in 2018 and 2019. On October 24, 1928, the architectural firm of H. Craig Severance Inc. filed plans for the \$1.25 million building, which would have 20 stories of stores and offices and a 21st-story penthouse apartment, and would be constructed by the George A. Fuller Company. Ohrstrom’s firm issued \$1.9 million in bonds to finance the building.

As construction proceeded into 1929, 400 Madison Avenue garnered considerable press coverage. At almost 200 feet long and less than 45 feet deep, its expansive and remarkably narrow profile led the *New York Herald Tribune* to describe it as “an unusual structure both in appearance and as a real estate renting proposition.”¹² As one of the smallest new skyscrapers in East Midtown—at 125,000 square feet, it was less than one-sixth the size of the Chrysler Building—its developers employed an unconventional marketing approach, targeting the building at “business or professional men desiring small but impressive offices,” including Wall Street firms looking to open branch offices near Grand Central Terminal.¹³ This need was essentially unmet by East Midtown’s enormous new skyscrapers, according to E. E. McNally, the building’s renting manager, meaning that “The person seeking a small office of the highest grade ... has been forced to take an office in a second rate building, or else in one of the great buildings occupied by firms utilizing large space, where his small unit was practically submerged and gave an appearance of inferiority not in keeping with the tenant’s standing.”¹⁴

The 400 Madison Avenue Building was notable in that essentially all of its rentable space was considered first-class. This was made possible by its unusually long and narrow footprint, which enabled natural sunlight to illuminate all of its offices. As architectural historian Carol Willis has observed, “until the introduction of fluorescent bulbs in the 1940s, sunlight was the principal source of illumination for interiors.... The quality and rentability of office space thus depended on large windows and high ceilings that allowed daylight to penetrate as deeply as possible into the interior.”¹⁵ Among real estate experts, the agreed-upon maximum distance from the nearest window for “first-quality space” was 20 to 28 feet, with rents dropping rapidly at distances beyond that. Following the maxim of architect and skyscraper theorist Harvey Wiley Corbett that “It is better business to construct less building, and have shallow offices well

lighted, than to have more building with deep spaces poorly lighted,” the planners of 400 Madison Avenue conceived the building as a thin “vener of rentable space” facing Madison Avenue and the side streets, wrapping around a central rear service core containing elevators, stairways, lavatories, and other necessary features.¹⁶ Ohrstrom promoted the building’s “exceptional light penetration,” and the *New York Times* noted that “No portion of the usable floor area will be more than 27 feet from a window.... All space in the building will have street frontage. There will be no rear courts, as all floors will be lighted by street windows.”¹⁷ Not only did this bring higher rents, but it also answered the demands of many employers, who believed that increased access to light and air made their workers more efficient. The building’s high percentage of first-class office space, as well as its near-total lot coverage for its first 14 stories, made 400 Madison Avenue an exceptionally efficient generator of rental income relative to its lot size.

In August of 1929, with 400 Madison Avenue two months away from completion, advertisements began appearing in the *New York Times* and *Herald Tribune*. Each ad highlighted an office in a different area of the building, presenting these spaces as ideal for, variously, an engineer, lawyer, architect, or financial firm, and emphasizing the building’s excellent light, high ceilings, central location, fine appointments, and distinguished address. To the engineer, 400 Madison offered proximity to “the main offices of thousands of foremost business and industrial organizations in America,” as well as “an abundance of north light for men at drafting boards,” all at “an address of Madison Avenue prestige and advertising value”; to the architect, “a flood of natural light” within a space “with not a single column to obstruct interior arrangements.”¹⁸ The 400 Madison Avenue building was officially completed in October 1, 1929, and three weeks later, an advertisement noted that several financial houses had established branch offices in “this great white citadel of business and finance ... notable for ... its numerous windows which give the sunlit effect of a glass house, its superior appointments and service, [and] the distinguished character of its tenants.”¹⁹ Advertisements promoted 400 Madison Avenue as “Built for the ‘400’ of Business and Finance,” playing on the building’s street address and invoking that term’s associations with Manhattan’s social elite.

Most of the building’s initial tenants were lawyers, real estate, advertising, and insurance firms, and brokerage houses and other financial firms. Other early tenants included the Austrian tourist office, the Consulate General of Bulgaria, the New York League of Women Voters, and the Regional Plan Association, which remained at 400 Madison Avenue into the 1940s. Ohrstrom would go on to arrange the financing for another, more prominent tower designed by H. Craig Severance, the 71-story Manhattan Company Building at 40 Wall Street (designed in association with Yasuo Matsui, 1929-30), which briefly reigned as the world’s tallest building upon its completion.²⁰

The Architect: H. Craig Severance²¹

Harold Craig Severance was born in the town of Chazy in northern New York State in 1879. After studying architecture in the United States and France, he began his career in 1900 in the New York City office of his cousin, Charles H. Rich. Severance then joined the office of Carrère & Hastings before opening his own practice in 1907. Over the next four years, he primarily designed loft and office buildings in Midtown Manhattan, many of which still stand. By 1914, he joined with William Van Alen to form the partnership of Severance & Van Alen, which was known for its creative “modern” classical designs for steel-framed commercial buildings. The firm’s commissions included the Gidding & Company Building at 724 Fifth

Avenue (c. 1920), 377 Fifth Avenue (c. 1920-21), the Bar Building at 36 West 44th Street (c. 1921), and the Bainbridge Building at 37 West 57th Street (c. 1922). Severance and Van Alen ended their partnership in 1924, after which Severance opened his own office in the Bar Building, where he remained into the 1930s.

Following his split with Van Alen, Severance won commissions for several skyscrapers, including the 33-story Ruppert Building at 535 Fifth Avenue (c. 1925); the 35-story Montague-Court Building at 167 Court Street in Brooklyn (1925-26, within the Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District); and the 35-story 50 Broadway Building in Lower Manhattan (c. 1926). In 1929, he won his highest-profile commission, for the 71-story Manhattan Company Building at 40 Wall Street. This project placed Severance in direct competition with his former partner to design the world's tallest building, a title held by 40 Wall Street upon its May 1930 completion before being surpassed, by Van Alen's Chrysler Building, a few months later. Severance followed the Manhattan Company Building with the 45-story Nelson Tower (1929-31), which wraps the northwest corner of Seventh Avenue and 34th Street. By this time, Severance's firm had acquired the name of H. Craig Severance, Inc.

In addition to his many office skyscrapers, Severance designed the 19-story Manger Hotel (c. 1925), later the Taft Hotel, on the east side of Seventh Avenue between 50th and 51st Streets; Bailey Hall at Union College in Schenectady, New York (c. 1926); a Coca-Cola bottling plant at 619 East 19th Street (c. 1936); and the four-story building on the north side of West 35th Street between Broadway and Sixth Avenue (c. 1940) that replaced the New York Herald Building. At the time of his death in 1941, Severance was supervising the construction of blimp hangars and administration buildings at the U.S. Naval Air Station in Lakehurst, New Jersey.

The Builder: George A. Fuller Company²²

The George A. Fuller Company was founded in Chicago in 1882 by George Allon Fuller. Fuller was trained as an architect at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and started his career as a draftsman in the office of Peabody & Stearns in Boston, becoming a partner by age 25. His early work included the design and supervision of construction of the Union League Club of New York (Peabody & Stearns, 1881, demolished). Fuller quickly realized he was more interested in the construction phase of building and started his own contracting firm. From 1880 to 1882 he was a partner in the firm of Clark & Fuller, building, in Chicago, the Union Club and the Chicago Opera House. He formed his own firm in Chicago in 1882, building one of the first completely steel-framed skyscrapers, the Tacoma Building (Holabird & Roche, demolished), in 1887. Fuller was instrumental in differentiating the contractor's role from that of the designer, and, breaking with common practice, provided only building services. Fuller's extensive knowledge of construction and his interest in the new technologies being developed for high-rise construction gained his company a reputation as a premier skyscraper builder. He used electric hoists and new methods of steel fastening and he pioneered a team approach to tall building construction that was adapted throughout the country.

After Fuller's death in 1900, his son-in-law Harry S. Black became head of the Fuller Company. With the company's operations now in New York, Black became a major force in the promotion and construction of tall office buildings in this city. Black established a real estate venture, the United States Realty and Improvement Company, to plan, finance, and build in New York. The Fuller Construction Company was, for a time, a subsidiary of U.S. Realty, handling the construction work for the speculative building of its parent company.

In 1902, Harry Black hired the nationally prominent Chicago architect Daniel Burnham to design an imposing headquarters building for the firm facing Madison Square in New York. Completed in 1903, this building received considerable publicity but the popular name—the Flatiron—soon eclipsed that of the building’s owners. In 1928, the Fuller Company decided to build a new headquarters at Madison Avenue and 57th Street (Walker & Gillette, 1928-29), both to acquire more space and to follow the business center which was moving northward.²³

The Fuller Company has constructed thousands of buildings in New York, throughout the country, and abroad. The company’s work in New York includes the old Pennsylvania Station (McKim, Mead & White, 1904-10, demolished); the United States General Post Office (McKim, Mead & White, 1908-13); the Plaza Hotel (Henry J. Hardenbergh, 1905-07); the United Nations Headquarters (Board of Design, Wallace K. Harrison, Director of Planning, 1947-52); Lever House (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1950-52); and the Seagram Building (Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, with Philip Johnson and Kahn & Jacobs, 1955-58).²⁴ In Washington, D.C., the Fuller Company constructed the National Cathedral (George Frederick Bodley and Philip Hubert Frohman, begun 1907); the U.S. Supreme Court Building (Cass Gilbert, 1935); and the Lincoln Memorial (Henry Bacon, 1914-22).

Skyscraper Design and the 400 Madison Avenue Building²⁵

Chicago was the home of the original skyscraper, William LeBaron Jenney’s ten-story Home Insurance Building of 1884-85 (demolished), which was the earliest-known tall building constructed of a metal skeleton that supported both its floors and outer walls. While design was largely a function of engineering and technology in the earliest skyscrapers, a new aesthetic was emerging by the 1890s. The most important skyscraper architect and theorist of the decade was Louis Sullivan, whose dictum that the tall office building “must be every inch a proud and soaring thing, rising in sheer exultation,” was reflected in his design for the Wainwright Building, completed in St. Louis in 1891.²⁶ This building’s tripartite composition—with its base, body, and cornice analogous to the base, shaft, and capital of a classical column—prefigured countless skyscrapers to come, but few skyscraper architects heeded Sullivan’s advice to avoid historical ornament. Instead, they embraced it, in works like the American Surety Building (Bruce Price, 1894-96) which was sheathed in opulent Renaissance Revival style detailing.²⁷ American Surety was an early exemplar of what came to be known as the “eclectic phase” in skyscraper design, in which architects drew upon historical precedent, dressing their skyscrapers in a profusion of classical and Gothic ornament in the pursuit of “pure visual pleasure.”²⁸ The eclectic phase lasted into the 1920s, when it was supplanted by Art Deco and ended by the Great Depression, which halted nearly all new skyscraper construction.

Until 1916, there were no limits on building height or bulk in New York City. In that year, the city implemented the nation’s first zoning regulations, which permitted unrestricted height on one-quarter of a building site, but also instituted a “sky exposure plane” requiring skyscrapers to taper as they rose to allow light and air to reach the street. Six years later, architect and critic Harvey Wiley Corbett along with architectural delineator Hugh Ferriss published a group of renderings that dramatically illustrated zoning’s impact on the shape of tall buildings. Presented as a series progressing from the abstract, pyramidal shape prescribed by the zoning envelope to a practicable finished building, these drawings were profoundly influential, catalyzing a trend in which “buildings endeavored to take on the feeling of sculpted mountains, their shape suddenly more important than their historical detail or even their style.”²⁹ Instead of tapering continuously, most skyscrapers constructed under the 1916 zoning rose in a series of

tiers like a wedding cake; this form was so pervasive that by the mid-1920s, architects and critics spoke of the “setback style,” an “aesthetic of simple, sculptural mass that became the benchmark of progressive design.”³⁰

The architect of the Woolworth Building, Cass Gilbert, described the skyscraper as “a machine that makes the land pay,” and skyscrapers were generally designed from the inside out with the goal of maximizing rental income relative to lot size. Every skyscraper had an “economic height,” defined as “the number of stories that would produce the highest rate on the money invested,” which largely depended on its lot size and dimensions along with the building’s height district as specified by the zoning ordinance. Calculating the economic height was a balancing act: although additional rentable space could be gained by adding floors, taller buildings required additional elevators, which ate into space—and rental income—throughout the building. On smaller lots, moreover, floors above a certain height became so cramped or oddly shaped as to be essentially unmarketable. At 21 stories—with ground-story retail, second-through-20th-story offices, and a 21st-story penthouse apartment—400 Madison Avenue needed only four elevators, allowing for a compact rear service core ringed completely by high-revenue first-class office space.³¹ Its dramatic massing, consisting of a sheer 14-story rise from street level and setbacks at the 15th, 17th, and 20th stories, was largely the product of its “2X” height district, which permitted it to rise uninterrupted for 160 feet—twice the width of Madison Avenue—before tapering. Its slab-like form follows the precedent set in 1927 by the Fred F. French Building, which proved that “even relatively small lots could ... sprout economically viable skyscrapers” by eschewing the conventional freestanding tower.³² Among smaller skyscrapers, including the French Building, 400 Madison Avenue is unusual for its fully symmetrical form, made possible by its regular, rectangular lot extending for a full block along the west side of Madison Avenue.³³

Constructed at the tail end of the eclectic phase in skyscraper design, 400 Madison Avenue was sheathed by H. Craig Severance in neo-Gothic style cream-colored terra cotta. Associated with medieval European cathedrals, the Gothic style’s “insistent, almost urgent shouts upward seemed particularly appropriate” for buildings reaching unprecedented heights in the early 20th century.³⁴ It became a popular skyscraper style soon after 1900, employed for the New York Times Building (Cyrus L. W Eidlitz and Andrew C. McKenzie, 1903-05, reclad), the Trinity and United States Realty Buildings (Francis H. Kimball, 1904-07), the Liberty Tower (Henry Ives Cobb, 1909-10), and most famously, the Woolworth Building (Cass Gilbert, 1910-13), one of the city’s most prominent landmarks and the world’s tallest building from 1913 to 1930.³⁵ Although Severance’s use of monochrome terra cotta may seem backward-looking at a time when exuberantly ornamented, polychrome Art Deco towers were coming into fashion, it reflected his philosophy that tall buildings should not only have excellent interior light but should contribute to the illumination of surrounding streets and structures. As William LaZinsk of Severance’s office stated in 1929,

Although the zoning laws take into account only height, color is an important consideration in conserving the light. A building should throw off light as well as absorb it. Its powers of reflection, as well as its setbacks, can serve to brighten the surroundings. The beauty of the structure itself, however, demands more than a flat white surface. To achieve the proper appearance, the Architect should be a painter also. Shadows and highlights of varying degrees bring out the design in the proper manner. On the 400 Madison Avenue Building, there are deep shadows

and others not so deep and there are angles which catch the sun and form interesting highlights. The details of the building vary with the changing position of the sun, while the general position remains the same.³⁶

All three of the building's primary facades are treated similarly, with vertical piers and recessed windows and spandrels that emphasize the building's height; as in most skyscrapers of the eclectic phase, ornament is concentrated at the building's base and crown. The ground story is of pink granite topped by a bullnose molding, above which rises the building's elongated base. Rising to the fifth story, the base has large window openings intended to draw additional light into these lower, darker office spaces. The seven central fifth-story windows are crowned by an unusual, thick band composed of pointed arches, buttresses, shields, tracery, and other Gothic motifs, joined by empty tabernacles with stylized crockets. The outer fifth-story openings on the Madison Avenue facade, and all of the fifth-story openings on the side facades, are headed by heavy projecting bands containing small colonnettes. Reminiscent of the "raised curtain" motif in Art Deco design, these features, along with the highly geometricized nature of much of the building's Gothic ornament, reflect the emerging influence of the Art Deco style in the late 1920s.³⁷ Above the 14th story, the building rises in a series of four setbacks lavishly decorated with abstracted Gothic ornament and culminating with a crown of Gothic tracery flanked by grouped chimneys and crockets.

The 400 Madison Avenue Building was generally well-received at the time of its completion, with the journal *Architecture and Building* describing it as "unusual in construction ... As an architectural development, the building is a distinct ornament to the thoroughfare. It presents an exceedingly interesting block front as seen close by in its lower stories and at a distance...."³⁸ Since then, the building has seen few substantial alterations, other than the removal, prior to 1983, of its monumental main-entrance portal on Madison Avenue. Although its upper-story windows have been changed from one-over-one double hung sashes to single-pane windows, the building retains its original decorative second-through-fifth-story window frames and portions of its original metal storefront framing.

Later History³⁹

Into the 1930s and over subsequent decades, 400 Madison Avenue continued to house advertising, real estate, and financial firms, as well as lawyers' and tourist offices. It also attracted an array of tenants drawn by its proximity to New York's major publishing houses and television studios, the Garment District, and the music- and recording-industry businesses clustered around Times Square. It has housed trade publications and consumer magazines, including, from 1932 to 1945, *Family Circle*; many out-of-town and foreign newspapers maintained offices there into the 1980s. In 1944 and 1945, 400 Madison was home to the Council of Books in Wartime, an initiative by the country's largest publishing companies that provided 122 million copies of some of their most beloved titles, including *The Great Gatsby* and *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, to active-duty soldiers and sailors.⁴⁰ Between 1945 and 1957, companies associated with the renowned film producer David O. Selznick, including Selznick Studios and Vanguard Films, had offices there, and in 1949 and 1950, it was the business home of actress and producer Lucille Lortel. In 1964, pioneering African-American stockbroker June M. Middleton, described by the *New York Times* as "the only Negro woman selling securities for a New York Stock Exchange firm," joined the brokerage of Hornblower & Weeks at 400 Madison Avenue.⁴¹ In the 1970s, it was the home of the Association of Black Foundation

Executives, which had been founded with the goal of “rais[ing] the level of social consciousness in the philanthropic community.”⁴² Perhaps the building’s best-known retail tenant was the luxury luggage retailer Crouch & Fitzgerald, which remained at 400 Madison from 1932 until its recent closure.

Under its current owner, ASB Real Estate Investments, 400 Madison Avenue is well-maintained and continues to house a variety of office and retail tenants. At the time of its opening, the *New York Times* noted that the 400 Madison Avenue Building helped “to form a line of massive steel and stone” forming the “Grand Canyon of American business.”⁴³ Although many of its neighboring buildings have been replaced by glassy skyscrapers, the 400 Madison Avenue Building, with its dramatic symmetrical massing, intricate and creative neo-Gothic ornament, and bright and expansive facade, remains a commanding and engaging presence along Madison Avenue and in the East Midtown area.

Report prepared by
Michael Caratzas
Research Department

NOTES

¹ This section was written by Matthew A. Postal of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. It is mostly based on designation reports prepared by members of LPC’s research staff. Also see Kurt C. Schlichting, *Grand Central Terminal* (John Hopkins University Press, 2003); Robert A. M. Stern and others, *New York 1880: Architecture and Urbanism in the Gilded Age* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1999); Robert A. M. Stern and others, *New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism* (New York: Rizzoli Books, 1983); and Robert A. M. Stern and others, *New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism Between Two World Wars* (New York Rizzoli Books, 1987).

² St. Patrick’s Cathedral is a New York City Landmark; Central Park is a New York City Scenic Landmark.

³ Grand Central Terminal is a New York City Landmark.

⁴ Both the New York Central Building and Park Avenue Viaduct were designed by Warren & Wetmore and are New York City Landmarks.

⁵ Both of these buildings are New York City Landmarks.

⁶ Both of these buildings are New York City Landmarks.

⁷ Both of these buildings are New York City Landmarks; the Seagram Building is also a New York City Interior Landmark.

⁸ Portions of this section are adapted from LPC, *275 Madison Avenue Building Designation Report* (LP-2286) (New York: City of New York, 2009), 2-3, prepared by Michael Caratzas; and LPC, *Manhattan Company Building Designation Report* (LP-1936) (New York: City of New York, 1995), 2, prepared by Jay Shockley. Other sources include “400 Madison Avenue Building,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 14, 1928, 17; “Financing 400 Madison Avenue Bldg.,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 8, 1928, 6; “\$1,900,000 400 Madison Avenue Building” (Advertisement), *New York Times*, October 15, 1928, 34; “\$1,250,000 Office Building for Madison Avenue,” *New York Herald Tribune*, October 25, 1928, 40; “\$1,250,000 Structure Planned for Madison Avenue Block,” *New York Times*, October 25, 1928, 52; “Plans Filed for New Construction and Alterations,” *Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide*, October 27, 1928, 42; William J. Demorest, “Millions of Feet of Office Space Added to Grand Central Zone,” *New York Times*, January 20, 1929, RE1; Demorest, “Few Offices for Rent in Terminal Zone,” *New York Herald Tribune*, January 20, 1929, D1; “Skyscraper 45 Feet Wide Will Cover Block Front,” *New York*

Herald Tribune, February 10, 1929, D1; “Tall Building on Narrow Plot,” *New York Times*, February 10, 1929, 166; “Banker at 34 to Build Highest Structure Here,” *New York Herald Tribune*, April 10, 1929, 14; “Home for Cassatt & Co.: Take Large Space in Madison Avenue Building,” *New York Herald Tribune*, June 9, 1929, D2; “New Building Will Feature High Class Small Office Units,” *New York Herald Tribune*, June 30, 1929, D2; “Commercial Space Will Glut Market in the Next Two Years,” *New York Herald Tribune*, July 14, 1929, D1; “Madison Avenue Offices: New Building Near Ritz-Carlton Will Open in September,” *New York Times*, August 18, 1929, W16; “More Light in Offices: Builders Find Employers Seek Improved Working Conditions,” *New York Times*, August 25, 1929, RE7; “Another Stock Exchange Firm Locates on Madison Avenue,” *New York Herald Tribune*, August 27, 1929, 41; “600,000 Persons Daily Travel on Madison Avenue,” *New York Herald Tribune*, September 1, 1929, D2; “Radio Tube Makers Lease Floor in Madison Avenue,” *New York Herald Tribune*, September 12, 1929, 40; “Uptown Lease by Stock Brokers,” *New York Times*, September 16, 1929, 55; “More Air and Light for Office Workers,” *New York Herald Tribune*, October 6, 1929, E1; “Lofty Buildings Give Manhattan New Skyline Effects,” *New York Times*, October 6, 1929, RE1; “Survey This Vast Field of Business at Your Elbow ... from These Admirable Engineer’s Offices” (Advertisement), *New York Herald Tribune*, August 15, 1929, 36; “An Architect’s Tower-Floor Haven” (Advertisement), *New York Herald Tribune*, September 6, 1929, 8; “A Lawyer’s Office Affording Quick Contact with a Vast Business Zone,” *New York Herald Tribune*, September 24, 1929, 14; “Wall Street Approves These Exceptional Office Locations ... in the Grand Central Zone” (Advertisement), *New York Times*, September 17, 1929, 57; “Stock Exchange Concern Takes Madison Avenue Space,” *New York Herald Tribune*, October 8, 1929, 52; “Meeting the Critical Business Man’s Idea of Office Perfection” (Advertisement), *New York Herald Tribune*, October 16, 1929, 13; “Wall Street is Making 400 Madison Avenue an Important Brokerage Center” (Advertisement), *New York Herald Tribune*, October 22, 1929, 49; “Such Floors as These Never Should Be Mistaken for the Usual Office Space” (Advertisement), *New York Herald Tribune*, October 29, 1929; “George McAneny Rents Madison Avenue Floor,” *New York Herald Tribune*, December 11, 1929, 50; “Women Voters to Begin Campaign for \$60,000,” *New York Times*, January 15, 1939, 21; “Lobby Design Important in Office Buildings,” *New York Herald Tribune*, January 26, 1930, E19; and “Rapid Expansion in Central Zone,” *New York Times*, May 10, 1931, RE1.

⁹ “Midtown Zone is Big Business Area,” *New York Times*, January 6, 1929, 201.

¹⁰ The Graybar and Fred F. French Buildings are New York City Landmarks.

¹¹ The Chrysler Building is a New York City Landmark.

¹² “Skyscraper 45 Feet Wide Will Cover Block Front.”

¹³ “Madison Avenue Offices: New Building Near Ritz-Carlton Will Open in September.”

¹⁴ “New Building Will Feature High Class Small Office Units.”

¹⁵ Carol Willis, *Form Follows Finance: Skyscrapers and Skylines in New York and Chicago* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1995), 24-25.

¹⁶ Corbett cited in Willis, 27; “Skyscraper 45 Feet Wide Will Cover Block Front.”

¹⁷ “Tall Building on Narrow Plot.”

¹⁸ “Survey This Vast Field of Business at Your Elbow ... from These Admirable Engineer’s Offices”; and “An Architect’s Tower-Floor Haven.”

¹⁹ “Wall Street Approves These Exceptional Office Locations ... in the Grand Central Zone.”

²⁰ The Manhattan Company Building is a New York City Landmark.

²¹ This section is largely adapted from LPC, *Manhattan Company Building Designation Report*, 4; and LPC, *Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District Designation Report* (LP-2449) (New York: City of New York, 2011), 54-55, prepared by Christopher D. Brazee. Other sources include Office for Metropolitan History, Manhattan Building Permits Database, 1900-1986 (metrohistory.com/dbpages/NBsearch.lasso); “Old Hotels Yield to Business Rush,” *New York Tribune*, February 24, 1915, 1; “Tall Loft on Famous Site,” *New York Tribune*, March 12, 1916, B11; “Lawyers to Have Fourteen Story Building of Their Own,” *New York Tribune*, January 1, 1922, A16; “Bainbridge Colby Plans Lofts for 57th Street,” *New York Tribune*, June 18, 1922, B1; “Old Architectural Firm Dissolve Partnership,” *New York Tribune*, March 2, 1924, B2; “\$5,500,000 Hotel to Go Up on Carban

Land,” *New York Herald/New York Tribune*, October 23, 1924, 25; “Russek Co. to Erect Eight-Story Addition,” *New York Herald/New York Tribune*, January 20, 1925, 28; “Continental on Broadway Changes Hands,” *New York Herald/New York Tribune*, March 17, 1925, 29; “30 Stories Will Be Built on Delmonico Site,” *New York Herald/New York Tribune*, May 26, 1925, 29; “Manger Skyscraper Hotel Will Be Ready in 1926,” *New York Herald/New York Tribune*, June 7, 1925, B12; “Tallest Brooklyn Building Planned for Court Street,” *New York Herald/New York Tribune*, December 25, 1925, 29; “\$1,000,000 Jewish Theater Planned for Lower East Side,” *New York Herald/New York Tribune*, January 27, 1926, 32; “Downtown Manhattan Again Will Echo Activities of Skyscraper Builders,” *New York Herald/New York Tribune*, February 7, 1926, B2; “Ten-Story Building for Fifth Avenue Site,” *New York Herald/New York Tribune*, February 26, 1926, 33; “Contract Awarded for Bailey Hall at Union College,” *New York Herald Tribune*, September 15, 1926, 43; “Prudence Co., Inc., Plans new Brooklyn Home,” *New York Herald Tribune*, July 24, 1928, 33; “45-Story Office Building for Seventh Avenue Site,” *New York Herald Tribune*, October 19, 1929, 30; “Manhattan Building Plans,” *New York Herald Tribune*, March 31, 1931, 49; “Plan Riding Academy for E. 91st St. Buildings,” *New York Herald Tribune*, March 31, 1931, 49; “New Structure to Rise at Site of Herald Building,” *New York Herald Tribune*, February 24, 1940, 5; and “H. C. Severance Dies; Designer of Skyscrapers,” *New York Herald Tribune*, September 3, 1941, 16.

- ²² This section is adapted from LPC, *Fuller Building Designation Report* (LP-1460) (New York: City of New York, 1986), 1-2.
- ²³ Both the Flatiron and Fuller Buildings are New York City Landmarks.
- ²⁴ The United States General Post Office, Plaza Hotel, Lever House, and Seagram Building are New York City Landmarks.
- ²⁵ Portions of this section are adapted from LPC, *275 Madison Avenue Building Designation Report*. Other sources include Paul Goldberger, *The Skyscraper* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981), 3-101; Ada Louise Huxtable, *The Tall Building Artistically Reconsidered: The Search for a Skyscraper Style* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 4-56; and Stern and others, *New York 1930*, 507-615.
- ²⁶ Goldberger, 18.
- ²⁷ The American Surety Building is a New York City Landmark.
- ²⁸ Goldberger, 26. Monuments of the Eclectic period include the Italian-Renaissance-style Flatiron Building (D.H. Burnham & Co., 1901-03); the French-Beaux-Arts-inspired Singer Tower (Ernest Flag, 1908, demolished); the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Tower (Napoleon LeBrun & Sons, 1909); and the Woolworth Building (Cass Gilbert, 1910-13). The Flatiron, Metropolitan Life Insurance, and Woolworth Buildings are New York City Landmarks.
- ²⁹ Goldberger, 58.
- ³⁰ Willis, 77, 79.
- ³¹ *Architecture and Building* noted that space had been provided for six elevators in anticipation of a possible expansion to the neighboring lot and that the shafts for the two unused elevators had been floored over to provide storage space. The expansion was never carried out.
- ³² Stern and others, *New York 1930*, 597.
- ³³ Many slab skyscrapers, like the Fred F. French Building, were constructed on street corners. Because streets were generally narrower than avenues, the primary street and avenue facades had different sky exposure planes, resulting in asymmetrical massing. For more on this topic, see LPC, *500 Fifth Avenue Building Designation Report* (LP-2427) (New York: City of New York, 2010), 5-8, prepared by Olivia Klose.
- ³⁴ Goldberger, 42.
- ³⁵ All but the New York Times Building are New York City Landmarks.
- ³⁶ “Light Colored Materials Add Beauty and Brighten Neighboring Structures,” *Brooklyn Standard Union*, June 15, 1929, 20.
- ³⁷ On the raised curtain motif, see LPC, *275 Madison Avenue Building Designation Report*, 4, 7.

³⁸ “400 Madison Avenue Building, New York City,” *Architecture and Building*, October 1929, 299.

³⁹ Sources for this section include *Manhattan Address Telephone Directories, 1929 to 1993* (New York: New York Public Library, 1983-1994).

⁴⁰ “Publishers Gave Away 122,951,031 Books During World War II,” *The Atlantic* (September 10, 2014).

⁴¹ “Firm Lists Financial Appointee,” *New York Amsterdam News*, July 25, 1964, 21; Vartanig G. Vartan, “A Girlhood Dream Is Realized: Negro Woman Now Selling Stocks for Big-Board Firm,” *New York Times*, February 5, 1965, 39.

⁴² “Fierce Appointed Director of ABFE,” *New York Amsterdam News*, July 17, 1976, C1.

⁴³ “Lofty Buildings Give Manhattan New Skyline Effects.”

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of the building and site, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the 400 Madison Avenue Building has a special character, 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 among its important qualities, the 400 Madison Avenue Building features dramatic massing, intricate neo-Gothic detailing, and a bright, expansive terra-cotta facade commanding a full Madison Avenue blockfront; that it is one of the most striking prewar skyscrapers in Manhattan's East Midtown section; that it was designed by H. Craig Severance and constructed by the George A. Fuller Company, one of the nation's most experienced skyscraper builders; that it was completed in 1929 as the area surrounding Grand Central Terminal was experiencing a boom in skyscraper construction and transformation into one of the country's leading financial centers; that it was described in the press as "an unusual structure both in appearance and as a real estate renting proposition" and as a "distinct ornament" to Madison Avenue; that its unconventional footprint made for a remarkably efficient plan consisting of a small rear service core wrapped by a brightly illuminated "veneer" of offices, and that the building was notable in that virtually all of its offices had street frontages and commanded first-class rents; that the building's massing was guided by provisions in the city's 1916 zoning resolution that required tall buildings to taper as they rose; that the building is sheathed in cream-colored terra cotta that reflects sunlight to neighboring buildings and the streets below, reflecting Severance's belief that skyscrapers should brighten their surroundings; that the building's abstracted neo-Gothic ornament, which includes tracery, grouped chimneys, and crockets on its lavishly decorated crown, reflects the emerging influence of the Art Deco style at the end of the 1920s; that following the building's completion, Severance and its chief financier, George L. Ohrstrom, collaborated on the Manhattan Company Building at 40 Wall Street, which briefly reigned as the world's tallest building; and that the 400 Madison Avenue Building remains a well-preserved, visually engaging representative of East Midtown's 1920s skyscraper boom.

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 400 Madison Avenue Building and designates Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 1283, Lot 17 as its Landmark Site.

Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair

Adi Shamir-Baron, Diana Chapin, Wellington Chen, Michael Devonshire, Michael Goldblum, John Gustafsson, Kim Vauss, Commissioners



400 Madison Avenue Building
Madison Avenue and East 48th Street facades
Photo: Sarah Moses, 2016



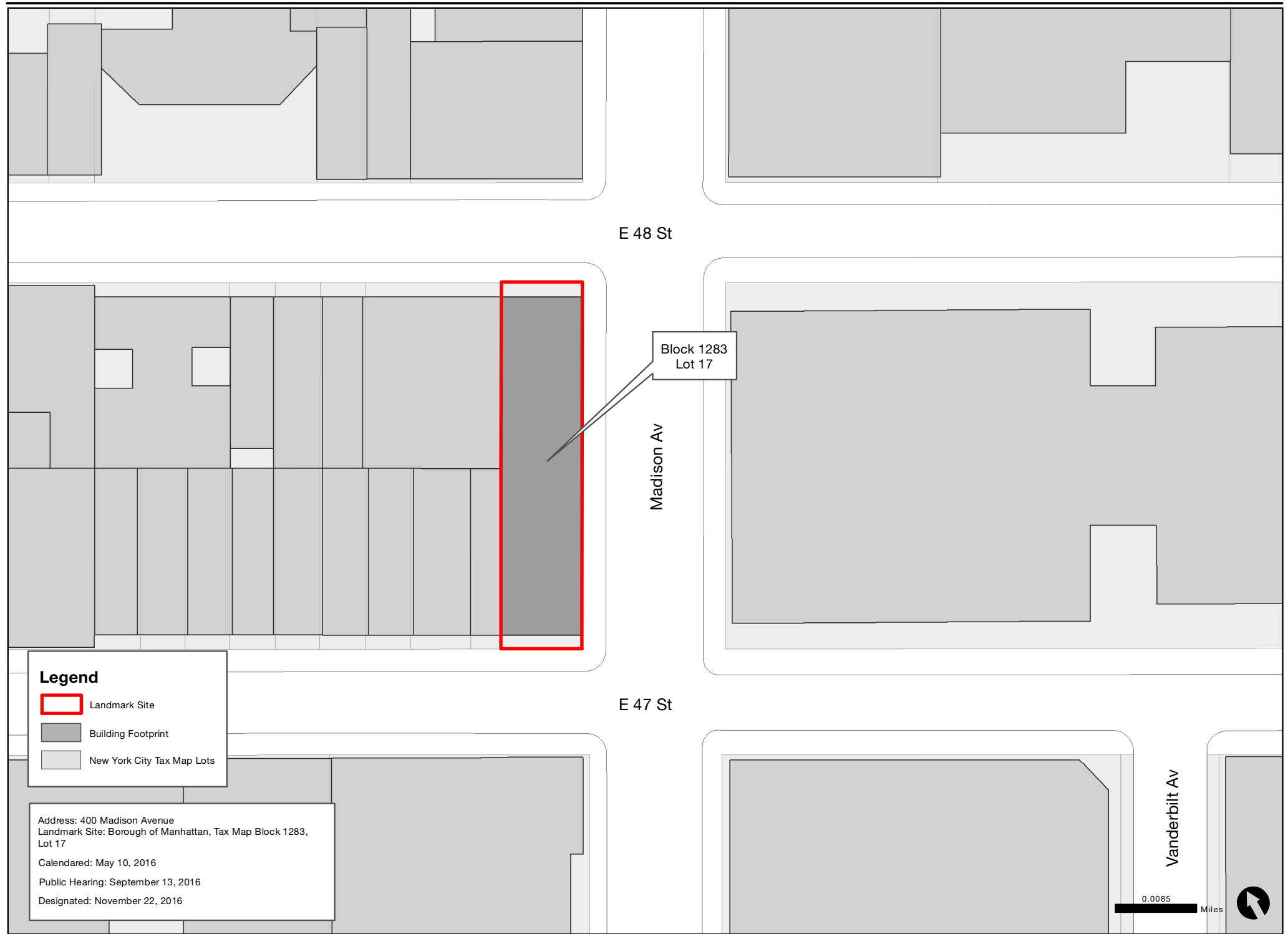
400 Madison Avenue Building
East 47th Street and Madison Avenue facades
Photo: Sarah Moses, 2016






400 Madison Avenue Building
Madison Avenue facade, base
Photo: Sarah Moses, 2016



400 Madison Avenue Building
Madison Avenue facade, upper stories
Photo: Sarah Moses, 2016



Legend

-  Landmark Site
-  Building Footprint
-  New York City Tax Map Lots

Address: 400 Madison Avenue
Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 1283, Lot 17
Calendared: May 10, 2016
Public Hearing: September 13, 2016
Designated: November 22, 2016

Vanderbilt Av

0.0085 Miles

