Landmarks Preservation Commission
June 12, 2012, Designation List 456
Amended Landmark Site
June 19, 2012, Designation List 456a
LP-2428

MARTHA WASHINGTON HOTEL, 30 East 30th Street (aka 27-31 East 29th Street), Manhattan. Built: 1901-03; Architect: Robert W. Gibson

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 859, Lot 26 in part, consisting of the land on which the described building is located.

On July 12, 2011 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Martha Washington Hotel and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 2).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. There were no speakers in opposition. On June 12, 2012, the Landmarks Preservation Commission voted to designate the entire lot 26. The Landmark site was amended on June 19, 2012 to include only the land on which the described building is located.

<u>Summary</u>

The Renaissance Revival style Martha Washington Hotel was the first hotel built in New York to provide housing for professional women. Although increasing numbers of women were joining the work force, residential options for single, working women at that time were extremely limited. The developer, the Women's Hotel Company, was incorporated in 1900 specifically to create such facilities. The project was conceived as a business rather than a charity and promised 5% return on the subscriptions of its investors. The 12-story building opened in 1903, serving permanent residents as well as transient guests, and was immediately full. Its purpose differed from existing rooming houses and chaperoned institutions in that it provided a comfortable, independent living situation for single, working women. Although most women at this time were still expected to marry and keep house for their husbands and families, many women were beginning to venture away from this traditional role and become professional workers in business and as teachers, artists, doctors, or nurses. Living quarters for these pioneers were not always easy to find and many types of established housing were not available to single women. This building was designed by prominent architect Robert Gibson, known for his ecclesiastical and commercial designs in Manhattan and upstate New York. Gibson won this commission through a design competition and later served on the board of the Women's Hotel Company. This classically-inspired brick and limestone building has facades on both 29th and 30th Streets that feature prominent quoins, Palladian windows, splayed lintels with keystones and balconettes with iron railings. The building is located in a section of Manhattan between Fifth and Sixth Avenues that was filling with hotels during this period. Centrally located and close to shopping, entertainment and various types of transportation, the hotel was convenient for permanent residents and visitors alike. The Martha Washington continued to serve women only until 1998. Today it remains in use as a hotel.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Midtown Manhattan Neighborhood[1]

As Manhattan's real estate development pressed northward, in the late 19th century the neighborhood around Fifth Avenue, in the 20s and 30s, experienced some of that change. After its initial residential development with row houses for wealthy New Yorkers, the area first became an entertainment center focused on Madison Square Garden (opened 1880 at Madison Avenue and 26th Street, rebuilt 1889-91, McKim, Mead & White, demolished 1925). Numerous legitimate theaters (all demolished) opened on Fifth Avenue and Broadway around this time.[2] Related businesses were attracted by the popularity of the area, the most celebrated being Delmonico's Restaurant that moved to 212-214 Fifth Avenue at 26th Street in 1876 to satisfy the gastronomical needs of the area's patrons. Two of the first hotels in the area were the Gilsey House (1869-71, Stephen Decatur Hatch, a designated New York City Landmark) at Broadway and 29th Street and the Grand (1868, Henry Engelbert, a designated New York City Landmark).[3] Beginning in the 1870s, this section also became the city's primary club district, with the opening of numerous private social clubs where members could eat, drink and socialize. Some clubs met regularly in hotels and restaurants but others built or purchased their own structures, including the Knickerbocker Club (located at Fifth Avenue and 28th Street in the former residence of William Butler Duncan, demolished), the Reform Club (at Fifth Avenue and 27th Street in the former residence of Amos R. Eno) and the St. Nicholas Club and Canadian Club (at 12 East 29th Street).[4]

By the turn of the 20th century, the entertainment district continued to move north to Longacre (Times) Square. Retail businesses moved into this section from Ladies Mile and other more southerly locations. Rogers, Peet & Company located at 1260 Broadway in 1889, while R.H. Macy's opened their large store on Herald Square in 1902. Fifth Avenue also attracted businesses which replaced the town houses of wealthy families. B. Altman's opened its large store at 34th Street and Fifth Avenue in 1904, followed slightly later by Tiffany's and Gorham Silver. The density of the neighborhood increased as large apartment houses were added to the mix of structures. One of these was the Knickerbocker Apartments, a luxury building at Fifth Avenue and 28th Street, built in 1882-84 (demolished).[5]

Many new luxury hotels were attracted to the area because of its easy accessibility to subway and streetcar lines, and the two newly-constructed train terminals, Pennsylvania and Grand Central. In addition to the hotels already mentioned, scores of hotels and apartment hotels opened in the late 19th and early 20th century, including the classical palazzo Hotel Imperial (1889-91, Broadway and 32nd Street, McKim, Mead and White, demolished), the Holland House, called "one of the most opulent and luxurious hotels in city"[6] (1891, Harding & Gooch, Fifth Avenue and 30th Street, demolished), the Waldorf Hotel (1891-93, Henry J. Hardenburgh, 1895-97, expanded as Waldorf Astoria, Fifth Ave and 34th Street, demolished), the Hotel Royalton (1898, Rossiter & Wright, 44 West 44th Street), the Hotel Martinique (1897-98, expanded 1901-03, 1909-11, Henry J. Hardenbergh, Broadway and 32nd Street, a designated New York City Landmark), the Aberdeen Hotel, (1902-04, Harry B. Mulliken, 17 West 32nd Street, a designated New York City Landmark), and the Hotel Breslin (1903-04, Broadway and 29th Street, Clinton & Russell, located within the Madison Square North Historic District).

New York Hotels and Apartment Hotels[7]

Hotels have been an important part of city life since the earliest taverns and inns of New Amsterdam dispensed food, drink, lodging and entertainment to colonial travelers, but during the second half of the 19th century New York hotels reached an extreme degree of size and luxury. This was epitomized by Henry J. Hardenbergh's Waldorf and Astoria Hotels (which functioned as one hotel) on Fifth Avenue at 34th Street, with 1,300 bedrooms and 40 public rooms, all lavishly and individually decorated. While this was the largest and most luxurious, many hotels of different categories were built at this time, responding to the greater ease of travel that allowed many more people to visit New York for business and pleasure.

This period also saw the growing acceptability of various types of multiple housing.[8] The change from single-family homes to multiple dwellings was a dramatic one and newspapers and magazines were brimming with articles discussing "the proper type" of housing for different groups.[9] Middle and upper-class people came to acknowledge the advantages of apartment life slowly, over time, sometimes aided by the development of buildings geared to specific people with the understanding that all the residents in any given building would be "just like them," sharing a common status or lifestyle.[10] Buildings geared toward families (by far the most common and acceptable way of life) would not welcome single women or single men whose lives were often suspect. At the same time it was understood that men sometimes had to move for employment and therefore the need for housing for men or bachelor apartments was apparent.[11]

Among the new types of buildings were numerous apartment hotels and residential hotels, which were "new hotels of the largest and most modern type"[12] These facilities were commonly used by couples or families who did not want or could not afford to keep up a full middle class home with all the servants and work that entailed.[13] Apartment hotels provided parlors and bedrooms, expecting residents to take meals in the common dining room or restaurant. Parlors were also provided for entertaining or other more public activities. Well-appointed lobbies and public spaces often provided a higher degree of luxury than could otherwise be afforded.

Women's Housing

Around the turn of the 20th century, the city's population grew rapidly due to tremendous numbers of immigrants from other countries as well as the influx of Americans from rural areas who came because of expanded employment opportunities. It was a period of huge growth in business and industry, leading to greater wealth for the elite and an expanding middle class.[14] This process was aided by an improvement in educational opportunities for many people, with more men and women achieving secondary and college degrees. The anonymity of the city, along with greater job opportunities, encouraged a newfound independence for many women who had previously been restricted to "their proper sphere" in the home.[15] Although women often had to choose between a career and a family, many did choose the former for the greater independence and social contact it offered.[16] Between 1870 and 1920, the number of women in the workforce increased by almost 64%.[17] While many of these women worked in factories, many others were office workers and professionals in education, medicine and the arts. This led to even greater and more varied demand for specialized housing for a variety of income levels. If any of these women wanted to live independently, their options were extremely limited.

The need for housing specifically created for women workers began to be apparent around the middle of the 19th century. When possible, many single women continued to live at

home, while others lived in boarding houses. Eventually, a "Working Women's Home" for lower-paid workers was set up at in a former tenement at 45 Elizabeth Street, with a large dormitory containing beds separated by curtains and a common dining room, parlor and reading room. In 1869, A.T. Stewart opened a hotel on Park Avenue, designed by John Kellum and intended for "women of modest means."[18] It provided small double or single bedrooms along with a central dining room. Its columned entrance and marble entry floor indicated its grand intentions but the large number of rules and regulations governing its inhabitants made it undesirable for middle class women and the cost put it outside the affordable range for most clerks and factory workers. This effort was yet more proof that "in the 1870s...young, respectable women did not have society's blessing to make independent homes of their own."[19]

While it was acceptable for single men to live in a residential hotel, this was not the case for many years for women, because of public concerns for their protection and lack of supervision. Many New York hotels established rules to the effect that they would not accept a single woman traveler after 6 PM unless they were accompanied by a trunk, showing their legitimacy as a guest in the city.[20] An article in 1899 described the huge need for housing for this group, estimating that there were 60-70,000 "self-supporting women in the city, many with nowhere to live.[21]

The growing numbers of women in the workforce gradually forced an acceptance of the situation. As the first decade of the new century progressed, the need for housing geared especially toward their needs and the discussion of new roles for women continued. A symposium and series of articles in *Harpers Bazaar* in 1908 were titled "The Girl Who Came to the City," while in 1911, *The Ladies Home Journal* featured an article titled, "Her Sister in the Country Who Wants to Come to the City to Make Her Way."

Martha Washington Hotel

The Women's Hotel Company was the sponsor and developer of the Martha Washington Hotel. Organized in 1897 for the express purpose of building "high grade hotels for the exclusive accommodation of business and professional women,"[22] the group raised money for its building by selling stock that it promised would return 5% on investments. Although they planned to work on a strictly business, rather than charitable, basis, the genesis of the project came from the Charity Organization Society where the group's founder, Charles Day Kellogg, was employed. The January 1898 prospectus for the hotel proposed

> to supply greatly needed accommodations, combined with far more comfort and independence than they can elsewhere procure within their means, to the thousands of salaried and professional women of New York City and to those annually coming to the City for longer or shorter terms of study, training and business; and to establish the enterprise entirely on business principles, with a view of giving to the shareholders a reasonable income, with undoubted security of constantly augmenting value.

The first Board of Directors consisted of Lucien Warner, president, Charles F. Cox, vice-president, Charles M. Jessup, treasurer, and Charles D. Kellogg, secretary.[23] Well-known people who served as advisors included (architect) Robert W. Gibson, Mrs. Richard Irvin, Samuel Macauley Jackson, Mrs. Payson Merrill, and Herbert B. Turner. These people were all involved in philanthropic work, and many served on the board of the Charity Organization Society, a group started in 1882 by Mrs. Josephine Shaw Lowell to "bring a degree of order to the

chaotically fragmented charitable enterprises of the metropolis."[24] The group eventually included more than 500 churches and societies and more than 1,000 families.

The idea of supporting charitable work by selling stock that proposed to provide a small return for investors was a concept that had been in existence at least since the mid 19th century in England. In the 1840s, as concerns about the lack of healthy living conditions for many poor people increased and there was no expectation that the government would provide help, private groups formed to try to help these people. In 1844, the Society for Improving the Condition of the Labouring Classes was founded with the purpose of "arranging and executing plans as models and establishing loan societies, upon sound principles..." They desired "to provide the best accommodations at the least rent compatible with their desire to make a limited profit."[25] Throughout the rest of the 19th century and into the 20th, many other groups followed this model, both in England and later in the United States.[26]

In 1897 the Women's Hotel Company announced its plans and organization, with the explanation that a facility for independent women did not exist in New York at that time. They expressed the opinion that there was a great need for this type of housing since other places women might live either had too many rules for "the working girl of today" or was "not cheap enough for working girls."[27] Within two years, the company received more than enough letters of interest to fill the hotel immediately upon opening. Work on the actual building was delayed, at first because of the Spanish-American War and later due to a lag in the purchase of subscriptions. By 1899 there was enough capital to proceed, since many well-known New Yorkers such as John D. Rockefeller and William Schermerhorn, as well as Mrs. Russell Sage (who bought 10 shares) and Helen Gould, daughter of railroad magnate Jay Gould, had invested in the project.[28] By the time the hotel opened, much of the stock in the company was owned by individual women who supported the idea of a women's hotel.

Early in 1901 the Women's Hotel Company purchased two lots through the block on East 30th and East 29th Streets, 100 feet west of Madison Avenue. They paid $200,000 to the American Female Guardian Society which had owned the property since 1856 and ran a school on the 75-foot-wide site.[29] After the purchase of the property by the Women's Hotel Company, the existing building was demolished. The New Building permit was issued in 1901 to plans by the prominent architect Robert W. Gibson, who won a competition for this commission.[30] A newspaper announcement about the building noted that it was expected that the new hotel would "meet all the demands of exacting womankind."[31]

Robert W. Gibson (1854-1927)[32]

Robert Williams Gibson, an important and prolific architect, was born in Essex, England, graduated in 1879 from the Royal Academy of Arts, London (winning the Soane Medallion) and spent a year traveling on scholarship in Italy, France and Spain. After immigrating to the United States in 1881, Gibson established an architectural practice in Albany, N.Y., where he soon entered the competition for the design of the Cathedral of All Saints (Episcopal) and won over the only other submission: that of the preeminent Romanesque Revival master, Henry Hobson Richardson. The church was constructed in 1884-88 and 1902-04. Gibson also designed numerous substantial houses as well as the Romanesque Revival style National Commercial Bank (1887) in Albany. In 1888, Gibson moved to New York City, where he established a successful architectural practice, specializing in ecclesiastical and commercial buildings. Two early commissions were for the Romanesque-inspired U.S. Trust Co. Building (1888-89,

demolished), 45 Wall Street, and the New York Ear & Eye Infirmary (1888-94), Second Avenue and 13th Street.

Episcopal church designs figure prominently in Gibson's work, especially in New York State, many in the Gothic Revival style.[33] West End Collegiate Church and School (1892-93, West End Avenue and West 77th Street, a designated New York City Landmark) is a distinctive essay in the Dutch Renaissance Revival style, while the Church Missions House (1892-94, with Edward J.N. Stent, 281 Park Avenue South, a designated New York City Landmark) was inspired by a medieval Flemish guildhall. The Randall Memorial Chapel and Music Hall (1890-92; chapel demolished), Sailors' Snug Harbor, Staten Island, in the Greek Revival style, displays Gibson's wide-ranging abilities.

Gibson was well-connected socially in New York and received commissions for numerous private homes, especially on Long Island, as well as the Morton F. and Nellie Plant House at 651 Fifth Avenue (1903-05, Cartier's since 1917, a designated New York City Landmark). Gibson had many notable commercial and institutional projects in New York although many are no longer extant.[34] A prominent exception is the New York Botanical Garden Museum Building in the Bronx (1896-1901, a designated New York City Landmark). He was a director of the New York chapter of the American Institute of Architects and a president of the New York Architectural League.

Typical of architects of this period, Gibson worked in a number of historically-inspired styles, probably influenced by his early training. Many of his projects display characteristics of the Renaissance Revival or Beaux Arts styles, with classical details used on buildings with modern construction techniques and intended for contemporary purposes. Rusticated bases, strong cornices, engaged pilasters, and classical ornamental details adorn such structures as office buildings, banks and large-scale hotels.

Design of Martha Washington Hotel

In a reaction to the highly irregular and picturesque styles of the mid 19th century, many buildings in the United States that date to the following years (around the turn of the 20th century) were created with classically-inspired designs, which included symmetrical, evenly-distributed elements with ornamental details from various classical traditions such as Greek, Roman and Renaissance. These historical revival styles were often used by architects who had trained at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris or other European schools and who had traveled and observed the architecture so prominent in this part of the world. This style of architecture also suggested a greater refinement of taste and culture on the part of the patrons who supported such buildings and they became very popular.

The Martha Washington Hotel was designed in the Renaissance Revival style, using organizing elements such as cornices to divide the building horizontally and projecting or grouped bays to give a vertical emphasis. Ornamental details such as quoins, lintels detailed with keystones or pediments, rustication, brackets and dentils were used to highlight various parts of the facade. Robert Gibson, who was trained in England and traveled widely on the Continent before moving to America, used all of these elements on both facades of the Martha Washington Hotel, giving the building a distinctive presence in the busy mid-town hotel district in which it was constructed

Opening of Martha Washington Hotel

The Martha Washington Hotel opened in March 1903 and received extensive coverage in the press.[35] The idea of a hotel solely for women was considered peculiar at the time, requiring continuous explanations about the need for such a facility due to the greater numbers of women working and traveling than in the past. One of the hotel's early brochures acknowledged this issue, explaining that there were originally doubts "that it would be feasible to house so large a number of women as four hundred to five hundred under one roof."[36]

Originally called the Women's Hotel, the 12-story building was immediately fully occupied with permanent and transient guests, with 200 more on a waiting list. Manager James Case was in charge of the staff that was primarily composed of women, with several men employed as bell hops and elevator operators. Contemporary news articles described the conveniences available in the hotel, including a drug store, a ladies' tailor shop and millinery store, a manicurist and chiropodist, a ladies' shoe polishing parlor, and a newspaper stand. The building facilities included the latest conveniences, including electric lights, elevators, steam heat, and a mail chute. Single rooms and apartments were available for guests, along with a library, reception rooms on each floor including some private parlors, a roof promenade, a private dining room and a separate restaurant open to the public. There was great emphasis on the central location and convenience to public transportation. Authors also pointed out frequently that the hotel was founded on business principles, with "no paternalism or philanthropic idea," and "no harassing restrictions are imposed upon the hotel guests other than those prevailing in the best hotels."[37] By way of reassurance, one of the articles noted that the tenants were "teachers, bookkeepers, stenographers, musicians, artists, writers, nurses, physicians and other professional women."[38] The Board of the Women's Hotel Company was so enthusiastic at the opening of the Martha Washington Hotel that they promised to build other hotels in other cities on the same model before long.

Subsequent History

Although glowing descriptions accompanied the opening of the hotel and early reports were positive, within a few years there were indications of trouble with the hotel management. The Fourth Annual Report to the stockholders (dated January, 1904) explained that the delays in opening the hotel, due to strikes and "other unavoidable obstacles" required that the directors lend money to cover the initial expenses. Additionally, it was stated that only the transient guests were profitable for the hotel rather than the permanent residents, and therefore no dividend was possible at that time. A financial statement from January 18, 1907 explained that in the previous year there were extra expenses, due to a coal strike, repairs to the building, and a needed renewal of furnishings, that again made the distribution of dividends impossible. However, new higher rates went into effect as of September, 1906 and the hotel was beginning to see a profit. By the Seventh Annual Report to the Stockholders, in January, 1907, the directors reported that the "American Plan" option (a fee including all meals) was being ended, as it was too expensive and there were not enough people using it.

Major changes occurred early in 1907.[39] Stockholders were unhappy that they had never received any dividends and complained that the enterprise was in fact a charity rather than a business. Another group, including Lucy Kellogg, daughter of the founder of the hotel, wanted to take over the management, in order to return the hotel to the basis on which it was first intended, by lowering prices to make residency more affordable to working women. At first it appeared that the Board was going to allow this, but in the end the hotel was leased for ten years

to Arthur W. Edgar, the proprietor of the Westminster Hotel at Irving Place and 16th St, an experienced hotel man. He declared that the Martha Washington "will be run on the principle of a man's hotel. [It] will be brought up to hotel par and run at as reasonable rates as possible" with "no consideration of philanthropy, and it will be run for no particular class of women, but women will find there a certain seclusion and protection that they do not have in an ordinary hotel." [40]

In 1920, the hotel was purchased by the Martha Washington Hotel Corporation, which was run by Julius and William Manger who had an extensive chain of hotels in New York.[41] During its first few years of existence, the all-woman Hotel Martha Washington was a novelty to some. Residents complained that some people came by to stare and make fun of them.[42] However, by 1911 the concept was more accepted. It was lauded as the only hotel of its kind. "No matter how unprotected a young girl may be who comes alone to town, with 'Martha Washington' for a chaperone, she is considered as safe as in her own home."

The hotel continued to be run for women only until 1998. In spite of objections from many residents, the new owners at that time declared that they could not discriminate against clients based on gender and that they would only accept "suitable males." They provided rooms with private baths for male guests, while many women still shared bathrooms.[43] By 2000, the owners began to upgrade the entire hotel.[44]

Through the years, residents of the Martha Washington have included poet Sara Teasdale, who lived there for many years after 1913,[45] actress Louise Brooks, who moved there after being evicted from the Algonquin Hotel,[46] and Louise E. Dew, a well-known editor, writer, and lecturer, who edited the *Ladies' World* and contributed to many contemporary newspapers and magazines. The hotel was the location for the movie *Valley of the Dolls* and from 1907 served as the headquarters for the Interurban Women's Suffrage Council.[47]

Description

The Renaissance Revival style Martha Washington Hotel runs between East 29th and East 30th Streets with nearly identical street facades. The main entrance is centered in the 7-bay wide facade on East 30th Street while the East 29th Street facade has two symmetrical entrances, one on each side. Twelve stories high, the building is symmetrically arranged with a tall ground story and *piano nobile* marked by rusticated limestone and topped by a cornice. The main section is faced with tan brick with rustication along each side, and the top has ornamented terra-cotta panels on the 12th story and a broad, overhanging cornice. Balconettes punctuate the facades, along with bracketed cornices, Palladian windows and quoins.

30th Street Facade

Historic: Central entrance flanked by two storefronts in double-height street level; piers between have limestone alternating with tan brick; string course above includes simple entablature over doorway; *piano nobile* faced with stone and brick formed into quoins on windows, rounded openings with keyed terra-cotta moldings and squared openings with splayed terra-cotta lintels, stone balustrades in front of center 3 windows; stone panels beneath outside windows; broad cornice supported by brackets above 2nd story with narrow iron railings for balconnettes; 3rd -8th stories faced with brick, brick rustication at each corner, squared window openings with central, 3-part Palladian windows, simple stone sills, terra-cotta window surrounds and lintels are either splayed, keyed or have rounded shell-like pediments; decorative terra-cotta spandrel panels beneath central 4th story windows; central three windows set off with stone quoins between windows; cornice at 9th story with balconnettes and narrow iron railings, splayed terra-cotta

lintels over all windows; 10th story has rectangular windows with splayed terra cotta lintels with bracketed keystones and corbelled terra-cotta bricks above windows, supporting string course; smaller, rectangular windows on 11th story alternate with ornamented terra-cotta panels; broad, projecting cornice with dentils and modillions.

Alterations: Lower floor painted; central hotel entrance; steel awning with downlights, supported on metal poles; glass-and-metal doorway with plain glass transom; small plaque with name "LOLA" next to doorway; new storefronts; 3 bays on each side for stores; restaurant on east has central entrance reached by marble stairs with metal railing; metal and glass light fixtures at each side of door connected by wires; canvas, retractable awnings over windows and door; flower boxes in windows; bulkhead with siammese connection; plant stands attach to building at each end of restaurant; store on west has recessed central entrance bay with concrete stairs, metal railing; metal-and-glass door with air conditioner mounted in wall above; metal-and-glass fixtures with conduit on each side of door; single, fixed sash windows with plain glass transoms on each side of entry; camera on westernmost window, facing doorway; small, openings in bulkhead covered by grilles; windows changed throughout; small lights mounted on cornice above base, between windows; large uplights mounted on railings at 3rd story; flagpoles mounted on railings at 3rd story.

29th Street Facade

Historic: Similar to 29th Street facade except raised basement; two columned entrances, one at each end bay; each surmounted by pediment with cartouche and finial, rusticated columns; each reached by stairs; upper stores same as on 29th Street facade except balconnetes at end bays on 5th story.

Alterations: Recent alterations to stairs and metal railings at each entrance include concrete stairs with rounded steps; small lights mounted on cornice above base, between each window; uplights and flagpoles mounted on railings of 3rd story balconnettes; windows changed throughout.

Western Facade Not designed, visible above 3 story building to west; brick with 1/1 non-historic windows, light shaft, upper section near top covered with metal sheeting.

Site:

Stairways for store entrances project into sidewalk; double-door, diamond-plate sidewalk vault entrance in front of western store; two small lights inset in sidewalk next to western store entry.

Report Researched and Written by
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NOTES

[1] Much of the information in the section comes from Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), *Hotel Wolcott Designation Report (LP-2423)* (New York: City of New York, 2011) by Virginia Kurshan; LPC, *The Wilbraham Designation Report* (LP-2153) (New York: City of New York, 2004), by Jay Shockley; and LPC, *Madison Square North Historic District Designation Report* (LP-2097) (New York, City of New York, 2001), by Donald Presa and Gale Harris.

[2] These included the Fifth Avenue Theater (at 24th Street), the San Francisco Music Hall (at 28th Street), and Daly's Fifth-Avenue Theater (at 28th Street), the Metropolitan Opera House (1883, Broadway and 39th Street), the Casino Theatre (1882, 39th Street) and Harrigan's Theater (later Herald Square Theater). M*adison Square North Historic District Designation Report*, 12.

[3] Other early hotels in the area were the Albemarle, the St. James, the Victoria (all demolished).

[4] All of these club buildings have been demolished or converted to other use.

[5] This building included one floor of bachelor apartments.

[6] *The Wilbraham Designation Report*, 2.

[7] Information in this section comes from Paul Groth, *Livng Downtown, The History of Residential Hotels in the United States* (Berkeley: Univ of Calif Pres, 1994); Elizabeth Collins Cromley, *Alone Together, A History of New York's Early Apartments* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1990); Richard Plunz, *A History of Housing in New York City* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1990); and *Hotel Wolcott Designation Report*.

[8] Cromley, Ch. 6. "The Modern Apartment House."

[9] Margaret Gibbons Wilson, *The American Woman in Transition; The Global influence, 1870-1920* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1979), 7.

[10] Cromley, 187.

[11] *The Wilbraham Designation Report*

[12] Century Intl, 493-4. Apartment hotels defined as a "suite of rooms ...for families that use the dining room of building or go out for meals.

[13] Cromley, 189; and Groth, 70.

[14] David C. Hammack, *Power & Society, Greater New York at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 59.

[15] Wilson, 3-4.

[16] Wilson, 7.

[17] Wilson, 6.

[18] Cromley, 112.

[19] Cromley, 114.

[20] *New York Times*, Sept. 8, 1904.

[21] "Homes for Single Women," *New York Tribune*, Jun. 19, 1899.

[22] Lewis Randolph Hamersly, "Charles Day Kellogg," in *Who's Who in New York (city and state)* (L.R. Hamersly Co.: New York, 1904).

[23] Lucien Warner was a doctor who began Warner Brothers underwear manufacturers and was a major benefactor to Oberlin College, his alma mater, as well as to the YMCA, the Congregational Church and the American Missionary Association. Lucien Cox helped start the New York Botanical Garden and served on its board for many years. He was president of various scientific organizations including the New York Microscopical Society, the Council of the Scientific Alliance of New York and the New York Academy of Sciences, as well as being chairman of the Committee on the Prevention of Tuberculosis for the Charity Organization Society. Charles Jessup was a banker at

the Metropolitan Trust Company in New York. Charles C. Kellogg was active in business until he became General Secretary of the Charity Organization Society in Philadelphia and then New York, serving until 1896.

[24] Hammock, 77.

[25] John Tarn Nelson, Five *Percent Philanthropy, An Account of Housing in Urban Areas Between 1840 and 1941* (Cambridge: University Press, 1973), 15-18.

[26] The City Housing Corporation that built Sunnyside in Queens was also based on the idea of a 5% profit for its investors.

[27] "Housing Women Workers," *New York Tribune*, Sept. 11, 1897.

[28] "Women's Hotel Project," *New York Times*, Jan 22, 1899, 20; "Shares In the Woman's Hotel," *New York Times* Mar 26, 1899. Stock certificate in the name of Mrs. Russell Sage, for 10 shares at $1,000 each is in files of the New-York Historical Society.

[29] New York County Office of the Registrar, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 74, page 128, March 6, 1901. See also "Site for Women's Hotel," *New York Times*, Jan. 26, 1901, 9.

[30] New York City Department of Buildings, NB 1224, 1901. The design competition was mentioned in a publicity brochure for the hotel dated February, 1903 (in the collection of the NYPL).

[31] "Hotel for Women," *Brooklyn Eagle*, Dec 24,1901, 9.

[32] LPC, architects files and LPC, *Church Missions House Designation Report* (LP-1044) (New York: City of New York, 1979) prepared by Ruth Selden-Sturgill; James Ward, *Architects in Practice, New York City 1900-1940* (N.Y.: Comm. for the Pres. of Archl. Recs., 1989); Gibson obit., *New York Times*, Aug. 19, 1927, 17; Robert B. Mackay, Anthony Baker and Carol A. Traynor, eds., *Long Island Country Houses and Their Architects 1860-1940* (N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 1997), 177-179; Cornelia Brooke Gilder, "Robert W. Gibson (1851-1927)," *Albany Architects: The Present Looks at the Past* (Albany: Hist. Albany Fdtn., 1978), 10-11, and "Robert W. Gibson: Master of Many Styles," *Preservation League of New York Newsletter* (May-June 1984), 4-5; "Robert Williams Gibson," Albert Nelson Marquis, ed., *Who's Who in America* 7 (Chicago: A.N. Marquis & Co., 1912), 797, and *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* 11 (N.Y.: James T. White Co., 1893), 324; George E. DeMille, *Pioneer Cathedral: A Brief History of the Cathedral of All Saints* (Albany, 1967), 51.

[33] Examples of Gibson's church designs in the Gothic Revival style include Christ Mission (1886), Gloversville, N.Y.; Christ Church (1888-89), Herkimer, N.Y.; the 1888-89 interior of St. Paul's Cathedral (1860-61, Richard Upjohn), Buffalo, N.Y.; St. Stephen's Church (1888-89), Olean, N.Y.; Christ Church (1886-94), Rochester, N.Y.; St. Michael's Church (1890-91), Amsterdam Avenue and West 99th Street; Trinity Church (1891), Ossining, N.Y.; St. John's Church (1892), Northampton, Mass.; Grace Church (1892), Plainfield, N.J.; Christ Church (1893), Corning, N.Y.; and St. Luke's Church (1897-98), Mechanicsville, N.Y.

[34] These include the Fifth Avenue Bank (1890, demolished, 530 Fifth Avenue); Seawanhaka Corinthian Yacht Club (1891-93), Oyster Bay, N.Y.; Greenwich Savings Bank (1892, demolished, 246 Sixth Avenue); New York Coffee Exchange (1895, demolished, 110 Pearl Street); and the New York Clearing House Exchange Building (1896, demolished, 77 Cedar Street).

[35] "Hotel for Women Only," *New York Times* Feb. 3, 1903; Hotel Martha Washington," *Architects' and Builders' Magazine* 35 (Jan., 1903), 166; "Women's Hotel Opens," *New York Tribune*, Feb. 4, 1903, 7. "The Hotel Martha Washington, An interesting experiment in Inn Keeping," *The Independent* 55 (June 25, 1903, 491-2).

[36] Brochure dated February, 1903, in collection of New York Public Library.

[37] *The Independent*.

[38] *New York Times*, Feb.3, 1903.

[39] "Martha's Excited," *New York Tribune*, Dec. 25, 1906; "Change at Woman's Hotel," *New York Times*, Dec. 29, 1906; "Crisis Comes To-Day in The Martha Washington," *New York Times*, Jan. 28, 1907, 7; "To Lease Women's Hotel," *New York Tribune*, Dec. 28, 1906, 7; "The Martha Washington Leased for Ten Years," *New York Times*, Jan. 29, 1907.

[40] "The Martha Washington Leased for Ten Years".

[41] New York County Office of the Registrar, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 3133, page 256, February 25, 1920. The Manger Hotels also owned the nearby Hotel Wolcott at this time (see designation report).

[42] "Injustice to Women's Hotel, *New York Times*, Sept. 1, 1904, 6.

[43] "Martha Washington Goes Coed," *Village Voice*, Nov. 17, 1998.

[44] "New Landlord, Old Tenants, Hard Questions," *New York Times*, Feb. 27, 2000.

[45] W.D. Drake, *Sara Teasdale: Woman and Poet* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979).

[46] Louise Brooks, *Lulu in Hollywood* (Minneapolis, Univ. of Minn. Press, 1974).

[47] This group served as the unifying organization of 15 smaller groups formed to support women's suffrage in the late 19th century. Mari Jo and Paul Buhle, *The Concise History of Women's Suffrage: Selections from History of Women's Suffrage* (Urbana, IL: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1978), 400.

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 Martha Washington Hotel 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 Martha Washington Hotel was developed by the Women's Hotel Company for the purpose of providing comfortable, independent living arrangements for middle-class working women; that this company was formed by a group of people active in the Charity Organization Society to fill an unmet need for housing for working women; that the group sold stock to members of New York's elite as well as to working women themselves, with the promise of 5% return on investment; that the hotel was the first of its kind in New York to provide living arrangements that gave women the same independence as men; that the hotel included private rooms for permanent and transient residents, with shared facilities such as a dining room, parlors, library and roof deck; that the hotel was located in the heart of Manhattan's mid-town hotel district, convenient to transit, commerce and entertainment; that the building was designed by prominent architect Robert Gibson, who had designed numerous churches, commercial and residential structures in New York City and State; that this building displays the popular Renaissance Revival style using classical elements such as rustication, columns, strong cornices with dentils and modillions, Palladian windows and quoins, to give a sense of dignity to this important structure; that this hotel continued to provide women-only facilities until 1998, when it was converted to a co-ed hotel; that the Martha Washington Hotel continues to contribute its gracious presence to busy Manhattan streets and to provide the services of a convenient mid-town hotel after more than 100 years.

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 Martha Washington Hotel, 30 East 30th Street (aka 27-33 East 29th Street), Manhattan, and designates as its Landmark Site Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 859, Lot 26, in part consisting of the land on which the described building is located.

Pablo Vengoechea, Vice- Chairman
Frederick Bland, Michael Goldblum, Margery Perlmutter,
Elizabeth Ryan, Roberta Washington, Commissioners

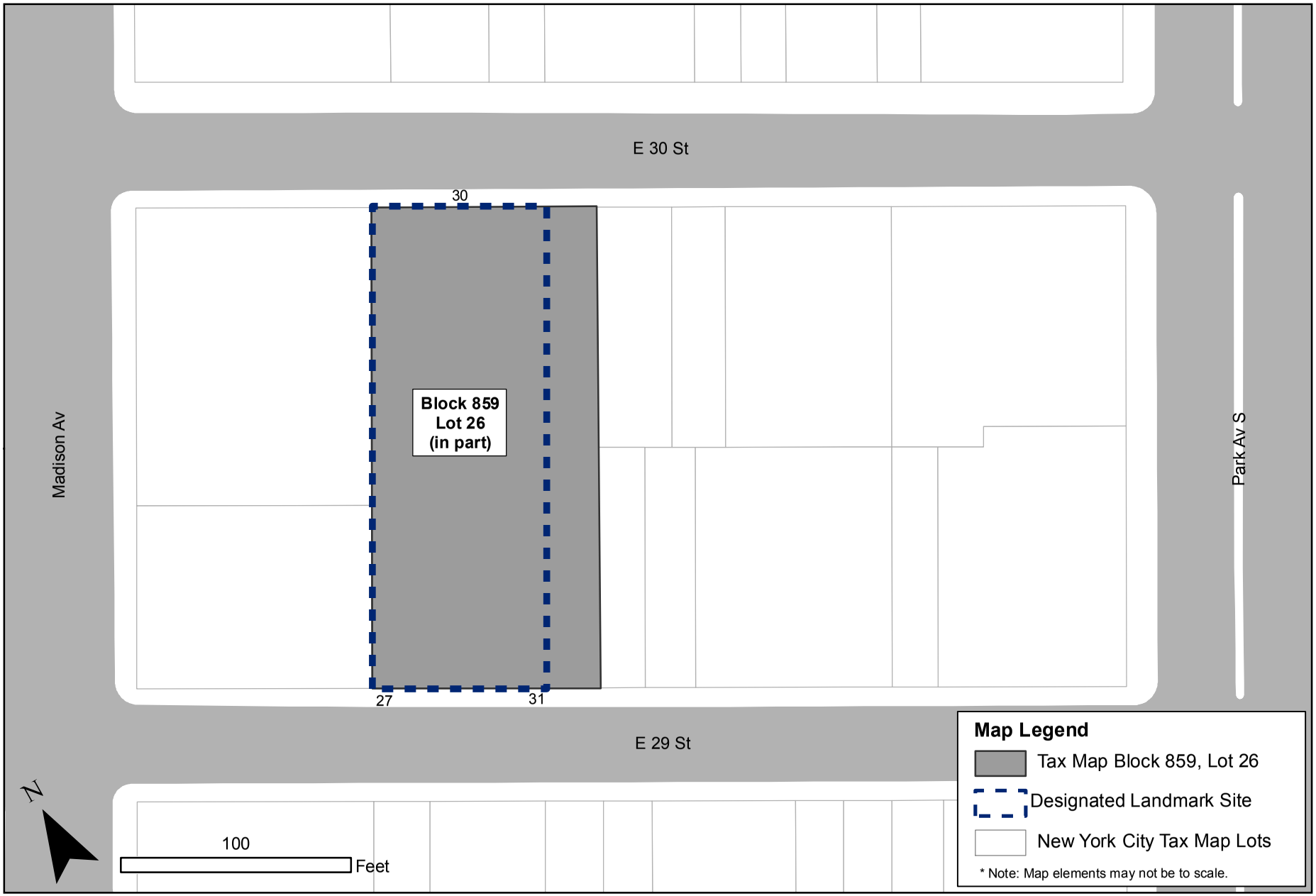
Amended lot vote
Robert B. Tierney, Chairman
Frederick Bland, Diana Chapin, Michael Devonshire,
Joan Gerner, Margery Perlmutter, Commissioners

Martha Washington Hotel
30 East 30th Street (aka 27-31 East 29th Street), Manhattan
Block 859. Lot 26
30th Street Facade
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2010

Martha Washington Hotel
East 29th Street Facade
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2010

Martha Washington Hotel
30th Street Details
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2010 and 2012

Martha Washington Hotel
Facade details
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2012



MARTHA WASHINGTON HOTEL (LP-2428), 30 East 30th Street (aka 27-31 East 29th Street)
Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 859, Lot 26, in part, consisting of the land on which the described building is located.

Designated: June 12, 2012; Landmark Site Amended: June 19, 2012

Graphic Source: New York City Department of City Planning, MapPLUTO, Edition 09v1, 2009. Author: New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, JM. Date: June 19, 2012