



Date:	12/15/2020
LPC Docket #:	LPC-21-01518
LPC Action:	Approved
Action required by other agencies:	DOB
Permit Type:	CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Address: 2500 Jerome Avenue - Saint James Episcopal Church and Parish

Borough: Bronx

Block: 3190 **Lot:** 1

Historic District: Individual Landmark

Description: A Gothic Revival style church and parish house designed by Henry Dudley and constructed in 1863. Application is to demolish the existing 1960's fellowship hall and construct a new building on the landmark site.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission NOTED that the Saint James Episcopal Church and Parish site comprises the c. 1860 Gothic Revival style church, c. 1892 parish house addition, and c. 1960 fellowship hall addition sited on an approximately one acre lot bound by Saint James Park and Recreation Center to the northeast, and the Jerome Avenue elevated subway to the west. The lot also features substantial greenspace at the front and side of the property in front of the church, and an asphalt driveway and parking lot. The Commission further NOTED that the two apartment buildings at 2525 and 2501 Morris Avenue were constructed within the footprint of the original lot, the former by the church in 1938 and the latter on the former site of the stone parsonage, which was sold by the church in c. 1963.

Pursuant to Section 25-307 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Commission APPROVED THE PROPOSAL, finding:

- that the 1960 Fellowship Hall addition is not one of the features for which the site was designated, and its demolition will not diminish the special architectural and historic character of the Individual Landmark;
- that historically once-rural churches often redeveloped portions of their property as the city grew up around their church buildings;
- that St. James Church has twice before re-developed the eastern portion of its site with apartment buildings, and the construction of a new building at the northwest portion of the lot along Jerome Avenue is in keeping with this tradition;
- that the careful siting of the new building will retain a significant amount of greenspace at the front of the church facing East 190th Street and the southern end of the side of the church facing Jerome Avenue, and will maintain the existing unobstructed views of the church from the south and southwest; that views of the church from the north from the park are currently blocked and compromised by the park recreational building, and the view of the northwest façade of the church from Jerome Avenue is seen in context with the church-built 1920s apartment building, and therefore, blocking these views will not have a significant impact on appreciation of the church from these public thoroughfares;
- that the proposed U-shaped building will create an intimate and harmonious close at the northern end of the site;
- that the materials of the proposed building, featuring rusticated, smooth, and Roman style gray brick, red cast stone, and raked joints, will echo the materials palette of the church building in a contemporary way;
- that the change in material and bond at window spandrels will create contrast and add architectural interest to the facades;
- that the canopy will be well scaled to the entrance and simply designed, helping it remain a harmonious, secondary presence;
- that the relatively simple details of the proposed building's façade elements, the patterned brickwork, and the use of casement windows, will maintain a level of articulation which will be compatible with the church building;
- that the axial approach to the rectory and west façade of the church from Jerome Avenue, will be through a gothic arch with metal gate, recalling design elements of the historic church without replicating them;
- that the 19-foot high entrance portal and arcade, featuring a series of pointed gothic arches that relate to arches on the church, will provide open views of the historic church;
- that the simple design, small scale and materials and finish palette of the one-story community hall building will help provide a harmonious transition between the apartment building and the historic church building;
- and that the proposed materials of the interior courtyard will relate well to the historic church building and be in keeping with those typically found at church courtyards.

However, in voting to grant the approval, the Commission requested that the applicants continue to study the resolution



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of the base of the arcade, in consultation with staff.

VOTE:

Present: Sarah Carroll, Adi Shamir-Baron, Frederick Bland, Diana Chapin, Wellington Chen, Michael Devonshire, Jeanne Lutfy, Anne HolFord Smith, Everardo Jefferson, Michael Goldblum, John Gustafsson

9-2-0

In Favor = S.Carroll, A.Shamir-Baron, F.Bland, D.Chapin, W.Chen, M.Devonshire, J.Lutfy, A.HolFord Smith, E.Jefferson

Oppose = M.Goldblum, J.Gustafsson

Abstain =

Recuse =

Please note that these "Commission Findings" are a summary of the findings related to the application. This is NOT a permit or approval to commence any work. No work may occur until the Commission has issued a Certificate of Appropriateness, which requires review and approval of Department of Buildings filing drawings and/or other construction drawings related to the approved work. In addition, no work may occur until the work has been reviewed and approved by other City agencies, such as the Department of Buildings, as required by law