

**500 FIFTH AVENUE BUILDING**, 500 Fifth Avenue (aka 500-506 Fifth Avenue,  
1-9 West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street), Manhattan

Built 1929-31; Architects Shreve, Lamb & Harmon

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 1258, Lot 34

On October 26, 2010, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the 500 Fifth Avenue Building and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Public Hearing Item No. 3). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. Two people spoke in favor of designation, including representatives of Assembly Member Richard Gottfried and the Historic Districts Council. Representatives of the owner of the 500 Fifth Avenue Building stated that at the time of the hearing they had no position either for or against designation, and requested that the hearing period be extended by 60 days. The public hearing was continued on December 14, 2010 (Public Hearing Item No. 1), and a representative of the owner of the 500 Fifth Avenue Building spoke but took no position on designation.

Summary

Built in 1929-31, Shreve, Lamb & Harmon's 500 Fifth Avenue Building is a soaring 59-story Art Deco skyscraper, located at the northwest corner of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and Fifth Avenue. The building was constructed concurrently with the Empire State Building. Because the site was so valuable and so small, measuring only 100 feet by 208 feet, the building was designed to the maximum height and floor area allowable under the 1916 zoning code. Located in two zoning districts with differing setback requirements, it is asymmetrically massed with setbacks at the 18<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 25<sup>th</sup> stories on Fifth Avenue and a recessed light court beginning at the eighth story and setbacks at the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, and 34<sup>th</sup> stories on West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street. Sheathed in limestone, terra cotta, and buff brick, the facades are enriched with carefully scaled Art Deco motifs, which accentuate the building's sculptural massing and emphasize its verticality. On Fifth Avenue the limestone and black granite main entrance is treated as a pylon framed by stylized gilded palmettos and capped by an allegorical relief by sculptor Edmond Amateis "symbolizing the genius of the modern skyscraper." Capping the setbacks and tower are a series of angled brick and terra-cotta panels decorated with chevrons that read as pleated cresting against the skyline. When it opened in March 1931, 500 Fifth Avenue was the crowning achievement of real estate developer Walter J. Salmon, who was responsible for rebuilding the north side of West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Shreve, Lamb & Harmon was one of the leading architectural firms in the country specializing in skyscraper design. In addition to 500 Fifth Avenue, Shreve Lamb & Harmon designed the Empire State Building (1929-31, 350 Fifth Avenue, a designated New York City Landmark). 500 Fifth Avenue continues to be used as an office building with street-level stores.



## DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

### History and Development of Midtown and the 500 Fifth Avenue Site<sup>1</sup>

The area surrounding Fifth Avenue between 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and the southern end of Central Park remained rural in character until the second half of the nineteenth century, when speculative residences and mansions began to be constructed on lots newly mapped by the city.<sup>2</sup> By 1900, the character of the neighborhood on the blocks north of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street began to change with the construction of, or the conversion of private residences to, exclusive retail shops, restaurants, and office buildings. By 1923, so many banks and trust companies had established uptown branches near the intersection of Park Avenue and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and on the blocks of Fifth Avenue north of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, that *Rider's New York City* guide reported the area was popularly known as “Little Wall Street.”<sup>3</sup> 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, which linked this business district to Times Square, became one of the busiest thoroughfares in New York while Fifth Avenue remained the most fashionable shopping street in the city, leading *Real Estate Record & Guide* to declare the parcel at 500 Fifth Avenue, at the northwest corner of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, as “the most valuable building site on Manhattan Island north of Wall Street.”<sup>4</sup>

In 1903 a young and ambitious real estate entrepreneur named Walter J. Salomon (1871-1953), who later changed his surname to Salmon,<sup>5</sup> leased the corner lot and the adjacent L-shaped lot, which fronted on Fifth Avenue and West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street. Salmon then converted the existing building, the eight-story Hotel Bristol, into a commercial and office building and renamed it the Bristol Building. This property was to form the core of Salmon's redevelopment plan for 500 Fifth Avenue, his crowning achievement as a real estate man and the final puzzle piece in the transformation of the entire block front into an imposing wall of modern commercial structures.<sup>6</sup>

### New York's Art Deco Skyscrapers<sup>7</sup>

America's involvement in World War I, followed by a recession in the early 1920s, caused a construction lull in New York City, as in other parts of the country. By the mid 1920s, the economy had bounced back, and demand for new and larger commercial buildings was booming. Fifteen new office skyscrapers were erected in New York in 1925, and 1926 saw the construction of 30 more.<sup>8</sup> This building frenzy lasted through the 1929 stock market crash, as construction went forward in the early 1930s on buildings that had already been planned and financed; although largely finished by 1932, the boom left behind a “rich array of towers,” many of them executed in what is known today as the Art Deco style.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, several of New York's most spectacular skyscrapers from this period—including the Chanin Building (Sloan & Robertson, 1927-29), the Chrysler Building (William Van Alen, 1928-30), the Empire State Building (Shreve, Lamb & Harmon, 1929-31) and the General Electric Building (Cross & Cross, 1929-31), all designated New York City Landmarks, are among the country's most significant examples of Art Deco design.

Into the 1910s, no limits on building height or bulk existed in New York City. In 1916, New York implemented the nation's first zoning regulations, which permitted unrestricted height on one quarter of a building site, but required skyscrapers to taper as they rose to allow light and air to reach the street. Six years later, architect and critic Harvey Wiley Corbett (1873-1954) and architectural delineator Hugh Ferriss (1889-1962) published a group of influential renderings that explored zoning's impact on the shape of tall buildings. Presented as a series of illustrations progressing from the abstract, pyramidal shape of the zoning envelope to a stepped-back practicable building form, these drawings catalyzed 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.”<sup>10</sup> So pervasive were the new stepped-back skyscrapers that by the mid-1920s, architects and critics spoke of an emerging “setback style”.<sup>11</sup>

Another important influence on 1920s skyscraper design was Eliel Saarinen’s 1922 competition entry for the Chicago Tribune’s new tower. With its straightforward shape, vertical emphasis, and limited ornament, Saarinen’s ahistorical design was “taken to be style-less and was thought in the twenties to have freed architects from what seemed the inevitable alternatives in skyscraper design, Gothic solutions on the one hand and vertically stretched Classicism on the other.”<sup>12</sup>

The issue of what constituted “modern” design was expounded upon in the press and occupied many architects, who sought an appropriate means of expressing the societal changes brought about by new technology and manufacturing processes. A dichotomy existed, according to Ada Louise Huxtable, between the “modern” architecture of Europe and the “modernistic” new skyscrapers of New York:

‘Modern’ was radical, reductive, and reformist; ‘modernistic’ was richly decorative and attached to conservative and hedonistic values. ‘Modern’ was the austere, abstract, elite, avant-garde work of ... [Walter] Gropius, Mies [van der Rohe], and Le Corbusier, united in its early days under the rubric of the International Style. ‘Modernistic’ was neither pure nor revolutionary; it fused the ornamental and the exotic for what was really the last great decorative style.<sup>13</sup>

Only a handful of International Style skyscrapers were constructed in the United States before World War II.<sup>14</sup> Far more popular was the “modernistic” style, which was later termed “Art Deco” based on its debt to the 1925 Paris *Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes*.<sup>15</sup> Flamboyant, dynamic, and dazzling to the eye, Art Deco’s primary characteristic was its “sumptuous ornament, and the lush textures and colors achieved by combining several materials, such as stone, brick, terra cotta, and metal.”<sup>16</sup> Gilding and shiny materials were frequently used, and favorite decorative motifs, drawn from the natural world and geometric forms, included “spirals, sunflowers, steps, zigzags, triangles, double triangles, hexagons, fragmented circles, and seashells.”<sup>17</sup> Frequently, facades were given a woven fabric treatment, in buildings including One Wall Street (Ralph Walker of Voorhees, Gmelin & Walker, 1929-31, a designated New York City Landmark) and the 21 West Street Building (Starrett & Van Vleck, 1929-31, a designated New York City Landmark). Wall surfaces read as thin decorative veneers, as “stage sets” to a public infatuated with movies and the theater.<sup>18</sup>

As Art Deco was conquering New York, a new skyscraper form, the slab, emerged. Into the 1920s, the city’s tallest skyscrapers were typically constructed on enormous lots. These sites were big enough, as with the Chrysler Building, to allow for “geometrically pure” square, needle-like towers that broke free of their bases and pierced the sky.<sup>19</sup> But as large lots became rarer and developers sought to construct tall office buildings on narrow lots, this approach became unfeasible; the square tower, if made too small, lost too much of its internal space to elevators. As a result, new skyscrapers on narrower lots took on a slab-like form, their long and rectangular upper stories seemingly extruded from their bases. The pioneering slab skyscraper was H. Douglas Ives’ and Sloan & Robertson’s 38-story Fred F. French Building (1927, a designated New York City Landmark) at Fifth Avenue and 45<sup>th</sup> Street, which was constructed on a relatively small lot.<sup>20</sup> But the master of the slab at the end of the 1920s was Raymond Hood, whose Daily News Building marked the most radical departure of any tall building from previous skyscraper form. Despite the rich Art Deco bas-relief over its main entrance, Hood’s building,

with its artfully planned setbacks and flat, unornamented roofline, came closer to abstract sculpture than any skyscraper before; falling, in style, “between modern and modernistic,” it forsook the decorated crown of the Art Deco skyscraper and approached the purity of the International Style.<sup>21</sup> Hood built upon his experience with the Daily News Building in designing another of the city’s great slab skyscrapers, the RCA Building at Rockefeller Center (a designated New York City Landmark), which was completed in 1933. Located just three blocks from the French Building, and similar in design and materials to the Daily News Building, 500 Fifth Avenue’s slender, slab-form tower situated the building within this group of transitional skyscrapers, precursors to the postwar office building.<sup>22</sup> But with the Depression remaining entrenched and money for office buildings drying up, few Art Deco skyscrapers were completed in New York after Rockefeller Center, and the style, increasingly employed for government and institutional buildings, became considerably more restrained.<sup>23</sup>

#### Shreve, Lamb & Harmon<sup>24</sup>

Richmond Harold Shreve (1877-1946)

William Frederick Lamb (1883-1958)

Arthur Loomis Harmon (1878-1958)

The architectural firm of Shreve, Lamb & Harmon, formed in 1929, was one of New York City’s premier design teams, known primarily for their modern office buildings and especially the Empire State Building (completed 1931, a designated New York City Landmark). The three principal designers had traditional architectural educations and experience with important New York firms before they joined together and created buildings specifically adapted to the design requirements and technological advances of the modern era.

Richmond Harold Shreve was born in Cornwallis, Nova Scotia. He studied architecture at Cornell University, graduating in 1902, and spent the next four years on the faculty of the School of Architecture there. While at Cornell, he supervised the construction of Goldwin Smith Hall, designed by the New York firm of Carrère & Hastings, and at the conclusion of the project he joined the firm. William Frederick Lamb, son of New York builder William Lamb, was born in Brooklyn. Graduating from Williams College in 1904, Shreve subsequently studied at the Columbia University School of Architecture, and then went to Paris to study at the Atelier Deglane. After receiving his diploma from the École des Beaux Arts in 1911, Lamb returned to New York and joined the firm of Carrère & Hastings where he met Shreve. In 1920, Shreve and Lamb became partners in the new firm of Carrère & Hastings, Shreve & Lamb. By 1924, they decided to establish their own partnership, and five years later they were joined by Arthur Loomis Harmon to form Shreve, Lamb & Harmon. Harmon, who had been born in Chicago, studied at the Art Institute there and graduated from Columbia University School of Architecture in 1901. He worked as a designer in the firm of McKim, Mead & White between 1902 and 1911. From 1912 to 1913, he was an associate in the firm of Wallis & Goodwillie, and then practiced alone until joining Shreve and Lamb. His works from that period include battle monuments at Tours, Cantigny and Somme-Py in France, a YMCA in Jerusalem, and the award-winning Shelton Hotel in New York.

Of the three architects in the firm, Lamb was generally acknowledged to be the designer, and Shreve the administrator. For the Empire State Building, the firm’s most famous work, Lamb was the designer, but Shreve’s organizational skills were generally credited with enabling the building to be constructed in just one year. Shreve was also active as a planner beyond the

firm's work; he was the director of the Slum Clearance Committee of New York after its formation in 1933, and chief architect of the group preparing plans for the Williamsburg Housing Project, as well as chief architect of the Vladeck Houses on the Lower East Side and also of Parkchester in the Bronx.

Shreve, Lamb & Harmon worked principally on commercial office buildings, although they also designed a number of estates and residences in the New York suburbs, and a few apartment houses in Manhattan (such as No. 130 East 57th Street and No. 30 East 76th Street, located within the Upper East Side Historic District). Their residential work was largely in the neo-Tudor and other popular historical styles of the 1920s, while their commercial work tended to be spare and functional, reflecting little of the Beaux Arts ornament for which Carrère & Hastings had been famous. Their other buildings in New York included the L.P. Hollander & Company Building at 3 East 57<sup>th</sup> Street (1929-30, a designated New York City Landmark), a 1931-33 addition to 14 Wall Street (a designated New York City Landmark), the Best & Company store at Fifth Avenue and 51<sup>st</sup> Street (demolished), an addition to the New York Times Annex on West 43<sup>rd</sup> Street, the Lefcourt National Building, and the Mutual of New York Building. Outside of New York City, their work includes the Standard Oil Building in Albany, the Reynolds Tobacco Company building in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and the Chimes Building in Syracuse, NY. These tend to be similar to their New York City work, with unadorned limestone cladding, metal-framed windows and simple, set-back massing, occasionally with Art Deco or Streamlined ornamental motifs.

#### Edmond R. Amateis<sup>25</sup>

Edmond R. Amateis (1897-1981) was an American sculptor born in Rome and trained at the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design in New York. Working in the U.S. and Europe, Amateis created monumental public sculpture of a heroic-classical nature. Early in his career he won recognition with his award of the Prix de Rome (1921), the Avery Prize of the Architectural League of New York (1929), and the McCleese Prize of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (1933). For the New York World's Fair of 1939, Amateis sculpted a monumental allegorical group based on American folklore, with figures depicting Johnny Appleseed as Benevolence, Paul Bunyan as Efficiency, and Strap Buckner as Humility. Amateis's other major commissions included a sculptural frieze for the Liberty Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri, completed in 1938, and a memorial to American soldiers who died in France during World War II, located in Draguignan, France.

#### Design and Construction of the 500 Fifth Avenue Building<sup>26</sup>

With his acquisition of the properties at nos. 3, 5, 7, and 9 West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street in 1915, Walter J. Salmon had assembled a parcel of 20,900 square feet at 500 Fifth Avenue, about the minimum size necessary for profitable redevelopment.<sup>27</sup> In 1922, Gerry Estates, Inc. entered into an agreement with Salmon to redevelop the site.<sup>28</sup> With other projects in the works, including the adjacent Salmon Tower at 11-27 West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, Salmon delayed beginning work on the corner site until the summer of 1929. At that time he announced plans for a fifty-eight story building with frontage of 100 feet on Fifth Avenue and 208 feet on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street to be built to the design of Shreve, Lamb & Harmon.<sup>29</sup> Given its status as the second most valuable piece of real estate in Manhattan, redevelopment of this site was greatly anticipated among the real estate community and by the public at large. An article in the *Real Estate Record & Guide* described the high-profile nature of the project:

For years residents of the city and out-of-town visitors alike have speculated as to the future of this corner, wondering that so prominent a location—at “the crossroads of the world”—should have been neglected in the modern development of Fifth Avenue as the leading shopping street of the world and of the Grand Central area as the midtown financial and business district...With the fashionable shopping district definitely extending its limits above Forty-second Street; with the north and south flow of automobile and pedestrian traffic and the cross flow between Grand Central Station and Times Square making the intersection one of the busiest in the world, and with other building under way, the time appeared ripe for an improvement on this corner.<sup>30</sup>

The construction of the office building at 500 Fifth Avenue had a significant impact on the eventual development of the adjacent parcels, because its planning affected the zoning of the entire Fifth Avenue block front. The zoning code permitted a taller building on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street than on Fifth Avenue, so Salmon acquired a long-term lease on the adjacent four-story converted dwelling at 508 Fifth Avenue in 1927; by merging the zoning lots of this 25 by 102-foot building and that of 500 Fifth Avenue, he was able to build a higher tower than would have otherwise been possible.<sup>31</sup>

The program for 500 Fifth Avenue called for street-level stores, banking facilities on the second and third floors, and office units on the floors above, totaling approximately 450,000 square feet of rentable area. Plans were submitted to the Buildings Department in October 1929, and excavation began in February of 1930; the estimated cost of the project was \$4,000,000.<sup>32</sup> Charles T. Wills, Inc. was the general contractor, and McClintic-Marshall Co. the steel contractor. Erection of the skyscraper’s steel skeleton began at the end of March, and was completed in a mere four months owing to a highly efficient system whereby the steel arrived on site and was hoisted by derricks to the 36<sup>th</sup> floor, where it was assembled and continuously distributed by a relay derrick to other floors. The exterior brickwork was completed in early September 1930, and the general contract for the building was completed in January 1931. At the height of the building project nearly 2,200 workers were employed.<sup>33</sup>

The construction of 500 Fifth Avenue and its sister skyscraper the Empire State Building (constructed concurrently from January 1930 to May 1931) set a new standard for speed and efficiency in building construction.<sup>34</sup> Each component of 500 Fifth Avenue’s structure was planned, mapped, and measured in advance, in what historian Christopher Gray called a “tight ballet of scheduling.”<sup>35</sup> This strategic approach to construction planning and oversight was successfully realized at 500 Fifth Avenue through the close collaboration of the architect, building owner, real estate advisers, operating managers, and builder throughout the entire process of planning and construction. Architect Richmond Shreve was a great proponent of rationalized building construction, and expounded on his ideas in an essay titled “The Economic Design of Office Buildings”:

To set up properly an income-producing building the control of its design and construction should be in the hands of a Board on which sit Owner, Banker, Builder, Architect, Engineers, and Real Estate Men. The record of their decisions finds place in plans, specifications and contracts, financial transactions and leases, and the outcome of their work, if it is to be successful, must have been foreseen far in advance of its realization.<sup>36</sup>

500 Fifth Avenue was completed in just over a year without accident or serious injury, and opened in March 1931 in time for the traditional renewal date for business leases of May 1. William F. Lamb called 500 Fifth Avenue “a thoroughly frank expression of the requirements of an up-to-date office building.”<sup>37</sup> These requirements included modern, well lit and properly ventilated office units near elevators and bathrooms; fast and efficient elevator service; and maximum rentable floor space. Despite its relatively small lot (less than a quarter of the size of the Empire State Building lot)<sup>38</sup> and constricted building envelope, 500 Fifth Avenue offered all of these things; moreover, its unusually advantageous corner location across from the New York Public Library and Bryant Park afforded ample natural light, cross-ventilation, and unobstructed views for two blocks to the south.

Effectively, Shreve, Lamb & Harmon designed 500 Fifth Avenue from the top down, determining the placement of the building’s service core within the tower and then the base, and from the inside out, determining the ideal office unit as a basis for formulating the overall plan and circulation.<sup>39</sup> The building’s set-back configuration, which allowed for an unusually high window-to-wall ratio, as well as a 25-foot wide light court on the west side of the building beginning at the sixth floor, ensured that no office unit would be more than 30 feet from natural light; a distance of 28 feet or less was considered optimal for modern office buildings before the development of air-conditioning. Floor areas ranged from 2,150 to 18,000 square feet, with office units as small as 9 feet in width and as large as an entire floor.<sup>40</sup> The typical floor plan for the building’s base had 21 office units, while the typical floor plan for the tower had nine office units.

The main entrance to the building was placed on the Fifth Avenue facade, about 70 feet from 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and on center with the sheer tower rising above the setbacks, and the remainder of the ground floor on both the east and south facades was dominated by an unbroken line of bronze-framed, plate-glass storefronts. The main entrance was framed dramatically by pylons and crowned with the highly stylized bas-relief figure of a Grecian woman holding a staff with a winged sun disc and kneeling beside a model of the building itself, an allegorical representation of the “genius of the modern skyscraper,”<sup>41</sup> sculpted from a single block of limestone by Edward Amateis.<sup>42</sup>

The dramatically massed exterior of 500 Fifth Avenue expressed the constraints of the zoning code, which allowed more bulk on the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street side than on the Fifth Avenue side and thus determined the positioning of the tower on the base. The building’s tight footprint, which limited the size of the base, and the imperative of maximizing profits with top-quality office and retail space in a relatively small building envelope, resulted in the complex geometry of setbacks stepping up asymmetrically to the slender tower.<sup>43</sup> With regards to the height of office buildings in a competitive real estate market, “...there is a point where the balance begins to swing back and the rate of return on capital investment begins to diminish as the building goes higher.”<sup>44</sup> At 500 Fifth Avenue, the projected height of 58 stories (plus a penthouse, making the total 59 stories), or 697 feet, was considered the limit of economic feasibility for a 100- by 208-foot lot.<sup>45</sup> In his essay on tall office buildings, Shreve summed up the design problem inherent in the 1916 zoning ordinance, describing the modern tall office building as

“a geometrical form consisting of a base enclosed by vertical walls, an intermediate section defined by sloping limits, and a tower...[and]...practical usable office floor area, supported and enclosed by structural forms, served by mechanical equipment, and reached through public spaces which are not directly sources of revenue.”<sup>46</sup>

Shreve went on to offer this thought:

The demands of time, cost, and practicability need not be hostile to the aesthetic side of the work. Indeed, may it not be fairly said that character is improved and greater success of pure design assured if sound reasoning as to value, and honest recognition of function, accompany and guide our struggle to attain architectural beauty?

Shreve, Lamb & Harmon's completed building was noted in the press for its height, its zoning conditions, and its real estate value; it was among the city's notable tall buildings of the time and remains a distinguished example of Art Deco skyscraper design.<sup>47</sup> Stylized geometrical ornament, a restrained color palette, and the "vertical accent" created by spandrels and channeling all contributed to the building's "modern architectural treatment",<sup>48</sup> in the words of partner William Lamb. On the second, third, and fourth stories, limestone piers decorated with channeling and abstracted frond and scroll motifs and light-green metal spandrels decorated with folds and chevrons reflect Art Deco's affinity for stylized geometric forms. Around the main entrance the carved limestone pylons and allegorical bas-relief are picked out in gilding, and on the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street facade a pair of eagles carved in profile enhance the figural quality of the ornamental scheme. Rising above the base is 500 Fifth Avenue's flat-roofed, slab-form tower. The tower's vertical buff-brick stripes are likely inspired by Hood's Daily News Building, which bridged Art Deco and the emerging International Style when it opened in 1930. As with the Daily News Building—where Hood sought to conceal the windows to avoid the effect of a wall "shot full of holes"—these stripes alternate with dark window bands.<sup>49</sup> In the center bays on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and in the two window bays over the main entry, 500 Fifth Avenue's terra-cotta spandrel panels are dark gray in color and angle forward. Seen from a distance the dark color of the spandrels merges with the dark color of the window frames to create a series of vertical stripes that rise unbroken to the roofline. This striped effect is continued on the north elevation, where the large expanse of brick wall enclosing the elevators and utilities is articulated with three uninterrupted channels filled with strips of dark gray terra cotta. Above its base, 500 Fifth Avenue is virtually free of ornament, except at the tower, where a series of angled brick and terra-cotta panels decorated with chevrons read as pleated cresting against the skyline.

### Subsequent History

A year after the stock market crash and three months before the opening of 500 Fifth Avenue, Walter J. Salmon was quoted in the papers on the subject of his prospects for an immediate return on his investment: "We feel that it will take some time to absorb the approximately 500,000 square feet of office space in the building, but the enterprise was undertaken with the greatest faith in the future of midtown expansion and development."<sup>50</sup> By May 1931, three months after its opening, the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> floors of the building had been fully rented<sup>51</sup>; by the end of the year, several prestigious tenants had signed leases, including the Electrolux Corporation, no less than ten railroad corporations, and the Western Universities Club, which used the penthouse and the three floors below for its club facilities. An article in the *New York Times* from January 1932 reported a consistent demand for business space in the midtown area, calling business renting "brisk."<sup>52</sup> Later tenants of 500 Fifth Avenue included the Austrian and Japanese consulates, and in the mid-1930s the building became the target of Communist protests directed at the Japanese consulate, which had offices on the 40<sup>th</sup> floor.

In 1944, when the Manufacturers Trust Company—then located at 513 Fifth Avenue—and the Mutual Insurance Company entered into a lease in which Mutual Life agreed to construct a



new bank building on the property at nos. 508 and 510-514 Fifth Avenue, a corollary agreement with Walter Salmon permitted Manufacturers Trust Company to sublease, and ultimately redevelop, 508 Fifth Avenue. An important stipulation in this agreement was that during the time Salmon's lease remained in effect (1944-65), any building erected on the portion of the lot at No. 508 would not exceed the height of the then-existing building (63 feet) or otherwise interfere with 500 Fifth Avenue.<sup>53</sup> Thus, the height of the new bank building was effectively limited to four or five stories, and light and ventilation levels on the north wall of 500 Fifth Avenue were preserved.

In 1955, the land under 500 Fifth Avenue was sold by Gerry Brothers & Co., whose principals were descendants of the original ownership, to the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.<sup>54</sup> 500 Fifth Avenue was again the site of political disturbance in 1980, when Croatian nationalists bombed a Yugoslavian bank located on the 30<sup>th</sup> floor of the building; there were no injuries, and only minor damage to the interior spaces.<sup>55</sup> In the mid-1990s, the facade of 500 Fifth Avenue was repaired, ornament was restored or selectively refabricated, and replacement windows were installed.<sup>56</sup> The building continues to be used as an office building with street-level stores.

### Description

500 Fifth Avenue is an asymmetrically massed skyscraper with setbacks at the 18<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 25<sup>th</sup> stories on the Fifth Avenue (east) facade and a recessed light court beginning at the eighth story and setbacks at the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, and 34<sup>th</sup> stories on the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street (south) facade; the side (west) facade is partially visible from street; sheathed in limestone, terra cotta, and buff brick, the facades are enriched with carefully scaled Art Deco motifs, which accentuate the building's sculptural massing and emphasize its verticality; on the Fifth Avenue facade the limestone and black granite main entrance is treated as a pylon framed by stylized gilded palmettos and capped by an allegorical bas-relief; the metal-and-glass main entrance door is deeply recessed and has returns of polished stone or metal; possibly historic pendant and wall-mounted light fixtures within recess of main entrance; possibly historic light fixtures and flag poles flank the main entrance; freight entrance in seventh bay of ground floor on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street facade; ground-floor storefronts on the Fifth Avenue and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street facades retain the original patinated metal cornice with chevron motifs; the three commercial stories above the storefronts have large show-window openings set between limestone piers decorated with channeling and abstracted frond and scroll motifs and patinated metal spandrels decorated with stylized folds and chevrons; the majority of the show windows on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street facade are historic multi-pane metal sash; on the Fifth Avenue facade only a few of these historic show windows remain; on the buff-brick mid-section and tower the windows are arranged into paired and triple groups separated by projecting piers, with the major piers enhanced by vertical channeling; in the center bays on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and in the two window bays over the main entry, the terra-cotta spandrel panels are dark gray in color and angle forward; seen from a distance the dark color of the spandrels merges with the dark color of the window frames to create a series of vertical stripes that rise unbroken to the roofline; this striped effect is continued on the back (north) elevation where the large expanse of brick wall enclosing the elevators and utilities is articulated with three uninterrupted channels filled with strips of dark gray terra cotta; crowning the setbacks and tower are a series of angled brick and terra-cotta panels decorated with chevrons that read as pleated cresting against the skyline.

**Alterations:** non-historic metal-and-glass storefront infill on ground story; several non-historic plate-glass windows with metal frames on second through fourth stories of Fifth Avenue

and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street facades; metal plaques and security lights at main entrance on Fifth Avenue facade; four utility boxes affixed to southeast corner of building above fifth story; double-hung metal replacement windows in all openings above the fourth story; louvers or vents in several window openings or as replacement window panes on Fifth Avenue and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street facades; brick replaced at corners of building; dunnage/cooling tower and antennas visible on roof.

Report prepared by  
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Research Department

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Portions of this section are adapted from LPC, *(Former) Manufacturers Trust Company Building (now Chase Bank Building) Designation Report* (LP-1968) (New York: City of New York, 1997), prepared by Gale Harris, based on information from the following sources: William Bridges, *Map of the City of New York and Island of Manhattan with Explanatory Remarks and References* (New York: William Bridges, 1811); Christopher Gray, “Streetscapes: 647 Fifth Avenue; A Versace Restoration for a Vanderbilt Town House,” *New York Times*, Apr. 9, 1995; Gray, “Streetscapes: 57th Street and Fifth Avenue; an 1870 Marble Row, Built in an Age of Brownstones,” *NYT*, Apr. 7, 2002; Arthur Bartlett Maurice, *Fifth Avenue* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1918); New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances; David M. Scobey, *Empire City: The Making and Meaning of the New York City Landscape* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002); Robert A.M. Stern, Thomas Mellins and David Fishman, *New York 1880* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1999); Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin and John Montague Massengale, *New York 1900* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983); I.N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909*, 6 (New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1928); M. Christine Boyer, *Manhattan Manners: Architecture and Style, 1850-1900* (New York: Rizzoli, 1985), 140; *Atlas of the City of New York and Part of the Bronx* (New York: E. Robinson, 1885); *Atlas of the City of New York: Borough of Manhattan* (Philadelphia: G.W. Bromley, 1899-1909); *Atlas of the City of New York: Borough of Manhattan* (Philadelphia: G.W. Bromley, 1928-60); *Manhattan Land Book* (New York: G.W. Bromley, 1934); *Manhattan Land Book* (New York: G.W. Bromley, 1955); *Rider’s New York City: a Guidebook for Travelers* (New York: Henry Holt, 1923), 265; “58-Story Building Planned for Hotel Bristol Site,” *Real Estate Record & Guide*, July 20, 1929, p. 3; LPC, *New York Central Building/now Helmsley Building Designation Report* (LP-1297) (New York: City of New York, 1987), prepared by Janet Adams, 1-3; New York Telephone, *Manhattan Address Directory*, 1929, 1944, 1950.

<sup>2</sup> Bridges, *Map of the City of New York*.

<sup>3</sup> See *Rider’s*, 265; A major factor in the emergence of Midtown as an important business district was the construction of Grand Central Terminal (Reed & Stem and Warren & Wetmore, a designated New York City Landmark), completed in 1913 following the electrification and submergence of the railroad tracks along Park Avenue. So great were the expectations for the area surrounding the terminal as a commercial district and “notable center of artistic structures” that the area was christened the “Grand Central Terminal Zone” a year before Grand Central opened. By 1917, “the blocks immediately north and south of 42nd Street in the terminal zone [composed] one of the liveliest commercial quarters of the city,” and four years later, 100 million people—equal to the entire population of the United States—were passing through the terminal each year. The Grand Central Zone emerged in the late 1920s as one of the city’s great skyscraper districts. See “New Grand Central Station and Stern’s Store Important Factors in 42d Street’s Development,” *NYT*, May 12, 1912, XX1; “Tall Building on Madison Avenue Corner Will Replace Hyde House at 40<sup>th</sup> Street,” *NYT*, Apr. 8, 1917, RE1; and “\$300,000,000 Estimated as the Aggregate Cost of the Present and Future Development of the Grand Central Terminal Zone,” *NYT*, Mar. 20, 1921, S5.

<sup>4</sup> “58-Story Building,” 8.

<sup>5</sup> Census records indicate that Walter J. Salomon changed his surname to Salmon sometime between 1910 and 1920. See U.S. Census Records, 1910 and 1920.

<sup>6</sup> Between 1899 and 1907, Walter J. Salmon acquired by lease nearly half of the properties on the north side of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street between Fifth and Sixth avenues, totaling nearly 500 feet of frontage. Salmon's eponymous tower at 11-27 West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, a bulky 32-story set-back office building, opened in 1926, five years before 500 Fifth Avenue. As president of the Forty-second Street Association, in 1919 Salmon launched a campaign "to intensify the importance of Times Square as the heart of Greater New York," and in the mid-1920s he rightly predicted that every major Wall Street banking institution would open a midtown branch within the decade. By 1929, Salmon controlled three of the five buildings on the north side of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street between Fifth and Sixth avenues and had earned a reputation as the most important real estate operator in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street zone between Broadway and Fifth Avenue. See "Saw 42<sup>nd</sup> St. Value Thirty Years Ago," *NYT*, Oct. 26, 1930, RE10; "Walter J. Salmon, Realty Man, Dead," *NYT*, Dec. 26, 1953, 13; and "58-Story Building," 8.

<sup>7</sup> Portions of this section are adapted from LPC, *2 Park Avenue Building Designation Report* (LP-2186) (New York: City of New York, 2006), prepared by Virginia Kurshan, and LPC, *275 Madison Avenue Designation Report*. Other sources include David Gebhard, *The National Trust Guide to Art Deco in America* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996), 1-15; Paul Goldberger, *The Skyscraper* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981), 9-101; Ada Louise Huxtable, *The Tall Building Artistically Reconsidered: The Search for a Skyscraper Style* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 4-49; Cervin Robinson, "Buildings and Architects," in *Skyscraper Style: Art Deco New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 3-33; Rosemarie Haag Bletter, "The Art Deco Style," in *Skyscraper Style*, 34-81; and Carol Willis, *Form Follows Finance: Skyscrapers and Skylines in New York and Chicago* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1995), 67-107.

<sup>8</sup> "Buildings and Architects," 12.

<sup>9</sup> *The Skyscraper*, 61.

<sup>10</sup> *The Skyscraper*, 58.

<sup>11</sup> *Form Follows Finance*, 77-79.

<sup>12</sup> "Buildings and Architects," 8.

<sup>13</sup> *The Tall Building Artistically Reconsidered*, 39-44.

<sup>14</sup> Among these were the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society Building in Philadelphia (Howe & Lescaze, 1930-31), and the McGraw-Hill Building in New York (Hood, Godley, & Fouilhoux, 1931, a designated New York City Landmark).

<sup>15</sup> The name Art Deco was coined by the British historian Bevis Hillier in the 1960s.

<sup>16</sup> "The Art Deco Style," 37.

<sup>17</sup> *The National Trust Guide to Art Deco in America*, 7.

<sup>18</sup> *The Skyscraper*, ix.

<sup>19</sup> *New York 1930*, 595.

<sup>21</sup> According to *New York 1930*, "The Fred F. French Building ... demonstrated that a slab could retain the iconic clarity of the skyscraper type and provide more rentable space per square foot of ground area, and that with elevators and services grouped at one end of a central spinelike corridor, its floors were more easily adapted for either a single tenant or subdivision into individual offices." See Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and Thomas Mellins, *New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism Between the Two World Wars* (New York: Rizzoli International, 1987), 597. The Chanin Building is another prominent slab skyscraper from the late 1920s.

<sup>22</sup> Eric Peter Nash and Norman McGrath, *Manhattan Skyscrapers* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2005), 73.

<sup>23</sup> *Skyscraper Style*, 83-88 contains a selected list of Art Deco buildings constructed in New York City. As is evident from this list, construction of Art Deco buildings dropped sharply in the early 1930s; although the style persisted through the end of the decade, it became increasingly austere, as shown in works such as the Tiffany and Criminal Courts buildings (Cross & Cross and Harvey Wiley Corbett, respectively, both 1939).

<sup>24</sup> This section is adapted from LPC, *Upper East Side Historic District Designation Report* (LP-1051) (New York: City of New York, 1989), prepared by the Research Department.

<sup>25</sup> Information in this section is based on the following sources: “Fair Will Exhibit Heroic Statuary,” *NYT*, Dec. 11, 1938, p. 63; “14 Artists Win Admission to Arts Institute,” *NYT*, Feb. 8, 1952, p. 18; Sanka Knox, “Public Sculpture in U.S. is Deplored,” *NYT*, Mar. 31, 1955, p. 29; Alistair Duncan, *American Art Deco* (New York: Abrams, 1986), 226; and “Liberty Memorial,” National Historic Landmarks Program, National Park Service website, <http://tps.cr.nps.gov/nhl/detail.cfm?ResourceId=1159372926&ResourceType=Site> (Accessed November 30, 2010).

<sup>26</sup> Portions of this section are adapted from LPC, *(Former) Manufacturers Trust Company Building*, based on information from the following sources: Boyer, 140; *Atlas of the City of New York and Part of the Bronx* (New York: E. Robinson, 1885); *Atlas of the City of New York: Borough of Manhattan* (Philadelphia: G.W. Bromley, 1899-1909); *Atlas of the City of New York: Borough of Manhattan* (Philadelphia: G.W. Bromley, 1928-60); *Manhattan Land Book* (New York: G.W. Bromley, 1934); *Manhattan Land Book* (New York: G.W. Bromley, 1955); *Rider’s New York City*, 265; “58-Story Building,” 3; LPC, *New York Central Building*, 1-3; New York Telephone, *Manhattan Address Directory*, 1929, 1944, 1950; and LPC, *275 Madison Avenue Building*.

<sup>27</sup> “Saw 42<sup>nd</sup> St. Value Thirty Years Ago.”

<sup>28</sup> See Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 3291, p. 295; “58-Story Building,” 8.

<sup>29</sup> New York City, Department of Buildings, Manhattan, New Building Application 594-1929.

<sup>30</sup> “58-Story Building,” 8.

<sup>31</sup> New York City, Department of Buildings, Manhattan, New Building Application 594-1929, contains a letter dated June 10, 1929, from Shreve, Lamb & Harmon to the Superintendent of Buildings outlining the terms of this agreement. It should be noted that 500 Fifth Avenue, Inc. was the lessee/developer of record for 500 Fifth Avenue, while the Jefferson Leasing Company was the lessee/developer of record for 508-514 Fifth Avenue, though Walter J. Salmon was both the president and principal investor in both corporations. See “58-Story Building,” 8; and the 1927 lease to the Jefferson Leasing Company recorded in New York County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 3625, p. 282.

<sup>32</sup> New Building Application 594-1929. The Empire State Building cost \$24.7 million to construct. See Tauranac, 269.

<sup>33</sup> “Skyscraper Frame Up,” *NYT*, July 29, 1930, 41; “Brick Work Finished at 500 Fifth Avenue,” *NYT*, Sept. 7, 1930, RE1.; “New Skyscraper Opened by Salmon,” *NYT*, Mar. 3, 1931, 56.

<sup>34</sup> Tauranac, 205. In reference to the Empire State Building, Shreve wrote that its construction required “feats of organization in some respects never before attempted.” For Shreve, Lamb, & Harmon, 500 Fifth Avenue must have been a similar achievement, albeit on a smaller scale. See R.H. Shreve, “The Economic Design of Office Buildings,” *Architectural Record* (April 1930), pp. 340-359: 345.

<sup>35</sup> Christopher Gray, “A Businesslike Tower, Overshadowed by a Famous Sibling,” *NYT*, Sept. 30, 2007, accessed online.

<sup>36</sup> Shreve, 343.

<sup>37</sup> “Dignity in Height of Tower Building,” *NYT* (Oct. 26, 1930): RE2.

<sup>38</sup> Tauranac, 108.

<sup>39</sup> Historian Carol Willis explains the new approach to tall office building design of the 1920s and 1930s, writing that “...the architectural press of the time stressed the importance of designing the tall office building from the top down, the logic being that the tower floors are the module to be repeated most, and from the inside out, the logic being that the ideal office unit determines the plan and circulation.” See *Form Follows Finance*, 81.

<sup>40</sup> *New York 1930*, 612; Ferris, Dakin Bennett, “A Fifth Avenue Office Building,” *Architectural Record*, (Oct. 1931): 267-274: 267.

<sup>41</sup> “Dignity in Height of Tower Building.”

<sup>42</sup> Another Art Deco skyscraper featuring a self-representation is the Cities Services Company Building at 70 Pine Street (1930-32, Clinton & Russell, Holton & George), which has a three-dimensional model of itself at the Pine Street entrance.

<sup>43</sup> Richmond Shreve put it this way: “Finance dictates the fenestration; rent rolls rule the parti.” See Willis, 81.

<sup>44</sup> Shreve, 259.

<sup>45</sup> Square footage of the tower floors at 500 Fifth Avenue was approximately 4,500, while square footage of tower floors at the Chrysler and Empire State buildings was approximately 8,800 and 15,000, respectively. See Willis, 76.

<sup>46</sup> Shreve, 347.

<sup>47</sup> Historian John Tauranac writes that “by the time 500 Fifth Avenue was finished in 1930, *The Building Record and Guide* was calling Forty-second Street and Fifth Avenue ‘the best known corner in the world,’ where only shops representing a national advertiser or a firm doing an enormous business could afford to locate.” In 1929 the city designated Fifth Avenue in Midtown as a special retail zoning district, requiring that all newly constructed buildings on Fifth Avenue have stores on the first two floors. See Tauranac, 135; “Building in Two Zones”; “Dignity in Height of Tower Building”; “Tall Building Opening,” *NYT*, Dec. 14, 1930, RE4; and Jerry E. Patterson, *Fifth Avenue: The Best Address* (New York: Rizzoli, 1998), 115.

<sup>48</sup> “Dignity in Height of Tower Building.”

<sup>49</sup> Cervin Robinson, 26.

<sup>50</sup> “Tall Building Opening.”

<sup>51</sup> Tauranac, 272.

<sup>52</sup> “Demand Continues for Business Space,” *NYT*, Jan. 15, 1932, 40.

<sup>53</sup> See Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 4327, p. 570; Liber 4327, p. 600; Liber 4327, p. 613; and Liber 4327, p. 636.

<sup>54</sup> See Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 4936, p. 210.

<sup>55</sup> “Bomb in 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. Tower Shatters Yugoslav Bank,” *NYT*, Mar. 18, 1980, B1.

<sup>56</sup> “500 Fifth Avenue,” Projects page of FacadeMD homepage, <http://www.facademd.com/projects/index.htm> (Accessed May 12, 2010); Department of Buildings, Manhattan, Job No. 100825920 (Apr. 27, 1994).

## FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of the buildings and site, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the 500 Fifth 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 500 Fifth Avenue Building was built in 1929-31 to the design of Shreve, Lamb & Harmon, concurrently with their Empire State Building; that the building is a soaring 59-story Art Deco skyscraper, located at the northwest corner of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and Fifth Avenue; that because the site was so valuable and so small, measuring only 100 feet by 208 feet, the building was designed to the maximum height and bulk allowable under the 1916 zoning code; that because it was located in two zoning districts with differing setback requirements, it is asymmetrically massed with setbacks at the 18<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 25<sup>th</sup> stories on the Fifth Avenue (east) facade and a recessed light court beginning at the eighth story and setbacks at the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, and 34<sup>th</sup> stories on the West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street (south) facade; that the building is sheathed in limestone, terra cotta, and buff brick, and the facades are enriched with carefully scaled Art Deco motifs, which accentuate the building's sculptural massing and emphasize its verticality; that the limestone and black granite main entrance on Fifth Avenue is treated as a pylon framed by stylized gilded palmettos and capped by an allegorical relief by sculptor Edmond Amateis; that the three commercial stories above the ground-floor storefronts have large show windows set between limestone piers decorated with channeling and abstracted frond and scroll motifs and patinated metal spandrels decorated with stylized folds and chevrons; that on the buff-brick mid-section and tower the windows are arranged into paired and triple groups separated by projecting piers, with the major piers enhanced by vertical channeling; that in the center bays on the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street facade and in the two window bays over the main entry, the spandrel panels are dark gray in color and angle forward, and seen from a distance the dark color of the spandrels merges with the dark color of the window frames to create a series of vertical stripes that rise unbroken to the roofline; that this striped effect is continued on the back (north) elevation where the large expanse of brick wall enclosing the elevators and utilities is articulated with three uninterrupted channels filled with strips of dark gray terra cotta; that crowning the setbacks and tower are a series of angled brick and terra-cotta panels decorated with chevrons which read as pleated cresting against the skyline; that its flat roof and freestanding, slab-like form are particularly modern innovations, making it a precursor to the postwar office building; that when it opened in March 1931, 500 Fifth Avenue was the crowning achievement of real estate developer Walter J. Salmon, who was responsible for rebuilding the north side of West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; that its architects, Shreve, Lamb & Harmon, were one of the leading architectural firms in the country specializing in skyscraper design; and that the building continues to be used as an office building with street-level stores.

Accordingly, pursuant to 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 500 Fifth Avenue Building, and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1258, Lot 34 as its Landmark Site.

Robert B. Tierney, Chair  
Pablo E. Vengochea, Vice Chair  
Frederick Bland, Diana Chapin, Michael Devonshire, Michael Goldblum,  
Christopher Moore, Margery Perlmutter, Commissioners



**500 Fifth Avenue Building**  
500 Fifth Avenue, Manhattan  
Built: 1929-31  
*Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2010*



**500 Fifth Avenue Building**  
View west from 42<sup>nd</sup> Street  
*Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2010*





**500 Fifth Avenue Building**  
500 Fifth Avenue during construction, 1930.  
*Image courtesy of the New York Public Library (NYPL ID 708774F)*



**500 Fifth Avenue Building**

500 Fifth Avenue seen from Bryant Park in 1938 (left), and the same view seen in 2010 (right).

*Left: Image courtesy of the New York Public Library (NYPL ID 717907F)*

*Right: photo by Christopher D. Brazee, 2010*



**500 Fifth Avenue Building**

View of rear (north) facade from Fifth Avenue, with the mast of Shreve, Lamb & Harmon's Empire State Building (1929-31) in the background.

*Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2010*



**500 Fifth Avenue Building**

Rear facade with 510 Fifth Avenue (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1953-54) in the foreground.

*Photo: Christopher D. Braze, 2010*



**500 Fifth Avenue Building**  
Main entrance on Fifth Avenue.  
*Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2010*



**500 Fifth Avenue Building**  
Allegorical bas-relief with miniature of 500 Fifth Avenue, sculpted by Edward Amateis, crowning main entrance.  
*Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2010*

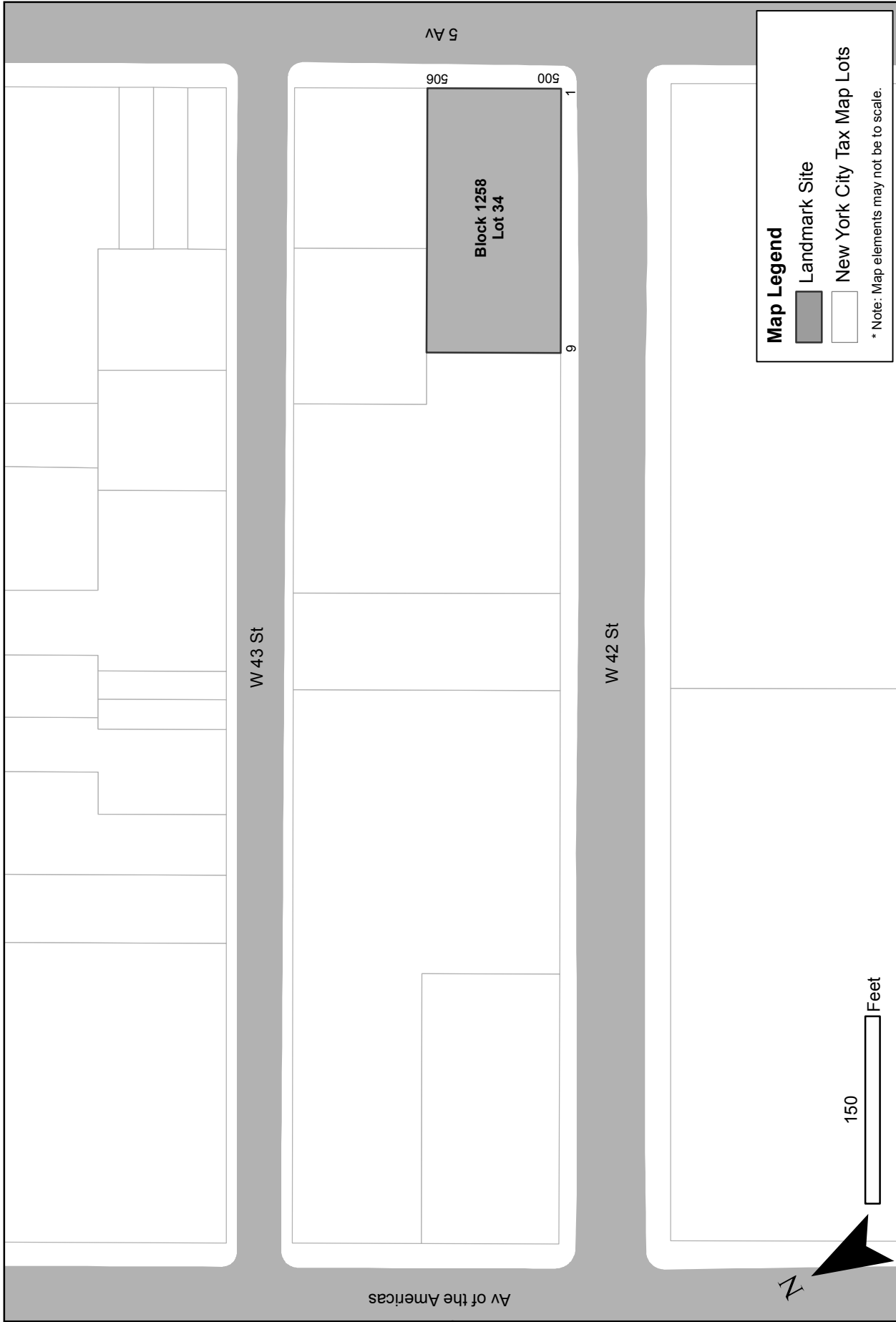


**500 Fifth Avenue Building**  
Ground-story storefronts and show windows on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street.  
*Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2010*



**500 Fifth Avenue Building**  
Carved eagles flanking 500 Fifth Avenue sign on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street facade.  
*Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2010*





**500 FIFTH AVENUE BUILDING (LP-2427), 500 Fifth Avenue (aka 500-506 Fifth Avenue; 1-9 West 42nd Street)**  
 Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 1258, Lot 34

Designated: December 14, 2010