

11 EAST 90TH STREET HOUSE, Borough of Manhattan. Built 1902-03; architects Barney & Chapman.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1502, Lot 110.

On June 25, 1974, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the 11 East 90th Street House and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 5). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Seven witnesses spoke in favor of designation. There was one speaker in opposition to the designation. The owner also spoke at the public hearing.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

This elegant residence, built in 1902-03 for M. Louise McAlpin, was designed by the New York City architectural firm of Barney & Chapman. In keeping with their training at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, the architects' design was inspired by the classical traditions of the 18th-century French hôtel particulier.

The area in which the house is located acquired the name "Carnegie Hill" soon after Andrew Carnegie erected his mansion at Fifth Avenue and 91st Street at the turn of the century. Although middle-class residences had been built in the area in the 1880s and 1890s, Carnegie's move uptown inspired other well-to-do business and professional people to build here. The McAlpin family had purchased property in the area even before it became fashionable. Louise McAlpin and her husband William W. McAlpin moved into their new home at 11 East 90th Street in 1904. William's brother, George, built the adjoining house at 9 East 90th Street at the same time.

The handsome four-and-one-half-story residence is faced with smooth limestone ashlar and enhanced by elegant decorative detail. The facade is divided horizontally into three major sections: the bandcourse separating the street level from the parlor story is repeated below the fourth story, and the entire front is crowned by a projecting dentilled roof cornice which provides the base for a graceful parapet above. Tall, dignified round-arched ground floor openings with deep reveals and festooned keystones contrast with square-headed windows set with French casements at the upper stories, while balustrades and crowning cornice slabs set on elongated console brackets accentuate the parlor floor windows. The third and fourth floor windows are outlined by "eared" enframements. A balustraded parapet, repeating the design of the balustrade in front of the parlor story windows, rises above the roof cornice partially concealing three dormer windows with arched pediments which are set in the attic story.

The elegant detail and the careful scale of the house were skillfully combined by the architects to create a residence which is a fine example of the architecture in Carnegie Hill in the early 20th century. Its dignified appearance adds an important element to the block, and it enhances the entire Carnegie Hill area.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

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 11 East 90th Street House 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 11 East 90th Street House is an elegant residence inspired by 18th-century French sources, that it is enhanced by restrained architectural detail, that it is a fine example of Carnegie Hill residential architecture of the early 20th century, and that it adds dignity to this block and enhances the entire Carnegie Hill area.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 63 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the 11 East 90th Street House, Borough of Manhattan and designates Tax Map Block 1502, Lot 110, Borough of Manhattan, as its Landmark Site.