

EDITH FABBRI HOUSE (now the House of the Redeemer), 7 East 95th Street,
Borough of Manhattan. Built 1914-16; architect Grosvenor Atterbury.
Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1507, Lot 9.

On June 25, 1974, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Edith Fabbri House (now the House of the Redeemer) and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 14). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Eight witnesses spoke in favor of designation. There was one speaker in opposition to designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The Fabbri House at 7 East 95th Street, built in 1914-16, is stylistically derived from Italian Renaissance sources and has many of the characteristics of an Italian palazzo. The architect, Grosvenor Atterbury, is noted for his restoration of City Hall in 1908.

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. Edith Fabbri purchased the property for the house in 1912, and she and her husband Ernesto moved into the house in 1916. Mrs. Fabbri transferred the building to the House of the Redeemer in 1949; it is now used as a retreat center.

This handsome five-story brick structure with contrasting limestone detail displays a warmth because of its materials that is somewhat unusual in a palazzo design. The L-shape of the plan with a rear wing at the western side of the main section of the house forms a courtyard--an unusual feature in the New York City block system. The courtyard is entered through an elaborate wrought-iron gate set between urn-topped stone pillars. A two-story section containing the entrance hall extends along the main section to the rear wing. The two-story section is lined with handsome French windows set in stone arches at both floors. The windows have balustrades at the bases, and they are separated by stone pilasters, providing an elegant contrast to the brick wall surface. The section terminates in a stone cornice surmounted by a stone parapet. The impressive entranceway, flanked by rusticated pilasters, is set within a heavy rusticated stone frame. Handsome carved wood doors beneath a wrought-iron fanlight contribute to the dignity of the entrance.

The facades of the main section of the building and the rear wing, which face 95th Street, are unified by a similar architectural composition; however, each floor is differentiated by a distinct window treatment. On the main section the ground floor windows have stone enframements with corbeled sills and triangular pediments. As is typical of this style, the second floor is distinguished by a more elaborate treatment incorporating elegant, stylized detail. French windows set in round-arched stone enframements with stone spandrels beneath individual cornices are further accented by stone balustrades at the window bases. Small square windows light a mezzanine floor above. The fourth floor windows have rectangular stone enframements with cornices. The cornices above the second and fourth floor windows, as well as a projecting string course below the fourth floor, stand out crisply from the smooth wall surface, providing further contrast. Bull's eye windows adorn the fifth floor. The upper three floors on the west side of the main block are handled in a similar fashion. A continuous modillioned stone cornice unifying all three facades crowns the building.

The L-shaped plan, the courtyard, and the fine architectural details which are used to differentiate each floor are the features which distinguish this handsome residence as being in the palazzo style derived from Italian Renaissance sources. Its dignified appearance adds distinction 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 Edith Fabbri House (now the House of the Redeemer) 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 Edith Fabbri House (now the House of the Redeemer) is a handsome residence in the palazzo style derived from Italian Renaissance sources, that it is enhanced by fine architectural detail, that the L-shaped plan and courtyard are distinctive features of the building, that it is a prime example of Carnegie Hill residential architecture of the early 20th century, and that it adds distinction to its 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 Edith Fabbri House (now the House of the Redeemer), 7 East 95th Street, Borough of Manhattan and designates Tax Map Block 1507, Lot 9, Borough of Manhattan, as its Landmark Site.