

Landmarks Preservation Commission  
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THE HARVARD CLUB OF NEW YORK CITY, 27 West 44th Street, Borough of Manhattan. Begun 1893, completed 1894. Major additions completed 1903, 1915; architects McKim, Mead & White.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1260, Lot 20.

On May 10, 1966, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of The Harvard Club of New York City, and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. (Item No. 12). Two witnesses spoke in favor of designation. The Commission continued the public hearing until June 14, 1966 (Item No. 4). At that time The Harvard Club opposed the proposed designation. Both hearings were duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law.

#### DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Sitting erect and dignified on West Forty-Fourth Street is this trim and elegant Georgian club house. The charm of this building lies in its red brick with limestone trim and in its intimate scale, the delicate refinement of its handsome detail, and the pleasing harmony of its well related architectural components. The front elevation consists of a handsome motif, where a main entrance doorway at street level is surmounted by a central round headed window, flanked by two pairs of limestone Ionic columns which rest on the second floor ledge and support the delicately refined third floor cornice. Directly above this and centered between two windows is the handsomely carved shield of Harvard University. At the roof line, the stone coping, covering the brick parapet wall, supports a central crowning element composed of a star-studded stone ball flanked by two horizontally placed consoles. To the west of this three story building, a six story addition was made in 1915.

The Forty-Fifth Street elevation is very interesting and its design is considered by many to be equal in quality to that of the entrance facade. This exterior wall contains three-story round-headed windows set between brick pilasters, which light the great lounge, considered by many architectural historians to be the finest club room in America. At the public hearing, the Chairman of the Historical Buildings Committee of the American Institute of Architects, New York Chapter, said that he read several years ago a brief obituary of an honored Harvard alumnus, in which it was noted that the most significant accomplishment of the deceased, as a member of the building committee at the time the club was built, was that he held out for a period of weeks against the entire committee for the three storied lounge. He won his point, and today the Harvard Club has a room that has no equal in the City.

The November 1966 Bulletin of the Harvard Club contains the following quotation from the Harvard University Bulletin of October 20, 1902, which devoted most of that issue to describing plans for the first expansion of the club. "The Harvard Club of N.Y.C.", it reported, "has just adopted plans for an addition to the Club House which will surpass in usefulness and comfort any building of its character in the world." When this work was completed a homecoming was held in Harvard Hall, December 7, 1905 with President Charles W. Eliot as the principle speaker.

The Harvard Club of New York City was organized in 1865, with headquarters at 11 West 22nd Street. The Club was incorporated in 1887 "to advance the interest of the University, and to promote social intercourse among the alumni resident in New York City and vicinity." The original part of the present club house was constructed between 1893-94 and designed by Charles Follen McKim, as a handsome Georgian building of modest scale. Additions were made to the club in 1903, 1915, and 1946, which greatly enlarged it.

## 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 Harvard Club of New York City 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 Harvard Club is an outstanding example of the Georgian Style, that the facade exhibits charm, excellent proportions, handsome architectural details and distinctive features in the best Georgian manner and that the club house reflects the taste and cultural atmosphere of the alumni of this great American University.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 8-A 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 Harvard Club of New York City, 27 West 44th Street, Borough of Manhattan and designates Tax Map Block 1260, Lot 20, Borough of Manhattan, as its Landmark Site.