



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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BURT LAZARIN
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

February 8th, 2018

Hon. Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair
Landmarks Preservation Commission
Municipal Building, 9th floor
One Centre Street New York, NY 10007

Re: 444 West 22nd Street: Certificate of Appropriateness for Row House Alterations

Dear Chair Srinivasan:

On the recommendation of its Chelsea Land Use Committee, following a duly noticed public hearing at the Committee's meeting on January 16, 2018, Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4), at its regularly scheduled meeting on February 7, 2018, voted, by a vote of 39 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining and 0 present but not eligible to vote, to recommend approval of some proposed items, and to recommend disapproval of other proposed features. The project proposes alterations to the row house at 444 West 22nd Street in the Chelsea Historic District.

Background

444 West 22nd Street is a Greek Revival row house built for Chelsea's founder, Clement Clarke Moore. The 1970 Chelsea Historic District Extension Designation Report notes that:

No. 444 was built in the Greek Revival Style, in 1835-36, for Clement Clarke Moore. It retains the general characteristics of its style, windows and ironwork; and, most important, the attic windows set in a deep frieze board beneath the cornice, although enlarged in 1922, are rare survivors. At a later date, the original Greek Revival inner doorway was moved back in its opening.

Proposal

The proposed work includes:

- Replacing third floor façade windows with wood windows having insulated glass and mullions in a configuration and casement operation to simulate the likely original. The trim on the windows would be painted black
- Painting the brick façade gray, painting window trim black
- Replacing the door sidelights with solid wood panels within the door entrance
- Moving the front railing fence forward to align with the adjacent neighbors' fence line.

CB4 Analysis and Recommendations

CB4 recommends approval of:

- The replacement of the third-floor windows with new ones simulating the likely original type
- We welcome the filling in of the air conditioner penetration below the center second-floor window and hope that this will be achieved with minimal visual distraction by careful brick selection to match the color of existing façade brick.

CB4 recommends disapproval of:

- Painting the façade grey. The façade has Flemish bond red brickwork, somewhat rare in post-Federal-Era row houses, and is in excellent condition. Most of the houses on this block are red brick.
- Painting of all the front façade (including the third floor) window trim black. We believe that white trim would be more in keeping with historic precedent. White or light-cream colored paint would have a richer and livelier interaction with the color of the surrounding brick, and would emphasize the windows and their muntin configurations.
- Replacing the glazed door sidelights with solid wood panels because they would be out of character with Greek Revival precedent; privacy and security concerns can be addressed without eliminating the sidelights.
- Moving the front fence forward. We are concerned that the front railing fence is original to the building, an example of fine decorative ironwork, and is anchored directly to the façade. Moving it forward will create a gap in the returning end section of fence perpendicular to the façade. Although the applicant claims that moving the fence away from the façade will align it with neighboring fences, this is true only for the adjacent modern fence to the west. A comparison with the similar decorative-ironwork fence in front of 440 West 22nd Street, two doors east, finds the same condition of anchorage directly to the house, decorative elements turning 90 degrees to return uninterrupted into its façade. This comparison highlights a character-defining period consistency in the relationship of fence to both façade and stoop projection which should be retained. 444's fence is an intact antique element specifically cited in the Designation Report and should not be altered.

Sincerely,



Burt Lazarin
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4



John Lee Compton, Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee



Betty Mackintosh, Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee

cc: Hon. Corey Johnson, City Council
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President

Draft Letter re 444 West 22nd Street, Application to LPC for Certificate of Appropriateness for Row House Alterations



444 West 22nd Street



440 West 22nd Street