



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

424 West 33 Street, Suite #580
New York, NY 10001
tel: 212-736-4536
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

JESSICA CHAIT
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

July 1, 2025

Sarah Carroll, Chair
Landmarks Preservation Commission
David N. Dinkins Municipal Building, 9th Floor North
1 Centre Street
New York, NY 10007

Re: Proposed Alterations to 521-537 West 25th Street

Dear Chair Carroll:

Manhattan Community Board 4's (MCB4) Chelsea Land Use Committee, at its regularly scheduled meeting on June 16th, 2025, voted to recommend to the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) **approval with conditions of a Certificate of Appropriateness for proposed modifications to the firstfloor windows, doors, entries, lighting and signage for 521-537 West 25th Street in the West Chelsea Historic District. The Board recommends approval of the proposed modifications provided the applicant consider replacing existing brick infill to recreate a transparent transom over the second bay, match brickwork overall to create a more unified looking facade, remove the lights on the cornice which are currently unused or inoperable, investigate using top solar panels to power the lights, and plant trees along the 200 feet street frontage.**¹

Background

521-537 West 25th Street is an American Round Arch style; four-story red brick factory building designed for the Conley Foil Company by Schickel & Ditmars and constructed between 1900-1901. The building has undergone many alterations over time. The 4-story, brick-clad principal façade features a tripartite composition with symmetrical east and west bays flanking a central, four-story projecting tower. The historic brick façade features crenulated brick and bluestone banding at the top of the tower; bluestone band and string courses, windowsills and copings (floors 2-4); non-historic cast stone windowsills occur at some locations at the 1st floor. The 1st floor features non-historic,

¹ Due to the scheduling of the LPC hearing on July 8th, 2025, this recommendation will be ratified at the July 23rd Full Board meeting.

grey-finished, divided lite, metal and glass infill at doors, transoms and windows with clear, translucent and painted glazing, and a black finished metal elevator door. Some of the 1st floor, historic segmental and round arched masonry brick openings remain while others have been modified with non-historic infill brick masonry. The fenestration above the 1st floor consists of non-historic, single pane, fixed, hopper and casement metal windows with a black finish. Non-historic metal and glass lights with exposed conduit and mounts are located along the parapet wall. The proposed scope of work will include a change of use from factory to self-storage at the building.

Application

The proposed scope of work for Commission level review includes:

- Bifold doors: remove non historic metal and glass storefront infill at 2 bays; install new black finished metal and glass multilight bifold doors at 2 bays
- Flat-headed masonry openings: remove non historic metal and glass storefront infill at 2 bays; install new black finished metal and glass multilight windows with cast stone sill; new brick bases
- Segmental masonry opening: remove non historic metal and glass doors and metal stairs and handrails, brick base, flat steel lintel and brick infill at one bay; reduce the width of the masonry opening to align with the brick segmental arch; install new multilight metal and glass window segmental arch top and black finish in the new masonry opening; new cast stone sill and brick base and brick masonry to restore narrower masonry opening
- Signage: install one new non-illuminated sign (“Prime Storage” and logo) mounted on a steel plate, at the segmental arched transom above the lobby/office entrance. Lettering to be 0’-10”high; logo to be 1’-8” high. Signage and logo finishes to match Prime Storage corporate branding color scheme. Clear transom glass to receive a greyscale reversible film behind the proposed signage lettering and logo

All former penetrations will be treated with composite repair mortar to match the adjacent masonry conditions in color, tooling and appearance.

There are also a number of modifications anticipated to be reviewed at the staff level. These include the removal of graffiti, security cameras, metal signs and vitrines, and anchors; two non-historic luminaires and exterior conduit; five non historic lamps, mounts and exterior conduit at the stone copings above the roof parapet. They also include the installation of reversible gray 3M film at three segmental arched window bays; three new security cameras with concealed conduit whose housing will be finished to match adjacent brick; two new DOT tear drop luminaires with concealed conduit; one intercom with concealed conduit. All existing ground floor metal infill will be prepared, primed and painted black. Holes in the brick masonry will be repaired.

Recommendation

We appreciate the care with which the applicant has approached the preservation of this significant historic building. The Board finds the proposed work appropriate with the following conditions: that the brickwork be examined and replaced as needed, particularly above the bays between 521 and 525 West 25th Street, to ensure a unified façade; that the segmental arch top between columns 14 and 15 be restored; that the non-functioning lights at the stone copings above the roof parapet be removed; that the applicant investigate the use of rooftop solar panels to power the building's lighting; and that a minimum of ten street trees be planted along the full 200-foot frontage.

The Board also urges the applicant to take proactive steps to discourage sidewalk parking during loading and unloading activities at the storage facility and to address potential traffic congestion on West 25th Street. While we recognize that these concerns fall outside LPC's formal purview, we recommend the applicant engage with the Community Board's Transportation Committee to further address these operational impacts.

Sincerely,



Jessica Chait
Chair
Manhattan
Community Board 4



Gregory Morris
Co-Chair
Chelsea
Land Use Committee

cc: Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Erik Bottcher, City Council
Applicant for 521-537 West 25th Street