



HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY FORM

NYS OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION
& HISTORIC PRESERVATION
P.O. BOX 189, WATERFORD, NY 12188
(518) 237-8643

OFFICE USE ONLY

USN: 06101.013272

NRE

IDENTIFICATION

Property name(if any) Hotel Pennsylvania I
Address or Street Location 401 Seventh Avenue
County New York Town/City _____ Village/Hamlet: New York
Owner _____ Address _____
Original use _____ Current use _____
Architect/Builder, if known _____ Date of construction, if known _____

DESCRIPTION

Materials -- please check those materials that are visible

Exterior Walls:	<input type="checkbox"/> wood clapboard	<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> vertical boards	<input type="checkbox"/> plywood
	<input type="checkbox"/> stone	<input type="checkbox"/> brick	<input type="checkbox"/> poured concrete	<input type="checkbox"/> concrete block
	<input type="checkbox"/> vinyl siding	<input type="checkbox"/> aluminum siding	<input type="checkbox"/> cement-asbestos	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____
Roof:	<input type="checkbox"/> asphalt, shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> asphalt, roll	<input type="checkbox"/> wood shingle	<input type="checkbox"/> metal <input type="checkbox"/> slate
Foundation:	<input type="checkbox"/> stone	<input type="checkbox"/> brick	<input type="checkbox"/> poured concrete	<input type="checkbox"/> concrete block

Other materials and their location: _____

Alterations, if known: _____ Date: _____

Condition: excellent good fair deteriorated

Photos

Provide several clear, original photographs of the property proposed for nomination. Submitted views should represent the property as a whole. For buildings or structures, this includes exterior and interior views, general setting, outbuildings and landscape features. Color prints are acceptable for initial submissions.

Please staple one photograph providing a complete view of the structure or property to the front of this sheet. Additional views should be submitted in a separate envelope or stapled to a continuation sheet.

Maps

Attach a printed or drawn locational map indicating the location of the property in relationship to streets, intersections or other widely recognized features so that the property can be accurately positioned. Show a north arrow. Include a scale or estimate distances where possible.

Prepared by: K Howe address _____
Telephone: _____ email _____ Date 1/28/2010

(See Reverse)

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

IF YOU ARE PREPARING A NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION, PLEASE REFER TO THE ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS

Narrative Description of Property: Briefly describe the property and its setting. Include a verbal description of the location (e.g., north side of NY 17, west of Jones Road); a general description of the building, structure or feature including such items as architectural style (if known), number of stories, type and shape of roof (flat, gabled, mansard, shed or other), materials and landscape features. Identify and describe any associated buildings, structures or features on the property, such as garages, silos, privies, pools, gravesites. Identify any known exterior and interior alterations such as additions, replacement windows, aluminum or vinyl siding or changes in plan. Include dates of construction and alteration, if known. Attach additional sheets as needed.

Narrative Description of Significance: Briefly describe those characteristics by which this property may be considered historically significant. Significance may include, but is not limited to, a structure being an intact representative of an architectural or engineering type or style (e.g., Gothic Revival style cottage, Pratt through-truss bridge); association with historic events or broad patterns of local, state or national history (e.g., a cotton mill from a period of growth in local industry, a seaside cottage representing a locale's history as a resort community, a structure associated with activities of the "underground railroad."); or by association with persons or organizations significant at a local, state or national level. Simply put, why is this property important to you and the community. Attach additional sheets as needed.

Hotel Pennsylvania

File'



Hotel Pennsylvania - 401 Seventh Avenue 1



Hotel Pennsylvania - 401 Seventh Avenue 2

proposed construction activities could physically alter architectural resources or be close enough to them to potentially cause physical damage or visual or contextual impacts.

Following the guidelines of the *City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Technical Manual*, the architectural resources study area for this project is defined as being within an approximately 400-foot radius of the development site (see **Figure 8-1**). Within the study area, architectural resources that were analyzed include National Historic Landmarks (NHLs), properties listed on the State and/or National Registers of Historic Places (S/NR) or properties determined eligible for such listing (S/NR-eligible), New York City Landmarks (NYCLs) and Historic Districts, and properties determined eligible for landmark status (“Known Architectural Resources”). Additionally, a survey was conducted to identify any previously undesignated properties that appear to meet S/NR or NYCL eligibility criteria (“Potential Architectural Resources”).

As detailed in this chapter, the proposed project (either scenario) would not result in significant adverse impacts on historic resources.

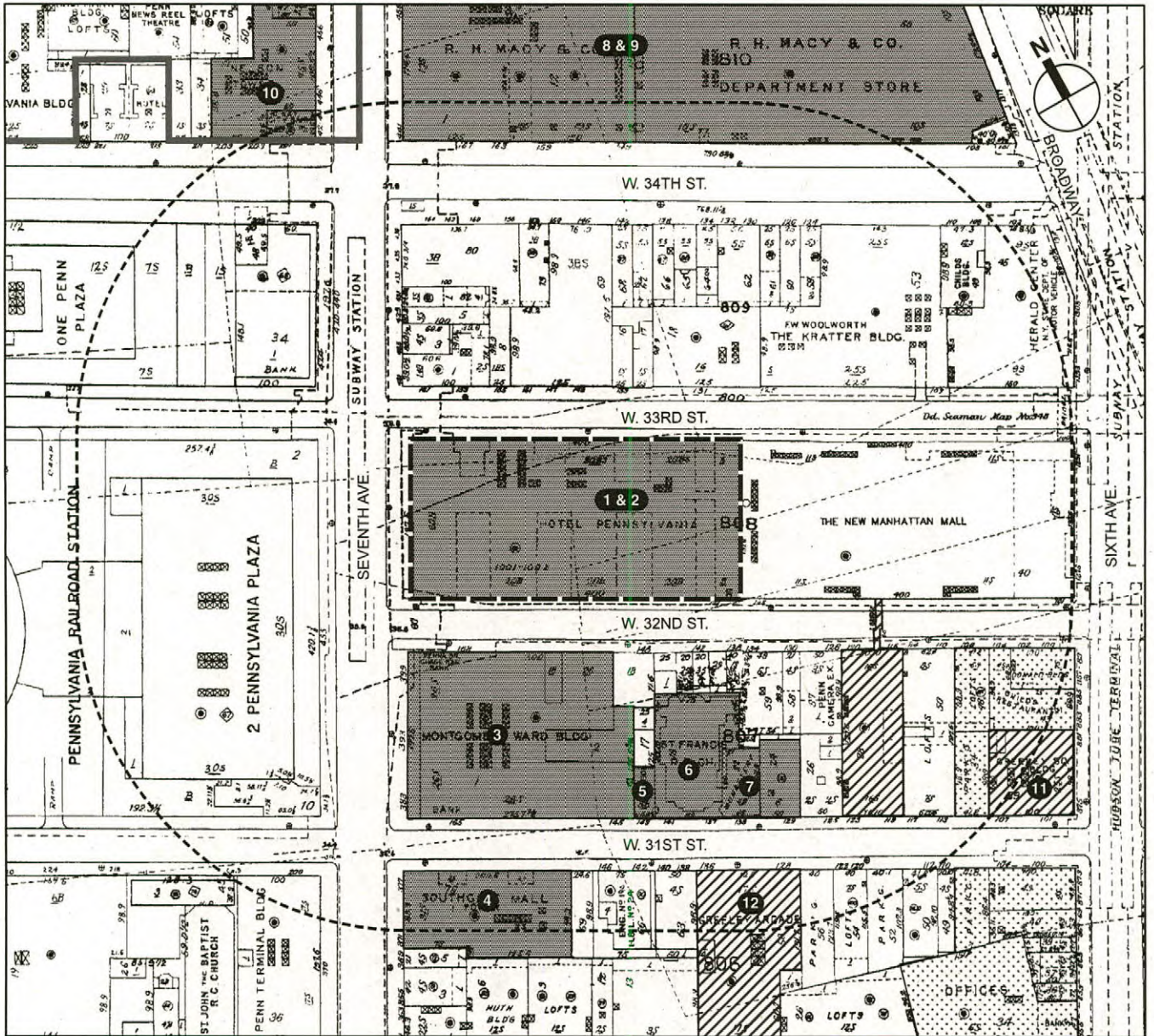
B. BACKGROUND HISTORY¹





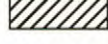


By the mid-19th century, the farmland that had once characterized the area of Manhattan surrounding the development site had been developed as a primarily residential district of four- and five-story tenement buildings with shops at the street level for the working classes and three- and four-story, single-family rowhouses for the middle class. Other buildings in the area by that time included a school and several stables buildings located among the residential buildings. Industrial buildings were generally located west of Seventh Avenue and included a brewery and other small manufacturing buildings. After the Civil War and until the early 20th century, this area changed from a mostly residential area to one having a broader mix of building types and uses, including theaters, hotels, restaurants, and shops, with theaters and hotels locating along or near Sixth Avenue, Broadway, and West 34th Street.

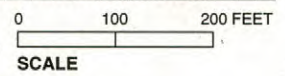
In 1902, the Pennsylvania Railroad began construction of the original Pennsylvania Station designed by McKim, Mead & White. The following year, plans were announced for the construction of a new Grand Central Terminal on 42nd Street at Park Avenue. These major transportation developments (even before their completion) made the “Pennsylvania Zone” (“Penn Zone”) attractive to retailers and manufacturers who sought easy transport of materials and access to out-of-town shoppers, wholesale buyers, and commuters. By this time, the Sixth Avenue elevated train also extended through the area. The original Pennsylvania Station was completed in 1910 and occupied the large block bounded by Seventh and Eighth Avenues between West 31st and West 33rd Streets. Also in 1910, the Hudson and Manhattan Railroad (now the PATH train) constructed a passenger tunnel under the Hudson River connecting New Jersey to the new Pennsylvania Station, further enhancing access to this area. The General Post Office, also designed by McKim, Mead & White, was built between 1910 and 1913 on the eastern portion of the block west of the original Pennsylvania Station on the west side of Eighth Avenue. It was designed to use the Pennsylvania Station tracks below for postal operations.

In addition to these large-scale transportation developments, by 1910, larger and taller factory lofts were being built on the east-west streets near Pennsylvania Station in the Penn Zone replacing many of the smaller residential tenements and rowhouses that had previously

¹ Information summarized from the draft historic resources document prepared by BCA in connection with the proposed Expanded Moynihan/Penn Station Redevelopment Project.



-  Project Site
-  Study Area Boundary (400-Foot Perimeter)
-  Photograph Reference Number
-  Known Architectural Resource
-  Potential Architectural Resource
-  Garment Center Historic District (S/NR - Eligible)
-  Construction Site



characterized much of this area. Hotels and theaters were being built along Seventh Avenue and Broadway and elegant shopping on West 34th Street near Herald Square. By 1911, large 10- to 12-story department stores had been built in the area with frontages on Sixth Avenue, including the eastern portion of Macy's, Gimbel Brothers, and Saks and Company. Taller loft buildings had also been built that ranged in height from 5 to 16 stories, including the 16-story Cuyler Building, built in 1911-1912 at 119-123 West 31st Street/116-120 West 32nd Street.

In 1917 a segment of the Seventh Avenue subway line was opened between Times Square and West 34th Street, and by 1919, as described in more detail below, the 22-story Hotel Pennsylvania was completed. This large hotel occupies the western portion of the block between West 32nd and West 33rd Streets with its primary frontage on Seventh Avenue. The hotel shared the block with the 10-story Gimbel Brothers Department Store building (now the Manhattan Mall, described below). By the early 1920s the Penn Zone was well established as a thriving business district. The economic boom of the 1920s further contributed to the rapid rate of construction of new, larger hotels, lofts, and office buildings. Existing buildings that date from this development period include: the 26-story former Equitable Life Assurance Company Building (1922-1923) at 383-399 Seventh Avenue, the 25-story Greeley Square Building (1926) at 101-107 West 31st Street; the 17-story Greeley Arcade Building (1926) at 128-136 West 31st Street/127-133 West 30th Street, and the 31-story former Governor Clinton Hotel (1929) at 371-377 Seventh Avenue. The Garment and Fur Districts, north and south of the Penn Zone, respectively, were established around this time and are characterized by loft buildings designed and constructed specifically for these industries.

Development changes in the area surrounding the Hotel Pennsylvania have also included the construction in 1953 of a through-block 25-story commercial building on West 34th Street. In 1963 the original Pennsylvania Station was demolished, and the site was redeveloped with the current train station and Madison Square Garden. The block northwest of the hotel was also greatly altered with the demolition of the older, mostly smaller three- to five-story residential buildings on the west side of Seventh Avenue between West 33rd and West 34th Streets. This block was redeveloped in 1968 with the 30-story 2 Penn Plaza Building and in 1972 the 57-story 1 Penn Plaza Building. In the 1980s, the Gimbel Brothers building was significantly altered to create the Manhattan Mall with the removal of its original masonry cladding and the addition of a primarily glass and metal curtain wall.

Other more recent changes to the area near the Hotel Pennsylvania have included the construction of two new hotels on West 31st Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues. Three older buildings on West 31st and West 32nd Streets have also been demolished and are now being redeveloped.

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

PROJECT SITE

KNOWN ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

The **Hotel Pennsylvania** is located at 401 Seventh Avenue between West 32nd and 33rd Streets. In an October 30, 2003 letter, as part of the environmental review for the No. 7 Subway Extension—Hudson Yards Rezoning and Redevelopment Program, Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (2004), the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) determined that the Hotel Pennsylvania meets eligibility criteria

for listing on the State/National Registers of Historic Places (see Appendix B). As part of the same environmental review, LPC determined that the Hotel Pennsylvania appears eligible for designation as a NYCL (NYCL-eligible) (see Appendix B). However, in 2007 and 2008, in a response to letters and supporting materials submitted to LPC by members of the public requesting an evaluation of the eligibility of the Hotel Pennsylvania for designation as a New York City Landmark, LPC made the following finding: "In response to the information you submitted concerning the property referenced above [the Hotel Pennsylvania], a senior staff committee of the Landmarks Preservation Commission has reviewed the property for consideration as a potential landmark. At this time, the property does not appear to meet the criteria for designation and will not be recommended to the full Commission for further consideration as a New York City landmark" (see Appendix B).

The Hotel Pennsylvania was designed by the architecture firm of **McKim, Mead & White** and completed in 1919. It is a 22-story brick-and-stone hotel with Classical Revival details. It is designed with a rusticated base with an Ionic entrance portico along its Seventh Avenue entrance and a loggia of ionic pilasters (see Photographs 1 and 2 of **Figure 8-2**). The hotel was built to cater primarily to travelers using the original Pennsylvania Station (1910), now demolished, which was also designed by McKim, Mead & White and formerly located in the current location of the Pennsylvania Station and Madison Square Garden complex across Seventh Avenue. The hotel was designed to complement the train station and the General Post Office (1913), also designed by McKim, Mead & White, located along the west side of Eighth Avenue west of the original Pennsylvania Station. The Pennsylvania Railroad company built the hotel partially out of concern that it would lose passengers to the New York Central Railroad which was building the Commodore Hotel for a similar clientele near Grand Central Terminal. The Hotel Pennsylvania was also designed to meet a newly emerging need for businessmen's hotels and was built to accommodate large conventions of professional societies and business organizations. The hotel's lobby, once one of the most important decorative spaces in the hotel, was modeled after the peristyle court in a house of the late Roman Republic, and its ornamental glass ceiling was designed by the firm of G. Rae & Co. Other original interior spaces included ballrooms and banquet rooms; a main restaurant, private dining rooms, a tea room, a bar, and a men's cafe; and a library.

Since the hotel's construction in 1919, the building's exterior and interior spaces have undergone several major alterations. Four of the building's six Ionic portico columns at the Seventh Avenue entrance have been cut off at mid-height to accommodate a new marquee and an expanded entryway. Windows on the building's first three floors have been altered and expanded into doorways or replaced to accommodate a variety of retail establishments, many of which have awnings and miscellaneous signage. Windows on the building's upper floors have been replaced with modern aluminum windows of several different types. Various types of signage have been installed on the building's facades. A penthouse structure has been added to the roof, which breaks the copper cornice line and adds approximately a half floor in height. Most, if not all, of the hotel's original public rooms, described above, no longer exist as many have been converted to commercial retail space. The hotel lobby's original ornamental glass ceiling has been removed, although the lobby's terrazzo tile floors remain. The hotel's ballrooms have also been converted for use as television studios.

As described in more detail in "Background History," the context of the Hotel Pennsylvania has been altered since the hotel's construction in 1919. Most of the three- to six-story rowhouses and tenement buildings have since been demolished. Several larger, taller office and commercial buildings now in the area surrounding the hotel were developed on the sites of these older,

Notable events

- December 1925 William Faulkner stayed at The Hotel Pennsylvania while writing one of his many novels. Later he would go on to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature.^[11]
- November 17, 1935 Herbert Hoover spoke before the Ohio Society of New York at the Hotel Pennsylvania^[12]
- In 1940, Glenn Miller and the Glenn Miller Orchestra began the first of several extended engagements at the Hotel Pennsylvania's Cafe Rouge, often broadcast live on NBC Radio. Recordings of several of these engagements were released by RCA Victor.^[13] ^[14]
- In December 1942 Charlie Chaplin attended a dinner at The Hotel Pennsylvania in New York sponsored by Russian War Relief^[15]
- In 1953, Dr. Frank Olson jumped through the closed window of his 10th floor room. Olson worked for the CIA and it is believed he was involved with experiments to study the effects of LSD.
- On November 3, 1964, former Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy addressed his supporters in the hotel (then the Statler Hilton), after capturing the seat of incumbent Kenneth Keating in the United States Senate.
- The character "Statler" of Statler and Waldorf was named after the hotel, when it was the Statler Hilton. ^[16]
- In June 2002, Dave Barry wrote a column about his experience at the thinly-disguised "Hotel Shpennsylvania".

Filming