



THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
1 CENTRE STREET 9TH FLOOR NORTH NEW YORK, NY 10007  
TEL: 212 669-7700 FAX: 212 669-7780



September 24, 2013

ISSUED TO:

**Joan Z. Lonergan**  
**The Hewitt School**  
**45 East 75th Street**  
**New York, NY 10021**

Re: **STATUS UPDATE LETTER**  
LPC - 148052  
SUL 14-8884  
42 EAST 76TH STREET  
HISTORIC DISTRICT  
UPPER EAST SIDE  
Borough of Manhattan  
Block/Lot: 1390 / 46

This letter is to inform you that at the Public Meeting of September 24, 2013, following the Public Hearing of the same date, the Landmarks Preservation Commission voted to approve a proposal to construct rooftop and rear yard additions and alter the front areaway at the subject premises, as put forward in your application completed August 29, 2013. This approval will expire September 24, 2019.

No work can begin until a Certificate of Appropriateness is issued. Upon receipt, review and approval of two (2) signed and sealed copies of the final Department of Buildings filing drawings for the approved work, a Certificate of Appropriateness will be issued.

Please note that all drawings, including amendments which are to be filed at the Department of Buildings, must be approved by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. Thank you for your cooperation.

Edith Bellinghausen

**Please Note: THIS IS NOT A PERMIT**

cc: Jared Knowles, Deputy Director, Preservation/L.P.C.; Jennifer Cappeto,  
Higgins Quasebarth & Partners, LLC



THE HEWITT SCHOOL

JOAN LONERGAN  
HEAD OF SCHOOL

December 12, 2013

Board of Standards and Appeals  
250 Broadway, 29<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Commissioners:

I'm writing to you as the Head of the Hewitt School ("Hewitt" or the "School"), a small, independent school for girls on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. Hewitt is a close-knit school community of exceptionally talented teachers, eager and able learners, and both emerging and visionary leaders who are supported by dedicated trustees, engaged parents, and accomplished alumnae. For over ninety years, Hewitt has provided an exemplary education for girls and young women from kindergarten through grade twelve, an education they value throughout their lives.

Today Hewitt prepares young women to lead their lives confidently and successfully in a world that is increasingly complex and constantly changing. Because Hewitt's teachers and programs encourage students to develop their unique strengths and their own moral compass, our students learn to define success in their own terms, not someone else's.

In September 2012, Hewitt, laid out a strategic plan for the future of the School (the "2012 Strategic Plan"), which aimed to adapt the School to the educational challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century while remaining true to its mission of empowering girls to discover their full intellectual and creative abilities, to pursue their passions and personal best, and to lead lives of consequence with character, compassion and conviction. A key component of the 2012 Strategic Plan is to design flexible learning spaces for Hewitt's students using new and existing facilities.

The School moved to its main building at 45 East 75<sup>th</sup> Street in 1954. In 1966, the School expanded its physical facilities by purchasing two buildings at 44 and 46 East 76<sup>th</sup> Street, directly to the north of its 75<sup>th</sup> Street building, and subsequently constructed a two-story gymnasium with an auditorium. In 1974, the School added three floors to this building and, in 1986, expanded again by adding a connection in the rear yard of its 75<sup>th</sup> Street building.

The School's last expansion was more than 10 years ago, when the School acquired a townhouse building at 3 East 76<sup>th</sup> Street, which would accommodate its Lower School. Since that time, the School's enrollment has increased by more than 15%. As a result, in

2011, the School acquired a building at 42 East 76<sup>th</sup> Street (the "Townhouse") and subsequently retained Robert A.M. Stern Architects, LLP ("RAMSA") to develop a master plan for the School's campus, with special priority given to the renovation of the Townhouse.

RAMSA conducted interviews with faculty and students to collect information on building use, its success and challenges and it also benchmarked Hewitt's space against its peers. Hewitt's existing facilities total 41,108 gross square feet ("GSF"), while that of its peers range from 105,000 GSF (150% more floor area) to 203,000 GSF (400% more floor area). As a result, Hewitt currently provides only 78 square feet ("SF") per student, well below that of its peers, which range from 164 SF to 289 SF per student. The renovation of the Townhouse will give the School large, flexible teaching and learning spaces for students in all divisions, unavailable at present, and will allow the School to support the innovative programming and teaching envisioned in the 2012 Strategic Plan.

Once renovated, the Townhouse will provide 25% more space, ten flexible classrooms that include science and fabrication labs, performing and creative arts areas and a roof terrace. In particular, the bulk variances which are being sought from the Board of Standards and Appeals will provide the School with 1) A new dedicated art studio for students in Kindergarten through grade 5 in the rooftop addition of the renovated Townhouse, and 2) Additional much needed classroom space in the realigned rear (south) façade of the Townhouse.

The proposed lower level extension into the rear garden of the Townhouse will provide the School with a much-needed storage room for its adjacent gymnasium and "black box" performing arts space, which will subsequently restore the functions of these spaces to their original intended uses. The proposed first floor extension into the rear yard of the Townhouse will provide a much larger choir room for the School, sufficient to house a baby grand piano, while also having a table formation for their bell choir. This will allow the School's existing choir room to be repurposed as office space for the School's network and technology department – a group of five staff members who currently are crowded into a room approximately 8'-0" x 15'-0". The new space for the technology group will allow them to grow their staff as well as provide support services to the School and students which previously were not possible due to space limitations.

Another key component of the 2012 Strategic Plan is to provide a high-quality and well-rounded science and technology education in, and appropriate to, all grades. This includes providing a fabrication lab to support the School's goal of providing students with hands-on opportunities to create and build things as a new way of learning. An assessment of Hewitt's science and technology spaces demonstrates that the School has the requisite number of science labs but lacks the appropriate proportions for these rooms and also lacks preparation space to accommodate its academic needs at a minimally acceptable level.

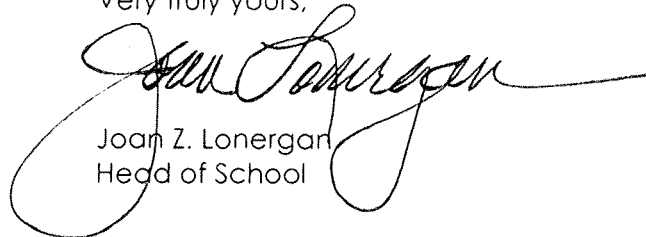
The renovated Townhouse will provide both a science lab and a fabrication lab. The science lab, located on the second floor, will be adjacent to the existing science labs and share resources already in place for the existing labs. The proposed Townhouse re-alignment of the rear (south) façade on the second floor will extend the floor's footprint by approximately 100 SF by filling in the recessed area formed by the existing three story build-out at the southeast corner. This additional space will afford the School a rectangular-shaped, better-proportioned science lab that is larger than the School's existing labs and able to accommodate two faculty members in this extended area. This science lab is also designed to open to the fabrication lab to its north via large doors and is intended to provide a flexible open space which can work as one large suite while still maintaining the ability to secure each room.

Hewitt's creative arts program currently is taught in two fairly large art studios which serve many different branches of the creative arts and, as a result, are crowded with materials and lack the proper free area necessary for easels, sculpture and pottery.

The renovated Townhouse will house a digital art studio on the third floor, adjacent to the existing art studios, and provide the School with a space to advance educational activities related to writing, publishing, video and news-making. The proposed rooftop addition will provide a dedicated art studio for students in Kindergarten through grade 5 and will provide a space for younger children to practice art in an environment designed to accommodate their smaller bodies. This new art studio is on the top floor of the Townhouse, which is easily accessible to the third and fourth graders on the upper floors of the existing 76<sup>th</sup> Street building thereby saving time by alleviating the need for the youngest children in the school to travel two floors to an art studio. This additional art classroom also will allow the existing art studios to be more focused on providing classes geared towards the Middle and Upper Schools.

Once renovated, it is believed that the Townhouse will provide large, flexible teaching and learning spaces for students in all three divisions – space that is not currently available in the School's existing buildings. These classrooms and open collaboration areas will accommodate the School's increased enrollment, and support the innovative programming and teaching envisioned in the 2012 Strategic Plan. It is the School's hope that the Board of Standards and Appeals finds its request for variances to be thoughtfully considered and justified.

Very truly yours,



Joan Z. Lonergan  
Head of School

New York City Board of Standards and Appeals  
250 Broadway, 29<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
New York, NY 10017

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**Hewitt School Renovation and Expansion Project  
Board of Standards and Appeals – Architect’s Letter**

RAMSA

Dear Commissioners:

Overview of Current Facilities

Established in 1923, the Hewitt School (“Hewitt” or the “School”) is an independent college preparatory school for girls in kindergarten through grade twelve. Since moving to its current location at 45 East 75<sup>th</sup> Street in 1954 – a Federal Style residence built for Ernest Stillman (Cross and Cross 1924-1925) – the School has grown steadily to an enrollment of 524. In 1966, the School expanded its physical facilities by purchasing two buildings at 44 and 46 East 76<sup>th</sup> Street, directly to the north of its 75<sup>th</sup> Street building, and subsequently constructed a two-story gymnasium with auditorium below grade (Evans and Delehenty 1966-67). In 1974, the School adds three floors to this building and in 1986, expanded again by adding a connection in the rear yard of its 75<sup>th</sup> Street building.

In 2011, the School acquired 42 East 76th Street (the “Townhouse”), a townhouse immediately to the west of their existing 76th Street building, providing an opportunity to create new teaching and learning spaces for the Middle and Upper School for the first time in 27 years. These new teaching and learning spaces will facilitate the implementation of the School’s mission, as defined in the newly completed Strategic Plan 2012, which is to provide an inspiring place where girls are empowered to discover their full intellectual and creative abilities, to pursue their passions and to achieve their personal best.

The Need for Expansion

In the fall of 2010, Hewitt engaged Robert A.M. Stern Architects, LLP (RAMSA), to provide master plan services to evaluate their existing buildings and determine existing and future space requirements and opportunities for expansion into the Townhouse. RAMSA conducted interviews with faculty and students to collect information on building use, its success and challenges and also benchmarked Hewitt space against its peers. Among these peers, Hewitt School has the smallest student population at 528 students, with the other schools ranging from 550 (4% more students) to 728 (38% more) students. Hewitt’s existing facilities total 41,108 gross square feet, while that of its peers range from 105,000 gsf (150% more floor area) to 203,000 gsf (400% more floor area). As a result, Hewitt provides only 78 square feet per student, well below its peers, which range from 164 sf to 289 sf per student. It is extraordinary how successful Hewitt has been at delivering on its mission given its constrained facilities but also compelling to imagine how effective the school might be if it had facilities that truly supported its mission!

The expansion will provide the School with: 1) A new dedicated art studio for younger children in the rooftop addition of the renovated Townhouse, and 2)

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Additional much needed classroom space by re-aligning the rear façade of the Townhouse.

The Proposed Changes

As Hewitt considers the expansion and renovation of its facilities, Hewitt is seeking the following variances from the BSA for the Townhouse:

1. To build above the 60’-0” Maximum Normal Building Height (by 9’-11”) in order to provide a classroom and the required mechanical space to support the new spaces created within the Townhouse;
2. To re-align the existing rear yard (south) façade where there is currently a bump-out and a recess in the façade, to provide a uniform façade up to a height of 35’-2” at the roof level. The location of this façade is 24’-7” from the Townhouse’s south property line and encroaches into the rear yard 30’-0” setback by 5’-5”.

The Townhouse is currently a residential-use building and will need to be reclassified as a community-use building in order for the School to assume use of the building as an extension of their current program. This will require a complete gut demolition of the Townhouse’s interior while preserving the exterior north facade and masonry party walls, in order to provide a self-sufficient, free standing and seismically independent structural system calibrated to support proper loading capacity for the School’s use.

A. Exterior Changes

The School understands the importance of preserving the Townhouse’s north façade as the site is located in the Upper East Side historic district and is one of three remaining townhouses on the block. As a result, RAMSA has worked closely with the School to identify work associated with the exterior facades and to develop a space program for the School that respects the Townhouse’s location in a historic district. The School is committed to restoring this north facade and has carefully considered the work of the interiors so as not to affect it. Due to the need to retain the north façade and zoning setback requirements in the rear yard, Hewitt is proposing to expand vertically above the existing height of the Townhouse by adding a one-story classroom with a mechanical bulkhead above. This addition will be set back from the street wall by 19’-10” and will be marginally visible from the surrounding streets below.

The Townhouse’s existing south façade is a brick façade which includes a three-story brick build-out with a two-story iron balcony above on one-half of the façade and a garden below street level. The existing south façade also has a two-story storefront system leading into the garden that was added a number of years ago.

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Hewitt is proposing to replace this south façade in its entirety, along with an extension of the lower level and first floor into the rear yard, creating a one-story rear yard addition with a roof height of 12'-0". The proposed south façade visible above the one-story rear yard addition will provide a unified and coherent façade by filling in the recess currently created by the three story build-out, and by removing the iron balconies, which are in poor condition.

As further described below, these proposed changes to the exterior, along with the thoughtful assignment of teaching and learning spaces within the Townhouse, will support the School’s mission of providing flexible spaces for students and teachers to create, investigate, and make connections and meaning out of their work.

**B. Interior Changes**

The School's indoor athletic facilities consist of a single gymnasium/multipurpose room located in the basement of the 76<sup>th</sup> St. building. A variety of activities and events compete for the use of this room including basketball, volleyball, gym class, various clubs, and large meetings and gatherings. There is currently only one 13'-0" x 8'-0" locker room with 54 small lockers, and one 90 sq ft storage space for athletic equipment. The gymnasium itself is only 34'-2" wide, 68'-7" long and has a clear height of 14 - 8". (In comparison, a regulation high school basketball court is 60 ft wide, 104 ft wide and has a clear height of 26 ft.) The School's gymnasium/multipurpose room also has no room for spectators except for a 2'-8" by 26'-0" mezzanine, which is located at one end of the court and currently used for equipment storage.

Historically, the School has been known for the strength of its performing arts program, even though its performing arts facilities are inferior in size and quality to those of all of its peers. The School's only dedicated performing arts space is a "black box" space measuring 25'-10" by 34'-1" by 18'-1" high. There is no performing arts storage, spectator or pre-function space outside of this black box space and it is put to non-performing arts use frequently, including as overflow space for the cafeteria. By way of comparison, the performing arts facilities of the School's peers include auditoria and dedicated dance studios.

The proposed lower level extension into the rear garden of the Townhouse will provide the School with a much needed storage room for the gymnasium and performing arts, which will subsequently free up the gymnasium and "black box" spaces, and restore the functions of these spaces to their original intended uses. The first floor extension into the rear yard will provide a much larger choir room for the School, sufficient to house a baby grand piano, while also having a table formation for their bell choir. The existing choir room in the School will be repurposed as office space for the School’s network and technology department – a group of five staff members who currently are crowded into a room approximately

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RAMSA

8'-0"x15'-0". The new space for the technology group will allow them to grow their staff as well as provide support services to the School and students which previously were not possible due to space limitations.

The proposed renovated Townhouse will provide a total of three additional performing arts spaces – a dance room adjacent to the gym, the choir room described in the preceding paragraph and a drama room on the third floor. A locker room in the lowest level of the Townhouse will replace the existing locker room adjacent to the cafeteria and “black box” space. This will allow the School to repurpose the existing locker room to be an extension of the cafeteria, serving as “swing” space for food service or performance support.

Central to Hewitt's mission and current strategic plan is the goal of providing a high-quality and well-rounded science, technology and mathematics education in, and appropriate to, all grades. The Middle and Upper Schools currently share four science teaching spaces (“labs”). Each lab has at least one sink while one has three work stations with sinks. Only one lab has a designated preparation space and its 63 sf space is significantly undersized to meet current needs. Other prep areas have been converted into faculty offices for the science department. Storage space is also very limited with only 75 sf. available. An assessment of Hewitt's science and technology needs in light of its mission and strategic plan demonstrates that the School has the requisite number of science labs but lack the appropriate proportions for these rooms and preparation space to accommodate its academic needs at a minimally acceptable level. Additionally, the School lacks a maker space that would support its goal to provide students with hands-on opportunities to create and build things as a new way of learning.

The renovated Townhouse will provide a science lab and a fabrication lab. The science lab, located on the second floor, will be adjacent to the existing science labs and share resources already in place for the existing labs. The proposed Townhouse re-alignment of the south façade on the second floor will extend the floor’s footprint by approximately 100sf by filling in the recessed area formed by the existing three story build-out at the southeast corner and will afford the School a rectangular-shaped, better-proportioned science lab that is larger than the School’s existing labs and able to accommodate two faculty members in this extended area. This lab is also designed to open to the fabrication lab to its north via large doors and is intended to provide a flexible open space which can work as one large suite while still maintaining the ability to secure each room.

Hewitt’s creative arts program currently is limited to what can be taught in two fairly large art studios. These studios often serve many different branches of the creative arts and, as a result, are crowded with materials and lack the proper free area necessary for easels, sculpture and pottery.



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The renovated Townhouse will house a digital art studio on the third floor, adjacent to the existing art studios, and provide the School with a space to advance activities related to writing, publishing, video and news-making. The rooftop addition is proposed to be a dedicated art studio for grades Kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grade and provides a space for younger children to practice art in an environment designed to accommodate their smaller bodies. This new art studio is on the top floor of the Townhouse, which is easily accessible to the third and fourth graders on the upper floors of the existing 76<sup>th</sup> Street building thereby saving time by alleviating the need for the youngest children in the school to travel two floors to an art studio. This additional art classroom will also allow the existing art studios to be more focused on its use of providing classes geared towards the Middle and Upper schools.

Hewitt's current Middle and Upper School classrooms are both too few and too small for the School's needs. Middle and Upper school classes typically vary in size between 16 and 18 students. Accepted educational standards, and comparison with Hewitt's peers, suggest that classes of this size should be accommodated in classrooms of approximately 25 net square feet. Only six of Hewitt's Middle and Upper School classrooms currently achieve this size and the four smallest classrooms are 45% below this standard. A school-wide assessment of Hewitt's classrooms indicates that the School needs ten more classrooms to accommodate its academic needs at a minimally acceptable level and needs to expand or replace existing classrooms with appropriately sized, proportioned, and equipped rooms. In addition to the significant deficit in classroom size and quantity, Hewitt's Middle and Upper school classrooms are consistently and chronically short of teaching preparation space, storage space, as well as faculty support, offices, and meeting space.

The renovated Townhouse will provide the School with an additional three classrooms seating between 14 -18 students, and a faculty room for 10 additional faculty.

The various expansions on the School's current site have resulted in the current disjointed maze of inaccessible, narrow and winding hallways connecting the north and south ends of the School. Upon entering the current School facilities at either the 75<sup>th</sup> Street or 76<sup>th</sup> Street entries, one is not able to traverse the length of the School except through stairs leading to half levels at the gymnasium level and the first floor. These half levels and winding corridors are confusing, disorienting and unsightly due to the changes in building materials as one moves through the various segments of building expansion. This is also tremendously detrimental to the psychological perception of unity within the School, especially since the Upper School occupies the south end of the building and the Middle School occupies the north end of the building, with no clear physical or visual connection between the two. In addition, the building's only elevator is on the south side of the School and does not provide wheelchair accessibility to the north end of the School.

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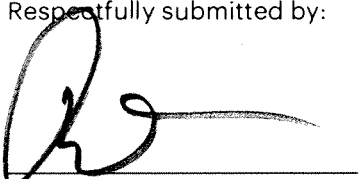
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In conjunction with the renovation of the Townhouse, the School is considering renovating the lobby of its existing 76<sup>th</sup> Street building in order to create a central passageway on the first floor which will traverse the north end of the School, and have a visual termination focused on the existing fan light above the 76<sup>th</sup> Street entry. This will provide a much needed organizing element in the School. The renovation also will include an elevator on the north end of the School which will serve all levels of the Townhouse and the existing 76<sup>th</sup> Street building and will be sized to meet requirements for medical stretchers.

Hewitt is committed to upgrading its facilities to meet today’s standards of providing quality education to students and believes strongly that these additions and enhancements to its facilities will help the School achieve its goals. The purchase of the Townhouse adjacent to their existing building provides the School with an incredible opportunity to reassess its space and it is the School’s hope that the Board of Standards and Appeals finds its request for variances to be thoughtfully considered and justified.

Respectfully submitted by:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Preston Gumberich,  
Partner,  
Robert A.M. Stern Architects