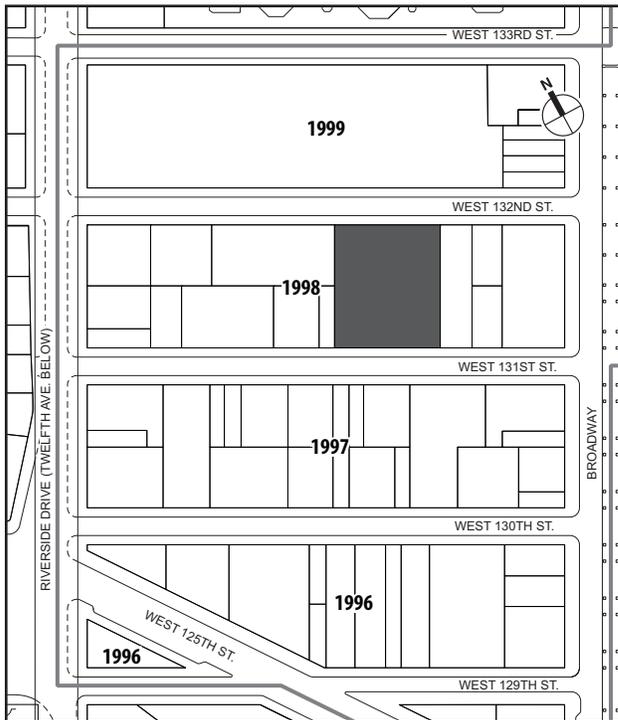


Block 1998 Lot 17

SITE CONDITION: FAIR



LOCATION, USE, ZONING, AND OWNERSHIP

Lot 17 is located at 615 West 131st Street, with lot area fronting West 131st and West 132nd Streets (see Photographs A and B). The six-story 210,000-gsf “Studebaker Building,” which is in an M1-2 zoning district, was acquired by 615 West 131st Street Company circa April 1997 and is under contract by the Trustees of Columbia University. The structure was built in 1924, renovated in 1997, and is currently undergoing further renovations for office use.

PHYSICAL AND STRUCTURAL CONCERNS

Overall, the exterior of this site was evaluated by Thornton Tomasetti Inc. to be in fair condition due to localized structural distress, some substandard exterior and site conditions, and safety concerns.¹ As shown in Photographs C

to E, the façades have scattered cracks and repair patches. There are corrosion stains on the lintels above some windows and roll-up doors on the north and south façades (see Photographs F and G, respectively), as well as on the stone cladding on the north façade, likely from the former steel window frames that have recently been replaced (see Photograph H). In addition, there are signs of efflorescence on the south façade (see Photograph I). The sidewalks and curb cuts along West 131st Street and West 132nd Street are in good condition, with a few local cracks and minor spalls (see Photographs J and K, respectively).

HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS

The stone cladding above a door opening on the south façade is cracked and appears to be an unsafe condition for people using this entrance due to the potential for falling debris (see Photograph C). On the West 132nd Street sidewalk, an expansion joint has widened. This strip between the curb and the widened joint is steeply sloped (see Photograph L), which is a potential tripping hazard for pedestrians.

BUILDING CODE VIOLATIONS

Lot 17 has 11 open building code violations issued between 1985 and 2005. Six violations were issued by DOB between 2001 and 2005 for the building’s elevator, and one violation was issued in 2005 for elevator safety test. Two violations issued by DOB in 2003 cite the building’s boiler. A violation was issued by ECB in 1997 for plumbing that does not conform to approved plans and for failure to main-

¹ The interior of the building was not evaluated because it was undergoing extensive renovations during the time of the site visits from January to April 2007, the period in which Thornton Tomasetti, Inc. performed detailed, structural assessments of properties in the study area.

Block 1998 Lot 17

tain the boiler. The final violation was issued in 1985 by DOB. No additional information is provided in the DOB Building Information System.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The Phase I ESA identified the following environmental issues: former and current use as a factory, paint room, spray booths, solvent storage, fuel oil AST, multiple gasoline USTs, generator of hazardous waste, a former manufactured gas plant gas holder, and an open status spill. The database entry for the spill indicated excavation of soil as part of construction, and that a closure request would be submitted. A soil sample collected as part of the Phase II investigation indicated concentrations of metals in exceedance of guidance values, which were likely related to urban fill. No groundwater samples were collected as part of the Phase II investigation.

Manhattanville Neighborhood Conditions Study

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Photograph 1998-17-A



Photograph 1998-17-B

Block 1998 Lot 17



Photograph 1998-17-C



Photograph 1998-17-D

Block 1998 Lot 17



Photograph 1998-17-E



Photograph 1998-17-F

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Photograph 1998-17-G



Photograph 1998-17-H

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Photograph 1998-17-I



Photograph 1998-17-J

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Photograph 1998-17-K



Photograph 1998-17-L