

Hotel Seville

(now The James NoMad Hotel)



Hotel Seville

(now The James NoMad Hotel)

LOCATION

Borough of Manhattan
Tax Map Block 858, Lot 17 in part
22 East 29th Street

(18-20 East 29th Street; 15-17 East 28th Street;
90-94 Madison Avenue)

LANDMARK TYPE

Individual

SIGNIFICANCE

A 12-story plus penthouse hotel building designed by Harry Allan Jacobs, built in 1901-04, with a through-block Annex designed by Charles T. Mott, built in 1906-07; significant for its distinctive Beaux-Arts architecture and as a notable representative of an early-20th-century hotel in New York City.



Hotel Seville, c. 1905
Wurts Bros., Museum of the City of New York



Hotel Seville (The James NoMad Hotel)
Sarah Moses (LPC), 2018

Hotel Seville

22 East 29th Street, Manhattan
(18-20 East 29th Street; 15-17 East 28th Street; 90-94 Madison Avenue)

the 29th Street Neighborhood Association, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, Historic Districts Council, and the Society for the Architecture of the City. The Commission also received two letters in favor of designation: one from State Senator Liz Krueger, Assembly Member Richard Gottfried, and New York City Council Member Ben Kallos, and a second letter from a board member of the Victorian Society of America Metropolitan New York Chapter.

Designation List 504

LP-2602

Built: 1901-04; Annex: 1906-07

Architects: Harry Allan Jacobs; Charles T. Mott

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 858, Lot 17 in part, consisting of the portion of the lot bounded by a line starting at East 29th Street at the northwest corner of the lot, continuing easterly along the northern lot line to a point at the northeast corner of the lot; thence southerly along the eastern lot line to a line parallel to the southern facade of the 1904 building section; thence westerly along such line to the eastern lot line of the 1907 Annex; thence southerly along the eastern lot line of the Annex to the southern lot line along East 28th Street; then continuing westerly along the southern lot line to the western lot line; thence northerly along the western lot line to the point of beginning at East 29th Street, as shown in the attached map.

On February 20, 2018, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Hotel Seville (now The James NoMad Hotel) (Research Department Public Hearing Item No. 1). The public hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. Six people spoke in favor of designation, including a representative of the owner and representatives from Manhattan Community Board 5,

Summary

Hotel Seville

The Hotel Seville is a distinctive Beaux-Arts style building, notable for its elegant architecture and its importance within the development of New York City hotels during the early-20th century.

Prominently located at the corner of Madison Avenue and East 29th Street, the hotel exhibits the classical composition and exuberant ornamental features that were popular for many hotels and apartment buildings at the time of construction. Built in two stages, the hotel is particularly striking with its highly ornamented base and crown, horizontal stripes in red brick and limestone, a variety of decorative window openings and surrounds, and sculptural elements in a French Renaissance style.

The Hotel Seville is representative of many New York City hotels constructed during the early-20th century. It was typical in its Beaux-Arts style, mid-range accommodations, and its height. The hotel complemented and supported the north of Madison Square neighborhood that evolved from affluent residential blocks into a bustling commercial and business district. It was popular with permanent residents and visitors alike, providing comfortable and stylish public spaces and guest rooms. In addition to being moderately priced, it was conveniently located near department stores, commercial showrooms, theaters, office buildings, and public transportation.

The hotel site, the former location of the Rutgers Presbyterian Church, was purchased in 1901 by Maitland E. Graves, a railroad promoter from upstate

New York. After Graves became bankrupt, the property was purchased by Louis C. Raegener, a prominent patent lawyer and real estate investor who completed construction of the corner building in 1904.

Harry Allan Jacobs (1872-1932) designed the original corner section of the hotel. Jacobs began his New York practice in 1900 after attending the Columbia Architecture program. His skillful application of French Renaissance ornamentation reflected his training at the prestigious L'Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. During his 30-year career he designed many New York City buildings including the Beaux-Arts style Hotel Marseilles (built 1902-05) at Broadway and West 103rd Street and the Renaissance Revival style Andrew Freedman Home (built 1922-24) at 1125 Grand Concourse in The Bronx, both New York City Landmarks.

As a result of the hotel's early success, Louis Raegener hired architect Charles T. Mott in 1906 to design a through-block Annex on the lots immediately west of the hotel. Although one story shorter than the original building, this Annex continued the original design vocabulary and most of the ornamental features of the original corner building.

In 1987 the Hotel Seville was upgraded and renamed the Carlton. Today in 2018 it is The James NoMad Hotel, marketed with luxury boutique accommodations. Alterations have affected windows, entrances, and lower sections of the 28th Street facade. The hotel continues to fill the same function it was designed for more than 100 years ago and remains a fine example of the Beaux-Arts style and a significant contributor to the streetscape along Madison Avenue.

Building Description

Hotel Seville

Hotel Seville is prominently located at the southwest corner of Madison Avenue and East 29th Street. Built in two stages, it consists of the original 12-story plus penthouse corner hotel building (1904) and an 11-story through-block hotel Annex (1907) with facades on East 28th and East 29th streets. Although the Annex along East 29th Street is one story shorter, it continues the original design vocabulary and many of the ornamental features of the earlier section.¹

The hotel's primary facades extend from a chamfered bay at the corner, four bays along Madison Avenue and nine bays along East 29th Street including the three-bay Annex, which extends through the block to a similar façade on East 28th Street. The vertical bays of the primary facades alternate between flush red brick with punched windows with limestone surrounds and bowed (or angled at the East 28th Street Annex) metal-clad window bays framed with quoins. The resulting contrasting bays create a visual rhythm highlighted by red brick, cream-colored masonry, and the weathered metal of the bay windows.

The primary facades are organized vertically in a tripartite configuration with a three-story base with an above-ground basement, a seven-story midsection, and a decorative crown of two stories (one story at the Annex) capped by an overhanging decorative cornice. The base and the crown are differentiated from the midsection with intermediate cornices and by the extent and variety of design details. There is a narrow areaway that lights the basement. An intermediate cornice above the base and another above the mid-section further divide

these sections. On the roof there is a one-story penthouse in the northwest corner and a balustrade parapet along the perimeter.

The footprint of the 1904 corner section is a "U" that opens to the south, creating an inner courtyard. The upper stories of these secondary courtyard facades with angled bay windows are visible from Madison Avenue. The footprint of the 1907 Annex is an "I" with similar bay windows along the recessed lot-line walls. The west-facing lot line wall is visible from East 28th Street and the adjoining park.

The main entrance to the hotel was historically along East 29th Street and is maintained as such today. Immediately south of the hotel along Madison Avenue is a three-story extension that was built in 2004-05 for an added entrance and lobby. This recent addition of the hotel is not included in the landmark designation.

Based on historic photographs, the hotel's original windows were either wood or metal-clad (kalamein) and included multi-light and one-over-one configurations. In the 1904 corner section there were pairs of multi-light casements at the second and third floors and at the crown; wider windows had multi-light sidelights and taller windows had multi-light transoms. There were also multi-light curved window sash in the bowed bays, casement in the center and double-hung at the sides.

Originally, the multi-light arched windows at the first floor had a pronounced center mullion, transom bar below arched muntins, and stained or leaded glass. The windows in the 1904 building's midsection and all windows in the Annex above the first floor were historically one-over-one double-hung sash.

In general, the window openings and surrounds remain intact, but with a few exceptions, the windows have been replaced with aluminum one-over-one sash set in squared aluminum panning. A

pair of original bowed multi-light casement windows, flanked by multi-light double-hung sash, remains in one location at the southernmost fourth-floor bowed bay window on Madison Avenue.

1904 Building (Corner of Madison Avenue and East 29th Street)

Historic

Base: The base consists of a partially visible basement floor and three stories. The basement is faced in granite ashlar, with a limestone torus-shaped water table with block keystones. Window openings are square-headed with tripartite multi-lite windows.

The first three stories are articulated by horizontal banding of limestone below alternating bands of red brick and limestone, with limestone quoins at the corners.

The first floor features tall round-arched window openings, each with limestone enframing that includes balustrade at the sill, concave and expressed voussoirs, and ornate key console that is flanked by carved oak leaves (only along East 29th Street). Console brackets support selected second-floor balconets. A large square “display-like” opening flanks each side of the chamfered corner. Each square opening has a decorative metal enframing in a tripartite configuration with profiled mullions and transom bars. These have fixed metal or metal-clad windows above limestone stills with decorative metal railings.

The entrance on East 29th Street has a slightly projecting one-story limestone surround with Tuscan pilasters at each side and a pair of Ionic columns *in antis* supporting a full entablature topped with a masonry attic-like feature.

Second and third floor window openings are square-headed and grouped within limestone enframements. The second floor window openings each feature a lintel with keystone and guttae and a projecting limestone balconet. Wide balconets are

supported by large console brackets and topped with a decorative metal railing. The third-floor window openings sit between console brackets and feature a decorative metal railing at each limestone sill. The chamfered corner includes a similar window grouping but with an arched window at the third floor above a square-headed window at the second floor.

Between the window bays are large oval cartouches framed with carved foliage below a lion’s head. A projecting intermediate cornice separates the base from the floors above and features modillions and console brackets.

Original tripartite window configurations remain at several locations at the base: at the corner windows, at the bay adjacent to the Annex, and at the third floor above the 29th Street entrance, but in these instances, the casement windows have been replaced by six-over-six double-hung windows.

Midsection: The midsection of the hotel features alternating vertical bays of red brick with cream-colored limestone or terra cotta trim, and projecting bowed window bays with bowed cornices, all clad in weathered metal. The cream-colored masonry is smooth ashlar, keyed at the edges at the building’s corners and at the edges of the window bays. Quoins in line with cornices at the bowed windows feature a guilloche pattern. The cream-colored masonry is concave along the edges of the bowed window bays.

The brick bays feature square-headed window openings with cream-colored masonry surrounds with bracketed sills and flat projecting hoods over profiled brackets with guttae. There are two bays of small rectangular utility windows along Madison Avenue and three bays (two are historic) along East 29th Street (not including the Annex).

Bowed metal-clad window bays have prominent intermediate curved cornices, a scrolled cornice at the tenth floor, mullions with ornate

reeded pilasters separating three openings, and spandrel panels trimmed with scrolled frames.

The building's intermediate cornice between the midsection and crown has a profiled course and Greek key pattern that extends in line with the decorative tenth-floor hood-like projections above each bowed window bay. Each hood has a block keystone and is supported with console brackets.

Crown: The two-story crown is clad in red brick with square-headed window openings with cream-colored masonry surrounds with flat arches and keystones at the 11th floor and flat arches at the 12th floor. Ornate details include two-story vertical panels with molded pendants, over-size console brackets, and dentil molding at the frieze beneath the overhanging profiled metal cornice with block modillions.

Roof: There is a one-story penthouse in the northwest corner of the roof and a balustrade parapet along the perimeter, visible in a circa 1909 photograph.

Rear Facades: Sections of red brick facades are visible from Madison Avenue and include the rear of the 1904 "U"-shaped section, each wing with three bays of square-headed windows with flush stone lintels and sills. A small section of the courtyard and the top floor of the Annex are also visible.

Alterations 1904 Building

Basement: granite painted; removal of basement doorway at chamfered corner; windows replaced with aluminum, retaining multi-light configuration; light fixtures attached to wall along areaway; exposed conduit; Siamese pipe

First Floor: replacement of all first floor multi-light arched window assemblies, transoms, and mullions, with a single-light fixed aluminum window at each opening; replacement of the multi-light arched window assembly and limestone balustrade at

chamfered corner with a metal-framed glass door assembly, narrow sidelights and single-light transom window; at the new corner entrance, the installation of a black metal-framed light-box canopy held in place by thin metal posts; addition of one bay of small utility windows along East 29th Street; replacement of one arched-window assembly and limestone balustrade west of 29th Street entrance with a flush-metal service door assembly; addition of louvered opening adjacent to new service door; three security cameras; flagpole

At East 29th Street entrance, removal of decorative metal grille in front of doors; installation of metal and glass door assembly; new canopy over steps (2016-17); replacement steps, and removal of decorative masonry lions at steps

Second and Third Floors: replacement of multi-light casement windows and transoms, some with multi-light sidelights, with aluminum one-over-one double-hung windows; infill at second-floor window adjacent to corner; up- and down-light assemblies with exposed conduit at each bay; up-lights in balcony at corner

Midsection: replacement of bowed (convex) multi-light windows in projecting window bays, (except historic remain at southernmost fourth floor bay window along Madison Avenue) and of one-over-one double-hung windows in brick bays, all with (flat) aluminum one-over-one sash windows

Crown: replacement of multi-light casement windows and transoms with aluminum one-over-one double-hung sash windows

Roof: installation of large bulkhead on top of penthouse, minimally visible from Madison Avenue north of East 29th Street

Rear Facades: brick painted; replacement aluminum windows

1907 Annex (East 29th Street Facade)

Historic

The 11-story Annex facade along East 29th Street is three bays wide and continues most of the material, design, and ornamentation of the 1904 building section with these noticeable exceptions: the Annex is one story shorter; the two bowed-window bays flank a single bay of punched windows and extend from the second to the eleventh floor rather than the fourth to the tenth floor as in the 1904 building; the windows within the metal-clad bowed bays have historically contained one-over-one double-hung sash (not multi-light); and the Annex has a simpler crown with metal dentil molding and no console brackets. There is one bay of rectangular utility windows

Basement and first floor: continuation of the 1904 building with the tall round-arched windows

Second and third stories: continuation of the horizontal stripes of red brick and limestone and the large oval cartouches

Midsection: central bay clad in red brick with square-headed punched windows flanked on each side by metal projecting bowed bay windows

Crown: one story, continuation of the bay windows and a single square-headed window with a flat arch and keystone within cream-colored masonry enframing; cornice with modillions and dentil molding

Alterations 1907 Annex (East 29th Street)

Basement: See 1904 alterations section

First Floor: replacement of multi-light tall arched windows with single-light aluminum windows; security camera; surface-mounted light fixture with exposed conduit

Second through 11th Floors: replacement of windows with one-over-one double-hung aluminum windows at all floors

1907 Annex (East 28th Street Facade)

Historic

The 11-story Annex facade along East 28th Street is three bays wide similar in composition and materials to the Annex facade along East 29th Street, with these notable exceptions: the facade is shorter, with no above-ground basement and a shorter first floor; the facade exhibits fewer ornamental features; the metal-clad window bays are angled, not bowed, without projecting cornices; there are no intermediate building cornices, no separate crown, and no dentil molding at the building's cornice.

Historically the first floor consisted of storefronts that had been altered over the years. The historic second floor consisted of angled bay windows that flanked a central window with an ornate molded cream-colored masonry surround topped with a small cartouche.

Alterations 1907 Annex (East 28th Street)

First and Second Floors: reconstruction of the facade and fenestration at the first two floors by removing the cladding and all fenestration, and in its place the installation of a short black marble base with cream-colored ashlar above; three square-headed double-height openings; one shorter door opening; aluminum windows with metal spandrel panels and louvers; new angled base for third-floor bay windows; new string course between second and third floors; and one security camera

Third through 11th Floors: infill of small utility windows at the third and fourth floors; replacement of windows with one-over-one double-hung aluminum windows at all floors

1907 Annex (West Facade)

Historic

This lot-line facade overlooks a Privately Owned Public Space (POPS) adjacent and west of

the Annex. The red brick facade includes three bays of angled metal-clad bay windows (same design as the East 28th Street facade) and bays of several sizes of punched square-headed window openings with a contrasting stone sill, but no window surrounds. The windows are one-over-one double hung, with the exception of several multi-light double-hung windows.

Alterations 1907 Annex (West Facade): brick painted; replacement aluminum one-over-one double-hung windows

Areaway along Madison Avenue and East 29th Street

Historic

Historic photographs show the narrow areaway in its present location with iron pipe railing spanning masonry piers topped with decorative light posts (some sections have a low curb).

Alterations of Areaway: replacement of masonry curbing and metal railing, similar to historic; removal of historic light posts and masonry piers; uprights installed in the areaway

History

Hotel Seville

Madison Square North²

Hotel Seville, now The James NoMad Hotel, is located within the area north of Madison Square, a neighborhood that is often defined by East 25th Street to the south, East 30th Street to the north, Sixth Avenue to the west, and Park Avenue to the east. The neighborhood is also sometimes identified as part of Midtown South. Just to the west and south of the Hotel Seville lies the Madison Square North Historic District, designated by New York City in 2001.

During the early-19th century, the Madison Square area was open farmland with scattered cottages. By the mid-19th century, the countryside had developed into a residential area of row houses with streets and lots laid out according to the 1811 Commissioners' Plan.³ The plan also set aside open spaces for markets and parks. One of these public spaces became Madison Square, named for James Madison, the president of the United States at that time. Madison Square was first used by the military, but by 1847, it was landscaped into a 6.23-acre park enclosed by a cast-iron fence.⁴

By the Civil War the Madison Square neighborhood became a residential enclave for the city's influential and wealthy residents. Most lived in four- or five-story brick or brownstone row houses in the popular Italianate style, with broad stoops leading to the parlor floor entryways. The neighborhood also supported small stores, churches, a number of hotels, and restaurants.⁵ For example, the celebrated Delmonico's Restaurant moved to the neighborhood in 1876. There were also private social

clubs where members could dine and socialize.

After 1891, the popular Madison Square Garden at East 26th Street, just three blocks south of the future Hotel Seville, dominated the neighborhood. The large entertainment complex was designed by Stanford White who topped the building with a 341-foot-high tower modeled after the 16th-century Giralda Tower in Seville, Spain. This block-long facility accommodated theaters, restaurants, a ballroom, and apartments. As such, it was the venue for a variety of large-scale events and performances, thereby attracting additional businesses and visitors to the area.⁶ In addition to Madison Square Garden, other theaters opened nearby along Broadway, then known as the “Great White Way.”

At the turn of the 20th century, the Madison Square neighborhood experienced additional changes that transformed the area into a bustling commercial and entertainment district. Transportation improvements included the addition of two new subway lines along Broadway and Park Avenue, with a station nearby at East 28th Street. Streets were better paved, there were more garages and stables, and trucks could make more efficient deliveries.⁷ Bridges and rail terminals made midtown more reachable for commuters and visitors alike. A number of retail and wholesale businesses were concentrated to the west of Fifth Avenue. For example, large department stores, such as B. Altman’s and R. H. Macy’s, moved up town from Ladies’ Mile and established large stores in the area just north of Madison Square.

By 1910, the neighborhood still retained many individual residences, particularly along the east-west streets, but multi-story office and commercial buildings began to appear. The neighborhood’s evolution set the stage for speculative investments by entrepreneurs who developed hotels, apartment, and office buildings.

New York City Hotels

Hotels and inns have played an important role in the economic and social development of cities, and particularly New York City as it developed northward.⁸ One of the most famous early hotels was the 1836 Astor House, large for its day and located near City Hall. Its prominent location in lower Manhattan helped establish it as an important hotel, where businessmen, professionals, and politicians routinely gathered and socialized.⁹ A more modest hotel nearby, the Cosmopolitan, was built nearly ten years later in 1845 across the street from what became the Hudson River Railroad Depot. The hotel has the distinction of being one of the oldest hotels in the city that still serves its original purpose.¹⁰

Although most of New York City’s hotels were concentrated south of 14th Street before the Civil War, construction of the prestigious Fifth Avenue Hotel in 1858 along Broadway between 23rd and 24th streets signaled the beginning of a new hotel district in the vicinity of Madison Square.¹¹ After the Civil War, the Gilsey House (1871) and the Grand Hotel (1868) continued the pattern along Broadway a little farther north between 29th and 31st streets. Both of these buildings are still standing and New York City Landmarks.¹² As more hotels were built, this stretch of Broadway soon became known as the “Avenue of Great Hotels.”¹³

Although many hotels were built along Broadway, a number were also located nearby along prestigious Fifth Avenue such as the 1890 Wilbraham Hotel at 30th Street, a New York City Landmark.¹⁴ Another example was the extravagant 1893-97 Waldorf-Astoria farther north at 34th Street. With 1300 rooms, this “palace” was purportedly the largest hotel in the world at the time.¹⁵

By the early 1900s, hotels of various sizes and degrees of luxury become more numerous in the Madison Square neighborhood, both on the avenues and side streets. Many of these hotels, like the Hotel

Seville and others across the city, accommodated not only the increased number of visitors and business travelers, but also provided lodging (without kitchens) for long term residents.¹⁶

Early 20th-Century Hotels

The Hotel Seville is representative of the early 20th-century mid-priced hotel built in New York City with its refined accommodations, wide range of services, and its distinctive architecture, including its 12-story height and Beaux-Arts design, popular at that time.

Centrally located in respectable neighborhoods, mid-priced hotels proudly advertised their convenient locations, reasonable prices, and an array of amenities. Their promotional material described their stylish lobbies, dining rooms, parlors, and bars. In addition to modern and well-decorated guest rooms, many of these hotels also had roof-top gardens, libraries, and billiard rooms to add to their appeal.¹⁷

These mid-priced hotels, like the Hotel Seville, catered to middle-class people with comfortable incomes who appreciated moderately priced, yet elegantly appointed hotels.¹⁸ The hotel's public rooms, often with plush furnishings, were typically located on the main and mezzanine floors, making them accessible to not only residents and guests, but also to visitors who were not staying at the hotel. Lobbies, bars, and dining rooms were popular meeting places, providing a place for business and gossip, where guests could "...weave themselves into the social groups they needed for their work or personal ambitions."¹⁹ The public parlors, often outfitted with a piano, became a favorite place for women to socialize and enjoy tea.

Elevators provided access to the guest rooms above, consisting of single rooms, with or without private baths, and suites that were typically used by long-term residents. None of the rooms or suites had kitchens; guests and residents were expected to buy

their meals in the hotel dining room or nearby restaurants. Although moderately-priced, the hotels included all the possible comforts of modern life: telephones, modern plumbing, laundry services, maids, valets, barbers, hairdressers and shoe-shine boys.²⁰

Until around 1960, the majority of hotels, including the Hotel Seville, that catered to "out of town" visitors also offered rooms and their services to long term residents. The increased popularity of living in a hotel occurred when it became more acceptable, and even desirable, for middle and upper class people to live in some type of multiple housing. Hotels extended their services to long-term residents who did not want or could not afford to keep up a fully staffed and well-furnished middle-class home or apartment. These residents included those who not only enjoyed the freedom of being unfettered by a house or apartment, but also enjoyed the social aspects of living in a hotel. Since 1960, most mid-range hotels now cater to short-term visitors or have converted their rooms into apartments with kitchens.

Fireproof Construction

The typical early 20th-century mid-priced hotel in New York City, including the Hotel Seville, promoted its fireproof construction, including steel framing and masonry cladding. The typical 10- to 12-story height of many hotels corresponded to the NYC Building Code adopted in 1899, which allowed some modifications to fireproof construction when a class of buildings did not exceed 12 stories. This class included any building "used as a hotel, lodging house, school, theatre, jail, police station, hospital, asylum, or institution for the care or treatment of persons..."²¹ Major fireproofing requirements for this class of buildings included the following: walls constructed of brick, stone, concrete, iron or steel; no wood used for the beams, lintels, floors, roofs, partitions, furring, or ceilings; and additional

requirements for stairs and windows.²² Although these types of buildings, including hotels, had to be fireproof, partitions, furring, ceilings, doors, windows, casings, and floor boards could be made of wood or flammable material when the height did not exceed 150 feet or 12 stories.

Consequently, many hotels built in the early-20th century in New York City are 10- to 12-stories tall. A number in the vicinity of the Hotel Seville include the Martha Washington (12 stories), built for women in 1901-03; the Aberdeen (12 stories), built 1902-04; and the Hotel Woolcott (10 stories). All are New York City Landmarks.²³

Beaux-Arts Style

The Hotel Seville was designed in the Beaux-Arts style, a design-approach commonly employed for hotels and apartment buildings at the time. The style was also used for prominent civic monuments and institutions around the turn of the 20th century. Its application on a 12-story structure reflects the desire to elevate the appearance of grandeur and importance of the building and in this instance, the hotel type. The grand architecture appealed to the middle class traveler and resident who appreciated the style's association with elegance and continental sophistication.

The Beaux-Arts style is characterized by an abundance of re-interpreted classical-style ornament, with an emphasis on molded ornament, boldly scaled details, contrasting materials, and carved sculptural elements.²⁴ The composition exhibits a strong symmetry and regularity. Hotel Seville's sculpted lion heads, festooned cartouches, bays of bowed windows, ornamental metal, and stripes of limestone and red brick are just some of the features that illustrate the style. Window variations and enframements are also important in the design, as seen in the variety of arched and square-headed openings, some with multi-light sash and decorative

balconies. The style often includes a strong roofline such as a mansard, or as in the Hotel Seville, a highly ornamented overhanging cornice.

The term Beaux Arts to describe a style references L'Ecole des Beaux Arts, a prestigious and world-famous art school in Paris, known for its rigorous training in the arts, including architecture. The Academy of Architecture program emphasized classical precedents adapted to evolving building types. The style became popular with American architects who attended L'Ecole and was also adopted by their fellow practicing architects as well. It is interesting to note that the use of the term "Beaux-Arts" to describe an architectural style did not become popular until the mid-1960s. Early-20th-century architects and writers often used the term French Renaissance to describe buildings like the Hotel Seville.

Similar Beaux-Arts style hotels constructed around the same time as the Hotel Seville include the 1902-04 Hotel Wolcott, the 1902-05 Hotel Marseilles, and the 1903-05 Hotel Saint Louis, among others.²⁵ These three examples are New York City Landmarks.

Hotel Seville

Hotel Seville was the result of an entrepreneurial plan during a time of widespread hotel speculation and construction in New York City. The main section of the hotel sits on a lot that was the location of two successive church buildings: the 1844 Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church and the 1875 Rutgers Presbyterian Church. After the Rutgers congregation moved to the Upper West Side, their 1875 church building served as the Masonic Scottish Rite Hall.²⁶

The Masonic Hall and lot were purchased by Myer Hellman in 1901 for \$175,000 and resold soon afterwards to Maitland E. Graves, a bank cashier and railroad promoter from Watertown, New York. In

July of 1901 Graves filed for a building permit to construct a “...twelve-story brick, stone, and terracotta corner building, 74.1’ by 95’...designed by H. Allan Jacobs of 1133 Broadway, architect; cost, \$765,000.”²⁷

Much of the construction of this 410-room hotel with 300 bathrooms was completed by early 1903, but Graves experienced financial pressures when mechanics’ liens were filed against the property. After Graves was sued by 20 vendors, he became bankrupt. Around the same time, a newspaper article reported that Graves left the country for Europe.²⁸

The foreclosed property was then purchased by Louis C. Raegenar, P. Henry Dugro (his Columbia school classmate and later law partner) and other investors for \$489,000.²⁹ Raegenar was a prominent patent lawyer and real estate investor who also maintained part interest in the Hotel Savoy with Dugro, and was on the Board of Directors of the Murray Hill Hotel.³⁰ In 1904 Raegenar completed the project and opened the Hotel Seville. An advertisement in *Puck* magazine noted that the fireproof hotel had guest rooms for transients and permanent guests, with or without baths, European Plan (price of room did not include meals), and was conveniently close to Fifth Avenue and Grand Central Depot.³¹

With its corner location and 12-story height, the Hotel Seville stood out among the neighboring three- and four-story row houses. Its location and prominence was part of an early wave of development that reshaped the neighborhood, heralding the office buildings and taller apartment buildings in the subsequent decades. Shortly after opening, due to the hotel’s overwhelming popularity, Raegenar decided to expand.³² He commissioned his brother-in-law, Charles T. Mott, to design the through-block Annex, completed in 1907.

In 1913 Louis Raegenar purchased two small

residential lots just south of the hotel along Madison Avenue.³³ These lots eventually became the site of the 2005 extension for an additional hotel entrance (not part of this designation). Raegenar continued buying property on that block, so that by 1920 he owned the entire block frontage along Madison Avenue between East 28th and East 29th streets.³⁴

The hotel was moderately priced and appealed to both visitors and permanent residents alike. Its promotional material emphasized its proximity to department stores, theaters, churches, and transportation lines. The hotel also catered to business travelers who appreciated being close to nearby office buildings and commercial showrooms. The management was proud of the fire-proof construction and emphasized the numerous windows that provided ‘floods of sunshine’ and ‘cooling breezes.’ It was a ‘Modern Hotel with a homelike atmosphere...’³⁵

Historic photographs illustrate the Hotel Seville’s inviting restaurant and bar with natural wood trim and tasteful decoration. There was also a more informal Grille in the basement, accessed from the corner entrance. The lobby featured carpeting and comfortable chairs, but the hotel’s main attraction was a large stained-glass dome over the bar. Advertisements also indicated there was a rooftop garden with greenery and views.

Louis Raegenar and his wife lived at the hotel as permanent residents for 22 years.³⁶ After he died in 1928 she continued to live there while Raegenar’s firm, the Roy Realty Company, continued ownership.³⁷ In the decades that followed Raegenar’s death, the Hotel Seville continued to welcome both visitors and full-time residents. During that time, newspapers would occasionally mention some of the prominent guests and residents. One article noted that a guest in 1931 was the wife of the New York City’s chief magistrate. Another news story mentioned that a prominent lawyer and broker

died at his home in the Hotel Seville in 1946.³⁸

The hotel was sold in 1946 by the Roy Realty Co to a syndicate of investors known as the Seville Realty Corp. The sale included the original 1904 hotel, Annex, and the two lots along Madison Avenue that were purchased in 1913.³⁹

In 1964, in preparation for New York City's World's Fair, the Seville Hotel was approved by a panel for inclusion on a list of 183 hotels that were recommended to visitors.⁴⁰ In 1987 the hotel was upgraded, remodeled, and renamed the Carlton.

In 2005 the hotel was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.⁴¹ At that time, its owners embarked on a five-year rehabilitation project. This remodeling created a 300-room hotel, upgrading it from a budget two-star rating to a four-star hotel.⁴² As part of this project, a new entrance (not part of this designation) was added at 86-88 Madison Avenue, on the site of the two lots that were purchased in 1913.

In 2015 GFI Capital Resources Group (GFI Development Company, LLC) who also own the nearby Ace Hotel (former Hotel Breslin at 20 West 29th Street), bought the Carlton Hotel and has since changed its name to The James NoMad Hotel.⁴³ From 2016 to 2018, the new owners have undertaken a major upgrade of the hotel, including interior renovations; installation of new windows, entry doors, and canopies; and reconstruction and reconfiguration of the first two floors at the Annex facade along East 28th Street.

Architects

Harry Allan Jacobs (1872-1932), was a prominent Beaux-Arts-trained early-20th-century architect who designed many buildings in New York City and the surrounding area.⁴⁴ He is best known for his elegant townhouses and country estates. He graduated from Columbia College's Course of Architecture in the School of Mines.⁴⁵ He then traveled to Paris to attend

L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts and was awarded a Rome Prize by the American Academy in Rome.

In 1900 he established his architectural practice in New York City, eventually specializing in town houses, many commissioned for wealthy clients living in the Upper East Side. He also designed hotels, commercial buildings, and a number of charitable institutional buildings, including the Andrew Freedman Home on the Grand Concourse in The Bronx.⁴⁶ His work was showcased in *New York Architect*, "Versatility and Conservatism in Architecture: Some Recent Examples of the Varied Work of Harry Allan Jacobs."⁴⁷

In addition to the Hotel Seville, he also designed the Hotel Marseilles on Broadway and 103rd Street in Manhattan, built 1902-05.⁴⁸ Both of these hotels show the influence of the French Renaissance and of the Beaux-Arts. He also designed the 1927 neo-Renaissance Hotel Elysee at 54 East 54th Street.

Later in his career he became more active in urban planning, promoting affordable housing, parks, and finding solutions for traffic congestion. In the years before he died, he (and other architects) moved away from revivalist styles and became interested in a more modern less ornamented approach. In the mid-1920s he was appointed to the Mayor's Committee on Plan and Survey and was active within the Municipal Art Society. He died in 1932 at the age of 60. His son, Robert Allan Jacobs also became a well-known New York City architect, a partner with Ely Jacques Kahn (Kahn & Jacobs) from 1940 to 1972.

Charles T. Mott (1855-1934) was born in Staten Island and a brother-in-law to Louis Raegener, owner and developer of the Hotel Seville. By 1885 he had established an architectural practice in Brooklyn.⁴⁹ A few years later he moved his office to Manhattan where he became active in the design of row houses, particularly on the Upper West Side. From 1893 to

1896 Mott worked in partnership with Hugo Kafka in the firm Kafka & Mott, designing Renaissance Revival style row houses, many within the West End-Collegiate and Riverside-West End Extension I Historic Districts. One of his most notable commissions was Halliehurst, an 1890 Shingle style mansion in Elkins West Virginia, for Senator and Mrs. Stephen B. Elkins. He was a member of the Architectural League and a fellow of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). After a successful career in New York City and the East Coast, he moved to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1910 while maintaining an office and home in Brooklyn. Many AIA events in California listed Mott as an active participant. He retired to Concord, California where he died in 1934.

Conclusion

The Hotel Seville is a distinctive Beaux-Arts style hotel, notable for its elegant architecture and its importance within the development of New York City hotels and the area north of Madison Square during the early 20th century. Prominently sited at the corner of Madison Avenue and East 29th Street, the hotel exemplifies the style, composition, and ornamental features that were popular for hotels at the time of construction.

Report researched and written by

Marianne Hurley
Research Department

Endnotes

¹ The East 28th Street Annex facade is shorter than the East 29th Street Annex facade. East 28th Street does not have an above-ground basement and historically had a shorter first floor, consequently, the difference in building height.

² Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), *Madison Square North Historic District Designation Report (LP-2097)* (New York: City of New York, June 26, 2001).

³ Madison Avenue itself was constructed during the 1840s, extending from East 23rd Street to the Harlem River.³

⁴ During the years before and after the Civil War, the farmland north of Madison Square was sold and subdivided into residential building lots, typically 20 or 25 feet wide and 100 feet deep. This pattern was interrupted by lots for religious or commercial structures.

⁵ Episcopal, Dutch Reform, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic parishes, among others, were in the immediate vicinity of Madison Square.

⁶ The Stanford White Madison Square building was demolished in 1925. Madison Square Garden then moved to 8th Avenue and 50th Street until 1968 when it again moved above the subterranean Pennsylvania Station on 7th Avenue and 33rd Street.

⁷ "A New Idea in Loft Buildings: The New Up-town Mercantile District," *Real Estate Record and Guide*, (October 24, 1908), 777; (October 31, 1908): 841.

⁸ LPC, *St. Louis Hotel Designation Report (LP-2533)* (New York: City of New York, June 25, 2013), prepared by Virginia Kurshan

⁹ Built for John Jacob Astor on Broadway between Barclay and Vesey streets, designed with Greek Revival details by Isaiah Rogers, it was five stories tall with 300 rooms including a bath and toilet on each floor; demolished by 1926.

¹⁰ Christopher Gray, "The Granddaddy of Them All," *New York Times (NYT)*, October 8, 2009, RE9. The former Cosmopolitan Hotel, located at Chambers and West Broadway, is now The Frederick, a name used in 1851. The hotel is part of the Tribeca South Historic District, designated 1992.

¹¹ (LPC), *Madison Square North Historic District Designation Report, (LP-2097)* (New York: City of New York, June 26, 2001),7.

¹² LPC, *Gilsey House Designation Report (LP-1029)* (New York: City of New York, September 11, 1979), prepared by James T. Dillon; LPC, *Grand Hotel*

Designation Report (LP-1041) (New York: City of New York, September 11, 1979), prepared by James T. Dillon.

¹³ Moses King, *King's Handbook of New York* (Boston: Moses King, 1893), 148.

¹⁴ LPC, *The Wilbraham Designation Report (LP-2153)* (New York: City of New York, June 8, 2004), prepared by Jay Shockley.

¹⁵ The Waldor-Astoria was demolished in 1929 to make way for the construction of the Empire State Building. Today's 1931 Waldorf-Astoria Hotel is located farther north at Park Avenue and 49th Street.

¹⁶ Paul Groth, *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 5. If a guest stays more than one month, he or she is considered a permanent resident.

¹⁷ Information about mid-range hotels is taken from Chapter 3, "Midpriced Mansions for Middle Incomes," in Paul Groth, 56-89.

¹⁸ Paul Groth, 61, Mid-priced hotels charged 1/3 to 1/2 what a high-end hotel would charge

¹⁹ Paul Groth, 59.

²⁰ William Hutchins, "New York Hotels II," *Architectural Record* 12 (November 1902), 621.

²¹ City of New York: *The Building Code* (New York: J. W. Pratt Co., 1901), 77.

²² *Ibid*, 78.

²³ Martha Washington Hotel, 27 East 29th Street; the Aberdeen, 17 West 32nd Street; and the Martinique Broadway and 32nd Street.

²⁴ LPC, *New York Public Library (Stephen A. Schwarzman Building) Interiors, Main Reading Room and Catalog Room (LP-2592)*, (New York: City of New York, August 8, 2017), prepared by Matthew Postal.

²⁵ The Hotel Wolcott is at 4 West 31st Street, Hotel Marseilles at Broadway and West 103rd Street, and Hotel Saint Louis at 34 East 32nd Street.

²⁶ David Dunlop, *From Abyssinian to Zion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 186.

²⁷ "The Building Department: List of Plans Filed for New Structures and Alterations," *NYT*, July 24, 1901, 12; NB 1322, Department of Buildings.

²⁸ "In the Real Estate Field," *NYT*, January 1, 1903, 12; "M. E. Graves in Bankruptcy," *NYT*, April 30, 1903, 7.

²⁹ "Lower Madison Avenue under New Influences," *NYT*, April 16, 1905, 20.

³⁰ Jeff Hirsh, *Manhattan Hotels: 1880-1920* (Dover, New Hampshire: Arcadia Publishing, 1997), 14. The 1892 Hotel Savoy was located at Fifth Avenue and 59th Street, demolished 1925. The 1884 Murray Hill Hotel was located at Park Avenue and 40th Street; demolished 1946.

³¹ Advertisement, *Puck* (literary magazine), Vol. LV (June 8, 1904).

³² The added lots for the Annex were originally leased and purchased in 1920. "Hotel Seville Buys Leasehold," *Sun-Herald*, May 13, 1920. "Cruikshank Company sold...to the Hotel Seville, Louis C. Raegner, president the four lots at 15 and 17 East Twenty-eighth street, and 18 and 20 East Twenty-ninth street, 50 x 200, covered by the Annex of the Seville."

³³ "The Real Estate Field," *NYT*, July 15, 1913, 14.

³⁴ "Owner of Seville buys Apartment," *New York Herald*, December 25, 1920.

³⁵ Brochure for the Hotel Seville (no date) in the "Hotels-New York City" file in the George B. Corsa Hotel Collection of the New York Historical Society Museum Library.

³⁶ "Louis C. Raegener, Lawyer, Dies at 72," *NYT*, July 7, 1928, 5. Raegener owned the Hotel Seville up to his death in 1928.

³⁷ "L. C. Raegener Estate Set at \$1,124,347." *NYT*, May 25, 1929, 25.

³⁸ "Mrs. McAdoo died at the hotel," *NYT*, January 19, 1931; "George A. Carden, Lawyer, Broker, 80 dies while at his home in the Hotel Seville," *NYT*, June 5, 1946.

³⁹ "Syndicate Buys Hotel Seville As City Deals Cover Wide Area," *NYT*, August 4, 1946, 131. 124 feet of frontage on Madison Avenue (86-94 Madison Ave) and 145 feet on East 29th Street, and 50 feet on East 28th Street. These various lots would later be combined into Lot 17.

⁴⁰ The list included hotels that were not considered "flophouses." List (1964) in the "Hotels-New York City" file in the George B. Corsa collection of the New York Historical Society Museum Library.

⁴¹ National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), *Seville Hotel, New York, New York (#05000088)* (listed February 24, 2005), nomination prepared by Aaron Wolfson.

⁴² "New Lobby and Address, for a 1900s Hotel," *NYT*,

May 4, 2005; Work also included uncovering and restoring a large stained-glass dome over the bar.

⁴³ “The Real Deal” website, accessed November 17, 2016.

⁴⁴ Information on Harry Allan Jacobs: “H. A. Jacobs Dies; Architect Here,” *NYT*, August 22, 1932, 15; “Harry Jacobs, Architect, Dies After Operation,” *New York Herald Tribune*, August 23, 1932; NRHP, *House at 49 East 80th Street, New York, New York (#07001193)* (listed November 15, 2007), nomination prepared by Anthony Robins.

⁴⁵ *Columbia Spectator*, Vol XXXIV (August 7 1894), 9. John Russell Pope was a classmate of Jacobs at Columbia College’s Course of Architecture.

⁴⁶ LPC, *Andrew Freedman Home Designation Report (LP-1796)* (New York: City of New York, June 2, 1992), prepared by Andrew S. Dolkart.

⁴⁷ *New York Architect*, August, 1911, vol. 5; also C. Matlack Price, “Versatility and conservatism in architecture: some recent examples of the varied work of Harry Allan Jacobs,” *Arts and Decoration*, January 1912, vol. 2, 93-95.

⁴⁸ LPC, *Hotel Marseilles Designation Report (LP-1660)* (New York: City of New York, October 2, 1990), prepared by Kevin McHugh.

⁴⁹ Information on Charles T. Mott: LPC, *West End-Collegiate Historic District Extension (LP-2462)* (New York: City of New York, June 25, 2013), 262; “Architect Hornbostel Honored by Comrades,” *Oakland Tribune*, July 23, 1910; “Prominent Delegates From the East Are Expected Here Today,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 15, 1911, 4; “Charles T. Mott,” *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, December 18, 1934 (obituary).

Findings and Designation

Hotel Seville

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and the other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Hotel Seville (now The James NoMad Hotel) has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and culture characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Hotel Seville is a striking example of the Beaux-Arts style architecture with its classical composition and finely crafted French Renaissance-inspired details; that the hotel was built in two stages in 1901-04 and 1906-07, designed by two prominent New York City architects, Harry Allan Jacobs and Charles T. Mott; that the hotel was built during a period of growth in the neighborhood north of Madison Square and is important within the development of New York City hotels during the early 20th century; that the hotel complemented and supported the neighborhood as it changed from affluent residential blocks into a bustling commercial and business district; that the hotel was popular with both permanent residents and transient guests with its proximity to stores, public transportation, theaters, and offices; that the Beaux Arts style of the building, with its red brick facade, limestone accents, round-arched windows, bays of bowed and angled windows, and sculptural features was favored by architects for hotels and apartment houses during the early 20th century; and that the building continues to be a prominent contributor to the streetscape and continues to fill the same function for which it was

designed more than 100 years ago.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Hotel Seville (now The James NoMad Hotel) and designates Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 858, Lot 17 in part, consisting of the portion of the lot bounded by a line starting at East 29th Street at the northwest corner of the lot, continuing easterly along the northern lot line to a point at the northeast corner of the lot; thence southerly along the eastern lot line to a line parallel to the southern facade of the 1904 building section; thence westerly along such line to the eastern lot line of the 1907 Annex; thence southerly along the eastern lot line of the Annex to the southern lot line along East 28th Street; then continuing westerly along the southern lot line to the western lot line; thence northerly along the western lot line to the point of beginning at East 29th Street, as shown in the attached map.

Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair

Wellington Chen
Michael Devonshire
Michael Goldblum
Anne Holford-Smith
Jeanne Lutfy
Adi Shamir-Baron
Commissioners



Hotel Seville (The James-NoMad Hotel)
22 East 29th Street at Madison Avenue
Sarah Moses (LPC), 2018



Hotel Seville, Main Entrance, circa 1917
East 29th Street
William D. Hassler Photography Collection
New York Historical Society



Main Entrance, East 29th Street
Sarah Moses (LPC), 2018



Hotel Seville, Madison Avenue Facade (left)
Sarah Moses (LPC), 2018



East 29th Street Facade, (top right)
Annex at the right
Sarah Moses (LPC), 2018



Hotel Seville, Annex Facade East 28th Street
Sarah Moses (LPC), 2018



Hotel Seville, Annex Facade East 29th Street
Sarah Moses (LPC) 2018



Advertisement
"Hotels-New York City"
George B. Corsa Hotel Collection
New York Historical Society Museum Library

