

**YORKVILLE BANK**, 1511 Third Avenue (aka 1511-1515 Third Avenue and 201-203 East 85<sup>th</sup> Street), Borough of Manhattan.

Built 1905 and 1923-24; Architects Robert Maynicke (1905) and P. Gregory Stadler (1923-24)

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 1531, Lot 1

On March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Yorkville Bank and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Public Hearing Item No. 1). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. Three people spoke in favor of designation, including representatives of the owner, the Historic Districts Council, and the Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts. There was no testimony in opposition to the proposed designation.

### Summary

The Yorkville Bank building, an Italian Renaissance Revival structure designed by architect Robert Maynicke and constructed in 1905, served for more than 85 years as a banking center for the Yorkville neighborhood of Manhattan's Upper East Side. The opening of the Second and Third Avenue elevated railways in the 1870s ushered in a period of urbanization for the neighborhood, bringing with it middle-class row house and apartment development. By the turn of the century, Yorkville had become a destination for waves of German, Hungarian, and Czechoslovakian immigrant families looking to escape the overcrowded tenement districts of Manhattan's Lower East Side.



The Yorkville Bank first established itself on the northeast corner of Third Avenue and East 85<sup>th</sup> Street in 1893, and its original stockholders were largely German or of German descent. In 1905, the bank hired Robert Maynicke, an architect born in Germany and trained at Cooper Union, to design the dignified four-story granite, limestone, brick, and terra-cotta bank and office building. Maynicke worked for noted architect George B. Post before co-founding the firm Maynicke & Franke in 1895, and is responsible for the design of the Germania Bank Building (1898-1899) at 190 Bowery, a designated New York City Landmark. In 1923-24, the structure was expanded by architect P. Gregory Stadler with the addition of one-and-a-half bays on both street facades, intended to blend seamlessly with Maynicke's original design. The result is an elegant palazzo-type building featuring tall arched openings on the ground story separated by full-height pilasters and flanked by delicate roundels; two pairs of massive cast-bronze entrance doors with panels depicting Classical allegorical figures and motifs; vertically continuous terra-cotta window surrounds ornamented with pediments, scrolled keystones, and metopes; and bold cornices at the first and fourth stories. By 1990 the building had ceased functioning as a bank, and subsequently minor changes were made to the building's exterior to accommodate new commercial tenants. After 107 years, the Yorkville Bank building remains a significant reminder of Yorkville's once prominent German-American community.

## DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

### Early History and Development of Yorkville<sup>1</sup>

The community of Yorkville, in the vicinity of present-day Third Avenue and East 86<sup>th</sup> Street, had its beginnings as a small village along the Boston Post Road. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, there were working farms in the area as well as the estates of many prominent New York families along the nearby riverfront. A major boost to the area was the creation in 1834 of a railroad station in Yorkville, at 86<sup>th</sup> Street and Fourth (Park) Avenue, by the New York & Harlem Railroad, which had been incorporated in 1831 as Manhattan's first railway. Horsecar lines ran along Second and Third Avenues by 1858; these were followed by elevated railway lines in 1877-80. As development of the Upper East Side pushed northward in the 1880s and 1890s, masonry rowhouses, tenements, and French flats filled in the lots between the older frame buildings, and eventually replaced most of them. Many Irish immigrants, who participated in the construction of Central Park, the Croton Reservoir, and the transportation lines, settled in Yorkville. Several periods of German immigration also helped to establish the character of the neighborhood; employment was provided by three breweries and their associated businesses (coopers, bottlers, etc.), and by the Steinway Piano Factory across the river in Astoria.<sup>2</sup>

By the 1880s, the locus of the city's German-American community was shifting to Yorkville, as waves of immigrant families arrived there from Germany or moved uptown from *Kleindeutschland*, the heart of German-American Manhattan in the early and mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (located in today's East Village and Lower East Side).<sup>3</sup> German immigration to the United States peaked in 1882, and between 1860 and 1890 the German population of New York increased from 15 per cent to 28 per cent of the city's total population. By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Yorkville had become the cultural and residential center of German-American New York, with a vibrant community sustained by traditional German social institutions such as churches, benevolent associations, labor organizations, shooting clubs, and gymnastics or musical societies (*turnvereine* and *gensangvereine*, respectively). Commercial enterprises including German-language newspapers and book stores, beer halls, bakeries and delicatessens, dance halls and cabarets, restaurants and theaters catered to patrons of German and Central European heritage, and the stretch of East 86<sup>th</sup> Street between Lexington Avenue and today's Carl Shurz Park emerged as the German-American community's main street. In addition to Germans, other immigrant groups began to settle in Yorkville around the turn of the century, notably Hungarians, who formed an enclave along East 79<sup>th</sup> Street between First and Second Avenues, and Czechoslovakians, who colonized the area between 71<sup>st</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> Streets east of Second Avenue.

Yorkville's German-American heyday was short-lived, however, as the community began a steady decline during the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century resulting from population migration to the outer boroughs spurred by subway construction and the availability of more affordable, modern housing.<sup>4</sup> A 1926 New York *Times* article expressed nostalgia for Yorkville's fading ethnic identity:

Yorkville, for well-nigh two decades known to connoisseurs of east side life as the exclusive domain of Czechoslovaks, Hungarians and Germans, is slowly giving up its strongly accentuated Central European character and gradually merging into a state of colorless impersonality...

The onset of World War I dealt a major blow to Yorkville as anti-German hysteria swept the city, prompting the neighborhood's residents to abandon signs of their German heritage by

changing surnames or business names and discontinuing German-language church services, newspapers, and school instruction.<sup>5</sup> In the years leading up to World War II, Yorkville's German-American community suffered a final blow as it became the center of pro-Nazi agitation in New York and as migration from the neighborhood to the outer boroughs and surrounding counties intensified.<sup>6</sup>

### History of the Yorkville Bank<sup>7</sup>

The Yorkville Bank was incorporated in December 1892 with a capital of \$100,000, as the German-American community in Yorkville was growing both in population and prosperity. Prominent German-American businessmen numbered among the bank's principals and stockholders, notably Oswald Ottendorfer, publisher of the city's preeminent German-language newspaper, the *Staats-Zeitung*, and Jacob Ruppert, Jr., son of the founder of the Jacob Ruppert Brewery and later owner of the Yankees baseball team.<sup>8</sup> Reinhold Van der Emde, a druggist by profession, served as the bank's first president.<sup>9</sup>

By the time the Yorkville Bank joined the Federal Reserve system in 1918, its capital had grown to \$9,224,000, and in 1925 the bank merged with the Manufacturer's Trust Company to become the 29<sup>th</sup> largest bank in the country.<sup>10</sup> With the merger, the Yorkville Bank gained the resources and financial capacity of a national bank while maintaining a considerable degree of independence in its operations, as well as retaining all of its officers, directors, and employees. After the merger, the bank was generally referred to as the "Yorkville Bank Office" or "Yorkville Office" of the Manufacturer's Trust Company, but as late as 1959 the bank was still listed in city directories as the Yorkville Bank.<sup>11</sup>

### Banks and Architectural Imagery<sup>12</sup>

As industry, business, and commerce prospered after the Civil War, New York became the nation's financial capital. Apart from a few imposing buildings on Wall Street, however, banks were for the most part located in converted residences, or in office buildings, but prior to the 1880s and 1890s, rarely in quarters designed for them. With very high property values in the financial district, many commercial banks began to build office buildings, conducting business on the ground floors and renting revenue-producing office space above. Savings banks, many of which catered to small private investors, were, in contrast, generally not located in the Wall Street area; therefore, taking advantage of less expensive real estate, they were able to build monumental bank buildings for their exclusive use, many on corner sites.<sup>13</sup>

Savings banks proliferated in the 1890s. Among them were the Greenwich Savings Bank, designed by Robert W. Gibson (1892, demolished); the Bank for Savings at East 22nd Street and Fourth Avenue, designed by Cyrus L.W. Eidlitz (1892, partially demolished); the sumptuous Bowery Savings Bank, designed by McKim, Mead & White (1893-95); and R.H. Robertson's New York Bank for Savings at Eighth Avenue and 14th Street (1896-97). The last two are designated New York City exterior and interior landmarks. This trend continued after the turn of the century. In 1909, *Architectural Record* published a lengthy, illustrated survey, in which the author invoked the ancient Greek and Roman temples—which had also served as banks—as ancestors to the modern type; the recent banks, however, had evolved due to "the marvelous growth of modern consumerism."<sup>14</sup> The illustrations attest to the pervasiveness of the classical bank type, about which the author states, "The effect of the structure must be one of great importance and simplicity. It must make on the depositors the impression of being a perfectly safe place to leave their money and valuables."<sup>15</sup>

This bank imagery developed not only as the result of economic conditions, but also in response to the resurgence of the neo-classical style, what has been termed Academic Classicism. American architects, influenced by the principles of the French Ecole des Beaux-Arts and the popularity of the "Great White City" –the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago–based designs on interpretations of Renaissance and neo-Classical prototypes. In part, Academic Classicism and the Beaux-Arts style were popularized as a means to create an architecture characterized by order, clarity, and sobriety, qualities considered appropriate to the democratic ideals of the expanding nation, and particularly appropriate to the design of banks and public institutions. In making historical associations, American architects drew parallels between their own culture, the American neo-classical past, and the enlightened Greco-Roman and Renaissance civilizations.<sup>16</sup>

### Robert Maynicke<sup>17</sup>

Born in Germany, Robert Maynicke (1848-1913) studied mechanics and mathematics at Cooper Union. By 1872-73, he was employed by George B. Post, where he studied the structural properties of iron and steel and supervised the firm's work on early elevator buildings—commercial structures built during the 1870s and 1880s whose increased height required an elevator for easy access—including the Mills Hotel, Produce Exchange, Cotton Exchange, Union Trust, Equitable, Havemeyer, and Pulitzer Buildings (all demolished). Maynicke oversaw construction of the firm's New York Times Building (1888-89, 41 Park Row, a designated New York City Landmark). Maynicke remained with Post until 1895, when he joined in partnership with Julius Franke, a native New Yorker and graduate of the College of the City of New York (now City College), who also worked with Post early in his career. Maynicke & Franke designed over one hundred large commercial structures in New York. The firm's work is noteworthy for its use of advanced structural systems, as well as for its exploration of the artistic and structural properties of reinforced concrete. Maynicke designed the Beaux-Arts Style Germania Bank Building (1898-1890) at 190 Bowery, a designated New York City Landmark, as well as many stores, lofts, and office buildings within what is now the Ladies Mile Historic District, the Tribeca Historic Districts, and the NoHo Historic District. These buildings were mainly in the Renaissance and Classical Revival styles of architecture.

### P. Gregory Stadler<sup>18</sup>

P. Gregory Stadler was born in New Jersey to German parents around 1891, and by 1924 was working as an architect out of offices located at 318 East 161<sup>st</sup> Street, in the historically German-American Melrose section of the Bronx. Stadler worked mostly in the Bronx, where he lived with his family, and his largest commission appears to have been the Bronx County Trust Company building. Stadler designed this seven-story Renaissance Revival style bank-and-office building, which was completed in 1926, approximately two years after he designed the addition to Maynicke's Yorkville Bank building. Still standing, the Bronx County Trust Co. building was erected on a prominent corner site in the Hub, the commercial heart of the south Bronx and also a heavily German-American neighborhood in the late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Stadler's addition to the Yorkville Bank building appears to be the architect's most important work in Manhattan.

## Architecture of the Yorkville Bank Building<sup>19</sup>

In 1893 the principals of the Yorkville Bank leased property at the northeast corner of Third Avenue and East 85<sup>th</sup> Street, and the four-story brick structure occupying the lot became the institution's first home.<sup>20</sup> In 1901 the Yorkville Bank purchased the corner lot, and three years later purchased the lot adjacent and to the north in preparation for construction of its first purpose-built building. The original Yorkville Bank building, designed by German-American architect Robert Maynicke, was a modestly scaled four-story brick and terra-cotta structure featuring elements characteristic of the Italian Renaissance Revival style, including palazzo-type massing articulated by a strong cornice above the ground-story base and a second cornice crowning the building; arched openings flanked by pilasters at the ground story; a Classical entry portico facing Third Avenue; pedimented window lintels at the second story; and detailing such as dentils, acanthus-leaf molding, roundels, metopes, and guttae. The building was clad in granite at the foundation, limestone at the ground-story base, white brick and terra-cotta trim at the upper stories, and terra cotta at the cornice. The light-colored brick and white-glazed terra cotta, the latter manufactured by the Excelsior Terra Cotta Company<sup>21</sup> of Rocky Hill, New Jersey, were chosen to match the limestone of the base, giving the bank the monumental appearance of an entirely stone-clad building. In her book *Terra Cotta Skyline*, author Susan Tunick writes that "thousands of New York buildings relied on terra cotta with granite- and limestone-like finishes to provide a sense of opulence when builders found that natural stone was too expensive."<sup>22</sup> The building housed offices on the upper floors for bank employees and other business tenants, many of whom were in real estate.<sup>23</sup>

Between the winter of 1922 and the spring of 1923, the bank purchased the two lots adjacent to it to the north and east, laying plans to expand its building on the strength of a growing business and the neighborhood's rising property values, a trend that was noted in the press as early as 1912.<sup>24</sup> The Yorkville Bank hired architect P. Gregory Stadler to enlarge Maynicke's building using the same design and materials, and Stadler took advantage of the additional frontage of approximately 25 feet on both Third Avenue and East 85<sup>th</sup> Street to add one-and-a-half bays to each street facade. The new full bays replicated the original bays, while the half bays were narrower and simpler, having no arched openings and designed only to accommodate secondary entrances, which included an entrance for the third- and fourth-floor office tenants on East 85<sup>th</sup> Street and an emergency exit on Third Avenue.

Stadler gave the bank a new entrance, removing the portico from the center bay of the Third Avenue facade and creating a new double entrance by inserting two pairs of doors into the existing arched openings at the corner of the building. The massive cast-bronze doors were fabricated by the John Polachek Bronze & Iron Company of Long Island City, with each leaf featuring a panel depicting an allegorical figure flanked by smaller panels above and below decorated with Classical grotesques. The male allegorical figure holds in one hand a staff supporting a beehive, the traditional symbol of thrift; in the other, a key, suggesting the prudence and security of banking; and rests his foot on a cornucopia, the symbol of plenty. Above his shoulder reads the inscription "Finance/ Savings". The female allegorical figure holds a locomotive engine in one hand, symbol of industry; and a caduceus in the other, the symbol of commerce; and a sailing ship is depicted at her feet. Above her shoulder reads the inscription "Commerce/ Industry".<sup>25</sup> Upon completion, the building's facades were sandblasted in order to blend the joints between old and new masonry.

Renovations to the original Yorkville Bank, which cost \$125,000 when it was erected in 1905, ran to \$160,000, and the enlarged building housed the bank in the basement, ground, and

mezzanine (or second) stories, and, as previously, office tenants on the third and fourth floors. In the basement were the bank's safes, as well as a shooting gallery for bank employees. On the building's exterior, the bold geometric forms and large scale of Maynicke's original ornament—the muscular first-story cornice, the strong pedimented window surrounds at the second story, and the paneled spandrels at the third story—were well suited to replication and maintained a pleasing scale even on the larger facades of the expanded building. The new Yorkville Bank commanded a larger presence on the corner of Third Avenue and East 85<sup>th</sup> Street, with its symmetrical facades and Classical architectural vocabulary expressive of the sobriety and dignity of the banking institution.

### Subsequent History<sup>26</sup>

After the Yorkville Bank was expanded, tenants of the upper-floor offices continued to be concentrated in the real estate industry, but other tenants included insurance agents or companies, like the John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company, of Boston, which was a tenant in the late 1920s. As late as 1939, a notable number of office tenants in the Yorkville Bank had German surnames,<sup>27</sup> but by then the German character of Yorkville had largely disappeared. The dismantling of the Third Avenue elevated line in 1955 caused the demolition of many adjacent buildings and contributed to the neighborhood's decline, as did the closing of the Ruppert Brewery in 1965. Beginning in the 1980s Yorkville was targeted by private interests for residential and commercial redevelopment, a trend that was aided by a re-zoning of the area to encourage new retail activity. The ensuing high-rise residential construction and large national retail stores dramatically changed Yorkville's scale and character. In 1988 the Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company sold the old Yorkville Bank building to the 1511 Third Avenue Real Estate Co., and by 1990 had moved its bank business to the northeast corner of Lexington Avenue and East 86<sup>th</sup> Street. The building has had two subsequent owners since then. In 1991 the ground floor space was leased to the Gap clothing company, and a few years later the upper-story offices were converted for use by the Equinox Fitness Club. Both businesses are still tenants in the building. In 2006, the owners of the building entered into a transfer-of-air-rights agreement with the owners of the luxury high-rise residential building slated to be built on the southeast corner of Third Avenue and East 86<sup>th</sup> Street, immediately north of the bank. A portion of the new residential building, which was completed in 2008, cantilevers over the old Yorkville Bank building.

### Description

**Historic:** The Yorkville Bank is a four-story Italian Renaissance Revival-style building clad in granite at the foundation, limestone at the one-story base, white brick with terra-cotta trim at the upper stories, and terra cotta at the cornice. The building comprises a four-bay facade on Third Avenue and a seven-bay facade on East 85<sup>th</sup> Street, both symmetrical and featuring tall arched openings at the base, a heavy denticulated and molded cornice at the first story, and substantial window surrounds on the upper stories linked in continuous vertical bays by spandrel panels adorned with metopes or paneled impost blocks with guttae. The ground-story openings are separated by substantial Doric piers, and the arches spring from smaller engaged Doric piers whose capitals, with molding and guttae, form the imposts; each arch has a coffered return and is flanked by roundels. The second-story window surrounds feature molded pediments supported on paneled pilasters topped by scrolled brackets terminating in guttae, while the third- and fourth-story surrounds feature molded and paneled enframements, with molded lintels supported

on scrolled keystones above the fourth-story windows. The restrained cornice is composed of a banded frieze accented by plain roundels, and above that dentils and foliated molding beneath a deep overhang, and a crowning band of acanthus leaves resting on bead-and-reel molding. The Third Avenue facade ends in a narrow fifth bay featuring a secondary entrance at the ground story and simple punched window openings on the second through fourth stories; there is a historic one-over-one double-hung window with a decorative grille at the second story. The secondary entrance is surrounded by a paneled enframing with a transom panel flanked by scrolls and topped by a molded pediment. The East 85<sup>th</sup> Street facade ends in a narrow eighth bay similar to the final bay on the Third Avenue facade, except that in place of a secondary entrance there are two punched window openings on the ground story; the lower opening contains a small window and louver and the upper opening contains a historic one-over-one double-hung window with a decorative grille. A secondary entrance in the seventh bay of this facade was added during the 1923-34 renovation to serve the offices on the upper floors of the building. The building's corner entrance is composed of two identical pairs of cast-bronze doors, one facing Third Avenue and one facing East 85<sup>th</sup> Street. The doors feature panels depicting Classical allegorical figures and motifs on both the interior and exterior faces. The doors are surmounted by cast-bronze pediments containing Classical motifs and escutcheons bearing the monogram "YB" and crowned by an acroterion. The doors have large ring-style handles. Originally, the upper-story windows were two-over-two double-hung sash, probably wood or metal-clad wood, while the ground-story arched windows were divided by a transom bar and two vertical mullions, probably all of cast bronze. In 1923-24, the building was extended by one and a half bays (or 26 feet) along Third Avenue and one and a half bays (or 25 feet) along East 85<sup>th</sup> Street, making the new avenue frontage 77 feet and the new side street frontage 125 feet. The original design was repeated in the one full bay added to each facade, with the half bays relatively unadorned and accommodating secondary entrances. At this time the entrance to the bank was moved from its original location in the center bay of the Third Avenue facade to the current corner location comprising two entrances, one on Third Avenue and one on East 85<sup>th</sup> Street.<sup>28</sup>

**Alterations:** By 1983, several of the transoms at the ground-story arched windows had been altered with panels and/or louvers, and the windows below had also been altered with the removal of the original vertical mullions (two per window) and the installation of pairs of double-hung sash. Decorative metal grilles at the transoms above the entrance doors had also been removed or covered over by this time. The original "Yorkville Bank" inscriptions have been removed from the bronze panels above the entrance doors. The ground-story arched windows were further altered in 1990-91, when the Gap took over the ground floor for a retail store (Job No. 100145905). The windows and stone spandrels below, as well as the vents with decorative grilles in the foundation, were all removed, and plate-glass show windows with a thick metal transom bar were installed. While the new arched transom windows maintained the original window plane, the new show windows below the transom bar were brought significantly forward from the original window plane, altering the overall profile of the arched openings. The sixth arched opening on the East 85<sup>th</sup> Street facade was further altered by the extension of the window opening down to grade to accommodate a glass door; masonry infill was installed in the remainder of the enlarged opening. "Gap" signs were installed in the arches above the corner entrances, and one at the ground story near the end of each facade. The building was further altered c. 1996, when the Equinox sports club moved into the building's upper floors and

modified the secondary entrance on the East 85<sup>th</sup> Street facade. Large awnings with metal armatures were installed at nearly all of the upper-story windows; and a metal-and-glass canopy, tall metal light fixtures, sign boxes, and signage were added to the East 85<sup>th</sup> Street secondary entrance. An accessibility ramp was constructed at this entrance c. 1993, while another concrete accessibility ramp with steps and metal railings was installed at the main corner entrance on East 85<sup>th</sup> Street in 2012. The granite foundation and limestone base have been painted, as well as the brick of the upper stories. Mechanical equipment is visible on the roof. An apartment tower completed c. 2008 was constructed on the adjacent lot to the north, and a portion of this building cantilevers over the northern property line of the Yorkville Bank.

### Sources:

Photograph of 1511 Third Avenue, c. 1939-41 (Department of Finance “Tax Photograph” Collection, Municipal Archives); Photographs (2) of 1511 Third Avenue, 1983 (LPC File); “Yorkville Bank, New York City,” *Architecture and Building*, vol. 24 (May, 1924): 40-42, 49; Department of Buildings online Building Information System records; “A New Gap for an Old Bank,” *New York Times* (March 17, 1991), R1; “For the Disabled, Some Progress,” *NYT* (October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1993), R1; Mary Tannen, “Gym Dandy,” *NYT* (January 5, 1997), SM46.

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### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> This section was adapted from Landmarks Preservation Commission, *160 East 92<sup>nd</sup> Street House Designation Report* (LP-1630), (New York: City of New York, 1988), report prepared by Jay Shockley; LPC, *East 10<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District Designation Report* (LP-2492), (New York: City of New York, 2012), report prepared by Christopher D. Brazee; and LPC, *Loew’s Canal Street Theatre Designation Report* (LP-2368) (New York: City of New York, 2010), report prepared by Christopher D. Brazee; and is also based on information from the following sources: Frederick M. Binder and David M. Reimers, *All the Nations Under Heaven: an Ethnic and Racial History of New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); Federal Writers’ Publications, Inc. of WPA, *New York City Guide* (New York, Random House, 1939); Emery Deri, “Alien Yorkville Re-enters the Union,” *New York Times* (October 24, 1926), SM6; Christopher Gray, “Where the Streets Smelled Like Beer,” *NYT* (March 25, 2012), RE6; “Yorkville’s Great Revival,” *NYT* (April 14, 1912), 2; “Yorkville Changes in Home Conditions,” *NYT* (October 21, 1928), 171; and “Yorkville,” in Kenneth T. Jackson, *The Encyclopedia of New York City*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 1428-29.

<sup>2</sup> Yorkville’s three breweries were located in the vicinity of 92<sup>nd</sup> Street and Second Avenue: George Ehret’s Hell Gate Lager Bier Brewery (1866); Jacob Ruppert Brewery; and George Ringler Brewery.



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<sup>3</sup> The *General Slocum* excursion boat fire of 1904, in which more than 1,000 German-Americans perished, devastated the *Kleindeutschland* community and caused an exodus to Yorkville and other developing German-American neighborhoods of the outer boroughs, including Elmurst, Astoria, and Corona, Queens. LPC, *East 10<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District Designation Report*, p. 17; Deri, "Alien Yorkville Re-enters the Union".

<sup>4</sup> In 1900 60% of the city's German-Americans resided in Manhattan; by 1910, that number had fallen to 42% . Binder and Reimers, 97.

<sup>5</sup> Immigration to the U.S. was strictly curtailed during World War I, and the German immigration rate never recovered—despite passage of the National Origins Act of 1924, which established a policy favoring immigrants from northern and western Europe. Binder and Reimers, 152.

<sup>6</sup> The pro-Nazi German-American Bund was headquartered at 178 East 85<sup>th</sup> Street until the organization was dissolved in 1941, concurrent with U.S. entry into the war. Anti-Nazi institutions, notably the German Workers Club and the German Central Bookstore, were also located in the neighborhood (at 1501 Third Avenue and 218 East 84<sup>th</sup> Street, respectively). Binder and Reimers, 189-252.

<sup>7</sup> Information in this section is based on the following sources: Henry Wysham Lanier, *A Century of Banking in New York: 1822-1922* (New York: The Gilliss Press, 1922); "Reinhold Van der Emde Dead," *NYT* (June 2, 1909), 7; "For the New Yorkville Bank," *NYT* (December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1892), 4; "A New New-York Bank," *NYT* (April 1, 1893), 2; *American Druggist and Pharmaceutical Record*, vol. 44, (New York: American Druggist Publishing Co., 1909), 349; U.S. Passport Applications, 1795-1925, accessed on Ancestry.com on March 5, 2012; U.S. Census Records for 1870 and 1910, accessed on Ancestry.com on March 5, 2012; "Yorkville Bank in Reserve System," *NYT* (September 14, 1918), 14; "Another Merger of New York Banks", *NYT* (February 20, 1925), 24; and "Manufacturer's Hanover Trust Company", Wikipedia entry, accessed online May 15, 2007 ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manufacturer%27s\\_Hanover\\_Trust\\_Company](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manufacturer%27s_Hanover_Trust_Company)).

<sup>8</sup> A noted philanthropist, Oswald Ottendorfer built the Ottendorfer Branch of the New York Free Circulating Library and the German Dispensary (later Stuyvesant Polyclinic) (1883-84), located at 135 and 137 Second Avenue and both individually designated New York City Landmarks.

<sup>9</sup> Born in 1842 in the Waldeck region of Germany, Reinhold Van der Emde studied pharmaceuticals in Switzerland before immigrating to the United States in 1867 and finding employment with druggist Henry Diedel, who had immigrated from Germany in 1855 and operated a pharmacy at 875 Third Avenue in the 1880s. Diedel was made a principal of the Yorkville Bank, as was Bernhard Amend, also a druggist. Van der Emde, who during his lifetime was also a trustee of the German Savings Bank and the German Liederkranz (one of the earliest German musical societies founded in New York City, in 1847), served as president of the Yorkville Bank until his death in 1909.

<sup>10</sup> The Manufacturers Trust Company was chartered in 1905 by New York State as the Citizens Trust Company of Brooklyn, and underwent various mergers and associated name changes between 1905 and 1915, when it became known as the Manufacturers Trust Company. From 1961 to 1969, the bank was known as the Manufacturer's Hanover Trust Company, changing its name again in 1992 to the Chemical Banking Corporation. In 1996, it became known as the Chase Manhattan Bank, and is now known as the JPMorgan Chase Bank.

<sup>11</sup> New York City Address Directory, December 1959.

<sup>12</sup> This section was adapted from LPC, *Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company Building Designation Report* (LP-1633), (New York: City of New York, 1988), report prepared by Elisa Urbanelli; and LPC, *(Former) Germania Bank Building Designation Report* (LP-2162), (New York: City of New York, 2005), report prepared by Donald G. Presa.

<sup>13</sup> A.C. David, "Private Residences for Banking Firms," *Architectural Record*, 14 July 1903, 13-14. See also Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and John Massengale, *New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism, 1890-1915* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983), 177.

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<sup>14</sup> “Recent Bank Buildings of the United States,” *Architectural Record*, vol. 25, no. 1 (January 1909), 1-3.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>16</sup> Richard Guy Wilson, “The Great Civilization,” *The American Renaissance, 1876-1917*, Exhibition Catalogue (New York: the Brooklyn Museum, 1979), 11-16.

<sup>17</sup> This section is based on the following sources: LPC, “Architects’ Appendix,” Ladies Mile Historic District (LP-1609); LPC, “Architects’ Appendix:” Tribeca West Historic District (LP-1713); LPC, “Architects’ Appendix,” Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District (LP-1647); LPC, (Former) New York Times Building (LP-2031); “George Browne Post,” *Macmillan Encyc.*, vol. 3, 460-463; and Trow’s Directory.

<sup>18</sup> Information in this section is based on the following sources: LPC, *Haffen Building Designation Report* (LP-2388), (New York: City of New York, 2010), report prepared by Theresa C. Noonan; James Ward, *Architects in Practice in New York City, 1900-1940*, for the Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records (Union, N.J.: J&D Associates, 1989), 73; Christopher Gray, “Office for Metropolitan History,” website accessed on April 25, 2012 (<http://www.metrohistory.com/searchfront.htm>); U.S. Census Records for 1930, accessed on Ancestry.com on April 25, 2012; “Bronx County Trust Co. Building, New York City,” *Architecture and Building*, vol. 45 (April 1926), 45, 71-74; and LPC Architects’ File.

<sup>19</sup> Information in this section is based on the following sources: New York County, Office of the City Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber 18, p. 395 (February 16, 1893); Liber 78, p. 175 (December 23, 1901); Liber 98, p. 361 (July 26, 1904); Liber 3300, p. 250 and p. 269 (September 21, 1922); and Liber 3339, p. 145 (April 10, 1923); New York City, Department of Buildings, New Building Permit No. 8-05 (1905) and Alteration Permit No. 217-23 (1923); “Yorkville Bank, New York City,” *Architecture and Building*, vol. 56 (May 1924), 40-42, 49.

<sup>20</sup> This prominent corner location was situated at the heart of German-American Yorkville, and the bank undoubtedly benefitted from proximity to the commercial “main street” of East 86<sup>th</sup> Street and other German-American institutions, such as the Musical Mutual Protective Union, which was located at 210 East 86<sup>th</sup> Street in 1904 and also at 209-215 East 85<sup>th</sup> Street (almost next door) after 1918. Christopher Gray, “Streetscapes: Echoes of a Union Hall; Artificial Sunlight,” *New York Times* (June 06, 1999), RE2.

<sup>21</sup> The Excelsior Terra Cotta Company was established in 1894 as the successor to the Partridge, Powell, & Storer Company, manufacturers of face brick, and after a brief run merged with the Atlantic Terra Cotta Company in 1907. The Yorkville Bank is thus a rare example of Excelsior terra cotta in New York City; it is likely that the terra cotta used later by Stadler for the addition was manufactured by the Atlantic Terra Cotta Company. Advertisement, *The Brickbuilder*, vol. 15 (March 1906), 66 and “Trade Review,” *Brick and Clay Record* (January – July 1909), 339, both articles accessed via Google Book Search on February 27, 2012; Walter Geer, *The Story of Terra Cotta* (New York: Tobias A. Wright, 1920), published in *Sites* 18 (1986); Dennis L. Dollens, ed., *Sites*, vol. 18 (New York: Lumen, Inc., 1986); E-mail correspondence with Susan Tunick, February 29, 2012.

<sup>22</sup> Susan Tunick, *Terra Cotta Skyline*, (New Jersey: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997), 63.

<sup>23</sup> Advertisements appearing in the *New York Times* and the *Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide* between 1906 and 1919 indicate that many of the Yorkville Bank’s office tenants were in the real estate industry.

<sup>24</sup> “Yorkville’s Great Revival,” *NYT* (April 14, 1912), p. 2.

<sup>25</sup> According to the U.S. Census Records for 1910, John Polachek was born in Hungary c. 1874. By the 1920s, Polachek’s company was regarded as the leader in the American architectural bronze industry. Other contractors hired during the renovation were evidently part of New York’s German-American community, including the Niewenhou Co., Inc., who served as general contractors, and Benjamin Riesner, Inc., metalworkers who were responsible for all copperwork and cornices at the Yorkville Bank. U.S. Census Records for 1910, accessed on Ancestry.com on February 13, 2012; “Polachek Merges Bronze Companies,” *NYT* (Nov. 23, 1927), 30.

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<sup>26</sup> Information in this section is based on the following sources: New York County, Office of the City Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Reel 1424, p. 1496 (July 1, 1988); Reel 2203, p. 2363 (DATE); Reel 3660, p. 997 (DATE); and Easement Doc. No. 2006020100489005 (April 10, 2006); Barbara Presley Noble, "If You're Thinking of Living in: Yorkville," *NYT* (July 23, 1989), R7; Shawn G. Kennedy, "A New Cachet for Old East 86<sup>th</sup> Street," *NYT* (April 15, 1990), R1; NYC Address Directories, 1939 to 1993; J. Paul Behrke, "If You're Thinking of Living In: Upper Yorkville," *NYT* (September 8, 1991), R7; "A New Gap for an Old Bank," *NYT* (March 17, 1991), R1; Claudia H. Deutsch, "When a Bank Departs, a New Tenant May Be a Bank," *NYT* (June 9, 1996), R11; Mary Tannen, "Gym Dandy," *NYT* (January 5, 1997), SM46; Real estate advertisement, *NYT* (November 6, 2002), C6; Christopher Gray, "Where the Streets Smelled Like Beer," *NYT* (March 25, 2012), RE6.

<sup>27</sup> New York City Address Directory, September 1939.

<sup>28</sup> The original entrance was marked by a Doric portico over a low stoop. Decorative iron fencing at both street facades of the building was removed, likely at the time of the Stadler addition.

## FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of the buildings and site, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Yorkville Bank has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest, and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Yorkville Bank was constructed in 1905 to the designs of Robert Maynicke; and that the Yorkville Bank first established itself on the northeast corner of Third Avenue and East 85<sup>th</sup> Street in 1893, and its original stockholders were largely German or of German descent; that in 1905, the bank hired Robert Maynicke, an architect born in Germany and trained at Cooper Union, to design the dignified four-story granite, limestone, brick, and terra-cotta bank and office building; that in 1923-24 the structure was expanded by architect P. Gregory Stadler with the addition of one-and-a-half bays on both street facades, intended to blend seamlessly with Maynicke's original design and materials; that the result is an elegant palazzo-type building featuring tall arched openings on the ground story separated by full-height pilasters and flanked by delicate roundels; two pairs of massive cast-bronze entrance doors with panels depicting Classical allegorical figures and motifs; vertically continuous terra-cotta window surrounds ornamented with pediments, scrolled keystones, and metopes; and bold cornices at the first and fourth stories; and that the Yorkville Bank building served for more than 85 years as a banking center for the Yorkville neighborhood of Manhattan's Upper East Side, and remains a significant reminder of the neighborhood's once prominent German-American community.

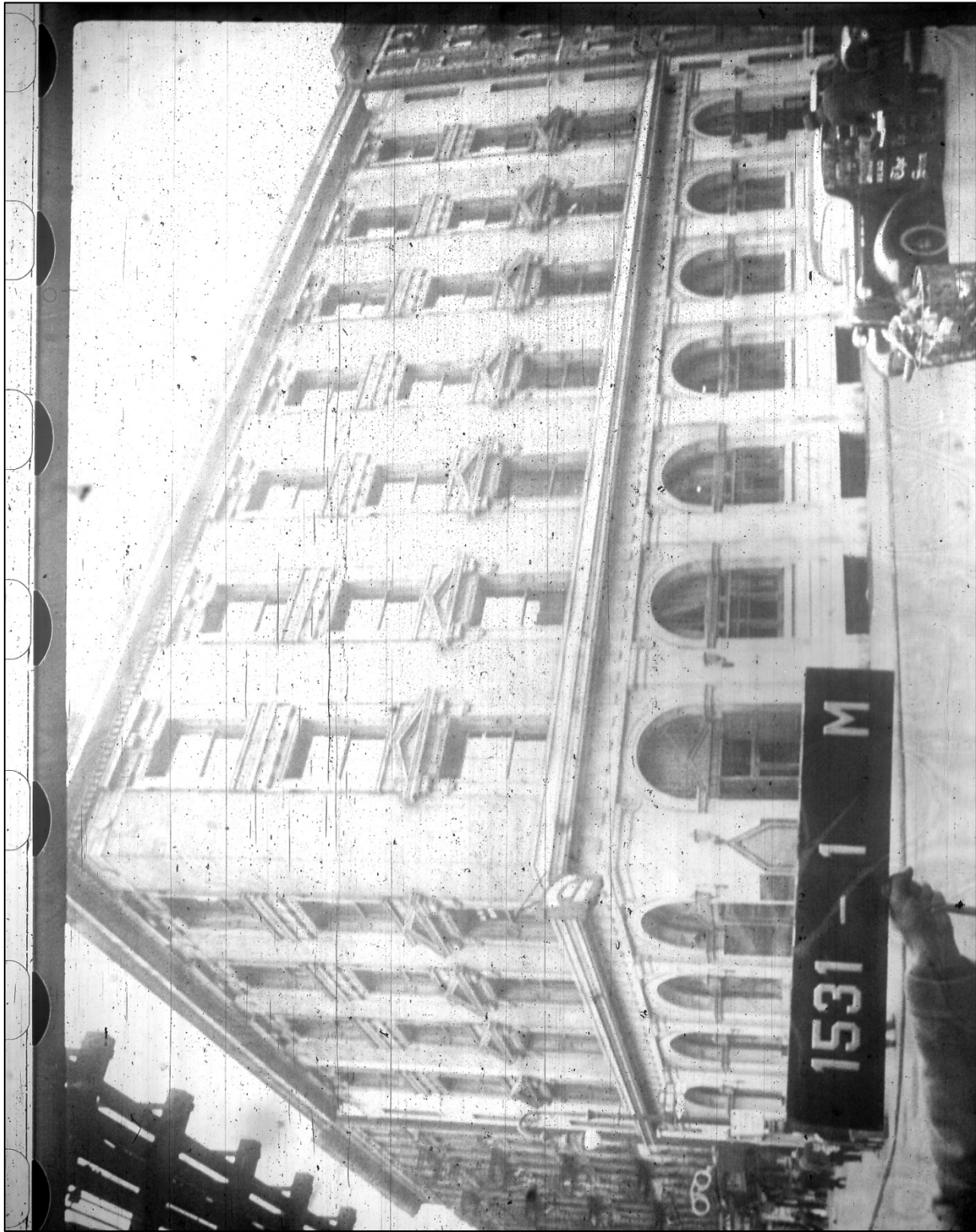
Accordingly, pursuant to provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Yorkville Bank, and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1531, Lot 1 as its Landmark Site.

Pablo E. Vengoechea, Vice-Chair  
Frederick Bland, Michael Goldblum, Margery Perlmutter,  
Elizabeth Ryan, and Roberta Washington, Commissioners



**Yorkville Bank, 1511 Third Avenue**  
Built: 1905; Addition: 1923-24  
Architect: Robert Maynicke; P. Gregory Stadler (addition)  
*Photo: Christopher D. Brazeel, 2012*





**Yorkville Bank**

*Photo: NYC Department of Finance, c. 1939-41*



**Yorkville Bank,**  
*Photo: Landmarks Preservation Commission staff, 1983*



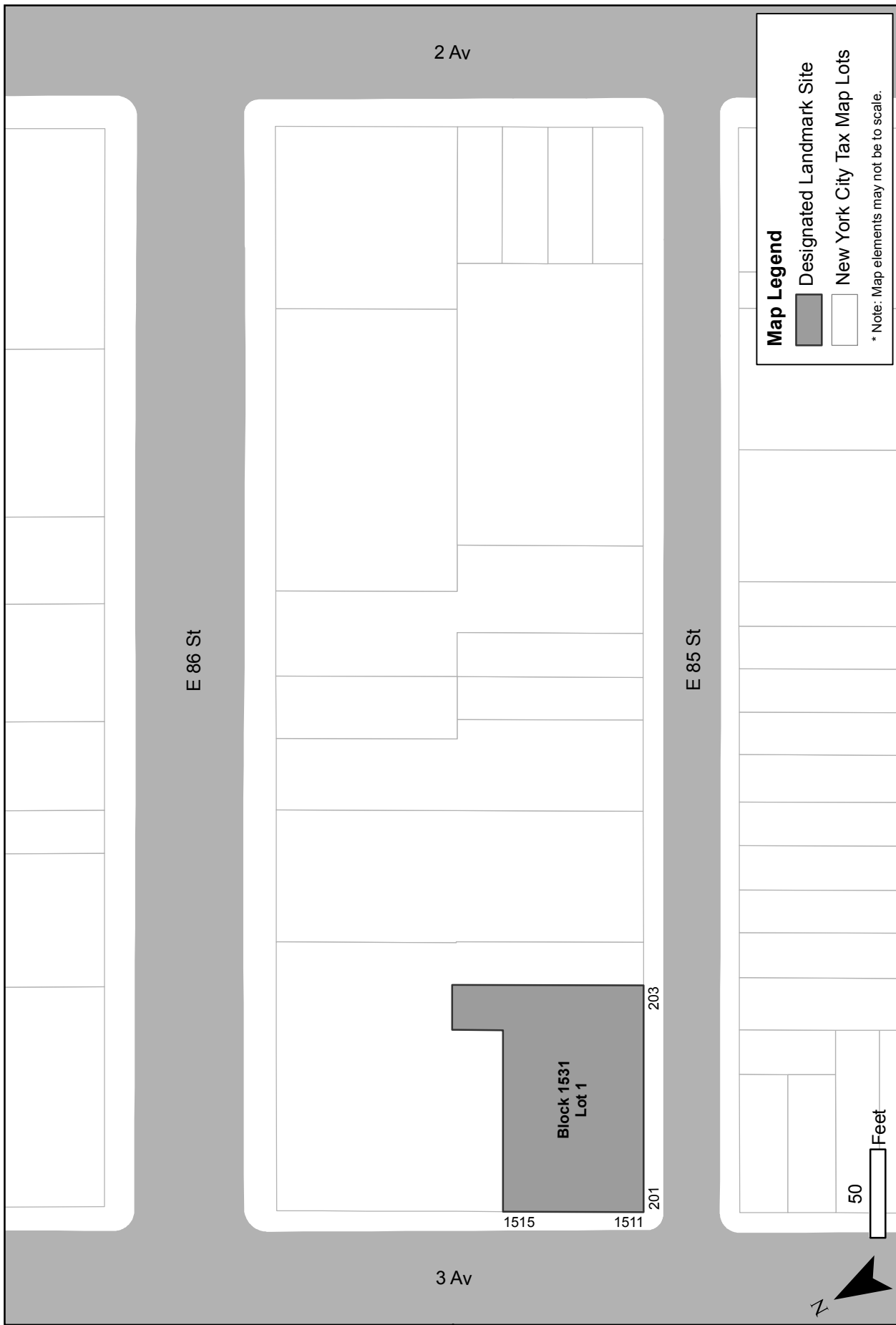
**Yorkville Bank**  
*Photo: Christopher D. Brazeo, 2012*





**Cast-bronze doors fabricated by the John Polachek Bronze & Iron Co. of Long Island City**

*Photo: Christopher D. Brazeo, 2012*



**YORKVILLE BANK BUILDING (LP-2510), 1511 Third Avenue (aka 1511-1515 Third Avenue and 201-203 East 85th Street)**  
 Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 1531, Lot 1

**Designated: June 12, 2012**