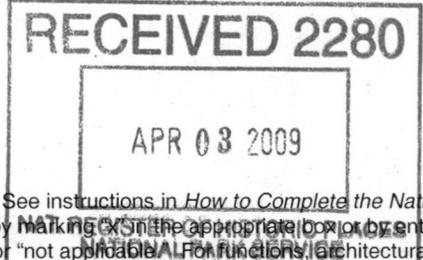


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking  in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

#### 1. Name of Property

historic name 240 Central Park South

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Location

street & number 240 Central Park South [ ] not for publication

city or town New York [ ] vicinity

state New York code NY county New York code 061 zip code 10021

#### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination [ ] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [ ] nationally [ ] statewide  locally. ([ ] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Ruth A. Rapoport DSHPD  
Signature of certifying official/Title

Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation

3/26/09  
Date

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([ ] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register  
[ ] see continuation sheet
- [ ] determined eligible for the National Register  
[ ] see continuation sheet
- [ ] determined not eligible for the National Register

[ ] removed from the National Register

[ ] other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Edson H. Beall

date of action

5-12-09

240 Central Park West

New York, New York

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	0	<b>TOTAL</b>

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

\_\_\_\_\_

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Deco; Moderne

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation \_\_\_\_\_

walls brick \_\_\_\_\_

roof \_\_\_\_\_

other steel, terra cotta \_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

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**7. DESCRIPTION<sup>1</sup>**

240 Central Park South (Mayer & Whittlesey, 1939-40) is located on Broadway at Columbus Circle between Central Park South and West 58<sup>th</sup> Streets, New York City, New York County, New York. The lot is irregularly shaped and has frontage of 189' along Central Park South, 50' along Columbus Circle, 165' along Broadway, and 145' along West 58th Street. The building is sited on the south side of Central Park South, across the street from the National Historic Landmark Central Park (listed 5/23/1963). The block front along the south side of Central Park South is occupied by buildings ranging from sixteen to twenty-four stories. 240 Central Park South retains its integrity to a high degree.

The building was designed by Albert Mayer (1897-1981) and Julian H. Whittlesey (1905-1995) and constructed by the J.H. Taylor Construction Company for the J.H. Taylor Management Corporation. It was quickly recognized as a significant statement of early modern architecture. The building consists of two main towers set atop a one-story base. The north tower faces Central Park South and is C-shaped in plan with a twenty-eight-story central section and twenty-story wings. The south tower, facing West 58<sup>th</sup> Street, is rectangular in plan and rises fifteen stories. Both towers overlook an interior central courtyard.

The ground floor consists of the primary entrances to both the north and south towers and ten storefront bays along Broadway and Central Park South. Essential to the original minimalist design of the building is the curved form of the storefronts along Broadway. Set on a diagonal, the storefronts' undulating line is emphasized by the brick parapet above the stores. The storefronts were recently restored to their original appearance, including black Carrara-glass sign bands and bronze friezes.

A restoration of the building was completed in 2007 with work on the exterior masonry, storefronts, residential entries, terraces, roof decks (public), landscaped areas on Central Park South center court, the central court and green roofs over the storefronts. The interior work completed included restoration of lobbies, elevators, hallways and solarium.

The main entrance on Central Park South is set back from the property line with a small landscaped court. Two large bays of continuous windows with inset non-historic Herculite automatic doors in the center (which match the appearance of the original doors) are emphasized by a curved concrete canopy that projects slightly. This brick-clad entrance pavilion has large fixed pane windows with transoms. The entrance and walkway are covered by a non-historic awning which is supported by steel columns.

The entrance on West 58<sup>th</sup> Street is surrounded by orange terra-cotta block produced by the Atlantic Terra Cotta Company. To the west of the entrance is an original green-glazed tile inset planter; a historic doctor's sign

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plaque above the planter; and a row of small single-pane windows. To the east of the entrance, multi-pane windows flank an inset office entrance, with a wood and glass door, brick steps, and a non-historic iron gate.

The entrance to the restaurant space (vacant) that occupies the eastern storefront on the ground floor of Central Park South was originally located on the east wall of the court, but was relocated to Central Park South. The north side of the restaurant space and the east wall of the court have non-historic single-pane windows, with metal surrounds, which are set into the recessed brick of the historic enframements. The far east bay has a non-historic revolving metal door and a metal and glass door.

The retail shops on the western portion of the complex extend along Broadway from the southeast corner of Central Park South and Columbus Circle to the northeast corner of West 58<sup>th</sup> Street. They act as a one-story connector between the two towers. The northern-most store, which also faces Central Park South, was originally entered through a corner entrance as well as through the lobby interior. At a later date it was combined with the shops to the west and a large mechanical vent was added. None of the store's existing fabric is original.

There are a total of ten storefront bays along Broadway: the four central bays are curved in plan and are flanked on each side by three bays which are square in plan. The original storefronts were constructed with a kalamein system of a wood core clad with bronze sheet metal. The cast-bronze frieze historically acted as an awning pocket. The southern-most storefront had a recessed entry at the corner – this was removed at an unknown date.

Recent alterations have reestablished the historic design and materials of the storefronts along Broadway and on Central Park South, which had been significantly altered over time. The signage exists on a new continuous black-glass sign band in a bronze frame; the profiled bronze frieze matches the historic configuration. The infill framing is bronze cladding over a structural stainless steel frame, matching the historic sheet bronze of the kalamein system. Brick bulkheads (pierced by vents) and parapets exist below and above the storefronts.

A number of original features are located along West 58<sup>th</sup> Street: a loading area, paved with concrete and partially covered by a canopy roof enclosed on the north by a brick wall with metal gates; a brick post at the east end of the loading area at the sidewalk; a service entrance sidewalk with two brick entrance posts of different heights at the street end; and an L-shaped raised planting bed bordered by a brick retaining wall. There was originally a planting strip between this retaining wall and the street sidewalk. Original sidewalk and loading area gates have been removed. This entire area is currently enclosed by non-historic roll-down gates and chain-link fencing; there is also chain-link fencing along the east side of the service entrance sidewalk and above the loading area canopy roof.

The small entrance courtyard on Central Park South has a concrete sidewalk leading to the main entrance. Lining the court are low retaining walls and an entrance post, faced with gray glazed terra-cotta ashlar blocks, capped

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by a metal railing. The court has terra-cotta block planters, flagstone pavers, and quarry tiles. The west wall of the entrance court is clad in blue-gray extruded terra-cotta blocks produced by the Atlantic Terra Cotta Company. This wall is part of a one-story store to the west; the store has a rooftop terrace bordered on the east and north by an original metal railing.

A central landscaped courtyard is located in the area between the two towers at the center of the site. The eastern portion of the courtyard is divided by a submerged pedestrian ramp leading to the basement from the off-street loading area on West 58<sup>th</sup> Street.

The roofs of the one-story shops along Columbus Circle/Broadway are also landscaped. Historically, the first-floor roof contained raised planting beds; currently it is landscaped with sunken planting beds and has flagstone paths.

The towers are steel-frame structures clad in orange Belden brick that varies in hue. The street and courtyard walls on both towers rise fifteen to nineteen stories without setbacks, except for the cantilevered corner balconies. The original brick is extruded with a sand finish and set in a six course American bond on all facades; decorative soldier course bands are found on the north façade of the north tower between the second and fourth floors.

At the upper floors the fenestration pattern of steel casement windows and the use of corner balconies form a contrast to the simple vertical planes of the brick walls. The historic window configurations combine casements, fixed panes, transoms and hoppers. The principal configurations of the windows are: two casements windows flanked by two fixed panes with hoppers and transoms; a fixed center pane flanked by casements with hoppers and transoms; and double casements with hoppers and transoms. Some steel casement sash have been modified to accept window air conditioner units. Non-matching, non-historic aluminum windows were installed at various points in time. Numerous smaller windows are also original to the buildings.

The north tower faces Central Park South and rises twenty-eight stories. "The Quiet City," an abstract mosaic mural by Amedee Ozenfant (1886-1966) is located above and below the third story on the north façade. It was restored by Bolt Studios in 2006.

The central section of the north tower has cantilevered balconies from the twenty-first to the twenty-eighth story; corner terraces on the twenty-seventh story of the northern façade; and a tank house surmounted by a roof terrace (now enclosed). The northern façade of the tank house has windows divided by pilasters clad in blue-gray extruded terra-cotta bricks. Roofs have chimneys, wing walls, bulkheads, and stairs. The twenty-story wings have cantilevered balconies on the corners facing Central Park South above the seventh story except for the

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eastern-most corner, where the balconies start at the sixteenth story. The eastern wall of the building is set back from the east lot line above the ground story.

The twentieth story has penthouses, an original solarium/recreation room, and three roof terraces (including one to the south). Pergolas, or concrete roof canopies, are located on the public terraces at the twentieth floor of the north tower. The roof terraces are open to all residents of the building.

The south tower, located along West 58<sup>th</sup> Street, rises fifteen stories without setbacks. Three decorative horizontal brick bands emphasize the first floor. It has cantilevered balconies above the tenth story. The roof has a pergola at the west end, and bulkheads.

240 Central Park South has two lobbies. The main (north) lobby serves the north tower and is entered off the entrance court facing Central Park South. The south lobby serves the south tower and is located on West 58<sup>th</sup> Street. The two lobbies are connected by a long corridor running north-south; a lobby lounge (solarium) is located at the center of the building, midway between the north and south lobbies. The solarium faces onto the ground-floor courtyard.

The north lobby is an understated space between the east and west wings of the building. Elevators are located at the south end of the north lobby – two to the west and two to the east. Many of the original finishes in the lobby spaces remain including the green terrazzo flooring, which extends throughout the spaces; original copper cladding; and recessed lighting. There is a mail desk on the east end of the lobby with a marble finish. Gray extruded terra cotta block surrounds the elevators on the south walls. Originally, the lobby contained built-in and moveable furniture including sofas and elevated planters. One of the wood planters remains. The corridor connecting the north lobby to the south lobby has copper clad walls and continued green terrazzo flooring.

The south lobby provides access to the elevators in the south tower. It has plaster walls and double-leaf doors leading to the exterior.

The finishes of the ground floor solarium are intact, including the curved bay of steel windows set on a marble sill and the marble wall panels. Raised planters line the curved windows as well as the mirrors opposite the windows.

There are 308 apartment units in the upper floors. In the north tower the apartments are arranged around a C-shaped corridor. The corridors have flat plaster walls with terrazzo baseboard moldings and carpeted floors. Soffits were added to corridors to carry upgraded services.

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The apartments are spacious and open, varying in size from studios to two-bedroom units. Typical apartment conditions include flat plaster walls, with simple wood moldings, hardwood floors, and pocketed ceilings created by the exposed structural beams. In most units all of the rooms have windows. Floor plans of the apartments are arranged to take advantage of the views of Central Park with corner windows and balconies. A large number of the apartments in the north tower face Central Park, while the rest also have city views due to the overall layout of the complex. Cantilevered balconies were provided for about 100 apartments above the seventh story, facing Central Park, and above the tenth or twelfth story in the southern sections of the project. Cantilevered corner windows and wide steel casement windows (in many locations the width of the room) allow for a maximum of light and air. Most apartments above the sixth story have wood-burning fireplaces; other historic finishes such as the built-in bookcases and shelves remain in many units.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location
- C** a birthplace or grave
- D** a cemetery
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

**Areas of Significance:**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

**Period of Significance:**

1939-1940

**Significant Dates:**

**Significant Person:**

n/a

**Cultural Affiliation:**

n/a

**Architect/Builder:**

Mayer & Whittlesey

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by historic American Building Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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**8. SIGNIFICANCE<sup>2</sup>**

240 Central Park South Apartments, built in 1939–40 to the design of Mayer & Whittlesey, is eligible for listing on the National Register under Criteria C because it is a significant and innovative complex that represents the transition between 1930s Art Deco style apartment towers with courtyards (characteristic of Central Park West) and post-World War II “modernist” apartment houses. It is notable for its sophisticated planning and modernist near-lack of applied ornament. As stated by *Architectural Forum* in 1941, “the architectural character of these buildings stems directly from the plans and the fenestration.” Constructed by the Mayer family’s J.H. Taylor Construction Co. for the J. H. Taylor Management Corp., it was one of Manhattan’s largest luxury apartment projects of its day. The architects were particularly skillful in adapting their plan to a highly prominent and complex site, with frontages along Central Park South, Columbus Circle, Broadway and West 58th Street. The building consists of two main towers set atop a one-story base. The north tower faces Central Park South and is C-shaped in plan with a twenty-eight-story central section and twenty-story wings. The south tower, facing West 58<sup>th</sup> Street, is rectangular in plan and rises fifteen stories. Covering only about half of the lot, the buildings provided a maximum amount of light, air, quiet, and corner apartments, which featured cantilevered balconies and views (many of Central Park). Landscaped open space included the entrance court, central courtyard and adjacent shops’ rooftops, and roof terraces atop both buildings. Clad in an orange-colored brick, the buildings were detailed with broad steel-casement windows and the contrasting concrete of the balcony slabs. Amedee Ozenfant’s mosaic “The Quiet City” decorates the front entrance, while rooftop vertical architectural elements enliven the skyline. 240 Central Park South Apartments was marketed with an explicit suburban appeal, and the slogan “Where the Park is Part of the Plan,” at a time when Manhattan was losing population to the outer boroughs and suburbs. Lewis Mumford, in *The New Yorker* in 1940, praised its “ingenious” planning solution, while *Architectural Forum* called it “one of the best apartment buildings yet produced.” Mayer and Whittlesey, founded in 1935 (Mayer, Whittlesey and Glass after 1945), was noted for planning and apartment housing, such as Manhattan House (1950-51, with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill).

**The Mayer Family and J.H. Taylor Construction Co./J.H. Taylor Management Corp.<sup>3</sup>**

By the late 1930s, the J.H. Taylor Construction Co. and J.H. Taylor Management Corp. had built, owned, and managed a number of large apartment buildings in New York City. Associated with these firms were members of the prominent German-Jewish Mayer family, who individually and collectively had a long involvement in New York real estate through their activities in architecture, engineering, construction, management, investment, and ownership through various corporate entities. Bernhard Mayer (1857-1929), son of Mayer and Fannie Mayer, was born in Altdorf, Germany, and immigrated to the United States in 1872. He became a principal in the real estate firm of Weil & Mayer, with his brother-in-law, Lazarus Weil. Mayer left an estate worth over \$2.5 million which, after charitable donations, was left to family members, principally his widow Sophia Bittenwieser Mayer (1860-1945) and their six children. Of Bernhard Mayer’s children, all three male Mayer siblings were active in

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real estate and construction, while two sisters also achieved prominence.<sup>4</sup>

Joseph L. B. Mayer (1885-1939), a real estate agent specializing in Park Avenue properties, was an officer and director of the Gruenstein & Mayer Corp., and an officer of the corporations for 875, 1040, and 1069 Park Avenue and 205 East 69th Street.<sup>5</sup>

Charles Mayer (1888-1980), a graduate of Columbia University with a degree in civil engineering and a master's degree in engineering (1909), became chief engineer in the construction of apartment and office buildings through his J.H. Taylor Construction Co. (founded 1913),<sup>6</sup> as well as a consulting engineer on such projects as Lewisohn Stadium (1915, Arnold W. Brunner; demolished), City College. He also served as president of the J.H. Taylor Management Corp. (formed in 1931).

Albert Mayer (1879-1981) received a degree in civil engineering from M.I.T. (1919), worked for Charles (1919-35) and was a principal partner in the J.H. Taylor Construction Co. He was one of the engineers of the 240 Central Park South Apartments [see below].

Their sister, Fannie Mayer, married William Korn (1884-1972), who became president of the J.H. Taylor management Corp. and J.H. Taylor Construction Co. Among the J.H. Taylor Construction Co.'s projects were the Jewish Hospital addition (1922-23), Brooklyn; 40 Central Park South Apartments (1941); Lebanon Hospital (1942) in the Bronx; and the office building at 1407 Broadway (1950, Kahn & Jacobs).

Clara Woollie Mayer (1895-1988), a graduate of Barnard College (1915), did graduate work at Columbia University in 1915-19, and became a student at the New School for Social Research in 1919. She helped to organize a student committee in 1922 to raise funds to assist the school's then precarious financial situation. A history of the New School states that she "recruited her mother and several brothers and sisters to the school's cause. Over the next fifty years only [director] Alvin Johnson played a more important part in the life of the New School."<sup>7</sup> Clara Mayer was appointed a trustee on the school's board of directors (1924-30), was secretary to the board (1931-46), assistant director of the New School (1931-36), associate director (1937-43), dean of the School of Philosophy and Liberal Arts (1943-60), vice president (1950-62), and dean of the New School (1960-62).

The Mayer family contributed \$100,000 towards the new building for the New School (1929-31, Joseph Urban). Her brothers' J.H. Taylor construction Co. was recruited to construct the building at low cost, and Charles and Albert have been credited with recommending Urban as architect.<sup>8</sup> The famous New School auditorium was originally dedicated to the memory of their father, Bernhard Mayer.<sup>9</sup> In 1956-59, the Mayer family contributed to the expansion of the New School, which was designed by Albert Mayer's firm.<sup>10</sup>

**Mayer & Whittlesey, Architects**<sup>11</sup>

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Albert Mayer, after working for his brother Charles in construction and engineering, became a registered architect and in 1935 established the firm of Mayer and [Julian H.] Whittlesey, which specialized in the design of apartment buildings. Mayer was well known as a planner and housing consultant in the United States and abroad from the 1930s on. He was a member of the Regional Planning Association of America (1930-33) which influenced the creation of the Greenbelt towns project, and was a founder, with Henry Wright and Lewis Mumford, of the Housing Study Guild (1933) which made recommendations on public housing and advocated large, planned projects, leading to the creation of the U.S. Housing Authority in 1937. Mayer received the apartment house award from the New York Chapter, American Institute of Architects (A.I.A.) in 1941 for Thorneycroft Homes, Forest Hills, Queens, and participated in the design of the Ft. Greene Houses (1942-44, with Clarence Stein, Rosario Candela, Wallace K. Harrison, Ely Jacques Kahn, Andre Fouilhoux, et al), Brooklyn, for the New York City Housing Authority. During World War II, Mayer served in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the construction of airfields, and his meeting of Jawaharlal Nehru led to a number of commissions in India, including a pilot development project for rural villages (1947 on) and the original master plan for Chandigarh, India (1950, with Matthew Nowicki).<sup>12</sup> Mayer was an advocate for the rational planning of new towns, which included Kitimat, British Columbia (1951-56, with Clarence Stein). He retired from active architectural practice in 1961, but continued work as a housing consultant and as a professor, and was author of *The Urgent Future* (1967), in which he discussed his planning philosophies.

Julian Hill Whittlesey (1905-1995), born in Greenwich, Connecticut, was educated in architecture and civil engineering at Yale University, and studied at the Fontainebleau School of Fine Arts, France, and the American School of Classical Studies, Athens. Like Mayer, he was interested in housing issues, and he worked as a consultant to the Resettlement Administration in the 1930s, as an advisor to the U.S. Public Housing Administration, and during World War II designed offices and housing for the military. Whittlesey participated in the design of the James Weldon Johnson Houses (Park Avenue and East 112th-115th Streets, 1947-48, with Harry M. Prince and Robert J. Reiley), and the Colonial Park Houses (1951, with Prince and Reiley). He also served as a consultant to the Baltimore and Yonkers Housing Authorities. In the 1960s, he worked as an archaeologist.

Mayer & Whittlesey and its successor firms were responsible for the design of a number of notable New York City apartment houses. The innovative 240 Central Park South Apartments (1939-40) was followed by the 22-story 40 Central Park South Apartments (1941), built by J.H. Taylor Construction Co. for Mayer family relative L. Victor Weil. In 1945, Mayer & Whittlesey became Mayer, Whittlesey & [M. Milton] Glass. Glass (1906-1993), educated at City College, Columbia and New York Universities, and the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design, worked as a draftsman in a number of architectural offices prior to joining Mayer & Whittlesey, where he was head draftsman in 1940-45. Mayer, Whittlesey & Glass designed the noted 20-story Manhattan House (200 East 66th Street, 1950-51, with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill), for the New York Life Insurance Co., which employed the innovations and amenities of 240 Central Park South on a full-bock scale (Manhattan House was designated a

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landmark by the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission in 2007). William J. Conklin (b. 1923) joined Mayer, Whittlesey & Glass in 1951 and became associate partner in charge of design in 1958. The firm was also joined by James S. Rossant. Mayer, Whittlesey & Glass received the medal of honor for large-scale housing and city planning, and an apartment house award, from the New York Chapter, A.I.A. in 1952.

The firm designed 220 Central Park South Apartments (1954); New School for Social Research Kaplan and List buildings (66 West 12<sup>th</sup> Street, 1956-59, Conklin in charge of design); Butterfield House (37 West 12<sup>th</sup> Street, 1959-62, Conklin and Rossant in charge of design);<sup>13</sup> Painting Industry Welfare Building (45 West 14<sup>th</sup> Street, 1960, Conklin in charge of design); Gala East Harlem Plaza (Jefferson Houses, First Avenue and 112th-115th Streets, 1960); and the Premier (333 East 69th Street, 1960-63, Conklin in charge of design). Mayer, Whittlesey & Glass was dissolved in 1961.

The firm of Whittlesey & Conklin was formed in 1961 (Whittlesey, Conklin & Rossant after 1965); it developed the master plan for the new town of Reston, Virginia (1962-69). Conklin & Rossant, its successor firm, was established in 1967. Milton Glass began his own firm in 1961 that became Glass & [Elliott M.] Glass in 1966.

**Columbus Circle and Central Park South<sup>14</sup>**

Columbus Circle was created at the junction of Broadway, Eighth Avenue/Central Park West and West 59th Street (Central Park South). In 1868-71, Broadway had been widened and planted north of 59th Street, becoming known as "the Boulevard," and by 1870, land was acquired for grander southern corner entrances to Central Park (designed in 1858 by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux).<sup>15</sup> The Plaza Hotel (listed as a National Historic Landmark 11/29/78) was created at Fifth Avenue and "the Circle" was established at Eighth Avenue. Maps of Central Park from this period indicate that the Circle was intended to have a sculptural focus. The Ladies Pavilion (1871, Jacob Wrey Mould), first used as a bus shelter in Columbus Circle, was moved into the park and the corner came to be dominated by the Maine Monument (1901-13, Attilio Piccirilli, sculptor; A. Van Buren Magonigle, architect).

Central Park South has sometimes been referred to as a "gold coast" of Manhattan due to its advantageous location, facing the south end of Central Park, and the presence of luxurious hotels and apartment houses. In the early 1870s, town houses and mansions for New York's elite began to be constructed along Fifth Avenue and the adjacent blocks of the West 50s. Nearby West 57th Street, between Sixth Avenue and Broadway, has had a distinguished history as a center of the arts and music for over a century. Central Park South, first fully developed in the 1870s-80s, has from the beginning attracted a mix of hotels, residential structures, and institutions, as indicated on Robinson's *Atlas of the City of New York* of 1885. Among the more notable were the Fifth Avenue Plaza Hotel (begun by Fife & Campbell; 1888-91, McKim, Mead & White); the Hawthorne (No. 128, 1883, Hubert & Pirsson); and Central Park Apartments ("Spanish Flats" or "the Navarro")(1881-83, Hubert & Pirsson),

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a complex of eight buildings at Nos. 150-180 (all now demolished).

In 1885, a law was enacted to limit the height of all new residential construction in New York City to a height of 80 feet (six stories), but hotels and residential hotels were exempted because they were considered commercial properties. Central Park South thus continued to attract such structures. New buildings and institutions along the street at the turn of the century, some by prestigious architects, included the Plaza Hotel (No. 2, 1905-07, Henry J. Hardenburgh), one of the world's great luxury hotels; New York Athletic Club (No. 56, 1899, William A. Cable; demolished); Deutscher Verein (German Club)(No. 112, 1889-91, McKim, Mead & White; demolished); Catholic Club (No. 120, 1891-92, William Schickel & Co.; demolished); and Gainsborough Studios (No. 222, 1907-08, Charles W. Buckham), which provided studios and apartments for artists.<sup>16</sup>

During the period between the two world wars, many new hotels and apartments were constructed: No. 100 (1916-18, Schwartz & Gross); Plaza Hotel addition (1921, Warren & Wetmore); No. 126-130 (1924-25, Schwartz & Gross); the Navarro (No. 112, 1925, J.E.R. Carpenter); New York Athletic Club (No. 180, 1927-29, York & Sawyer); Barbizon Plaza (No. 106, 1928-30, Lawrence Emmons, with Murgatroyd & Ogden); Hampshire House (No. 150, 1927-29; 1931-8, Caughey & Evans); Essex House (No. 160-170, 1929-30, Frank Grad); Hotel St. Moritz (No. 56, 1929-30, Emery Roth); No. 226-230 (1939-40); No. 40 (1941); and No. 120 (1941, H.I. Feldman).

In May 1939, a nearly one-acre site at one of the most visible locations in Manhattan, the entire blockfront along Broadway and Columbus Circle between West 58th and 59th Streets (across from Central Park), was purchased by 240 Central Park South, Inc., an entity of the J.H. Taylor Management Corp. This site, once seventeen lots, had been assembled between 1881 and 1908 by George Ehret (1835-1927), a German-born brewer. An immigrant to the United States in 1857, Ehret had worked in the Roemelt & Co. (later Hupfel's) Brewery, becoming foreman, prior to establishing his own Hell Gate Brewery in 1867. His enormous profits, which were invested in real estate, led the *New York Times* to comment at his death that he "was said at one time to be the largest holder of real estate in New York City" after the Estate of John Jacob Astor.<sup>17</sup> This property, one of only two vacant blockfronts along Broadway between Times Square and Columbus Circle<sup>18</sup>, was transferred to the George Ehret Columbus Circle Corp. in April 1927. Apparently initially intended for a roadhouse or hotel<sup>19</sup>, it was developed with a large U-shaped, two-story Mission Revival style building that was used for automobile-related businesses (with large advertising signs on top).<sup>20</sup> The building that had formerly housed Fire Engine Co. No. 23 (by 1885), 233 West 58th Street, was next-door and also part of the assembled site.

Mayer & Whittlesey filed plans for an apartment building, expected to cost \$1.6 million, in July 1939. According to the *Real Estate Record and Guide*, 240 Central Park South Apartments was intended as "a permanent headliner of the J.H. Taylor Management Corporation's service, and not as a speculative venture."<sup>21</sup> Construction began in September and was completed, in just over a year, in September 1940. The final cost was \$4.5 million.<sup>22</sup>

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As built, the project, called by the *New York Herald Tribune* “the largest [apartment house] now in construction in Manhattan,”<sup>23</sup> was actually two buildings, joined at the ground story, that overlooked a central landscaped courtyard and covered only about half the site. The *Real Estate Record* commented that “this is probably the lowest land coverage in the city for an apartment project of this size. By sacrificing ground coverage, the builders have been able to incorporate a maximum number of corner suites.”<sup>24</sup> The northern building facing Central Park is twenty stories in height, with an eight-story (plus tank house) tower, and is roughly C-shaped in plan around an entrance court. The southern building is fifteen stories. The architects were particularly skillful in adapting their plan to the highly prominent and complex site, and incorporated shops along Columbus Circle/Broadway into the project.

The architects said of the design process, “We had what amounted to a design board consisting of the architects, the owner, operating manager, the rental agent and the builder, together with such engineers as might have to be called in from time to time,”<sup>25</sup> whose viewpoints and expertise were merged into “agreed decisions” which aimed to take into account factors of economy, progressive planning, and civic-minded architecture. After several schemes were proposed, the two-building solution was adopted and the building heights determined in large part due to elevator requirements. The Multiple Dwelling Law of 1929 had permitted the mechanical venting of public spaces, bathrooms, and kitchens in apartment buildings with tall towers. Examples of this type are the San Remo (1929-30, Emery Roth), the Majestic (1930-31, Irwin S. Chanin), and the Century (1931, Chanin), at 145-146, 115, and 25 Central Park West,<sup>26</sup> and River House (1931-32, Bottomley, Wagner & White), 435 East 52nd Street. Architect-historian Robert A.M. Stern has stated that “after the collapse of the real-estate market in the Depression, the type was never again seriously pursued, except at 240 Central Park South, which despite the limitations of its courtyard remains a paradigm of the contextually responsible high-rise apartment in Manhattan.”<sup>27</sup> The buildings, clad in an orange-colored brick, were constructed with steel-skeleton framing (produced by the Bethlehem Steel Corp.) set on reinforced concrete footings, with concrete-slab floors set between fireproofed steel beams. The open space of the complex, called by *Buildings and Building Management* “one of the most ingenious landscaping programs ever seen in New York,”<sup>28</sup> was done under the supervision of landscape architects Cynthia Wiley and Eleanor Robertson Paepcke.<sup>29</sup> Included in the overall landscaped open space scheme were the northern entrance court; off-street loading area and planting bed along 58th Street; gardens on the ground-story shops’ roofs and central court; a ground-floor conservatory, with a curved glass wall, connecting the lobbies of the two buildings and overlooking the interior gardens; a roof garden on the purposely-lower southern building; and roof terraces on the 20th story of the northern building.

In terms of exterior architectural expression, 240 Central Park South Apartments represents a transition between the usage of the Art Deco, Art Moderne, and Modern Classical styles for New York apartment houses throughout the 1930s and post-World War II “modernism.” According to the *New York Herald Tribune*, “the architects conceived the idea while studying architecture in Stockholm, Amsterdam, and Vienna.”<sup>30</sup> Albert Mayer was quoted on the project’s modernist and functionalist aspects:

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This building will introduce the philosophy of modern architecture, allowing the purpose of the structure and its location to dictate its style. New York has seen great strides in the design business buildings, where such requirements as entire floors of space have dictated broad bands of windows, but until now little progress has been made in letting the comforts and requirements of the private home guide us in planning large apartment buildings.<sup>31</sup>

*Architectural Forum* further stated on its modernism that:

the architectural character of these buildings stems directly from the plans as developed on different levels, and the fenestration. There is no applied "architecture." The exterior walls are lush, of a brick somewhat darker than the white concrete balcony slabs, whose sharp alternation of light and shadows constitutes the main decorative element of the exterior.<sup>32</sup>

While there had been examples of fully modernist apartment buildings in Manhattan, such as the Beaux-Arts Apartments (1929-30, Kenneth M. Murchison and Raymond Hood), 307 and 310 East 44th Street, and Rockefeller Apartments (1935-37, Harrison & Fouilhoux), 17 West 54th Street and 24 West 55th Street,<sup>33</sup> the modernist architectural approach was more typically seen during this period in public housing projects, garden apartments, and larger planned developments throughout the city.<sup>34</sup> 240 Central Park South Apartments is an unusual and innovative highrise luxury apartment complex in Manhattan, notable for its architecture, planning, and response to its urban site.

The retail shops along the Columbus Circle/Broadway side of the complex include rounded storefronts staggered along the diagonal property line, adding a nearly Art Moderne style to the complex. According to Mayer, "in this manner a new maximum in display value will be achieved through architectural beauty instead of at the expense of it. Each shop will enjoy many of the advantages of a corner location."<sup>35</sup> The main entrance court and Central Park South façade were embellished by a number of features: a glass-fronted lobby and entrance; a blue-grey extruded terra-cotta-block wall along the western side of the court; and the work of "collaborating artists," according to *Architectural Forum*,<sup>36</sup> apparently a reference to both the abstract mosaic mural entitled "The Quiet City" but Amedee Ozenfant<sup>37</sup> and ceramic plaques (no longer extant) on the Central Park South restaurant façade to the east of the court. An orange extruded terra-cotta-block entrance enframingent and green tile inset planter decorate the 58th Street façade of the southern building. Rooftop vertical architectural elements, such as water tower enclosure, chimneys, and wing walls, enliven the skyline.

240 Central Park South Apartments was planned with 326 apartments, ranging in size from one to four rooms. A large number of the apartments face Central Park, while the rest also have views due to the overall layout of the complex. The amenities offered were a mixture of those found in a traditional apartment house with those of an apartment hotel. A restaurant was located on the ground floor facing onto the entrance court. There was interior lobby access to the shops. An off-street loading area along 58th Street, partially covered by a roof, allowed for

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the transfer of goods by a hand truck ramp leading directly into the basement. There were four passenger and two service elevators. Cantilevered balconies (averaging eight feet square) were provided for about 100 apartments above the seventh story facing Central Park and above the tenth or twelfth story in the southern sections of the project. Cantilevered corner windows and wide steel casement windows (in many locations the width of the room) allowed for a maximum of light and air. Most apartments above the sixth story had wood-burning fireplaces. Maid service was available and servants' lavatories and separate service halls were located on each floor; workrooms, storage rooms, and laundry facilities were provided in the basement. A solarium/recreation room was located on the 20th story of the northern building. Construction included special sound insulation (including elevators) and insulation against heat from boilers, etc. An independent generating plant provided power for the complex, while a hot water heating system was "the first plant of this type ever introduced in a tower apartment house."<sup>38</sup>

The marketing appeal of 240 Central Park South Apartments was explicitly suburban. *Buildings & Building Management* pointed out that the J.H. Taylor Management Corp. was well aware that Manhattan had lost a population of 650,000 over the preceding two-and-a-half decades to the outer boroughs and suburbs.<sup>39</sup> In its prospectus and advertising, J.H. Taylor used the slogan "Where the Park is Part of the Plan" in recognition of its site facing Central Park, the project's own landscaped open space, and the prospective residents' "wide-spread enthusiasm for out-of-doors life, fresh air, sunshine and vistas of green lawns and trees."<sup>40</sup> *Architectural Forum* commented that:

The architects... had formulated certain ideas – and actual plans – as to how people might live and would want to live, if they preferred to live in the inner city, rather than in the suburbs, or if they could be convinced that the city had something less stony and court-yardy to offer than the inner cores of our cities have generally known. Their ideas... included the romantic vistas that our cities afford, but usually give only to the top few floors of their tallest buildings. They included a pattern of gardens, of open-air dining, of solariums, not only for the few fantastically priced pent-houses and terraces, but for all who decided to live in their buildings. And also an intimation of these, a sense of greenery and openness and refreshment even to passers-by.<sup>41</sup>

A special mail campaign and newspaper advertisements were particularly successful in attracting tenants. The building was over twenty-five percent rented by August. Starting rents were about \$550 a room.

**Critical Response**

240 Central Park South Apartments, though not widely noted in the architectural press at the time of its construction (possibly due to the timing between the end of the Depression and World War II), was featured in three notable publications. Lewis Mumford, in *The New Yorker* in December 1940, opined that:

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The new apartment house... shows that in single projects... the architectural imagination has not gone stale. This one seems to me, at least in form, the finest in its class that has been put up since the Rockefeller apartments, and its interior plan is, I think, superior to theirs. ... The architects... had a very teasing problem. The plot is irregular... Their solution was an ingenious one, which gives the living quarters of their buildings the maximum possible light, air, and quiet. ... the ingenuity of the solution lies in the fact that only the western flanks of these two buildings abut on noisy, raucous Broadway.<sup>42</sup>

Mumford additionally admired the “very pleasant orangey brick” of the buildings, the breadth of the apartment windows, the extensive use of balconies, the openness of the glass-fronted main entrance, and the Broadway shopfronts, and wrote that “in the difficult matter of terminating a high building, the architects again, by the simplest means, have scored a real success.”<sup>43</sup> The apartment complex was included in the Museum of Modern Art’s *Guide to Modern Architecture* of 1940 which called it “a conscientious restudying of the apartment house problem, with particular attention to light, air, and view.”<sup>44</sup> It was also praised in May 1941 in *Architectural Forum*:

It shows a host of improvements which taken together add up to one of the best apartment buildings yet produced. ... the plan... shows an admirably worked out scheme for a difficult site. The solution is notable for the skill with which a maximum number of rooms have been given a view of the park, and for the flexibility with which various types of living units have been fitted into a standardized structural layout.<sup>45</sup>

The complex has been singled out in more recent criticism. Architectural critic Paul Goldberger in the *New York Times* in 1977 listed the building among “The City’s Top 10[Luxury] Apartment Buildings,” stating that: this often-overlooked building at the edge of Columbus Circle contains not only good apartments, but also some splendid urban lessons. ... The apartment house is thoughtful, intelligent, and unpretentious throughout – one of the last pieces of luxury housing in New York about which that can be said.<sup>46</sup>

Goldberger further lauded the building in *The City Observed: New York* (1979):

[Central Park South’s] last building is one of its very finest, No. 240... Here, urbanistic concerns were paramount... a complex form consisting of a pair of towers atop a zigzag, garden-topped base was used. The base brings variety to storefronts and rhythm to the building’s Columbus Circle façade; the overall massing emphasizes park views and brings individuality to apartment layouts. It is a remarkably sophisticated design, substantially ahead of its time in its knowing response to a difficult urban site.<sup>47</sup>

Robert A.M. Stern wrote in an article in 1980 that:

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240 Central Park South comes at the point when the transition between traditional and modernist styles strongly affected American practice and produced a number of interesting buildings which, because of the ideological positions the shift forced architects and critics alike to take, have been largely overlooked.<sup>48</sup>

Stern later observed in *New York 1930* (1987) that:

It was not its bland facades that lend 240 Central Park South distinction but rather the shaping of the two towers, particularly the northern one, in response to the complex perimeter of the site. Aspects of the courtyard apartment building were combined with those of the skyscraper apartment building to establish both a horizontal and vertical reflection of the city's composition. Terraces began only above the level of the trees in Central Park (high enough to be free of the fumes of the street); roofs were set back not only to conform to zoning requirements but also in consideration of solar orientation and views; and chimneys and mechanical equipment combined with the penthouse suites to produce a lively skyline. At the street level the building respected the varied nature of its locale: a deep, planted courtyard on Central Park South created an elegant pocket of shade, while a vigorous one-story commercial strip along Broadway used curved corners to define the diagonal of the street. The building succeeded... as an exemplar of humane values applied to the problem of high-density city living and as a finely tuned instrument of urbanism.<sup>49</sup>

**Later History of 240 Central Park South**<sup>50</sup>

240 Central Park South, Inc., original owner of the property, sold it in May 1976 to Central Park South Associates, an entity of Sarah Korein, a New York real estate mogul known for choice Manhattan properties. Sarah Rabinowitz (c. 1905-1998), born in Germany and raised in Palestine, married Isidor Korein, a Hungarian engineer, and immigrated to New York City in 1923. After the purchase of two apartment buildings in Brooklyn in 1931 and 1941, she entered the Manhattan real estate market after the war with the purchase of 715 Park Avenue. She later bought and sold the Osborne Apartments, the Beresford, Croyden Hotel, Fifth Avenue Hotel, and Schwab House Apartments, and owned the land and/or buildings at Lever House, Equitable Building, 1 Penn Plaza, Delmonico Hotel, Swiss Center, and 220 and 240 Central Park South Apartments.

Among the building's many residents over the years have been Antoine de Saint-Exupery (1941-), later author of *The Little Prince* (1943); actress Sylvia Miles (since 1968); Albert Mayer (c. 1975 to his death in 1981); Clara Mayer (c. 1975-86); and the fictive Lois Lane in the movie *Superman* (1978). Directories list an office of the J.H. Taylor Management Corp. here from 1940 to the 1980s.

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Notes for Sections 7 and 8

<sup>1</sup> Section 7 is based on the building description in the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission Designation Report, *240 Central Park South Apartments* (LP-2116), June 25, 2002, by Jay Shockley and visual observations of the building by Higgins Quasebarth & Partners, LLC in July and September of 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Section 8 is taken almost in its entirety from the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission Designation Report, *240 Central Park South Apartments* (LP-2116), June 25, 2002, by Jay Shockley. Most of the content is directly excerpted from the Designation Report. All research and notes are the work of New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission staff.

<sup>3</sup> “[Bernhard] Mayer Left Gifts to Eight Charities,” *New York Times* (NYT), Aug. 21, 1929, 10; “Bernhard Mayer Left Estate of \$2,150,640,” NYT, May 26, 1932, 52; Jos. Mayer obit., NYT, Dec. 5, 1939, 27; Korn obit., NYT, Dec. 19, 1972, 46; Chas. Mayer obit., NYT, Dec. 15, 1980, D17; Peter M. Rutkoff and William B. Scott, *New School: A History of The New School for Social Research* (N.Y.: Free Pr., 1986); Clara Mayer obit., NYT, July 19, 1988, B8; “Clara W. Mayer,” *Who’s Who of American Women* 1 (Chicago: Marquis-Who’s Who, 1958), 834, and *Who’s Who in World Jewry* (N.Y.: Pitman Publ. Corp., Inc., 1972), 602; Clara Mayer, *The Manmade Wilderness* (N.Y.: Atheneum, 1964), 167; LPC, *East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District Designation Report* (LP-1976) (N.Y.: City of New York, 1998), prepared by Jay Shockley and Gale Harris; Benjamin J. Buttenwieser, *Buttenwieser Family Tree* (1975), 5-7.

<sup>4</sup> Theresa Mayer Durlach (b. 1890), received a PhD. Degree in anthropology (1923) from Barnard College and was active in the suffragette movement. She worked for peace during World War I, serving as treasurer of the New York chapter of Jane Addam’s World Peace League. She founded her own organization, World Peaceways, in the 1930s. She married tobacco jobber Milton S. Durlach in 1922. “War Foe Seeks to Put Peace Tract on Every American Breakfast Tray [Theresa M. Durlach],” NYT, Oct. 24, 1937, VI, 7.

<sup>5</sup> 875 Park Avenue (1911-12, George and Edward Blum) is located within the Upper East Side Historic District. 1040 Park Avenue (1924, Delano & Aldrich, with [M.W. Hopkins]) was built by the J.H. Taylor Construction Co. 1069-1075 Park Avenue (1921-22) was designed by George and Edward Blum.

<sup>6</sup> Andrew C. Mayer, Charles Mayer’s son, believes the firm was named for a former boss of his father’s. Telephone conversation, April 2002.

<sup>7</sup> Rutkoff and Scott, 34.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>9</sup> Cervin Robinson and Rosemarie H. Bletter, *Skyscraper Style: Art Deco New York* (N.Y.: Free pr., 1975), fig. 51D. The New School, 66 West 12th Street, is located within the Greenwich Village Historic District. It is also a designated Interior Landmark.

<sup>10</sup> The Mayer family home until after 1895 was at 41 East 72nd Street (1881-82, Robert B. Lynd); the house was owned by Clara Mayer until 1975. It is located within the Upper East Side Historic District. Charles Mayer's daughter, Berna Osnos, is president of the 1804 Washington Avenue Corp. which owns all ten properties in the East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District.

<sup>11</sup> "Albert Mayer" *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects* 3 (N.Y.: Free Pr., 1982), 129-130, and *Who Was Who In America* 8 (Chicago: Marquis Who's Who, Inc., 1985), 266; Mayer obit., *NYT*, Oct. 16, 1981, B6; Martin Filler, "An Architect With Quality: Albert Mayer 1897-1981," *Skyline* (Dec. 981), 9; Whittlesey obit., *NYT*, May 23, 1995, B11; *American Architects Directory* (N.Y.: Monacelli Pr., 1995); "Apartment House Design Awards Given to New York Architects," *Real Estate Record & Guide (REMG)*, June 7, 1941, 15; "22-Story House Facing Central Park" [40 Central Park South], *NYT*, July 13, 1941, XI, 2; N.Y. Life Insurance Co., "Manhattan House" prospectus (c. 1951), Avery Library, Columbia University; New Face on 14th Street" [Painting Industry Welfare Building], *Progressive Architecture* (Dec. 1961), 145.

<sup>12</sup> Le Corbusier received the commission after Nowicki's death in 1950 and Mayer's withdrawal from the project.

<sup>13</sup> The Kaplan and List Buildings and southern section of Butterfield House are located within the Greenwich Village Historic District.

<sup>14</sup> Robert A.M. Stern, Thomas Mellins, and David Fishman, *New York 1880* (N.Y.: Monacelli Pr., 1999); E. Robinson, *Atlas of the City of New York* (1885); G.W. Bromley & Co., *Atlas of the City of New York* (1899) and *Manhattan Land Book* (1934); NYC, Dept. of Buildings, Manhattan, Plans, Permits and Dockets; Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and Thomas Mellins, *New York 1930* (N.Y.: Rizzoli, 1987).

<sup>15</sup> Central Park is a designated New York City Scenic Landmark.

<sup>16</sup> The Plaza hotel and Gainsborough Studios are designated New York City Landmarks.

<sup>17</sup> Ehret obit.

<sup>18</sup> "Commercial Growth of Columbus Circle," *NYT*, Apr. 10, 1927, XI, 2.

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<sup>19</sup> *New York Herald Tribune*, Jan. 21, 1940.

<sup>20</sup> Columbus Circle was located amidst Automobile Row, which extended from the West 40s to the West 60s along Broadway in the 1910s-20s.

<sup>21</sup> "Management Experience....," 3. Joseph Mayer was president of 240 Central Park South, Inc. (until his death in December 1939), and William Korn was later president.

<sup>22</sup> Christopher Gray, "A Model of High-Density Residential Development," *NYT*, Feb. 9, 1997, IX, 4.

<sup>23</sup> "Towering Apartment...."

<sup>24</sup> "Management Experience....," 3.

<sup>25</sup> *Architectural Forum*, 313.

<sup>26</sup> The San Remo, Majestic, and Century are designated New York City Landmarks.

<sup>27</sup> Robert A.M. Stern, "With Rhetoric: The New York Apartment House," *VIA: Culture and the Social Vision* (Univ. Of Pa., 1980), 101.

<sup>28</sup> "Planned for....," 34.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>30</sup> "Towering Apartment...."

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Architectural Forum*, 316.

<sup>33</sup> The Beaux-Arts and Rockefeller Apartments are designated New York City Landmarks.

<sup>34</sup> Examples include garden apartments by Andrew J. Thomas in Jackson Heights, Queens; Amalgamated Houses (1930, Springsteen & Goldhammer), 504-520 Grand Street; Hillside Homes (1932-35, Clarence Stein), the Bronx; Knickerbocker Village (1934, John S. Van Wart and Frederick L. Ackerman), Lower East Side;

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Williamsburg Houses (1934-38, Richmond H. Shreve and William Lescaze), Brooklyn; Castle Village (1938, George F. Pelham, Jr.), West 181st Street and Northern Avenue; and Parkchester (1938-42, R.H. Shreve), the Bronx.

<sup>35</sup> "Towering Apartment..."

<sup>36</sup> *Architectural Forum*, 312.

<sup>37</sup> Amedee Julien Ozenfant (1886-1966), born in San Quentin, France, studied painting and architecture in Paris (1906-13). Working as a painter, he also produced the avant-garde review *l'Elan* (1915-17). In 1918, with Charles Edouard Jeanneret (Le Corbusier), Ozenfant issued an artistic manifesto on "Purism," an attempt to purify geometric language by the use of common machine-made objects. The *New York Times* observed that the influence of Purism "was felt more deeply in industrial design and in architecture, particularly in the building of Le Corbusier, than in painting." Ozenfant and Le Corbusier (with poet Paul Derme) edited the journal *l'Esprit Nouveau* (1919-25), but a dispute ended their collaboration in 1924. Le Corbusier had designed Ozenfant's atelier in Paris in 1922. Ozenfant came to New York in 1925 and founded an art school, but returned to France. He taught at the Modern Academy (1925-30) and the Ozenfant Academy (1931-35), Paris, and the French Institute (1936-38), London. He moved to New York City in 1938, was a lecturer at the New School for Social Research and Yale University (1938-41), Cooper Union (1939-40), University of Michigan (1940), and Harvard University (1941). After 1939, he was president of the Ozenfant School of Fine Arts in New York. Ozenfant was naturalized in 1944, and remained in New York until 1955. "Amedee-Julien Ozenffant," *Who Was Who in America* 4 (Chicago: Marquis-Who's Who, Inc., 1968), 727; Ozenfant obit., *NYT*, May 5, 1966, 47; Deborah Gans, *The Le Corbusier Guide* (Princeton: Princeton Archl. Pr., 1987).

<sup>38</sup> "Management Experience..." 3.

<sup>39</sup> "Planned for..." 34.

<sup>40</sup> J.H. Taylor.

<sup>41</sup> *Architectural Forum*, 313.

<sup>42</sup> Mumford.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>44</sup> John McAndrew, edit., *Guide to Modern Architecture: Northeast States* (N.Y.: Museum of Modern Art, 1940), 80.

<sup>45</sup> 312.

<sup>46</sup> Paul Goldberger, "The City's Top 10 Apartment Buildings," *NYT*, Oct. 6, 1977, C1 and 6.

<sup>47</sup> Paul Goldberger, *The City Observed: New York* (N.Y.: Vintage Bks., 1979), 180.

<sup>48</sup> Stern, "With Rhetoric..."

<sup>49</sup> Stern, etc., *New York 1930*, 424.

<sup>50</sup> NY County; Sarah Korein obit., *NYT*, Nov. 4, 1998, C23; "Ackman-Ziff Seeks Lead Role in N.Y. Mortgages," May 16, 2000, [www.ackmanziff.com](http://www.ackmanziff.com) website; Richard Alleman, *The Movie Lover's Guide to New York* (N.Y.: Perennial Library, 1988), 65-66; Gray; Kelly Crow, "Trying to Protect a Zigzag Piece of a Famed Circle," *NYT*, Sept. 2, 2001; *Manhattan Address Directories* (1941-86).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 1

240 Central Park South

Name of Property

New York, New York

County and State

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 2

240 Central Park South

**Name of Property**

New York, New York

**County and State**

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 3

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County and State

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240 Central Park West  
Name of Property

New York, New York  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.0

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 585985 4513423  
Zone Easting Northing

3 18            
Zone Easting Northing

2 18          

4 18          

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ward S. Dennis

organization Higgins Quasebarth & Partners, LLC date September 2008

street & number 11 Hanover Square, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor telephone 212-274-9468

city or town New York state NY zip code 10005

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

#### Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Central Park Associates, LLC

street & number 240 Central Park South telephone 212-581-6394

city or town New York state NY zip code 10019

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 2050

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 1

240 Central Park South

**Name of Property**

New York, New York

**County and State**

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**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property occupies the Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1030, Lot 58. The lot is irregularly shaped and has frontage of 189' along Central Park South, 50' along Columbus Circle, 165' along Broadway, and 145' along West 58th Street. See attached map.

**Boundary Justification**

The nomination boundary encompasses the historic (and current) property boundary for the building at 240 Central Park South (aka 232-246 Central Park South [West 59<sup>th</sup> Street]), 233-241 West 58<sup>th</sup> Street, and 1792-1810 Broadway.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 11 Page 1

240 Central Park South

**Name of Property**

New York, New York

**County and State**

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**11. PHOTOGRAPH LIST**

240 Central Park South

New York County, NY

All photos by Jenn Capetto, August 2007.

CD-R on file at:

Higgins Quasebarth & Partners, LLC

11 Hanover Square, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor

New York, NY 10005

-and-

NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

- Photo 1 Central Park South (West 59<sup>th</sup> Street) (north) façade.
- Photo 2 Overall view of building, looking southeast. The north tower is in the foreground.
- Photo 3 West façade of north tower.
- Photo 4 View of the west façade of the south tower.
- Photo 5 View of the south and east facades of the south tower.
- Photo 6 Detail of the restored entrance to the north tower on Central Park South.
- Photo 7 Detail of the restored mosaic on the building façade.
- Photo 8 View of storefronts on the north tower's west façade.
- Photo 9 Storefronts along Broadway, looking southeast.
- Photo 10 Storefronts along Broadway and West 58<sup>th</sup> Street, facing north from West 58<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Photo 11 Detail of the south tower entrance on West 58<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Photo 12 View of planted terrace at the third story. The terrace is located above the stores on the west side of the building between the north and south towers.
- Photo 13 View of corner balconies on the north façade of the north tower, facing southeast from Columbus Circle.
- Photo 14 North lobby looking southeast toward the mail desk and east elevator bank.
- Photo 15 North lobby looking north at the restored windows, seating area, copper-clad columns and terrazzo floor.
- Photo 16 Restored sitting area (solarium) between the north and south lobbies, looking southeast.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section 11 Page 2

240 Central Park South  
**Name of Property**  
New York, New York  
**County and State**

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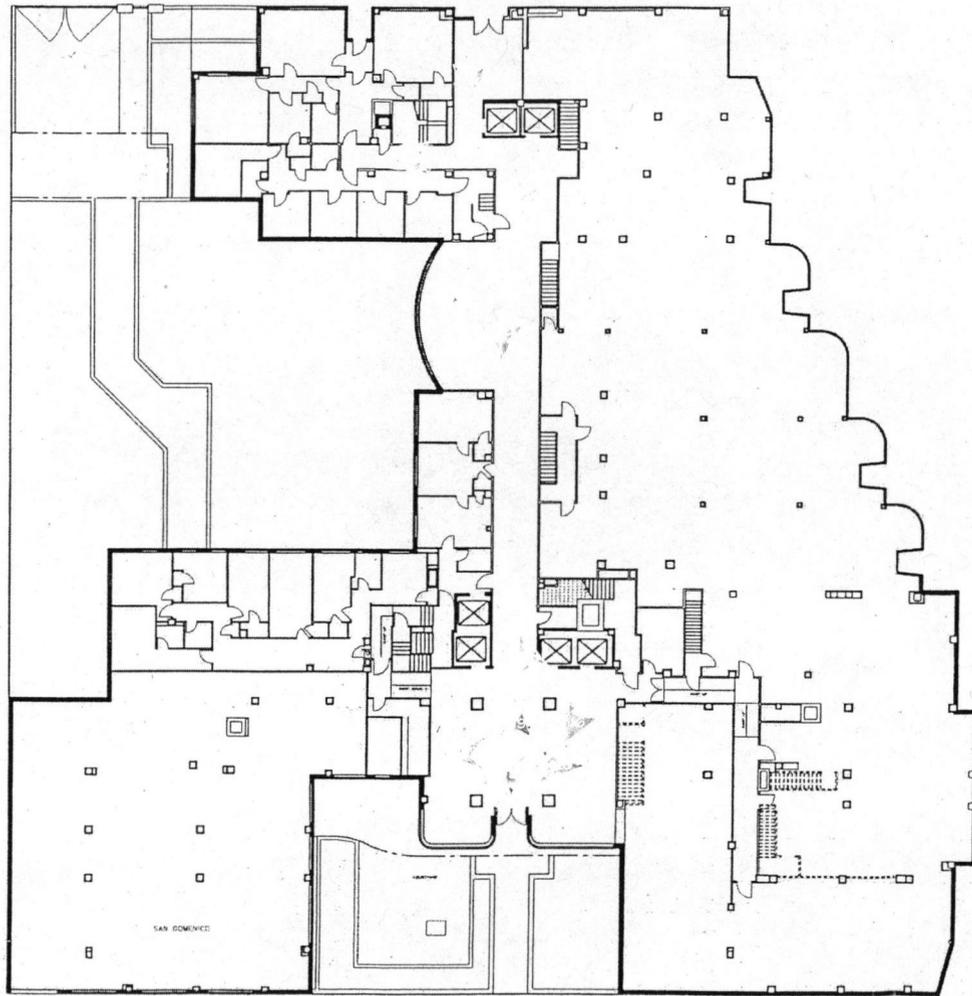
Photo 17 Apartment 14I in the north tower, living room looking northwest.

Photo 18 Apartment 11E in the north tower, kitchen looking east.



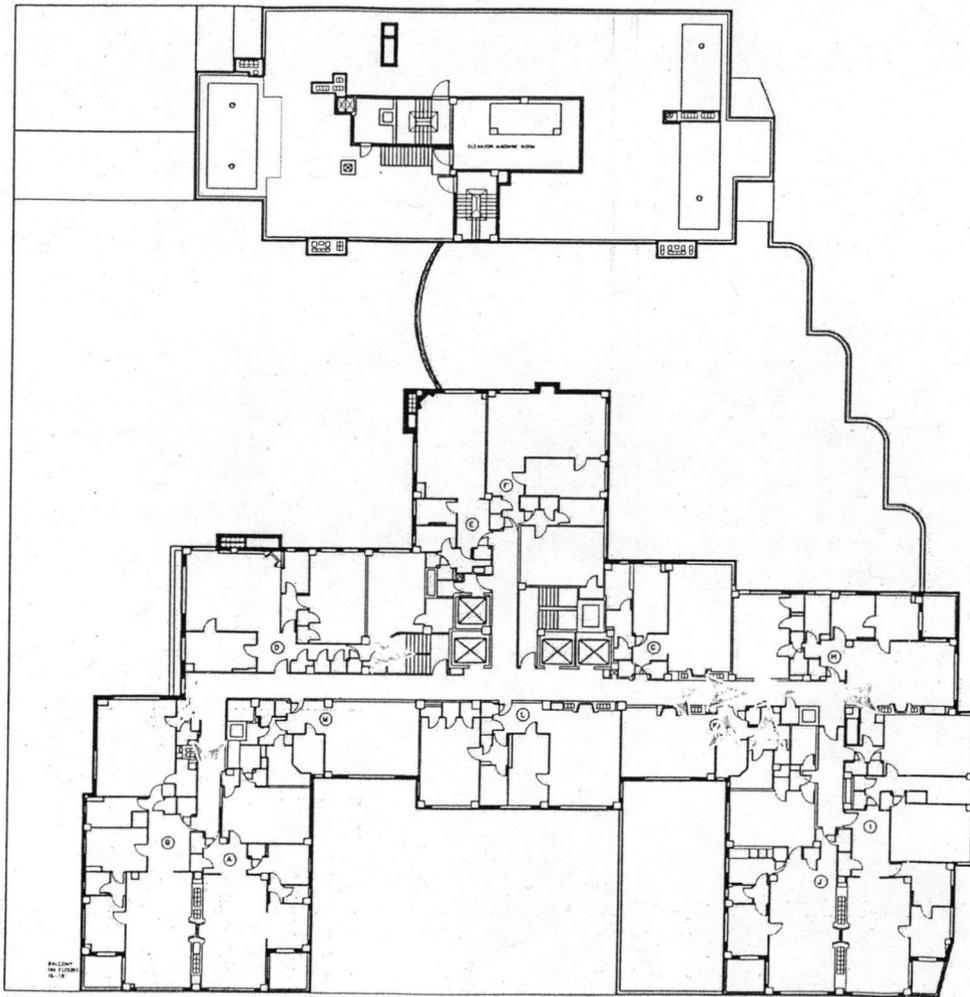
**240 Central Park South**  
 New York County, NY

Source: Sanborn, Manhattan Land book (2000-2001), pl. 82  
 Scale: 1" = approx. 200'



240 Central Park South		
Historic Preservation Certification Application Part 2 • August 2004		
	GROUND FLOOR	Higgins & Quasebarth 270 Lafayette Street New York, NY 10012 (212) 274-9468
		

Ground floor



240 Central Park South		
Historic Preservation Certification Application Part 2 • August 2004		
	16TH FLOOR	Higgins & Quasebarth 270 Lafayette Street New York, NY 10012 (212) 274-9468
		

16<sup>th</sup> Floor

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY 240 Central Park South  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, New York

DATE RECEIVED: 4/03/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/17/09  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/02/09 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/17/09  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 09000304

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 5.12.09 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places**

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



240 Central Park South  
New York, New York  
Photo 1



240 Central Park South  
New York, New York  
Photo 2







240 Central Park South  
New York, New York  
Photo 4





240 Central Park South, New York, NY  
Photo 5









115  
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240 Central Park South  
New York, New York  
Photo 15







240 Central Park South

New York, New York

Photo 17



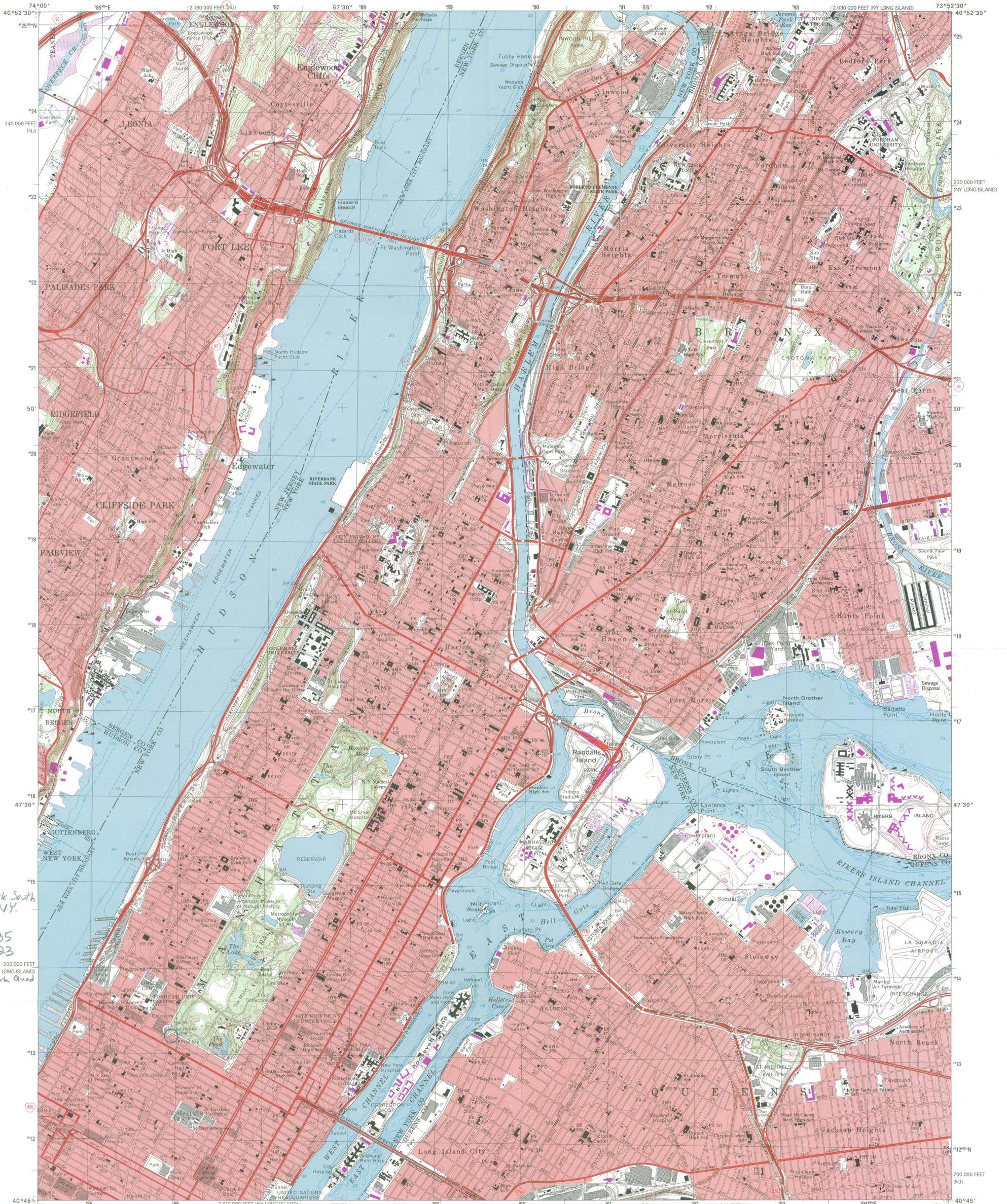


HP Premium

HP Premium

240 Central Park South  
New York, NY  
Photo 18





240 Central Park South New York Co, NY. Zone 18 Easting 585985 Northing 4513423 USGS - Central Park Quad 1:24000

Produced by the United States Geological Survey Topography compiled 1966. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1977 and other sources. Photointerpreted using imagery dated 1995; no major culture or drainage changes observed. Survey control current as of 1966. Boundaries, other than corporate, revised 1999 Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS charts 226, 274, 745, 746, and 747 (1966). This information is not intended for navigational purposes North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27) Projection: New York coordinate system, Long Island zone (transverse Mercator) 10 000-foot ticks: New York coordinate system, Long Island zone and New Jersey coordinate system 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 18 North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map Information shown in purple may not meet USGS content standards and may conflict with previously mapped contours

SCALE 1:24 000. Includes a scale bar in meters and feet, a north arrow, and a diagram showing the relationship between the map datum and the mean lower low water datum. Text: CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929 TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048 DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET, DATUM IS MEAN LOWER LOW WATER THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 4 FEET IN THE HUDSON RIVER AND 5.7 FEET IN THE EAST RIVER THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION legend: Primary highway hard surface, Secondary highway hard surface, Interstate Route, U.S. Route, State Route, Light-duty road, hard or improved surface, Unimproved road. Includes a table of adjoining 7.5' quadrangle names (Hackensack, Mount Vernon, Washawen, Flushing, Jersey City, Brooklyn, Jamaica) and a barcode with ISBN 0-607-92023-4.



## The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

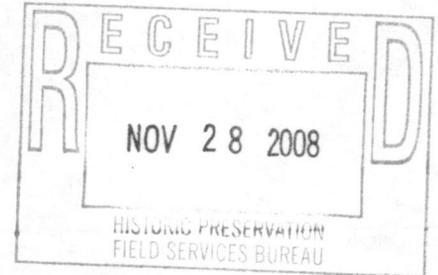
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor North, New York NY 10007 TEL: 212-669-7926 FAX: 212-669-7797  
<http://nyc.gov/landmarks/>



KATE DALY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
[kdaly@lpc.nyc.gov](mailto:kdaly@lpc.nyc.gov)

November 24, 2008

Ms. Ruth Pierpont, Director  
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation  
and Historic Preservation  
P.O. Box 189  
Peebles Island  
Waterford, New York 12188-0189



Re: 240 Central Park South Apartments, New York, New York

Dear Ms. Pierpont:

I write on behalf of Chair Robert B. Tierney in response to your request for comment on the eligibility of 240 Central Park South in Manhattan for the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

The Commission strongly supports the nomination of the 240 Central Park South Apartments. On June 25, 2002 the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission voted to designate this building as an individual New York City landmark based on its distinguished character and innovative plan. Completed in 1940, it is one of the largest luxury apartment buildings of its day and has an entrance court decorated with "The Quiet City," a mosaic by Amedee Ozenfant.

Therefore, based on the Commission's prior review and designation of this building, the Commission has determined that 240 Central Park South appears to meet the criteria for inclusion on the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

Sincerely yours,

Kate Daly

cc: Robert B. Tierney, Chair  
Mary Beth Betts



**New York State Office of Parks,  
Recreation and Historic Preservation**

Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau • Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189  
518-237-8643  
www.nysparks.com



**David A. Paterson**  
Governor

**Carol Ash**  
Commissioner

April 3, 2009

Ms. Alexis Abernathy  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye St. NW  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: Transmittal of National Register  
Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to transmit three new National Register nominations to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register as follows:

William Cauldwell House, Noyac, Suffolk Co., NY

240 Central Park South, New York, New York Co., NY

Industrial Complex at 221 McKibbin Street, Brooklyn, Kings Co., NY

Thank you for your assistance in processing these proposals. Please feel free to call on me at 518-237-8643 ext. 3258 if any questions arise.

Sincerely,

Mark L. Peckham  
National Register  
Program Coordinator

enclosures