EXHIBIT 42

Landmarks Preservation Commission
July 13, 1993; Designation List 252
LP-1843

HOTEL THERESA

(now Theresa Towers)

2082-2096 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevard (Seventh Avenue), Borough of Manhattan.
Built 1912-13; architect George & Edward Blum.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1930, Lot 30.

On July 15, 1991, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Hotel Theresa and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 10). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Two speakers testified in favor of designation. A representative of the owner spoke in opposition to designation. Eight additional speakers were in favor of the designation of this and the other items on the calendar at the hearing but urged the Commission to continue its work in Harlem. Numerous letters have been received expressing the same sentiments.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Summary

The Hotel Theresa, built in 1912-13, was one of the major social centers of Harlem, serving from 1940 until its conversion into an office building in the late 1960s as one of the most important institutions for Harlem's African-American community. In addition to its historical importance, the hotel is a major work of the noted architectural firm of George & Edward Blum, and it exemplifies this firm's singular approach to ornamentation and inventive use of terra cotta. Although planned primarily as an apartment hotel, the Theresa also welcomed transient guests. In addition, the hotel contained a two-story dining room used for banquets, weddings, meetings, and other functions, and a bar and grill that became a major social center for Harlem's black celebrities during the 1940s and 1950s. During these decades, the Theresa was known as the "Waldorf of Harlem," playing host to many of America's most prominent black social, political, entertainment, and sports figures, as well as to many foreign dignitaries. The Theresa was also home to important Harlem institutions, including the March Community Bookstore and Malcolm X's Organization of Afro-American Unity. The Theresa entered the national limelight in 1960 when Cuban premier Fidel Castro chose to stay at the hotel while visiting New York to speak at the United Nations General Assembly; while at the Theresa, Castro hosted a visit from Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev. Encompassing the entire western blockfront of Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevard (originally Seventh Avenue), between West 124th and West 125th streets, the Theresa is one of the most visually striking structures in northern Manhattan with its projecting bays, arched surrounds, and prominent gables.

Harlem and 125th Street: History and Development[1]

The village of Harlem, originally known as Nieuw Harlem (named for the Dutch city of Haarlem), was established by Dutch governor Peter Stuyvesant in 1658. The village boundaries incorporated much of northern Manhattan, extending as far south as what is now East 74th Street near York Avenue. Although by 1683 Harlem was considered a part of the city and county of New York, it remained a relatively unpopulated area of farms and estates until after the Civil War. Major development was spurred by the opening of transit lines connecting the community with the larger city of New York to the south. The earliest rail line to run through Harlem was the New York & Harlem Railroad (later incorporated into the New York Central Railroad), which started service along Fourth Avenue (now Park Avenue) in 1837. The advent of the elevated railroads provided Harlem residents with a relatively convenient means of commuting to downtown business and commercial districts. Three elevated lines inaugurated service to Harlem between 1878 and 1880, running along Second, Third, and Eighth avenues. The elevated lines were augmented in 1904 by service on New York City's first subway line. The Interborough Rapid Transit Company's subway ran from City Hall north to the Upper West Side, splitting at 96th Street into the Broadway Line to Washington Heights and the Lenox Line through Harlem (the present route of the Nos. 2 and 3 trains).[2]

As Harlem became more closely linked to built-up parts of the metropolis, it generated interest from real estate speculators and builders. However, the entire Harlem area was not developed at one time. With the advantage of transit lines on Second, Third, and Fourth avenues, East Harlem was heavily developed by the mid-1880s, primarily with housing for working people.[3] Central Harlem was far less developed in this period; single-family rowhouses, planned for affluent middle-class families, clustered on the blockfronts between 123rd and 135th streets east of Eighth Avenue, but virtually the entire area between Park Avenue and Ninth Avenue (now Morningside Avenue) from 110th to 123rd streets remained vacant until the 1890s and first years of the twentieth century.

During the era of major development in Harlem, following the opening of the elevated lines, 125th Street began to take on the character of a regional main street. Every one of the transit lines that ran through Harlem had a station on 125th Street. By 1885, several of Harlem's important institutional, cultural, and commercial organizations had built or rented space on the street. This was especially true in East Harlem where there were several important churches, the architecturally distinguished headquarters of the Mount Morris Bank (a designated New York City Landmark), and a number of civic installations, including a post office and courthouse in a building known as Harlem Hall. East 125th Street was also lined with many tenements and flats with stores at street level.

West 125th Street was less extensively built up than the eastern portion of the street. There were several prominent corner apartment houses, a number of rowhouses, and many mid-block flats, most of which probably had stores at street level.[4] One of the largest and most prominent buildings on West 125th Street was the Hotel Winthrop located on the entire blockfront of Seventh Avenue between 124th and 125th streets, later to be the site of the Hotel Theresa. The Winthrop was a six-story brick building erected by Alva S. Walker, "one of the shrewdest real estate owners and operators in Harlem, who made a specialty of property on the corners of the principal streets."[5]

By the 1890s, extensive residential development was occurring in Central Harlem. The *Real Estate Record* noted as early as 1891 that "the remarkable increase in the population of Harlem has naturally brought with it an increase in the number of stores and business buildings."[6] However, the impact on 125th Street of this new wave of residential development was far less than might be expected. One of the few impressive buildings erected during the 1890s was the H.C.F. Koch & Co. dry goods emporium (1890) at 132-140 West 125th Street between Lenox and Seventh avenues, which was illustrated in the *Real Estate Record* article.[7] Even after the 1904 opening of the IRT, with a stop at 125th Street and Lenox Avenue, little new construction occurred, despite

the fact that, according to a 1912 analysis in the *Real Estate Record*, 125th Street was "one of the city's best-known and highest-priced arteries of trade." As the article notes, "if any New Yorker who knows his New York were asked what street, in proportion to its local prominence and its transportation facilities, presents the most unattractive, even dilapidated, appearance, he would name off hand Harlem's busiest thoroughfare, 125th street," a street, the article later notes, with "rental values out of all proportion to the character of the improvements."[8] This article was written just as the construction of the Hotel Theresa was ushering in a small flurry of new construction, much of it on the block of 125th Street between Seventh and Eighth avenues; this block of 125th Street had the highest land values because of its central location and because it was convenient to several transit lines. The Theresa was soon joined by several other significant new buildings, including the Apollo Theater (1913-14; a designated New York City Landmark), at 253 West 125th Street; the Victory Theater (1917), at 235-237 West 125th Street, and the Blumstein Department Store (1921), at 230 West 125th Street; however, even today, much of West 125th Street is lined with modest one- and two-story commercial buildings.

Gustavus Sidenberg and the Construction of the Hotel Theresa[9]

Gustavus Sidenberg, the builder of the Hotel Theresa, acquired the site in 1892 when he purchased the Hotel Winthrop from Alva and Elizabeth Walker. An additional twelve feet, six inches on 125th Street was acquired from the Walkers in 1892 and fourteen feet on 124th Street was purchased in 1895 from the Union Dime Savings Institution. Sidenberg apparently continued to maintain the Winthrop until 1911 when it was announced that he had leased the property to department store proprietor L.M. Blumstein. In February 1912, the *New York Times* published a drawing of the Renaissance-inspired facade of the planned nine-story commercial building that the architectural firm of Buchman & Fox had designed for Blumstein to replace the Winthrop.[10] However, shortly after the announcement of the Sidenberg-Blumstein partnership, the arrangement unraveled, for less than two months later the *Evening Mail* announced Gustavus Sidenberg's plans for the "first big hostelry erected in the upper part of the city."[11]

Gustavus Sidenberg (1843-1915) was born in Breslau, Germany, and moved to America with his family in 1853. The family settled in New Bedford, Massachusetts, where, in 1858, Gustavus began work in a dry goods store. Moving to New York, Sidenberg took several jobs before establishing the firm of G. Sidenberg & Co. in 1863. This firm, organized by Gustavus and his brother William, initially manufactured ladies collars, but soon branched out into lace importing.[12] In the late 1890s, Sidenberg retired from this firm, purchased a seat on the New York Stock Exchange, and established the banking brokerage house of Sidenberg & Kraus.[13] For two decades, beginning in 1892, Sidenberg maintained the Hotel Winthrop, finally demolishing the old structure in 1912 and replacing it with "Harlem's first great hotel."[14] Besides being a major speculative financial venture on Sidenberg's part, the hotel project was also a memorial to his recently deceased wife Theresa Sidenberg (1848-1910).[15]

The Theresa was planned primarily as an apartment hotel.[16] Apartment hotels (often referred to as "family hotels") were hotels with suites that catered primarily to long-term guests, many of whom maintained their permanent residences in the building. Apartment hotels first became popular in the late 1880s and 1890s, especially on the Upper West Side, and they continued to be built through the 1920s. These buildings combined the amenities of a hotel with the privacy of an apartment. Each suite in an apartment hotel such as the Theresa consisted of one or more rooms with a private bath, but without a full kitchen. Instead, residents could take their meals in the hotel's dining room or have meals delivered to their private suites. As the hotel was readied for opening, *Harlem Magazine* commented on the inviting atmosphere of the Theresa, noting that it would possess "the varied comforts and conveniences of an up-to-date hostelry, with all the seclusion of home life."[17]

The thirteen-story Hotel Theresa was planned with 300 guest rooms, arranged primarily in suites of one room and bath, two rooms and bath, and

three rooms with two baths. One hundred rooms were reserved for transient guests (not all had baths), while the others were to house permanent and long-term residents. All rooms had windows looking out onto the street. The main dining room, with seats for 272 people, was housed on the top story, in a grand, double-height space with an ornate plaster ceiling. In addition, there were smaller dining rooms for private dinner parties. Since the Theresa was the tallest building in Harlem, diners had magnificent views of Harlem, the New Jersey Palisades, and Long Island Sound. The Theresa was planned with its main entrance in the center of the Seventh Avenue frontage, with stores occupying the remainder of the street-level space. Original commercial lessees included a dairy, a delicatessen, a tailor, and a barber.[18] The entrance lobby consisted of a space thirty by thirty-five feet with a marble staircase leading to the main lobby on the second story. In addition to the lobby, with its comfortable chairs and hotel desk, the second story contained offices, waiting rooms, a ladies' parlor, and a smoking room.[19]

The Hotel Theresa opened in 1913 and immediately began to house both permanent and transient guests. The 1915 New York State Census lists 193 people living in the hotel.[20] This included single people, couples, and families, many of whom were permanent residents. Among those listed were Thomas M. Lenehen, the manager of the hotel, and thirty-six hotel employees, mostly women: fifteen chamber maids, nine waitresses, eight laundresses, two bakers (male), a housekeeper, and a porter (male).[21] All of the residents of the hotel and all of the live-in servants were white, despite the fact that at the time the Theresa opened, Harlem's African-American population was rapidly growing, especially in the area to the north of 125th Street. In 1914, Harlem had approximately 50,000 black residents.[22] The Theresa, like many other early twentieth-century Harlem institutions, had a strict policy of segregation.[23] It was not until 1940, long after Harlem had become New York's most prominent African-American community, that the whites-only policy ended at the Theresa. (See below.)

George & Edward Blum and the Design of the Hotel Theresa[24]

For his new Harlem hotel, Gustavus Sidenberg commissioned a design from George & Edward Blum, an architectural firm that was only four years old, but which had already designed some of New York City's most interesting apartment buildings. This was the firm's first building in Central Harlem (in 1915, the Blum firm designed the St. Nicholas Baths, at 27 Lenox Avenue at 112th Street; demolished), its only commission from Sidenberg, and one of its two hotels (in 1927 the firm designed the Hotel Piccadilly on West 45th Street; demolished).

Little is known about the lives of either George or Edward Blum. The brothers were of French ancestry and each spent a significant part of his childhood in France. George Blum (1870-1928) was born in New York two years after his parents arrived in America. However, by 1876, the family was back in France, where Edward Blum (1876-1944) was born. The Blums returned to New York in 1888. The details of George Blum's early education are not known; however, Edward Blum is known to have graduated from Columbia College in 1899, with a Bachelor of Science Degree in architecture. In 1901 Edward matriculated at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris; three years later, George Blum followed his brother to the Ecole. Neither brother studied at the Ecole long enough to receive a diploma. Edward probably returned to New York around 1905, while George may have stayed in France until 1908. By the following year, the firm of George & Edward Blum appears in city directories. This coincides with its earliest known commissions. Over the next twenty years, the firm was responsible for at least 120 apartment houses, as well as many garment-industry loft buildings, a few town houses, a number of synagogues, and several other structures.

The finest works of the Blum firm are undoubtedly the apartment houses. At the time the Blums opened their office, the construction of this building type was increasingly popular. George & Edward Blum was among several firms that gained prominence by specializing in the design of apartment houses. Most of the Blums' contemporaries created rather traditional French

Beaux-Arts and Italian Renaissance-inspired buildings, decorated with conventional mass-produced ornament applied to the facade. In contrast, the Blums created a singular group of buildings that combined the rectilinear massing common to New York apartment buildings with an unusual ornamental vocabulary that is fully integrated into the design. In 1912, the Blum firm was commissioned to design eight major apartment buildings. The Hotel Theresa was also designed in 1912, and, while not strictly speaking an apartment building, the design of the hotel closely resembles that of contemporary apartment houses by the Blum firm.

The Hotel Theresa is an example of the Blums' inventive use of terra cotta. Terra cotta was an extremely popular material for ornamental detail on early twentieth-century apartment houses. However, unlike many other apartment house architects in New York, the Blum firm did not purchase stock terra-cotta pieces; rather, it commissioned individually-designed terra-cotta decorative forms with a distinctive aesthetic. The Theresa is one of about a dozen buildings designed by the Blum firm between 1910 and 1913 with facades faced with white or beige terra cotta and matching brick. The hotel is faced with white brick, highlighted with white terra-cotta panels, spandrels, window enframements, and pediments. All of the terra cotta was manufactured by the New Jersey Terra Cotta Company of Perth Amboy. The terra cotta employed on the Theresa includes both smooth glazed pieces and mottled blocks designed to resemble rusticated stonework (these appear on the second story and on the beltcourse that separates the second and third stories).

For its most distinctive buildings, the firm designed terra cotta that is relatively flat, with ornamental patterns created by the overlapping of decorative elements molded in low relief. In many cases the various elements that make up the ornament on a facade appear to be quite simple, but they are arranged and rearranged in such a way as to create complex decorative schemes. At the Theresa, the pattern of facade ornamentation is created by the use of narrow bands that form geometric shapes -- notably diamonds, triangles (often formed by zigzag bands), squares, hexagons, and octagons. The apparent simplicity of the geometry is quite deceptive, since these bands overlap in unexpected ways, forming shapes of different sizes and on different planes. This is especially evident on the rectangular spandrel panels located on the projecting bays of the Theresa. Here the flat bands create diamonds of at least five different sizes, some projecting and other receding from the plane of the facade. Often the firm employed virtually identical shapes to create differing effects. This can be seen by comparing the rather flat geometric grid set within the squares on the beltcourse running between the second and third stories, with the virtually identical grids on the far more three-dimensional squares that appear on the upper floors.

Besides using terra cotta in a novel manner, the firm also experimented with designing buildings without the traditional metal or terra-cotta cornice found on most contemporary buildings. At the Theresa, the roofline is marked by four enormous flat-topped pediments. This extremely unusual rooftop silhouette had been used by the Blum firm a year earlier in its designs for the Oxford Hall and the Cambridge Hall, a pair of apartment houses located at 454 and 456 Riverside Drive, just north of West 116th Street (the pediments have been removed from those buildings). Just before the firm received the commission to design the Theresa, the Oxford Hall and the Cambridge Hall were awarded an honorable mention for apartment house design from the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. This award may have inspired the similar rooftop form at the Theresa.

The Theresa remains one of the most visually striking structures in northern Manhattan because of its location, height, distinctive design forms such as projecting bays, arched surrounds, and prominent gables, and extensive and inventively-used terra-cotta ornament.

"The Waldorf of Harlem"[25]

In 1940, long after Harlem had become a predominantly African-American community, the Hotel Theresa finally dropped its policy of discrimination. Several years later *Ebony* reported that "the change to Negro residents was made in 1940 after vain attempts by the management to

maintain the Theresa as white despite the changing character of the neighborhood. After huge financial losses for a number of years, the owner capitulated."[26] At that time, the building was still owned by the estate of Gustavus Sidenberg. The estate retained ownership until 1948; from that date until its sale in 1966 and conversion into an office building, the hotel had a series of corporate owners, all of whose principals were white.

Almost immediately following the change in racial policy, the Theresa became the "most famous Negro hotel in [the] nation."[27] The hotel's owners installed a African-American manager and the establishment began to cater almost exclusively to a black clientele.[28] Since the Theresa was the largest hotel in Harlem and one of the few hotels in New York City that welcomed black guests, it soon became a major social center for Harlem; in fact, the hotel became known as the "Waldorf of Harlem." The most extensive discussion of the hotel as the "social headquarters of Negro America" is the article published in the sixth issue of *Ebony*, in April, 1946. *Ebony* recorded that to the Theresa's "registration desk flock the most famous Negroes in America. It is the temporary home of practicably every outstanding Negro who comes to New York." Among those who frequented the Theresa were Joe Louis and other big time fighters, "Rochester and the Hollywood contingent," bandleaders, educators, writers, and business and labor leaders, as well as Grace Johnson, the widow of novelist James Weldon Johnson, and Florence Murray, editor of the *Negro Yearbook*, whose permanent homes were in the hotel. Eight years later, *Hospitality*, the official magazine of the Nationwide Hotel Association, an organization of hotels and resorts that catered to African-Americans, wrote that "the Theresa has become the outstanding hotel for minorities in the country. It is the mecca for leading figures in the theatrical, sports, fraternal, political and society fields." An especially favored destination within the hotel was the Theresa's bar which was managed by former big-band leader Andy Kirk; many of Harlem's most famous residents and visitors came to this place where, according to African-American journalist James Hicks, "everybody was hanging."[29] The Theresa was popular despite the fact that it was somewhat run down; *Ebony* noted that "with its dimly lit hallways, drab colorless bedrooms, dingy ancient furnishing, and limited room service, the Theresa is anything but a first-rate hotel. But it is the best that Harlem has."[30]

Besides serving Harlem's black community as a hotel and an important social center, the Theresa also housed several important community institutions. For example, the Theresa was home to the March on Washington Movement, founded by A. Phillip Randolph. This World War II-era organization sought an end to discrimination in industry, job training, government service, and the military. When the March began having financial problems, its treasurer, Aldrich Turner, suggested that part of the headquarters space in the Theresa be converted into a bookstore. The March Community Bookstore stocked current titles in all fields, but "a most important feature of the stock [was] the large body of literature, both past and present, regarding the Negro."[31] By the 1960s, several of the lower floors had been converted into offices. Just before its conversion into the Theresa Towers, five floors of the hotel served as offices for HARYOU-ACT, an anti-poverty project headed by black educator Kenneth Clark.[32] In 1965, the second-floor, corner office overlooking 125th Street and Seventh Avenue was the headquarters of the Organization of Afro-American Unity, founded by Malcolm X following his break with Elijah Mohammed and after his return to New York from his pilgrimage to Mecca.

The Hotel Theresa gained national notoriety in September, 1960 when Cuban Premier Fidel Castro, visiting New York to speak at the United Nations, decided to move his country's delegation into the Theresa.[33] The Cubans occupied forty suites on three floors of the hotel, with Castro housed on the ninth floor. According to the *New York Times*, Castro decided to stay in Harlem because of "the belief that Negroes would be more sympathetic to the Cuban revolutionaries."[34] Although some anti-Cuban demonstrators appeared outside of the Theresa, Castro was greeted nightly by huge crowds of supporters on 125th Street. During his stay at the Theresa, Castro met with black reporters, had dinner with members of the Theresa's staff, and received visits from Malcolm

X, poets Langston Hughes and Allen Ginsburg, Columbia University professor C. Wright Mills, Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser, Indian prime minister Nehru, and, most prominently, from Russian premier Nikita Khrushchev (photographed giving Castro a bear hug). Castro was not the first foreign dignitary to stay at the Theresa, nor was he the last. *Ebony* reported that Haitian and Liberian diplomats favored the Theresa; following Castro's visit, other third-world leaders chose to stay at the hotel (apparently Patrice Lumumba of the Belgian Congo, now Zaire, was one such visitor).

Building Description

The Hotel Theresa is a thirteen-story steel-frame structure faced with white brick and white terra cotta. With the exception of the main entrance, located in the center of the Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevard facade, the entire ground floor is commercial. All of the original storefronts have been altered.[35] The second through ninth stories are clad in brick laid in Flemish bond with deeply recessed mortar (a design motif typical of George & Edward Blum's work); these stories have extensive terra-cotta ornamentation. The four upper stories are clad primarily in white terra cotta, with small areas of brick. Each floor of the building is articulated by a row of rectangular window openings. The windows originally had multi-paned upper sash and single-paned lower sash (these have been replaced). The strong horizontal quality of these rows of windows is balanced by the presence of projecting three-sided vertical bays -- four on the front facade, arranged in pairs set near each end of the elevation, and two as end bays of the 124th Street and 125th Street elevations.

Horizontally, the building is massed with the single-story commercial base, originally separated from an ornate two-story transitional section by an iron balcony (removed). Above the third story is a six-story shaft. Another two-story transitional section is separated from the two-story crown by an iron balcony the extends across all three street facades. The ornate second story has thirteen large windows (one in the center of each of the four projecting bays, one in the vertical window band set between each pair of bays, and six in the center of the elevation), each of which is set within a round-arched terra-cotta frame ornamented with incised and zigzag detail. The narrow end windows of the projecting bays are framed by zigzag bands. Above each of these windows and above the pairs of narrow windows that flank each projecting bay are octagonal panels of terra cotta cast to resemble rough-textured stone; these also have zigzag surrounds.

Separating the second and third stories is a wide terra-cotta beltcourse consisting of a central band of rough-textured clay bordered by zigzag bands. These are interrupted by squares with central, perforated hexagons and strapwork banding. At the seven central windows and at the windows set between the pairs of bays, the beltcourse continues as the face of projecting balconies; these balconies rest on stylized concave brackets. On the third story, the windows above the balconies have complex and ornate enframements. The windows are bordered by bands of overlapping zigzags, as well as cyma moldings that form swan's-neck pediments. A cartouche, set within the arms of each swan's neck, is embellished with HT, the initials of the hotel. Resting on the pediments and cartouches are the projecting bases of fourth-story balconies.

From the fourth to the ninth story, the most ornate sections of the building are the projecting bays. Here, each central window has a large spandrel with complex diamond-shaped decorative detail. The spandrels of the narrow side bay windows take the form of the strapwork squares described above. The fifth through eighth story windows of the vertical window bands between the bays, and every other band of the central section, have modest terra-cotta spandrels and were originally highlighted by iron balconies (removed). Three-sided, terra-cotta balconies are extant on the ninth story.

The four top stories are clad almost entirely in terra cotta, most of it cast in a diaper pattern or in variations of the geometric patterns seen below. On the tenth and eleventh stories, the four projecting bays that extend from the second story are joined by six additional projecting bays. These floors are separated from the two top stories by a projecting balcony with original iron railing, that caps the lines of bays. The top story is crowned by tall flat-topped pediments. On the main

elevation, there is a pediment located near either end of the facade. The face of each pediment is extremely ornate, the most notable feature being an enormous brick and terra-cotta blind arch with an enormous cushion-like form in the center. These cushion-like forms also appear within smaller blind arches above eleven of the other upper-story windows. The windows of the upper floors are set within two-story enframements and, within each frame, are separated by metal spandrels. The exceptions are at the four vertical bands of narrow windows, each of which has a rectangular twelfth-story window and a round opening on the thirteenth story.

The elevations facing West 124th and 125th streets are similar to that facing Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevard. Each of these elevations has a projecting three-sided bay at either end, with three vertical window bands set in between. The ornate second- and third-story enframements and tenth- and eleventh-story bay only appear at the center. The rear wall of the hotel is clearly visible from the west. This facade is massed with a shallow light court in the center and is articulated by windows and fire doors. The rear elevation is faced with beige brick. Terra-cotta ornament is limited to a narrow vertical band at either end of the facade and a coping band along the edge of the rooftop pediments. White brick trim appears around the windows of the two upper floors. The rear wall still bears a painted sign advertising the Hotel Theresa.

Later History[36]

By the mid-1960s, the Theresa had seriously deteriorated. The owners put little money into modernizing or up-grading the hotel facility which, even during Fidel Castro's visit, had been described as "smudgy" and "dowdy." A new corporation acquired the building in 1966 and began the conversion of the hotel into a modern office building known as Theresa Towers. While initially the new owners considered stripping the masonry facade and replacing it with glass and aluminum, they decided instead to alter the interior while keeping the historic exterior largely intact. The converted building opened in 1970, with tenants that included the State University of New York (which leased five floors for its Urban Center in Manhattan), Harlem-Dowling Children's Service (a branch of the Spence-Chapin Adoption Agency), the City Agency for the Aged, and various lawyers, doctors, accountants, and other local professionals. The building continues to serve the Harlem community as an office building with stores at street level.

Report prepared by
Andrew S. Dolkart
Landmarks Consultant

NOTES

1. Sources for Harlem's history and development include Col. A.B. Caldwell, *A Lecture: The History of Harlem* (New York: Small Talk Publishing Co., 1882); "Harlem Supplement," *Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* 18 (Nov. 7, 1891); *Harlem of To-Day* (Harlem: The Businessmen of Harlem, c.1894); James Riker, *Revised History of Harlem* (New York: New Harlem Publishing Co., 1904); and Gilbert Osofsky, *Harlem: The Making of a Ghetto* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971).

2. Service was inaugurated on the Lenox Avenue portion of the new subway system on November 23, 1904; see Joseph Cunningham and Leonard O. Dehart, *A History of the New York City Subway System, Part I: The Manhattan Els and the I.R.T.* (New York: privately printed, 1976), 28.

3. Building in East Harlem included a substantial number of dumbbell tenements, as well as some rowhouses. There were also a significant number of factories, primarily along the Harlem River waterfront. *Robinson's Atlas of the City of New York* (New York: E. Robinson, 1885) presents an accurate illustration of the extent of construction in Harlem by the mid-1880s.

4. The large apartment houses were the Berkshire on the southeast corner of Eighth Avenue, and the Eiselben and Beverly, on the southwest and northwest corners of Sixth Avenue.

5. "Harlem's New and Palatial Hotel," *Harlem Magazine* 1 (April, 1913), 12. Walker acquired the property in 1885, the same year that construction began. Designed by Theodore E. Thomson, an architect who maintained his office on 125th Street and Eighth Avenue, the Winthrop was a stylistically conservative building designed with the Italian Renaissance massing that had been popularized for hotel design in the 1850s. A photograph of the Winthrop was publishing in "$500,000 Business Building Planned for 125th Street," *New York Times*, Feb. 4, 1912, VIII, 2 and a drawing of the establishment is printed in *Harlem of To-Day*, 33. Both of these views indicated that the entrance was in the center of the long Seventh Avenue frontage and that the hotel had shops on the ground floor.

6. "Harlem Supplement," 9.

7. The "Harlem Supplement" illustration is a drawing of the original four-story building. A drawing of Koch & Co. with the two-story addition of 1893 is in an advertisement printed in *Harlem of To-Day*, 1, with the caption, "the largest house of its kind in New York (above 23rd Street)." The building is extant, although the street level has been altered.

8. "Rentals and Freehold Values in 125th Street," *Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* 90 (Sept. 28, 1912), 561.

9. Major sources for Sidenberg and the construction of the Hotel Theresa include, "Big Hotel For Harlem," *Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide* 90 (Dec. 14, 1912), 1118; "Harlem's New and Palatial Hotel," 11-12, 32; "Hotel Theresa a Success" *Harlem Magazine* 1(Dec., 1913), 21-23; John W. Leonard, ed., *Who's Who in New York City and State*, 3rd ed. (New York: L.R. Hamersly & Co., 1907), 1184; and New York City Department of Buildings, New Building permit No. 254-1912.

10. "$500,000 Business Building Planned for 125th Street," *New York Times*, Feb. 4, 1912, Sect. 7, p. 2.

11. "12-Story Hotel for Harlem," *Evening Mail*, March 21, 1912.

12. The firm of G. Sidenberg & Co. first appears in the 1863-64 New York City directory. For a year the company was located at 413 Broadway, before moving to 345 Broadway. The 1870 New York City directory lists Gustavus and William Sidenberg, and two other brothers, Henry and Richard, at 305 Canal Street/49 Howard Street, a large building at the corner of Mercer Street. By 1880 the firm had moved to 49 Mercer Street, a cast-iron building erected in 1872-73 and now located within the SoHo Cast-Iron Historic District (the business was listed as "rufflings" -- apparently relating to ruffs, or stiff collars). By 1895, the firm had branched out into laundry, with this business at 136 Mulberry Street. By 1905, G. Sidenberg & Co. had moved to 477 Broadway, a cast-iron building from 1869-70, also within the SoHo Cast-Iron Historic District, moving again by 1910 to 116 Fifth Avenue, at West 17th Street, a building erected in 1909 and now located within the Ladies Mile Historic District (in this year G. Sidenberg & Co. is listed as "importers laces, white goods, ladies neckwear, collars, etc.").

13. "Harlem's New and Palatial Hotel," notes that Gustavus retired from the lace firm in 1895, while the biography in *Who's Who In New York City and State* states that he retired in 1902. City directories continue to list Sidenberg in the collar and lace business through 1898; in 1899 he first appears as a broker.

14. "Harlem's New and Palatial Hotel," 11.

15. A memorial tablet was erected in the hotel. This plaque is illustrated in "Hotel Theresa a Success," 22. Following his first wife's death, Sidenberg married again; his second wife was also named Theresa (she died in 1943). The second Theresa Sidenberg is mentioned in Gustavus' will. She is also mentioned in "Mrs. Sidenberg Robbed," *New York Times*, Jan. 29, 1913, p. 1.

16. For a detailed discussion of the development of the apartment hotel, see "The Architectural Development and Character of Multiple Dwellings: Apartment Hotels," in New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District Designation Report*, section written by Michael Corbett (New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, 1990), 52-54.

17. "Harlem's New and Palatial Hotel," 12.

18. Ibid., 12, 32.

19. The demand for rooms at the Theresa was so great that in 1917 George & Edward Blum moved the hotel's office, lobby, and lounging rooms to street level, replacing former commercial space. A mezzanine was to be constructed in the new lobby for a barber shop, public toilets, and a small office. The old lobby space on the second floor was to be converted into five new rooms with three baths. See "To Remodel Harlem Hotel," *New York Sun*, Feb. 24, 1917, and New York City Department of Buildings alteration permit No. 480-1917.

20. The 1915 census is probably not a wholly accurate list of residents, since those who were not home when the census delineator visited the Theresa may not have been listed.

21. Thomas Lenehen lived in the Theresa with his wife and two children. He had previously been the manager of the Hotel Winthrop, the Theresa's predecessor.

22. Osofsky, 105.

23. Osofsky, 121, notes that the Koch department store tried to ignore the increasingly black character of Harlem's population, treating black customers in a discourteous manner until the store closed in 1930. The Blumstein store refused to hire African-American staff members until 1930, and then only for the most menial positions. A boycott by local black residents finally persuaded the Blumstein firm to change its policy. In addition, many white churches and clubs refused to admit black members; these organizations finally disbanded or relocated, selling their buildings to African-American organizations. An example is Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, a white congregation, which sold its church complex on Lenox Avenue and West 122nd Street to St. Martin's Episcopal Church, a black congregation, in 1928.

24. This section is based on Susan Tunick and Andrew S. Dolkart, *George & Edward Blum: Texture and Design in New York Apartment House Architecture* (New York: Friends of Terra Cotta, forthcoming).

25. The major source for the Hotel Theresa as a social center is Jervis Anderson, *This Was Harlem: A Cultural Portrait 1900-1950* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1981). Other sources dealing with the Hotel Theresa include "The Waldorf of Harlem," *Ebony* 1 (April, 1946), 8; "The Presidents' Corner," *Hospitality* 1 (Feb. 1954), p. 4; George Haefer, *The Sound of Harlem* [record album notes] (New York: Columbia Records, 1964); and William Miles, *I Remember Harlem, Part Three: Toward Freedom 1940-1965* (WNET documentary film, 1980). The Commission would like to thank Sandra Griffin, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Landmarks Harlem, Inc., for her contribution to this section of the report.

26. "The Waldorf of Harlem."

27. Ibid.

28. The first black manager was Walter M. Scott. In the 1950s, the manager was William Harmon Brown (his son Ron Brown, later to become chairman of the Democratic Party, and then Secretary of Commerce in the administration of President William J. Clinton, spent several years of his youth here). The hotel's last manager was Love B. Woods, who, according to the *New York Times* ("Harlem's Theresa Hotel Thriving In Office Role," Oct. 8, 1970, p. 94) tried unsuccessfully to buy the Theresa and preserve it as a hotel.

29. James Hicks' reminiscences are a part of *I Remember Harlem*.

30. "The Waldorf of Harlem."

31. A detailed history of the founding of the bookstore is provided in "The March Community Bookstore," *The Negro History Bulletin* 12 (Mar., 1949), 137-138.

32. HARYOU-ACT stood for Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited-Associated Community Teams. It was organized during the Kennedy administration, but then became part of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society program, funded through the Office of Economic Opportunity. The organization, initially run by black psychologist and educator Kenneth Clark, established preventive programs aimed at reducing the number of unemployed young people in Harlem. HARYOU-Act hoped to totally reorganize Harlem's public schools and establish a series of 40 preschool academies. When Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., demanded the President Kennedy give him "a piece of the action," Clark resigned in protest. See Nicholas Lemann, *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How it Changed America* (New York: Knopf, 1992) 128.

33. Castro and his entourage initially settled into the Shelburne Hotel on Lexington Avenue, but after complaining about ill treatment at the Shelburne (the hotel had apparently demanded an exceptionally large deposit), Castro moved his entire party to the Theresa. Castro's visit to the United Nations and his move to the Hotel Theresa received a great deal of publicity in the New York newspapers. See, for example, "An Evening on the Ninth Floor," *New York Post*, Sept. 20, 1960, p. 3; "Angry Castro Switches Hotels," *New York Times*, Sept. 20, 1960, p. 1; "Russian Goes to Harlem, Then Hugs Cuban at U.N.," *New York Times*, Sept. 21, 1960, p. 1; "Theresa Hotel On 125th St. Is Unruffled by Its Cuban Guests," *New York Times*, Sept. 21, 1960, p. 16; "Cubans Pay Bill in Cash," *New York Times*, Sept. 29, 1960, p. 15. The *New York Amsterdam News* gave surprisingly little coverage to Castro's visit; the only major article is "Castro Leaves an Unruffled Harlem," Oct. 1, 1960, p. 1. National magazines gave some attention to the visit; see, "Boorish Odyssey of K's Man From Havana," *Life* 49 (Oct. 3, 1960), 28-29; "Manhattan Follies," *Newsweek* 56 (Oct. 3, 1960), 24; "Diplomacy Flight to Harlem," *Time* 76 (Oct. 3, 1960), 16.

34. "Angry Castro Switches Hotels."

35. Alteration permits on file at the New York City Department of Buildings indicate that new storefronts began to be installed as early as 1916.

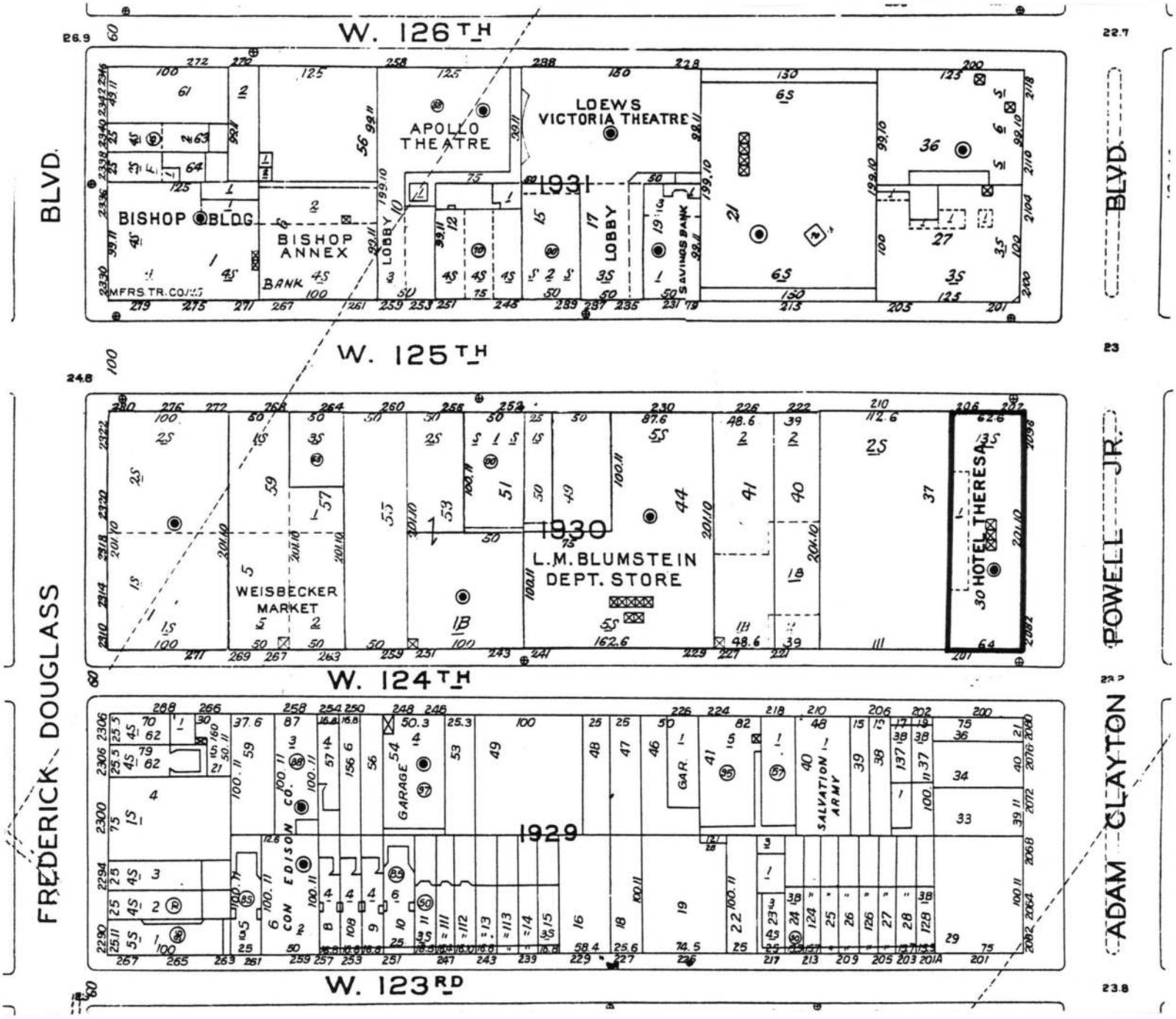
36. This section is based on accounts in "To Make Office Bldg. Of Theresa," *New York Amsterdam News*, Aug. 20, 1966, p. 1; "Harlem Hotel to Get a New Look," article dated Sept. 25, 1966 in Schomburg Library "Scrapbook"; "News of Realty," *New York Times*, Feb. 24, 1968, p. 56; "Harlem's Theresa Hotel Thriving in Office Role," *New York Times*, Oct. 8, 1970, p. 49.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Hotel Theresa 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 Hotel Theresa, built in 1912-13, is significant in the history of Harlem, America's most prominent African-American community, as one of the most important social centers of that community; that it is a major work by the noted architectural firm of George & Edward Blum, exemplifying this firm's singular approach to ornamentation and inventive use of terra cotta; that the hotel, known as the "Waldorf of Harlem," was a center for African-American celebrities during the 1940s and 1950s, hosting many of the most prominent black social, political, entertainment, and sports figures; that the hotel housed the offices of important Harlem institutions including the March on Washington Movement and Malcolm X's Organization of Afro-American Unity; and that the Theresa is one of the most visually striking structures in northern Manhattan with its projecting bays, arched surrounds, and prominent gables.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Hotel Theresa, 2082-2096 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevard (Seventh Avenue), Borough of Manhattan, and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1930, Lot 30, as its Landmark Site.



Hotel Theresa (now Theresa Towers)
2082-2096 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd., Manhattan

Landmark Site: Manhattan Tax Map Block 1930, Lot 30

Graphic Source: *Sanborn Manhattan Land Book*, 1988-89.



Hotel Theresa (now Theresa Towers)
2082-2096 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd., Manhattan

(Photo: Carl Forster, LPC)



Hotel Theresa (now Theresa Towers)
2082-2096 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd., Manhattan

(Photo: Carl Forster, LPC)





Hotel Theresa
Details, window bays

(Photo: CF)





Hotel Theresa
Details, upper stories and pediment

(Photo: CF)