

## **MORRIS B. SANDERS STUDIO & APARTMENT**

219 East 49<sup>th</sup> Street, Manhattan. Built 1934-35; Morris B. Sanders, architect.

Landmarks Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1323, Lot 10.

On October 30, 2007, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Morris B. Sanders Studio & Apartment and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 10). The hearing had been advertised in accordance with provisions of law. A representative of the owner spoke in opposition to designation. Two witnesses spoke in favor of designation, including representatives of the Historic Districts Council and the Landmarks Conservancy. In addition, the Commission received three letters in support of designation, including one from Manhattan Community Board Six.

### Summary

Morris B. Sanders, Jr. designed and built 219 East 49<sup>th</sup> Street in 1934-35. Located in the Turtle Bay section of Manhattan, between Second and Third Avenues, this building was one of the earliest structures in New York City to adapt the aesthetic principles pioneered by Le Corbusier and other European modernists starting in the 1920s. Whereas the nearby Lescaze House, considered to be the first truly modern-style residence in New York City, was built on East 48<sup>th</sup> Street as an alteration to an existing structure in 1934, the 5½ story Sanders Studio & Apartment was an entirely new structure. Planned with two duplex apartments and an office for Sanders on the first floor, the upper stories are cantilevered and clad with blue glazed brick and several types of glass. There is hardly any ornament, no stoop to ascend, and the entrance is set at a slight angle to the street. This level, in contrast to the floors above, is faced with white marble and features a curved, waist-high planting bed. The upper stories juxtapose solids and voids, alternating recessed balconies with rear walls of clear glass and glass-block windows. At the time of completion, 219 East 49<sup>th</sup> Street was received favorably. The Architectural League of New York City awarded the project a silver medal for domestic architecture in 1935, applauding the architect's "fresh and modern use of glazed brick and glass brick and a harmonious color scheme." Articles devoted to the house were also published in London's *Architectural Review* and the *Architectural Forum*. Morris Lapidus, who collaborated with Sanders on a pavilion at the 1939 New York World's Fair, later described it as "a fine modern building, one of the first of its kind."



## DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

### Townhouses in Turtle Bay

The Morris B. Sanders Studio & Apartment is located in the Turtle Bay section of Manhattan on East 49<sup>th</sup> Street, between Second and Third Avenues. Named for a swampy cove that once existed along the East River, near 49<sup>th</sup> Street, the area remained rural until after the Civil War when townhouses and tenements began to fill the blocks east of Lexington Avenue and the sprawling rail yards connected to Grand Central Depot (1869-71, demolished). Some of these houses, such as Nos. 312 and 314 East 53<sup>rd</sup> Street (1866, both are designated New York City Landmarks), were made of wood, but most were masonry structures, faced with thin veneers of brownstone and brick. As products of speculative development, these single-family residences occupy standard twenty-foot-wide (or smaller) lots. More often than not, they were designed in variants of the classical style, with elaborate porticos and cornices, executed in wood or stamped metal.

By the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, these houses were perceived as old-fashioned. Not only was this type of decoration judged as passé but so was the use of dark stone and floor plans that emphasized the second (or parlor) floor. Attempts to update the New York townhouse began during this period, first, through new construction, distinguished by limestone or marble elevations, but also in the redesign of existing structures. In some cases, alterations focused on the interiors alone, but in other instances developers commissioned entirely new facades. One of the most significant groups of houses to reflect this trend is Turtle Bay Gardens (a designated Historic District), created by Charlotte Martin in 1918-20. Located along the north side of East 48<sup>th</sup> Street and the south side of East 49<sup>th</sup> Street (slightly east of the Sanders Studio), between Second and Third Avenues, there are a total of twenty structures, dating from the late 1860s. Martin, who spent considerable time living in Rome, envisioned a shared Renaissance-style garden flanked by single-family units and apartments. Architects Edward C. Dean & William Lawrence Bottomley transformed the eastern half of the block, closer to Second Avenue, adding light-colored stucco facades embellished with straightforward neo-classical details and ironwork. Most significant, however, was the removal of the stoops, establishing street level entrances and interior layouts that set the main living areas opposite the common garden.

A significant number of Turtle Bay residents have been involved in the arts, specifically actors, authors, and architects. In 1928 the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design moved to East 44<sup>th</sup> Street, erecting an Art Deco-style atelier, as well as twin residential structures catering to students and faculty designed by Raymond Hood (all are designated New York City Landmarks). Architects who lived in Turtle Bay Gardens include the enclave's co-designer, Dean, as well as Everett V. Meeks, Dean of the Fine Arts School at Yale University, and Philip Johnson. In addition, the noted designers Mary and Russell Wright lived and worked at 221 East 48<sup>th</sup> Street, starting in 1949.

Of particular significance to Sanders was his neighbor, the architect William Lescaze, who in 1933 purchased an 1865 row house located at 211 East 48<sup>th</sup> Street (a designated New York Landmark). Born in Switzerland, Lescaze worked briefly with the French housing specialist Henri Sauvage and then moved to the United States where he opened an interior design practice in New York in 1923. It is not known what, if any, relationship they shared but it seems likely that Sanders was influenced or inspired by Lescaze's use of such self-consciously modern features as glass brick, "ribbon" windows, and a free-standing steel lally column, painted blue.

Despite such dramatic changes, Lescaze chose to retain the steep stoop, placing his office and studio at ground level and the family residence at the top of the stairs. Shortly after, he acquired 213 East 48<sup>th</sup> Street and merged the two structures.<sup>1</sup>

The Lescaze House and the Sanders Studio belong to a small group of surviving structures in New York City created by artists and architects for their own use. Combining living and sometimes professional space, they were often built as experiments or to advertise the owner's success and skill. The earliest known example is a small brick town house at 25 Harrison Street (1796-97, a designated New York City Landmark), built by John McComb, co-designer of City Hall. Subsequent examples include houses designed by and built for H. H. Richardson at 45 McClean Avenue (1868-69, a designated New York City Landmark) on Staten Island, Ernest Flagg at 209 Flagg Place (1898-1917, a designated New York City Landmark, aka Stone Court) on Staten Island, interior decorator Lockwood De Forest at 7 East 10<sup>th</sup> Street (c. 1887, part of the Greenwich Village Historic District) in Manhattan, Dwight James Baum at 5001 Goodridge Avenue (1916, part of the Fieldston Historic District) in the Bronx, and Joseph & Mary Merz at 48 Willow Place (1965, part of Brooklyn Heights Historic District). In the mid-twentieth century, both Edward Durrell Stone and Paul Rudolph transformed older houses at 130 East 64<sup>th</sup> Street (1956, part of the Upper East Side Historic District) and 23 Beekman Place (begun 1975) into memorably idiosyncratic residences and offices.

#### Morris B. Sanders (1904-48)<sup>2</sup>

Morris B. Sanders was a prominent architect and designer, based in New York City from the late 1920s through 1948. Born in Arkansas in 1904, his parents operated a successful plumbing company in Little Rock and his uncle, Theodore M. Sanders (1879-1947), studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris and worked as an architect. The Sanders family was quite comfortable; Morris attended the Phillips Academy at Andover, Massachusetts, and Yale University, graduating from the Yale College of Fine Arts in 1927. According to a 1946 advertisement, before settling in Manhattan he traveled to North Africa and studied cabinet-making in Paris. In addition, claims were later made that he “coordinated” an industrial arts exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art during 1928.<sup>3</sup> He married his first wife, the window display designer Altina Schinasi, in 1928 and a lavish, multi-page spread of their sparsely-decorated apartment appeared in *Architect* magazine.<sup>4</sup> Sanders received a license to practice architecture in New York State in December 1929. It appears that he usually worked independently, first, at 18 East 41<sup>st</sup> Street, and later, at 211 East 49<sup>th</sup> Street.

The planning of Sanders Studio coincided with his appointment as head of the art department at Shenley Liquors in April 1934, and the death of his father in February 1935. Sanders became a prominent designer, recognized for interiors and consumer goods, including ceramics, lighting, and furniture. He co-designed a pavilion for the Distilled Spirits Institute at the 1939 World's Fair, with future neighbor Morris Lapidus, as well as many commercial and residential projects, some of which appeared in *Better Homes & Gardens* magazine and other publications. During the Second World War, he worked in the consumer products division of the Office of Price Administration (OPA). He became vice president of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in the mid-1940s. *Life* magazine described Sanders as “inventive and talented” and his modular furniture, produced by the Mengel Company of Louisville, Kentucky, was exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in 1946.<sup>5</sup>

## Design and Construction

Construction of the nearby Lescaze House was completed in June 1934. Lewis Mumford, critic for the *New Yorker*, wrote:

All in all, Mr. Lescaze has done a very useful piece of individual pioneering. I should not be surprised if his ingenious treatment of plot and site started a wave of renovation of old brownstones.<sup>6</sup>

Mumford forecast correctly and when the American Institute of Architects published *A Guide to New York Architecture 1660-1952* two decades later, the architect Huson Jackson observed:

Since 1934, when Lescaze built his house, a number of other town houses of contemporary character have appeared in the east midtown area. Most are alterations of existing houses, frequently quite thoroughgoing. A few are one-family residences but most contain offices and one or more living units.<sup>7</sup>

Among the various examples cited by Jackson, four were located on East 49<sup>th</sup> Street, including works by the architects Michael M. Hare, Ronald Allwork, and Morris Lapidus. Built from 1938 to 1947, all were built as alterations to earlier structures.

The Sanders Studio was the second house constructed in New York City to adapt aesthetics promoted by the French architect Le Corbusier and other European modernists and the first built as an entirely new structure. Lescaze planned his house as an alteration, retaining the foundations and floor levels, but Sanders adopted a completely new configuration, removing the stoop and adding a fifth (and partial sixth) floor. He created an unornamented facade of alternating solids and voids that recalls some of Le Corbusier's houses of the 1920s, as well as the French architect's unrealized proposal for the Immeuble-Villas (apartment villas) at the Salon d'Automne of 1922 where each duplex apartment was expressed as a pair of rectangular elements. Juxtaposed side by side, rather than one above the other, units were designed with deep recessed patios (flanked by interior glass walls) and double-height walls of flush glass.<sup>8</sup>

In November 1934, the *New York Times* published a short description of the Sanders scheme, accompanied by a rendering. It reported that an "East Side Home" was being planned for Barbara Castleon Sanders (the architect's second wife) and was described as "one of a group of new Manhattan Houses designed in the severe modern style."<sup>9</sup> Sanders filed plans for a new building permit on October 19, 1934 (N. B. 146-34). The estimated cost of the 19 by 64 foot structure was \$20,000. Construction began in late March 1934, following demolition of a 2½ story brick dwelling dating from 1869. Saxton & Menten, Inc. served as builder. As work neared completion, in September 1935, a more descriptive article about the "Studio Residence" and its interiors appeared in the *New York Times*.<sup>10</sup> This article highlighted the extensive use of glass brick, as well as the central air conditioning system. Lescaze had been one of the earliest architects in New York City to use this material, but two recent works in Paris – the Maison de Verre (1928-32) by Pierre Charreau and the Immeuble et Apartment de Le Corbusier at 24 Rue Nungesser-et-Coli (Le Corbusier, 1931-34) – had already made extensive use of glass brick and may have been familiar to Sanders who, at the very least, visited France during mid-1930.<sup>11</sup> Le Corbusier lived in a duplex apartment in the latter building from 1934 to 1965 and like the Sanders Studio the main elevation combined projecting and recessed forms, faced mostly in glass.

The Sanders House was completed in December 1935. His studio was located at the rear of the ground floor, behind a small foyer and front reception area. It was described as "compactly

designed, with numerous cupboards providing storage space.”<sup>12</sup> Above, the next two floors were conceived as a rental duplex, and the uppermost floors, including a partial floor at the rear of the sixth story, were set aside as a seven-room apartment for the Sanders family. The three units were described as displaying “open plan interiors,” cork and linoleum floors, and built-in furniture. Shallow, covered balconies, at the second and fourth stories, adjoin the living-dining areas. The air conditioning equipment, manufactured by the Schwerin Air Conditioning Corporation, was installed in the basement.

#### Materials: Glass Bricks, Blue Bricks

Among the features that made the Sanders House most recognizably “modern” was the extensive use of vacuum glass brick on the front and rear facades. At ground level, most of the front wall was made of glass, admitting “ample light” to the architect’s office. These small bricks (about five by five inches) were manufactured by the Structural Glass Corporation and the Macbeth-Evans Glass Company, the same firm used by Lescaze. Inside the second and fourth floor balconies, larger bricks were used, framing vertical steel casement windows. Almost a foot square, this “new type” of window was larger than earlier glass brick and was supplied by the Corning Glass Company.<sup>13</sup> According to Museum of Modern Art architecture curator John McAndrew, it was the first time that brick of this size had been used and the differences in size reflect the scale of the rooms they adjoin. For instance, the living and dining areas on the second and fourth floors were designed with open plans to face walls of large glass bricks, and the smaller spaces for bedrooms on the third and fifth floors were designed to face walls combining casement windows and smaller glass bricks. Central air conditioning, Sanders believed would “eliminate the necessity for opening windows,” and except for the casement windows, most of the glazing was fixed. Street noise was, consequently, also reduced, particularly the sound of elevated trains passing along Second and Third Avenues.

Equally distinctive was the selection of dark blue brick to clad the second through fifth stories. Sanders’ choice of hue was unusual and much deeper in shade than the blue favored by the European modernists. Glazed brick, though dating to antiquity, gained significant popularity in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century when improved production techniques made it widely available to architects and builders. Associated with cleanliness and natural light, white glazed brick was initially used in hospital settings and light courts, and later in such prominent New York City landmarks as the Plaza Hotel (1907) and the Hotel Theresa (1912-13).

During the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, color became an important issue in contemporary architecture. Frank Koester, writing in *Modern City Planning and Maintenance* observed in 1914: “Americans prefer buildings in the natural color of their materials, our cities are practically devoid of any definite color scheme. With the use of glazed brick and tile, however, new color effects are being obtained.”<sup>14</sup> Such trends intensified after the First World War, both in the production of polychrome terra cotta and mass-produced brick facing. Designated New York City Landmarks that display strong and distinctive colors include the neo-Gothic American Radiator Building (1923-24) on West 40<sup>th</sup> Street and the Streamlined Modern McGraw-Hill Building (1930-31) on West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, both designed by Raymond Hood. Like the Sanders Studio, these towers are distinguished by a single saturated color, respectively, black brick (with gold terra-cotta trim) and turquoise terra cotta. Hood strongly believed in this approach, commenting: “It is best for the whole building to be one color . . . New York of the future, I believe, will consist of gaily colored buildings.”<sup>15</sup> The *New York Times* portrayed this development in positive terms. It blamed any “delay” to adopt his idea on cautious property

owners who hesitated “to risk anything not done before.”<sup>16</sup> In October 1927, critic H. I. Brock commented that the earlier brownstone era was monotonous and that the white fronts of the City Beautiful movement were “doomed to turn gray, then drab – eventually dust colored – in the smoke of our industries.”<sup>17</sup> Sanders certainly appreciated this last sentiment, choosing an especially dark shade (in contrast to Lescaze) that would reveal less dirt and discoloration. MoMA curator McAndrew viewed his choice in practical terms, writing that it was “suitable for the city’s sooty atmosphere.”<sup>18</sup>

### Reception

During the early 1930s, few new houses were constructed in Manhattan. Erected at the moment when the hardships associated with the Great Depression had begun to ebb, such projects were portrayed by the printed media as cause for optimism. The *New York Times* published two articles on the Sanders Studio, emphasizing the materials and how technology was integrated throughout the interiors. Other than observing that the “severe straight lines stand out in sharp contrast to the old brownstone houses,” little mention was made of aesthetics and the design’s relationship to other contemporary works. The following winter, in February 1936, the Sanders Studio was included in the Architectural League of New York’s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary exhibition at the Fine Arts Building, also known as the Art Students League. Sanders received a silver medal in domestic architecture (no gold medal was given) for his “fresh and modern use of glazed brick and glass brick and a harmonious color scheme throughout.”<sup>19</sup>

In March 1936, *Architectural Forum* published a comprehensive article on the house. This author praised how it rises “abruptly from a stodgy row of brown-faced houses, interrupting with brutal finality the orderly sequence of uniform facades.”<sup>20</sup> More enthusiastic than the reporter from the *New York Times*, the article focused on the benefits of using specific materials and how the grids of glass bricks provided the “only decorative patterns.” *Modern Mechanix* published a brief article on the house in July 1936. This author called the exterior “impressively beautiful” and the “latest architectural miracle to be wrought by glass blocks.” Considerable attention was paid to the interiors and how Sanders combined glass walls with an open plan to create the “open spaciousness of a country manor.”<sup>21</sup>

The *New York City Guide*, prepared by the Federal Writer’s Project of the Works Progress Administration in 1939, included the Sanders Studio as an example of “interesting building design.” The author claimed that it “excites interest because of its vertical alternation of windows and open porches.” Grouped with the Lescaze and Michael Hare houses, the architects “achieve striking effects through the imaginative use of color, texture of materials, and the sequences of well-related spaces.”<sup>22</sup>

### Subsequent History

Sanders died in the building in 1948, and a year later, in August 1949, the house was sold. The current owner, Donald Wise, acquired the building in 1980. Though some newspapers reported that Sanders died of a heart attack, his neighbor and sometime collaborator Morris Lapidus, claimed it was a suicide. Together, they designed the Distilled Spirits Institute Building at the 1939-40 World’s Fair in Queens and had contemplated forming a partnership. Lapidus, who found Sanders difficult, later recalled:

I knew Morris Sanders by reputation; an enviable one for a man so young ...  
[Sanders] worked and lived in a converted brownstone on East 49<sup>th</sup> Street. He had

created a fine modern building, one of the first of its kind, with large window areas framed with blue glazed brick.<sup>23</sup>

The sole obituary appeared in *Interiors* magazine. Among his achievements, his furniture designs and his “glass and royal blue brick fronted office and home at 219 East 49<sup>th</sup> Street” were highlighted as significant.<sup>24</sup>

In the decades following the Second World War, the studio was recognized as an early and significant example of early 20<sup>th</sup> century modernism. It was placed within an elite category of Manhattan town houses and was featured in most architectural guides. Not only did Huson Jackson cite it in his modest guide for the AIA in 1952, but it was given a close reading by future *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable in 1962, who described the studio as “a good example of the modern style during its pioneering decades.” She praised the “emphasis on flat surfaces and simple geometric shapes” for being a “protest against the routine mannerisms of overworked period styles.” Lastly, she highlighted Sanders’ unusual choice of color, writing:

The preferred color for such flat surfaces in the 1930s was white, a color highly impractical in Manhattan’s soot-laden atmosphere. The architect chose instead to use blue-black glazed brick for an equally smooth but soot-resistant facade. Such hard-surfaced materials and surface sleekness particularly appealed to a period which consciously based its values on a machine aesthetic and rejected handicraft materials and effects. With its hard-machined polish, the house relies on the light and shade of its recessed balconies to give the facade its interest and drama.<sup>25</sup>

When the first edition of the *AIA Guide to New York City* debuted in 1967, the authors emphasized the building’s functional character: “A ground floor office and two duplexes, all clearly expressed on the facade. Dark glazed brick was used to fend off soot, balconies to control sunlight.”<sup>26</sup> More recent editions, such as in 2000, called the style “Modernist,” with comments on the design’s “sleek modernity” and its “glistening facade enriched with shade and shadow.”<sup>27</sup>

In *New York 1930*, published in 1987, the authors placed the Sanders Studio under the category of “Bowdlerizing Brownstones.” They discussed various strategies of row house redesign from the 1920s forward, claiming that it “followed Lescaze’s formula, introducing dark-blue glazed brick in place of the usual white stucco.” They also criticized the proximity of the balconies to the street and the need to train ivy across the facade as a form of decoration. This ivy, however, appears only at the rear, facing north.<sup>28</sup>

### Description

The Sanders Studio & Apartment is located on north side of East 49<sup>th</sup> Street, between Second and Third Avenues. The main (south) facade and side facades (east and west) are five stories tall. The red brick east facade is visible in front of, and above, the adjoining building. The red brick of the west facade is only visible at the fifth story. The rear (north) facade is six stories tall and can be seen from Amster Yard, which is typically open and accessible to the public.

The ground story of the **main (south) facade** is primarily faced with white marble. The entrance, to the east, is set at an angle and has an historic door (painted red) with three square glass panels. To the east of the door is a round glass lighting fixture with metal trim and metal numbers (219) that indicate the address. Left of the door, extending to the west end of the facade, is a raised waist-high concrete planting bed, currently filled with vines. The base of the planting bed, which curves toward the door, appears to be made of non-historic red brick. The wall

behind the planter is small glass brick, about five by five inches. There is a small square window near the west edge of the glass brick wall, as well as a lally column, painted white, that rises from inside the planter to beneath the second floor. The base and underside of the second story is painted white. The second through fifth floors project over the ground story and are faced with dark blue brick. The second and fourth stories have recessed balconies with metal tube railings. The walls within each recess are painted white and incorporate a rear wall of large glass bricks that extends nearly the full width of the facade. Doors, located at the east end of the glass brick wall, connect the balconies to the apartments. The third and fourth stories are enclosed by glass walls. At the center of each wall are five vertical metal casement windows, painted red. At the very top of the facade the blue brick is laid vertically, suggesting a cornice.

The secondary facades (east and west) are faced with red brick, including the six-story rear facade. It appears that at one time these elevations were whitewashed. Each level of the **rear facade** has different fenestration. Where glass brick is used, it is small in size, like that used on the ground story of the street facade. A metal railing marks the edge of the roof. The **sixth** (top) story is divided into three sections. Vertical casement windows flank the glass brick center section. The **fifth-story window** is divided into three sections, with a pair of vertical casement windows at center. There are two windows on the **fourth story**: at left (east) is a pair of vertical casement windows, and right, a large non-historic window. To the right of the left window is a square vent. Below both windows extends a shallow open metal balcony, with railing. The **third-story** windows are similar to the fourth, however, the right (west) window is original and the left (east) windows appears to be non-historic. Below the right window, a non-historic red metal shelf supports an air-conditioning unit. The **second story** is similar to the fourth story, incorporating a pair of casement windows, a square vent, and to the right, a non-historic four-pane window. The **first story**, at ground level, is mostly obscured by a concrete block wall.

Report researched and written by:  
Matthew A. Postal  
Research Department

#### NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> *Lescaze House Designation Report* (LP-0898), (City of New York: Landmarks Preservation Commission, 1976).

<sup>2</sup> Last viewed online at Google Books, Carolyn Gray Lemaster, *A View of the Tapestry: A History of the Jewish Experience in Arkansas, 1820s-1990s*, 132, 214.

<sup>3</sup> Sanders, clipping files, Thomas J. Watson Library, Metropolitan Museum of Art. An unidentified source claimed it was the museum's first industrial design show and that Sanders created "bottles and glass, carpet, furniture and flooring for various exhibitors." He worked with George Sakier, formerly a consultant to the American Radiator Company.



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- <sup>4</sup> According to United States Census of 1930, they lived with their enfant son Raymond, as well as a servant and nurse. Sanders later divorced Altina and married Barbara Castleton by 1935.
- <sup>5</sup> Clippings from *Life Magazine* (September 23, 1946) and *Pencil Points* (September 1946), New York Public Library, Art & Architecture Division.
- <sup>6</sup> Lewis Mumford, *New Yorker* (September 1934), 101, cited by Lorraine Welling Lanmon in *William Lescaze, Architect* (Art Alliance Press, 1987), 103.
- <sup>7</sup> Huson Jackson, *A Guide to New York Architecture 1660-1952* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1952), 23.
- <sup>8</sup> A full-size model of a single unit was executed for the 1925 exposition, known as Le Pavillon de l’Esprit Nouveau.
- <sup>9</sup> “East Side Home,” *New York Times*, November 11, 1934, RE2. The earliest known mention of the project was in the *New York Times* on July 5, 1934, page 31. The article reported that Barbara Castleton Davis had purchased the site and planned to add two stories to an existing two-story building to create a pair of duplex apartments.
- <sup>10</sup> “Studio Residence With Glass-Brick Facade Nearing Completion in East 49<sup>th</sup> Street,” *New York Times*, September 22, 1935, RE1.
- <sup>11</sup> Last viewed online at [http:// Ancestry.com](http://Ancestry.com), Arrivals and Departures for Morris B. Sanders, October 1930.
- <sup>12</sup> “Morris Sanders House, New York” in *Architectural Forum* (March 1936), 159.
- <sup>13</sup> *New York Times*, September 22, 1935.
- <sup>14</sup> Frank Koester, *Modern City Planning* (1914), 164, last viewed online at Google Books.
- <sup>15</sup> Cited by Susan Tunick in *Terra-Cotta Skyline* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997), 81.
- <sup>16</sup> “Gay Buildings Seen in Artistic Trend,” *New York Times*, July 10, 1927, RE12.
- <sup>17</sup> “Color Splashes in the City’s Drabness,” *New York Times*, October 9, 1927, SM8.
- <sup>18</sup> John McAndrew, *Guide to Modern Architecture* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1940), 70.
- <sup>19</sup> “Architect’s Show Marks 50<sup>th</sup> Year,” *New York Times*, February 18, 1936, 25.
- <sup>20</sup> “Morris Sanders House, New York.”
- <sup>21</sup> “Architect Builds Modern Glass Home,” *Modern Mechanix* (July 1936), last viewed online at <http://blog.modernmechanix.com/2007/07/13/architect-builds-modern-glass-home>.
- <sup>22</sup> *New York City Guide* (Octagon Books, reprinted 1970), 211.
- <sup>23</sup> Morris Lapidus, *Too Much is Never Enough: An Autobiography* (New York Rizzoli International Publications, 1996), 118.
- <sup>24</sup> *Interiors* (September 3, 1948), 64.
- <sup>25</sup> Ada Louise Huxtable, *Four Walking Tours of Modern Architecture in New York City* (New York: Museum of Modern Art and the Municipal Art Society, 1961), 47-48.
- <sup>26</sup> *AIA Guide to New York City* (New York: Macmillian Publishing Company, 1967), 125.
- <sup>27</sup> *AIA Guide to New York City* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2000, 4<sup>th</sup> edition), 311.
- <sup>28</sup> Robert A. M. Stern, *New York 1930* (New York, 1987), 379.

## 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 Sanders Studio & Apartment 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 the Morris B. Sanders Studio & Apartment is one of the earliest structures in New York City to adapt the innovative aesthetic principles pioneered by Le Corbusier and other European modernists during the 1920s; that this 5½ story structure was inspired by the nearby William Lescaze House on East 48<sup>th</sup> Street but differs in that it was not built as an alteration to an existing town house but was an entirely new structure; that it is located in Turtle Bay and was completed in 1935 to serve as the architect's studio and home, with a rental duplex on the second and third floors; that it is a rare surviving example of a structure designed by an architect for the architect's own use in New York City; that Sanders, a graduate of Yale University, was a prominent architect and industrial designer from the late 1920s to 1948; that the street elevation is faced with industrial materials, mostly blue glazed brick and glass brick; that Sanders received a silver medal for the building's design from the Architectural League in 1935; and that this exceptionally well-preserved structure is a rare work by this architect and has been frequently cited in architectural guides to New York City.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 (formerly Section 534 of Chapter 21) 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 Morris B. Sanders Studio & Apartment, 219 East 49<sup>th</sup> Street and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Block 1323, Lot 10, as its Landmark Site.

Commissioners:

Robert B. Tierney, Chair;

Pablo E. Vengoechea, Vice-Chair

Fred Bland, Stephen Byrns, Diana Chapin, Roberta Brandes Gratz,

Christopher Moore, Margery Perlmutter, Elizabeth Ryan, Commissioners



**Morris B. Sanders Studio & Apartment**

219 East 49<sup>th</sup> Street, Manhattan

*Photo by Carl Forster*

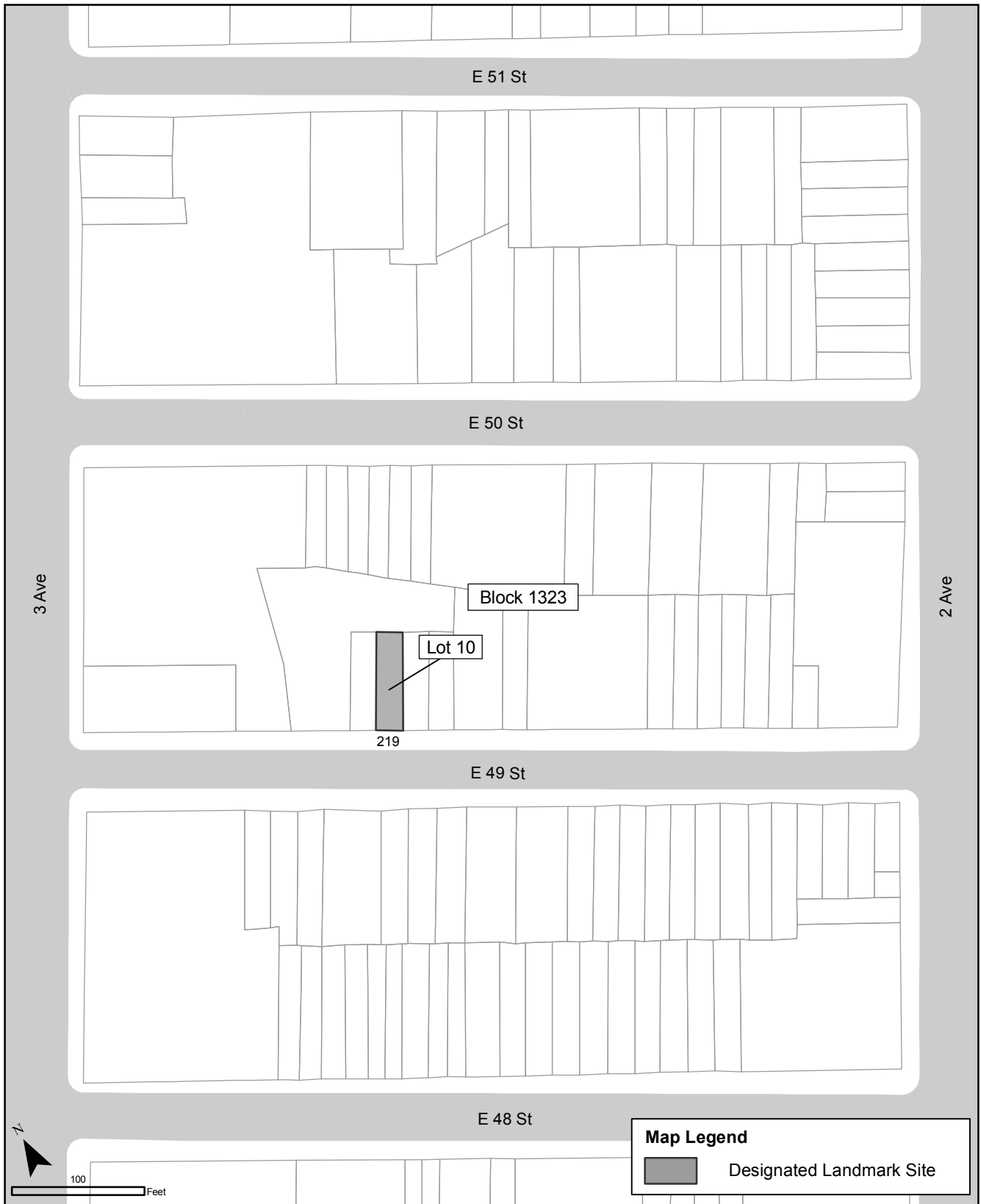


**Morris B. Sanders Studio & Apartment**  
*Photos by Carl Forster*





**Morris B. Sanders Studio & Apartment**  
Rear facade, view from Amster Yard  
*Photo by Matthew A. Postal*



MORRIS B. SANDERS STUDIO & APARTMENT (LP-2267), 219 East 49th Street.  
 Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 1323, Lot 10.

Designated: November 18, 2008

Graphic Source: New York City Department of City Planning, MapPLUTO, Edition 06C, December 2006.  
 Author: New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, JM.