

Skyscraper Up for Landmark Status

By ROBERTA B. GRATZ

The Landmarks Preservation Commission today considers landmark status for a Midtown skyscraper.

The proposal, given a good chance of passage, would mark the first time such a building has been given that designation.

In recent years, the commission has been strongly criticized for not giving landmark status to such buildings as the Empire State Building, Rockefeller Center or the Woolworth Building.

The American Radiator Building (now American Standard Inc.) at 40 W. 40th St., is the skyscraper on the agenda of the City Hall hearing.

One of the city's first modern skyscrapers, the 50-year-old building was designed by Raymond M. Hood, a top architect of the 1920s and early 1930s and designer of the New York Daily News (1930) and McGraw Hill (1931) buildings.

The American Institute of

Architects Guide to New York says: "Hood's black brick and gold terra cotta Gothic-inspired tower is the centerpiece in a row of Renaissance City buildings."

The 23-story building is being considered as part of a landmark package along with scenic designation of Bryant Park and an interior designation of the 42d St. Public Library.

At the hearing, the commission voted to designate the Dorilton at 171 W. 71st St., a 12-story 1902 apartment house, considered one of the finest Beaux Arts buildings in Manhattan.

Along with American Radiator, the commission is considering today several unusual districts and buildings:

¶ "First Houses," the eight-building low-rise public housing complex at Avenue A between 2d and 3d Streets, the nation's first public housing project when dedicated in 1934.

¶ Hamilton Heights Historic District, West 140th through 145th Streets between Amsterdam Av. and Hamilton Terrace, a community of row houses in a wide range of styles constructed between 1890 and 1915.

¶ Steinway Historic District, a factory town in Astoria with simple, well-preserved row houses built by the famous piano manufacturer in the 1870s and probably the city's first "company town."

¶ 85 Leonard St., the only known building (1861) still standing in the city designed by James Bogardus, the first and leading designer in this country of cast iron architecture.

¶ The 1898 Jamaica Savings Bank at 161-02 Jamaica Av. that is considered the finest Beaux Arts building in Queens.

¶ The turn-of-the-century Office of the Register for Queens at 161-04 Jamaica Av., a neo-Italian Renais-

sance building now housing the Jamaica Arts Center.

¶ Ocean Parkway, planned as an integral part of Prospect Park by Almsted and Vaux and whose functional separation of traffic by tree-planted malls was an important innovation in the history of American road building.

