



PRESERVATION OUTLEASING SUCCESS STORY

New Lease and New Life at the Morgan North General Mail Facility

New York, New York

THE PROJECT

The United States Postal Service owns a 10-story, 1.3 million square foot Art Deco Style building known as “Morgan North” and located at 341 9th Avenue in New York City. The building, which occupies a full city block, was built in 1933 and was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. In the early 2000s, the West Chelsea area of Manhattan—with Penn Station, Hudson Yards, and the historic High Line park a few blocks away—began experiencing a renaissance. At that time, Morgan North was not fully utilized by the Postal Service. Given the availability of space, in 2016 the Postal Service began looking for suitable tenants. In 2019, the Postal Service leased the underutilized portion of the building to New York City-based real estate development company Tishman Speyer. The long-term lease, also known as an “outlease,” includes the top six floors of the building, more than 500,000 square feet. The Postal Service will continue to occupy the basement and first four floors.

THE PROCESS

The Postal Service initiated consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) in July 2019, determining that the 99-year lease and corresponding rehabilitation was an undertaking. The Postal Service will retain ownership of the building and will meet NHPA compliance obligations. Moreover, the rehabilitation of the building will be implemented in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the recommended approaches of the National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services Branch. The Postal Service therefore found that no adverse effects to historic properties would result from the undertaking, and the New York State Historic Preservation Office concurred with the Postal Service’s finding.

THE SUCCESS

According to the *New York Post*, Tishman Speyer intends to redevelop the space into high-tech creative office spaces with a 2.5 acre roof deck, eighth floor terrace, and 5,100 square feet of retail on 9th Avenue. The lease, which is the largest outlease in Postal Service history, affords companies and the public the ability to utilize and enjoy the historic building while also preserving its historic status and allowing for long-term federal ownership.

“We finalized our commitment to redevelop Morgan North because we saw it as an ideal fit... With its dynamic West Chelsea location, authentic character and unparalleled access to collaborative indoor and outdoor spaces, we knew that Morgan North would be a major draw...”

— Rob Speyer, President and CEO, Tishman Speyer, as quoted in *New York Real Estate Journal*

Partners:

- U.S. Postal Service
- New York State Historic Preservation Officer
- New York State Office of Parks
- Delaware Nation
- Manhattan Community Board Four
- Municipal Art Society of New York
- New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
- New York Landmarks Conservancy
- Tishman Speyer

Exterior façade of Morgan North General Mail Facility (U.S. Postal Service)

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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