



## NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Robert B. Tierney  
Chairman

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Tuesday, February 12, 2013  
No. 13-01

### COMMISSION NAMES FIVE FDNY FIREHOUSES AS NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS

*Constructed in a Range of Styles during the Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries, the Buildings Reflect the Evolution of Firehouses from Simple Sheds to Imposing Expressions of New York City's Civic Character*

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission today unanimously approved the designation of five architecturally distinctive municipal firehouses that have been in continuous use since they were first built more than 100 years ago. Owned and operated by the Fire Department of the City of New York, the firehouses are located in Brooklyn, the Bronx and Queens, and were constructed at a time of unprecedented population growth and development in the neighborhoods they served.

"Each of these buildings is a clear expression of civic spirit and pride of purpose that existed at the time they were built and continue to this day in our City's municipal architecture," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. "The FDNY has done an exemplary job of protecting these structures that have a vital role in protecting New Yorkers, and we're grateful for its support of the proposals to landmark them."

"FDNY Firehouses are important symbols of bravery, safety and service in the communities they protect," said Fire Commissioner Salvatore J. Cassano, "With these latest landmark designations, the Landmarks Preservation Commission has not only recognized the beautiful architecture and rich histories of these firehouses, they've also paid tribute to every FDNY Firefighter who has called them home for more than a century."

The new landmarks include: **Engine Co. 228** at 436 39<sup>th</sup> St. in the Sunset Park section of Brooklyn and **Engine Co. 240/Battalion 48** at 1307-1309 Prospect Ave. in the Windsor Terrace section of Brooklyn; **Engine Co. 46/Hook & Ladder 17** at 451-453 E. 176<sup>th</sup> St. in the Bathgate section of the Bronx and **Engine Co. 73/Hook & Ladder 42** at 655-659 and 661 Prospect Ave. (at East 152<sup>nd</sup> Street) in the Longwood section of the Bronx and **Engine Co. 268/Hook & Ladder 137** at 259 Beach 116<sup>th</sup> Street in the Rockaway Park section of Queens.

The designations bring to 37 the total number of landmark firehouses throughout the City. Of this total, 32 are operational, while the others have been repurposed for other uses.

Descriptions of the firehouses follow below:

**Engine Co. 228**, at 436 39<sup>th</sup> St., Sunset Park, Brooklyn

Originally known as Engine Co. 28 and located off of Fourth Avenue, this two-story, midblock firehouse was completed in 1891 as part of the Brooklyn Fire Department, which was absorbed into the Fire Department of New York following the consolidation of all five boroughs in 1898. It was built during the first wave of commercial and residential development in Sunset Park, of Brooklyn's first areas to be settled.



The Romanesque Revival firehouse was constructed by William J. Moran, a successful and well-known builder in Brooklyn who helped construct the former Domino Sugar plant on Kent Avenue and the Dime Savings Bank on DeKalb Avenue in Williamsburg, both New York City landmarks. The Romanesque Revival emerged as the design of choice for civic architecture between 1885 and 1895 in Brooklyn because of its durability, brawn and restrained details. An example is the 68<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct House and Stable at 4302 Fourth Avenue, also a New York City landmark.

Framed by brownstone quoins, the façade of the modestly scaled firehouse is comprised of a large central arch, flanked by two smaller ones, all three of which are made of reddish-brown sandstone and red brick. The second story features ornamented arched windows and a denticulated frieze. The firehouse became Engine 228 in 1913 during a reorganization of the fire department.

“Engine Co. 228 retains a commanding presence that’s conveyed the reliability and strength of the FDNY for more than 100 years,” said Chairman Tierney. “It’s also an imposing showcase for an architectural style that had an important role in shaping firehouse design at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.”

#### **Engine Co. 240/Battalion 48** at 1307-1309 Prospect Ave., Windsor Terrace, Brooklyn



Completed in 1895, the firehouse originally was organized Engine Co. 40/Hook & Ladder 21 as part of a campaign by Brooklyn Fire Commissioner Frederick W. Wurster to modernize the department. It was constructed to serve the then-growing residential enclave of Windsor Terrace, located between Prospect Park and Green-wood Cemetery.

The building was designed by the noted architect Peter J. Lauritzen, a Danish immigrant who designed eight firehouses for the Brooklyn Fire Department between 1894 and 1897 before it was absorbed into the New York City fire department when the City was consolidated in 1898. His other designs include several institutional and commercial buildings, including the Offerman Building, at 503-13 Fulton St. in Brooklyn, a New York City landmark, as well as numerous residences in the borough.

Lauritzen designed Engine Co. 40 in the Romanesque Revival style, a popular design for firehouses in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Its asymmetrical façade is made of limestone and brick, and features rusticated limestone at the ground story, a richly decorated round turret and an elaborate arched cornice.

The two-story firehouse was put into service on Jan. 20, 1896 and fought its first fire nine days later. During its early years the engine company battled several major fires in Brooklyn, including one in a stable in 1897 that resulted in the deaths of 47 horses and another in Flatbush in 1899 that destroyed a fireworks company.

“This exuberant building has served Windsor Terrace with distinction for more than a century,” said Chairman Tierney. “The quality of the building’s materials, workmanship and details set it apart from the commercial and residential buildings in the neighborhood, creating a sense of civic pride.”

The firehouse was renamed Engine Co. 240 in 1913 as part of a reorganization in the Fire Department, and has since 1978 housed Battalion 48, which oversees the FDNY’s units in Park Slope, Windsor Terrace and Borough Park.

#### **Engine Co. 46/Hook & Ladder 17**, 451-453 E. 176<sup>th</sup> St., Bathgate, the Bronx

This midblock, three-story firehouse consists of two nearly identical buildings that were designed by the prominent architectural firm of Napoleon LeBrun & Sons and completed in 1894 and 1904 as the population and number of buildings increased in the neighborhood, located on a 140-acre tract owned by Alexander Bathgate, a Scottish immigrant.



Napoleon LeBrun & Sons was the official architecture firm for the fire department from 1880 to 1895, and designed 42 fire structures during that time throughout the Bronx and Manhattan as part of a campaign to modernize the force. The firm standardized firehouse design and introduced such innovations as placing horse stalls in the main part of the ground floor to reduce the time it took to hitch them to the equipment used to fight fires.

In addition to firehouses, LeBrun & Sons designed many residential and commercial buildings, including the Metropolitan Life Insurance Building and the Home Life Insurance Building, both New York City landmarks.

Engine Co. 46 is faced with brownstone and light brick with banding and consists of two nearly identical three-bay sections. The 1894 building features garlanded spandrel panels, dentiled courses, round terra-cotta medallions and a terra-cotta frieze with framed panels under a terra-cotta cornice supported by embellished scroll brackets. This design was repeated on the 1904 building.

“The buildings form an incredible composition that speaks volumes about the vital role of the Fire Department and about New York City’s commitment to providing the best municipal services possible,” said Chairman Tierney.

In addition to Engine Co. 46 and Hook & Ladder 17, the firehouses have been home to the offices of several engine and hook and ladder companies as well as the offices of the Fire Marshalls and the Bureau of Fire Communications.

#### **Engine Co. 73/Hook & Ladder 42** at 655-659 and 661 Prospect Ave., Longwood, the Bronx



Located near the intersection of East 152<sup>nd</sup> Street, the two-story Renaissance Revival style firehouse was built in 1900, during a period that saw an intense municipal building construction campaign following the consolidation of the five boroughs in 1898.

The building was designed by Horgan & Slattery, an architecture firm that was close to the administration of Robert Van Wyck, the City’s first mayor after consolidation, and won numerous municipal commissions. The firm designed many firehouses for the FDNY and stationhouses for the Police Department and was also responsible for the Hall of Records at 31

Chambers St. in Manhattan, New York City landmark and the current home of the Surrogate’s Court.

The main façade of the building is clad in orange-colored, iron spot brick, limestone and terra cotta decorative details, and features a second-story enframingent with a scrolled pediment embellished by a foliated torch.

The adjacent three-story neo-Classical style structure, which houses Hook & Ladder 42, was built in 1912 and designed by Hoppin & Koen, the architectural firm that designed the sumptuous former New York City Police Headquarters building at 240 Centre St. in Manhattan, a New York City landmark.

The Hook & Ladder 42 building features rusticated limestone cladding at the ground floor, a segmental-arched vehicle bay, red brick cladding laid in Flemish bond on the upper stories, a spandrel panel with the Fire Department's seal and monumental pilasters that supports a cast-stone entablature and brick parapet.

"These buildings have stood as dignified sentinels against fires in this neighborhood for more than a century," said Chairman Tierney. "They are excellent examples of how the FDNY was keeping up with an evolving neighborhood and its safety needs."

### **Engine Co. 268/Hook & Ladder 137** at 259 Beach 116<sup>th</sup> St., Rockaway Park, Queens

The three-story, red brick firehouse was completed in 1913 to serve the growing population along the Rockaway Peninsula resulting from transportation improvements that provided greater access to the area from the mainland.



The firehouse was built to the designs of the noted Brooklyn architect, Frank J. Helmle, who was responsible for a number of New York City landmarks, including the Boat House, the Tennis House and Willink Entrance Comfort Station in Prospect Park, a New York City scenic landmark and St. Gregory the Great, a Roman Catholic church in the Crown Heights II Historic District that was designed in the Early Christian Revival style.

Engine Co. 268 combines elements of the Colonial Revival and Arts & Crafts styles, two popular early 20<sup>th</sup> century architectural styles. The building's Colonial Revival style elements include a red-brick façade, an arched loggia and a projecting cornice, while the Arts & Crafts elements include the overall simplicity of the building's design, a diamond brick pattern at the projecting brick piers, a stepped parapet wall and ceramic shields.

The building's third-floor loggia was an uncommon feature in firehouse design that appeared around 1912, after then-Fire Commissioner Joseph Johnson ordered the addition of covered or uncovered roof gardens where firefighters could exercise. Twelve were constructed with covered roof gardens, but only three \_ all designed by Helmle\_ had covered gardens, including this one.

In addition to fighting fires, Hook & Ladder 137 also serves as a "surf rescue unit," responding to distress calls from boats and swimmers.

"This firehouse stands out not only for its architecture, but also for the extraordinary service it has provided to the Rockaway Peninsula and beyond during its 100-year history," said Chairman Tierney.

In other business, the Commission held a public hearing on a proposal to landmark the **Bialystoker Center and Home for the Aged**, an Art Deco style building at 228 East Broadway on Manhattan's Lower East Side that was completed in 1931 and designed by Harry Hurwit.

\*\*\*

The Landmarks Preservation Commission is the mayoral agency responsible for protecting and preserving New York City's architecturally, historically and culturally significant buildings and sites. Since its creation in 1965, LPC has granted landmark status to more than 30,000 buildings and sites, including 1,323 individual landmarks, 114 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks, 109 historic districts and 18 historic district extensions in all five boroughs. Under the City's landmarks law, considered among the most powerful in the nation, the Commission must be comprised of at least three architects, a historian, a realtor, a planner or landscape architect, as well as a representative of each borough.

Contact: Elisabeth de Bourbon/ 212-669-7938