



NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Robert B. Tierney
Chairman

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COMMISSION DESIGNATES A HISTORIC DISTRICT IN BROOKLYN AND THREE LANDMARKS IN MANHATTAN

Second Phase of Crown Heights North Historic District, a Federal Style Rowhouse, a Midtown Townhouse and a Multicolored Terra Cotta Loft Building in Greenwich Village, As Commission Advances 1,780 Sites Towards Designation

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission today unanimously approved the designations of the 600-building **Crown Heights North II** Historic District in Brooklyn and three individual landmarks in Manhattan, in a series of actions affecting approximately 1,781 buildings in all five boroughs.



"Today LPC not only took steps to protect more of city's history, it made history," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. "It designated, calendared or held public hearings on more buildings in a single day for the first time since the 2,020-building Upper West Side Historic District was approved in 1990," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney.

The newly designated individual landmarks are the **154 West 14th Street Building**, a c. 1913, multicolored terra cotta-clad loft building at the southeast corner of Seventh Avenue, the **Fisk-Harkness House**, a c. 1906 neo-Tudor Gothic style townhouse at 12 East 53rd

Street, and the c. 1817 Federal style **Hardenbrook-Somarindyck House** at 135 Bowery.

The Commission voted to calendar, or schedule, public hearings on two historic districts in the East Village section of Manhattan: the 300-building **East Village/Lower East Side Historic District**, and the 26-building **East 10th Street Historic District**, which runs along the northern edge of Tompkins Square Park between Avenues A and B.

Public hearings were also scheduled on a plan for a 640-building **Crown Heights North III Historic District** and proposals to landmark the first-floor lobby of the **Madison Belmont Building** at 181 Madison Ave. and the **Barbizon Hotel for Women** at 140 East 63rd St., both in Manhattan. Dates for the hearings were not immediately scheduled.

The Commission also held public hearings on proposals to landmark **four** mid-19th and early 20th-century buildings on City Island in the Bronx; **two** buildings in Brooklyn, a c. 1866 Gothic Revival style church building, now home to the **Paul Robeson Theatre** at 40 Greene Ave. in Fort Greene and the c. 1929 neo-Romanesque **East New York Savings Bank** building at 1123A Eastern Parkway in Crown Heights, **one** in Queens, the c. 1867 Italianate style **Daniel Eldridge House** at 87-61 111th Street in Richmond Hill, **one** on Staten Island, the **William T. and Mary Marcellite Garner Mansion** at 355 Bard Ave., constructed in 1859-60 in the Second Empire style; and **seven** Federal style buildings in lower Manhattan dating from c. 1800 to the 1830s.

Finally, the Commission held a public hearing on the 219-building **West End-Collegiate Historic District Extension**, one of three historic district extensions proposed for Manhattan's Upper West Side. The others are the **Riverside-West End Historic District Extension I**, with 190 buildings and the **Riverside-West End Historic District Extension II**, with 338 buildings.

Descriptions of the new historic district and landmarks follow below:

Crown Heights North II Historic District, Brooklyn



The 600-building district, bounded by Bergen Street and Eastern Parkway to the north and south, and Nostrand and Brooklyn avenues to the west and east, adjoins the existing 472-building Crown Heights North Historic District, which was designated in 2007.

The Crown Heights North II Historic District is comprised largely of rowhouses, freestanding residences and apartment houses that were constructed between the 1870s and the 1920s and designed by a number of prominent Brooklyn architects in the neo-Grec, Queen Anne, Art Deco and Art Moderne styles, as well as the Romanesque, Colonial, Gothic and Medieval Revival styles.

“The neighborhood is an exquisite mosaic of remarkably well-preserved examples of architectural styles and building types designed by some of Brooklyn’s best-known architects,” said Chairman Tierney. “It mirrors the architectural integrity, breadth and depth of the existing historic district.”

Most of the land within the Crown Heights North Historic District was part of a farm owned by the Lefferts family, who auctioned off the property as 1,600 lots starting in the 1850s. The area developed slowly until the arrival of the Kings County Elevated Railway in 1888, which accelerated the district’s transformation to an urban neighborhood.



The district’s earliest buildings, located at 1109-1117 Bergen Street (at right), date to 1876 and were designed in the neo-Grec style by E.B. Stringer. They were followed by the construction of numerous freestanding houses, including the Queen Anne style residences at 979 Park Place (George P. Chappell) and 847 Prospect Place (Albert H. Kipp) and the Romanesque Revival style house at 758 St. Mark’s Avenue (Halsted P. Fowler), all completed in 1886.

Noteworthy examples of the Colonial Revival style include 190 New York Ave., which was completed in 1896 and designed by Edward York, co-founder of the prominent firm of York & Sawyer, and a pair of spectacular Dutch Renaissance Revival rowhouses at 860 and 862 Prospect Place that feature door surrounds with large scallop shells and stepped roof gables (above).



Construction of multi-family houses started in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Some of the finest examples are three Renaissance Revival style buildings at 239 to 247 New York Ave. (at left), which were completed in 1906 and designed by William Van Alen, the future architect of the Chrysler Building.



One of the district's few institutional buildings are the Roman Catholic Church of St. Gregory the Great (c. 1917), its school (c. 1921) and rectory (c. 1922). All three were designed by the Brooklyn firm of Helmle & Corbett. An example of a basilican church based on early Christian architecture, St. Gregory's features a distinguished front portico and seven-story bell tower and was inspired by Rome's two oldest basilicas, the basilicas of San Clemente and Santa Maria.

Hardenbrook-Somarindyc House, 135 Bowery, bet. Broome and Grand streets



Completed in 1817, the 3 ½ -story, brick-clad Hardenbrook-Somarindyc House originally served as the residence of John A. Hardenbrook, a prominent soap and candle merchant who was one of the original signers of the Buttonwood Agreement, the c. 1792 pact that established the predecessor board to the New York Stock Exchange.

The 22-foot-wide rowhouse features Flemish bond brickwork, a high peaked roof with two pedimented dormers and a chimney.

“The Commission has made it a priority to protect these rare reminders of an important era of the City’s history,” said Chairman Tierney. “The Hardenbrook-Somarindyc House is one of the oldest, most intact

Federal style houses in Manhattan, and recalls the period after the Revolutionary War when the lower Bowery was the ‘it’ neighborhood in New York City.”

The building was occupied by Hardenbrook's daughter, Rebecca Hardenbrook Somarindyc until 1841, when it was converted to commercial use. Its tenants included the maker of leather products as saddles, firemen's helmets and trunks, a barber, a pawnshop, a photographer and a lighting firm. It remained in Rebecca Hardenbrook Somarindyc's family until 1941, and is currently owned by the First American International Bank.

Fisk-Harkness House 12 East 53rd Street, between Fifth and Madison



Originally completed in 1871 as a brownstone rowhouse, the five-story building was transformed into a grand, neo-Tudor Gothic style townhouse in 1906 by Raleigh Colston Gildersleeve, an architect responsible for several buildings at Princeton University and elsewhere in New Jersey. Harvey E. Fisk, a prominent banker and Princeton alumnus, commissioned the redesign after he bought the brownstone in 1905, when the neighborhood in the 50s off Fifth Avenue was known as Manhattan's most desirable residential neighborhood.

Fisk's building is one of several brownstones in the neighborhood that were substantially renovated at the turn of the 20th century, and have been named New York City landmarks in recent years. They include the Mary Hale Cunningham House at 124 East 55th St., the Edith Andrews Logan Residence at 17 West 56th St. and the E. Hayward Ferry Residence at 26 W. 56th St.

“Before it became a magnet for luxury retailers and offices, this was an exclusive residential neighborhood that attracted many of New York’s wealthiest citizens,” said Chairman Tierney. “The building vividly recalls that moment in the City’s history, and has remained in active use since then for many different purposes.”

The townhouse is clad in limestone with Tudor-arch window and door openings, and features leaded glass windows and such Gothic ornament as gargoyles, buttresses, finials, crocketed hood molding, escutcheons and crenellations.

Fisk sold his townhouse to William L. Harkness, a Standard Oil heir, whose widow sold it to an art gallery in 1922. Later occupants included the Automobile Club of America, Symons Galleries and an antiques dealer. It's currently owned by the Laboratory Institute of merchandising, a college of fashion merchandising and business.

154 West 14th Street Building, at Seventh Avenue



This eclectic, 12-story loft building was completed in 1913 to house the manufacturers and distributors of various goods and equipment. Partially clad in multicolored, glazed terra cotta, the building was constructed by real estate developer Leslie R. Palmer to take advantage of the imminent construction of a subway line beneath Seventh Avenue.

The building was designed by Herman Lee Meader, an architect who designed several other buildings in New York City that also displayed polychromatic terra-cotta ornament, including the c. 1917 Cliff Dwelling Apartments at Riverside Drive and 96th Street, completed. But the building at 154 West 14th St. is one of the first in the City to feature glazed terra cotta in hues of white, beige, mustard, cobalt blue, celadon, and green. Until then, terra cotta used to clad buildings in New York

almost always was tinted only to resemble masonry.

“The wildly colored ornament that made this building stand out nearly 100 years ago still grabs your attention today,” said Chairman Tierney.

The terra cotta used at the 154 West 14th Street Building was manufactured by the New York Architectural Terra Cotta Co., where Palmer was a director, making the building virtual advertisement for firm's products. Meader's ornamental scheme for building incorporated Secessionist, Art Nouveau, Arts & Crafts, and Mission Revival style motifs. The building also features a pink granite water table and entrance surround on 14th Street; a three-story base clad in terra cotta that's capped with a complex ornamental terra-cotta cornice and multi-pane show windows on the second story.



Aside from distributors and manufacturers, other tenants have included the Corn Exchange (later Chemical) Bank, the Postal Telegraph Cable Co. and the Works Progress Administration Cartographic and Map Making Project of the U.S. Treasury occupied three floors in 1937, producing relief maps of New York City and other countries. The building is currently owned by Abner Properties.

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 27,000 buildings, including 1,290 individual landmarks, 112 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks, 103 historic districts and 16 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.

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