



The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

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COMMISSION APPROVES PROSPECT HEIGHTS HISTORIC DISTRICT IN BROOKLYN, CITY'S LARGEST SINCE 1990, AND THREE NEW LANDMARKS IN MANHATTAN

Commission Also Acts on Proposals to Protect 1,100 Other Buildings in All Five Boroughs

The Landmarks Preservation Commission today unanimously approved the designations of the 850-building Prospect Heights Historic District, the City's largest since the 2,020-building Upper West Side Historic District was formed in 1990. The Commission also voted to designate three individual landmarks in Manhattan: 94 Greenwich Street, a 210-year-old Federal style row house, the Mount Olive Fire Baptized Holiness Church in Harlem and the John Peirce Residence, an elegant former single-family residence in Midtown.

Separately, the Commission held 18 public hearings and voted to calendar six future public hearings on proposals that, if approved, would give landmark status to approximately 1,100 buildings in all five boroughs.

"Collectively, today's actions represent the biggest single-day record of designation activity this Commission has seen in recent memory," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. "It's the culmination of the groundwork that was laid three years ago with the beginning of an exhaustive survey of 24,000 buildings across the City. I am very proud of our superb staff, our volunteer Commissioners, as well as the owners and advocacy groups for making it possible to bring these designation proposals forward. It's a great day for New York City."

The Commission voted against two proposals to give landmark status to two highly altered Federal style buildings at 94 ½ and 96 Greenwich Street.

Today's designations came at the Commission's final meeting of fiscal year 2009, which ends June 30. The votes bring the total number of designated buildings for the past 12 months to a total of nearly 1,000 buildings and sites (the highest number since 2007, when the Commission designated 1,158 buildings), including five historic districts, one scenic landmark, one interior landmark and 33 individual landmarks. Since 2003, LPC has approved a total of 11 historic districts outside of Manhattan, the highest number of any administration since the Commission was founded in 1965.

Descriptions of the Prospect Heights Historic District and three buildings that were given individual landmark status follow below:

Prospect Heights Historic District



The district encompasses 850 outstanding single-family row houses, apartment houses and several institutional and commercial buildings that were constructed between the mid-19th century and early 20th century, and designed in a broad array of architectural styles, ranging from neo-Grec to Art Deco.

“Prospect Heights is among Brooklyn’s most distinguished, cohesive neighborhoods because of its architectural integrity and diversity, scale, tree-lined streets and residential character,” said Chairman Tierney. “These features lend the neighborhood its unique sense of place, making it a natural for

historic district status.”

The district, located to the north of Prospect Park, is bounded by Atlantic Avenue to the north, Eastern Parkway to the south, Flatbush Avenue to the west and Washington Avenue to the east. The first major battle of the American Revolution, the Battle of Brooklyn, took place in the vicinity of Prospect Heights in August 1776.

Prospect Heights started its transformation from farmland and forest into a residential neighborhood in the mid-19th century. Its growth was primarily fueled by transportation improvements and the development of the 585-acre Prospect Park, which was completed in 1873.

The earliest structures in the neighborhood are two frame buildings at 578 and 580 Carlton Avenue that appear to date from the 1850s. The first groups of row houses in Prospect Heights date from the 1860s and 1870s, and were designed primarily in the neo-Grec, Italianate, Anglo Italianate or Second Empire styles, such as 123-133 Prospect Place between Flatbush and Carlton Avenues (see above).

Later row houses, constructed in the 1880s and 1890s, were designed primarily in the Romanesque and

Renaissance Revival styles, or combined elements of both. An example is the row of 22 houses at 280-322 Park Place (at right). Several buildings in the district constructed in the early 20th century feature architectural styles that were



designed to recall America’s roots at a time of increasing immigration, such as the Colonial Revival style four-story apartment building at 112-114 St. Mark’s Avenue and the Neo-Georgian style six-story multiple dwelling building at 186 Prospect Place.

While dominated by residential buildings, the district includes several institutional buildings, such as the Romanesque Revival style Duryea Presbyterian Church, designed by W.O. Weaver & Son and constructed in 1905 at 185 Underhill Avenue at Sterling Place; the grand, imposing P.S. 9 Annex at 251 Sterling Place, constructed in 1885; and the limestone-faced former Mount Prospect Laboratory at 349-355 Park Place. Built by the City in 1938 in the Art Moderne style to serve as its main water testing lab, the building is currently used as the Department of Education’s offices of Community School District 13.

94 Greenwich Street



Constructed around 1799 to 1800 at the corner of Rector Street in Lower Manhattan, 94 Greenwich Street is one of only five surviving houses of what had been the borough's most fashionable neighborhood following the Revolutionary War. The 3 ½-story building was built as an investment property by Augustine Hicks Lawrence, a banker and stock and insurance broker who co-signed the agreement that established the predecessor exchange to the New York Stock Exchange.

“This modest, remarkably intact building is a rare and powerful reminder of New York’s rebound from a devastating fire that destroyed a third of its buildings, the virtual evaporation of trade industry, and huge population losses that were brought on by the Revolutionary War and the seven-year occupation by the British Army,” said Chairman Tierney. “I’d also like to note that 94 Greenwich St. is the eighth Federal style building to be given landmark status since 2003.”

The building originally had a high-peaked gambrel roof that was removed for the construction of a full story in the mid-19th century. The outline of the original roofline is still visible on Rector Street. The building features Flemish bond brickwork and splayed brick lintels on the second and third stories of the Greenwich Street side, and marble lintels with double keystones on the Rector Street side.

The building was used as a single-family residence until 1810. Since then, it housed a boarding house for professional men, an ale house, a hotel, and numerous residential tenants on the upper floors, and commercial tenants on the ground floor. The descendants of the Lawrence family sold the building in 1921. The building has belonged to several owners since then.

Mount Olive Fire Baptized Holiness Church, 304-308 West 122nd Street, Manhattan

Located on West 122nd Street between St. Nicholas and Manhattan avenues in Harlem, the Mount Olive Fire Baptized Holiness Church was constructed in 1897 for the Second Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, an offshoot of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, which was founded in the late 18th century by Irish and Scottish immigrants who were fleeing persecution from the British government.

The one-story, beige brick building was designed in the Gothic and Romanesque Revival styles by noted architect James W. Cole, who is responsible for the Charles A. Vissani Residence at 143 W. 95th Street (an individual NYC landmark) and many commercial and residential buildings throughout the City.



The church’s symmetrical façade features pointed-arched window openings, terra-cotta ornament, stained-glass windows, crenellated brick corbelling along the gabled roofline and decorative pinnacles. An oculus filled with ribbed stained-glass windows sits above the entryway.

“The church’s façade makes a simple, but elegant statement of the purpose of the building,” said Chairman Tierney. “It projects a solid presence onto 122nd Street without overwhelming it, and reflects the distinctive of history of the institution that resides within it.”

The Mount Olive Fire Baptized Holiness Church acquired the sanctuary from the Second Reformed Presbyterian Church in 1943. The church is affiliated with the Fire Baptized Holiness Church of God of the Americas, which was established in 1898 in Mountville, South Carolina by a Methodist preacher after he received the “Baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire,” while praying in a corn field near his home.

John Peirce Residence, 11 East 51st Street, between Madison and Fifth avenues



The 5 ½ -story Italian Renaissance style residence, designed by the noted architect John H. Duncan, was built between 1904 and 1906 for John Peirce, one of the country’s largest granite contractors in the late 19th century.

Stone from Peirce’s Maine quarries was used to construct several important New York City buildings, including the Empire State Building. He also started a general contracting firm that was involved with the construction of Grand Central Terminal, the United States Custom House, the Brooklyn and Manhattan bridges and the Interborough Rapid Transit Company Powerhouse.

Peirce, a native of Frankfort, Maine, built his lavish residence at the height of his success across from St. Patrick’s Cathedral in the middle of what was once an elite residential area called Vanderbilt Row. He commissioned Duncan, the architect of Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch at Brooklyn’s Grand Army Plaza, and the General Ulysses S. Grant National Memorial.

Topped by a dramatic overhanging cornice, the building is faced with intricately carved limestone, and retains many of its original details including windows, bronze doors, keystones, wreaths and cast-iron balcony railings. The first three stories of the building are completely rusticated, while the upper floors are faced with smooth stone.

“This sumptuous, nearly perfectly intact home not only recalls a prestigious residential district, but also serves as a reminder of the enormous contributions John Peirce made to New York City’s greatest architectural works and infrastructure,” Chairman Tierney said.

Peirce lost his home to foreclosure in 1914. It was occupied by the Gardner School for Girls between 1916 and 1933, and is now the home of the Banco Mercantil de Venezuela.

The Commission held hearings throughout the day on proposals to designate the following 17 individual landmarks, including six Federal style houses, and a historic district in the Bronx:

1. The **Perry Avenue Historic District** in the Bedford Park section of the Bronx, a collection of nine, early 20th-century Queen Anne-style row houses on the northwest side of Perry Avenue between Bedford Park Boulevard and East 201st Street;
2. **The Lydia Ann Bell and J. William Ahles House** at 39-24 to 39-26 213th Street in Bayside, Queens, a Second Empire style residence constructed c.1873
3. **138 Second Avenue House** at Ninth Street in Manhattan, a Federal style, four-story residence constructed c.1832-1833 owned by the Ukrainian National Home
4. **145 Eighth Avenue**, between 17th and 18th streets in Manhattan, an intact 3 ½-story Federal style residence constructed c.1827
5. **147 Eighth Avenue**, between 17th and 18th streets in Manhattan, an intact 3 ½-story Federal style residence constructed c. 1828 adjacent to 145 Eighth Avenue.
6. **143 Allen Street House**, at Rivington Street in Manhattan, a two-story intact Federal style residence constructed c. 1831.

7. **57 Sullivan Street House**, at Sixth Avenue in Manhattan, a three-bay, wood-framed Federal style residence built c. 1816-1817
8. **177 West Broadway House**, between Worth and Leonard streets, a Federal style residence constructed c.1803-1805
9. The **Paramount Hotel**, at 235-245 West 46th St. between Eighth and Broadway, a Renaissance Revival style building built 1927-1928, designed by the renowned theater architect Thomas Lamb
10. The **Sire Building**, at 211 W. 58th Street between Seventh Avenue and Broadway, a five-story apartment building designed in the high Victorian Gothic style with and completed 1885.
11. The **Hebrew Actors' Union**, at 31 East 7th Street between Second and Third avenues, constructed in the late 19th century
12. The former **Germania Fire Insurance Company** building, at 357 Bowery, south of Cooper Square, a Second Empire style, 3 ½ story building completed in 1870
13. **97 Bowery** building, near Hester Street, a five-story Italianate commercial structure with a cast-iron façade constructed c. 1869
14. **311 Broadway** building between Thomas and Duane streets; a five-story Italianate style mercantile building constructed in 1858
15. **Ridley & Sons Department Store**, 315-317 Grand Street between Orchard and Allen streets, one of a pair of five-story, cast-iron buildings constructed c. 1886.
16. **Ridley & Sons Department Store**, 319-321 Grand Street between Orchard and Allen streets, one of a pair of five-story, cast-iron buildings constructed c. 1886.
17. **Jarmulowsky Bank**, 54 Canal St. at Orchard Street, a 12-story limestone and brick Beaux Arts style building built 1911-1912
18. **46 W. 55th Street** house, a distinguished town house between Fifth and Sixth avenues constructed c. 1869

The designation proposals that were calendared for public hearings include the **Staten Island Armory** at 321 Manor Road on Staten Island, the **Dollar Savings Bank** at 2792 Third Avenue, the **SoHo Historic District Extension** (110 buildings), the **Greenwich Village Historic District Extension II** (210 buildings) and the **Crown Heights North Historic District Extension** (610 buildings) in Brooklyn.

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 25,000 buildings, including 1,233 individual landmarks, 110 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks and 96 historic districts in all five boroughs. Under the city's landmarks law, considered 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.