The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, DEC. 16, 2008
No. 08-21

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COMMISSION LANDMARKS EAST VILLAGE CHURCH AND FORMER ENGINEERING SOCIETY HEADQUARTERS IN MIDTOWN

LPC Also Advances the Proposed Designations of Two Historic Districts and Eight Individual Landmarks Across New York City

The Landmarks Preservation Commission today voted unanimously to designate as New York City landmarks St. Nicholas of Myra Orthodox Church on East 10th Street, a brick and terra cotta building designed by the famed 19th century architect James Renwick Jr., and the former headquarters of the American Society of Civil Engineers on West 57th Street, an ornately clad structure that currently houses Lee's Art Shop, the arts supply and furniture and lighting store.

In addition, the Commission held public hearings on the proposed designations of the Ridgewood Historic District, Jamaica High School and P.S. 66 in Queens, and Grammar School No. 9 on Manhattan's Upper West Side. It also voted to schedule public hearings for the proposed landmark designations of two public libraries in the Bronx; a former brewery in Brooklyn; four former townhouses in Midtown Manhattan, a former German social club in the East Village and a historic district in Manhattan's Chelsea section known for its ties to the Underground Railroad.

"The actions taken today not only illustrate the breadth of the Commission's work, but also underscore its continued commitment to preserving more buildings and neighborhoods outside of Manhattan," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney.

Below are descriptions of the buildings that received landmark status:

St. Nicholas of Myra Orthodox Church, 288 East 10th Street, near Avenue A

Constructed between 1882 and 1883 as the Memorial Chapel of St. Mark's in the Bowery, one of the oldest Episcopal parishes in the City, the church was donated to St. Mark's by Rutherford Stuyvesant, a descendant of former Dutch governor Peter Stuyvesant, in memory of his late wife.

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The church was designed by James Renwick Jr., the prominent 19th-century architect who is responsible for many of New York City's best-known churches, including St. Patrick's Cathedral, Grace Church and St. Stephen's Church, and was built to assist the immigrant population that settled in the neighborhood in the late 19th century.

In 1911, St. Mark's rented the church to the Holy Trinity Slovak Lutheran Church, which remained there until St. Nicholas of Myra Orthodox Church, a Carpatho-Russian congregation, assumed the lease in 1925. The church is named for the Archbishop of Myra (located in present day Turkey), who is known among Catholics and Orthodox Christians as the patron saint of children, sailors, merchants and students. The congregation purchased the building from the Episcopal Diocese of New York in 1937, and continues to serve the neighborhood and parishioners.

"This lively, picturesque church has anchored the neighborhood for more than 100 years and served thousands of immigrants as they tried to adapt to their new country," Chairman Tierney said, adding that St. Nicholas is the 13th house of worship to receive landmark status since 2003 and was identified through the Commission's 2006 survey of 130 buildings in the East Village.

The brick and terra cotta Renaissance Revival-style church, features intricate trim, gothic-arched windows and a pair of ornate wooden doors topped by a stained-glass transom. The distinctive copper crosses that now crown the church were added later by the current congregation.

The Society House of the American Society of Civil Engineers, 220 West 57th St.

The four-story building, completed in 1897, was designed in the French Renaissance Revival-style design by architect Cyrus L.W. Eidlitz. It served as the headquarters of the American Society of Civil Engineers, a professional association founded in New York City in 1852 for architects and civil, geological, mining and mechanical engineers.

Clad in white glazed brick with intricately carved Indiana limestone ornament, the building is located between Broadway and 7th Avenue, a stretch of 57th Street that attracted many arts organizations in the late 19th century that constructed such noteworthy buildings such as The American Fine Arts Society Building (1891-92, Henry J. Hardenbergh), 215 West 57th Street and Carnegie Hall Carnegie Hall (1889-95, William B. Tuthill).

"Eidlitz's elegant building was regarded as a welcome addition to the streetscape when it was completed and praised for harmonizing with existing ones nearby," said Chairman Tierney. "It still retains a strong presence on the street and has been adapted for reuse by a wide range of noteworthy businesses."

The engineering society moved in 1917 to new quarters in Manhattan, but retained ownership of the building until 1966. The building was leased from 1918 to 1927 as offices and showrooms of the Ajax Rubber Co., one of the nation's leading manufacturers of pneumatic tires, and in 1927-28 as a showroom for luxury Stearns-Knight automobiles. Between 1928 and 1973, it was the location of a Schrafft's restaurant, a popular chain. In 1975, the ground story was leased by Lee's Art Shop, which purchased the building in 1994.

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The buildings that were calendared for public hearings are: the **Woodstock Branch of the New York Public Library**, 761 E. 160th St. and the **Hunt's Point Branch of the New York Public Library**, 871-877 Southern Boulevard, both in the Bronx; the **Burrill Mansion** at 36 E. 28th St., the **John Pierce Residence** at 11 E. 51st St., the **Logan Residence** at 17 W. 56th St and the **Ferry Residence** at 26 W. 56th St. in Manhattan; the **William Ulmer Brewery Complex** at 31 Belvedere Street and 26-28 Locust Street in the Bushwick section of Brooklyn and the former **Aschenbrodel Verein** (German for Cinderella club) at 74 E. 4th St., currently the home of La Mama Experimental Theatre.

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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 1,217 individual landmarks, 110 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks and 92 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.

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