



## NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Robert B. Tierney  
Chairman

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### LANDMARKS COMMISSION APPROVES WALLABOUT HISTORIC DISTRICT

*Early Brooklyn Neighborhood, Featuring One of the City's Greatest Concentrations of Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century Wood Houses, Was Home to the Nation's First Jewish Professional Baseball Player*



The Landmarks Preservation Commission today voted unanimously to approve the Wallabout Historic District, an architecturally diverse and historically significant collection of pre-Civil War residences in northwestern Brooklyn.

The district derives its name from "Waal Bogt," the Dutch appellation for the bay off the East River that was settled by a group of Walloons in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. During the American Revolution, as many as 11,000 Continental soldiers and sailors died on British prison ships anchored

in Wallabout Bay. Their bodies were either thrown overboard or buried along shore.



The district is located between Park and Myrtle avenues just south of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, which opened in 1801. It encompasses 55 wood and masonry buildings that were constructed during the mid-to-late 19<sup>th</sup> century in the Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate styles, and mainly owned by ship captains, pilots, ferry masters and boat builders.

"This district is a natural for designation because of its rich and varied architecture and strong connections to the Brooklyn Navy Yard and the city's 19<sup>th</sup> century maritime sector," said Commission Robert B. Tierney. "It also has one of the highest concentrations of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century wood houses in New York City."

More than 60 percent of the structures were built between 1849 and 1855, including the c. 1853, Italianate style residence at 123 Vanderbilt Ave. (on the left of the two buildings at right) where early baseball great Lipman (Lip) Pike grew up. He was living there when he was recruited to play for the Philadelphia Athletics, becoming one of the nation's first professional baseball players and its first Jewish professional player.



During the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the district thrived with the opening of a number of factories nearby and the rapid expansion of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, which was the largest shipyard in the world by the end of World War II, employing approximately 75,000 workers. A number of the structures fell into decline following the closure of the Navy Yard and other local industries in the 1960s, but have since been restored.

In other business, the Commission held public hearings on proposals to landmark two buildings in Manhattan: the c. 1903 Renaissance Revival style Martha Washington Hotel at 27-31 East 29<sup>th</sup>

Street and the c.1898 Beaux-Arts style former R.H. Macy & Company Store at 56 West 14<sup>th</sup> Street

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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 28,000 buildings, including 1,290 individual landmarks, 112 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks, 104 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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