



NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Robert B. Tierney
Chairman

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FIVE NEW LANDMARKS NAMED IN THE BRONX, QUEENS AND MANHATTAN

Commission Protects a Former City Island School, a Richmond Hill Villa, a Midtown Hotel, a Tribeca Office Tower and the 14th Street Annex of a Former Macy's Department Store Site

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission today unanimously approved landmark status for a Georgian Revival-style school in the Bronx, a rare Italianate-style villa in Queens, a Richardsonian Romanesque Revival-style commercial building, a Beaux-Arts style hotel and one of the annexes of a former R.H. Macy's department store complex near the corner of Sixth Avenue and 14th Street. All five were constructed in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and are significant reminders of the city's architectural and economic development at that time.

The newly designated buildings include: **Public School 102** at 190 Fordham Road on City Island; the **Daniel and Abbie B. Eldridge House** at 87-61 111th St. in Richmond Hill; the **Mutual Reserve Building** at 305 Broadway; the **Hotel Wolcott** at 4 West 31st St. and the former **R.H. Macy & Co.** annex at 56 West 14th Street.

"Four of five of these buildings were brought to the Commission's attention through a comprehensive survey initiated by LPC's staff of nearly 23,000 properties in all five boroughs," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. "Today's votes represent a culmination of that work." He added that a preservation advocate proposed landmark status for the Eldridge House.

Descriptions and photographs of the buildings follow below:

P.S. 102, 190 Fordham Road, City Island, The Bronx



The former school building, part of which now serves as the home of the City Island Historical Society and Nautical Museum, was completed in 1898, the same year as the consolidation of the five boroughs into the City of New York. The school was designed in the Georgian Revival style by the renowned architect C.B.J. Snyder, the City's superintendent of school buildings who oversaw some 400 school renovation and construction projects between 1891 and 1923.

Snyder drew acclaim for designing in a range of architectural, such as the Dutch Renaissance, Colonial Revival and Beaux-Arts, and is credited with introducing the Collegiate Gothic style to the City's public schools. He also pioneered the use of the "H-plan" in school buildings in order to maximize light, ventilation and classroom space on the small, dense, urban lots of Manhattan and Brooklyn. P.S. 102, however, assumes the proportions of a suburban school, representing a rare departure from Snyder's trademark layout.

The two-story schoolhouse was constructed to accommodate 400 students and had eight classrooms and playrooms in the basement. The exterior features a pedimented central pavilion with a prominent Palladian window and an oculus window, a segmental-pedimented entry porch, and entrance doors with sidelights and a fanlight.

“This handsome school played an important role in the development of City Island at the beginning of the 20th century, and remains a significant reminder of its earliest days as part of the City of New York,” said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. The school was renamed P.S. 17 in 1903, and designated The City Island School in 1916. The school closed when it was replaced in 1975 by P.S. 175, and the building was leased to the Historical Nautical Museum and other community groups. The City sold the property in 1988 with a covenant stipulating that half the building be used for community uses, while the remainder was converted in 2000 into a condominium.



Daniel Eldridge and Abbie B. Eldridge House, 87-61 111th Street, Richmond Hill, Queens



Designed in the Italianate style, the 2 ½-story villa was constructed c. 1870 in a largely undeveloped area that was known as Clarenceville. Located south of what is now Jamaica Avenue between roughly 111th and 112th streets and traversed by Atlantic Avenue, the area was incorporated into Richmond Hill in 1895.

The residence was constructed for Daniel Eldridge, a clerk in New York City’s Water Department who allegedly had ties to William Marcy Tweed, the notorious political boss.

The cube-shaped residence consists of a hipped roof with projecting eaves, a square cupola with paired round-arched windows, a segmental-arched entrance with an elaborate, bracketed door hood, and four angular bay windows. Its design may have been influenced by the cottage and villa designs popularized in the mid-19th century by the pattern books of Andrew Jackson Downing and Henry W. Cleaveland.

“It’s unique, highly intact, and one of the few structures of its kind in New York City,” said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney.

Daniel Eldridge sold the house around 1873. It changed hands a number of times until the current owners bought it in 1986 and converted the building into a childcare facility and school for the arts for children.

Hotel Wolcott, 4 West 31st Street

The Hotel Wolcott was one of many hotels constructed in the central part of Manhattan at the beginning of the 20th century, a period of robust economic growth in New York City. Located between Broadway and Fifth Avenue, the Beaux-Arts style, 12-story building was completed in 1904 and designed by the prominent architect John H. Duncan.

Duncan is best known for his designs for the General Ulysses S. Grant National Memorial and the Soldiers’ and Sailor’s Memorial Arch in Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn. He also designed many classically designed residences for wealthy New Yorkers, particularly in Midtown and on the Upper East Side.



The hotel's pink brick and limestone facade is six bays wide and arranged around a central main entrance. A deep mansard roof with two stories of dormer windows sits above a prominent cornice above the 9th floor. The two central bays on the 3rd through the 8th floors have rounded, projecting iron oriel windows. Over-scaled stone ornamental features such as keystones, brackets, heads and cartouches provide accents to the facade.

"The hotel illustrates the exuberance of the early 20th century in New York City, and serves as a graceful and solid anchor in one of Manhattan's busiest neighborhoods," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. "It's as eye-catching today as it was when it opened 107 years ago."

The Hotel Wolcott was named after Henry Roger Wolcott, a businessman and philanthropist from a prominent Massachusetts family who was a successful figure in the Colorado mining industry. The hotel drew such well-heeled guests as Henry Miller, Edith Wharton, and Doris Duke, and was the site of former Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia's inaugural ball in 1938. Later, Buddy Holly and the Everly Brothers stayed there in 1958 while recording their music at the Beltone Studios, which was located in the building.

Mutual Reserve Building, 305 Broadway



Located at the northwest corner of Broadway and Duane Street and completed in 1894, the Mutual Reserve Building is one of New York City's most significant examples of a tall, late-19th-century office building designed in the Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style, named after one of America's greatest architects, Henry Hobson Richardson.

The building's two main facades feature granite and limestone cladding, rusticated piers, foliate carving, and arcaded base and upper sections. It was designed by William H. Hume, who was best known for commercial and institutional work.

The building is one of the city's earliest steel cage-framed structures, which were precursors to skyscrapers. It was constructed as an investment property by the grandchildren of William F. Weld, a wealthy Boston merchant shipping magnate and shipbuilder. The initial principal tenant of the building was the Mutual Reserve Fund Life Association, an insurance company that went out of business in 1909.

"This robust building retains a formidable corner presence, and recalls the period several other insurance companies had their headquarters on this part of Broadway," said Chairman Tierney. Those buildings include the Home Life Insurance Co. Building (1892-94, Napoleon le Brun & Sons) at 256 Broadway and the New York Life Insurance Co. Building (1894-99, Stephen Decatur Hatch with McKim, Mead & White) at 346 Broadway, both of which are New York City landmarks.

The Mutual Reserve Building has housed many other tenants, including law firms and organizations associated with the publishing and paper trades, and served as the first long-term home of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission from 1967 to 1980. It has been owned since 1982 by Reade Broadway Associates.



R.H. Macy & Co. Store, 14th Street Annex, 56 West 14th Street



The tall, slender 14th Street Annex of the R.H. Macy & Co. was built in 1897, the last phase of the expansion of the famed department store, which commanded Sixth Avenue between 13th and 14th Streets from 1858 until 1902, when it moved to Herald Square.

Founded 1858 by Rowland H. Macy as a fancy goods store, Macy's became known for retailing strategies such as a cash-only policy and a money-back guarantee. It was located in the heart of the city's then-central retail district, Ladies' Mile, which is bounded roughly by 14th and 23rd streets and Sixth Avenue and Broadway.

The nine-story, Beaux-Arts style annex building was designed by William Schickel and Isaac Edward Ditmars, whose other notable late commissions were the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola at 980 Park Avenue (c. 1900), the E.G. Jennings Residence at 2 East 82nd Street (c. 1900) and the William Baumgarten Residence at 294 Riverside Drive (c. 1901), all of which are New York City landmarks.

Clad in limestone, the annex features a rusticated three-story base with a large round-arched window at the second story, carved detailing, balconies, a four-story midsection with decorative ironwork, a colonnaded upper section, and a large copper acroteria at the roof.

"The annex provides a tangible link to the original site of Macy's, the department store that is practically synonymous with New York City," said Chairman Tierney.

The building remained part of another retail store until 1914, and later housed a variety of businesses. It was purchased by the predecessor firm of Babsol Realty LLC in 1938 and leased to the parent company of Noma Lites, Inc., one of the world's largest manufacturers of Christmas lighting decorations. It remained in the building until 1965. Since then, other tenants have included lingerie, sportswear and jewelry shops.



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 29,000 buildings and sites, including 1,301 individual landmarks, 113 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks, 106 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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