



## NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Robert B. Tierney  
Chairman

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Tuesday, Oct. 29, 2013  
No. 13-08

### TAMMANY HALL ON UNION SQUARE AND THREE OTHER MANHATTAN BUILDINGS NAMED NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS

*Commission Also Holds Public Hearings on Proposals for a Second Extension of the Park Slope Historic District and the Landmark Designation of the Bronx General Post Office Lobby*



The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission today unanimously approved the landmark designation of the former Tammany Hall building on Union Square East in Manhattan, citing its distinctive architectural style as well as its historical associations, including its ties to the once-powerful Democratic Party political machine that dominated New York City politics in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Commission also voted to landmark two mid-19<sup>th</sup> century cast-iron store and loft buildings in Tribeca and a 180-year-old, Federal-style house on the Lower East Side.

In other business, the Commission held public hearings on proposals to expand the northern portion of the existing Park Slope Historic District by 287 buildings, and designate the lobby of the **Bronx General Post Office** at 560 Grand Concourse as an interior landmark, and three individual, exterior landmarks: the c. 1937 **M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office Building and Engine Room Building** at 582-584 Myrtle Ave. and 580 Myrtle Ave. ; the c. 1887 **Doering-Bohack House** at 1090 Greene Ave. and the c. 1920 **Masonic Lodge** building at 1054 Bushwick Ave., all in Brooklyn.

The Commission also voted to hold a public hearing at a later date on a proposal to landmark the c. 1913 **Ardslay Garage**, at 165 East 77<sup>th</sup> St. on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, a terra-cotta clad commercial building designed by George F. Pelham and featuring ornament characteristic of the Viennese Secessionist and Arts and Crafts styles

Descriptions of the new landmarks follow below:

#### **Tammany Hall**, 100 E. 17<sup>th</sup> Street



Completed in 1929 in the neo-Georgian style, the 3 ½ story building was originally the headquarters of Tammany Hall, the Democratic Party political machine named for a mythical Delaware chief and which dominated New York City politics during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Located at the southeastern corner of Union Square and East 17<sup>th</sup> Street, the building was commissioned at the height of Tammany's political fortunes and popularity and replaced another building on East 14<sup>th</sup> Street that's no longer extant.

Robert F. Wagner was beginning his distinguished career in the U.S. Senate, Alfred E. Smith was a popular and widely respected governor and the leading contender for the Democratic candidacy for president, and Jimmy Walker was an extraordinarily popular Mayor. Within a few years of the building's completion, revelations of municipal corruption led to Walker's resignation and a split in

the Democratic Party with Franklin Delano Roosevelt and other reformers distancing themselves from Tammany, and ensuring the election of Fiorello LaGuardia as mayor.

“The architecture is interesting, evocative and referential, but the history of Tammany makes it stand out,” said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. “Tammany means a lot of things to a lot of people, but it’s certainly a touchstone of New York City, state and national politics.”

The building was designed by Thompson, Homes & Converse and Charles B. Meyers. Together, they were responsible for the psychiatric wing at Bellevue Hospital and several buildings on the campus of Lehman College in the Bronx.

The building’s design was inspired by the original c. 1700 New York City Hall, where George Washington took the oath of office as the first president of the U.S. and was constructed with specially molded bricks modeled after those used by Thomas Jefferson at Monticello. It features a rusticated stone base, a pedimented portico, double-height pilasters and sculptural reliefs in limestone and terra cotta, including two symbols of the organization: a medallion of Chief Tammany and a polychrome plaque depicting a Revolutionary War cap (at at right).



The society sold the building to Local 91 of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union in 1943, and the main meeting hall became an important center for union activities in New York City. The Roundabout theater company leased it starting in 1984 until it moved to Midtown in 1991, when Local 91 leased it to producer Raymond Gaspard who renamed it the Union Square Theater. The New York Film Academy, a film and acting school began leasing space at the building in 1994. In 2001, Local 91 sold it to Liberty Theatres LLC, a subsidiary of Reading International, Inc., which owns and operates cinemas and theaters in the United States, Australia and New Zealand.

### **339 Grand Street House**, between Ludlow and Orchard, Lower East Side, Manhattan



Completed in 1833, this intact 3 ½-story, Federal-style building is part of a row of five row houses constructed by John Jacob Astor, a German immigrant who was the wealthiest man in America by the time of his death in 1848, on land he purchased in 1806 from a business associate, William Laight.

“This understated row house, by far the most intact of the five that are there now, is a significant reminder of the period after the Revolutionary War when New York City was developing into a major port and financial center,” said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. “It retains a great deal of its original fabric, despite its age and profound changes to the surrounding neighborhood over a nearly 200-year period.”

The designation brings to 18 the total number of Federal-style houses to which the Commission has given landmark status since 2002. The “Federal” style, which was fashionable from the 1780s to the early 1830s, takes its name from the then-new republic, yet is considered a continuation of the Georgian style of Great Britain. The houses were often constructed in rows, sharing party walls and chimneys, and featured details such as splayed lintels, cornices, dormers and doorways framed with columns and sidelights. They usually had a three-bay façade with two full stories over a high basement and an additional half story under a peaked roof with a ridgeline running parallel to the front façade.

The row house at 339 Grand St. retains its original form, height, width, façade with Flemish bond brickwork, high-peaked roof and dormer. A full-lot rear addition fronting on Ludlow Street was completed c. 1855, and also retains a great deal of original fabric.

The building remained in the family of Astor's granddaughter, Cecilia Langdon de Nottbeck until 1950. It was conveyed to E & I Realty in 1966 by Murray B. Fiterman. Ideal Hosiery has occupied the Grand Street storefront since 1965.

### **39 and 41 Worth St., between West Broadway and Church, Tribeca**



Both of these five-story, cast-iron-fronted, store-and-loft buildings were designed by Isaac Duckworth, an architect who designed several buildings in what are now the Tribeca East, Tribeca South and SoHo Cast-Iron historic districts. The cast-iron facades were manufactured by Daniel D. Badger, who popularized the use of cast-iron fronts and made New York City the center of cast-iron architecture.

The building at 39 Worth St. (left) was completed in 1866 and incorporates elements of the Italianate and Second Empire styles. It was constructed as an investment for James Smith, a prominent manufacturer of fire engines, and features a deep cornice with four large brackets with molding and lattice work. The building's flat-arched windows are framed with rope moldings, and each story is defined

horizontally by paneled spandrels and molded lintels.

Tenants over the years have included textile merchants, a rug importer and a restaurant. The building was converted into cooperative residences in 1981.

The building's neighbor, 41 Worth St. (at right in photograph above), was completed in 1865 and designed in the Venetian-inspired Italianate style for Philo Laos Mills, a dry goods merchant and founder of Mills & Gibb, a dry goods firm that had branches throughout the U.S. and Europe. The building's features include a deep cornice, bracketed quoins, and tiers of single-story arcades with round-arched windows framed with rope moldings.

Tenants over the years were involved with various aspects of the dry goods businesses such as manufacturers, importers and mill representatives and have included a linen company and a woolen merchant. It was converted into cooperative residences in 1981.

"These handsome buildings are great examples of how cast-iron architecture developed in New York City," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. "They incorporate architectural elements of differing styles, and are among the few remaining cast-iron buildings south of Canal Street that date to the era when the area was becoming the city's premier dry goods district."

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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 31,000 buildings and sites, including 1,338 individual landmarks, 116 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks, 109 historic districts and 20 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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