



## The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

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### **COMMISSION LANDMARKS BROOKLYN OFFICE BUILDING, ONE OF THE NATION'S FIRST CONCRETE STRUCTURES**

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission today unanimously voted to landmark the former New York and Long Island Coignet Stone Company building at 360 Third Avenue, a pioneering example of concrete construction in the United States. The 2 ½-story, Italianate-style structure on the corner of Third Avenue and Third Street in the Gowanus section of the borough was designed by William Field and Son and built between 1872 and 1873 to house the concrete manufacturer's main office. The building is adjacent to the future site of a Whole Foods supermarket.



“This mysterious, elegant, small building commands the attention of everyone who passes by it,” said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. “By designating it as a landmark, we are preserving the last remaining structure of a complex that was one of the first industrial producers of concrete in the nation.”

The building originally was part of the New York and Long Island Coignet Stone Company, a five-acre factory complex near the Gowanus Canal that manufactured Coignet -- or artificial -- stone, a type of concrete invented by Francois Coignet in Paris in the 1850s. The factory supplied the arches and clerestory windows in St. Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan, the ornamental details for the Cleft Ridge Span in Prospect Park and the building materials for the first stages of construction at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the American Museum of Natural History.

Made entirely of concrete, the 25-by-40 foot rectangular structure was built to showcase the durability and versatility of Coignet's inventive product, also known as “Béton (French for concrete) Coignet.” The company was reorganized and renamed the New York Stone Contracting Company in the mid-1870s, and continued to manufacture Coignet stone until 1882. Shortly after, the building housed the office of the Brooklyn Improvement Company, which was instrumental in Brooklyn's residential and commercial development during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission is the largest municipal preservation agency in the United States. Since its creation in 1965, the Commission has designated more than 23,000 buildings in all five boroughs, including 1,141 individual landmarks, 106 interior landmarks, nine scenic landmarks and 85 historic districts.

