



The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

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COMMISSION GRANTS LANDMARK STATUS TO 19TH CENTURY TOTTENVILLE SHOP BUILDING ON STATEN ISLAND

Sheathed in Original Clapboards and Shingles, Queen Anne Style Commercial Structure Is a Rare Vestige of the Island's Oyster and Shipbuilding Industries

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission today unanimously voted to designate the former George Cunningham Store as an individual landmark, one of seven significant 19th century Staten Island buildings that were nominated last year for landmark status. Located at 173 Main Street in Tottenville, on the southwestern tip of Staten Island, the small, one-story, Queen Anne-style building, which was originally constructed for use as a butcher shop, retains much of its original historic fabric.



“Its detailing, history and charming scale distinguish the store as a rare example of 19th century commercial construction,” said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. “It’s truly a visual gem, and combined with its role in the development of Tottenville, this shop undoubtedly deserves the recognition and protection that only landmark status can provide to the City’s significant buildings and places.”

Constructed in 1892 as a butcher shop by George G. Cunningham, who was the son of a Scottish immigrant, the small building still has its original clapboards, fish-scale shingles, and elaborate spindle along the peak of the gable. The store’s projecting storefront windows, supported by carved wooden brackets, also remain intact. It’s not known who designed or constructed the store, but it was built as part of the expansion of commercial businesses on Main Street that resulted from Tottenville’s thriving oyster and shipbuilding industries, which date to 1835. While other 19th century stores remain along Main Street, their historic details have been removed.

Cunningham’s butcher shop remained at 173 Main Street until 1913, when it was converted to a real estate and insurance office that occupied the building until 1957.

The George Cunningham store is one of seven important 19th century structures on Staten Island that the Commission voted to formally consider for landmark status in January 2007. Of these, two others have been designated as individual landmarks to date: the **Standard Varnish Works** at 2589 Richmond Terrace in Elm Park and the **Nathaniel Wyeth House** at 190 Meisner Ave. in Lighthouse Hill.

More

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 1,200 individual landmarks, 110 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks and 92 historic districts in all five boroughs.