



**NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION
COMMISSION**

Robert B. Tierney
Chairman

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FIVE BUILDINGS GIVEN LANDMARK STATUS

Times Square Hotel, East Village Theater, Two 180-Year-Old Federal-Style Houses in Chelsea and a 19th-Century Queen Anne Style Residence on Staten Island Are NYC's Newest Landmarks

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission today voted unanimously to extend landmark protection to the **Paramount Hotel**, the **La Mama Experimental Theatre Club Building**, two **Federal style houses** at 145 and 147 Eighth Avenue and the **Vanderzee-Harper House**, citing their architectural, historical and cultural significance.

The buildings came to the Commission's attention through surveys conducted by LPC's research staff of thousands of properties in Midtown Manhattan, the East Village, Staten Island and elsewhere in the five boroughs. The Eighth Avenue houses bring to 12 the total number of Federal-style buildings to earn landmark status since 2003, as part of the Commission's ongoing efforts to preserve examples of the City's development following the Revolutionary War. Descriptions of the buildings follow below:



The Paramount Hotel, 235-245 West 46th Street

The Paramount Hotel is one of the few hotels designed by Thomas W. Lamb, a Scottish immigrant who was one of the most prolific theater architects in the world. Over his career, Lamb designed more than 300 theater buildings in the United States and abroad.

Set on a narrow street between Seventh and Eighth avenues, the 19-story French Renaissance style hotel was completed in 1928 as part of a wave of development in Times Square, which had grown into a popular theater and entertainment district. It offered 600 rooms, restaurants, lounges and a nightclub in the basement.

The hotel is distinguished by a double-height arcade along the street. Each of the marble-faced arches is filled in by glass windows, offering views of the interior. Much of the building's brick, stone and terra cotta façade is lavishly decorated with foliate swags, ornate keystones, shells, angel's heads and other details. The building steps back gradually on the higher floors to an imposing central pavilion, and is capped by a high copper mansard roof with two stories of elaborate dormers, enormous urns and projecting pediments.

"Lamb created a vibrant, inviting hotel whose design reflected the excitement and energy of Times Square," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney.

The Paramount operated as a hotel under a number of owners over the years. It was bought in the 1990s and extensively renovated by hotelier Ian Schrager, and serves as a symbol of the neighborhood's resurgence.

La Mama Experimental Theatre Club, 74 East 4th Street



The four-story, red brick structure, located between Second Avenue and the Bowery, was constructed in 1873 as a social club for German-American professional orchestral musicians, and originally called the Aschenbroedel Verein, or “Cinderella Society” Building. Its members included conductors Carl Bergmann, Theodore Thomas and Walter Damrosch.

It was designed by August H. Blankenstein, a German-born architect, and its façade altered in 1892 by two other German-born architects, Frederick Kurtzer and Richard Rohl. They added cast-iron ornament that combines elements of the German Renaissance Revival and neo-Grec styles with such folk motifs as hearts. The building also features a prominent cornice, pedimented lintels and three composers' busts over the second-story windows.

The society moved to Yorkville in 1892, and sold the building to the Gesangverein Schillerbund, or Schillerbund Singing Society, one of the city's leading and oldest German singing societies, which remained there until 1895. For the next 70 years, the building was alternatively used as a public meeting and dance hall, a laundry, the Newsboys' Athletic Club and a meatpacking plant.

La Mama Experimental Theatre Club, the current owner, moved into the building in 1969, and is considered the one of the most influential Off-Off Broadway stages. To date it has produced an estimated 1,900 plays in New York City and has received more than 60 Obie Awards.

“The building not only remains one of the significant reminders of 19th-century German-American cultural contributions to New York City, but also expresses the enduring vitality of Off-Off Broadway theater in the East Village.”

145 and 147 Eighth Avenue

Located between 17th and 18th streets in the Chelsea section of Manhattan, this pair of modest 3 1/2 –story rowhouses are among a handful of Federal-style houses to survive north of 14th Street in Manhattan. Though nearly identical, the buildings were constructed separately, between 1827 and 1828, and have been used by a variety of commercial and residential tenants over the past 181 years.

“These Federal-style treasures recall an important period of New York City's development,” said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. “It's remarkable that they have remained largely intact, even as the neighborhood around them changed dramatically.”



Both buildings, which share a party wall and central chimney, are constructed with a steeply pitched roof, with double dormer windows. Their facades are clad in Flemish bond brickwork, and the windows on the second and third floors feature simple, flat stone lintels and sills. The names of the architects are unknown.

Vanderzee-Harper House, 327 Westervelt Avenue, Fort Hill, Staten Island



The Vanderzee-Harper House was constructed in 1887 by Charles A. Herpich, a Manhattan furrier who was active in Staten Island’s civic affairs, and sold to Margaret A. Shields, who married clothier Gordon Doane Vanderzee, after she moved in.

Clad in continuous brown wood shingles, and set on a slope, the house combines characteristics of both the Queen Anne and Shingle styles. It includes a prominent three-story tower, bay windows, bracketed, cantilevered gable projections, contrasting wall surfaces, a wavy porch roof, a tall, decorative masonry chimney and a variety of multi-light and stained glass windows.

“This eclectic house is an excellent surviving example of a design that combines elements of the Queen Anne and Shingle styles,” said Chairman Tierney. “It also underscores the Commission’s continued efforts to protect more reminders of Staten Island’s rich, 19th century past.”

The Vanderzees relocated to Philadelphia in 1895, and rented the house to several different tenants. It was purchased in 1920 by Thomas Harper, a grocery store owner. It was recently restored by the current owners.

In other business, the Commission held public hearings on proposals to give landmark status to the **Penn Club** on West 44th Street, the **Union League Club** on East 37th Street; and three modernist buildings: the **Spring Mills Building** on West 40th Street, the **Look Building** on Madison Avenue, and the former **Paul Rudolph residence** on Beekman Place.

It also voted to calendar, or schedule, public hearings on the **Greyston Estate gatehouse** at 4695 Independence Avenue in the Bronx, and the former **Eleventh Street Methodist Episcopal Chapel** on East 11th Street in the East Village.

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 1,250 individual landmarks, 110 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks and 99 historic districts in all five boroughs. Under the City’s landmarks law, considered 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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