



The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

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MURRAY HILL ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND FORMER GREENWICH VILLAGE PAINT PLANT ARE NAMED NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS

Designations of St. Stephen's Church and F.W. Devoe & Co. Factory Build on Commission's Record of Protecting NYC's Houses of Worship and Industrial Heritage

The Landmarks Preservation Commission today designated as New York City landmarks St. Stephen's Church, a James Renwick Jr.-designed Roman Catholic Church in the Murray Hill section of Manhattan, and the F.W. Devoe & Co. Factory, a former paint and brush making plant in Greenwich Village whose architects helped spur the revival of the use of terra cotta in building construction in New York City in the late 19th century.



St. Stephen's, located at 151 E. 28th St., between Third and Lexington avenues, was completed in 1854 and eventually became the largest Roman Catholic congregation in Manhattan, with as many as 28,000 parishioners by 1866. The two-story building was executed in the Romanesque Revival style, an unusual choice for a Catholic church constructed in the mid-19th century.

“St. Stephen's restrained, elegant, design belies the powerful influence its congregation and pastors wielded in the closing decades of the 19th century,” said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. “It's the fifth house of worship that's been given individual landmark status since 2003, and the Commission is actively pursuing others.”

St. Stephen's was established in 1848, and opened its original church at 27th Street near Madison Avenue in 1849. The church constructed a new sanctuary only five years later, giving the commission to Renwick, the architect of Grace Church, St. Patrick's Cathedral (both New York City landmarks) and other prominent church buildings in the City, which had mostly been designed in the Gothic Revival style. By 1865, the parish had grown so much that it had to build an addition, which extended to 29th Street, and added 100 distinctive stained glass windows and 43 interior murals by noted Italian painter Constantine Brumidi, who created the murals on the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol Building. The windows and murals are not part of the designation.

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The 28th Street exterior is faced with brownstone and features large, round-headed window and door openings and a roofline that's crowned by a large round parapet filled by a rose window. The 29th Street façade is larger and faced in brick with stone trim, but features many Romanesque Revival elements similar to those on the 28th Street façade, such as round-headed windows and doors, gabled roofs and corbel tables. It also has a wide, polygonal tower topped by a corbel table rising above the easternmost section.

About the F.W. Devoe & Co. Factory

Adorned with terra cotta ornament, the six-story F.W. Devoe & Co. Factory at 110-112 Horatio St., between West and Washington streets, was constructed in 1882-83, and is a rare example of the industrial buildings that lined the streets of the Far West Village at the end of the 19th century. The company, which dates as far back as 1754, specialized in the manufacture of oil and water-based paints, varnishes, brushes, and mathematical and surveyors' instruments.



“Like so many other factory buildings the Commission has designated, the Devoe factory vividly recalls New York City’s industrial past,” said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. “This Commission has made it a point to protect similarly outstanding representations of the City’s manufacturing heritage, including the recently designated West Chelsea Historic District in Manhattan and the DUMBO Historic District in Brooklyn and former American Bank Note factory in the Bronx.”

F.W. Devoe & Co. established its manufacturing complex on Horatio Street in 1855. The designated factory was the last and largest within the operation, and is an early example of the revived use of terra cotta as a significant building material. It was designed by the architecture firm of (Francis H.) Kimball & (Thomas) Wisedell, which is credited with re-introducing ornamental terra cotta to New York City buildings.

Much of the decoration of the Devoe factory is made of red terra cotta, including its prominent cornice, window lintels, capitals and decorative panels, two of which depict the products made at the plant, including paint brushes, an easel and mathematical instruments. The factory was converted into a storage warehouse in 1918, and into an apartment building in 1984.

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 1,208 individual landmarks, 110 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks and 92 historic districts in all five boroughs.