



NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Robert B. Tierney
Chairman

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, June 22, 2010
No. 10-06

COMMISSION EXTENDS GREENWICH VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT AND NAMES TWO NEW LANDMARKS IN THE BRONX

NYC's Largest Historic District Grows by 235 Buildings, as a Beaux-Arts Office Building and an Art Deco Apartment Complex in the Bronx Gain Protection

The Landmarks Preservation Commission today voted unanimously to extend the Greenwich Village Historic District for the second time in four years, and granted landmark status to the Haffen Building in the Melrose section of the Bronx, and Noonan Plaza Apartments in the borough's Highbridge neighborhood.



The expanded district, called the Greenwich Village Historic District Extension II, encompasses 235 architecturally distinctive tenement buildings, institutional buildings and rowhouses, and illustrates the area's transition from an affluent enclave to a vibrant community of working-class immigrants and artists.

The Haffen Building, completed in 1902, was constructed by a brewery owner and son of a German immigrant, and Noonan Plaza, completed in 1931, was built by an Irish-born developer, and attracted many upwardly mobile, second-generation Eastern

European Jewish immigrants from the crowded buildings and streets of the Lower East Side.

"While these newly designated buildings in the Village and the Bronx may be separated by geography and architectural style, they reflect the aspirations and experiences of the City's burgeoning immigrant population during the late 19th and early 20th centuries," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney.

In other business, the Commission held public hearings on proposals to designate a historic district on part of the Grand Concourse in the Bronx, as well as 12 individual landmarks in Brooklyn and Manhattan. It also agreed to place six other Manhattan buildings on a formal path to designation, many of which were identified through a Commission survey of hundreds of buildings in Midtown Manhattan and the Lower East Side. Descriptions of the extended district and new landmarks follow below.

Greenwich Village Historic District Extension II

The designation of a second extension brings to 2,320 the total number of landmark properties in the Greenwich Village Historic District, the largest historic district in New York City. The original district, approved in 1969, had 2,035 buildings, and was extended by 45 buildings in 2006.

The extension comprises two sections encompassing 235 buildings. The larger section includes all or part of 11 blocks between West 4th Street to north, West Houston Street to the south, Seventh Avenue South to the west and Sixth Avenue to the east. The smaller section includes the buildings on the west side of Seventh Avenue South between Leroy and Clarkson streets.



The earliest buildings in the extended district consist of Federal and Greek Revival style residential rowhouses that date from the 1820s to the 1850s. Tenement construction began in the area after the Civil War to house incoming immigrants, and include a range of examples that were designed in the Italianate, neo-Grec and Renaissance Revival styles.



A number of outstanding institutional, religious and larger commercial buildings also lie within the extended district. Examples include Our Lady of Pompeii (at left), a Catholic church at the corner of Carmine and Bleecker streets that was designed in the Baroque style by architect Matthew Del Gaudio and completed in 1928, and the flatiron-shaped Varitype Building at the southwest corner of Sixth Avenue and West 4th Street, designed by architect Fred Eberling and completed in 1907.

“All of the buildings in this extension represent a thriving neighborhood that reflects nearly 200 years of development, and are a critical part of the history and character of Greenwich Village,” said Chairman Tierney.

The Haffen Building, 2804 Third Avenue, the Bronx

Completed in 1902, the seven-story, Beaux-Arts style Haffen Building is located between 147th and 148th streets in the Hub, the commercial heart of the Melrose section of Bronx. It was commissioned by Matthias Haffen Jr., at the time a co-owner of the former J. & M. Haffen Brewery Company, which was founded in 1856 by his father, Matthias Haffen Sr., a German immigrant.

The building was designed by Michael J. Garvin, the architect of the landmark Bronx County Courthouse at East 161st Street and Third Avenue. Garvin was the Bronx’s first commissioner of buildings and the secretary to Matthias’s brother Louis F. Haffen, the first Bronx borough president.



The Haffens, considered one of the most influential families in the Bronx by the turn of the 20th century, were responsible for many of the borough’s infrastructure improvements and organized several civic, social and financial institutions, including the Bronx County Trust Company, the successor to the bank that occupied the ground floor when the Haffen Building opened.

The building helped fuel the rise of the Hub as an important business center, which later attracted department stores, movie palaces, vaudeville theaters and boutiques. The area prospered well into the 20th century.

Standing on the east side of Third Avenue, and extending through to Willis Avenue, the building is a remarkably intact example of the Beaux-Arts style aesthetic. Both facades feature the formal base-shaft-capital composition, as well as exuberant, carved ornament depicting festoons of fruit, flowers and ribbons; laurel wreaths and sheaves of wheat, an apparent reference to the family business.

"This building is an outstanding example of the Beaux-Arts style that calls the prominence and contributions of the German American community in the west Bronx," Chairman Tierney said.

Noonan Plaza Apartments, 105-149 West 168th Street (bet. Nelson and Ogden avenues), the Bronx



Noonan Plaza Apartments is considered one of the most impressive Art Deco style rental apartment complexes in the Bronx. It was built in 1931 for Bernard J. Noonan, an Irish-born developer, and is divided into eight, interconnected, six-to-eight-story sections, each with elevators, exterior light courts and interior garden courts, providing multiple exposures to the apartments.

The complex was designed by the architects Horace Ginsberg, a Russian immigrant, and Marvin Fine, two of the most prolific architects

of apartment house design in the Bronx, who were also responsible for Park Plaza Apartments (also a New York City landmark) on Jerome Avenue, and several other 1920s apartment buildings in Highbridge.

Their buildings and many others built at the time were constructed in response to a housing shortage that was brought on by an influx of immigrants to New York City during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and reflect the European modernist housing trends of the day.

Constructed on a slope, the complex is clad in tan ironspot brick with a vertical emphasis consisting of continuous piers contrasting with brown-and-black brick spandrel panels and black brick and geometric pattern accents on the top story. The main entrance of the complex, at the corner of Nelson Avenue and West 168th Street, features an angled portico with a gate lodge and a walkway leading to the interior terraced and landscaped Garden Court.

"This intact Art Deco complex offered a stylish, spacious affordable alternative for New Yorkers who were looking for a better quality of life," said Chairman Tierney. "It was part of a wave of housing that became a symbol of upward mobility and set a new standard that was later replicated throughout New York City."

The six Manhattan buildings that were calendared for public hearings include the Beaux-Arts style, c. 1904 **Hotel Wolcott** at 4 West 31st St.; the Neo-Renaissance style, c. 1907 **Mills Hotel No. 3** at 485 Seventh Ave.; the Italian/Spanish Renaissance style, c. 1926 **Madison Belmont Building** at 181 Madison Ave.; the Art Deco style, c. 1931 **500 Fifth Avenue Building** at 500 Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street; the Renaissance Revival style, c. 1907 **Engineers' Club** at 32 West 40th Street; and the Colonial Revival style, c. 1915 **Grand Street Playhouse** at 466 Grand Street. Hearing dates were not immediately scheduled.

Following the votes, the Commission held public hearings on proposals to designate a historic district along a section of the **Grand Concourse** in the Bronx and 11 Manhattan buildings and a Brooklyn church complex as individual landmarks. They include: the Romanesque Revival style, c. 1884 **St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church** in Williamsburg; the Spanish Baroque Revival

style, c. 1927 **Loew's Canal Street Theatre** at 31 Canal St.; the Modernist, c. 1971 **Japan Society Building** at 333 East 47th St.; the neo-Grec, cast-iron, c. 1886 **E. Ridley & Sons Department Store** at 315-317 Grand St.; a Viennese Secession style building at **154 West 14th Street**, a pair of c. 1820 Federal style houses at **190 and 192 Grand Street**; the Neo-Renaissance, c. 1912 **Haskins & Sells Building** at 35 West 39th St., a c. 1820 Federal style house at **177 West Broadway**, the Romanesque Revival style, c. 1912 **Mutual Reserve Fund Life Association Building** at 305 Broadway; the Neo-Renaissance style, c. 1900 **Rogers & Peet Company Building** at 258 Broadway and a commercial Italianate style, c. 1869 cast-iron building at **97 Bowery**.

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 27,000 buildings, including 1,267 individual landmarks, 110 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks, 100 historic districts and 16 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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Contact: Elisabeth de Bourbon/ 212-669-7938
edebourbon@lpc.nyc.gov