

August 24, 2017

**Public Notice Regarding Section 106 Review of
New York City Housing Authority HUD-Funded Programs and Activities
Programmatic Agreement**

The City of New York-Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) is issuing this public notice as a part of its responsibilities under 36 CFR Part 800, the regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Section 106), as amended.

In accordance with 36 CFR 800, HPD, acting as Responsible Entity for the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) under 24 CFR Part 58 and in coordination with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) – acting as the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) - has identified potential adverse effects pursuant to Section 106. These potential adverse effects are connected to certain activities to be facilitated by funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) grant programs such as the Capital Fund, Operating Fund, and HOPE VI programs. These HUD-funded activities, described further below, may be undertaken by NYCHA at public housing facilities throughout New York City and are subject to environmental review procedures pursuant to 24 CFR Part 58 which requires Section 106 compliance for certain actions.

HUD administers grant programs such as the Capital Fund Program, the Operating Fund Program, and HOPE VI, for financing, development, modernization, maintenance, and operations of public housing agencies and their properties. NYCHA may commit HUD assistance funded by these and other grant programs to undertakings such as maintenance and repair, rehabilitation, construction, demolition, acquisition, and disposition of NYCHA's public housing developments and their associated structures and facilities.

The SHPO was consulted in connection with the proposed activities. Through this consultation it was determined that out of the total of 328 NYCHA properties surveyed citywide that are subject to federal assistance originating from HUD, 38 are either listed or eligible for listing on the State and National Register (S/NR) of Historic Places (see attached SHPO letter dated November 30, 2016). For the purposes of Section 106, the Area of Potential Effect (APE) is identified as these 38 individual NYCHA developments.

Refer to the attached November 30, 2016 letter from the SHPO which includes a list of the 38 potentially affected historic properties that are either listed or eligible for listing on the S/NR of Historic Places. Attached to the November 30, 2016 letter is a bibliography of sources the SHPO relied on to make the eligibility determinations, as well as individual resource evaluations that outline the qualifying characteristics of each development. A summary of the 38 properties is as follows:

National Register Listed and Eligible NYCHA Properties by NYC Borough

Borough	Property	SHPO Determination
Brooklyn		
	Albany I and II	NR eligible
	Bayview Houses	NR eligible
	Boulevard Houses	NR eligible
	Brownsville Houses	NR eligible
	Ingersoll Houses	entire complex NR eligible
	Marcus Garvey Group A	NR eligible
	Marlboro Houses	NR eligible
	Pennsylvania Ave-Wortman Ave	NR eligible
	Red Hook Houses	NR eligible
	Whitman Houses	entire complex NR eligible
	Williamsburg Houses	NR eligible
Bronx		
	Boston Road Plaza	NR eligible
	Bronx River Houses	NR eligible
	Clason Point Gardens	NR eligible
	Davidson Houses	NR eligible
	Eastchester Gardens	NR eligible
	Gun Hill Houses	NR eligible
	Sedgwick Houses	NR eligible
	Twin Parks West (Sites I and II)	NR eligible
Manhattan		
	Amsterdam Houses	NR eligible
	Baruch Houses	NR eligible
	Carver Houses	NR eligible
	Douglas Rehabs (241 West 101 st St, 229 and 251 West 103 rd St, 244 West 104 th St)	NR eligible
	East River Houses	NR eligible
	First Houses	NR listed
	Harlem River Houses	NR listed
	Jacob Riis I and II	NR eligible
	King Towers	NR eligible
	Randolph Houses	NR listed
	Smith Houses	NR eligible
	Taft Rehabs	NR listed
	Vladeck Houses and Vladeck II	NR listed
	Wise Rehab	NR eligible (54 West 94 th St)
	W.S.U.R.A. Brownstones (47 West 89 th St, 15 and 38 West 90 th St, 22 and 64 West 91 st St)	NR eligible
Queens		
	Forest Hills Co-Op	NR eligible
	Queensbridge	entire complex NR eligible
	South Jamaica I	NR eligible
Staten Island		
	Berry Houses	NR eligible

It would be the intent of the PA to outline certain maintenance and other activities that are of no concern to SHPO, as well as the specific activities that would be subject to consultation with the SHPO under Section 106, and the steps that must be followed prior to the release of any funding connected to such activities. Establishment of a PA would help to eliminate uncertainties for SHPO consultation and streamline review of federally-funded capital improvements at NYCHA developments for the benefit of NYCHA residents.

In a letter from the SHPO dated July 26, 2017, which was generated in response to a proposed list of activities NYCHA requested exempt from SHPO consultation should they occur at any of the 38 developments, the SHPO concurred that they have no concerns with the following proposed work activities:

- Local Law 11 work- repairs include stitching new matching* brick into the existing brick facades, in-kind repairs or in-kind replacement of window lintels and sills, and repairs to existing expansion joints (*New brick must match existing brick in terms of size, color, texture, coursing, and mortar joint tooling);
- Replacement of Garbage Disposal equipment (Interior and Exterior compactors and bulk crushers);

- Electrical work- replacement of electrical components such as light fixtures, switches, and outlets as needed. Perform electrical upgrades and all ancillary work.
- Heating work;
- Plumbing work;
- Boiler Replacement;
- Gas Riser replacement- removal of existing gas risers and replacement with new gas risers and associated piping, in the same location. Installation of new gas meters;
- Closed Circuit Television and Layered Access Control- Installation of CCTV and LAC systems and their associated components;
- Fire System Work;
- Replacement of Underground piping such as Steam Distribution and Condensate lines;
- Fire and Water Distribution lines- removal of existing lines and replacement with new lines in-kind (i.e. same horizontal and vertical dimensions within 1 to 2 feet); associated ground disturbance is less than 24 inches below the existing surface;
- Energy Performance Contracts (EPC): EPC work includes 1) interior lighting retrofits; 2) installation of apartment water measures such as low flow toilets, faucet aerators and shower heads; 3) apartment temperature sensors, 4) ventilation system clean / seal / balance; 5) instantaneous water heaters; and 6) boiler plant equipment replacement / retrofits;
- General apartment renovations (bathrooms and kitchens);
- Elevator Replacements- replace elevators in disrepair;
- Roof Tank Vessel Replacement - repair and replacement of roof tank vessels only (does not apply to roof tank screening).

Furthermore, as outlined in the November 30, 2016 letter, the SHPO has agreed that all planned work at non-S/NR eligible or listed NYCHA properties (those not included in the above table) do not need consultation with the SHPO unless such proposed work includes:

- New construction;
- Demolition of buildings and/or structures (other than roof top communications equipment) on properties that are at least fifty years of age;
- Any other ground-disturbing activities in or around any known and unknown archaeological sites; and
- Work in or around, or associated with, existing Federal Art Projects and other art work at least fifty years of age.

As outlined above, HPD, in consultation with NYCHA and the SHPO, has determined that certain aspects of the proposed undertaking have the potential to result in adverse effects to NYCHA properties under Section 106, and a clearly understood process should be in place to appropriately review and approve such activities. Section 106 and the regulations at 36 CFR Part 800 require HPD, as the Responsible Entity on behalf of HUD, to assess any potential direct or indirect effects an undertaking would have on identified cultural resources and to seek ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse effects. As a result, NYCHA, HPD and the SHPO have determined that the execution of a Programmatic Agreement (PA) among all parties would be the most appropriate course of action to address the potential adverse effects.

The drafting of the PA is ongoing, but the overall intent of the PA is to outline certain maintenance and other activities that are of no concern to SHPO, as well as the specific activities that would be subject to consultation with the SHPO under Section 106 and the steps that must be followed prior to the release of any funding connected to such activities. Establishment of a PA would help to eliminate uncertainties for

SHPO consultation and streamline review of federally-funded capital improvements at NYCHA developments for the benefit of NYCHA residents.

Information related to the proposed project and HPD/SHPO's determination of an Adverse Effect may be viewed online at <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/developers/environmental-review.page> under the heading "Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966" toward the bottom of the webpage. Members of the public are encouraged to provide views on how the undertaking may affect historic properties and ways that these effects may be avoided, minimized, or mitigated. Comments may be submitted by email to nepa_env@hpd.nyc.gov for an 18-day period beginning on August 24, 2017.



Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner

July 26, 2017

Mr. Aaron Werner
HPD
100 Gold Street, Rm 7-A4
New York, NY 10038

Re: HUD
Updated exempt activities - HUD Capital and Operating Funds Programs
17PR05173

Dear Mr. Werner:

Thank you for requesting the comments of the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). We have reviewed the provided documentation in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. These comments are those of the SHPO and relate only to Historic/Cultural resources. They do not include other environmental impacts to New York State Parkland that may be involved in or near your project. Such impacts must be considered as part of the environmental review of the project pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and/or the State Environmental Quality Review Act (New York Environmental Conservation Law Article 8).

We have reviewed the request and project information described in your e-mail dated July 13th, 2017. Based upon our review, we have no concerns with the following proposed work activities:

- Local Law 11 work- repairs include stitching new matching* brick into the existing brick facades, in-kind repairs or in-kind replacement of window lintels and sills, and repairs to existing expansion joints. *New brick must match existing brick in terms of size, color, texture, coursing, and mortar joint tooling.
- Replacement of Garbage Disposal equipment (Interior and Exterior compactors and bulk crushers)
- Electrical work- replacement of electrical components such as light fixtures, switches, and outlets as needed. Perform electrical upgrades and all ancillary work.
- Heating work
- Plumbing work
- Boiler Replacement
- Gas Riser replacement- removal of existing gas risers and replacement with new gas risers and associated piping, in the same location. Installation of new gas meters.
- Closed Circuit Television and Layered Access Control- Installation of CCTV and LAC systems and their associated components
- Fire System Work
- Replacement of Underground piping such as Steam Distribution and Condensate lines, Fire and Water Distribution lines- removal of existing lines and replacement with new

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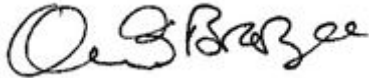
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lines in-kind (i.e. same horizontal and vertical dimensions within 1 to 2 feet); associated ground disturbance is less than 24 inches below the existing surface.

- Energy Performance Contracts (EPC): EPC work includes 1) interior lighting retrofits; 2) installation of apartment water measures such as low flow toilets, faucet aerators and shower heads; 3) apartment temperature sensors, 4) ventilation system clean / seal / balance; 5) instantaneous water heaters; and 6) boiler plant equipment replacement / retrofits.
- General apartment renovations (bathrooms and kitchens)
- Elevator Replacements- replace elevators in disrepair
- Roof Tank Vessel Replacement - repair and replacement of roof tank vessels only. Does not apply to roof tank screening

If additional information correspondence is required regarding this project it should be provided via our Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS) at www.nysparks.com/shpo/online-tools/ Once on the CRIS site, you can log in as a guest and choose "submit" at the very top menu. Next choose "submit new information for an existing project". You will need this project number and your e-mail address. If you have any questions, I can be reached at (518) 268-2182.

Sincerely,



Olivia Brazee
Historic Site Restoration Coordinator
olivia.brazee@parks.ny.gov

via e-mail only



Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner

November 30, 2016

Mr. Bruce Eisenberg, AIA
Deputy Director, Architecture Unit
NYC Housing Authority
90 Church Street
New York, NY 10007

Re: Citywide Review of NYCHA's Portfolio
14PR03504

Dear Mr. Eisenberg,

Thank you for continuing to consult with the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding your Citywide Review of NYCHA's Portfolio, and the development of a Programmatic Agreement between our agencies. We received your letter dated October 27, 2016 with 1) your list of proposed interim measures, as well as 2) your request for more information concerning the 13 NYCHA properties SHPO determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places but which were not on NYCHA's list of proposed eligible properties.

1) Interim measures. In general, we concur with your proposed approach to consultation moving forward. We agree all planned work at non-National Register eligible NYCHA properties which are not included in the table below do not need consultation with our office unless proposed work includes:

- a. new construction
- b. demolition of buildings and/or structures (other than roof top communications equipment) on properties that are at least fifty years of age
- c. any other ground-disturbing activities (work in or around any known and unknown archaeological sites)
- d. work in or around, or associated with, existing Federal Art Projects and other art work at least fifty years of age

We would appreciate a copy of any inventory files you may have relating to the Federal Art Projects and other art work in NYCHA's portfolio.

2) Attached please find a bibliography of sources we used to make our determinations of eligibility for each of NYCHA's 328 properties. Based on your request for additional information, our office closely re-examined the 13 properties that were not on NYCHA's list of recommended National Register eligible sites. As a result, we have removed four properties from SHPO's list; further research indicated that LaGuardia Houses in Manhattan, Forest Houses in the Bronx, and Glenwood Houses and Kingsborough Houses in Brooklyn do not meet the criteria required for National Register eligibility. Resource evaluations explaining our determination of eligibility

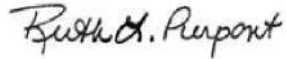
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for each of the nine remaining properties are attached, and the table below updates our findings (note that the last column represents SHPO's official determination of National Register eligibility). The revised number of National Register listed and eligible properties in NYCHA's portfolio stands at **38**.

We look forward to working with your office to develop a Programmatic Agreement to streamline future consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act between NYCHA and SHPO. If you have any questions or would like additional information regarding our eligibility findings, please contact our Survey Unit Coordinator, Kathy Howe at 518-268-2168 or via email (kathy.howe@parks.ny.gov) or our Technical Preservation Services Unit Coordinator, Beth Cumming at 518-268-2181 (beth.cumming@parks.ny.gov).

Sincerely,



Ruth L. Pierpont
Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation

Cc: Therese Fretwell, Regional Environmental Officer, HUD Region II
Maurisse Johnson, Raymond Stefanowicz, NYCHA

National Register Listed and Eligible NYCHA Properties by NYC Borough

Borough	Property	SHPO Determination
<i>Brooklyn</i>		
	Albany I and II	NR eligible
	Bayview Houses	NR eligible
	Boulevard Houses	NR eligible
	Brownsville Houses	NR eligible
	Ingersoll Houses	entire complex NR eligible
	Marcus Garvey Group A	NR eligible
	Marlboro Houses	NR eligible
	Pennsylvania Ave-Wortman Ave	NR eligible
	Red Hook Houses	NR eligible
	Whitman Houses	entire complex NR eligible
	Williamsburg Houses	NR eligible
<i>Bronx</i>		
	Boston Road Plaza	NR eligible
	Bronx River Houses	NR eligible
	Clason Point Gardens	NR eligible
	Davidson Houses	NR eligible
	Eastchester Gardens	NR eligible
	Gun Hill Houses	NR eligible
	Sedgwick Houses	NR eligible
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<i>Queens</i>		
	Forest Hills Co-Op	NR eligible
	Queensbridge	entire complex NR eligible
	South Jamaica I	NR eligible
<i>Staten Island</i>		
	Berry Houses	NR eligible

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- National Park Service. National Register of Historic Places/Multiple Property Documentation Form: *Public Housing in the United States, 1933 – 1949*. Washington, DC: National Park Service, December 1, 2004.



Date: 08/17/2017

Staff: James Finelli

USN Number: 04701.020141

Name: Albany and Albany II Houses

Location:

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

Albany (1950) - 1229 Park Place, Brooklyn
Albany II (1957) – 1440 Bergen St, Brooklyn

Built in two phases in 1950 and 1957 NYCHA's Albany and Albany II Houses development is bordered by Albany Avenue, Bergen Street, Troy Avenue, and Park Place in Brooklyn. The first phase consists of five residential buildings on the southern part of the site while the later phase to the north has three comparable buildings. Designed by Fellheimer, Wagner, and Vollmer, the building plans used fourteen-story five-pronged "asterisk"-type towers which attempted to improve the efficiency of the "cross" type through maximizing the number of apartments served by the core (Plunz, 263). This public housing development meets Criterion A in the following areas: (1) Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; (2) Politics/Government, for the State and local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income residents; and 3) Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income residents especially following World War II. The complex also meets Criterion C under the themes of Architecture and Community Planning & Development. The design and construction of the buildings and their placement in a designed landscape is representative of modern urban planning design theory of the period. The buildings in the original phase are evenly spaced around an "oval" green space. Carl Stelling Associates were the Landscape Architects & Site Planners for the first phase. Ryan J. Lynch was the Landscape Architect and Site Planner for Albany II. The design of this complex represents pre-'61 Zoning and it was the first of its type to use the "asterisk" plan layout.



New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189

518-237-8643

RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: 01/04/07

STAFF: Kathy Howe

PROPERTY: Amsterdam Houses

MCD: Manhattan

ADDRESS: Amsterdam Ave. to West End Ave.
Between West 61st & 64th Streets

COUNTY: New York Co.

USN: 06101.015790

- I. Property is individually listed on SR/NR:
name of listing:
- Property is a contributing component of a SR/NR district:
name of district:
- II. Property meets eligibility criteria.
- Property contributes to a district which appears to meet eligibility criteria.
- Pre SRB: Post SRB: SRB date

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Amsterdam Houses is located on a terraced site between West 61st Street to West 64th Street, from Amsterdam and West End Avenues in Manhattan. The apartment complex consists of 10 six-story brick buildings having "T" and "H" shaped footprints and 3 thirteen-story cruciform brick towers on landscaped grounds. Planning for this New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) complex began in 1941 but the complex wasn't completed until 1948. The complex meets NR Criterion A in the areas of politics/government and social history and Criterion C in the area of community planning and development.

Amsterdam Houses represent the response by the state and local government to provide affordable housing for low-income families and returning World War II veterans. The complex was financed by a

\$7.7 million loan from the New York State Division of Housing through a subsidy agreement with the city. New York State was progressive at the time in that it was one of the few states with its own public housing construction programs. While the New York State Housing Law passed in 1926 encouraging the formation of local housing authorities, it had little impact locally until 1934 when NYCHA was established.

The racial and ethnic diversity of the original residents of Amsterdam Houses reflects the thinking of key planners, architects, housing reformers, and laws of post- World War II New York. NYCHA's selection of original residents was a response to the state mandate that state-aided public housing projects bar discrimination based on race, color, creed or religion, as well as to both state and federal laws that were passed giving returning veterans preference in public housing.

The plan and design of Amsterdam Houses reflect the progressive thinking of its prominent design team: architects Grosvenor Atterbury, Arthur C. Holden, and Harvey Wiley Corbett, and landscape architects Gilmore D. Clarke and Michael Rapuano. Amsterdam Houses is notable for its open, classically-inspired plan with a central landscaped axis oriented toward the Hudson River and for the warmth and subtle articulation of its brickwork. The complex stands as one of the last publicly-funded housing developments of the post-World War II era to align with the city grid as opposed to the slightly later "tower in the park" schemes that relied on larger-scale super blocks.

The complex has undergone minor alterations including the slight widening of paths and the replacement of original windows. Despite these changes, the complex is remarkably intact to its 1948 completion date. Amsterdam Houses retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Amsterdam Houses- Summary of Research and Direction for further Research

Compiled by Katherine Longfield
5/25/06

Basic Facts

Architect: Grosvenor Atterbury, Harvey Wiley Corbett, and Arthur C. Holden

Built: 1947 (Addition 1974) Built following World War II by the New York Housing Authority under the Veteran's Emergency Housing Act.

Location: 61st St. to 64th St/Amsterdam Avenue to West End Avenue

Physical Layout: 13 buildings. 6 to 13 stories high on 9.49 acres. 1,080 apartments- houses 2,282 people. More than 50% of population is 65 or older.

Significance: The Amsterdam Houses, designed by Grosvenor Atterbury, were built following WWII by the New York City Housing Authority under the Veteran's Emergency Housing Act. Though the project was not completed until 1948, the city had developed plans for the "San Juan Hill" area as early as 1942 in anticipation of the end of the war. The project is significant for its history as an ethnically diverse public housing project, its demonstration of Grosvenor Atterbury's ideas on public housing, and its success as a socially-geared urban renewal effort. The architecture of the Amsterdam Houses stands out among other such housing projects for its classically inspired site plan that features a central landscaped axis running towards the Hudson River, and its uncommon and subtle masonry detailing.

Timeline:

1945

Emergency Committee on Housing formed under Moses- timeline for construction of AH created

1965

Lincoln Center Completed

1974

Addition by Oppenheimer Brady & Lehrecke completed. Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center moves to the addition

1943

Atterbury Designs Precast Concrete Design for AH- never implemented

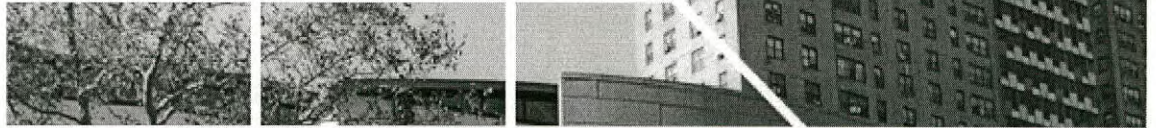
1947

Construction completed of AH houses- Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center opened as Settlement house



NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY

SEARCH



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NYCHA Housing Developments

ZOOM MOVE



New Search Legend

Search by street address or by borough. Click the SUBMIT button to map your location.

- Developments
- Selected Developments
- Searched Address
- Community Centers
- Day Care Center
- Libraries
- Subways
- Universities
- Schools
- Senior Centers
- Police
- Fire

Reset



Amsterdam

- + General Development Information
- + Development Management Office
- + NYCHA Resident Association
- + NYCHA Community/Senior Centers
- + On-Site Neighborhood Resources
- + Development Photos

State and National Registers Program Applicant Form

TYPE OF NOMINATION: Historic District

APPLICANT: LANDMARK WEST!

OWNER: NYCHA
Address
Contact #
Does Owner support nomination?

PRESERVATION CONSULTANT: LANDMARK WEST!
45 West 67th Street
New York, NY 10023
212 496-8110
landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org

NOMINATION PRIORITIES GOALS:

- Public and not-for-profit grant projects
- Projects that will use historic preservation as a marketing tool
- Projects sponsored by community organizations
- Projects benefiting from widespread citizen participation
- Projects that foster pride in community history
- Projects that foster awareness of historic properties
- Projects that can be incorporated into local school curricula

Historic Resource Inventory Form

Amsterdam Houses

Amsterdam Avenue to West End Avenue, between West 61st and 64th Streets
New York, NY 10023

Amsterdam Houses was constructed by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) to provide housing for low income families and returning World War II veterans. Residents were selected through a system based on income limitations, housing condition, family size and race. Completed in 1948 and designed by Grosvenor Atterbury, Harvey Wiley Corbett and Arthur Holden, all prominent architects who influenced the growth and development of New York City from the late 19th century through the middle of the 20th century. The landscaping was designed by the noted landscapers Gilmore D. Clarke and Michael Rapuano.

Statement of Significance

The architecture, the plan, and the racial and ethnic composition of its original residents reflect the progressive thinking of key planners, architects, housing reformers and laws of

post-War New York. As the last NYCHA large-scale public housing complex that maintained New York City's street grid for pedestrians, Amsterdam Houses is significant for its open, classically-inspired axial site plan and brick work detail which co-exist easily with modernist, International style features. Unlike many of the "tower in the park" complexes, Amsterdam Houses has a neighborhood ambiance created by varied building heights, the warmth and subtle articulation of the brick color and the central landscaped axis oriented to the Hudson River.¹ According to a 1940 NYCHA document, the design of Amsterdam Houses was meant to isolate it from the surrounding area to "resist possible influences of blight from its surrounding neighborhood,"² a concept that was recently echoed by a long-time resident who recalled that the design prevented children from wandering away without the knowledge of their parent.³

The plan incorporate numerous benches which are placed around the complex so that adults can watch children play or to relax in the open air. Three playgrounds are designed for children of various ages, a landscaping plan which further enhances the community environment. More than 5,000 square feet of ground floor space within the complex is reserved for a nursery, a clinic and management offices.

The cultural significance of Amsterdam Houses is rooted in the fact that it is one of NYCHA's first "experiment[s] in integration"⁴ which targeted the site of Amsterdam Houses for slum clearance areas and responded to the Public Housing Law of 1939 prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed or religion in public housing. NYCHA designated apartments for returning veterans and low income African Americans, whites and other persons of color. Though Amsterdam Houses was destined to displace more people than were eventually housed on the site, the reduced density and improved living conditions provided a foundation of economic revitalization to the area.

A bond still clearly exists among former and current residents of Amsterdam Houses, as evidenced by the annual reunions of long-time residents that continue to be held on the site. A long-time resident of the Amsterdam Houses recently stated, "we were really together then [the 1950s], blacks, Jews, Italians and Latinos;" it was a "great community to be raised in."⁵

Narrative Description of Property:

Setting

Amsterdam Houses is located between West 61st Street and West 64th Street, from Amsterdam and West End Avenues in Manhattan, and is situated on almost 9.5 acres east of the Hudson River (block 1154, see attached map). The housing complex is home to more than 2,300 people and comprises 10 six-story buildings having "T" and "H" shaped footprints and 3 thirteen-story cruciform towers. The Phipps Housing project (1902) is

¹ Stern, Mellins and Fishman, *New York, 1960*, p. 675

² NYCHA document, 8/14/40.

³ Comment of long-time resident, September 26, 2006 at Francis Morrone lecture on Amsterdam Houses, sponsored by Landmark West!

⁴ NYTimes article

⁵ Comment by long-time resident at the Francis Morrone lecture sponsored by Landmark West!, 9/26/06

located at the northwest section of the site and two large playgrounds are situated at the south side of the site, adjacent to a still existing factory building.

The Amsterdam Houses are load-bearing masonry structures with flat asphalt roofs; the exterior brick is articulated with horizontal bands above the windows at each floor. The original windows were steel multi-light of different sizes which were replaced with black aluminum with varying fenestration patterns. International-style influences are evident in the entryways which feature streamlined steel framing, and some of the landscape elements constructed with corrugated and reinforced concrete.



Modernist Door Entry



Corrugated Concrete Walled Stairway

Landscaping

Landscape architects Gilmore David Clarke and Michael Rapuano were engaged to develop and execute the landscaping plan of the Amsterdam Houses project. The trees were probably brought to the site and planted in 1947 from Riker's Island prison which had inmate-run nursery. Much of the original landscaping remains, but in the 1970s an environmental design effort to prevent crime resulted in additional fences and widened paths in order to allow for better emergency vehicle access. The trees and shrubs have flourished, creating lush, shaded areas.



Amsterdam Houses and recently planted trees, April 20, 1949 (photo courtesy of NYCHA Archives)



Landscaping, September, 2006

The residential coverage of the footprints of the Amsterdam Houses complex was designed to be just over 29%, with a population density per net acre of 410 persons,⁶ as compared to 463 persons per acre at the James Weldon Johnson site on East 112th and East 115th Streets and between Third and Park Avenues, also completed in 1949⁷.

History

When NYCHA was established in 1934, it inherited the Real Property Inventory compiled through the emergency work programs of the early 1930's, which yielded detailed surveys of each block in the City. In an era of rational planning, this was a valued "first scientific measure of neighborhood decline"⁸ which the fledgling NYCHA could then utilize as it analyzed neighborhoods to identify areas ripe for redevelopment.

⁶ Letter from William Vladeck, Chief Project Planning Division, 6/10/41

⁷ Stern, p. 69.

⁸ Schwartz, p.62

One of the thirteen areas chosen was the current site of Amsterdam Houses, then called San Juan Hill. When NYCHA acquired the site in 1941 there were 95 buildings which contained 1204 apartments and housed 1121 people, many of whom were on public assistance.⁹ The site was chosen because of the poor condition of the existing housing which were built under the Tenement House Act of 1879 and were in “an advanced state of disrepair” lacking central heat, toilets and hot water.¹⁰ Other reasons the site was chosen include the accessibility to transit, shopping and employment opportunities and because the site was the least expensive in the area that NYCHA could assemble. City officials were also concerned that “neighboring streets were the scene of frequent race riots¹¹ and they wanted to disperse the residents in order to encourage economic revitalization.

The residents of San Juan Hill were poor and about 77% were African American or Hispanic. Most of the more affluent black residents of the area had moved to Harlem around the time of the First World War, and the more well-to-do whites moved to other sections of the City and the tenements were then converted to rooming houses for the poor.¹²

San Juan Hill was not uniformly run-down. Tenements on West 62nd and West 63rd streets, between Amsterdam and West End Avenues (and acquired by NYCHA in 1941 for Amsterdam Houses) had been owned and developed by City and Suburban Homes Company in 1902 to be the “first model tenement building designed solely for negro occupancy erected in the City of New York¹³ This project was funded by the sisters Carolyn Phelps Stokes and Olivia Egleston Phelps Stokes who were housing reformers and philanthropists particularly interested in the “erection and improvement of tenement house dwellings in New York City and for education purposes of negroes.¹⁴ At the time, City and Suburban sold the property to NYCHA in 1941, City and Suburban wrote that the housing was well-maintained and profitable, and that 172 of the 174 apartments were occupied when NYCHA bought them. Demolition occurred in 1946 to make way for the Amsterdam Houses.

Just to the north of the Amsterdam Houses site is the Phipps Houses which “went beyond the minimum requirements established by law and were welcomed by the colored race as the first constructive step in the City of New York for provision of living accommodations equal to those provided for the white race.”¹⁵

In the 1940s, *public* housing in New York City was the only housing in the State that was subject to antidiscrimination laws, as opposed to *private* housing that permitted and even encouraged discrimination.¹⁶ “Redevelopment,” or slum clearance, was generally supported by community activists as the new public housing was to provide more modern

⁹ NYCHA summary document, 10/6/41.

¹⁰ NYCHA document 54D5f2, 8/14/40.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Stern, 1960, p. 675

¹³ News item released August 14, 1941 by John A. Cahill, President City and Suburban Homes Company.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Bodi, “To Stand and Fight,” p. 115.

facilities than was previously available to the poor¹⁷. It was not until later that public housing was perceived as a form of social engineering through site selections which created or reinforced patterns of housing segregation.

Original Funding and Eligibility

Amsterdam Houses project was financed by a \$7.7 million loan contract with the State Division of Housing through a subsidy agreement with New York City.¹⁸ This loan was enabled by a 1939 State Public Housing Law, the country's first state-subsidized public housing program and which barred discrimination in selecting public housing tenants based on race, color, creed or religion.. Preference was to be given to former site tenants and to returning veterans.¹⁹

Family size was limited to six; apartment sizes accommodated from two to six persons, with the majority of apartments having four rooms, in accordance with the Public Housing Law.²⁰ In 1949, the monthly rent ranged from \$32.00 for a three-room apartment, to \$67.00 for a six-room apartment, depending on family income. Rents were determined according to income, and non-veterans had to pay a higher proportion of their income than did veterans. As of December 31, 1948, 1090 persons had moved in; 69% were white, 23% were black and 8% were classified as "other."

According to a 1941 New York Times article decrying the high cost of Amsterdam Houses, NYCHA's cost per family was \$6,995. This figure included land and construction costs and was felt to be excessive since it was purportedly 61% higher than the Queensbridge Project, also built around that time.²¹

Architects

Amsterdam Houses was designed by Grosvenor Atterbury (1869-1956), Arthur Cort Holden (1890-1993) and Harvey Wiley Corbett (1873-1954), all well-known and highly respected architects of the day who explored housing plans prototypes and city planning models throughout their careers. All three architects lived over the age of 80 (Holden was 103 when he died) and their impact on the urban built environment was considerable from the late 19th through the middle of the 20th centuries.

Grosvenor Atterbury

Atterbury, mostly known for his homes for affluent, also designed model tenements, residential and institutional buildings, including First Phipps Model Tenement (1909), the Rogers Model Dwellings on West 44th Street (1915), Forest Hills Gardens (1909-22) with Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. for the Russell Sage Foundation, The Russell Sage Foundation Building (1912-13, designated by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission on June 20, 2000), and Sage House Apartments (1930-31).

¹⁷ Schwartz, Joel, *The New York Approach*, p. 64.

¹⁸ Contract between State of New York, City of New York and New York Housing Authority, relating to Amsterdam Houses, 3/26/41.

¹⁹ Memo from W.P. Seaver, Chairman, Priorities Appeal Committee of Federal Public Housing Authority to John A. Kervick, Director, Region II, dated 4/18/47.

²⁰ Section 156, Subdivisions 3 and 4 of the Public Housing Law.

²¹ *Housing Comes High*, NYTimes, 4/14/41.

Well-known projects institutional projects were the Blue Room in City Hall (1915,) American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (completed in 1936). Out of town projects included the Indian Hill Community in Worcester, Massachusetts (1916) and a community at Erwin, Tennessee, begun in 1921. Atterbury was also the Chairman of the NYC Chapter of the American Institute of Architects Committee of Design and Development and prolific author.²²

Lewis Mumford considered Atterbury to be “fully alive to the social responsibilities- and the economic conditioning- of architecture,”²³ while Christopher Gray credited Atterbury with being “a society figure with a social conscience.”²⁴ Involved in planning and architecture in the late 19th century, Atterbury was intimately involved in analyzing the plans of tenement buildings to make the best use of space and to open apartments for the poor to light and air.

Throughout his long career, Atterbury was a pioneer who gave much thought to the funding, the design and the construction techniques of low cost housing. In 1906, he designed the philanthropically-funded Phipps Houses, in which he proffered a variation of the then-accepted Flagg prototype for model tenement housing. Flagg’s prototype combined several lots to create a tenement organized around a courtyard, but Atterbury’s variation reduced the number of stairs and removed from the internal courtyards to maximize light and air. Despite the fact that philanthropists underwrote other Atterbury-designed projects, he believed that both state subsidy and private philanthropy “will prove but a well-intentioned gesture and only delay the economic solution of the problem.”²⁵ In other words, Atterbury advocated utilizing technological and design advances to significantly reduce the cost of housing production for the poor.

Though classically trained, Atterbury was eager to incorporate new designs and construction techniques to reduce costs and to develop more functional and pleasing designs. In 1931, he submitted a plan to the State Housing Commission to found the Research Institute of Economic Housing that would “stimulate, coordinate, concentrate and direct the national will and effort toward a scientific solution” to standardize the wholesale production of housing and construction materials to cut building costs.²⁶ Atterbury also endorsed revising funding formulas so that subsidies would be given on a sliding scale according to the construction cost per room. At approximately the same time that he was designing and overseeing the construction of Amsterdam Houses he was hired by the War Production Board to develop new lower cost housing production methods.

Atterbury brought to the Amsterdam Houses architectural team a perspective steeped in history and tradition, and he was a progressive thinker always seeking to challenge accepted norms in the interest of developing new, pragmatic models of low-cost public housing.

²² Stern, 1960, p. 68

²³ Mumford, Lewis, *Roots of Contemporary Architecture*, as quoted in Plunz, p. 219

²⁴ Christopher Gray, NYT 4/23/06

²⁵ Atterbury, Grosvenor, “Model Towns in America,” *Scribner's Magazine* 52 (July 1912):20-35.

²⁶ “Mass Production of Housing Urged” in *New York Times*, Feb 13, 1931, p. 19.

Arthur Holden

An architect and planner with a degree in economics, Arthur Cort Holden worked at the office of McKim, Mead and White from 1915-1920 and worked in various partnerships until 1977.²⁷ Holden worked on the Williamsburg Houses under Richmond Shreve (completed 1938 and landmarked by the NYC Landmark Preservation Commission in 2003) and was also associated with Frank Lloyd Wright during the construction of the Guggenheim Museum in New York (1959). He modestly stated that Wright chose him to work with because “Wright needed an architect registered in NY.”²⁸ Other projects include: Madison Square Boys Club (1924), Sussex Garden Apartments (Rye, New York, 1942), and Queensborough Community College (1968).

A planner and architect who was actively engaged in the pursuit of transforming the urban built environment of New York City, Holden devoted his career to “architecture in the service of the ordinary man.”²⁹ His planning ideas were progressive if not somewhat radical – he believed that blighted neighborhoods like the Lower East Side could be saved if “property owners could shape a future all their own” without eminent domain and he urged property owners to “pool property” to form “equity trusts” that would exchange ownership in property for proportional stock in the trust’s title to all.³⁰ As Chair of the NYC chapter of the AIA Committee on Housing, Holden was a vocal critic of NYCHA and he accused it of “eliminating such ‘seeming luxuries’ as closet doors, toilet seat covers, adequate electrical outlets and soundproofing in order to make tenants ‘slightly uncomfortable’ so that they [the low-income residents] would be spurred on to improve their lot and seek market-rate housing.”³¹

Harvey Wiley Corbett

The work of Harvey Wiley Corbett is still prominent in New York City today. Corbett’s firm Corbett, Harrison & MacMurray was part of a team that designed Rockefeller Center under the name of Rockefeller Center Associated Architects with Hood & Fouilhoux, Reinhard & Hofmeister. His other work includes the Bush Terminal Sales Building (1916-18), the Metropolitan Life North Building (1933), the NYC Criminal Courts Building (known as “The Tombs,” 1939), the Master Apartments at Riverside Drive and West 103 Street (1929), the National Title Guaranty Building (1929), Pennsylvania Power & Light (1928) and One Fifth Avenue (1929).

Like both Holden and Atterbury, Corbett was interested in rethinking the urban landscape. He was an early and ardent advocate of building skyscrapers, and he was

²⁷ Holden held a variety of positions, including membership on New York City Mayor’s Committee on City Planning (1934-1938) and the Coordinating Committee of the Welfare Council, chairman of the Executive Committee of the New York Urban League, chairman of the Committee on Housing of the NY Chapter of the AIA and Director of the Building Congress’s Land Utilization Committee.

²⁸ Smithsonian Archives on American Art, Interview with Arthur Holden
Conducted by Paul Cummings, January 20, 1971.

<http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/oralhistories/transcripts/holden71.htm>.

²⁹ Stein, Jannon, *Arthur Cort Holden Papers* Manuscript Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library, 2000.

³⁰ Schwartz, p. 62

³¹ Schwartz, p. 68

prescient in his concern that vehicular traffic would overwhelm the pedestrian. He was a visionary who wanted to separate automobile and pedestrian circulation and advocated creating a “terraced city” resembling “a modernized Venice, a city of arcades, piazzas and bridges, with canals for streets, only the canals will not be filled with water but with freely flowing motor traffic.”³² Whether due to Corbett’s influence or to the vision of others on the Amsterdam Houses architectural team, this “terraced city” effect is evident at Amsterdam Houses- intended to be an isolated oasis safe from the incursion of the rest of the rough-and-tumble San Juan Hill neighborhood.

Christopher Gray notes that at One Fifth Avenue Corbett used shaded brick of vertical bands of brick that cast shadows against the building façade. At Amsterdam Houses, this architectural device is turned on its side- with horizontal banding providing interest while still being inexpensive to execute.³³

Gilmore David Clarke, Landscape Architect

Landscaping at Amsterdam Houses was designed by the firm of Clarke and Rapuano. Clarke is best known for his design of the Unisphere and surrounding pool and fountains constructed in 1963-64 at the World’s Fair and his work at the 1939-40 World’s Fair (designated by the NYC Landmark Preservation Commission in 1995). Among his other well known work is the Saw Mill and the Bronx River Parkways and Rye Playland; late in his career, he also consulted for the Natural History Museum.

In 1934, Clarke was hired by Robert Moses as the Consulting Landscape Architect to the New York City Park Department; Moses undoubtedly recruited Clarke to work on the Amsterdam Houses project since Moses was particularly concerned that Amsterdam Houses include ample playgrounds and open space.³⁴

Clarke’s work reflects is a Beaux-Arts influence, and he is adept at incorporating the classical with modernist forms. The plan at Amsterdam Houses feature paths terminating at playgrounds, ample trees and shrubbery and benches, which combine to create an inviting environment.

³² Rasberger, James, “Coulda, Woulda, Shoulda” in *New York Times*, August 1, 2004.

³³ Gray, Christopher, “One Fifth Avenue; A Good Joke Not Well Retold” in *New York Times*, October 4, 1992.

³⁴ “Housing Plans are Held Up by Estimate Board” in *New York Times*,
And correspondence between Mayor LaGuardia and Gerard Swope, Chair, New York City Housing Authority, June 10, and June 23, 1941.

Summary

The Amsterdam Houses provides us with a perspective of how mid-20th century architects, housing reformers, politicians and planners grappled with such issues as housing design and construction costs, civil rights, integration, immigration and economic revitalization. Aesthetically, the complex represents a merging of the classic architectural planning and the modernist public housing "Tower in the Park" prototype. The interior plan which maintained the street grid for pedestrians, the benches, landscaping and playgrounds worked together to create a comfortable, neighborhood feel, while the building orientation and plan accessed from Amsterdam and West End Avenues was meant to envelope residents to protect them from outside influences instead of isolating them to keep them away from the surrounding neighborhood. Despite significant development which surrounds it, Amsterdam Houses retains its sense of community and neighborhood. State designation would serve to mark this building typology and foster a sense of neighborhood pride.

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Amsterdam Houses- Contextual Supplement

Planned before World War II, but completed afterwards, Amsterdam Houses exemplifies a pivotal moment in the collision of two competing visions of urban planning in the 20th century. Rooted in the New Deal acceptance of government responsibility for housing the poor, but profoundly influenced by the post-War need to house returning veterans, the target population that Amsterdam Houses was intended to serve shifted *from* the poor blacks and immigrants who had lived on San Juan Hill *to* the returning more middle-class veterans. Thus, Amsterdam Houses personifies the last gasp of the New Deal vision of social responsibility before the era of Urban Renewal was ushered in by the 1949 United States Housing Act which focused on upgrading the urban built environment by encouraging the provision of middle class housing to stem the tide of suburban migration and the revitalize the economic base of New York City.

Quite literally, Amsterdam Houses reflects a transition in the public housing typology of New York City, *from* the low-rise model housing of First Houses in which a strategy of rehabilitating every third house of existing houses was employed *to* a strategy of demolition of low-quality housing to build modern housing.

Resident Ethnic and Racial Diversity

Amsterdam Houses was one of the few NYCHA funded housing projects whose residents were ethnically diverse. Unlike the James Johnson Houses which opened in Harlem during the same month of December, 1948 and was only 16% white, the resident's ethnic and racial profile of Amsterdam Houses was more diverse, with 31% of its residents being representing minorities, while 68% were white.

Design

Amsterdam Houses stands as one of the last publicly funded housing developments in New York City to align with the city grid, making the complex feel more of a piece with the neighborhood, in stark contrast to later public housing urban renewal large-scale schemes that relied on larger-scale super blocks and "tower in the park" structures.

Legal Context of Amsterdam Houses

"By the time the Wagner-Steagall Act [of 1937] became national law, New York City and New York State had already seven decades of experience in grappling with the problems of the slums." (Sclar, Elliott, *Neighborhood Change and the Future of the City: The Case of the Upper West Side*, unpublished manuscript)

The Amsterdam Houses were originally funded under a series of NY State laws. In 1934, New York State passed the Municipal Housing Authority Law which allowed local governments to create local housing authorities that were empowered to develop affordable housing funded by the sale of municipal bonds or federal funds. Thus, the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) was born in 1934 (Sclar, p. III-21). Initially, NYCHA focused on developing and improving housing for the poor, but

gradually the problem of housing the middle classes became increasingly evident, as land prices increased, especially in the post-World War II years.

At the beginning of 1938, Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia devised a tax, the proceeds of which would finance \$500,000 in interest payments on \$16 million of NYCHA bonds (Sclar, p. III-23). In September 1938, NYS became the first state in the country to incorporate an article on housing in its Constitution. Article XVIII specifies how State and Local communities might set up publicly financed low-rent housing, with the State legislature empowered to provide funding. With the amendment passed, the relevant state law – chapter 44-A -- was enacted by the New York State legislature in June 1939.

New York City received two-thirds of the allotment of State loans in the first four years of the passing of the State housing law, some of which went to purchase the Amsterdam Housing site. During the war years, shortages kept the Amsterdam Houses and other projects from moving forward, but New York State prepared architectural plans to avoid future delays.

Post-war inflation in housing constructions costs necessitated additional funding from New York State, and a succession of laws (Laws of 1947, Chapter 618; laws of 1949, Chapter 27) were enacted by the NYS legislature and approved by referendum to increase housing loans from the original \$300 million to 735 million in 1949.

To expedite the construction of permanent housing, the authority undertook to rehabilitate boarded up slum buildings to house site residents displaced by the construction. NYCHA persuaded the State Division of Housing to approve funds for the rehabilitation of such buildings and on August 14, 1946, New York State provided \$35,000,000 for rehabilitation projects. Of that sum, \$669,497 went to rehabilitate housing for 340 residents from the Amsterdam Houses site in seven old law tenements and 112 “modern dwellings” at a cost per unit of \$5978.

Although the Amsterdam Houses received no funds from Federal or State monies that were earmarked specifically for veterans, Federal and State Governments did pass legislation providing for veterans preference in public housing that applied to the Amsterdam Houses.

Public Law 171, 81st Congress, First Session, Sec 302 (a), amended the Public Housing Act of 1937 and gave veterans preference over all others except eligible site occupants. The Consolidated Laws of New York, Chapter 44-A, Article VIII, Section 156 limited non-veterans to a 6 to 1 rent-income ratio but permitted veterans a more generous 8 to 1 ratio – making more veterans eligible for PH. Together, these laws had a significant impact on the Amsterdam Houses.



Date: 08/30/2016

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 06101.019184

Name: Baruch Houses - NYCHA

Location:

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or poses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

Significance Statement:

Baruch Houses is a 27.64-acre complex bounded to the north by East Houston, the FDR Drive to the east, Delancey Street to the south, and Columbia Street to the west. Located on Manhattan's Lower East Side, the complex is the largest NYCHA development in Manhattan, consisting of 17 buildings ranging in height from seven to fourteen stories. Built with federal funds, Baruch Houses was designed by Emery Roth & Sons and constructed in three sections between 1954 and 1959. The "tower in the park" design covers 13.4 percent of the superblock site.

The diagonally oriented towers feature a dynamic zig-zag form, flat roofs, original fenestration pattern, shallow canopies over the entrances, and minimal decoration other than the cream-colored basketweave brick work and blue glazed tilework at the entrances. The site includes curvilinear paths, randomly placed green space, a NYC Parks playground (Baruch Playground), and some parking lots. (Note: Within the playground is the individually NR eligible Baruch Bathhouse built in 1901; see 06101.000377.)

Baruch Houses meet the criteria for listing on the National Register as an intact representative example of public housing built by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) in the post-World War II era. The development meets Criterion A in the following areas: 1. Social History, as a physical representation of the long held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; 2. Politics/Government, for the Federal and local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low income residents; and 3. Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low income residents. The complex also meets Criterion C under the themes of Architecture and Community Planning and Development. The "tower in the park" design with green space is representative of modern urban planning design theory of the period.

Supplemental History of Baruch Houses:

NOTE: The following contextual history of Baruch Houses was prepared by Pratt Institute Historic Preservation Graduate Students, 2013. Accessed online at <http://smalltownintown.wixsite.com/home/baruch-houses>



"The Baruch Houses were created as an example for better housing practices. Emphasizing the importance of such a development, there was an obligation to provide decent housing for all living in the slums. This obligation was recognized both in federal and state legislation, and applications were taken for the low-rent apartments beginning in the summer of 1953. The Baruch Houses project was a solution to the lack of middle-income housing. The \$31,410,000 development would be the largest of all the low-rent projects built by the city, and would provide apartments for 2,194. The rest of the site would be utilized for landscaping, walking paths, and playgrounds.

The area changed drastically in anticipation of the Baruch Houses. The last few lingering shops included Poppa Carmello Bubello's candy shop at 311 Rivington Street, and Morris Rubin, a cobbler at Lewis Street and Rivington Street. The relocation of families living on the sites acquired for public housing was a problem for the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA). NYCHA's plan was to gradually relocate displaced tenement residents to new housing developments being built throughout the city. Through a three stage construction plan beginning along the East River and moving West, various sections of tenements would be destroyed in a timeframe that would allow those tenement residents to either be placed in new NYCHA housing throughout the city or would give them time to find other accommodations.

By 1952, Baruch Place was established as a street, and many other streets were changed within the housing development grid, such as New Street, which was paved to connect Baruch Street with Mangin Street, in addition to East Street, which was eventually destroyed to make way for Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive.

The Baruch Houses development recognizes the contributions Bernard Baruch's father, Simon Baruch, made toward better hygiene and living conditions, and nearby is the first public bath named for him. It was designed with an interest in public housing, hygiene, medical care, better conditions and equal opportunities for all. The bathhouse still remains on the property, and it was converted into a recreational facility shortly after the Baruch Houses project was complete.

Emery Roth & Sons, one of the most prolific architectural firms responsible for many of the classic New York City buildings such as The San Remo and The Beresford on Central Park West, designed 18 freestanding buildings for the Baruch Houses development in a zigzag style to offer great views of the East River and to underscore the concept of open space. Having worked on many projects in the 1920's and 1930's combining the Beaux-Arts and Art Deco styles, Richard Roth of the firm designed all sixteen thirteen-story structures, in addition to one seven-story building, with irregular fronts. The buildings incorporate diagonal axes and zigzag-shaped footprints. They are clad in red brick and feature crenellated slab blocks; the Baruch Addition, not designed by Emery Roth & Sons, is clad in yellow brick and deviates from the diagonal axes design. This general shape and building layout, which consists of dispersed structures throughout the site with no distinct primary facades, succeeds in providing 70 percent of the Baruch Houses with impressive views of the East River. There is no dominant central open space within the development; instead, there are generously scaled open spaces distributed throughout the complex. Additionally, the development's close proximity to the East River emphasizes the sense of open space. . . ."



Date: 02/22/2017

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 04701.019362

Name: Bay View Houses (NYCHA)

Location:

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:



Bay View Houses consist of 23 eight-story brick apartment buildings occupying a 30-acre site bounded by Shore Parkway, Rockaway Parkway, East 102nd Street, and a portion of Seaview Avenue in the Canarsie section of Brooklyn. The public housing complex was designed by Katz, Waisman, Blumenkranz, Stein, & Weber and constructed in 1955. The authors of *New York 1960*, opine that this is one of the more “notable” and “well-detailed” public housing projects built in Brooklyn’s South Shore section stating that “The architects developed a site plan that broke the vast project up into four quadrants, each with a playground and sitting areas, and each with its own identifying color – yellow, blue, brown, green – used on balcony columns, glazed brick patterns, lobby trim and signs. Inside, a screened balcony was located opposite the elevator on each floor, the first use of such a “porch” or terrace in any city housing project.” [1]

Bay View Houses complex was featured in *Progressive Architecture* (February 1958) in an article on “Middle Income Housing.” The complex meets NR Criterion A in the areas of politics/government, social history, and community planning, and Criterion C in the area of architecture. It represents the response of the local government through the New York City Housing Authority to provide affordable housing for middle-income families. It was built on the site of an area previously occupied by temporary housing opened in 1946 to accommodate returning war veterans and their families in Quonset huts. The Bay View Houses complex was the first no-cash-subsidy project to be constructed under the Wagner administration, meaning that the rents were set to cover operating costs and repay the construction debt with no cash contribution from any federal or state agency.

The complex represents the role of the local government in providing a supply of housing for the middle class following World War II. The site plan, the relationship of the buildings to one another, and the repetition of the design and form created a sense of communal identity that distinguished the complex as a separate entity, distinct from its surrounding neighborhood. It is typical of multi-family housing of the post war period in NYC in the tall height of its buildings as opposed the lower-scale public housing of the 1930s and 1940s. The architectural style of the buildings is dominated by the concept of “functional modernism,” the belief that the buildings should reflect, to the degree possible, the utilitarian ideals of European architectural precedents in public housing. The complex is characterized by a functional, utilitarian design; repetitive building forms; substantial open spaces; defined circulation networks; recreation areas; and functional interiors.

[1] Robert A.M. Stern, Thomas Mellins, and David Fishman, *New York 1960: Architecture and Urbanism Between the Second World War and the Bicentennial* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1995) 942.



Date: 08/18/2017

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 00501.002060

Name: Boston Road Plaza - NYCHA

Location: 2440 Boston Road, Bronx NY

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:



Boston Road Plaza (originally known as 2440 Boston Road)
2440 Boston Road, Bronx

NYCHA's Boston Road Plaza (originally known as 2440 Boston Road) in the Bronx consists of two buildings on a triangularly-shaped lot, with a significant rocky outcropping along the east edge, which together frame passive recreation areas on the east and west sides of the site. The site is bordered by Boston Road, Holland Avenue, and Waring Road. The main building is a 20-story tower designed to accommodate elderly residents. South of the tower is a one-story community center with a recent addition on the south side. Boston Road Plaza was built in 1972 to the design of Davis Brody Associates, Architects and M. Paul Friedburg Associates, Landscape Architects. The bold massing of the buildings at Boston Road represents a departure from many of the earlier, more conservative NYCHA designs. The complex meets Criterion A in the following areas: (1) Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; (2) Politics/Government, for the Federal and local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income elderly residents; and 3) Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income elderly residents. The complex which is less than 50 years of age is exceptionally significant under Criterion C for under the themes of Architecture and Community Planning & Development. The design and construction of the buildings and their placement in a designed landscape represent a particular moment in NYCHA's history when the agency was seeking bold approaches to design. The buildings have exterior walls of brown clay tile. The base of the tower has square posts which form covered walkways. Window bays with brown metal spandrels form continuous vertical elements on the facades. The massing of the tower is enlivened by cantilevered projections near the upper third of the building. The rectangular plan community center features two bold north-facing clerestories.

2440 Boston Road is discussed in a New York Times article from 1973 entitled "Housing Projects Break Mold." The development is noted as "one striking example of the new design trend in public housing . . . The structure, which contains 235 apartments for the elderly, was cited last December by the New York Society of Architects as 'a welcome departure from the characterless boxes which were the trademark of low-rent construction for over a quarter of a century.'

Norman Dorf of Davis, Brody & Associates, who designed the building, made the top eight floors, which have larger apartments with picture windows, wider than the base of the structure.

He said the novel design permitted bigger apartments while keeping land usage to a minimum. 'With more space at the top,' he explained, 'you increase the open area around the building.'

The project, completed in August, 1972, at a cost of \$5.4-million, is also notable for its corridors, which have exposed brick rather than plaster or cinder block walls, and are bright and airy because of large windows at either end." [Robert E. Tomasson, "Housing Projects Break Mold," New York Times, December 9, 1973, <http://www.nytimes.com/1973/12/09/archives/housing-projects-break-mold-projects-break-mold-style-and-amenities.html>]



Date: 08/17/2017

Staff: James Finelli

USN Number: 04701.020143

Name: Boulevard Houses (NYCHA)

Location:

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or poses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

Boulevard Houses (NYCHA)
812 Ashford St, Brooklyn

Built in 1951 NYCHA's Boulevard Houses is bounded by Linden Boulevard, Ashford Street, Wortman Avenue, and Schenck Avenue in Brooklyn. Designed by the noted architecture firm of Kelly & Gruzen and landscape architect, Michael M. Burris, the development's 18 buildings are set in two superblocks, all oriented true North ("Zeilenbau" planning concept), with six, 14-story buildings lining the elongated, central green, and twelve, 12-story buildings lining the site's perimeter. This public housing development meets Criterion A in the following areas: (1) Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; (2) Politics/Government, for the local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income residents; and 3) Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income residents especially following World War II. The complex also meets Criterion C under the themes of Architecture and Community Planning & Development. The design and construction of the buildings and their placement in a designed landscape is representative of modern urban planning design theory of the period.



Date: 06/23/2016

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 00501.001971

Name: Bronx River Houses

Location: 1605 East 174 Street, Bronx NY 10472

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:** False

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possesses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:



The Bronx River Houses appear eligible under Criterion A as a good example of post-World War II-era public housing in New York City that was built simultaneous with the Cross Bronx Expressway, and represent post-war visions of urban life, including high-rise apartment living, the rise of the automobile, and easy interstate highway access. It is also associated with popular music of the late 20th century, including the emergence of hip hop, an urban musical style that came to prominence in the 1970s. It was "...home to musicians like Afrika Bambaataa (Bam) who formed Zulu Nation here in 1974, a group which was to be a pivotal force in the formation of hip hop" (Elena Martinez/City Lore, Place Matters Profile of Bronx River Houses, accessed at www.placematters.net/node/1053, 12/13/2011). In addition, Bronx River Houses appear eligible under Criterion C as a good example of Swiss architect Le Corbusier's "Towers in the Sky" concept which he developed to improve society by providing state-of-the-art dwellings that permitted maximum light and ventilation, versus the cramped conditions offered in the city's tenement buildings.

Bronx River Houses (completed 1951) is located on a 13.94-acre parcel bound by Bronx River Avenue and the Cross Bronx Expressway to the north, Harrod Avenue to the east, East 174th Street to the south, and Bronx River Avenue to the west. The complex consists of nine 14-story elongated X-plan buildings, centered around rectangular-plan shafts. Apartments are located in the X-plan sections, while the rectangular-plan sections house both apartments and mechanical systems for the elevator and other infrastructure. The identical apartment buildings rest atop concrete foundations, and are constructed of red brick laid in common bond. They are capped by flat tar-coated roofs with simple brick parapets. Brick mechanical penthouses are situated in the center of each roof. The multi-faceted facades are generally three bays wide, pierced by a variety of single, paired, and triple double-hung sash windows, and horizontally installed bathroom sash. The windows are arranged in a symmetrical pattern. Entrances are generally sheltered by flat roof canopies, supported by simple brick piers.

Located in the center of the grounds is a low-scale community center which was extensively renovated in 2003. It is a single-story T-plan building that rests atop a concrete foundation; the facades are constructed of brick, and the building is capped by a flat roof. The metal parapet overhangs the roof, and emphasizes the horizontal nature of the building. The high-bay northern portion houses a gymnasium. Rectangular-plan sections are appended to the north and west facades, and likely house offices. The building is pierced by Modern-style windows and doors.

Bronx River Houses are located in a park-like setting that was designed and conceived to complement the buildings. The complex is surrounded by a metal picket fence, bordered by mature trees. Mature trees and concrete paved rectilinear and curved walkways also connect the buildings in the complex. The southwestern portion of the lot is occupied by 174th Street Playground. The playground was established by the New York City Parks Department simultaneous with Bronx River Houses in the late 1940s/early 1950s, and provides a recreational area for local residents (NYC Parks, no date). A community garden, located on the east side of Harrod Avenue outside the property boundary of the complex, also serves the local community.



Date: 08/17/2017

Staff: Paul Archambault

USN Number: 04701.020144

Name: Brownsville Houses

Location:

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:



Brownsville Houses (NYCHA)
307 Blake Ave, Brooklyn
Prepared by Kathy Howe, NYSHPO

Built in 1948, NYCHA's Brownsville Houses in Brooklyn is bordered by Sutter Avenue on the north, Osborn Street and Mother Gaston Blvd on the east, Dumont Avenue on the south, and Rockaway Avenue on the west. Blake Avenue divides the site into north and south sections. Designed by architect Frederick G. Frost and landscape architect Alfred Geiffert, Jr., the complex consists of twenty-seven three-story walk-up and six-story elevator buildings organized at forty-five degrees to the existing street grid, which form a series of angled forecourts along public streets and various quads and smaller interstitial spaces on the site's interior. A north-south axis that is mostly a pedestrian greenway links with Tilden Houses to the South, and terminates with the Langston Hughes Houses to the North.

Brownsville Houses was NYCHA's second postwar housing project (Elliott Houses in Manhattan was the first, completed in 1947). "Like all of the twenty-one postwar city and state projects, both Elliott Houses and Brownsville Houses used variants of the "cross" plan The cross plan tended to consolidate circulation by cutting down on excess corridor area, and it provided a maximum amount of light and ventilation to apartments in the protruding wing forms" (Richard Plunz, "A History of Housing in New York City," 262). This was the first NYCHA development to combine three-story walk-ups with six-story elevator buildings in a step-down form.

Brownsville was later the focus of architect Oscar Newman's 1972 publication, "Defensible Space," arguing for low-rise housing to promote family territoriality. In this publication, commissioned by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development and Research, Newman argued that appropriate architectural design and site planning can help inhibit crime by drawing comparisons between Brownsville with its low- and medium-rise buildings and the adjacent VanDyke Houses composed of high-rise towers.

Frederick G. Frost (1876-1966) was born in London, England, in 1876, and emigrated to the United States in 1892. He studied architecture at the Atelier Masquery in New York and then at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris from 1900 to 1902. Upon his return from Paris, he began work in the New York City office of architects Samuel Beck Parkman Trowbridge and Goodhue Livingston as a designer and office manager. While with Trowbridge & Livingston, Frost oversaw the design and construction of the B. Altman department store in Manhattan. Frost opened his own architecture practice in New York City in 1917 and was joined by his son, Frederick G., Jr., in 1936, and grandson, A. Corwin Frost, in 1963. The firm closed in 1978. Through more than six decades of practice, the firm designed hundreds of buildings for commercial, institutional, and residential clients. They were perhaps best known for the Friedsam Residence, the Martin Luther King, Jr., High School, the Graduate Faculty Center at the New School for Social Research, P.S. #36/The Morningside School, and the Seward Park Houses, all in Manhattan; the Queensbridge Houses in Queens; the Sams Residence in New Rochelle, N.Y.; various buildings for the New York School for the Deaf; and for St. John's Hospital, in Smithtown, N.Y. Additionally, Socony-Vacuum Oil Company (later Mobil Oil) hired the firm to design a standardized gas station and other company structures for United States and South American sites and Frost was retained as their corporate design consultant in the 1930s and 1940s. (Frederick G. Frost & Associates architectural records and papers, circa 1910-1982, Columbia University Libraries, Archival Collections, Biographical Note, see http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/archival/collections/ldpd_6761094/.)



**New York State Office of Parks,
Recreation and Historic Preservation**

Division for Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189
518-237-8643

Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Rose Harvey
Commissioner

RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: March 4, 2014

STAFF: Kathy Howe

PROPERTY: George Washington Carver Houses

MCD: Manhattan

ADDRESS: 65 East 99th Street (bounded by East 99th St., East 106th St.,

Park Ave, and Madison Ave

COUNTY: New York

PROJECT REF: 14PR00804

USN: 06101.018555

- I. Property is individually listed on SR/NR:
name of listing:
- Property is a contributing component of a SR/NR district:
name of district:
- II. Property meets eligibility criteria.
- Property contributes to a district which appears to meet eligibility criteria.
Pre SRB: Post SRB: SRB date

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

George Washington Carver Houses in El Barrio meet the criteria for listing to the National Register of Historic Places as intact representative examples of public housing built by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) in the post-World War II era. Completed in 1958 to the design of Kahn & Jacobs with significant renovations in 1964 by architects Pomerance & Brienes and landscape architect M. Paul Friedberg, the 14.63-acre development of 13 brick residential buildings is bounded by East 99th and East 106th Streets, and Park and Madison Avenues. The complex consists of a mix of 16-story tall X-plan

towers and 6-story buildings. Carver Houses were originally designed by Kahn & Jacobs following a "Towers in the Park" concept within a large superblock that is meant to decrease density, introduce more light and air into the home, and provide community park space within the immediate vicinity. The landscape plan emphasizes a wide plaza, green grassy areas, walks lined with mature trees, and play areas.

The complex is especially significant for the renovations made to the project's open spaces in 1964 which were financed by the Vincent Astor Foundation. "The newly orchestrated spaces provided active play areas for teenagers and children while also meeting the recreational needs of adults. Taking advantage of the existing planting and the center mall-like space that ran north-south through the project, the designers created a series of geometrically clear open spaces defined by low walls, steps and planters, culminating in an amphitheater cover 60,000 square feet near the midpoint, where lower buildings bounded the edges. Large enough to accommodate 1,500 people seated on permanent bleacherlike steps, the amphitheater included a circular stage area backed by U-shaped brick walls."¹

This housing complex meets Criterion A in the following areas: (1) Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; (2) Politics/Government, for the Federal and local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income residents; and (3) Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income residents especially following World War II. The complex also meets Criterion C under the themes of Architecture and Community Planning & Development. The design and construction of the buildings and their placement in a designed landscape is representative of modern urban planning design theory of the period.

If you have any questions concerning this Determination of Eligibility, please call Kathy Howe at (518) 237-8643, ext. 3266.

¹ Robert A.M. Stern, Thomas Mellins, and David Fishman, *New York 1960* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1995), 876-877.



Date: 11/30/2016

Staff: Daria Merwin

USN Number: 00501.002044

Name: Clason Point Gardens (NYCHA)

Location:

Resource Status:

- 1. Determination:** Eligible
- 2. Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or poses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

The Clason Point Gardens NYCHA complex consists of 46 mostly two-story residential buildings containing 400 apartments, completed on December 20, 1941. Located in the Clason Point neighborhood of the South Bronx, the 17-acre development is bordered by Story Avenue on the north, Noble and Croes Avenues on the east, Seward Avenue on the south, and Metcalf Avenue on the west. Clason Point Gardens is eligible for the State and National Registers under Criterion A in the area of Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor, as well as under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Community Planning and Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income residents.

Clason Point Gardens was the first public housing project built in the Bronx and NYCHA's first low-rise, garden-style apartment homes, constructed at a cost of roughly \$2.2 million. The first tenants, mainly low-income families headed by military veterans, moved into their homes in September 1941. The buildings initially resembled military barracks, with austere whitewashed concrete block walls organized in rows parallel to the existing street grid at the periphery and diagonally to the grid within the site's core.

The original design by the architecture team of York and Sawyer, Aymar Embury II, and Burton and Bohm, with landscape architects Jo Ray and A. Carl Stelling was among the few, low-rise, low-density public housing projects built in New York City, using only two stories and quasi-Zeilenbau site planning. Clason Point Gardens was one of New York's last housing projects of the interwar period that marked the end of the city's tradition of low- and mid-rise workers' housing. Adding to the site's significance is that in 1969-1972, Clason Point was redesigned by the advocate of "Defensible Space," Oscar Newman as an experimental site implementing the latest thinking in urban planning. Newman's alterations were designed to allow residents to have more "agency" over their personal space, and included changes such as letting residents change the exterior siding materials and colors on their units, adding exterior lighting, and delineating private and public space with new iron fences. Not all of Newman's changes at Clason Point Gardens were successful, but the lessons learned continue to shape urban residential design today.



Date: 08/21/2017

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 00501.001888

Name: Davidson Houses

Location: 1221 Prospect Avenue, Bronx NY 10459

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:** False

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:



NYCHA's Lewis S. Davidson Houses is a roughly U-shaped building located on an angled 1.9 acre site bounded by Union Avenue, Home Street, and Prospect Avenue in the Morrisania neighborhood of the Bronx. The wings of the building form a landscaped entrance courtyard at the rear of the building while an L-shaped parking lot is at the southwest corner of the parcel. Completed in 1973, the Brutalist residential building was designed by architect Paul Rudolph while the landscape was designed by landscape architect George F. Cushine. The building features cast-in place concrete frames which form a gridded pattern and contrasting dark gray infill panels of split-faced masonry blocks. The facades are enlivened by zig-zagging bay windows. The configuration of the metal frame window units vary depending on the internal function; the window units that provide light to living rooms, for example, consist of centered picture (fixed) windows with either single or paired double-hung sash on either side while most of the other windows appear to be three-light vertical sash. Rudolph's bold design for Davidson Houses was a departure from the earlier, more conservative red brick tower designs of NYCHA. The complex meets Criterion A in the following areas: (1) Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; (2) Politics/Government, for the government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income residents including the elderly; and 3) Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income residents. The complex which is less than 50 years of age is exceptionally significant under Criterion C for Rudolph's Brutalist architectural design.

This public housing development was completed just prior to New York City's fiscal crisis and the cut off of federal housing funds. Davidson was "hailed as a hopeful sign in the face of widespread blight and the loss of South Bronx housing in the early 1970s Lewis S. Davidson (1883-1964) whose name is commemorated in this housing development was a dynamic minister, teacher, community leader and activist. He used his skills to publish a local newspaper, develop a food cooperative, and even become the first president of the Bronx branch of the NAACP, which he founded" (Janet Butler Munch, entry on Lewis Davidson Houses in Bronx Architecture, an online guide to the online guide to the architecture of the borough developed by Lehman College Art Gallery/CUNY. See http://www.lehman.edu/vpadvance/artgallery/arch/buildings/Lewis_davinson.html).

"Paul Rudolph (1918-1997) was one of the most celebrated and innovative American architects of the 20th century Trained at the Harvard Graduate School of Design in the 1940s, Rudolph was a second-generation modernist who grew dissatisfied with functional aesthetics but remained committed to exploiting industrial materials to create structures of great formal complexity. From 1958 to 1965, he served as chairman of the Department of Architecture at Yale University, where he designed the well-known Art and Architecture Building, now called Paul Rudolph Hall" (Matthew A. Postal, LPC Research Department, Paul Rudolph Penthouse & Apartments, 23 Beekman Place, Manhattan, LPC Designation Report, November 16, 2010, LP-2390, pp. 3-4. See <http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/reports/2390.pdf>). While most of Rudolph's other projects in the metropolitan area were never realized, those that were constructed include designs in Manhattan for a townhouse at 101 East 63rd Street (1966); a mixed-use building at 246 East 58th Street (1989-94) that he later used as his architectural office and now houses the Paul Rudolph Heritage Foundation; and his personal residence at 23 Beekman Place residence where he converted the building to apartments and added a rooftop addition in 1976-82. His designs in the Bronx include Tracy Towers (1967-72), 20-40 West Mosholu Parkway; Davidson Houses for NYC Housing Authority (1967-73), 810 Home Street in Morrisania; and Middletown Plaza for the NYC Housing Authority (1967-73), 3033 Middletown Road in Pelham Bay.



Date: 08/21/2017

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 06101.019302

Name: 239 West 103rd St (NYCHA - Douglass Rehabs)

Location: 239 West 103rd Street, New York NY

Resource Status:

- 1. Determination:** Eligible
- 2. Contributing:** True

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or poses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

239 West 103rd Street was built in 1898 and designed by Clarence True. It is a contributing building in the Riverside-West End Historic District Extension II. This locally designated historic district is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C in the area of architectural design. Built primarily between the mid-1890s and the early 1930s, the buildings in the district represent the various phases of development that transformed the once rural area between West 89th Street and West 108th Street west of Broadway into a dense urban enclave of speculatively built single-family dwellings and grand high-rise apartment buildings.

This six-story and basement Renaissance Revival apartment building has the following character-defining features: Stoop; portico with Ionic columns and pilasters supporting an entablature with carved pediment; round-arched entrance with foliate keystone; round arched windows at first and sixth stories; stone quoins; keyed window surrounds and keystones at first through fifth stories; windows at sixth story set in an arcade with paired Ionic columns on carved corbels.



Date: 08/17/2017

Staff: Paul Archambault

USN Number: 06101.019182

Name: 251 West 103rd Street - NYCHA bldg

Location: 251 West 103rd Street, New York NY

Resource Status:

- 1. Determination:** Eligible
- 2. Contributing:** True

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

251 West 103rd Street - Manhattan
NYCHA-Douglas Rehabs
Prepared by Kathy Howe, NYSHPO

251 West 103rd Street was built in 1890-91 and designed by M.V.B. Ferdon. It is a contributing building in the Riverside-West End Historic District Extension II. This locally designated historic district is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C in the area of architectural design. Built primarily between the mid-1890s and the early 1930s, the buildings in the district represent the various phases of development that transformed the once rural area between West 89th Street and West 108th Street west of Broadway into a dense urban enclave of speculatively built single-family dwellings and grand high-rise apartment buildings.

This three story with basement Renaissance Revival brownstone row house has the following significant architectural features: rough-faced rustication at basement; windows with carved heads at basement; windows with carved lintel course, spandrels, heads and jambs at first story; two-story angular bay supported by carved brackets; molded sill and lintel courses at second story; carved window heads, lintel course and spandrels at third story; metal cornice with classically decorated frieze. Alterations: The stoop has been removed and the entrance relocated to the basement.



Date: 08/17/2017

Staff: Paul Archambault

USN Number: 06101.019301

Name: 244 West 104th Street (NYCHA - Douglas Rehabs)

Location: 244 West 104th Street, New York NY 10025

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or poses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

244 West 104th Street - Manhattan
NYCHA - Douglas Rehabs
Prepared by Kathy Howe, NYSHPO

244 West 104th Street was built 1898 and designed by George F. Pelham. It is a contributing building in the Riverside-West End Historic District Extension II. This locally designated historic district is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C in the area of architectural design. Built primarily between the mid-1890s and the early 1930s, the buildings in the district represent the various phases of development that transformed the once rural area between West 89th Street and West 108th Street west of Broadway into a dense urban enclave of speculatively built single-family dwellings and grand high-rise apartment buildings.

This nine-story Renaissance Revival apartment building has the following significant architectural features: one-story granite base with rusticated beltcourses, voussoir-style window lintels, and primary entrance enframingent with paired ionic columns supporting an entablature with ornamented frieze; brick-clad upper stories feature curved outer bays; window openings with full terra-cotta enframingents, some with molded lintels, some with piers ornamented with cornucopia and cartouches; top story features terra-cotta beltcourses running between windows; modillioned cornice.



Date: 08/17/2017

Staff: Paul Archambault

USN Number: 06101.019181

Name: 241 West 101st St - NYCHA bldg

Location: 241 West 101st St, New York NY

Resource Status:

- 1. Determination:** Eligible
- 2. Contributing:** True

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possesses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

241 101st Street - Manhattan
NYCHA- Douglas Rehabs
Prepared by Kathy Howe, NYSHPO

241 West 101st Street (aka 241-243 West 101st Street) was built in 1901 and designed by architect George Keister. It is a contributing building in the Riverside-West End Historic District Extension II. This locally designated historic district is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C in the area of architectural design. Built primarily between the mid-1890s and the early 1930s, the buildings in the district represent the various phases of development that transformed the once rural area between West 89th Street and West 108th Street west of Broadway into a dense urban enclave of speculatively built single-family dwellings and grand high-rise apartment buildings.

Known as The Ackerley, this seven story and basement Beaux Arts style residential building has the following significant architectural features: Rusticated stone base, basement rough-faced; upper stories brick with quoins; tripartite entrance surround with carved spandrels, paneled pilasters with cartouches, tresse molding and ribbon with building name supported by scrolls; windows above entrance with elaborately keyed surrounds; balustraded balcony with carved brackets, cartouches, and modillions; windows with keystones, upper stories with keyed surrounds; cornice at fifth story with swags, modillions, brackets, paneled frieze, and metal railings; mansard roof; pedimented dormers.



Date: 10/24/2014

Staff: Daria Merwin

USN Number: 06101.018559

Name: East River Houses (NYCHA complex; 1941)

Location: 416 East 105th St, New York NY 10029

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or poses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

The East River Houses complex is bounded to the north by East 105th Street, the east by FDR Drive, the south by East 102nd Street, and the west by First Avenue. It consists of ten buildings of 6, 10, and 11 stories on an 11.8 acre site, with a total of 1158 housing units. The East River Houses were built under the auspices of the US Housing Act of 1937, which established the US Housing Authority and a permanent Federal low-rent housing program. Construction began on May 1, 1940, with first occupancy on April 1, 1941; the project was designed by Voorhees, Walker, Foley and Smith in association with CW Schlusing and Alfred Easton Poor. Notable architectural features include red brick construction, flat roofs, original fenestration pattern, and stripped architectural details, while the site includes open spaces (courtyards, ball courts, playground) shared by the community. Based on preliminary research, the East River Houses appear to meet the criteria for listing on the National Register as an intact representative example of a public housing project built by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) in the late 1930s into the post-World War II era. The East River Houses meet Criterion A in the following areas: 1. Social History, as a physical representation of the long held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; 2. Politics/Government, for the Federal and local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low income residents; and 3. Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low income residents. The complex also meets Criterion C under the themes of Architecture and Community Planning and Development. The design and construction of the buildings and their placement in a designed landscape is representative of modern urban planning design theory of the period.

RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: July 2, 2012

STAFF: Kathy Howe

PROPERTY: Eastchester Gardens

MCD: Bronx

ADDRESS: 1134 Burke Avenue

COUNTY: Bronx Co.

USN: 00501.001561

- I. Property is individually listed on SR/NR:
name of listing:
- Property is a contributing component of a SR/NR district:
name of district:
- II. Property meets eligibility criteria.
- Property contributes to a district which appears to meet eligibility criteria.
- Pre SRB: Post SRB: SRB date

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Designed by Harrison & Abramowitz, Architects; landscape architects Gilmore Clarke, Michael Rapuano, and Leslie G. Holleran; and Seelye, Steveson & Value, Engineers, Eastchester Gardens was completed on June 1, 1950. The 15.01-acre complex is bordered by Burke, Bouck, Adeo and Yates Avenues, and consists of seven and eight-stories tall red brick buildings with 876 apartments. Eastchester Gardens was originally developed for moderate-income families, developed under the City's no-case-subsidy program.

The buildings at Eastchester Gardens are representations of the popular X configuration of postwar NYCHA housing. Four of the buildings are single cross plans while the remaining are double cruciforms with two X forms joined together. The building wings radiate from a central circulation core. "The cross plan tended to consolidate circulation by cutting down

on excess corridor area, and it provided for the maximum amount of light and ventilation to apartments in the protruding room forms....The disadvantage of the cross form was its relatively high cost owing to excessive exterior wall surface and the complexities of joining the wings at the core.”¹

Eastchester is notable for its landscape plan with graciously curving walks, a semi-circular playground space, green spaces, and London Plane trees.

Aside from replacement windows and entrance doors, the only major change at Eastchester is the addition of a new community center attached to one of the original buildings.

Eastchester Gardens meet Criterion A in the following areas: (1) Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; (2) Politics/Government, for the Federal and local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income residents following World War II; and 3) Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income residents after World War II.

The development is also eligible under Criterion C under the themes of Architecture and Community Planning & Development. The design and construction of Eastchester Gardens as a planned community is representative of modern urban planning design theory. Typical of the 1950s housing projects, Eastchester represented the social, economic, and aesthetic arguments for the “tower in the park” model.

If you have any questions concerning this Determination of Eligibility, please call Kathy Howe at (518) 237-8643, ext. 3266.

¹ Richard Plunz, *A History of Housing in New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 262.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
FIRST HOUSES
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 112-114, 118-120, 124-126, 130-132, 136-138 E. 3rd St.;
21, 31, 33-35, 37, 39, 44 Avenue A

CITY, TOWN New York VICINITY OF _____ COUNTY New York STATE New York
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 17 CODE 036 COUNTY New York CODE 061

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME New York City Housing Authority
STREET & NUMBER 250 Broadway
CITY, TOWN New York VICINITY OF _____ STATE New York

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. New York County Register's Office
STREET & NUMBER 31 Chambers Street
CITY, TOWN New York STATE New York

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Landmarks Preservation Commission LP-0876
DATE November, 1974 _____ FEDERAL _____ STATE _____ COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Landmarks Preservation Commission 305 Broadway
CITY, TOWN New York STATE New York

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The First Houses municipal housing project, on the lower east side of Manhattan, consists of eight brick buildings laid out in an L-shaped plan around an inner landscaped courtyard. The three buildings facing Avenue A are four stories high, while the five units on Third Street are five-story buildings separated by open access courts. Entrance to the buildings is gained through the access courts rather than from the streets.

The houses are solidly constructed of red brick and the windows originally had six-over-six sash. The windows, changed in 1974 to allow air conditioning units to be added, retain the effect of six-over-six sash. The chief ornament on the street fronts of the seven wide double units consists of three raised brick courses above the two top corner windows of each building, halfway between the top of the windows and the coping of the roof parapet. In addition, four small, square, recessed panels appear above the top four center windows. At 29 Avenue A, the same decoration is adapted to the narrower building. This ornament is a simplification of the angular, stylized motifs of the Art Deco period.

In the paved courtyard, the scene is enlivened by free-standing and applied animal sculpture, designed by artists associated with the Federal Artists Program, which has delighted several generations of children. A large dolphin dominates the rectangular area behind No. 130-132 East Third Street. Smaller scaled horses here reappear at two corners of the pool area, behind No. 136-138, in addition to a bear and a dog, all rather worn from use. The one-story parapet wall, which separates the yard from the Second Street side of the block, is charmingly decorated with round concrete molds set into the brick, depicting eight varieties of animals and birds which are repeated: seagull, gazelle, turkey, rabbit, pigeon, goat, fox and cat--all contributing, with the wall itself, to the feeling of apartness from the life of the city.

First Houses was a small project, originally planned for 120 to 122 families. All apartments had steam heat and hot water, and were equipped with the modern amenities usual in middle-class housing. A typical floor plan, which remains the same today, consisted of four apartments per floor, opening off a common stair hall.

Standard apartments still consist today of three rooms, i.e., living room, bedroom and kitchen, plus a bathroom. There are three two-room apartments, seven of four rooms, and one five-room apartment. Today, because of the conversion of the former nursery and of the synagogue, there are 126 apartments. Room sizes are quite adequate, with living rooms averaging 12 ft. X 15 ft. (some are 12 ft. X 18 ft.) and bedrooms 11 ft. X 12 ft. Kitchens are generally large enough to serve as dinettes, and each was originally equipped with such items as an electric refrigerator, high-oven four-burner stove and overhead laundry dryer. There were no windowless rooms: bathrooms and kitchens have one window; other rooms have two and some corner apartments even have three, providing cross-ventilation. A community laundry room, with electric washing machine, was provided for each of the eight units, as were incinerators, now replaced by compactors. There were a nursery and a synagogue originally, a community meeting room and a unit of the City's Public Health Service on the premises.

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CONTINUATION SHEET FIRST HOUSES

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE

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In 1966, chess tables and flower tubs were installed in the courtyard behind Nos. 29, 31 and 33 Avenue A by the City's Mobilization for Youth. At present there are still eight stores at street level which provide a variety of services for the project and the neighborhood. The coffee shop at 37 Avenue A was always a restaurant, but the other stores have replaced the original businesses.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1935-36

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Frederick L. Ackerman

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

First Houses is both historically and architecturally significant as the first public, low-income housing project in the nation! It was the first project undertaken by the newly established New York City Housing Authority, and was the first municipally sponsored and operated project which endeavored to deal with housing problems of the Lower East Side. It was unusual in that it began as an experimental program in partial demolition and rehabilitation of existing tenements on the site. Financed in part by the issuance of Housing Authority bonds, labor and materials were furnished under the "work-relief" program of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. In addition, a lawsuit resulting from condemnation by the Authority of two tenements on the site established the power of eminent domain of a city housing agency. The low height of the buildings lend a human scale to the project and encourage a feeling of neighborliness, while the landscaped courtyard, a modification of the garden apartment concept, provides an oasis for residents of the project. First Houses continues to serve the needs of its present tenants, and is a significant example of the experimental approach of the period of the New Deal.

First Houses, a municipal housing project, was begun early in 1935 and completed in mid-1936. Approval for the project was granted by Mayor LaGuardia on November 21, 1934. It began as a rehabilitation program, an experiment by the City in partial demolition of existing tenements on the site, in cooperation with the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) in a "work-relief" program.

First Houses was also significant as the first municipally sponsored and operated project which endeavored to deal with the acute and long-standing problems of the Lower East Side of Manhattan, the area of the greatest concentration of slums in the City. It was originally planned for 122 families, with an average monthly rental of \$6.05 per room, which included all basic amenities. Eligibility was determined in part by a family income of no more than five times the rent. The only other existing project on the Lower East Side was Knickerbocker Village, a twelve-story, two-building model housing project for middle-income tenants erected by the Fred F. French Company and financed by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC). The average rent of \$12.50 per room was far too high, in the middle of the Depression, for low-income residents of the neighborhood.

First Houses was a bold innovation in planning which began as an experiment in partial demolition of existing tenements on the site. It was originally planned to raze every third house, in order to open up the block to air and light, and then to

1. The text of this report was taken almost in its entirety from the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission Designation Report, First Houses (LP-0867), November, 1974, by Ellen Kramer.

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remodel the remaining houses. This practice had been successful in England and had been recommended in 1920 by Clarence Stein, Chairman of Governor Smith's Reconstruction Committee, as a practical and economical way to deal with urban renewal on the Lower East Side. Furthermore, in order to comply with the terms of Federal financing, First Houses had to be a slum renovation project. Demolition of the existing tenements on the site began on March 1, 1935, in accordance with plans submitted to the City's Department of Buildings on February 11. As work proceeded, it became apparent that the mid-19th century buildings left standing, structurally deficient from the outset, were dangerously weakened by the removal of the adjoining tenements. As a result, five of the present buildings were entirely rebuilt from the ground up, and the remaining three were almost entirely new throughout, reinforced by structural steel for center support of all spans and for main staircases. New twenty-year roofs were installed, walls were made soundproof, and doors were fireproofed. The reuse of bricks from demolished buildings on this and other sites provided a saving in construction costs and was a source of income for the Authority for several years.

The New York City Housing Authority was established on February 20, 1934, following the enactment of Chapter 4 of the Laws of 1934 of the State of New York. Among its provisions, this law made it possible for the new agency to apply for Federal aid. This enabling legislation, the Mandelbaum bill -- which authorized the creation of local housing authorities throughout New York State, with power to issue their own bonds-- passed both houses of the State Legislature late in January 1934, after having suffered two defeats the previous year. It was immediately signed into law on January 31 by Governor Lehman. Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia appointed Langdon W. Post, the former Tenement House Commissioner, to the post of chairman of the new agency. The first members of the Housing Authority were Louis I. Pink, B. Charney Vladeck, the Rev. E. Roberts Moore and Mrs. Mary Kingsbury Simkhovitch, all long-time advocates of housing reform and slum clearance.

Most of the old tenements on the site of First Houses were acquired from Vincent Astor and, indeed, the undertaking was known until shortly before its dedication as "the Astor project" or as the Housing Authority's "Experiment No. 1." In March 1934, immediately after the establishment of the Authority, Mr. Astor offered Commissioner Post thirty-eight parcels on the Lower East Side, which were earning less than 3% on investment, at substantially less than their assessed valuation. Vincent Astor, who had inherited the properties from his grandfather, John Jacob Astor, expressed his "...desire to do anything within reason to help clear these slums..." Underscoring the fact that private capital was unable to cope with such a vast problem, he urged other property owners to cooperate with Federal and municipal authorities in their new slum clearance program. On December 20, 1934 the New York City Housing Authority, having the approval

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of the Board of Estimate, acquired the property from Mr. Astor for \$189,281.31, a figure which represented less than half the assessed valuation. The purchase was made possible by the issuance of a tax-free, sixty-six year purchase money mortgage, to be paid up by the year 2000 at 1-3/4% interest for the first six months and 3-1/2% per annum thereafter. This Housing Authority bond established the credit of the New York City Housing Authority.

Labor and materials for the demolition of the old tenements, and for subsequent reconstruction, were furnished under the "work-relief" program of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) through the State Temporary Emergency Relief Administration. The use of the labor forces of the WPA (Works Progress Administration) was an experiment by the Authority. It raised serious friction between union labor and the relief workers and was the prime cause of a turbulent demonstration of 1500 people at the "Astor project" on September 13, 1935.

Two tenements at 130 and 132 East Third Street, separating the Astor properties, belonged to Andrew Muller who not only refused to sell at the price offered, but sought an injunction restraining the Authority from proceeding with demolition of the adjoining properties and challenged the constitutionality of condemnation proceedings initiated by the Authority in March 1935. A year later, on March 17, 1936, the New York State Court of Appeals handed down a major decision in the case of NYCHA vs. Muller which confirmed the right of condemnation. It was adjudged that the use of the power of eminent domain by the City was for the public benefit, namely the remedy of slum conditions which were beyond the scope of private enterprise. This building, on the site of the two Muller tenements, was financed by a Housing Authority Bond accepted by financier Bernard S. Baruch. The building was ready for the last initial group of tenants in mid-June 1936, six months after the first tenants had moved into First Houses.

The dedication of First Houses, originally set for October 1, 1935 but delayed by the changes in plans, legal problems and labor troubles, took place on December 3, 1935. The proceedings were broadcast on a national radio hookup. First came the reading of the congratulatory telegram from President Franklin D. Roosevelt, under whose leadership the Public Works Emergency Housing Corporation had been established in October 1933 and the National Housing Act passed in mid-1934. This was followed by the dedication of First Houses by Mrs. Roosevelt. Among other speakers were Governor Lehman, Mayor LaGuardia, Housing Commissioner Post, Parks Commissioner Robert Moses, Corrington Gill, Assistant WPA Administrator, and Victor Ridder, Administrator of the WPA in the City.

Following the dedication of First Houses, an "Abolish the Slums" luncheon was held,

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sponsored by the National Public Housing Conference. The role of the NPHC cannot be overemphasized. Since its first meeting in March 1932, under the leadership of Mary K. Simkhovitch, the well-known social worker and former director of Greenwich House, the group had urged a full program for public housing, including the creation of a municipal housing agency with enabling legislation and powers similar to the Port Authority. Among the speakers at the luncheon, presided over by Herbert Bayard Swope, were Mrs. Roosevelt, Senator Robert F. Wagner and A. R. Clas, Director of the Housing Division of the WPA, in addition to others previously mentioned.

On July 2, 1936, First Houses was formally turned over to the City. Victor Ridder, the local WPA Administrator, presented the key to the project to Housing Commissioner Post. Harry Hopkins, who had come from Washington for the occasion, spoke in defense of the project, as did Mayor LaGuardia. The Mayor unveiled a tablet describing First Houses, which is still affixed to the building at 112-114 East Third Street. It proudly proclaims: "These Houses Were Erected by the New York City Housing Authority as an Initial Step in the Program for Slum Clearance and Low-Cost Housing."

The First Houses project originally comprised a total area of 1.37 acres (now 1.23)† and land coverage was deliberately limited to 41.6% (now 43.4%). This allowed for air and sunshine for each apartment and for an outdoor seating area for the residents.

The plan was generally consistent with the guidelines set by Federal agencies of the time, notably the Federal Emergency Housing Administration, with regard to the following: residential zoning; neighborhood location, which emphasized a site on a quiet street, provision of a landscaped play area, access to schools, churches, stores, entertainment and transportation to places of employment; and orientation to the sun and wind--all cited in a special issue on "Housing" in the March 1935 issue of the Architectural Record. These standards applied to new construction, but the degree to which they were applied to an alteration of existing tenements on the site showed ingenuity and imagination on the part of the architect in charge of the planning and development of First Houses, Frederick L. Ackerman. Plans and specifications, signed by both the architect and Commissioner Langdon W. Post, were filed at the Buildings Department in two stages: on February 11, 1935, with reference to Nos. 106-128 East Third Street, a portion of which is now part of Village View Houses; and on July 30, 1935, which applied to the buildings on Third Street toward Avenue A and to Nos. 29-41 Avenue A.

Frederick L. Ackerman (1878-1950) was a well-known architect and city planner,

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CONTINUATION SHEET FIRST HOUSES ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 5

a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and a member of the American Institute of Planners. His 1917 study of housing and planning in England and his service as Chief of the Division of Housing and Town Planning for the U. S. Shipping Board made him especially valuable to the housing and planning movement in this country during the 1920s and still more in the thirties. Among the best known community planning and low-income housing projects on which he worked, in close association with Clarence Stein, were Radburn, N. J., and Sunnyside Gardens in Queens. Ackerman also drew up the specifications for the competition sponsored by the City Housing Authority in June 1934 for which 277 designs were submitted. In his memorial tribute to Ackerman, published in the A.I.A. Journal in December 1950, Lewis Mumford, the distinguished social critic, identified him as a follower of Thorsten Veblen, "...ready to practice economy and avoid the frivolities of conspicuous waste.... He dreamed of a society free from privilege and of rights conferred by property... of a civilization where people would work cooperatively with honesty and integrity..." Ackerman's work at First Houses, and his other projects for various housing authorities during the 1930s, notably in Washington, D. C., New York State and New York City, enabled him to put his theories into practice.

First Houses was repeatedly attacked as "a boondoggle" and "a million dollar extravaganza." While the cost of necessary new construction had roughly tripled the original estimate of \$350,000 which had been figured on the basis of demolition and renovation only, the achievement of the project was summarized by James Ford in his authoritative study, Slums and Housing (1936), in these words: "...though definitely not a solution of the problems of public housing, First Houses may be recorded as one of the more significant experiments worthy of the effort and cost involved." First Houses should be understood as an integral part of the period of the Depression and the New Deal, and of the mood of a people determined to alleviate the suffering of that one-third of a nation which Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in his Second Inaugural Address, described as "ill-housed, ill-clad, (and) ill-nourished."

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.23 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 8	5 8 5 6 4 0	4 5 0 8 3 8 ⁶⁰	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 430, Lot 10

See attached map

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

Virginia Kurshan, Research Consultant

NAME/TITLE Contact: Elizabeth Spencer-Ralph, Div. for Historic Preservation
518-474-0479

For Joan R. Olshansky, National Register Coordinator

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Landmarks Preservation Commission

July, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

305 Broadway

566-7577

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

New York

New York

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

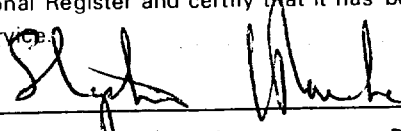
NATIONAL X

STATE _____

LOCAL _____

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE Director, Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau

DATE

10/12/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET FIRST HOUSES ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

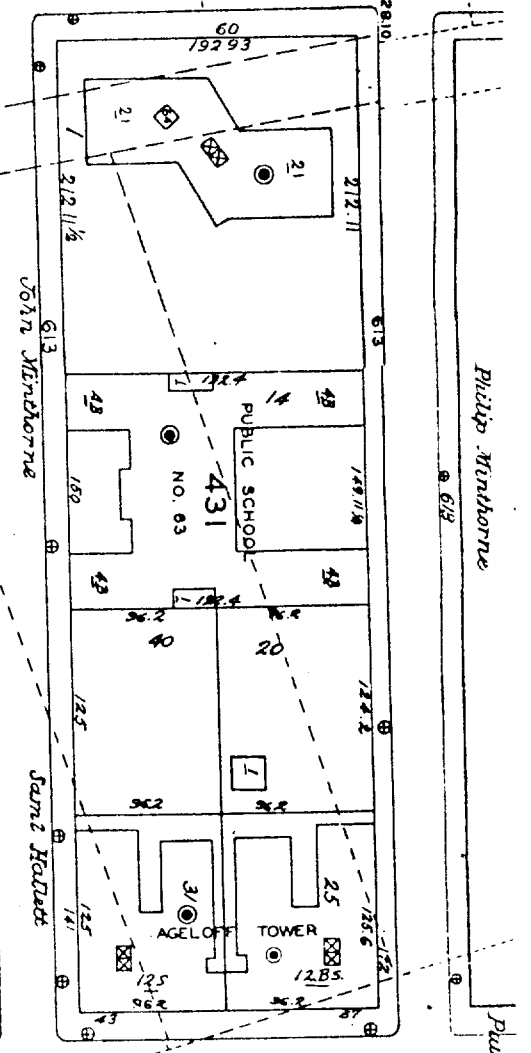
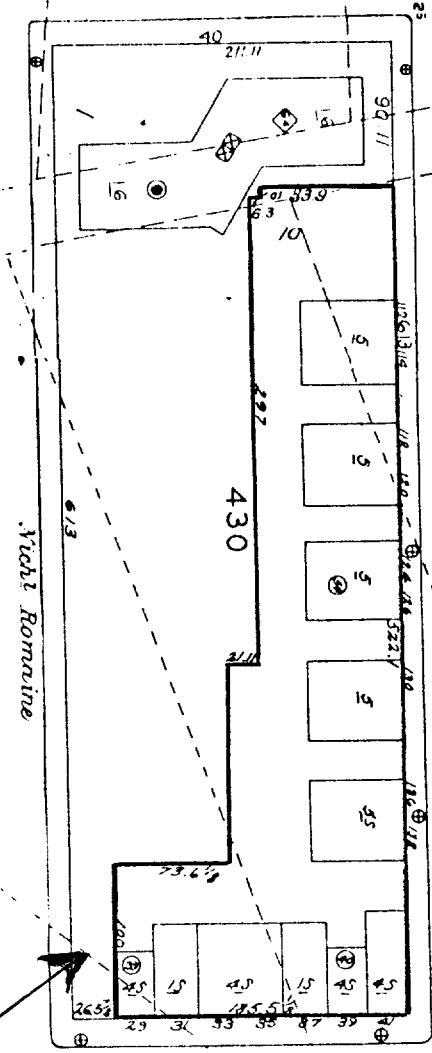
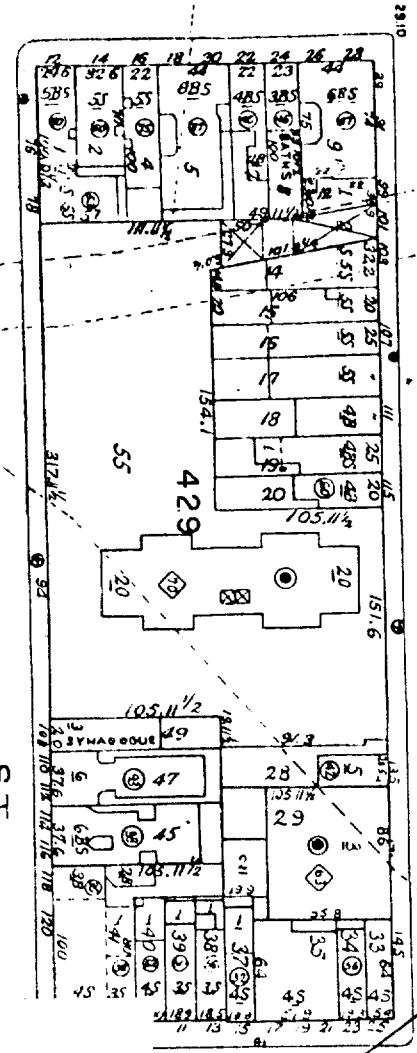
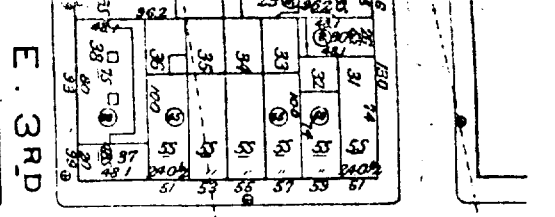
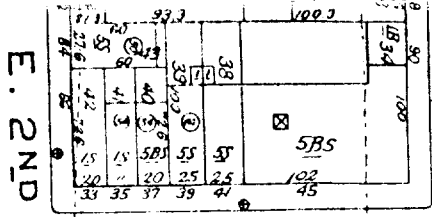
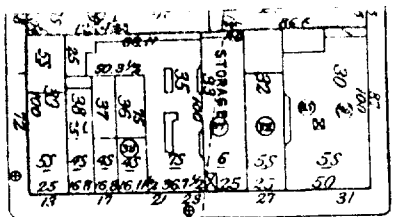
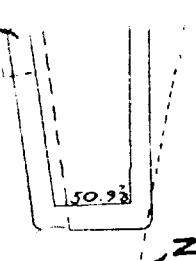
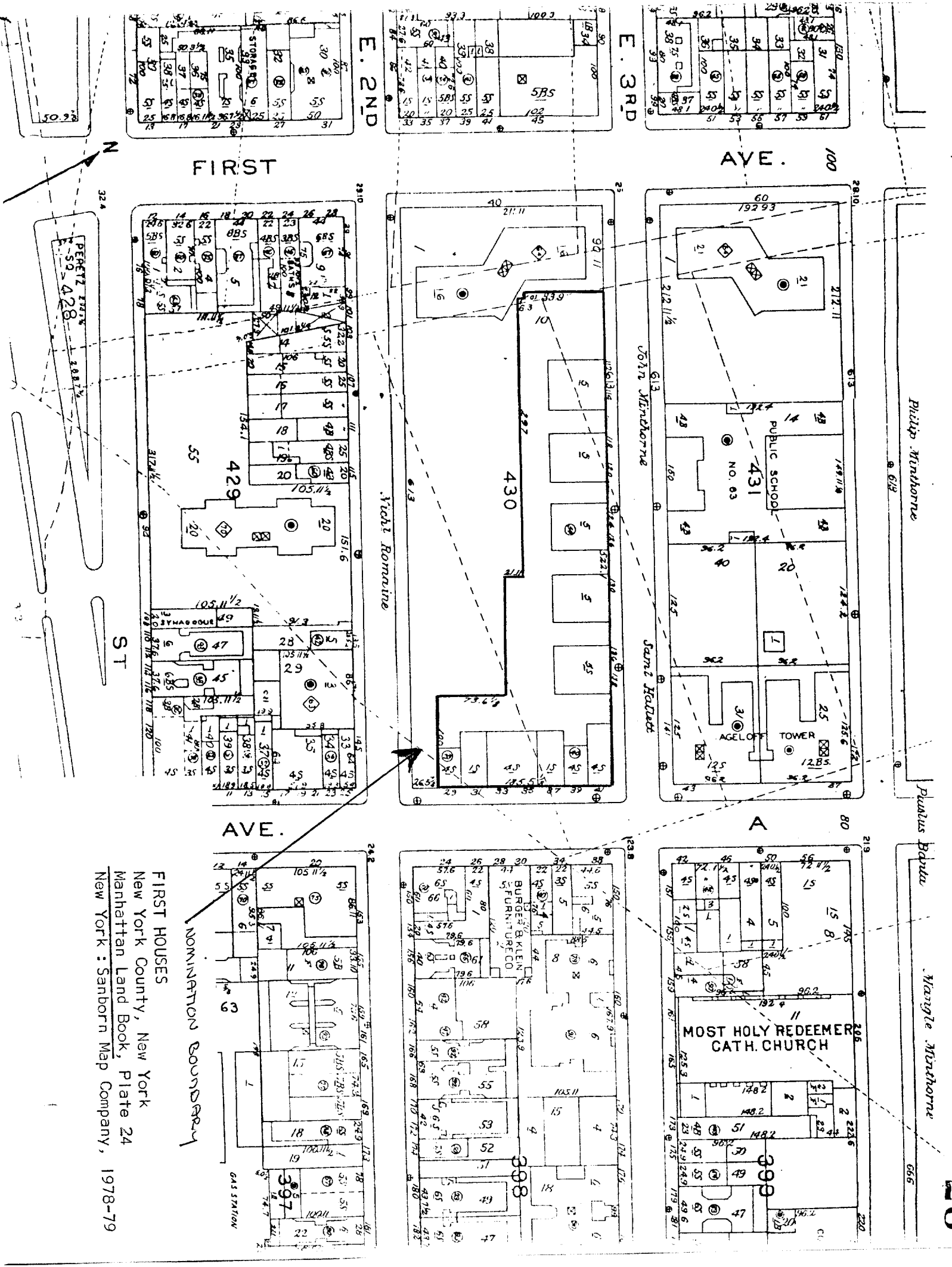
A more complete bibliography may be found in the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission research file: First Houses.

"Decision of the New York State Court of Appeals," The Architectural Forum, Vol. 64 (April, 1936), 142.

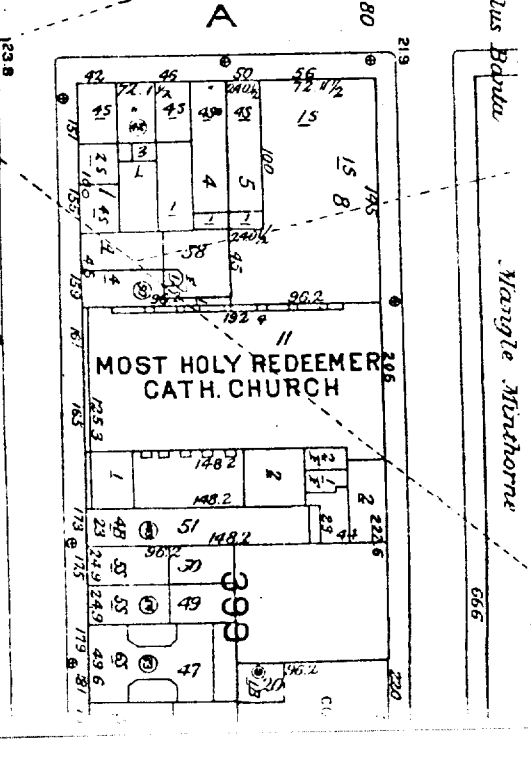
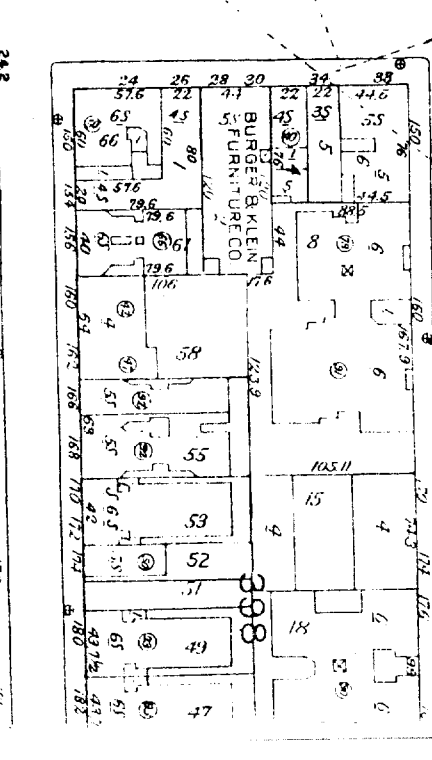
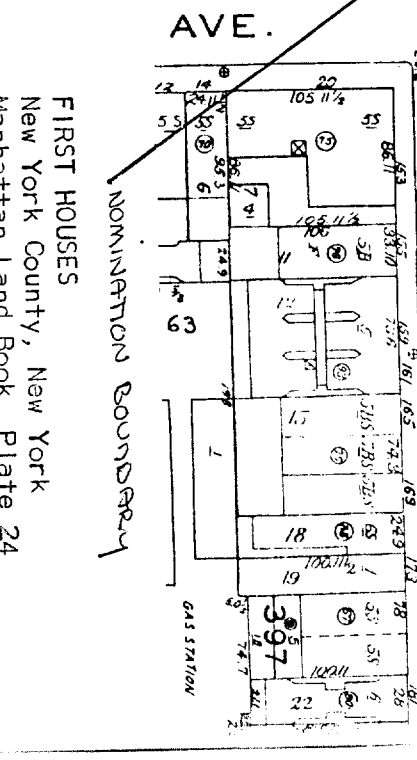
Mumford, Lewis. "Frederick Lee Ackerman, F.A.I.A., 1878-1950," Journal of the American Institute of Architects, XIV (December, 1950), 249-254.

"\$6.05 Per Room in Manhattan," The Architectural Forum, Vol. 64 (January, 1936), 67-68.

Strickland, Roy & Sanders, James. "The First Houses - Where It All Began," The Livable City, No. 5/1 (March, 1978), 4-5.



PEREZ 2317
 50 428
 388 7
 324



FIRST HOUSES
 New York County, New York
 Manhattan Land Book, Plate 24
 New York : Sanborn Map Company, 1978-79

NOMINATION BOUNDARY

GAS STATION

BURGER & KLEIN
 FURNITURE CO.

MOST HOLY REDEEMER
 CATH. CHURCH

Philip Minthorne

Publius Batta

Margie Minthorne

666

JUL 23 1974

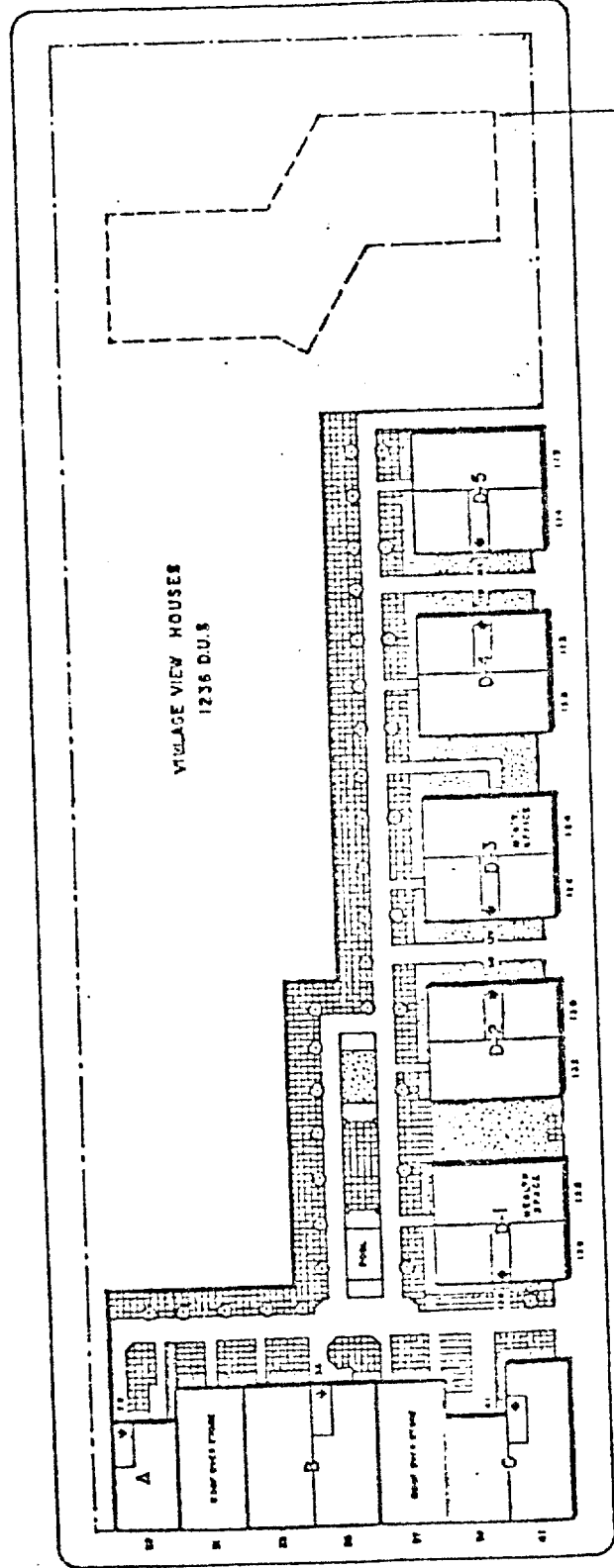
Landmarks Preservation Commission

First Houses
New York
New York County

FIRST HOUSES

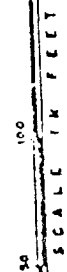
FIRST AVENUE MANHATTAN (CITY)

EAST SECOND STREET



VILLAGE VIEW HOUSES
1236 D.U.'S

VILLAGE VIEW HOUSES



EAST THIRD STREET

AVENUE

BUILDINGS A, B, AND C ARE FOUR STORIES
BUILDINGS D-1, D-2, D-3, D-4 AND D-5 ARE FIVE STORIES

PERSONS PER APARTMENT	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
ROOMS PER APARTMENT	2	3	4	5	
NUMBER OF APARTMENTS	3	115	7	1	126
NUMBER OF CONST. ROOMS	6	345	28	5	384
% TYPE APTS.	2.4	91.3	0.5	0.8	100%

- A. TOTAL AREA ----- 53,549 SQ.FT.(123 ACRES)
- B. NET HOUSING AREA ----- 53,549 SQ.FT.(123 ACRES)
- C. AREA COVERED BY DWELLING BLDGS. ----- 21,334 SQ.FT.(489 ACRES)
- D. AREA COVERED BY NON-DWELLING BLDGS. (STORES) ----- 3,206 SQ.FT.
- E. COVERAGE (C+D+A) ----- 43.4 %
- F. DESIGN DENSITY (PERSONS PER ACRE) ----- 218
- G. NO OF DWELLING BUILDINGS ----- 1
- H. FLOOR AREA RATIO (AS PER M.C.H.A.) ----- 175
- J. FLOOR AREA RATIO (AS PER ZONING) ----- 208

KEY PLAN

NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY

9.1.67 RIV. 9-12-64

61051 SE
(WEEHAWKEN)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



First Houses
New York, New York County
UTM Reference:
18 / 58564 / 450838

Brooklyn Quad

Glendale St Paneras
4506



Date: 12/27/2016

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 08101.012000

Name: Forest Hills Co-Op (NYCHA)

Location: 108-53 62 Drive, Forest Hills NY 11375

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:** False

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or poses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:



The Forest Hills Cooperative is eligible for the State and National Registers under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Social History as part of Mayor Lindsay's push for a diffusion of public housing under NYCHA's 'scatter-site' program begun in in mid-1960s. Architect Samuel Paul (1912-2002) designed both the site plan and the buildings. The low-income cooperative housing project opened in November 1975. The complex consists of three 12-story residential buildings and one community building, with ample green space, play areas, and a parking lot to the north. The brick-faced apartment buildings are oriented roughly north-south to maximize sunlight, and are flattened C-shape in plan. With the exception of the altered play areas, the buildings and the central green retain a relatively high degree of period integrity. Though less than fifty years of age the complex is exceptionally significant, receiving national attention as the scene of a bitter dispute between middle-class homeowners and advocates of low-income housing. It tells the story of the struggle to build low-income housing within a middle-class New York City neighborhood.

When it was first proposed in 1966 as one of 13 "scattered sites" public housing projects in New York City, the Forest Hills plan was met with very strong resistance, in part over fears that the racial makeup of the then largely white, Jewish middle class neighborhood would be radically altered. This resistance greatly increased after construction began in November 1971. Long-time residents of the neighborhood predicted that the development's construction would destroy the integrity of their middle-class neighborhood and bring crime and drugs into the area. "The most vocal opponents rallied and marched and threatened to block construction with their bodies. On the other side of the barricades, civil rights crusaders contended that these demands for neighborhood preservation were euphemisms for racial bigotry. They insisted that unless the project was built as planned, the goal of integrated and open housing everywhere would be sabotaged" (Michael T. Kaufman, "Forest Hills: From Rage to Tranquility," *New York times*, 15 September 1988).

Mayor Lindsay appointed a then little-known Queens attorney named Mario Cuomo to mediate the tensions in the community and come up with a compromise for the Forest Hills project. This role proved to be an important one in Cuomo's early career, though it was Borough President Donald Manes who in September 1972 offered the idea that the project should be cooperative rather than rental housing that helped allay neighbor's fears. Other compromises included significantly reducing the size of the project from three 24-story buildings with more than 840 apartments to three 12-story buildings with 432 apartments; giving community residents priority to the units; and setting aside 40% of apartments for older adult citizens. Cuomo's 'Forest Hills Diary, the Crisis of Low-Income Housing,' provides "a day-to-day account of the problems, divisiveness, threats and hostility engendered by the opposing forces engaged in the construction of the low income housing project" (James A. Coon, Sheldon W. Damsky, Dianne L. Rosen, "The Land Use Recodification Project," *Pace Law Review*, Volume 13, Issue 2, Fall 1993, p. 563). In their 1988 book, "City for Sale: Ed Koch and the Betrayal of New York," Jack Newfield and Wayne Barrett described the Forest Hills episode as "a watershed in New York's tortured recent history of race relations."

RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: June 29, 2012

STAFF: Kathy Howe

PROPERTY: Gun Hill Houses

MCD: Bronx

ADDRESS: 711 Magenta Street

COUNTY: Bronx

USN: 00501.001560

- I. Property is individually listed on SR/NR:
name of listing:
- Property is a contributing component of a SR/NR district:
name of district:
- II. Property meets eligibility criteria.
 Property contributes to a district which appears to meet eligibility criteria.
Pre SRB: Post SRB: SRB date

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Gun Hill Houses consists of six buildings, 13 and 14-stories tall with 732 apartments. Completed November 30, 1950, the 7.93-acre development in the Olinville section of the Bronx is bordered by East Gun Hill Road to the north, Holland Avenue on the east, Magenta Street on the south, and White Plains Road on the west. Designed by Alfred Hopkins and Associates, the federally funded project was one of four housing projects at the time that represented a break from the cross plan toward a new "in-line" plan that was cheaper and easier to build. As opposed to the excessive exterior wall surfaces and complexities of joining angled wings to a core, the in-line plan is based on the use of straight-line, double-loaded corridors and was billed as a "major revolution in the housing field" in an article

published in *Architectural Forum* in 1949.¹ In addition to Gun Hill, the new "in-line" plan was used at Parkside Houses in the Bronx, designed by Walker and Poor; Dyckman Houses in upper Manhattan, designed by William F. Ballard; and Segwick Houses in the Bronx, designed by Gordon Bunshaft of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill.² The in-line form at Gun Hill Houses forms a T-plan as opposed to the designs at the other projects that were simple slabs.³

Gun Hill meets Criterion A in the following areas: (1) Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; (2) Politics/Government, for the Federal and local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income residents following World War II; and 3) Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income residents after World War II.

The development is also eligible under Criterion C under the themes of Architecture and Community Planning & Development. The design and construction of Gun Hill Houses as a planned community is representative of modern urban planning design theory. Typical of the 1950s housing projects, Sedgwick represented the social, economic, and aesthetic arguments for the "tower in the park" model.

¹ Richard Plunz, *A History of Housing in New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), p. 264. See "Public Housing, Anticipating New Law, Looks at New York's High Density Planning Innovations," *Architectural Forum* (June 1949), 90: 87-89.

² Plunz, p. 274.

³ Plunz, p. 264.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Harlem River Houses

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

151st to 153rd Street, Macombs Place/Harlem River Dr.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

New York

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

19

VICINITY OF

STATE

New York

CODE

036

COUNTY

New York

CODE

061

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

New York City Housing Authority

STREET & NUMBER

250 Broadway

CITY, TOWN

New York

VICINITY OF

STATE

New York 10007

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

New York County Registers Office

Surrogate's Court Building

STREET & NUMBER

31 Chambers Street

CITY, TOWN

New York

STATE

New York 10007

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Landmarks Preservation Commission LP-0894

DATE

Sept. 23, 1975

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Landmarks Preservation Commission, 305 Broadway

CITY, TOWN
New York

STATE
New York 10007

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Harlem River Houses¹ project is comprised of three separate groups of four and five-story buildings which are situated on a nine-acre site with land coverage of 30.16 percent. This was an unusually low figure compared to the 60 percent coverage that prevailed in most of Harlem in 1935. The population density of the project was 225 persons per acre. In addition to creating light, airy apartments--each room was on the outside--the low land coverage also allowed for generous landscaping of the site.

The arrangement of the buildings on the relatively spacious, but difficult sloping trapezoidal shaped site, bisected by Seventh Avenue (now Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd.), is extremely effective and drew high praise from architectural and urban design critics Talbot Hamlin and Lewis Mumford.

There are three separate groups of buildings--each group composed of Z-, T-, and L-shaped sections--two west of Seventh Avenue and one east. In the western section the two groups of buildings are arranged axially around a large plaza area, basically formal in plan and intersected by the area created by closing West 152nd Street, whereas a zig-zag is effected along Macombs Place where the sections are stepped back to follow the diagonal line of the street. The eastern section, which was designed in relation to the Harlem River, is a more rambling arrangement and is designed around a deep courtyard.

The red brick buildings, varying in height according to the slope of the site, are of a simple, straightforward design. Decorative details are added in the form of raised brick bandcourses at the bases of the buildings. Broad, steel-framed casement windows with horizontal hopper lights punctuate the wall surface. Stairshafts lit by narrow vertical windows rise above the entrances which are sheltered by flat-roofed porticoes.

Of the original 574 apartments, 60 had two rooms with kitchenette, 259 had three rooms, 232 had four rooms, and 23 had five rooms. Each apartment had electric refrigeration and lighting, steam heat, ample closet space, a tile bathroom and cross-ventilation. The apartment layouts emphasized privacy by permitting circulation from a foyer only through the kitchen or living room to the bedroom area. Further privacy and quiet were insured by the structural division of the buildings with no more than four apartments opening on any hallway.

In their overall plan for Harlem River Houses the architects were anxious to promote a sense of community, as well as to provide facilities that would specifically meet the needs of Harlem residents. This resulted in such features as a nursery school for the children of working mothers, a health clinic, which has since closed, four social rooms for adults, four rooms for occupational use and children's inside play, and community laundries. The design of the buildings also resulted in ground floor space which could be used for stores on Seventh Avenue--another community service.

1. The text of this report is taken almost in its entirety from the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission Designation Report, Harlem River Houses (LP-0894), September, 1975, by Marjorie Pearson.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET Harlem River
Houses

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

Landscaping, supervised by Michael Rapuano enhances the site. All courtyards are liberally planted with London plane trees and paved with Belgian blocks. Sculpture, executed by Heinz Warnecke with the assistance of T. Barbarossa, R. Barthe, and F. Steinberger, also adds to the attractiveness of the courtyards. In the eastern section is a statue of two bear cubs. Sculptured penguins are placed around a fountain basin in the center of the large plaza in the western section. At the southern end of the plaza is a statue of a black laborer, while a statue of a mother and child with a dog graces the northern end. Also skillfully incorporated into the plan is a natural amphitheater in the eastern section, and below that a playground, as the site slopes down toward the river.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) History
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1936-37

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Chief architect:
Archibald Manning Brown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Harlem River Houses, both historically and architecturally significant, was the first federally-funded, federally-built, and federally-owned housing project in New York City. It is an example of the early collaboration between the New York City Housing Authority and the Federal Government and was one of the first efforts undertaken by the Roosevelt Administration in recognition of the government's responsibility to provide low-income housing. It was "a recognition in brick and mortar of the special and urgent needs of Harlem" and the Housing Authority actively involved Harlem citizens in the planning of the project including criteria for tenant selection. The arrangement of the buildings on the difficult trapezoidal site was extremely effective, drawing high praise from contemporary critics, and the courtyards and plaza were enhanced by handsome landscaping and sculpture. Harlem River Houses not only set a precedent for public housing across the country, but also offered features that could potentially raise the housing standards of all classes. The project was begun early in 1936 and completed in 1937.

The need for government-sponsored housing in urban areas, especially to aid lower-income groups, had been long recognized by concerned architects and social critics in the United States. Successful experiments in government housing had been carried out since the turn of the century in Great Britain, Holland, Germany, Austria, and Scandinavia; many projects had been designed by distinguished architects. Many people wondered why the United States government could not do the same.

A shortage of urban housing, especially at affordable prices, was intensified by the Depression of the 1930s. Under the Hoover Administration, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) had been established in 1932 with the purpose of advancing funds to limited-dividend corporations to enable them to construct housing. Knickerbocker Village, a middle-income project on the Lower East Side, was financed in this way. Under President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the powers of the RFC were transferred in 1933 to the Housing Division of the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works (PWA), making possible the extension of loans to limited-dividend corporations for financing new construction, for the rehabilitation of low-cost housing, and for slum-clearance; the agency could make grants and loans to duly-established public bodies, such as city and state housing authorities, for the same purpose; and it could buy, condemn, sell, or lease property to develop new projects itself. Thus, the Roosevelt Administration recognized that low-income housing was a responsibility of government--despite bitter complaints by the building and real-estate interests that the government

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CONTINUATION SHEET Harlem River Houses ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

was encroaching on their domain. Government officials, such as PWA Administrator Harold L. Ickes, effectively argued that private industry could not afford to build housing at affordable rents for the low-income sector.

New York City, through the jurisdiction of the New York City Housing Authority, had already begun its own experiment in low-cost housing in 1935 with the construction of First Houses on the Lower East Side, one of the city's most congested slum areas. Although financed through Housing Authority bonds, it used relief labor paid for through the Federal Government's "work-relief" program.

Harlem presented special problems. Although not as densely built up as the Lower East Side--only 60 percent of the total land area was used for residential purposes, and most residences were Old Law Tenements and one-and-two-family structures converted into rooming houses--the population density per acre was the highest in the city. At that time, Harlem's population, which was predominantly black, was confined by racial barriers to renting in that area. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., had tried to provide the private-industry housing solution when he funded the "Dunbar Apartments," completed in 1928. But at average prices of \$14.50 per room such cooperative apartments were far beyond the means of many Harlem residents.

Riots in Harlem in March 1935 and the subsequent hearings on conditions in Harlem by a committee appointed by Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia to determine the causes of the riots, helped focus attention on Harlem's urgent housing needs.

In May of that year, Langdon W. Post, Commissioner of the New York City Housing Authority, asked the Federal Government for \$1,500,000 for low-cost housing and slum clearance as part of a newly enacted work-relief program. Mayor LaGuardia announced that the next model housing project built in New York City with Federal aid would be in West Harlem. In July, PWA Administrator Ickes announced that the PWA would pay for a \$4.7 million housing project in Harlem, but only if the city could acquire a site in thirty days by condemnation and convey it to the Federal Government for purchase on the same terms as those used for the Williamsburg Houses, another PWA project which was just getting under way.

Because of artificially inflated land values on built-up residential sites in Harlem the site chosen for the new housing project was a largely vacant area, located between 151st and 153rd Streets and Macombs Place and the Harlem River and bisected by Seventh Avenue. Most of the site was owned by the Empire Mortgage Company, one of the financial interests of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Both the PWA and the city tried to buy the site directly. Rockefeller refused to sell unless the city also acquired the Dunbar Apartments, which he then owned, and which were just one block south of the proposed housing project site. Rockefeller feared that he would lose tenants from the Dunbar Apartments to the new project. The city filed condemnation proceedings, and the owners were eventually awarded \$1,095,000.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET Harlem River Houses ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

Rockefeller was not the only one who had doubts about building on the proposed site. A number of objections were voiced because the new housing was not a slum-clearance project and threatened to bring more people to the area. However, the PWA and the Housing Authority felt that building new housing on vacant land would help alleviate some of the overcrowding in existing buildings and might possibly permit some of the worst buildings in the area to be demolished later. Other real estate owners besides Rockefeller feared that the new housing would draw tenants away from their buildings, and the Real Estate Board asked that the Harlem project be open exclusively to persons of low income.

While condemnation proceedings were under way in 1935, the Housing Authority appointed a team of eight architects, headed by Archibald Manning Brown, to begin work on plans for the Harlem Project. In an early instance of Federal and city cooperation, the Housing Authority provided complete plans and specifications for the PWA which then undertook construction.

The team of architects--Archibald Manning Brown, Charles F. Fuller, Horace Ginsbern, Frank J. Forster, Will Rice Amon, Richard W. Buckley, and black architect John Louis Wilson--skillfully designed Harlem River Houses. Chief architect Brown (1881-1956) later originated plans for the Chelsea Houses and the Elliot Houses, both for the New York City Housing Authority. The recipient of a classical architectural education at Harvard and the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, Brown had a long-time interest in civic affairs as evidenced by a three-term membership on the board of the Municipal Art Commission. None of the architects were actually employees of the Housing Authority; all were members of private architectural firms who were assembled by the Housing Authority to design the project.

Commissioner Post appointed a group of prominent Harlem citizens to serve on the Harlem Housing Committee which was to encourage local participation by offering recommendations to the Housing Authority on the new housing project. The committee members were: Walter N. White, author and secretary of the NAACP; Alan Dingle, president of the Harlem Lawyers Association; Mrs. Harriet Shadd Butcher of the Russell Sage Foundation; James Hubert, executive secretary of the New York Urban League; Mrs. Daisy Reed of Utopia House; Donelan J. Phillips, president of the Consolidated Tenants League; Mrs. Minnie Green, vice president of the Consolidated Tenants League; Dr. Edward E. Best; Dr. C.B. Powell; Francis E. Rivers; and Earl Brown.

Title to the property was transferred from the city to the Federal Government at the end of November 1935. The deed stipulated that the city must maintain a park and playground area bordering on the Harlem River for ten years. It also provided for the closing of portions of 151st, 152nd, and 153rd Streets.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET Harlem River Houses ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 4

After the architects completed the plans and specifications, bids for the construction of the foundations were announced in Nov. 1935. The contract was awarded to the Carlton Company of New York, and actual construction began early in 1936. Similarly, contracts for the erection of the Harlem River Houses superstructure were awarded to the Cauldwell-Wingate Company in May 1936. It should be noted in this connection that the Housing Division of the PWA chose those private contractors who employed workmen paid at the union scale in full, in keeping with the PWA goal of building housing projects in order to create employment and stimulate the building industry.

From the beginning, it was planned that the Harlem River Houses would be operated by the New York City Housing Authority although ownership would be retained by the PWA. But in November 1936 the Housing Authority announced that it would not operate the project unless the maximum rents did not exceed \$7.50 per room. Arguing against projected rents of \$8.75 per room, Commissioner Post noted such rents would discriminate precisely against the lowest-income families who were supposed to benefit from the construction of such housing. The problem was resolved when the PWA set the rentals at \$7.10 per room, including heat and water. Rentals were determined according to a formula which would enable 55 percent of the cost of the project to be paid back to the Federal Government over a 60-year period and would also allow the project to pay its own maintenance and operating costs.

A one-year experimental lease--later renewed--transferring the Harlem River Houses from the PWA to the New York City Housing Authority was approved in May 1937. The lease was signed by Commissioner Post, with appropriate ceremonies on June 16, 1937, in the main courtyard of the Harlem River Houses. Special tribute was paid to President Roosevelt for having initiated government aid to housing low-income families.

Today the Harlem River Houses project remains one of the finest developments run by the New York City Housing Authority. There is still a strong sense of community, aided in part by the excellent overall physical planning.

When completed, Harlem River Houses was more than just a step toward solving the problem of housing that one third of a nation which Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in his Second Inaugural Address, described as "ill-housed, ill-clad, and ill-nourished." The hope was not only that Harlem River Houses would set a precedent for public housing across the country but would also provide an example which would help raise housing standards of all classes. As Lewis Mumford writing in The New Yorker in 1938 so eloquently stated:

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Harlem River
CONTINUATION SHEET Houses

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 5

Here, in short, is the equipment for decent living that every modern neighborhood needs: sunlight, air, safety, play space, meeting space, and living space. The families in the Harlem Houses have higher standards of housing, measured in tangible benefits, than most of those on Park Avenue. By contrast every other section of the city is a makeshift, congested, disorderly, dismally inadequate.

This low-cost housing, so much needed in 1935, was a prime instance of cooperation between the city and the Federal Government. It opened the door to the continuation of such policy and the rotational reconstruction of Harlem, which, over the years, has resulted in razing of many blocks of slums and their replacement by clean livable quarters for the residents.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET Harlem River Houses ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

A more complete bibliography may be found in the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission research file: Harlem River Houses.

Fisher, Robert. 20 Years of Public Housing. New York: Harper & Row, 1959.

Hamlin, Talbot. "New York Housing - Harlem River Houses and Williamsburg Houses," Pencil Points, 19 (May 1938), 281-212.

Landmarks Preservation Commission. Harlem River Houses Designation Report (LP-0894), by Marjorie Pearson. New York: City of New York, 1975.

Mumford, Lewis. "The Skyline - The New Order," New Yorker, 14 (Feb. 26, 1938), 42-44.

New York Times. Numerous articles 1935-1937 and 1975.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Attached Sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Nine acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	5,8,9,6,7,0	4,5,1,9,7,7,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Manhattan Tax Map Block 2037, Lot 11
 Manhattan Tax Map Block 2020, Lot 1

See Attached Map

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

Darlene K. McCloud, Research Consultant

NAME / TITLE

Joan R. Olshansky, National Register Coordinator

Contact: Elizabeth Spencer-Ralph, 518-474-0479

ORGANIZATION

Landmarks Preservation Commission

DATE

July 11, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

305 Broadway

TELEPHONE

(212) 566-7577

CITY OR TOWN

New York,

STATE

New York 10007

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

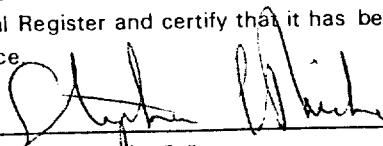
NATIONAL X

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE Director, Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau

DATE 10/17/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

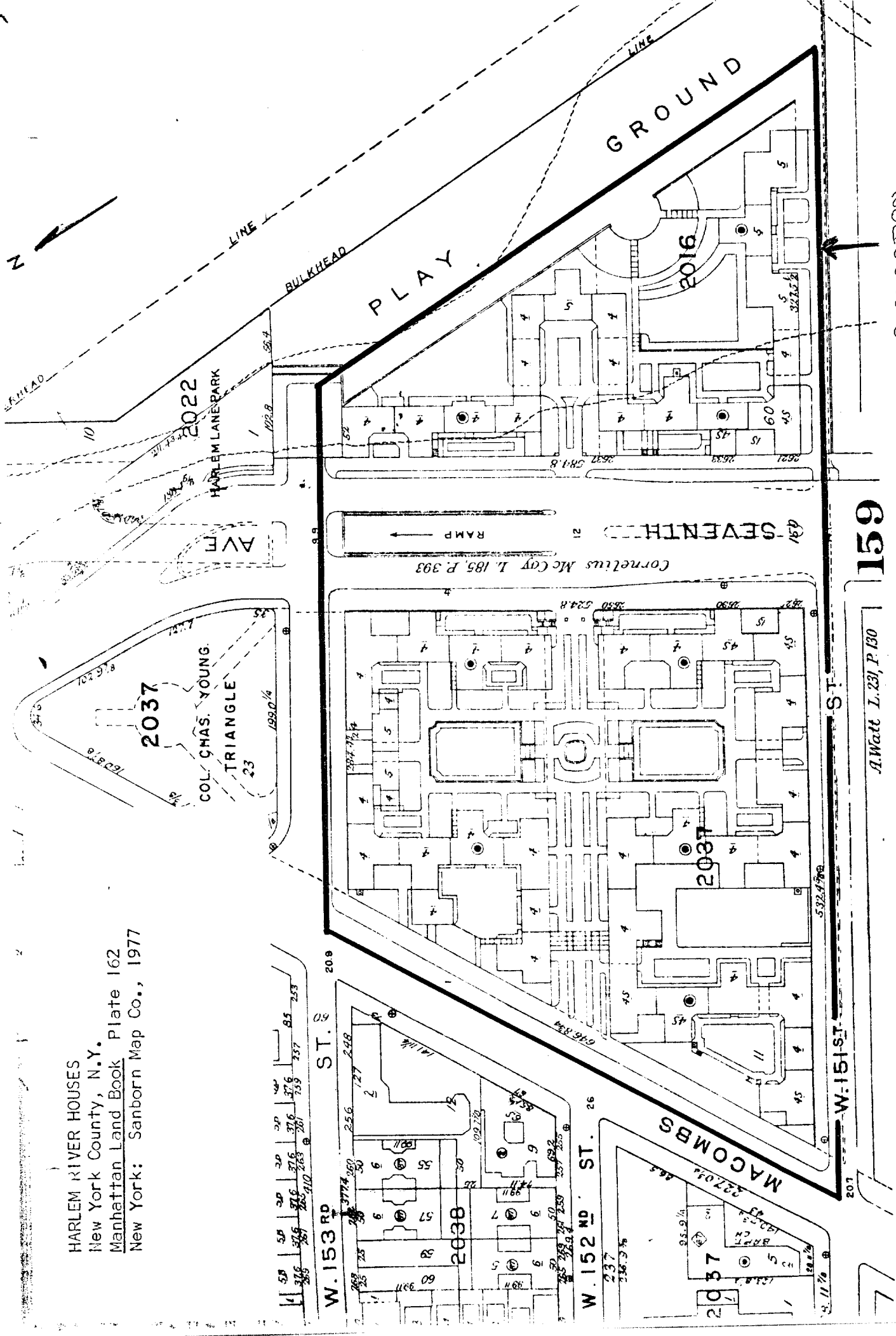
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

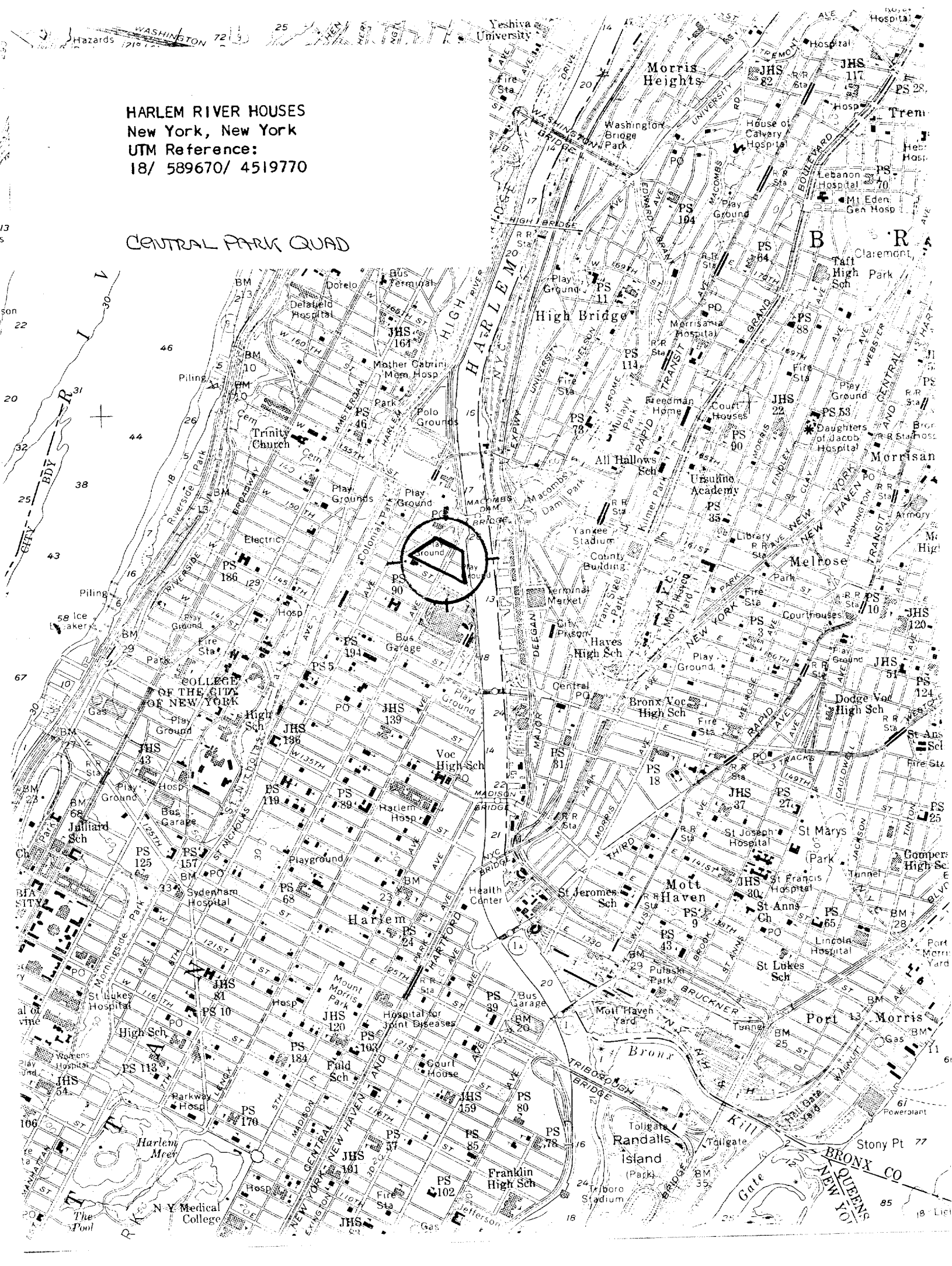
HARLEM RIVER HOUSES
 New York County, N.Y.
 Manhattan Land Book Plate 162
 New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1977



159
 A.Watt L.231, P.130

HARLEM RIVER HOUSES
New York, New York
UTM Reference:
18/ 589670/ 4519770

CENTRAL PARK QUAD





Date: 03/23/2017

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 04701.019404

Name: Ingersoll Houses (NYCHA)

Location:

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

The Raymond V. Ingersoll Houses were originally known as Fort Greene West, which together with Fort Greene East (now Walt Whitman Houses) was among NYCHA's largest housing projects, both largely completed in 1944. During World War II, the nearby Brooklyn Navy Yard employed more than 71,000 people. Due to the resulting demand for housing, NYCHA built 35 brick buildings between 1941 and 1944 ranging in height from six to fifteen stories collectively called the Fort Greene Houses. Production at the navy yard declined significantly after the war and many of the workers either moved on or fell on hard times. Post-war, the project was restored to its original objective--low-rent housing for New Yorkers. In 1957-58, the houses were renovated and divided into the Walt Whitman Houses and the Ingersoll Houses. Ingersoll Houses is bounded by Myrtle Avenue to the south, Prince Street to the west, Park Avenue to north, and St. Edward's Street to the east. The complex is significant under Criterion A in the areas of social history and politics/government for its association with World War II era public housing for Navy Yard employees and, later, low-income residents, and under Criterion C for the site plan and architectural design. The design and construction of the buildings and their placement in a designed landscape is representative of modern urban planning design theory of the period. The huge team of prominent architects assembled for the project – Rosaria Candela, Andre Fouilhoux, Wallace Harrison, Albert Mayer, Ethan Allen Dennison, William I Hohausser, Ely Jacques Kahn, Charles Butler, Henry Churchill and Clarence Stein – created a design of tall double-cruciform brick slabs in a planned landscape of walkways, greenspaces, and playgrounds. The buildings are an intact and excellent representative example of an architectural style defined by the concept of “functional Modernism” and driven by rapid construction and the need to keep costs low, where buildings reflect the utilitarian ideals of public housing, with unembellished lines and planes, flat roofs, and minimal architectural decoration.



Date: 12/06/2016

Staff: Daria Merwin

USN Number: 06101.018572

Name: Jacob Riis I and II Houses (NYCHA housing, 1949)

Location: 765 FDR Drive, MANHATTAN NY

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

Based on the results of the 2016 NYCHA city-wide survey, SHPO finds that the Jacob Riis Houses (I and II) are eligible for the State and National Registers, with significance in the areas of social history, community development, and architecture (Criteria A and C). The complex is located between Avenue D and the Franklin D Roosevelt Drive, spanning two superblocks from 6th Street to 13th Street. It consists of nineteen red brick faced buildings, between six and 14 stories each, containing 1,191 apartment units. The Riis Houses were completed January 17, 1949, according to plans of architects Walker & Gillette, with James C. McKenzie and Sidney L. Strauss, and landscape architects Charles D. Lay & Oliver I. Lay (with a mid-1960s redesign by M. Paul Friedberg). The site plan alternates between low- and mid-rise buildings around the perimeter of two superblocks, framing a "central mall" running from the north to south ends of both Jacob Riis Houses I and II. The two northern blocks are separated by East 10th Street, with a roundabout in the center of the block, and are framed by Buildings 8 and 11 on the north and south sides, respectively. See attachment for full description.



**New York State Office of Parks,
Recreation and Historic Preservation**

Division for Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189
518-237-8643

Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Rose Harvey
Commissioner

RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: March 5, 2014

STAFF: Kathy Howe

PROPERTY: Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Towers

MCD: Manhattan

ADDRESS: 70 West 115th St. (bounded by W. 112th St., Lenox Ave.,

W. 115th St., Fifth Ave.)

COUNTY: New York

PROJECT REF: 14PR00810

USN: 06101.018574

- I. Property is individually listed on SR/NR:
name of listing:
- Property is a contributing component of a SR/NR district:
name of district:
- II. Property meets eligibility criteria.
- Property contributes to a district which appears to meet eligibility criteria.
Pre SRB: Post SRB: SRB date

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Towers, located in Central Harlem, were designed by architect William I. Hohauser and built in 1950-54. Hohauser also designed Fort Greene Houses (1942) in Brooklyn and the Bronx River Houses (1952). Originally known as the Stephen Foster Houses the complex was renamed after Dr. King in 1968. The complex meets the criteria for listing to the National Register of Historic Places as an intact representative example of public housing built by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) in the post-World War II era. Bounded by West 112th Street to the south,

Lenox Ave. to the west, West 115th Street to the north, and Fifth Avenue to the east, the 13.75-acre development has ten 13 and 14-story brick towers. Each tower is designed as a two V's with their apexes joined by a slab that is bisected by a perpendicular slab.

The development is an example of a "Towers in the Park" design within a large superblock that is meant to decrease density, introduce more light and air into the home, and provide community park space within the immediate vicinity. The landscape plan emphasizes a centralized octagonal plaza, grassy areas, walks lined with mature trees, play areas, and parking lots.

This was one of several superblock public housing developments built in Central Harlem after World War II. City planners began studying and addressing the area's serious overcrowding, deteriorated housing stock, and lack of municipal services in the mid-1940s. "In 1944 the architect William Lescaze, assisted by his staff, including Sidney L. Katz and Read Weber, and the realtor James Felt, developed a master plan for the redevelopment of Central Harlem. Lescaze's study included eighty blocks bounded by Fifth Avenue and Morningside Park, 110th and 126th streets."¹ Lescaze's radical scheme called for the replacement of all building stock between Fifth and Lenox avenues, 110th and 125th streets, and the construction of housing superblocks. "Although Lescaze's project was speculative, in 1946 plans were announced by NYCHA for the realization of his southern superblock."²

This housing complex meets Criterion A in the following areas: (1) Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; (2) Politics/Government, for the Federal and local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income residents; and (3) Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income residents especially following World War II. The complex also meets Criterion C under the themes of Architecture and Community Planning & Development. The design and construction of the buildings and their placement in a designed landscape is representative of modern urban planning design theory of the period.

If you have any questions concerning this Determination of Eligibility, please call Kathy Howe at (518) 237-8643, ext. 3266.

¹ Robert A.M. Stern, Thomas Mellins, and David Fishman. *New York 1960* (Monacelli Press: New York, 1995), p. 875.

² *Ibid.*



Date: 08/18/2017

Staff: Lorraine Weiss

USN Number: 04701.020145

Name: Marcus Garvey Houses - Group A (NYCHA)

Location:

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:



Marcus Garvey Houses – Group A (NYCHA)
1424 East New York Avenue, Brooklyn, Kings County

Marcus Garvey Houses - Group A is located in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn.

Built over three city blocks, the 3.28-acre complex is bordered by East New York, Strauss Street, and Hopkinson Avenue (also known as Thomas S. Boyland St). Though ground was broken for the complex in 1972 it was not completed until 1975. This public housing development meets Criterion A in the following areas: (1) Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; (2) Politics/Government, for the local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income residents; and 3) Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income and elderly residents. The complex also meets Criterion C under the themes of Architecture and Community Planning & Development. Though less than 50 years of age, the complex appears to be of exceptional significance due to its urban design concept combining public-facing low-density blocks with high-density towers behind. The complex was part of the overall revitalization efforts in Brownsville during the 1970s which included the Urban Development Corporation's Marcus Garvey Village a few blocks to the south. Garvey Houses – Group A pre-dates New York City's "Tower-on-a-Base" zoning regulations. The architects for the complex were Bond Ryder Associates in association with Held and Rubin, Architects. M. Paul Friedberg was the landscape architect.

The three buildings that form the complex line the public street providing modern apartment layouts above. Buildings 2 and 3 consist of three-story residential blocks parallel to the angled street frontage of East New York Avenue with angled 14-story residential towers extending from the rear. The six-story Building 1 also fronts the East New York Avenue and was designed to house the elderly. Parking lots are located behind the buildings. The exterior walls of the buildings are of textured "corduroy" concrete with smooth bands of concrete defining the floor levels and building corners. Most of the windows are in pairs with one-over-one double-hung replacement sash. A Community Center located behind Building 2 was designed by Caples Jefferson Architects and completed in 2010.

The firm of Bond and Ryder, founded by J. Max Bond Jr. and Donald P. Ryder in 1969, became one of the leading African-American architecture firms in New York and the East Coast. From its inception, the firm was involved in a broad range of projects, including: medium and high density urban housing; urban planning and design; university, religious, and community complexes. The firm counted the Arthur Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in Harlem, the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change in Atlanta, and the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute in Alabama among its achievements. After Ryder's retirement in 1990, the firm merged with David, Brody & Associates, becoming David Brody Bond. That firm was responsible for the designs of the Riverbend Houses and Zeckendorf Towers.



Date: 11/07/2016

Staff: Daria Merwin

USN Number: 04701.016643

Name: Marlboro Houses (housing complex, 1958)

Location: 18 Avenue V, Brooklyn NY

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

The Marlboro Houses public housing complex, located in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Gravesend, was completed in 1958 to the designs of architects Harrison & Abramovitz, with site planning and landscape architecture by Gilmore D. Clarke and Michael Rapuano. The site plan emulates the Tower-in-the-Park model, with 28 residential buildings and two community buildings faced in red brick oriented north-south and east-west across two superblocks. In their 2016 inventory-wide review of properties, NYCHA determined that the Marlboro Houses complex is eligible for the National Register in the area of architecture (Criterion C) for the association with notable architects Harrison and Abramovitz. The NYCHA survey describes the complex as 30 buildings set in grid arrangement, oriented to almost true North, in a classic "Zeilenbau" formation, on two superblocks (demapping at least five public streets). Three 16-story buildings frame a green space on the West block; the remaining 27, seven story buildings edge the public streets are form a series of interior quads. Among the notable architectural features are entrances with prominent canopies.



Date: 08/21/2017

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 04701.019394

Name: Pennsylvania Avenue - Wortman Avenue Houses (NYCHA complex)

Location:

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or poses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

NYCHA's Pennsylvania-Wortman Avenue Houses (also known as Penn-Wortman Houses) is located on a 5.44-acre site bordered by Pennsylvania Avenue, Wortman Avenue, Vermont Street, and Stanley Avenue in the East New York section of Brooklyn. It was designed by noted architect Morris Lapidus and landscape architect M. Paul Friedberg. Completed in 1972, it consists of three 8 and 16-story tall residential towers set within one superblock, aligned with the street grid, framing a rectangular, central green space. The towers are of brown brick with a contrasting cream-colored brick used for the horizontal spandrels delineating each floor. Fenestration is regular with double-hung windows either in pairs or as single units. The windows in the central entrance bays of the buildings are framed by stone. Also located in the complex is a one-story community center/senior center that is attached at the south end of Building 1 and a free-standing U-plan public school – P.S. 4 – located at the northwest corner of the superblock. Both of these buildings feature the same brown brick as the towers and have stone pilasters. Penn-Wortman meets Criterion A in the following areas: (1) Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; (2) Politics/Government, for the local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income residents; and 3) Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income residents. The complex also meets Criterion C under the themes of Architecture and Community Planning & Development. The design and construction of the buildings and their placement in a designed landscape is representative of modern urban planning design theory of the period.



Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner

RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: February 23, 2016

STAFF: Daria Merwin

PROPERTY: Queensbridge Houses North and South

ADDRESS: 40-01 12th Street, Long Island City, NY 11101

USN: 08101.011719

MCD: Queens

COUNTY: Queens

- I. Property is individually listed on SR/NR:
name of listing:
- Property is a contributing component of a SR/NR district:
name of district:
- II. Property meets eligibility criteria.
 - Property contributes to a district which appears to meet eligibility criteria.
Pre SRB: Post SRB: SRB date

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Queensbridge Houses North and South, a public housing complex owned by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) in Long Island City built 1939-1940 to the design of chief architect William F.R. Ballard, meet the criteria for listing on the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places as an intact representative example of public housing. Queensbridge Houses meet Criterion A in the following areas: 1.) Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; 2.) Politics/Government, for the Federal and local government’s acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income residents; and 3.) Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income residents. The complexes also meet Criterion C under the themes of Architecture and Community Planning and Development. The design and construction of the buildings and their placement in a designed landscape is

representative of modern urban planning design theory of the period. The complex retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

History

Queensbridge Houses, along with Red Hook Houses and Williamsburg Houses in Brooklyn and the Harlem River Houses and First Houses in Manhattan, were the earliest public housing developments in New York City built under the National Housing Act of 1934, which created the Federal Housing Administration, and the United States Housing Act of 1937 (also known as the Wagner-Steagall Act), which provided local public housing agencies with Federal subsidies to improve living conditions for low-income families. Similar legislative actions were taken by state and local authorities during the 1930s: Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia founded the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) in early 1934, following the amendment of the New York State housing laws of 1926 which allowed the establishment of municipal housing authorities. These laws and actions were in part a response to the shortage of affordable housing during the Great Depression, and resulted in government investment in providing safe and clean homes for the poor and working classes (Plunz 1990:207-210).

The announcement that the Queensbridge and Red Hook projects were to be built with Federal funds before any other in New York City was made on January 27, 1938 in conjunction with LaGuardia's plan for widespread slum clearance and construction of new housing for the city's low income families (*The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, pp. 1-2). Clearing the site began in April 1938, and the cornerstone laid during a ceremony on April 26, 1939 (*The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, April 27, 1939, p. 3). The opening ceremony took place on October 25, 1929, though nearly 300 families had moved in earlier in the month. Newspaper accounts highlighted the Queensbridge project's amenities, particularly those meant for children, including a baby clinic operated by the City Health Department and a nursery school in the children's center. Other facilities included playgrounds, the community building with a gymnasium/auditorium, and a branch of the Queensboro Public Library, as well as space for 24 stores.

Description

Queensbridge Houses North and South consist of six "superblocks" bounded by Vernon Boulevard to the west, 21st Street to the east, 40th Avenue to the north, and 41st Road and the Queensboro Bridge to the south; the North and South parts of the complex are separated by 41st Avenue. It is the largest public housing project in the United States, with 3,149 units and roughly 7,000 occupants. There are 26 six-story brick faced apartment buildings, plus a community building and what was originally a children's center sited in the middle of the development. Each of the six blocks is arranged with the apartments around the perimeter, with open space in each center. William F.R. Ballard served as the chief architect, with Henry Churchill, Frederick G. Frost, and Burnett C. Turner working as associate architects. As described in *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (October 6, 1939, page 5): "The fireproof apartment buildings, composed of various Y-units, all with self-operating elevators, were designed to provide each dwelling unit with the greatest possible cross ventilation, light, air and privacy. Each apartment will have a modern bathroom, a kitchen equipped with electric refrigeration and a gas stove, and ample closet space and windows." Outdoor community spaces, landscaped walks, and playgrounds were included in the original site plan, and additional parkland was set aside by Robert Moses in conjunction with the project.

The use of connected Y-units at Queensbridge was a departure from rectilinear plans at earlier projects, and in fact deviated from the initial site plan produced by NYCHA technical staff, which featured three- to four-story garden apartments (Plunz 1990). The Modernist Y massing did have several advantages, with more façade area than conventional units and thus allowing for more units around a single elevator core that still received adequate light. The cost-effective design helped bring the \$13.5 million construction project under budget. The Y-units present a novel array of angled surfaces as viewed from adjacent streets, and this, together with the repetition of design and form clearly distinguish the housing project from the surrounding neighborhood. Further, as Plunz (1990:239) notes, "Aesthetically, in relation to the traditional tenement patterns, the Queensbridge Houses site plan offered a bold new

image in terms of both decreased coverage and nonrectilinear geometry.” As cited in Stern et al. (1987:499), architecture critic Lewis Mumford found the Queensbridge project to be “much handsomer” than the Red Hook Houses, and “the ‘Y units, in combination, form enclosures which at the same time give the effect of being open and of leading somewhere else’ with ‘a large pool of quiet space at the center... a handsome public plaza...’ In addition, he admired the mixture of tan brick and brown tile balustrade and parapet copings that provided ‘a very simple but judicious aesthetic touch.’” The use of brick, the fenestration pattern, and the flat roof with tile balustrade and copings are character-defining features of the Queensbridge North and South Houses.

Significance

In 2004, the National Park Service prepared a draft Multiple Property Documentation Form for Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949 (available online at <http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/guidance/Public%20Housing%20in%20the%20United%20States%20MPS.pdf>), which provides the historic context and registration requirements for government-sponsored projects. Queensbridge Houses North and South meet the requirements of the NPS document, having been built by a local housing authority (NYCHA) under the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 (Criterion A) and retaining a high degree of integrity for all physical characteristics identified by the NPS (functional utilitarian designs; repetitive building forms; low-rise, multi-family residential buildings arranged in highly ordered plans or “superblocks;” prominent community center/management office buildings; and substantial open spaces, circulation networks, and recreation areas) (Criterion C).

Queensbridge Houses are an intact and excellent representative example of an architectural style defined by the concept of “functional Modernism” and driven by rapid construction and the need to keep costs low, where buildings reflect the utilitarian ideals of public housing, with unembellished lines and planes, flat roofs, and minimal architectural decoration. Specifically, the complex meets the NPS requirements for National Register eligibility including substantially intact original site plan, including setting, building orientation, and the relationship between built and open spaces; high percentage of original buildings, including non-residential buildings such as community centers; original building design features, including fenestration patterns and roof configuration; and original building façade materials, except those for windows.

Sources

The Brooklyn Daily Eagle, “Mayor Acts to End All City Slums; Maps Program Requiring Loan of 100 Millions over 20 Years.” Thursday, January 27, 1938, pages 1-2.

The Brooklyn Daily Eagle, “Mayor Urges Labor Settle Housing Row.” Thursday, April 27, 1939, page 3.

The Brooklyn Daily Eagle, “Queens Housing Project Opens Oct 25.” Friday, October 6, 1939, page 5.

Plunz, Richard (1990) *A History of Housing in New York City: Dwelling Type and Social Change in the American Metropolis*. Columbia University Press, New York.

Stern, Robert A.M., Gregory Gilmartin, and Thomas Mellins (1987) *New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism between the Two World Wars*. Rizzoli, New York.



The Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Saturday, October 7, 1939, page 2.



Wurts Bros. (New York, N.Y.), [Vernon Boulevard. Queensbridge Housing Project New York City Housing Project #N.Y. 5-2, exterior of first unit finished, proof size, children on swing.], 1939. Museum of the City of New York. X2010.7.1.16661



Wurts Bros. (New York, N.Y.), [Queensbridge Houses with Midtown Manhattan in the distance.], 1939. Museum of the City of New York. X2010.7.1.16656

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name West 114th Street Historic District

other names/site number Randolph Houses

2. Location

street & number 204-246 West 114th Street and 215-277 West 114th Street [] not for publication

city or town New York City [] vicinity

state New York code NY county New York code 061 zip code 10026

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Rosemarie Purpoint SRHPO

5/9/14

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

date of action

West 114th Street Historic District
Name of Property

New York, New York
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local <input type="checkbox"/> public-State <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district <input type="checkbox"/> site <input type="checkbox"/> structure <input type="checkbox"/> object	Contributing <u>37</u> _____ _____ _____ 37	Noncontributing _____ buildings _____ sites _____ structures _____ objects 0 TOTAL

Name of related multiple property listing **Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

EDUCATION/school

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th & 20th CENTURY REVIVALS/

Renaissance Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls BRICK, BROWNSTONE, LIMESTONE,

TERRA COTTA

roof SYNTHETICS

other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

West 114th Street Historic District
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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location
- C** a birthplace or grave
- D** a cemetery
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by historic American Building Survey

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance:

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

EDUCATION

Period of Significance:

1895 - ca.1965

Significant Dates:

1895-1897, 1899, 1901-1902

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

NEVILLE & BAGGE, KERBY & CO.,

C.B.J. SNYDER

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other repository: _____

West 114th Street Historic District
Name of Property

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 3.92 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 8	5 8 8 1 6 1	4 5 1 7 3 6 3	3	1 8		
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	1 8			4	1 8		

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lindsay Peterson
organization Higgins Quasebarth & Partners, LLC date January 30, 2014
street & number 11 Hanover Square, 16th Floor telephone 212-276-9468
city or town New York state NY zip code 10005

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Rebecca Hemenway (authorized signatory), Trinity West Harlem Phase One Limited Partnership
street & number 75 Federal Street, 4th Floor telephone 617-720-8400
city or town Boston state MA zip code 02110

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20503

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Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

West 114th Street Historic District
Name of Property
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Narrative Description of Property

The West 114th Street Historic District consists of thirty-seven contributing buildings: thirty-six “Old Law” tenements, today known as the Randolph Houses, and one school, the Wadleigh High School for Girls (C. B. J. Snyder, 1900), located on West 114th Street between Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevard (formerly Seventh Avenue) and Frederick Douglas Boulevard (formerly Eighth Avenue) in the neighborhood of Harlem, Manhattan, New York City. The buildings, which are all five-stories tall and built within a seven-year period, are located in a neighborhood developed with modest nineteenth-century tenements, rowhouses, and apartment buildings, as well as several contemporary residential buildings. One block to the north is the New York Public Library, 115th Street Branch (NR-listed, 1980). The nearest historic districts are approximately five to ten blocks away and include the Mount Morris Park Historic District (NR-listed, 1973) and the Manhattan Avenue—West 120th-123rd Streets Historic District (NR-listed, 1992). The district is bounded by vacant lots on the east and west ends of the West 114th Street’s south side, and on the west end of West 114th Street’s north side. The streetscape itself features a robust pattern of stoops, areaways, projecting entrances, and trees set in a uniform concrete sidewalk that give the district a distinct sense of place. The nominated historic district stands out as an intact, visually cohesive group of lower- and middle-class tenements and a contemporaneous school, all representing a significant turning point in the evolution of the neighborhood as well as a shared mid-twentieth century development history.

The Randolph Houses, as the tenements on West 114th Street are presently known, were built as part of seven separate developments constructed in a four-year period between 1895 and 1899. The buildings were regulated under the 1879 Tenement House Act, which established minimum conditions for light, air and sanitary amenities. These requirements often resulted in symmetrical, dumbbell-shaped floor plans. When the New York State Tenement Act of 1901 was passed, these types of buildings became known as “Old Law” tenements and post-1901 tenements became known as “New Law” tenements. The Randolph Houses have shared light wells towards the front of the building and rear extensions that are set back from the adjacent property line in order to create rear courts.

The residential buildings, which are similar in scale, structure, material and style, have a strong cohesive character. All are five stories tall and are of brick-bearing construction with brick and masonry (brownstone, limestone or terra cotta) cladding on the front facade. Additionally, they are all designed in the Renaissance Revival style, each set with its own distinct façade organization and ornamentation. As part of a city-sponsored experimental program, the buildings were rehabilitated from ca. 1965 to 1977. At this time nearly all of the stoops were removed and replaced, and the windows were replaced. More recent changes include missing cornices and the insertion of openings with roll-down metal security gates at the ground level. As a whole, however, the tenement buildings appear largely intact in their massing, rhythm, materiality and ornamental detailing. Through these features they retain their integrity as a representative example of late-nineteenth century, working-class, speculative residential construction in Manhattan.

Additionally, the Wadleigh High School for Girls, located on the north side of West 114th Street, is an outstanding example of early twentieth-century French Renaissance style institutional architecture in New York City. Built in 1901-02, the school was intended to support the new neighborhood of tenements that had been constructed in this section of Harlem. It was built to the design of C.B.J. Snyder, prominent school architect and Board of Education’s Superintendent of School Buildings, and it is a particularly distinguished work and is a key visual feature of the West 114th Street Historic District streetscape.

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West 114th Street Historic District
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Section 7 Page 2

Building List

The building list includes the address, architect, original owner, date of construction, followed by a brief description of each building or group of buildings. All of the buildings are designed in the Renaissance Revival style. All of the buildings in the district are considered contributing.

West 114th Street, South Side

204 – 206 West 114th Street (2 buildings)

Architects: Ferdon & Ellicott

Date: 1896

Description: 204 - 206 West 114th Street are a pair of five-story brownstone-fronted tenements, each four bays wide, with projecting porticos above raised stoops and intact pressed-metal cornices. The porticoes have half-fluted Corinthian columns carrying a projecting hood above. The first story has ashlar brownstone window surrounds with carved volute keystones. The windows at the upper stories have molded surrounds, with pedimented hoods at the second and fourth stories and flat hoods at the third and fifth stories. The pedimented hoods have some surviving decorative detail in the tympanums. Each story has a projecting brownstone sill course unifying the facade. The windows at the first story and fronting on the shared fire escape are blocked up with wood panels (the panels at the first story are finished in cement stucco).

208 – 212 West 114th Street (3 buildings)

Architects: Neville & Bagge

Date: 1896

Description: 208 - 212 West 114th Street are a set of three five-story brownstone-fronted tenements, each four bays wide, with engaged entry surrounds above raised stoops and intact pressed-metal cornices. The first story and basement have rusticated brownstone block with a splayed brownstone lintel above the windows. The second story has rusticated ashlar brownstone piers carrying a projecting cornice. The third and fourth stories are unified by colossal Ionic pilasters that, in turn, carry a second cornice band below the fifth story. The windows at the third and fourth story are separated by decorative carved spandrels. The fifth story has single-height Ionic pilasters with a projecting stringcourse above. The windows at the first story and fronting on the shared fire escape are blocked up with wood panels (the panels at the first story are finished in cement stucco).

214 – 216 West 114th Street (2 buildings) & 218 – 226 West 114th Street (5 buildings)

Architects: Neville & Bagge

Date: 1897

Description: 214 – 226 West 114th Street are a set of seven five-story brick, limestone and terra-cotta tenements with engaged entry surrounds above raised stoops and intact pressed-metal cornices (missing at 222 and 224). The buildings were filed with the Department of Buildings as two separate developments and have separate New Building permits, but share the same design. The only indication that the buildings were separate developments is the small ($\pm 1'-0''$) height difference between 216 and 218.

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Section 7 Page 3

West 114th Street Historic District
Name of Property
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The first story and basement are constructed of limestone, with brick and limestone trim on the upper stories. The smooth limestone at the base is decorated with foliated window hoods (which differ from building to building) and a projecting balcony above the main entrance. There is a continuous limestone sill course below the third story and a continuous lintel course above the second and fifth stories. A continuous sheet-metal cornice runs below the fifth story. At the third through fifth stories, the flanking window bays in each building have projecting terra-cotta hoods, with eared flat hoods at the third and fourth stories and pedimented hoods at the fifth. The center windows at each building have splayed, flush terra-cotta lintels with a central projecting keystone. The windows at the first story and fronting on the shared fire escape are blocked up with wood panels (the panels at the first story are finished in cement stucco).

228 – 246 West 114th Street (10 buildings)

Architect: John P. Leo

Date: 1899

Description: 228 – 246 West 114th Street are a set of ten five-story brick, brownstone, limestone and terra-cotta tenements, each four bays wide, with flush entry surrounds above raised stoops and intact pressed-metal cornices (missing at 232 and 234). The basement is clad in brownstone, while the first story is clad in limestone up to the level of a continuous sill course below the second story. The second-story windows have flush terra-cotta lintels with decorative terra-cotta keystones. Terra-cotta sill and lintel courses are located above and below the third- and fourth-story windows, and a terra-cotta sill course is located below the fifth-story windows. The fifth-story windows are capped by projecting flat-arch window hoods. The windows at the first story and fronting on the shared fire escape are blocked up with wood panels (the panels at the first story are finished in cement stucco).

Alterations: The ground floor and stoop of 234 West 114th Street were lowered in 1966, and the flanking first-story window sills were dropped to create new entries close to the sidewalk grade. These flanking entries are now covered by roll-down metal doors.

West 114th Street, North Side

203 – 249 West 114th Street:

Wadleigh High School for Girls / (now) I.S. 88 Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing and Visual Arts

Architect: C.B.J. Snyder

Date: 1901-02

Description: The Wadleigh School is a five-story, H-shaped building with red brick walls and trim in buff limestone. The building displays elements of the Collegiate Gothic and French Renaissance styles. The West 114th Street elevation is composed of a recessed court and two projecting wings with gabled ends. Each corner of the recessed has a corner tower: the west corner tower is 125'-high with a pyramidal roof, cresting and gabled dormers; the east corner tower is polygonal and topped by a balustrade. Each of the recessed court facades consists of banked groups of six-over-six, wood-sash windows. The gable ends contain nine-over-nine sash. The limestone trim consists of stringcourses above the first and third floors; keyed surrounds and lintels around most windows; and corner quoining on the building and square tower. The two main entrances, located in the corner towers, and first-story windows have drip lintels set on corbels. The building is capped by ornate gabled roof

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West 114th Street Historic District
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dormers and a steeply pitched roof. On the West 115th Street elevation, a two-story auditorium is located in the recessed court.

251 – 261 West 114th Street (6 buildings)

Architects: probably Kerby & Co.

Date: circa 1895

263 – 277 West 114th Street (8 buildings)

Architects: Kerby & Co.

Owner: Cecelia Cassell

Date: 1895

Description: 251 - 277 West 114th Street are a set of fourteen five-story brownstone-fronted tenements, each four bays wide, with projecting entry porticoes above raised stoops and intact pressed-metal cornices. The buildings were filed with the Department of Buildings as two separate developments and have separate New Building permits, but share very similar design. Based on the design and layout similarities, these are believed to have been designed by the same architect and constructed within a year or two of one another.

The first story and basement are clad in ashlar brownstone and have projecting corbeled plinths that carry small colonnettes, which, in turn, carry the projecting hood of the front door surround. The only significant design variation between the two sets of buildings is the treatment of the brownstone at the first story and entry. 251 - 261 have the simpler design, with ashlar brownstone walls, molded brownstone window surrounds and plain spandrels below the windows. The Corinthian porch colonnettes at these buildings are slightly more stout, and are carried on simple fluted brackets. At 263 - 277, the design of the first story is more robust, with narrow rusticated coursing projecting between each course of ashlar, splayed jack-arch lintels above the windows and carved spandrels below. The Romanesque porch colonnettes at 263 - 277 are more slender, and are carried on plinths with carved faces.

The upper stories of all fourteen buildings are clad in ashlar brownstone with projecting brownstone sill courses and molded window surrounds. The brownstone on the upper stories is in generally poor condition, with many projecting elements eroded or missing entirely.

Alterations: 259 West 114th Street has a concrete stoop that extends across the western portion of the front facade, a modification made in 1966. The flanking first-story window sills were dropped to create new entries. To the west, the entry has a aluminum entry door opening onto the enlarged stoop. To the east, the entry extends to grade and is covered by roll-down metal doors.

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West 114th Street Historic District
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Statement of Significance:

The West 114th Street Historic District is significant under National Register Criterion C as a group of buildings that embody the distinctive characteristics of the lower- and middle-class tenement as it developed in New York City in the late-nineteenth century. The thirty-six residential buildings in the district all represent a distinct type of tenement: narrow, twenty-five-foot-wide Old Law tenements, erected under a law passed in 1879 that established minimum conditions for light, air and sanitary amenities. The construction of these buildings, which were erected in seven groups between 1895 and 1899, also reflect the history of development in Harlem. This development was integrally connected to the construction of the elevated trains along the Ninth Avenue line (in Harlem it followed Eighth Avenue), which attracted speculative builders to develop large tracts of Harlem. These builders sought to attract working-class residents who would commute downtown. As this community developed, new public services such as schools were needed, and in 1902 the Wadleigh School For Girls, the first public girl's high school in New York City, was erected in the district to serve the increasingly large student population. The Wadleigh Heigh School for Girls is significant in the history of education in New York City, and also as an early twentieth-century educational structure, designed by renowned school architect C.B.J. Snyder. It features a sophisticated design in the Colligate Gothic style and utilizes an innovative H-shape plan, which provided plentiful light and air to students within.

The district is also significant under Criterion A, reflecting the social history of Harlem as different groups moved into the buildings on West 114th Street. Initially, the buildings attracted white households of various ethnicities. Beginning in the late 1920s and early 1930s, African American families began to move in, reflecting Harlem's development into one of the most important neighborhoods for New York City's black community. By 1940, the federal census records show the evolution of the street to a black community was complete. This transformation coincided with acute housing overcrowding and an overall deterioration of the building stock in Harlem. Many buildings were abandoned and fell into city ownership. By the 1960s the tenement buildings on West 114th Street were no exception. However, these buildings participated in a unique city-sponsored rehabilitation program that functioned a social and physical experiment. Part of the experiment was to avoid displacing any residents from the area and to hire locals as part of integrated crews on the construction project. City officials hoped that this would provide a model for other rehabilitation efforts. Thus, the period of significance for the district is from 1895 when the first residential buildings were completed, until ca. 1965, when the structures were rehabilitated.

Early History of Harlem

The village of Harlem, located in what today is known as East Harlem, at East 125th Street and First Avenue, was established by the Dutch in 1658. It was called Niuew Haarlem after the Dutch city of Haarlem. One of a number of independent settlements (including Greenwich Village) on the island of Manhattan, Harlem was connected to New Amsterdam at the foot of Manhattan via what later became known as the Boston Post Road.

Harlem existed as a separate village and farming community through much of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The land on which the historic district is located was a flat, lowland area that was settled in the seventeenth century by a young Dutchman named Dr. Montagne, who built a small bark cabin for his family at the present intersection of St. Nicholas Avenue (a former Indian trail), Seventh Avenue and West 116th Street.¹ This area of the Harlem

¹ Carl Horton Pierce, William Pennington Toler and Harmon De Pau Nutting, *New Harlem Past and Present: The Story of an Amazing Civic Wrong, Now at Last to be Righted* (New York: New Harlem Pub. Co., 1903), 4.

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West 114th Street Historic District
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lowlands— known to the Indians as “Muscoota,” which means “flat place”—provided highly fertile farmland. Montagne occupied a roughly 200-acre tract that ran from 109th Street to 124th Street, known as Montagne’s Flat.²

This area remained farmland through the early nineteenth century, when David Wood purchased the land and built a farmhouse on present West 114th Street. When Wood’s daughter, Mrs. Julia Carolyn Wood Berdell, died at age 101 in 1928, the *New York Herald Tribune* noted that she was born in a farmhouse on the site that is now occupied by the Wadleigh High School for Girls.³

Beginning in the 1830s, new forms of transportation began to provide unprecedented access to the farmland north of 110th Street. In 1837, the New York and Harlem Railroad opened, serving the east side of Manhattan, Harlem and eventually upstate New York as far north as Columbia County. Although service was poor and unreliable, the opening of the railroad led to Harlem’s development as a suburb of New York City and coincided with the selling off of many larger farming estates in the 1850s and 1860s. During this period, Harlem was laid out with the street grid of the 1811 Commissioners’ Plan, which extended the rigid numbered street grid of New York throughout much of the island.

Advent of the Elevated Train

Development in Harlem became more rapid after the Civil War, especially after the village was formally annexed to the City of New York following the Panic of 1873. However, the area around West 114th Street continued to remain undeveloped, mostly due to the shortage of commuter options between the west side of Harlem and the business districts to the south. Small shantytowns began to spread through the west side of Harlem as deteriorating farmland was abandoned.⁴ Many New Yorkers visited the area to admire its rural charms while picnicking.

This trajectory shifted dramatically between 1878 and 1881, when the elevated train lines extended into the district via Second, Third and Eighth avenues, marking the true urban expansion of Harlem.⁵ The Ninth Avenue elevated train, which came up Columbus Ave, turned east on West 110th Street, and then north on Eighth Avenue (now Frederick Douglas Boulevard), had a particular impact on the district. The Ninth Avenue elevated, operated by the Manhattan Railway Company, had opened in Greenwich Village. By 1881 it was connected to the Sixth Avenue Elevated Line at 59th Street and extended up to West 155th Street. It had a local stop at West 110th Street and Ninth Avenue and an express stop at West 116th Street and Eighth Avenue.

This development produced a surge of new speculative construction. In 1886, the *New York Times* proclaimed: “A trip on the Sixth-avenue elevated [aka Ninth Avenue Elevated] railroad from Fifty-ninth to One Hundred and Fifty-fifth street shows that the entire face of the west side is being changed... Streets are being graded, and thousands of carpenters and masons are engaged in rearing substantial dwellings where a year ago nothing was to be seen but market gardens or barren, rocky fields.”⁶

At first, this development took the form of individual rowhouse developments, intended to attract middle- and upper-middle-class buyers who were attracted to Harlem by its quiet ambiance, abundant park land, and the low cost of housing

² *New Harlem Past and Present*, 5.

³ “Mrs. T.B. Berdell Dies,” *New York Herald Tribune*, 16 December 1928.

⁴ Andrew S. Dolkart and Gretchen S. Sorin, *Touring Historic Harlem: Four Walks in Manhattan* (New York: New York Landmarks Conservancy, 1997), 9.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ “Settling the West Side: New Dwellings Springing up by the Hundreds,” *New York Times*, 11 September 1886.

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compared to other Manhattan neighborhoods. Many of these rowhouse tracts were located north of West 114th Street, probably to be closer to West 125th Street, which acted as a major commercial corridor. The 1885 Robinson Atlas shows the blocks immediately north and south of West 125th Street were filled with brick and brownstone rowhouses, flats, hotels, and churches, as well as a number of wood-frame buildings. Amenities like parks, such as Mt. Morris Park and St. Nicholas Park, drew builders and new tenants to this more northern section of Harlem. The area around West 114th Street, however, remained nearly empty, save for two small rowhouse developments on West 111th Street and West 116th Street, between Sixth (now Lenox Boulevard) and Seventh avenues.

This building boom abruptly ceased in 1893, when the nationwide economic depression brought new construction to a halt. When the economy stabilized in 1895, investors mostly turned away from building new rowhouse developments and instead looked to build apartment houses and walk-up tenements. Typically, row houses and tenements were constructed along the side streets and larger apartment houses were located on the avenues.

Old Law Tenements

The term “Old Law tenement” refers to those tenement houses constructed in New York City between 1879 and 1901. While tenements during this period referred to all types of multi-family housing, the term had by this point earned a pejorative connotation and generally were understood to be those buildings housing poorer tenants. The city’s first tenements—multi-family housing for the poor and working class—were converted rowhouses on the Lower East Side and Corlear’s Hook. By the late 1820s, purpose-built tenements began to be constructed in these neighborhoods.

By the time of the post-Civil War building boom, the standard purpose-built tenement house was dark, airless and poorly constructed. Typical tenement house construction of this period consisted of a front and a rear building, with a small courtyard between that housed the “school sinks,” or outhouses. Increasingly, tenements were constructed to occupy almost the full lot. Given the twenty-five-foot-wide module and party-wall construction of the New York City grid, the only windows were on the front and rear of the buildings, leading to many windowless interior rooms.

New York’s first housing code was the 1867 Tenement House Act, and the following year the Department of Buildings began operation. The 1867 Tenement House Act sought to address the problems of light and air by requiring all rooms within tenements to have windows. However, the law did not specify that those windows needed to open to the outside, so builders were able to meet the letter of the law by providing windows between rooms. The 1879 Tenement House Act was passed by the city in response to the increasingly squalid and unsanitary conditions of the tenement. The act provided minimal allowances for light and air in every habitable room and came to be epitomized by the dumbbell tenement form developed by architect James E. Ware for an 1878 model tenement competition sponsored by the *Plumber and Sanitary Engineer* trade journal.

Although the dumbbell form became the most typical plan type, architects and builders continued to experiment with the form throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century. This variation in floor plans under the 1879 Tenement House Act can be seen in the seven tenement developments contained within the West 114th Street Historic District. Each of the six historic developments has a different facade articulation and different plan form (dumbbell and otherwise) with different stair and corridor layouts.

Regardless of the layout of the air shafts required under the 1879 act, they did little to provide light or air to interior apartments. As a result, in 1901, the New York State passed a new Tenement House Act. The 1901 Tenement House Act required much larger courtyards to provide light and air and, as a result, made the development of smaller tenements on

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the twenty-five-foot-wide module all but impossible. New Law tenements therefore occupy a larger footprint, a factor that quickly moved tenement house development away from the smaller builder/developers that typified development under the Old Law.

The development of Harlem as an urban residential district thus coincided with the earliest attempts to regulate building and housing in New York City, with most of the multi-family development in the area falling under the 1879 tenement law. The proximity of the project site to the elevated railroad running up Eighth Avenue undoubtedly accounts for the predominance of tenements, rather than rowhouses, on the side streets between Seventh and Eighth avenues.

The earliest development within the district is 251-77 West 114th Street, a total of fourteen buildings constructed in 1895 by architects Kerby & Co., a firm led by architect John E. Kerby (1858-1936). The son of a contractor and builder, John E. Kerby studied architecture at the Cooper Institute and at Fordham University.⁷ Along with his residential structures, Kerby also designed several other types of buildings, including churches, synagogues, college buildings, and a theatre. One of the only extant examples of his designs is St. Joseph's Catholic Church at 1949 Bathgate Avenue in the Bronx (1898). Kerby designed the tenements on West 114th Street in the Romanesque Revival style popular in the 1880s and 1890s, using features such as ashlar brownstone and corbelled plinths with carved faces carrying colonettes.

Another architectural firm represented in the West 114th Street Historic District is that of Neville & Bagge, composed of Thomas P. Neville and George A. Bagge. The partnership between Neville & Bagge was begun in 1892. They began initially constructing rowhouses, became prolific tenement designers, and eventually specialized in store and loft buildings and apartment houses.⁸ In 1896 they designed three tenements at 208-12 West 114th Street (three buildings), which were distinguished by the colossal brownstone Ionic pilasters that unify the third and fourth stories. In 1897, the firm designed seven brick, limestone and terra-cotta buildings at 214-26 West 114th Street decorated with foliated window hoods (which differ from building to building) at the ground story. Other lesser known architects active in the district include Ferdon & Ellicott (two buildings, 1896) and the prolific John P. Leo (ten buildings, 1899).

Wadleigh Girls High School

Churches, schools, theaters and other urban amenities soon followed residential construction on West 114th Street. In 1903 the Wadleigh High School, the first high school for girls in Manhattan and the first school constructed after the consolidation of the city's five boroughs, was dedicated in the presence of Mayor Seth Low and President Henry A. Rogers of the Board of Education.⁹ The building, which had opened the previous year, was built to accommodate 2,800 female students, many of which lived in the surrounding neighborhoods. It was named after Lydia F. Wadleigh, a pioneer in the field of higher education of women.

The structure was designed by the prominent school architect and Superintendent of School Buildings, C.B.J. Snyder (1860-1945), in the Collegiate Gothic style, which Snyder himself had introduced to public school architecture. Snyder was appointed to the position in 1891 and remained until 1923, with the responsibility for school buildings in all five boroughs.

⁷ "Col. John E. Kerby, Architect, 78, Dies," *New York Times*, 5 August 1936.

⁸ National Register of Historic Places, West 147th-149th Historic District, New York County, New York, National Register # 03000407: sec. 8, p. 6.

⁹ "High School Dedicated: Ceremonies at Institution Named for Lydia F. Wadleigh," *New York Times*, 24 February 1903; "Called a Happy Augury: Mayor Speaks at the Dedication of New Wadleigh High School," *New York Tribune*, 24 February 1903.

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Between 1884 and 1887 the Board of Education acquired 125 new sites in Manhattan and the Bronx to provide space for more than 132,000 new students.¹⁰ After the consolidation of New York's five boroughs in 1898, the city decided to create a unified education system. Lacking in available schools, the city soon began a building program to provide new schools for the huge waves of immigrants moving to the city.

On West 114th Street, the city purchased a through-block site in the midst of recently constructed tenement buildings. Due to the high cost of land in New York, Snyder had the particular challenge of maximizing small lots for educational use. Considering health and safety concerns such as fire protection, ventilation, lighting and reduced class size, Snyder devised the H-plan building, which provided an efficient and economical layout as well as significant amounts of light and ventilation and recreation areas.

Before Wadleigh, Snyder had used the H-plan for elementary schools. His design for the Wadleigh Girls High School produced the largest H-plan public school yet, with eighty classrooms, over a dozen laboratories, executive offices, three gymnasiums, a library, a large boiler and engine room, two study halls, numerous lavatories and cloak rooms.¹¹ The school also had two electric elevators, the first of their kind in public school buildings in the city. The *New York Times* declared that these interior innovations made it "the greatest school in the world."¹²

Constructed with a steel-frame structure that allowed for large expanses of windows, the building used Collegiate Gothic motifs in an attempt to link it to the great academic traditions of British schools like Cambridge and Oxford. But Snyder also added Americanizing elements such as Federal shields on the dormers, perhaps meant to act as an assimilation agent for the flood of immigrant children who would attend the school. Undoubtedly, the building's imposing image acted as a powerful symbol to the immigrant residents of West 114th Street, reminding them they were beneficiaries of the city's largesse.

By the 1930s, Wadleigh was Harlem's only integrated high school. Here, white students and teachers increasingly mixed with black students and teachers, many of which were coming from neighborhoods to the east. During this period, public housing rapidly expanded in East Harlem, yet the city neglected to build new schools in Harlem, leaving the existing ones overcrowded and dilapidated and also forcing East Harlem students to overflow into the surrounding areas.¹³ In 1937 the Board of Education tried to move Wadleigh to another part of Harlem. In former superintendent John Tildsley's words, this was because the blocks around Wadleigh had become "a neighborhood where gentlewomen do no like to pass."¹⁴ Instead of this drastic move, a separate vocational school specifically for black students was created within the building, reflecting the fact that integration and discrimination are not mutually exclusive.

Wadleigh was used as a girl's high school until 1954, when it was converted to a co-educational junior high school, called I.S. 88, in 1956. In the early 1980s, the building was rated one of the most deteriorated schools in the city. Several years later Wadleigh received a renovation. Along with typical repairs and cleaning, work included complete reconstruction of the steel in the main tower.¹⁵ None of this work impacted the overall integrity of the building. In 2013 the building functions as a secondary school for the performing and visual arts for sixth through twelfth graders.

¹⁰ NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission, Wadleigh High School for Girls/(now) Wadleigh High School, Designation List 260, LP-1840: 26 July 1994, 2.

¹¹ "Modern Ideas Followed in Building New High School," *New York Times*, 1 March 1903.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ "Mayor Is Criticized On Harlem Schools," *New York Times*, 22 November 1935.

¹⁴ "Wadleigh Presses New School Era," *New York Times*, 12 December 1937; Jonna Perillo, *Uncivil Rights: Teachers, Unions and Race in the Battle for School Equity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 22;

¹⁵ Christopher Gray, "Renovating a 1902 Novelty," *New York Times*, 19 September 1993.

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Speculation and Immigration

The Wadleigh High School for Girls was constructed to serve the largely immigrant, working and middle class populations that surrounded the building. The 1900 federal census and the 1905 New York state census are the earliest source of information about the residents of the district. The records show that while the majority of adults were American born, many were also foreign born. Unlike New York neighborhoods with strong ethnic character, such as the Jewish population on the Lower East Side or the Italians in Little Italy, West 114th Street's residents did not reflect a predominant ethnic group. In many cases the heads of family were born abroad in countries like Ireland, Germany, England, Russia, Sweden and France and had been in the U.S. for over ten years, with many in the range of twenty to forty years. Their children were nearly all born in the U.S. All the residents were recorded as being white. The residents were part of the working and middle class and their occupations ranged widely, including clerks, shop owners, shop workers, tradesmen, laborers, etc.

A typical building is the five-story structure at 226 West 114th Street, which contained approximately sixteen apartments. In 1905 the state census recorded eleven families living in the building, with a total of thirty-one individuals. The adults in this building came from Germany, England and Ireland, but all had been in the U.S. for over ten years; one Irishman for as long as fifty-five years. Families ranged from three to six people; some apartments took in boarders for extra income. Those employed included a janitor, a dressmaker, a telegraph operator, a pocket-book maker, a painter, a cashier, a conductor, a baker, a music teacher, two manicurists, a leather clerk and a tobacco clerk. The ethnic and economic makeup of the block remained largely the same through the late-1920s.

A major change in the character of the population becomes evident in the 1930 federal census, when for the first time there is a significant black population living in the historic district. At that time, 204, 206, 210 and 255 West 114th Street each housed three to four black families. By 1940, the street's racial and ethnic evolution was complete and the entire block was occupied by black families, reflecting the enormous population changes that occurred in Harlem in the early decades of the twentieth century as Harlem evolved into the most important center of black life in New York City. Many of these new occupants had migrated from neighborhoods like the Tenderloin and San Juan Hill in the West 30s, 40s and 50s, where not only was housing of poor quality but large construction projects like Pennsylvania Station had decimated the available housing stock.

At 226 West 114th Street, eleven families were recorded as living in the building in 1940. While most of the occupants were born in New York, several were born in southern and mid-western states such as North Carolina, Virginia, Florida, Oklahoma and Tennessee. One resident was born in Barbados, which is part of the British West Indies. These tenants reflected the fact that African-Americans from the south tended to migrate north, attracted to large cities like New York.¹⁶ The employed were primarily part of the service industry, working in private homes, lofts and public halls. This reflected the segregated nature of New York and other northern cities in the early decades of the twentieth century. Their jobs included a superintendent, a maid, an elevator operator, a laundress, a seamstress, a porter, and a bootblack. Other occupations for employed occupants were a laborer, a laboratory assistant at the Board of Health, a presser in a tailor shop, a presser in a dress factory, and timber man.

¹⁶ National Register of Historic Places, West 147th-149th Historic District, New York County, New York, National Register # 03000407, sec. 8, p. 9.

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1960s Rehabilitation

After the subway was extended northward in 1904, Harlem experienced yet another building boom. However, after this period very little private development occurred around West 114th Street. By the 1930s most of the development in Harlem was government sponsored, in the form of public housing. Following that the area significantly declined as a large portion of the population left Harlem. Many late nineteenth and early twentieth century tenements were abandoned and fell into city ownership.

The thirty-six residential buildings in the West 114th Street Historic District were acquired by the City of New York and redeveloped as a single project by the Community Improvement Corporation of Manhattan in ca. 1965-77. The buildings were acquired as part of \$5.9 million experimental program for the social and physical rehabilitation of a single, decaying block in Central Harlem.¹⁷ The Community Improvement Corporation of Manhattan was a nonprofit formed by two foundations—the Frederick W. Richmond Foundation, which primarily sponsored pilot projects in education and race relations, and the Carol W. Haussamen Foundation, which had previously contributed to Urban League and the Fund for the Republic. Part of city and federal anti-poverty programs, the project was meant to revitalize slums through rehabilitation rather than urban renewal.

The 114th Street tenement buildings, it was reported, were chosen for this experiment in housing because of the physical condition of the buildings, the uniformity of the structures on the block, and the fact that they were all built before 1901, which had certain tax implications.¹⁸ One aspect of the experiment was to investigate how to manage construction work while not displacing any residents from the area. Tenants would be moved into temporary apartments on the block and then when construction was finished they would be moved back into completed apartments. The project was meant to, in the words of Mayor Wagner, “test the feasibility of renovation without relocation,” and if successful was intended “to serve to broaden and hasten other rehabilitation efforts.”¹⁹ The plan was to complete the renovation of seven units every two weeks.

Physically, the project was an experiment in how to update nineteenth-century tenements for modern living. This included changing the walk-through (or railroad) layouts to a design that would have living rooms facing the light, and eliminate the need to walk through one room to another. Also, the scope of the work included new heating systems, new electrical wiring; central garbage disposal chutes and intercom systems; modern kitchens and bathrooms; new windows and doors; finished basements for use as community rooms and offices; new stoops; and backyards areas for children and sitting areas for adults.²⁰

The planners also hoped that residents of the block, many of whom were unemployed, would be put to work as part of integrated crews on the construction project. However, the *New Pittsburgh Courier*, an African American newspaper based out of Pittsburgh, quoted James R. Lawson, the president of the Harlem Council for Economic Development, expressing some skepticism over the project: “We are always suspicious when white people come to our community bearing gifts (so often false)... This, on the surface, appears to be a noble thing. But beneath the surface is a raw and blatant scheme. First, this development will cost the Foundation practically nothing as Urban Renewal funds were made

¹⁷ Samuel Kaplan, “Harlem Renewal Starts Officially,” *New York Times*, 14 April 1965.

¹⁸ “Harlemite Selected as Sub-Contractor for New 114th St.” *New Pittsburgh Courier*, June 12, 1965.

¹⁹ “Harlem Renewal Starts Officially.”

²⁰ “Harlemite Selected as Sub-Contractor for New 114th St; “To Occupy First Bldg. Completed On 114th St.,” *New York Amsterdam News*, 9 October 1965.

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available. Secondly, the tenants through fixed rents will bear the loans on this project.”²¹ Lawson’s criticism was seen as a motivating factor to make Andrew Gainer, a 116th Street refrigerator and stove dealer, the first African-American subcontractor in Manhattan to be associated with such a large project. Ultimately, fifty block residents were employed in the rehabilitation program.²²

In October 1965, residents moved into the first completed apartments within 263, 265, 275, and 277 West 114th Street. Residents were welcomed by Mayor Wagner as they moved in.²³ In May 1966, when James and Dorothy Magnum and their seven children moved from their dilapidated apartment at 257 West 114th Street to their new four-bedroom apartment at 263 West 114th Street, Mrs. Magnum declared “I feel like a Mrs. Rockefeller this morning.”²⁴ The project was ultimately completed in 1977.

Recent History

In 1990, the tenements on West 114th Street were named after A. Philip Randolph (1889-1979), a labor leader from Harlem. Randolph was the principal organizer of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), which came to be viewed as a symbol of African-American dignity, respect and a decent livelihood. Randolph also led efforts to end segregation in the Armed Forces and in schools.²⁵

Perhaps signaling Harlem’s revitalization in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, the *New York Times* reported in 1991 that the West 114th Street block is known, year after year, “as the one with more children on it than any other block in the neighborhood.”²⁶ More recently, Harlem has become a highly desirable area for young families and urbanites, generating much new development.

²¹ “Harlemite Selected as Sub-Contractor for New 114th St.”

²² “To Occupy First Bldg. Completed On 114th St.,” *New York Amsterdam News*, 9 October 1965.

²³ “First Families Moving in Rehabilitated W. 114th St.” *New York Amsterdam News*, Oct 16, 1965, pg. 3

²⁴ Simon Anekwe, “Feels Like a Mrs. Rockefeller In Move to New Apartment,” *New York Amsterdam News*, May 28, 1966, pg. 3.

²⁵ NYCHA Housing Developments, “Randolph, Philip A. Houses,” retrieved 14 May 2013,

[<http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycha/html/developments/manrandolph.shtml>].

²⁶ Sara Rimer, “Holiday Cheer Hills a Harlem Block: Old-Time Southern Warmth Among West 114th St. Neighbors,” *New York Times*, 26 December 1991.

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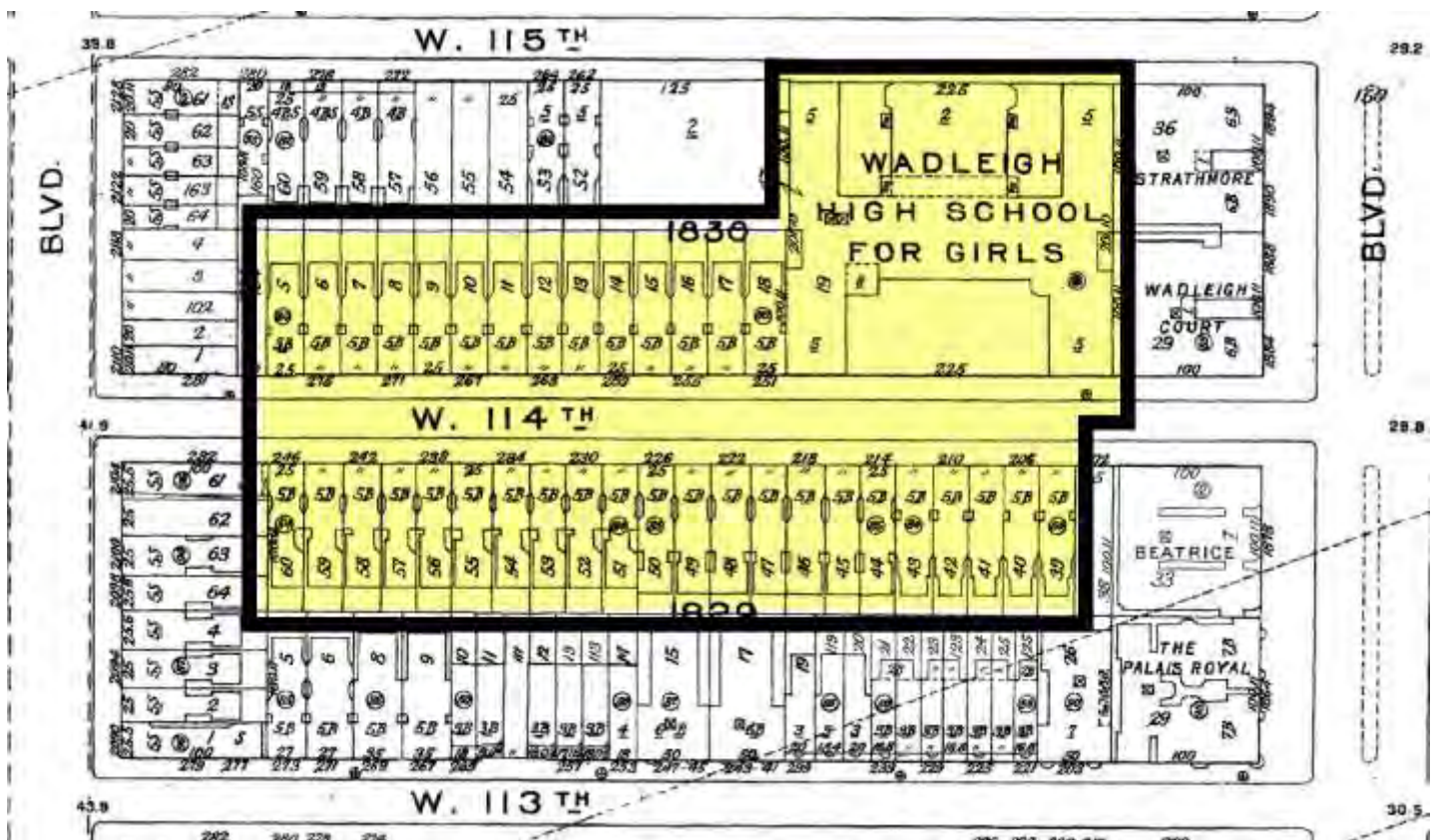
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Verbal Boundary Description

Boundaries are indicated on the accompanying base map.



Boundary Justification

The boundary of the West 114th Street Historic District was drawn to include the area associated with late-nineteenth century working- and middle-class speculative tenement construction as well as public service structures directly related to that development, such as the Wadleigh High School for Girls. The district is generally bounded to the west by a vacant lot and two contemporary developments constructed in 2010 and 2011. To the east, the district is bounded by a vacant lot and Seventh Avenue (Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevard)-facing corner apartment buildings that do not match the scale and character of the side-street tenements. To the north and south, the district is bounded by unrelated residential construction of various types including rowhouses, New Law tenements and contemporary apartment buildings.

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West 114th Street Historic District
Manhattan, New York Co., NY

204-264 W. 114th St &
215-277 W. 114th St



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



W 114th St. HD

Tax Parcel Data
NYC RPS
gis.nyc.gov/dof/dtm



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West 114th Street Historic District
Manhattan, New York Co., NY

204-264 W. 114th St &
215-277 W. 114th St



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



 W 114th St. HD

Tax Parcel Data:
NYC RPS
gis.nyc.gov/dot/dtm



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Additional Information

Photograph Log

Name of Property:	West 114 th Street Historic District
City or Vicinity:	New York
County:	Kings County
State:	NY
Name of Photographer:	Jorgen Cleeman
Location of Original Digital Files:	11 Hanover Square, 16 th Floor, NY, NY, 10005.
Number of Photographs:	20

Photo 1

View of the south side of West 114th St., showing 204-06 West 114th St.

Photo 2

View of stoop and entrance to 204 West 114th St.

Photo 3

View of 212 West 114th St. (south side).

Photo 4

View of south side of West 114th St., showing 208-216 West 114th St.

Photo 5

View of south side of West 114th St., showing 214-18 West 114th St.

Photo 6

View of 216 West 114th St. (south side).

Photo 7

View of 224 West 114th St. (south side).

Photo 8

View of entrance to 214 West 114th St.

Photo 9

Detail view of windows at 214 West 114th St.

Photo 10

View of 230 West 114th St. (south side).

Photo 11

View of south side of West 114th St., looking west from 234 West 114th St.

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Photo 12

View of south side of West 114th St., looking east from 236 West 114th St.

Photo 13

View of 242 West 114th St. (south side).

Photo 14

View of 255 West 114th St. (north side).

Photo 15

View of the lower stories of 255-57 West 114th St. (north side).

Photo 16

View of 263 West 114th St. (north side).

Photo 17

View of base of 275 West 114th St. (north side).

Photo 18

View of stoops and entrances on north side of West 114th St., showing 273-277 West 114th St.

Photo 19

View of entrance at 277 West 114th St. (north side).

Photo 20

View of the former Wadleigh High School for Girls, looking northwest.

Photo 21

View of the former Wadleigh High School for Girls, looking northeast.

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Historical Photographs and Maps



MODERN MONTAGNE'S FLAT—LOOKING EAST FROM THE LINE AT 112TH STREET.
[Arrow points to site of the original village.]

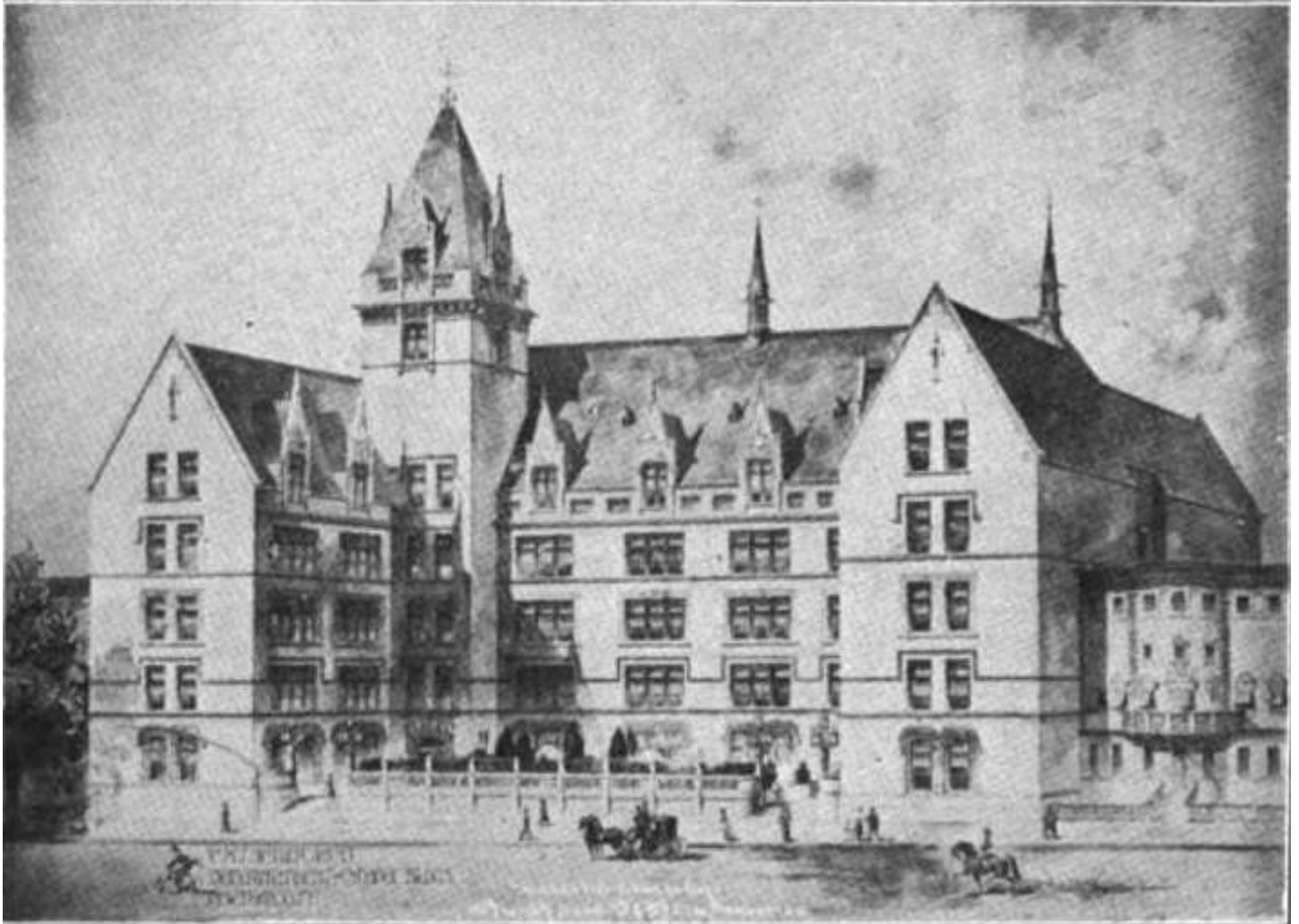
1. View of Montagne's Flat in 1903. The area inside the box shows the north side of the district, including the newly completed Wadleigh School for Girls. The images shows the degree of development in this area of Harlem in the early twentieth century. Note the elevated railroad, which runs up former Eighth Avenue (now Frederick Douglas Boulevard). (*New Harlem Past and Present*, pg. 21)

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2. Rendering of the Wadleigh School for Girls, 1907. (*The Granite Monthly: A New Hampshire Magazine*, vol. 39, pg. 214)

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3. View of West 114th Street looking east from Eighth Avenue (now Frederick Douglas Boulevard), 1928. (New York Public Library)

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4. View of 204-08 West 114th Street, ca. 1940. The church at the left side of the image is no longer extant. (NYC Municipal Archives)

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204-246 West 114th St. (Randolph Houses)
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New York, New York
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5. View of 208-18 West 114th Street, ca. 1940. (NYC Municipal Archives)

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National Park Service

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204-246 West 114th St. (Randolph Houses)
Name of Property
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6. View of 214-30 West 114th Street, ca. 1940. (NYC Municipal Archives)

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National Park Service

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204-246 West 114th St. (Randolph Houses)
Name of Property
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County and State



7. View of 218-28 West 114th Street, ca. 1940. (NYC Municipal Archives)

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National Park Service

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204-246 West 114th St. (Randolph Houses)

Name of Property

New York, New York

County and State



8. View of 228-40 West 114th Street, ca. 1940. (NYC Municipal Archives)

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National Park Service

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204-246 West 114th St. (Randolph Houses)
Name of Property
New York, New York
County and State



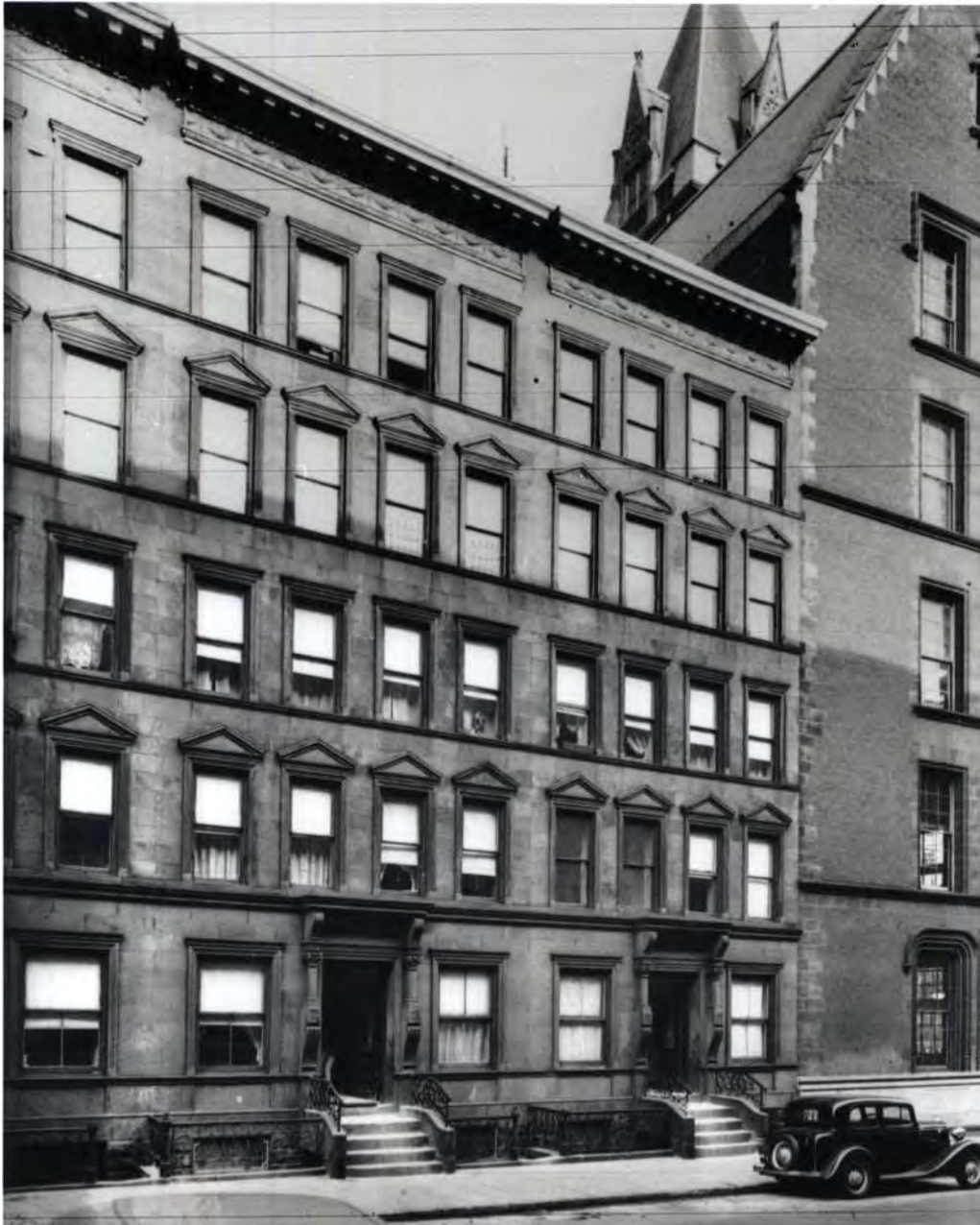
9. View of 269-73 West 114th Street, ca. 1940. (NYC Municipal Archives)

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204-246 West 114th St. (Randolph Houses)
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10. View of 251-53 West 114th Street and part of the Wadleigh School for Girls, ca. 1940. (New York Public Library, Acker Collection)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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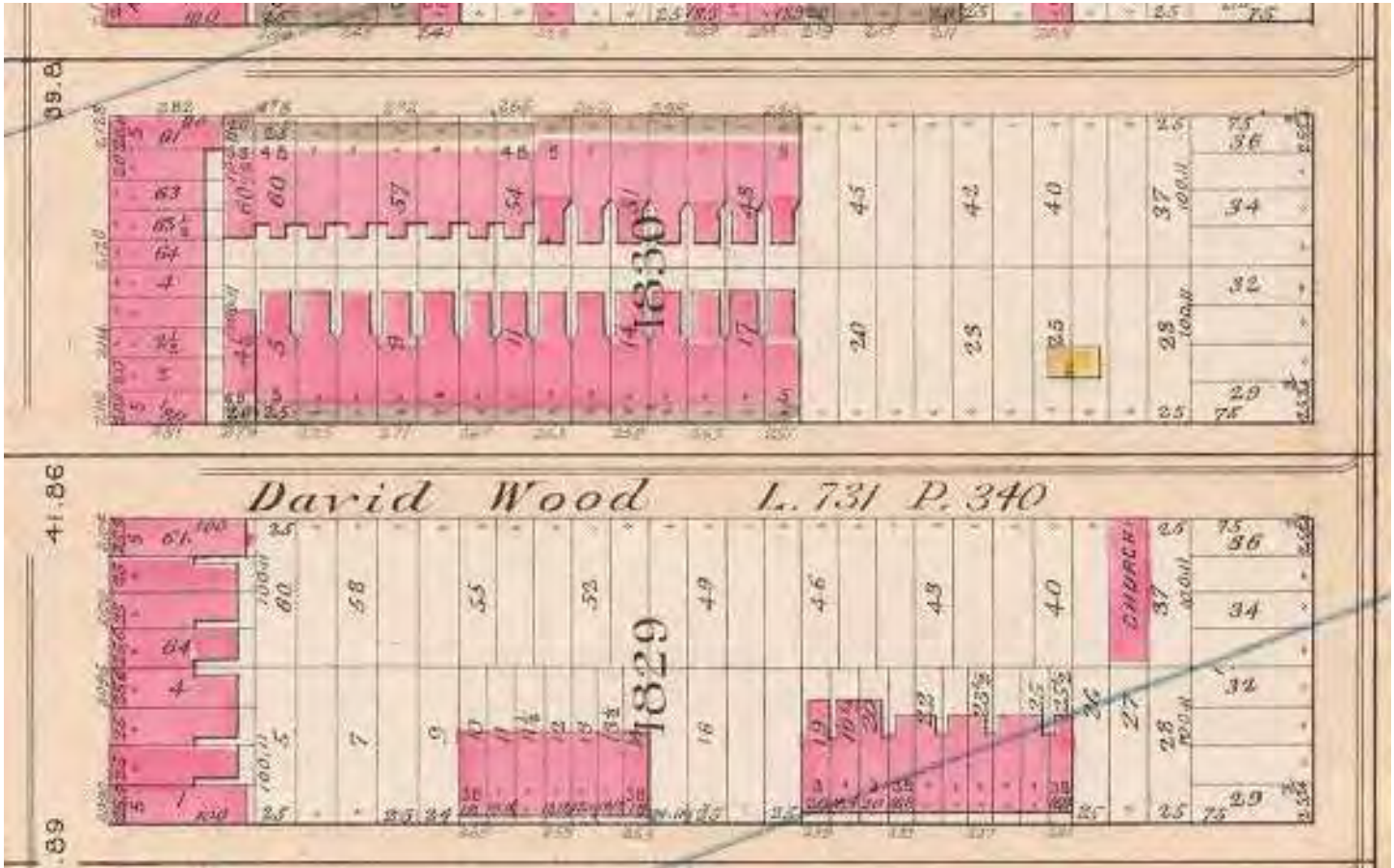
204-246 West 114th St. (Randolph Houses)

Name of Property

New York, New York

County and State

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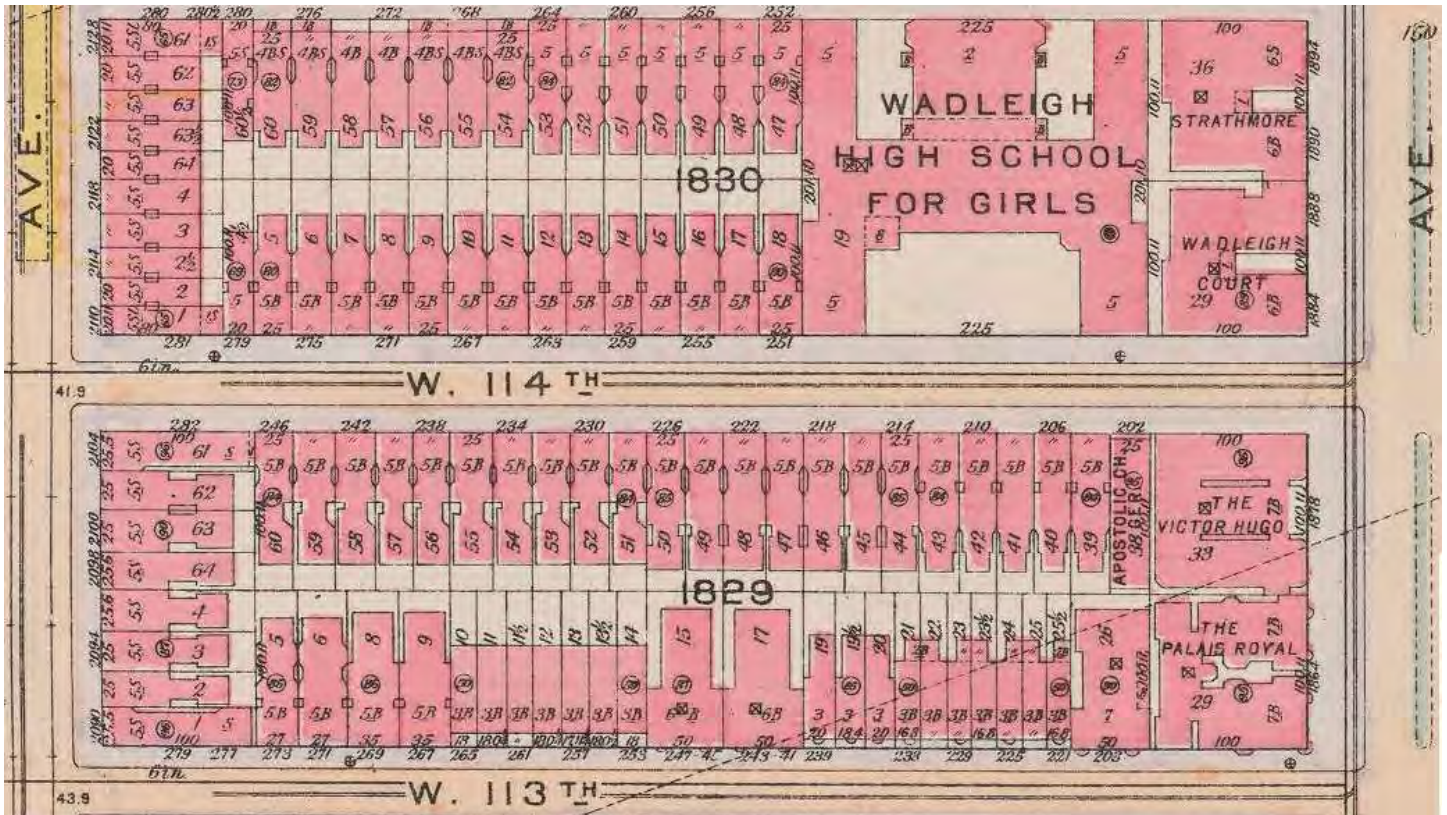
11. 1897 Bromley map showing only the north side of the street completed. Shown here are 251-61 West 114th Street (probably Kerby & Co., ca. 1895) and 263-77 West 114th Street (Kerby & Co., 1895). (New York Public Library)

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204-246 West 114th St. (Randolph Houses)
Name of Property
New York, New York
County and State



12. 1916 Bromley map showing all of the district's buildings completed. (New York Public Library)



Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner

RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: November 29, 2016

STAFF: Daria Merwin

PROPERTY: Red Hook Houses (East and West)

ADDRESS: 62 Mill Street and 55 Dwight Street, Red Hook

USN: 04701.019316

MCD: Brooklyn

COUNTY: Kings

- I. Property is individually listed on SR/NR:
name of listing:
- Property is a contributing component of a SR/NR district:
name of district:
- II. Property meets eligibility criteria.
 - Property contributes to a district which appears to meet eligibility criteria.
Pre SRB: Post SRB: SRB date

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Red Hook Houses East and West, a public housing complex owned by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) in Red Hook, Brooklyn meets the criteria for listing on the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places as an intact representative example of early public housing in New York City. First opened in 1939, Red Hook Houses meet Criterion A in the following areas: 1.) Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; 2.) Politics/Government, for the Federal and local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income residents; and 3.) Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income residents. The Houses also meet Criterion C under the themes of Architecture and Community Planning and Development. The design and construction of the buildings and their placement in a designed landscape is

representative of modern urban planning design theory of the period. The complex retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

History

Red Hook Houses, along with Williamsburg Houses in Brooklyn, Queensbridge Houses in Queens, and the Harlem River Houses and First Houses in Manhattan, were among the earliest public housing developments in New York City built under the National Housing Act of 1934, which created the Federal Housing Administration, and the United States Housing Act of 1937 (also known as the Wagner-Steagall Act), which provided local public housing agencies with Federal subsidies to improve living conditions for low-income families. Similar legislative actions were taken by state and local authorities during the 1930s: Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia founded the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) in early 1934, following the amendment of the New York State housing laws of 1926 which allowed the establishment of municipal housing authorities. These laws and actions were in part a response to the shortage of affordable housing, and were also meant to spur the economy as the country recovered from the Great Depression. They resulted in government investment in providing safe and clean homes for the poor and working classes (Plunz 1990:207-210).

The announcement that Red Hook Houses were to be built with Federal funds was made in conjunction with LaGuardia's plan for widespread slum clearance and construction of new housing for the city's low income families (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, January 27, 1938, pp. 1-2). At the time, Red Hook was a congested but bustling maritime community. More than 160 houses, home to more than 300 families, were demolished to make way for 27 six-story brick buildings containing 2,545 apartments, the largest public housing project in Brooklyn built at a cost of \$13 million that even today is home to roughly 70% of the 10,000 residents in the neighborhood (as of the 2000 census; Bleyer 2006). In 1955, three more residential buildings, forming Red Hook II, were added to the complex.

Ground was broken for Red Hook Houses amid much fanfare on July 18, 1938; the event was recorded by newsreels to be shown in movie theaters around the country. The first phase of construction called for "12 units of six-story elevator apartments, containing homes for 3,000 families at \$5.25 a room" (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, pp. 1, 3, 22). The first families, some of whom had been displaced when old tenements were demolished for the project, moved into their new apartments on June 30, 1939; among the noted amenities were "the broad-paned casement windows, none of which face on airshafts- electric refrigeration, metal kitchen cabinets, well-appointed baths" (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, p. 3). A recreation center was placed in the northeast corner of the complex, consisting of a community center (with an auditorium that could be converted to a basketball court, kitchen, and craft rooms), a children's center/nursery school, and one of two stores buildings on the site which housed 15 shops and four professional office suites (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 2, 1939, p. 2A). Red Hook Houses were well-sited to take advantage of public facilities such as Coffey Park (opened in 1901, with additions made in 1907 and 1943), the Red Hook Play Center (with a massive swimming pool, built under the Works Progress Administration in 1936), and Public School 27 (built in 1890, with large additions [1939, 1951] made in response to population growth due in large part to the Red Hook Houses).

Description

Red Hook Houses East and West were built in two phases: the main portion east of Dwight Street between Verona Street/West 9th Street and Lorraine Street (1938-1939) and one "superblock" west of Dwight Street (identified on NYCHA plans as Red Hook II, 1955). The original plan for the sites, including landscape features and circulation patterns, remains largely unchanged. The principal organizing feature of the site is a wide pedestrian and open space corridor called Centre Mall running from west to east between Columbia Street and Clinton Street, with groups of two or four apartment buildings in the adjacent blocks. Alfred Easton Poor served as the chief architect, with William F. Dominick, William I. Hohaus, Electus D. Litchfield, W.T. McCarthy, Jacob Moscovitz, and Edwin J. Robin working as associate architects.

Keeping construction costs as low as possible appears to have been a major concern at Red Hook Houses, where “economy was achieved at considerable sacrifice to amenity” as noted by Stern et al. (1987:498). As described in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (July 2, 1939, page 2A): “The primary requirements which the architects were called on to meet were... safety, decency, and economy. It was relatively easy to create a 100 percent fireproof structure, airy, open to sunlight, vermin-proof, with modern toilet, laundry and kitchen facilities, and equipped with incinerator intakes in each hallway, but the necessity to keep down costs challenged the architects’ ingenuity. A tremendous total saving was achieved through an aggregation of comparatively small items. Among them were the omission of all but one closet door in each apartment, omission of elevator stops in cellar, second, fourth and sixth floors, and a new method of plumbing installation, etc. In layout, Red Hook follows the modified offset crossplan, assuring that all apartments are supplied with the same degree of light and air. The absence of funds for decorative design is made up by an effective treatment of the mass, and by placement of windows and doors.”

In his 1940 review of Red Hook Houses, architecture critic Lewis Mumford took issue with the results of cost-cutting, calling out the “Leningrad formalism” and “unnecessary monotony” of the site. Mumford also suggested that if “three-story walk-ups and single-family houses had been included in the development, the contrast of low masses against the high ones would have provided drama... Such a combination of forms would have been better from a human point of view... Furthermore, it would have reduced the quite unjustifiable density of two hundred and thirty-six people an acre to a more rational figure.” When the Red Hook Houses were first proposed in 1935, before Federal funds were secured but anticipated at \$16 million, the plan did indeed call for three- and four-story garden apartments. The project allocation was reduced to \$12 million in 1938, which resulted in multiple design revisions to cut costs. As Plunz notes (1990:237-238), Red Hook Houses altered the trajectory of public housing design: “Previously, innovative philanthropic projects had always aimed at improving housing standards. Red Hook reversed this trend for the next two decades of housing philanthropy in New York City.”

Significance

In 2004, the National Park Service prepared a draft Multiple Property Documentation Form for Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949 (available online at <http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/guidance/Public%20Housing%20in%20the%20United%20States%20MPS.pdf>), which provides the historic context and registration requirements for government-sponsored projects. The Red Hook Houses East and West (with the exception of the non-contributing 1955 addition of three buildings west of Dwight Street) meet the requirements of the NPS document, having been built by a local housing authority (NYCHA) under the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 (Criterion A) and retaining a high degree of integrity for all physical characteristics identified by the NPS (functional utilitarian designs; repetitive building forms; low-rise, multi-family residential buildings arranged in highly ordered plans or “superblocks;” prominent community center/management office buildings; and substantial open spaces, circulation networks, and recreation areas) (Criterion C).

The Red Hook Houses are an intact and excellent representative example of an architectural style defined by the concept of “functional Modernism” and driven by rapid construction and the need to keep costs low, where buildings reflect the utilitarian ideals of public housing, with unembellished lines and planes, flat roofs, and minimal architectural decoration. Specifically, the complex meets the NPS requirements for National Register eligibility including substantially intact original site plan, including setting, building orientation, and the relationship between built and open spaces; high percentage of original buildings, including non-residential buildings such as community centers; original building design features, including fenestration patterns and roof configuration; and original building façade materials, except those for windows.

Sources

Bleyer, Jennifer (2006) Beyond the Buzz, Red Hook Remembers. *The New York Times*, August 20, page CY1.

Brooklyn Daily Eagle, "Mayor Acts to End All City Slums; Maps Program Requiring Loan of 100 Millions over 20 Years." Thursday, January 27, 1938, pages 1-2.

"Ground Broken for Red Hook's Housing Project." Monday, July 18, 1938, pages 1, 3, and 22.

"First Family Moves Into Red Hook Housing Project." Friday, June 30, 1939, page 3.

"\$13,000,000 Red Hook Housing Project to Open Officially Tuesday." Sunday, July 2, 1939, page 2A.

Mumford, Lewis (1940) "The Sky Line: Versailles for the Millions." *The New Yorker* February 17, reprinted in *Sidewalk Critic: Lewis Mumford's Writings on New York*, edited by Robert Wojtowicz, Princeton Architectural Press, 1998.

Plunz, Richard (1990) *A History of Housing in New York City: Dwelling Type and Social Change in the American Metropolis*. Columbia University Press, New York.

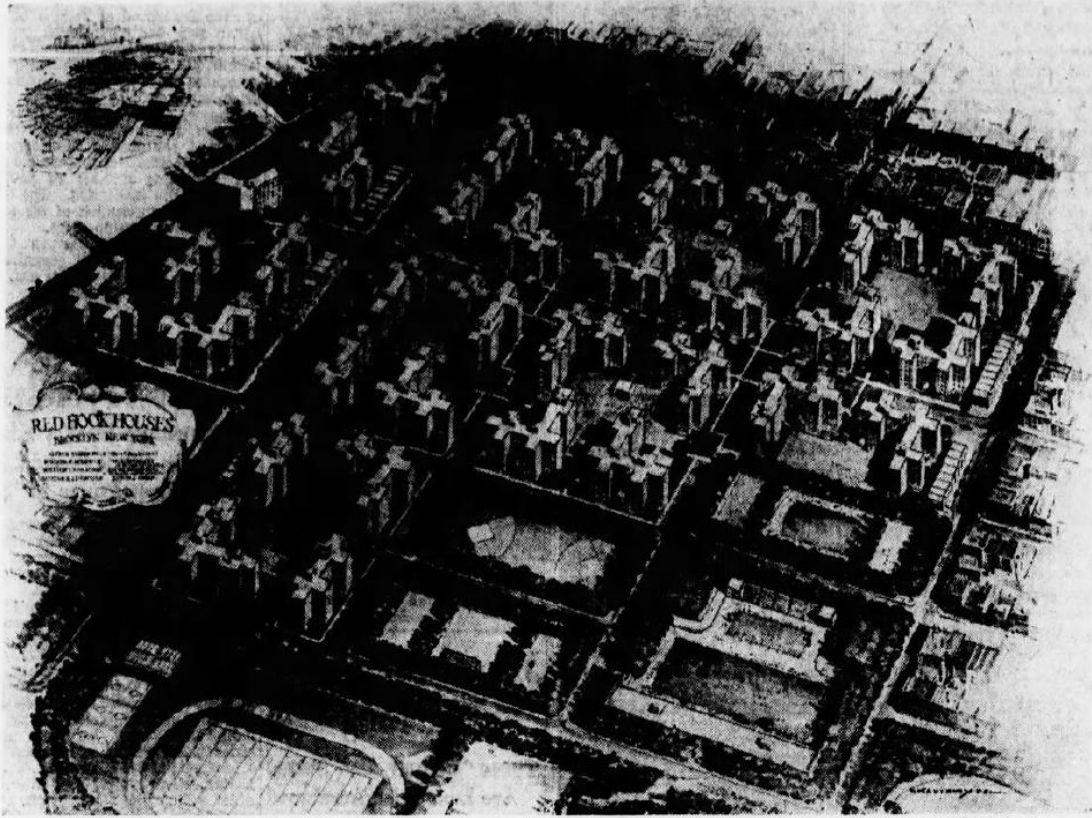
Stern, Robert A.M., Gregory Gilmartin, and Thomas Mellins (1987) *New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism between the Two World Wars*. Rizzoli, New York.

Figures



1951 aerial photograph of Red Hook, Brooklyn showing the 1938-1939 Red Hook Houses (center) surrounded by parks (<http://maps.nyc.gov/doitt/nycitymap/>).

Preview of Red Hook Housing Project



As the proposed \$19,000,000 low-rental housing development in the Red Hook section, which will provide dwellings for over 12,000 persons, will look when completed, according

to an architect's perspective prepared by the Red Hook Associated Architects under the direction of Alfred Easton Poor. Work will begin shortly after June 1.

Architectural rendering of the proposed Red Hook Houses, *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Monday, February 21, 1938, page 4.



Construction of Red Hook Houses nearing completion, circa 1939.



The Centre Mall at Red Hook Houses, circa 1940.



The Centre Mall at Red Hook Houses, 2014.

RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: June 29, 2012

STAFF: Kathy Howe

PROPERTY: Sedgwick Houses

MCD: Bronx

ADDRESS: 140 West 174th Street

COUNTY: Bronx Co.

USN: 00501.001559

- I. Property is individually listed on SR/NR:
name of listing:
- Property is a contributing component of a SR/NR district:
name of district:
- II. Property meets eligibility criteria.
- Property contributes to a district which appears to meet eligibility criteria.
- Pre SRB: Post SRB: SRB date

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Designed by Gordon Bunshaft of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill (SOM), Sedgwick Houses has seven buildings, 14 and 15-stories tall with 783 apartments. The complex retains the original one-story flat-roofed community center. Completed March 23, 1951, the 7.32-acre development in the Morris Heights section of the Bronx is bordered by West 174th Street on the north, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. (also known as University Avenue) on the east, Sedgwick Playground on the south, and Undercliff Avenue on the west.

The federally funded project was one of four housing projects at the time that represented a break from the cross plan toward a new "in-line" plan that was cheaper and easier to build. As opposed to the excessive exterior wall surfaces and complexities of joining angled wings

to a core, the in-line plan is based on the use of straight-line, double-loaded corridors and was billed as a "major revolution in the housing field" in an article published in *Architectural Forum* in 1949.¹ The buildings are arranged in three offset rows with a coverage of 18.7 percent on the site which is landscaped with curved walks, green spaces, and trees.

Sedgwick Houses meet Criterion A in the following areas: (1) Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor; (2) Politics/Government, for the Federal and local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income residents following World War II; and 3) Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income residents after World War II.

The development is also eligible under Criterion C under the themes of Architecture and Community Planning & Development. The design and construction of Sedgwick Houses as a planned community is representative of modern urban planning design theory. Typical of the 1950s housing projects, Sedgwick represented the social, economic, and aesthetic arguments for the "tower in the park" model.

If you have any questions concerning this Determination of Eligibility, please call Kathy Howe at (518) 237-8643, ext. 3266.

¹ Richard Plunz, *A History of Housing in New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), p. 264. See "Public Housing, Anticipating New Law, Looks at New York's High Density Planning Innovations," *Architectural Forum* (June 1949), 90: 87-89.



ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner

RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: June 15, 2016; additions made October 24, 2016

STAFF: Daria Merwin

PROPERTY: Governor Alfred E. Smith Public Houses

ADDRESS: 21 St. James Place, New York NY 10038

USN: 06101.018557; 06101.019192

MCD: Manhattan

COUNTY: New York

- I. Property is individually listed on SR/NR:
name of listing:
- Property is a contributing component of a SR/NR district:
name of district:
- II. Property meets eligibility criteria.
 - Property contributes to a district which appears to meet eligibility criteria.
Pre SRB: Post SRB: SRB date

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Summary Statement

The Governor Alfred E. Smith Houses (also known as the Smith Houses), a public housing complex owned by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) near Manhattan’s Lower East Side, was completed in 1953 to the designs of architects Eggers & Higgins and landscape architect Jo Ray. The site plan emulates the “tower in the park” model, with 12 X-shaped apartment buildings (15, 16, and 17 stories tall) faced in red brick oriented north-south and east-west across one superblock, with an adjacent public school, community center and playground serving as a visual focal point. The building arrangements form a series of angled forecourts along public streets, with retail and various quads and smaller interstitial spaces on the site’s interior. As is typical of mid-century public housing in New York, the Smith

Houses are rather austere in appearance; notable features include the exposed spandrel panel above the upper floor windows that creates the appearance of a cornice along the roof line of each building, as well as entrance bays covered by metal canopies and surrounded by glazed ceramic tile in different colors.

The Smith Houses meet Criterion A in the following areas: 1.) Social History, as a physical representation of the long-held concern that government was necessary to better the lives of the urban poor by removing slums and providing modern housing; 2.) Politics/Government, for the State and local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income residents and veterans following World War II; and 3.) Community Development, by serving to alleviate a housing shortage among low-income residents after World War II. The Smith Houses are eligible under Criterion C¹ with the themes of Architecture and Community Planning and Development. The design and construction of the buildings and their placement in a designed landscape is representative of modern urban planning design theory of the period. Typical of the 1940s-1950s housing projects, this complex represented the social, economic, and aesthetic arguments for the "tower in the park" model.

Aside from replacement windows and entrance doors, along with a safety rail added to all parapets, no major changes have been made to the buildings and its setting. The complex retains a relatively high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

History

New York City Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia founded the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) in early 1934, following the amendment of the New York State housing laws of 1926 which allowed the establishment of municipal housing authorities. These laws and actions were in part a response to the shortage of affordable housing during the Great Depression as well as a public concern for slum clearance, and resulted in government investment in providing safe and clean homes for the poor and working classes (Plunz 1990:207-210).

The complex was named for former Governor Alfred E. Smith, who had been raised in a tenement not far from the public housing location and who served as an advocate for better housing. Clearing the site began in 1948, with a groundbreaking ceremony held in October that year. A new approach of "sectional construction" was planned for the Smith Houses, with construction undertaken in two phases so that fewer families would need to be displaced at one time as a result of slum clearance and that the new housing could be filled more rapidly than traditionally was the case. The first applications for one of the 1,940 apartments (now 1,933) of the Smith Houses were accepted in August 1949, with preference given to people displaced by slum clearance at the site and to World War II veterans (*The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* August 27, 1949, page 1). The first seven buildings were nearly complete when the cornerstone was laid during a ceremony on October 19, 1949 (*The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* October 20, 1949, page 2). At the time of construction, the Smith Houses comprised the largest public housing project in Manhattan built to date, as well as the tallest such project planned in the city as a whole (Stern et al. 1995:141).

Description

The complex is situated on a "superblock" bounded by St. James Place to the west, Madison Street to the north, Catherine Street to the east, and South Street to the south. There are 12 brick-faced apartment buildings, all generally x-shaped in plan with the wings radiating from a central core at 45 degree angles, ranging from 15 to 17 stories tall; a public school, community center and park form a focal point on the east side. The buildings are oriented along a rough north-south and east-west grid. As noted by the 2015-2016 NYCHA survey, the building arrangements form a series of

¹ NYCHA recommended that the Governor Alfred E. Smith Houses are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C (notable architect) in their Citywide Review submitted to the SHPO on June 6, 2016; the SHPO concurs with this recommendation.

angled forecourts along public streets with retail and various quads and smaller interstitial spaces on the site's interior. The x-plan became popular for NYCHA housing after World War II. This form consolidates the circulation by cutting down on excess corridor area, and it provides for the maximum amount of light and ventilation to apartments in the protruding room forms. The disadvantage of the cross form was its relatively high cost owing to excessive exterior wall surface and the complexities of joining the wings at the core (Plunz 1990: 262).

The site plan reflects the tenets of the "tower in the park" model of urban residential design originally espoused by Le Corbusier, and embraced by mid-century public housing reformers. Like most public housing of the period, the Smith Houses are lacking in embellishment; perhaps the most notable feature is the exposed concrete spandrel panel above the upper floor windows that creates the appearance of a cornice along the roof line of each building. The buildings are clad in red brick set in American (common) bond, and most windows are one-over-one double-hung sash (these appear to be replacements). Main entrance doors to each building are protected by broad metal canopies, and surrounded by glazed architectural tiles. There are wide swaths of lawn between buildings, along with mature deciduous trees, play areas, park benches, and paved paths throughout the site. Landscape features such as allees between buildings and a circular open space near the center of the complex depicted on a circa 1950 architectural drawing (see below) are extant. A 60-foot long steel sculpture, "Orbital Connector" by the artist Hera, commissioned by NYCHA in 1989 sits in a grassed area near the southeast corner.

The architectural firm of Eggers & Higgins was responsible for the building design. The team of Otto Reinhold Eggers (1882–1964) and Daniel Paul Higgins (1886–1953) established their firm in 1937, after several years of working together under architect John Russell Pope. In addition to the Smith Houses, notable commissions completed by Eggers & Higgins in New York City include the Brooklyn War Memorial, Vanderbilt Hall at New York University, Damrosch Park and amphitheater at Lincoln Center, and two major buildings at the 1939 New York World's Fair in Queens. In 1948, Eggers was elected into the National Academy of Design. NYCHA records indicate that Jo Ray was responsible for the landscape design at the Smith Houses. Ray (1899-1973) is probably best known for his work at Bryant Park in Manhattan, along with the 1939 New York World's Fair. He also landscaped schools, private estates, and other projects in the greater metropolitan area, often working with his wife, fellow landscape architect Eloise Ray.

Sources

The Brooklyn Daily Eagle, "Applications Set For 1,940-Apt. At Smith Project," August 27, 1949, page 1.

"Cornerstone Is Laid At housing Project Honoring Al Smith," October 20, 1949, page 2.

Plunz, Richard (1990) *A History of Housing in New York City: Dwelling Type and Social Change in the American Metropolis*. Columbia University Press, New York.

Stern, Robert A.M., Thomas Mellins, and David Fishman (1995) *New York 1960: Architecture and Urbanism between the Second World War and the Bicentennial*. Rizzoli, New York.



An Architectural Drawing of the Design for the Smith houses, Lower Manhattan, ca. 1950 (photo 02.015.14732)



A Tenement being Demolished for Phase 2 of the Gov. Alfred E. Smith Houses, 11/27/1950. In the background Phase 1 is nearing completion, and in the far background is the Brooklyn Bridge. NYCHA started using the technique of sectional construction of slum clearance projects so that fewer families would need to be displaced at one time and new housing could be filled more rapidly (photo 02.003.13916).



Smith Houses Nearing Completion, Seen from the Manhattan Approach to the Brooklyn Bridge, 10/17/1952 (photo 02.003.17330).



Girl Scouts from the Alfred E. Smith Houses and Surrounding Neighborhood Walk through the Project on a Trip, ca. late 1950s (photo 02.015.16795).



A Wreath Was Laid at the Statue of Governor Alfred Smith at Smith Houses on the Lower East Side, November 18, 1959. The 1950 statue, in the Al Smith playground at Monroe and Catherine Streets, was sculpted by Charles Keck (1875-1951), who also made the Lincoln statue at Lincoln Houses (photo 02.003.29979).









Date: 10/03/2016

Staff: Daria Merwin

USN Number: 08101.012005

Name: South Jamaica Houses I

Location: 106-24 159th Street, Jamaica NY 11433

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or poses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

The original NYCHA complex in South Jamaica (South Jamaica I Houses) is situated on roughly 9 acres bounded by South Road, 159th Street, 109th Avenue, and railroad tracks in Jamaica, Queens. It consists of 11 three-to-four story brick buildings with 440 units (originally 448) opened in 1940. South Jamaica I is eligible for the State and National Registers under Criterion A, as the first New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) housing project to be racially integrated with black and white families. Prior to the construction of the project, South Jamaica was considered a slum and severely overcrowded. The site of the South Jamaica Houses was occupied by 150 wood-frame houses, but it was estimated that 3,000 families in the neighborhood needed improved housing conditions; that the land was of low value compared with potential sites elsewhere in New York City contributed to its selection. On August 16, 1939, New York City Mayor Fiorello H. La Guardia announced plans to allocate \$20 million towards five planned public housing projects, including the South Jamaica Houses. These were some of the first housing developments to be built and operated by NYCHA. The land was acquired at low cost, and the development was designed to feature low-rise buildings, and construction began in September 1939. The first families arrived in July 1940, and a children's nursery was opened on the site two months later. The complex generated controversy over the alleged selection of tenants by race, and because many applicants from Manhattan, Brooklyn and the Bronx were selected over local South Jamaica residents. The South Jamaica Houses became emblematic of racial issues in public housing and the city as a whole during the mid-twentieth century. See attached excerpt from Nicholas Bloom, "Public Housing that Worked: New York in the Twentieth Century" (University of Pennsylvania Press 2008:87-89).



Date: 08/22/2017

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 06101.002187

Name: CENTURY APARTMENTS, 95 West 119th St (NYCHA bldg)

Location: 95 West 119th St, Manhattan NY

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:** True

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

This seven-story apartment house at the corner of West 119th Street and Lenox Avenue contributes to the Mount Morris Park Historic District. Built in 1899-1901 and named the Century Apartments, this Beaux-Arts apartment building was designed by architect George Pelham. The façade features rusticated stonework at the lower two stories with brick at the floors above. The building is rich in stone and terra-cotta ornament including keystones, classical window surrounds, some with engaged columns, balconets, segmental arch lintels, and ornamental spandrels. Of special note is the rounded bay at the front corner of the building. The West 119th Street apartment entrance has a projecting entrance porch with paired columns. Alterations include the removal of the cornice and the insertion of storefronts on Lenox Avenue.



Date: 09/13/2016

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 00501.002061

Name: Twin Parks West (Sites I & II) - NYCHA

Location: 360 Ford Road, Bronx NY 10457

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or poses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

Twin Parks West is located along a sharp grade change between the Grand Concourse neighborhood and commercially-oriented Webster Avenue. The site is roughly bounded by East 184th to the north, Webster Ave to the east, East 182nd to the south, and Tiebout Ave to the west. In addition to the UDC-sponsored housing of Twin Peaks West on scattered sites, architect Giovanni Pasanella also designed this particular NYCHA housing complex.

The building consists of one long north-south slab with two perpendicular wings extending from the west elevation that frame a courtyard. The massive building has 322 units. Skip-stop elevators provided access to the apartments, half of which contained three or more bedrooms (New York 1960, p. 957).

To negotiate what might be the most impossible site in the development, a six-story vertical grade change at 183rd Street where a public pedestrian stair connects Tiebout Avenue to Webster Avenue, Pasanella's building turns the granite cliff into the fourth wall of a courtyard enclosed on three sides by apartments sheltering a public playground and daycare. In this public housing building, Pasanella employs not only the same skip-stop access as the moderate- and middle-income buildings, but grants its residents small balconies.

The 2016 New York City Housing Authority survey cites significance under Criterion C (both architecture and landscape design):

Notable Architect: Giovanni Pasanella; notable architect: Peter G. Rolland. Site plan: Reinterpretation of NYC perimeter block design considered one continuous building with pilotis at first floor connecting the street to the interior sunken garden. "Vest Pocket" (aka "Infill") development was part of the Twin Parks Model Cities Area program. Building Design: Modern version of traditional NYC perimeter block housing model. U-shape building forms a main quadrangle, with a sunken garden bound by rock outcropping on one site. Stepped down massing permits sunlight into planned courtyards.



Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation

Resource Evaluation

RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: July 2, 2012

STAFF: Kathy Howe

PROPERTY: Vladeck and Vladeck II Houses

MCD: Manhattan

ADDRESS: 70 Gouverneur St. and 28 Jackson St.

COUNTY: New York

USN: 06101.01608

- I. Property is individually listed on SR/NR:
name of listing:
- Property is a contributing component of a SR/NR district:
name of district: Lower East Side Historic District - Boundary Increase
- II. Property meets eligibility criteria.
 Property contributes to a district which appears to meet eligibility criteria.
Pre SRB: Post SRB: SRB date

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Vladeck and Vladeck II (also known as Vladeck City) Houses were listed on the National Register in 2006 as a contributing property of the Lower East Side Historic District – Boundary Increase. Consisting of 13-acres, Vladeck is bounded by Henry, Water, Gouverneur, and Jackson Streets. Vladeck II, east of Vladeck, is a 2.23-acre complex bordered by Madison, Cherry and Jackson Streets. The combined complex was designed by William F.R. Ballard and Sylvan Bien under Richard H. Shreve for Shreve, Lamb, and Harmon and built in 1939-1940. Vladeck Houses was New York's first city-aided housing development.

This complex of twenty-four, six-story brick apartment buildings is organized roughly north-south and set within a landscaped lawn and park. The rectangular buildings are combined in an offset

pattern pattern, creating a saw-tooth effect for the major buildings, interspersed with “C”-clamp shaped housing blocks. Linear parks are employed to create cohesiveness and connection between units.

NYCHA notes that:

Vladeck Houses is named after Baruch Charney Vladeck (1886-1938), one of the founders of the Jewish Labor Committee (JLC) in 1934, a group designed to provide Jewish presence in the American trade-union movement and to mobilize labor in the struggle against facism. He was then general manager of the *Forward*, a leading Yiddish language newspaper.... Vladeck extolled aid to refugees and education for the people in the labor movement (and the general public) about the threat of Nazi Germany. He was a member of the original Board of the New York City Housing Authority.¹

The National Register nomination offers the following history of the complex:

Vladeck Houses and Vladeck City Houses [Vladeck II] were developed near Corlear’s Hook on part of the land once designated for the massive-but-failed Rutgerstown redevelopment project. Named for labor activist Baruch Charney Vladeck, the 1,700 units of low-income housing replaced several dismally overcrowded blocks of tenements. The 1939-40 project was designed by architects William F.K. Ballard and Sylvan Bien working under R.H. Shreve of the notable architecture firm Shreve, Lamb and Harmon, whose Empire State Building is probably its most recognizable work. The site planning of Vladeck Houses differs dramatically from the tenement blocks that once surrounded it; the housing blocks are organized roughly North-South, and are set within landscaped grounds including linear parks, lawns and play areas. In the decades after Vladeck Houses radically altered the spatial geometry of the Lower East Side, a host of new slab-block, mid- and high-rise superblock public low-income housing was constructed following similar site-planning principles. These buildings provide a stark counterpoint to the remnant tenements and early low-income housing experiments over which they tower.²

¹ NYCHA website at <http://gis.nyc.gov/nycha/im/wmp.do;jsessionid=DC6EB61C325A6EEDED67BA7B20464843?>, accessed on 2 July 2012.

² Kerri Culhane, “Lower East Side Historic District – Boundary Increase” National Register nomination (On file at NYSOPRHP, Waterford NY, 23 July 2003), Section 8, p. 3.



Date: 03/23/2017

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 04701.019397

Name: Whitman Houses (NYCHA)

Location:

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or poses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

The Walt Whitman Houses were originally known as Fort Greene East, which together with Fort Greene West (now Ingersoll Houses) was among NYCHA's largest housing projects, both largely completed in 1944. During World War II, the nearby Brooklyn Navy Yard employed more than 71,000 people. Due to the resulting demand for housing, NYCHA built 35 brick buildings between 1941 and 1944 ranging in height from six to fifteen stories collectively called the Fort Greene Houses. Production at the navy yard declined significantly after the war and many of the workers either moved on or fell on hard times. Post-war, the project was restored to its original objective--low-rent housing for New Yorkers. In 1957-58, the houses were renovated and divided into the Walt Whitman Houses and the Ingersoll Houses. Whitman Houses is bounded by Myrtle Avenue to the south, St. Edwards Street and North Portland Avenue to the west, Auburn Place and Park Avenue to north, and Carlton Avenue to the east. The complex is significant under Criterion A in the areas of social history and politics/government for its association with World War II era public housing for Navy Yard employees and, later, low-income residents, and under Criterion C for the site plan and architectural design. The design and construction of the buildings and their placement in a designed landscape is representative of modern urban planning design theory of the period. The huge team of prominent architects assembled for the project – Rosaria Candela, Andre Fouilhoux, Wallace Harrison, Albert Mayer, Ethan Allen Dennison, William I Hohausser, Ely Jacques Kahn, Charles Butler, Henry Churchill and Clarence Stein – created a design of tall double-cruciform brick slabs in a planned landscape of walkways, greenspaces, and playgrounds. The buildings are an intact and excellent representative example of an architectural style defined by the concept of “functional Modernism” and driven by rapid construction and the need to keep costs low, where buildings reflect the utilitarian ideals of public housing, with unembellished lines and planes, flat roofs, and minimal architectural decoration. Of special note at the Walt Whitman complex is the circular-plan community center.



Date: 08/17/2017

Staff: Paul Archambault

USN Number: 04701.020142

Name: Williamsburg Houses HD

Location:

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:



Williamsburg Houses, 176 Maujer St., Brooklyn

NYCHA

Prepared by Kathy Howe, NYSHPO

1938

Associated Architects: Richmond H. Shreve, Chief Architect; with James F. Bly & Samuel Gardstein, G. [Holmgren, Volz & Gardstein], Matthew W. Del Gaudio & Harmon B. Gurney [Gurney & Claven], Arthur C. Holden, William Lescaze, John W. Ingle, Jr., Paul Trapani, Harry Leslie Walker. Meyer, Strong and Jones, MEP Eng.; George E. Strehen, Eng.; Fred Brutschy, Eng.; Vitale & Geiffert, Gilmore T. Clarke, Landscape Architects.

Public Works Administration (PWA) project.

Physical Description

The Williamsburg Houses, constructed from 1935-38, consist of twenty, four-story, walk-up apartment buildings located in the Williamsburg neighborhood of northwestern Brooklyn, New York. The 23.3-acre site extends four "super" blocks east to west, from Bushwick Avenue to Leonard Street, and three blocks north to south, from Maujer to Scholes Streets. The principal north-south artery is Graham Avenue. Between Maujer and Scholes Streets, Ten Eyck Street and Stagg Street are closed to vehicles. These winding east-west paths are called Ten Eyck Walk and Stagg Walk. They are identified by large pin-mounted stainless steel letters attached to the building facades and are visible along the north-south streets. The apartment buildings are numbered from 1 to 20 and each entrance has its own street address, for instance, "112 Maujer Street." Stainless steel signs, with pin-mounted numbers and letters, identify each entrance. There are a total of 1,620 apartments throughout the complex.

The Williamsburg buildings are free-standing objects, finished on all sides and approachable from multiple directions. No facade dominates and the apartment entrances face both the streets and courtyards. The entrances of the buildings are denoted with blue tile that stands out against the light-colored masonry palette.

In plan, the Williamsburg buildings are turned at a fifteen-degree angle to the street grid and there are three general building configurations. All are original to the complex. They include eight buildings with "H" shaped floor plans, six with floor plans that suggest a small letter "h," and six buildings with "T" shaped floor plans. While the "H" and "h" types alternate along Maujer and Scholes Streets (except next to the Junior High School between Manhattan and Graham Avenues, where both are "H" shaped), the "T" shaped buildings are located only in the center of the "super" blocks, between Ten Eyck Walk and Stagg Walk. Each footprint shape has spurs and extensions, resembling crossbars, that form a large number of courtyards.

All exterior materials on the buildings are non-historic. During the late 1980s, renovations to the buildings included the removal of some original materials, such as the blue terra-cotta entrance tile, and the casement windows. These changes were corrected as part of a large facade restoration in the mid-1990s. Under the supervision of Neil Cohen of the NYCHA, the elevations were completely reskinned, the parapets replaced, as well as the chimneys, railings, and terra-cotta banding. In addition, new canopies, doors, lighting fixtures, and signage were fabricated. Restoration of the storefronts, except along Bushwick Avenue, was completed in 2002.

Summary of Significance

The Williamsburg Houses are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C as one of the earliest housing developments in the United States to reflect the ideas of the modern movements in architecture. The building is also eligible under criterion A for its significance in the history of New York City Housing. Proposed in 1934, this residential complex was skillfully designed by the Williamsburg Associated Architects during 1935 and most units were occupied by 1938. The partnership included Richmond H. Shreve, of Shreve, Lamb & Harmon, the architects of the Empire State Building, and William Lescaze, the Swiss-born architect who helped introduce the "International" style on the eastern seaboard. Lescaze was responsible for the design. The complex was widely discussed by contemporary critics and more than 25,000 New Yorkers applied for 1,622 apartments. During the mid-1990s, the buildings underwent an extensive seventy-million dollar restoration which included the replacement of all exterior materials. Sponsored by the Housing Authority, in consultation with the Landmarks Preservation Commission, these alterations were remarkably sensitive.



Date: 08/22/2017

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 06101.011426

Name:

Location: 64 WEST 91ST ST, MANHATTAN NY

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

This four-story with basement brownstone rowhouse contributes to the Upper West Side-Central Park West Historic District. Built in 1889-1890, this Romanesque Revival building was designed by architect Henry L. Harris. It is part of a row of seven houses. Character-defining features of this three-bay wide rowhouse include the beltcourses and window lintels at the second through fourth floors, and the bracketed cornice. The ground and parlor stories have been refaced. The stoop has been removed and a basement entrance created.



Date: 08/21/2017

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 06101.011325

Name: 47 West 89th Street, Manhattan

Location: 47 WEST 89TH ST, MANHATTAN NY

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:**

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possesses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

This four-story with basement brick and brownstone row house contributes to the Upper West Side-Central Park West Historic District. Built in 1893, this Renaissance Revival building was designed by architect Harry Anderson. It retains its ornate frieze and bracketed cornice. The building forms part of a row spanning from 41-57 West 89th Street. Alterations include the removal of the stoop and the creation of a basement entrance.



Date: 08/22/2017

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 06101.011396

Name: 38 West 90th Street, Manhattan

Location: 38 WEST 90TH ST, MANHATTAN NY

Resource Status:

1. **Determination:** Eligible
2. **Contributing:** True

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

This three-story with basement brownstone rowhouse contributes to the Upper West Side-Central Park West Historic District. Built in 1892-93, this Renaissance Revival building was designed by architect Hermann Horenburger. It is one of a row of five houses spanning from 18 to 42 West 90th Street. Character-defining features beltcourses, decorative window surrounds, an oriel window on the second floor with a decorative stone balcony above, and stepped end gables. Alterations include the removal of the stoop and creation of a basement entrance.



Date: 08/22/2017

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 06101.011405

Name: 22 West 91st Street, Manhattan

Location: 22 WEST 91ST ST, MANHATTAN NY

Resource Status:

- 1. Determination:** Eligible
- 2. Contributing:** True

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

This four-story with basement brick and stone rowhouse contributes to the Upper West Side-Central Park West Historic District. Built in 1887-1888, this Queen Anne building was designed by architect William H. Boylan. It is part of a row of 17 houses. The basement and parlor floors are of rusticated stone while the upper floors are brick. Of special note at the parlor floor are the round-arched window openings with decorative spandrel panels below. Alterations include the removal of the oriel, cornice, and stoop, and creation of a basement entrance.



Date: 08/21/2017

Staff: Kathy Howe

USN Number: 06101.011362

Name: 15 West 90th Street

Location: 15 WEST 90TH ST, MANHATTAN NY

Resource Status:

- 1. Determination:** Eligible
- 2. Contributing:** True

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in our history.
- Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or posses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Summary Statement:

This four-story with basement brick and brownstone row house contributes to the Upper West Side-Central Park West Historic District. Built in 1889, this Renaissance Revival building was designed by architects Thom & Wilson. The basement and first floor have curved bay windows. The original stoop has been removed and a basement entrance created. The building retains its historic bracketed cornice.