



## Landmarks Preservation Commission

Meenakshi Srinivasan  
Chair

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### **CENTRAL RIDGEWOOD APPROVED AS A NEW YORK CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT**

*Commission Approves Landmark Status for 990-Building Historic District in Queens*



(New York)-The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission today unanimously approved the designation of the 990-building Central Ridgewood Historic District in Queens. The new district mostly consists of brick row houses, and represents one of the most harmonious and architecturally-distinguished enclaves of working-class dwellings built in New York City during the early twentieth century. (Pictured left: Catalpa Avenue streetscape)

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ridgewood, Queens was characterized by open farmland and several amusement parks. Due to transportation improvements, like the introduction of the electric trolley in 1894 and the opening of the elevated train around the turn of the century, the area's rural character evolved, reflecting the eastward expansion of a growing New York City.

Most of the houses in the Central Ridgewood Historic District were constructed between 1906 and the First World War by German-Americans and immigrants from Germany. Located adjacent to Brooklyn's Eastern District (which contained the modern communities of Bushwick, Williamsburg and Greenpoint), Ridgewood became an ideal location for upwardly mobile German-Americans to relocate, away from the over-crowded conditions found in Bushwick, Williamsburg, and the Lower East Side.

"The buildings in this district were a significant upgrade from earlier tenements, and served as a model for affordable housing at a time when New York City's population was growing rapidly," said Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. "Most remarkably, most of these lively buildings remain unchanged since their completion over 100 years ago."

"Preserving historically significant neighborhoods is important for today's New Yorkers, and for future generations, to understand their cultural heritage. The Central Ridgewood Historic District is unique for its harmonious 19th century brick homes - some with bow fronts, some with porches, others with steep stoops along tree lined streets. I am thrilled that this historic designation is moving forward and want to thank the Landmarks Preservation Commission for their hard work in making this possible," said Councilmember Elizabeth Crowley.



Louis Berger & Company was the architect of record for over 5,000 buildings in the Ridgewood-Bushwick area between 1895 and 1930. Berger was born in Germany in 1875, studied architecture at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn and served as an apprentice with the firm Carrere & Hastings before establishing his own business in Bushwick in 1895. Paul Stier, Ridgewood's most prolific builder, built over 2,000 houses in the area, including about half of the houses in the Central Ridgewood Historic District. (Pictured above, the Meyerrose House at 66-75 Forest Avenue)



Notable sites include the streetscapes of **69<sup>th</sup> Avenue**, **Madison Street**, and **Catalpa Avenue**, and the **Meyerrose House** at 66-75 Forest Avenue.

The detailing of the buildings is mainly in the Renaissance Revival Style, often mixed with elements from other styles, such as Romanesque Revival and neo-Grec. Many of the buildings' original brownstone stoops, cut-glass and wood doors, and iron fences, railings and gates remain intact, as do most of the pressed-metal cornices. Representing a cohesive collection of speculative urban architecture, the row houses in the Central Ridgewood Historic District retain a high level of architectural integrity and represent an important part of housing development in New York City. (Pictured left, 69<sup>th</sup> Avenue streetscape)

The Ridgewood Historic District is located near the previously-designated Ridgewood South and Ridgewood North Historic Districts, and is the 112<sup>th</sup> New York City Historic District.

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The Landmarks Preservation Commission is the mayoral agency responsible for protecting and preserving New York City's architecturally, historically and culturally significant buildings and sites. Since its creation in 1965, LPC has granted landmark status to approximately 31,729 buildings and sites, including 1347 individual landmarks, 117 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks, 112 historic districts and 20 historic district extensions in all five boroughs. Under the City's landmarks law, considered among the most powerful in the nation, the Commission must be comprised of at least three architects, a historian, a realtor, a planner or landscape architect, as well as a representative of each borough.

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