

Willoughby-Hart Historic District

Willoughby Avenue and Hart Street, Brooklyn
Tax Map Blocks (in part): 1758, 1766, and 1770

Built: 1871-1891

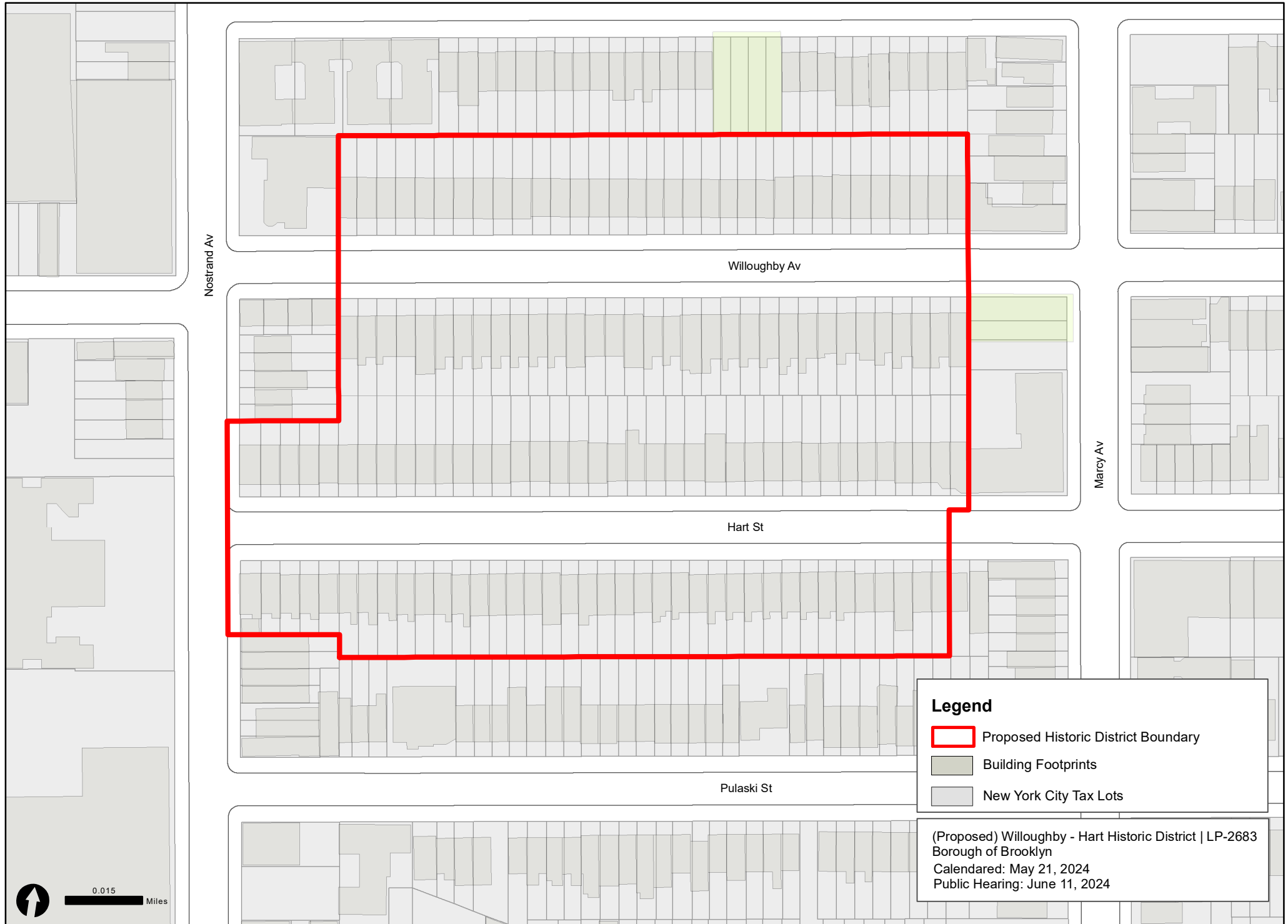
Proposed Action: Calendared May 21, 2024, Public Hearing June
11, 2024






The proposed Willoughby-Hart Historic District is comprised of two blocks of late-19th century row houses lining Willoughby Avenue and Hart Street between Nostrand and Marcy Avenues in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn. The rows are primarily neo-Grec-style houses faced in brownstone, along with examples of Second Empire houses, exemplified by their intact mansard roofs. Additionally, examples of Romanesque Revival houses on Hart Street retain their typical rusticated stone facades. Constructed during a period of intensive residential development of this section of Bedford-Stuyvesant following the extension of streetcar lines to the area and the completion of the Brooklyn Bridge, the streetscapes are consistent historic rows that stand out in the broader neighborhood for their intact architectural quality.

Historically part of a community known as Cripplebush, the Willoughby-Hart Historic District developed in the mid-17th century along the historic Cripplebush Road that connected the settlement of Bedford Corners to Newtown in Queens. Additional roads were built by the early 19th century, and the increased accessibility led to growth. By 1855, the neighborhood, along with the surrounding areas collectively known as the Eastern District, were annexed into greater New York City and large-scale development commenced. These rows of houses were all built in a twenty-year period of the late 19th century, beginning in 1871, during a time of rapid transition from farmland to dense residential development as part of the expansion of the Bedford neighborhood.

The earliest residents within the Willoughby-Hart Historic District were predominantly middle-class German immigrants, and by the early 20th century, the neighborhood became home to a large Russian Jewish population who owned many businesses in the area. By the 1950s and 60s many Black families moved to the area and Bedford-Stuyvesant eventually grew to become the largest Black community in New York City. Many current residents of these blocks represent the latest of multiple generations of families from the neighborhood. The community pride is evident in the stewardship of these impressive rows of historic buildings.



Legend

-  Proposed Historic District Boundary
-  Building Footprints
-  New York City Tax Lots

(Proposed) Willoughby - Hart Historic District | LP-2683
Borough of Brooklyn
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