



The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

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NEW LANDMARKS NAMED IN THE BRONX, QUEENS AND STATEN ISLAND

Beaux-Arts structures at the New York Botanical Garden, Jamaica High School in Queens and One of Tottenville's Earliest Residences Designated As Commission Moves Forward with Proposals to Landmark 10 Individual Buildings and Four Historic Districts

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission today held its annual spring designation day, approving three individual landmarks and moving ahead with 14 other designation proposals across the City. The panel granted landmark status to a Beaux-Arts ensemble of structures at the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx, Jamaica High School in Queens, whose graduates include filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola, and the Rutan-Journey House, a mid-19th century Greek Revival-style cottage in the Tottenville section of Staten Island.

In addition to the designation votes, the Commission held public hearings on proposals to designate three historic districts and eight individual landmarks. The Commission also voted unanimously to “calendar,” or schedule, public hearings on proposals to designate a historic district and two individual landmarks.

“Almost every one of the proposals that the Commissioners acted on today were brought to their attention through a comprehensive survey initiated by the LPC staff two years ago of some 22,000 buildings across the City,” said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. “The purpose of moving ahead with so many designation proposals on the same day is to highlight this Commission’s commitment to protecting more our City’s diverse heritage in every borough.”

Brief descriptions of the three properties that received landmark status and 14 other proposals that are now under consideration for designation follow below:

Commission designates New York Botanical Garden library, Fountain of Life and Tulip Tree Allée



Built at the turn of the 20th century inside Bronx Park, the building, fountain and allée form a distinguished Beaux-Arts influenced civic space within the New York Botanical Garden. Established by the New York state legislature in 1891, the NYBG is the largest and most renowned botanical garden in the country.

“The classically inspired building, fountain and allée form an impressive civic space that celebrates the

arts of landscaping, architecture and sculpture,” said Chairman Tierney.

The sweeping four-story, symmetrically designed neo-Renaissance style building, now a library, was originally built to serve as a museum that housed the Garden’s botanical specimens. When completed in 1901, the building was considered the largest botanical museum in the world, with the largest botanical library in the United States.

The building, designed by architect Robert W. Gibson, is clad in grayish-buff brick and buff terra cotta and features a pedimented central pavilion with monumental columns and a copper-clad saucer dome. The “Fountain of Life,” completed in 1905, was designed by Carl Tefft, and depicts a bronze sculpture of a cherub next to a dolphin on top of a globe, and a pair of web-footed horses being restrained by two humans, as a mermaid and merman watch from the basin below. The Tulip Tree Allée consists of 25 trees lining both sides of the drives and sidewalks that lead to the fountain, and was planted between 1903 and 1911 under the direction of Nathaniel Lord Britton, the NYBG’s first director.

Jamaica High School, 167-01 Gothic Drive, Jamaica, Queens

Set on the crown of a gentle hill and surrounded by a lawn, stone stairways and terraces, Jamaica High School opened in 1927 in response to a surge in the neighborhood’s population. It was designed by William Gompert, the former chief architect and superintendent of school buildings for the Board of Education, and accommodated some 3,300 students.



The sweeping, three-story school was constructed in the Georgian Revival style, which was said to help “Americanize” its students, who were mostly European immigrants, through its references to the nation’s colonial roots. With fully equipped athletic fields and a field house, the grounds stood in contrast to the tight lots on which most of the City’s schools were constructed.



“The elaborate drives and terraces and prominent location enhance the grand effect of such a large, dignified building,” said Chairman Tierney. “Its important role as a proud anchor of the community continues to this day.”

During his tenure, Gompert oversaw the design and construction of 169 new schools or school additions, including DeWitt Clinton and Theodore Roosevelt High School in the Bronx, James Madison High School in Brooklyn and Far Rockaway High School in Queens. Jamaica High School is made of brick and stone trim and includes granite columns and an entrance that’s topped by a tiered cupola that stands out in the residential neighborhood. Notable alumni include filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola, sportswriter George Vecsey, writer and journalist Letty Cottin Pogrebin; the late Washington Post humor columnist Art Buchwald; U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Texas) and Pulitzer-Prize winning poet Alan Dugan

Rutan-Journey House, 7647 Amboy Road, Tottenville, Staten Island

Constructed in 1848, the Rutan-Journey House is one of the first residences built in Tottenville, an oyster fishing and shipbuilding village on Staten Island's South Shore that was established in 1840. The 1 ½ story, three-bay clapboard cottage retains its original Greek Revival-style front porch and doorway, and has small eyebrow windows on the upper floor.



It was originally owned by James Madison Rutan, a ship carpenter, and purchased in 1850 by John S. Journey, a blacksmith, and is the first to be constructed on Amboy Road. The name of the builder is not known. It remains a privately owned residence.

“The house retains a great deal of its original fabric and details and is directly tied to Tottenville’s oyster fishing and shipbuilding industries,” said Chairman Tierney. “Like the other buildings on Staten Island that have been given landmark status by the Commission in the past two years, this one is a significant reminder of the Island’s unique past.”

Since 2003, the Commission has approved one historic district – the largest in Staten Island -- and 16 individual New York City landmarks, including the Rutan-Journey House, the highest number of designations in the borough since the Lindsay Administration in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The Commission held public hearings on the below three districts and eight buildings:

The proposed **Audubon Park Historic District** in Manhattan, comprised of 20 large, exuberant apartment houses constructed from 1905 to 1932 between West 155th and West 158th in Washington Heights; the **Fillmore Place Historic District**, in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, comprised of 29 mid-19th century rowhouses between Driggs Avenue and Roebling Street and the **Ocean on the Park Historic District** in the Prospect Lefferts Gardens section of Brooklyn, a stretch of 12 early 20th century Renaissance Revival limestone rowhouses located on Ocean Avenue between Lincoln Road and Parkside Avenue.

The **Edith Andrews Logan Residence**, a Georgian Revival-style townhouse at 17 West 56th Street; the **E. Hayward Ferry Residence**, a Beaux-Arts townhouse at 26 W. 56th Street; the **Middleton and Emilie Neilson Burrill House**, a Beaux-Arts mansion at 36 East 38th Street; the former **Aschenbrodel Verein** (German for Cinderella Society), a German Renaissance Revival building at 74 E. 4th St., that served as the home of an association of German musicians that now serves as the home of La Mama Experimental Theatre; the **Mount Olive Fire Baptized Holiness Church**, a Gingerbread Gothic-style building at 308 West 122nd Street in Harlem; the **Fort Washington Presbyterian Church**, a neo-Georgian structure designed by the renown firm of Carrere & Hastings at 21 Wadsworth Avenue in Washington Heights; the **William Uhmer Brewery**, a complex consisting of four buildings designed in the American Round-Arch Factory style at 31 Belvidere Street in the Bushwick section of Brooklyn and the **Ridgewood Theater** at 55-27 Myrtle Avenue in Queens, which was designed by the prominent theater architect Thomas Lamb and opened in 1916. Its Classical Revival style, limestone and terra-cotta façade faces provides a grand entrance to movie house that was considered one of the oldest continuously operating cinemas in the United States.

The Commission voted unanimously to “calendar,” or schedule, public hearings on the below district and two buildings:

The proposed **Perry Avenue Historic District** in the Bedford Park section of the Bronx, a collection of nine, early 20th-century Queen Anne-style rowhouses on the northwest side of Perry Avenue between Bedford Park Boulevard and East 201st Street; the **Paramount Hotel**, a Renaissance revival building at 235-245 West 46th St. in Manhattan that was designed by the renowned theater architect Thomas Lamb and features a façade marbled double-height arcade and **46 West 55th Street**, a Beaux-Arts townhouse. The hearing dates were not immediately scheduled.

The Landmarks Preservation Commission is the mayoral agency responsible for protecting and preserving New York City’s architecturally, historically and culturally significant buildings and sites. Since its creation in 1965, LPC has granted landmark status to more than 25,000 buildings, including 1,227 individual landmarks, 110 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks and 93 historic districts in all five boroughs. Under the city’s landmarks law, considered 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.