The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

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LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION PROPOSES HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION FOR CROWN HEIGHTS NORTH IN BROOKLYN

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission today took the first step toward protecting the finely detailed row houses, mansions, churches and other structures built during the 19th and 20th centuries in the Crown Heights North section of Brooklyn.

The creation of the historic district, one of the largest to be proposed in New York City in more than 10 years, will occur in phases. The first phase, encompassing 472 buildings, will run along Dean Street between Bedford and Kingston avenues and includes buildings designed by Brooklyn's most prominent architectural firms in styles ranging from Romanesque Revival and Queen Anne to Renaissance Revival and Art Deco.

"Crown Heights North is a neighborhood rich in architectural variety with a distinct sense of place," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. "Many of the buildings we hope to preserve through this designation reflect the innovative quality and excitement of late 19th and early 20th century American architecture."

The Commission unanimously voted to calendar the proposed historic district for a public hearing that's expected to be held on September 19, 2006.

In 1870, St. Mark's Avenue began attracting wealthy residents who constructed numerous mansions, including the imposing Dean Sage Residence, a High Victorian-style home that was designed by the prominent 19th-century architect and critic Russell Sturgis.

Residential construction grew substantially in the neighborhood following the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1883, and continued through the 20th century with each wave of upwardly mobile immigrants. After the subway opened in 1920 along Eastern Parkway, many of the free-standing mansions were demolished and replaced with six-story elevator apartment buildings designed in finely detailed Tudor Revival, Mediterranean and Art Deco styles by the architectural firms of Emery Roth, Cohn Brothers and Shampan & Shampan.

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission is the largest municipal preservation agency in the United States. Since its creation in 1965, the Commission has designated nearly 23,000 buildings in all five boroughs, including 1,140 individual landmarks, 106 interior landmarks, nine scenic landmarks and 85 historic districts.

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