

LONGWOOD HISTORIC DISTRICT EXTENSION, Borough of the Bronx.

The property bounded by a line extending westerly along the northern curb line of Macy Place, northerly along the western property line of 856 Macy Place, easterly along the northern property lines of 859-871 Macy Place, southerly along part of the eastern property line of 871 Macy Place, easterly along the northern property line of 781 Hewitt Place, easterly across Hewitt Place, southerly along the eastern curb line in front of 760-782 Hewitt Place, westerly across Hewitt Place, northerly along the western curb line of Hewitt Place, to the point of beginning, the Bronx.

Testimony at the Public Hearing

On April 13, 1982, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of this extension to the Longwood Historic District (Item No. 15). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. Two persons spoke in favor of the proposed designation. There were no speakers in opposition. Several letters were received in support of the proposed designation, including a letter from Assemblyman Armondo Montano.

Historical and Architectural Introduction

History

The Longwood Historic District Extension consists of a portion of a blockfront adjacent to the Longwood Historic District, which was designated in July 1980. The history of development of this blockfront (the north side of Macy Place) is similar to that of the Longwood Historic District. The developer of Macy Place was Theodore Macy, after whom the street is named. Along with the developers of the original Longwood Historic District, George B. Johnson and C. Ball, the Macy family contributed to one of the early urbanization efforts in Morrisania, which had been sparsely populated until the late 19th century. The plans for the IRT subway between the Bronx and Manhattan spurred this early rowhouse development; the completion of the subway and massive population influx in the early years of the 20th century resulted in subsequent apartment house construction, which left the blocks of the Longwood Historic District and Macy Place as one of a handful of isolated, low-scale, rowhouse districts amidst the high density apartment buildings more typical of this section of the Bronx.

Architecture

The Longwood Extension is clearly linked to the original Longwood Historic District by the design of its buildings. The five nearly identical double houses that make up the Extension (there is also one freestanding house built for John McGrath in 1903 by James F. Meehan) are similar to those that comprise most of the original district. Designed by the Architect Warren C. Dickerson in 1900, the double houses in the Longwood Historic District Extension exhibit, as do those by Dickerson in the previously designated district, elements of the neo-Renaissance style with an echo of the Romanesque Revival. The former is represented by the use of the masonry bay, concentration of ornament at doorways, Composite and Corinthian columns, and other classical details. The latter style is reflected by a slight heaviness of proportion and the use of rough-cut stone and arched windows. The only significant stylistic difference between the buildings in the Extension and buildings in the previously designated district is the lack of false mansard roofs in the Extension.

The Macy Place houses handsomely frame the onion-domed Hewitt Place United Church, at the foot of Macy Place in the previously designated Longwood Historic District. Additional information on the history of the development of the area encompassed by the Longwood Historic District Extension as well as its architectural characteristics can be found in the designation report for the Longwood Historic District.

Building Descriptions

Common Characteristics

The five pairs of houses on Macy Place exhibit certain characteristics in common. The structures are designed in mirror-image, with the entrances and stoops paired between flanking round or angular bays. Each of the pairs of buildings in the Extension is capped by a modillioned cornice with classical motifs of swags, wreaths, or foliage. Roofs are flat. Basement level entrances are located under each stoop. The side walls of the pairs of buildings are visible from the street, but are faced with common brick. Windows in these walls have simple limestone lintels and sills.

Ironwork typically consists of wrought-iron gates separating the buildings and opening onto side walkways, wrought-iron fences defining the areaways, basement level window grilles, and under-stoop grilles protecting basement doors. Ironwork is marked by S-shaped scrolls, spiral-twist vertical components, and small, cast-iron floral appliques. Cast-iron newel posts frame the side gates leading into the areaways. Stoop railings consist of pipe rails, originally with claw end-pieces (most are now missing) and scrollwork elements flanking the vertical connecting posts.

Nos. 857 and 859 Macy Place

This two story-over-basement pair has the typical configuration, with round projecting bays flanking the double entrance bay in the center. The facade is grey brick with limestone trim on the first and second floors and brownstone trim, now painted, at the basement level. There is a brownstone water table separating the first and basement stories, painted on No. 857, natural on No. 859. Basement windows have plain flush lintels and plain sills. The stoop is brownstone, now painted.

The ironwork on this building pair is similar to that on all the Macy Place buildings. About 50 percent of the stoop railing on No. 857 is missing.

All windows are wood, with one-over-one sash; aluminum storm windows have been added. First floor windows have flat arches with flush keystones. There is a lintel course, projecting molded sill course, and three rough-hewn bandcourses in between, connecting the three windows within the round bays. The two doorways which retain their original wood frame glazed double doors and transoms have flat arch lintels with projecting scrolled keystones. Second floor windows have flat arches with keystones, which project in an S-scroll over the two windows of the central bay. Sills are unornamented, with a flush sill course across the facade.

Nos. 861 and 863 Macy Place

This two-story-over-basement pair has angular bays and is faced with Roman brick, now painted, limestone trim on the first and second floors, and brownstone trim on the basement level. All trim, as well as the brownstone stoops, is now painted. All windows are wood with one-over-one sash, now with aluminum storm windows.

There is a brownstone water table separating the first and basement stories. Basement windows have undecorated flush lintels and plain sills. The basement door grille is missing on No. 863. First floor windows are rectangular and have a wide lintelcourse and a sillcourse on the projecting bays. The two doorways are topped by molded bracketed lintels, with carved vertical components extending up along the transom and connecting with a molded horizontal band. Double doors are wood-framed and glazed.

Second floor windows are round arched and have drip moldings with projecting scrolled fluted keystones and a sillcourse. The arched tops of the windows have been filled in by storm window panels. Aluminum awnings have been added to the main doorway and central window at the basement level on No. 861.

Nos. 867 and 869 Macy Place

The facade of this two-story-over-basement, round-bay pair is red brick with limestone trim on the first and second stories, brownstone trim at the basement level (painted on No. 867), and brownstone stoops, now painted. All windows are wood, one-over-one sash, with No. 867 now having aluminum storm windows. Below the brownstone water table are basement windows with plain sills and lintels.

First floor windows have molded surrounds, as well as molded lintels and sillcourses extending across the projecting bays. Door surrounds are edged with egg and dart moldings and are capped with flat pediments supported by carved brackets. Doors are single, wood framed, and glazed, with transoms. Molded enframements surround the top and sides of second floor windows, and join molded sills.

Nos. 871 and 873 Macy Place

This pair is identical to Nos. 861 and 863 Macy Place. The facades of Nos. 871 and 873, however, are unpainted except for the stoops and basement trim of No. 873. The brick color is orange. No. 873 has aluminum storm windows on the upper two floors, and the arched tops of the second story windows are filled in with panels.

Nos. 877 and 879 Macy Place

This pair differs from the other Macy Place buildings in that it is three full stories over a low basement, with a correspondingly lower stoop. The facade material is grey brick, with Roman brick used on the flush sections and common brick on the round bays. The trim is limestone on the upper three floors and brownstone at the basement level, now painted at No. 879. The stoops are brownstone; that at No. 877 is in poor condition and the stoop at No. 879 is painted. All windows are wood with one-over-one sash, and now have aluminum storm windows, except at basement level. The water table serves as a continuous lintel for the basement windows, which have plain sills. The basement doorway grille of No. 877 is missing and there are no basement window grilles. In addition, the stoops of this pair have cheek walls, with the handrails extending horizontally along their length.

The first floor windows are embellished with a complex ornamentation of smooth, rough-finished, molded, and carved elements. There is a wide, flat lintel course, with rough-cut keystones over the two end windows of each bay and fluted, scrolled keystones over the center windows. Four rough-finished horizontal courses connect the three windows of each bay, with flat vertical bands beside each window and molded sill courses completing the enframements. Wood-paned glazed double doors and transoms are surrounded by molding carved with an egg and dart pattern. Above the door lintels is a flat pediment spanning both entrances and supported on three large foliate brackets.

The second floor windows are ornamented with flat arches and fluted, scrolled keystones over the central window in each bay and the two windows in the central flat bay. There is a flush sillcourse with the sills themselves molded and terminating with volutes. The third floor windows have flat lintels and a plain sillcourse. The lintelcourse, however, is ornamented with foliate carving. The windows on the projecting bays are additionally framed by smooth pilasters with plain rectangular bases and variously-elaborated Scamozzi capitals.

No. 781 Hewitt Place

This three story vernacular frame structure has been severely altered by the additions of asphalt siding, in a brick pattern, and by the loss of elements of the one-story wood porch, which extends along the entire front of the building, and wraps around the north side.

The building features a three-sided projecting bay extending the full height of the structure, which is topped by a pressed metal, modillioned cornice with swag decoration on the frieze. The swag motif is repeated on the frieze of the porch. Three original wood columns with Ionic capitals support the porch roof on the north side of the building, but these columns are missing elsewhere and have been replaced by square concrete columns extending up from the cheek walls of the concrete stoop. The balustrade along the edge of the porch, undoubtedly once wood, is now modern wrought iron. An old ornamental wrought-iron fence and gate extend along the front of the yard. The original doorway has been reduced in size, with a modern door and aluminum storm door installed.

Although this building is not of the same architectural character, or by the same architect, as the remainder of this district, it falls within the district because of its location on the block and similar scale, which strongly supports the sense of cohesiveness of the district.

Report prepared by
Jeremy Woodoff
Landmarks Preservation Commission staff

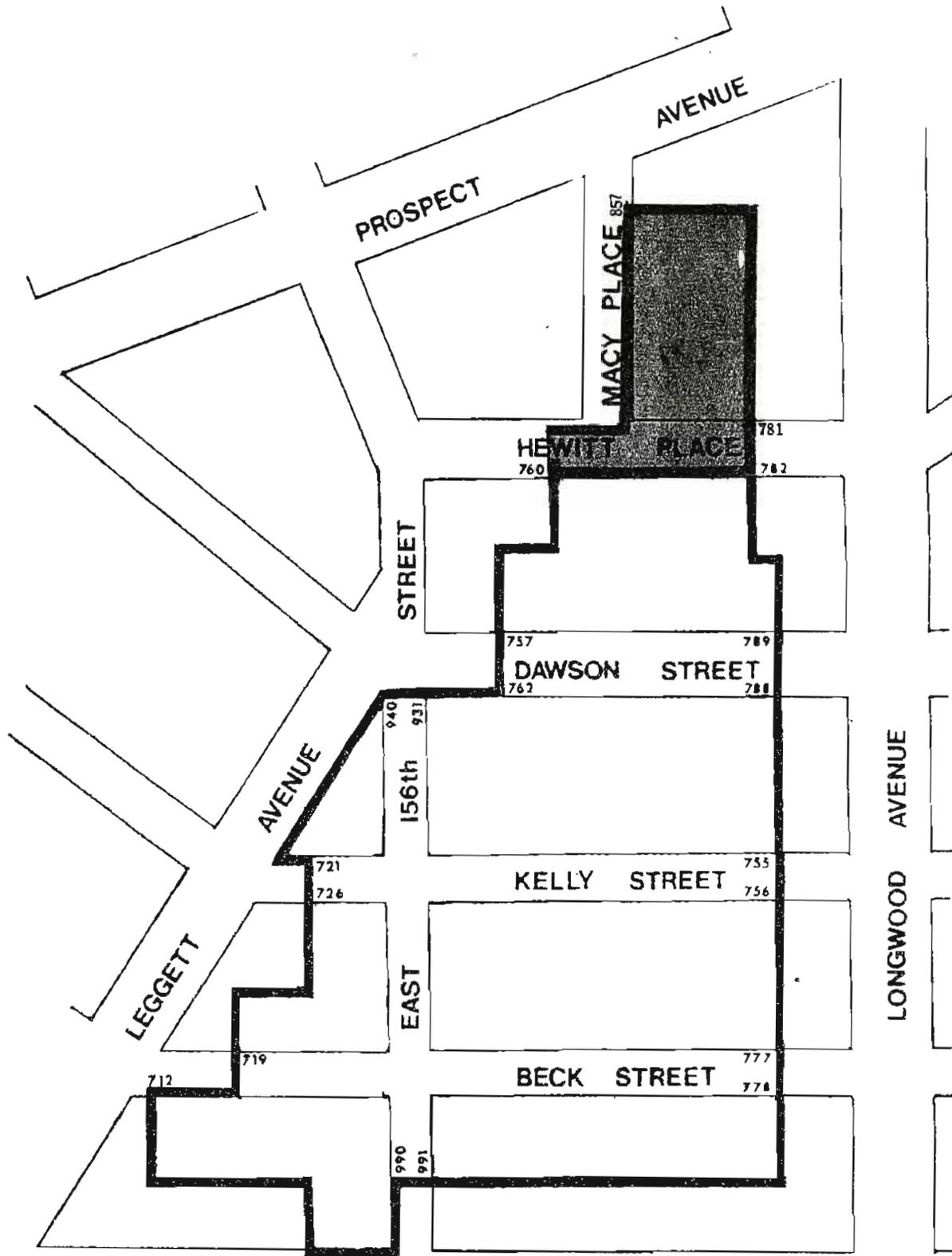
Report typed by
Barbara Sklar

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this area the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Longwood Historic District Extension contains buildings and other improvements which have a special character and special historical and aesthetic interest and value which represent one or more periods or styles of architecture typical of one or more eras in the history of New York City and which cause this area, by reason of these factors, to constitute a distinct section of the city.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Longwood Historic District Extension contains some of the best examples of the turn-of-the-century architecture that transformed the Bronx into an urban extension of Manhattan following the linking of the two boroughs by the I.R.T. subway system; that the Macy Place buildings are closely related historically and architecturally to the buildings in the previously designated Longwood Historic District; that the Macy Place houses were conceived as an architectural ensemble exhibiting elements of the neo-Renaissance and Romanesque Revival styles; and that a uniformity of scale, consistency of style and relative architectural intactness give the Longwood Historic District Extension a special sense of place.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 21 (formerly Chapter 63) of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as an Historic District the Longwood Historic District Extension, Borough of the Bronx, containing the property bounded by a line extending westerly along the northern curb line of Macy Place, northerly along the western property line of 857 Macy Place, easterly along the northern property lines of 859-871 Macy Place, southerly along part of the eastern property line of 871 Macy Place, easterly along the northern property line of 781 Hewitt Place, easterly across Hewitt Place, southerly along the eastern curb line in front of 760-782 Hewitt Place, westerly across Hewitt Place, northerly along the western curb line of Hewitt Place, to the point of beginning, the Bronx.



LONGWOOD HISTORIC DISTRICT EXTENSION

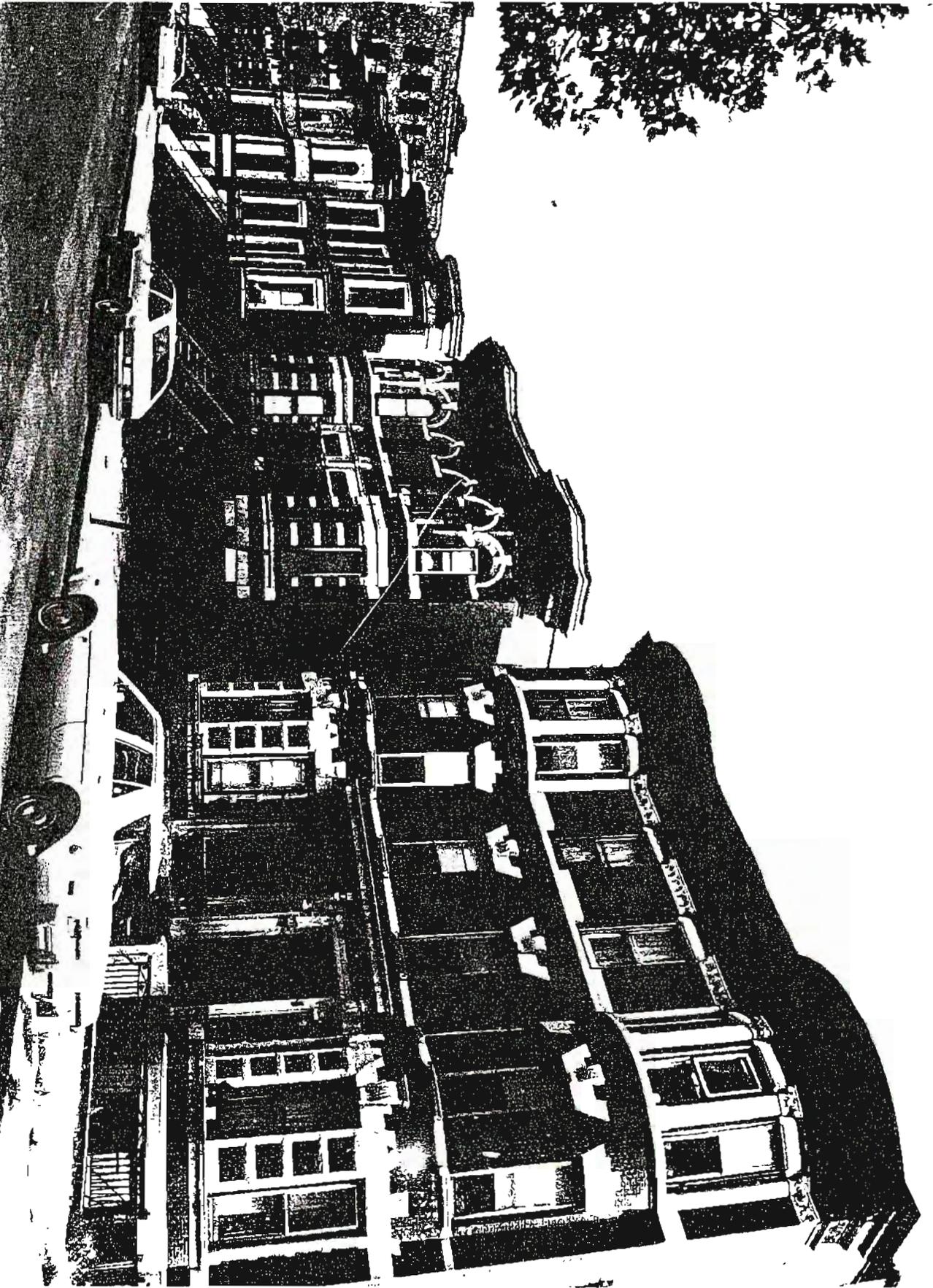
Designated February 8, 1983



LONGWOOD HISTORIC DISTRICT

Designated July 8, 1980

Landmarks Preservation Commission



857 - 879 Macy Place