



The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

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250 HOUSES IN BROOKLYN'S FISKE TERRACE-MIDWOOD PARK EARN LANDMARK STATUS

Landmarks Preservation Commission Also Designates Midtown Hotel and Four East Village Buildings – Webster Hall, Public Bath, Synagogue and Former Women's Shelter

City's Landmarks Commission Also Considers Three Historic Districts, Three Midtown Buildings, Two Harlem Libraries, One Chase Manhattan Plaza and An Upper West Side Church

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission today unanimously approved the City's 91st historic district, and five individual landmarks in Manhattan. The newest landmarks include: the **Fiske Terrace-Midwood Park Historic District** in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn; **Webster Hall, Congregation Beth Hamedrash Hagadol Anshe, Elizabeth Home for Girls** and the **Free Public Baths of the City of New York** in the East Village section of Manhattan; and the **Allerton 39th Street House** in Midtown Manhattan. The designations bring the total the number of individual landmarks in all five boroughs to 1,189.

“Today we moved forward on more than a dozen individual landmarks and landmark districts that showcase the breadth and depth of our work,” said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. “The latest additions to the City's outstanding collection of landmarks recall several important periods in our City's history. The stately homes of Fiske Terrace-Midwood Park evoke the transformation of the Flatbush section of Brooklyn from an agricultural village to a suburban neighborhood, while the synagogue, meeting hall public bath and girls' home reflect different aspects of the 19th-century immigrant experience in the East Village.”

The Commission also held public hearings on the proposed **NoHo Historic District Extension**, which includes 60 buildings, and the proposed designations of the **former American Society of Civil Engineers Clubhouse**, now the site of Lee's Art Supply at 218-222 West 57th St.; **former Fire Engine Company No. 54** at 304 West 47th St.; and **St Michael's Church, Parish House and Rectory** at 201-225 West 99th St.

In addition, the Commission voted unanimously to hold public hearings on proposals to designate the **West Chelsea Historic District** in Manhattan, comprised of 55 19th- and early 20th-century industrial buildings; to expand the **Douglaston Historic District** in Queens, with a proposed extension that includes 21 Greek Revival, Italianate, and Mediterranean Revival-style structures. The Commission also voted to hold hearings on the **George Bruce Branch of the New York Public Library** at 518 W. 125th St., a Georgian Revival-style building designed by Carrere & Hastings; the **East 125th Street Branch of the New York Public Library** at 224 E. 125th St., a Renaissance Revival style building by McKim, Mead & White; **275 Madison Avenue**, a 42-story Art Deco-style skyscraper at 40th Street; and **Chase Manhattan**

More

Bank, the Modernist Skidmore Owings & Merrill masterwork at 1 Chase Manhattan Plaza in Lower Manhattan (see separate release).

Below are brief descriptions of the City's newest historic district and five newly designated landmarks:

Fiske Terrace-Midwood Park

Bound on the north and south by Foster Avenue and Avenue H, and on the west and east by the Brighton subway line and Ocean Avenue, this district comprises 250 eclectic houses that were largely completed and occupied by 1914, and were built by two prominent local builders and developers.

The primary developer of Fiske Terrace, which lies south of Glenwood Road and is named for George B. Fiske, an oil merchant, was the T.B. Ackerson Company, whose owner once boasted of transforming the area "from woods into city in 18 months." Approximately 75 percent of the houses in the Midwood Park part of the district, which lies north of Glenwood Road, were constructed by the John R. Corbin Company.

Most of the houses in the district adhere primarily to the popular early 20th-century architectural styles, especially the Arts and Crafts, Colonial Revival and Dutch Colonial Revival styles. The houses were typically constructed in one of three forms: the box-like foursquare, crowned by a hipped or pyramidal roof; the temple-house, featuring a prominent front-facing gable; and the bungalow, with its low profile, deep porch with thick tapered columns, and broadly overhanging eaves.

East Village Designations

The designations of Webster Hall, Congregation Beth Hamedrash Hagadol Anshe, Elizabeth Home for Girls and the Free Public Baths of the City of New York are the result of a Commission-driven effort to preserve more of the East Village's architecturally, historically and culturally significant buildings. LPC staff recommended the buildings for consideration as landmarks following a 2006 LPC survey of 130 buildings between East Houston and 14th Street, the Bowery/4th Avenue and the East River.

Webster Hall and Annex

Constructed in 1886 in the Renaissance Revival style, Webster Hall is one of New York City's most historically and culturally significant 19th-century assembly halls. Architect Charles Rentz, who was responsible for a number of flats and tenements, factories, and stables buildings across the City, designed the assembly hall, which is clad in red Philadelphia pressed brick with brownstone trim and features a metal cornice and unglazed red terra cotta ornament. Now a nightclub, Webster Hall has been the venue for numerous balls, receptions, lectures, meetings, conventions, political and union rallies, military functions, concerts, performances, and sporting and fundraising events. It was the site of the formation of the Progressive Labor Party in 1887, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America in 1914.

An annex was added to the main assembly hall in 1895. In the 1950s and 60s, RCA Victor Records operated a recording studio inside. Classical, pop vocal, jazz, Latin, folk, and gospel albums were made by such stars as Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Tony Bennett, Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, Julie Andrews, Harry Belafonte, Ray Charles, Jeannette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy.

Beth Hamedrash Hagadon Anshe Ugarn, 242 East 7th St.

This Beaux Arts-style synagogue, whose name translates to Great House of Study of the People of Hungary, was constructed in 1908, and rebuilt from an existing house by the architects Samuel Gross and Joseph Kleinberger for a Hungarian congregation that had formed in 1883. Between 1907 and 1922, both architects designed numerous tenement buildings on Manhattan's Lower East Side, as well as larger apartment buildings in upper Manhattan, several of which are in the Hamilton Heights/ Sugar Hill and Hamilton Heights/ Sugar Hill Northwest Historic districts.

Hungarian immigrants were part of the large 19th century European migration, and many of them settled between 1st and 10th Streets, near 2nd Avenue in Manhattan. The synagogue, located on 7th Street between Avenues C and D, was one of the City's earliest Hungarian congregations, and its highly detailed façade stood out among many of the Lower East Side synagogues built during the same period.

The congregation ceased to exist by 1975 and in 1985 the building was converted to residential use.

Elizabeth Home for Girls, 307 East 12th Street

Completed in 1891, Elizabeth Home for Girls was a shelter for young women operated by the Children's Aid Society, which was established in 1852 by Charles Loring Brace to house and educate the City's poorest children. Located between First and Second avenues, the building, serves as a reminder of the difficulties faced by those who lived in the City's tenement districts in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Brace commissioned the celebrated architect Calvert Vaux to design this facility and 11 others for the Children's Aid Society. Two are designated New York City landmarks (the Mott Street Industrial School and the Tompkins Square Lodging House for Boys).

The Elizabeth Home for Girls, a four-story brick and sandstone building in the Queen Anne style with German Renaissance flourishes, was used by the Children's Aid Society until 1930. It has retained virtually all of its original defining characteristics, including, among other things, a stepped gable, arched entrance topped with an ornamented console and balcony and a prominent central chimney.

11th Street Public Bath, 538 East 11th St.

This elaborate Beaux-Arts style building was designed by Arnold W. Brunner, the architect and city planner who is responsible for the public baths at Asser Levy Place, Shearith Israel Synagogue and Temple Israel—all of which are New York City landmarks. The bathhouse, located between avenues A and B, was completed in 1906 to alleviate sanitary problems in the City's tenements, few of which had baths or showers.

The limestone-clad structure was meant to contrast with its tenement neighbors and stand out as an example of civic pride. It was used as a public bath until the 1950s, and purchased in 1995 by Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer Eddie Adams and converted into a fashion and corporate photography studio.

The Allerton House, 145 E. 39th Street

The Allerton House was completed in 1918 as a long-term residential hotel for young, middle class, single men. Designed in the Northern Italian Renaissance style by architect Arthur Loomis Harmon, the Allerton House was one of a chain of six that were built in New York City between 1913 and 1924. The base of the building is clad in granite and its main façade is structured around three bays of windows, constructed primarily of red brick with projecting headers that ascend to a central hipped roof tower. The prominent roof garden, emphasized by the three arched openings separated by twin terra cotta columns forming the crown of the building, was a central feature of the hotel's communal facilities.

This building became a seminal building for the hotel type and precursor to the design of the Shelton Hotel. Harmon designed the Shelton Hotel in 1924, the first tall building of the postwar era, and, at the time, the world's tallest hotel. Harmon combined the use of rich materials, subdued stylistic references and emphasis upon the vertical of the Allerton design with the set back masonry mandated by the new zoning laws. Harmon later became a partner with the architectural firm of Shreve & Lamb, designers of the Empire State Building.

In 1956, the Salvation Army converted the building to the Ten Eyck-Troughton Memorial Residence for Women, and remained in use by the organization until it was purchased recently by a private developer.

For more information or photographs of each property, please e-mail Lisi de Bourbon at edebourbon@lpc.nyc.gov or visit the Commission's Web site: www.nyc.gov/landmarks.

The Landmarks Preservation Commission is 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 some 25,000 buildings, including 1,189 individual landmarks, 110 interior landmarks, nine scenic landmarks and 91 historic districts in all five boroughs.