

# Park Terrace West-West 217<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District

**Address, Borough**  
**Tax Map Block 2243 Lot #**

**Built:** 1921-1935

**Architects:** Moore & Landsiedel, Benjamin Driesler, Louis Kurtz, C. G. de Neergaard, and A. H. Zacharius

**Style:** Colonial Revival/Craftsman and Tudor Revival

**Action:** Proposed for Commission's Calendar September 25, 2018



The Park Terrace West-West 217th Street Historic District, located in Inwood, is a picturesque enclave of fifteen early 20th-century Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival style houses. It consists of fifteen houses—both free-standing and semi-detached—designed by architects (Moore & Landsiedel, Benjamin Driesler, Louis Kurtz, C. G. de Neergaard, and A. H. Zacharius) between 1920 and 1935. The proposed historic district's appealing historic character, significance, and sense of place is derived from its uniform scale, consistency of architectural styles and building materials, and landscaped gardens that work with the unique topography of this part of Inwood.

Inwood was known as Tubby Hook until 1864. It the northern-most region of Manhattan, surrounded by two rivers, the Harlem River to the north and east, and the Hudson River to the west. The area was once vast farm land, and initially the land on which the proposed historic district is located was part of the Isaac and Michael Dyckman farm. In 1851 it was divided and a 26-acre parcel was sold to John Ferris Seaman and his wife Ann Drake-Seaman. It was bounded by the Isham estate to the south, West 218th Street to the north, Seaman Avenue to the west, and Broadway (formerly Kingsbridge Road) to the east.

The city began to develop around the edges of these vast estates in the late-19th century. Upon Ann Drake-Seaman's death in 1878, the property was left to a nephew Lawrence Drake, who divided the bulk of it into lots that were sold to developers. The portion of the property that contained the Seaman family's mansion, located south of these lots, remained intact until 1938, and was the last property to be developed in the area.

In 1906 the extension of the Interborough Rapid Transit (IRT) subway lines spurred the initial residential development of the area. Later in the 1920's the construction of the IND subway lines along Broadway initiated even more speculative development of large apartment buildings for middle-class families. The proposed Park Terrace West-West 217<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District developed much later than other parts of Inwood, and as a result has a special character which is more typically found in suburban development of the city's outer boroughs. The small scale of the residences and the suburban quality of the potential historic district is rare in Manhattan.

The proposed Park Terrace West-West 217th Street Historic District possesses a high degree of integrity, and is comprised of two-story red-brick buildings, designed in the Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival styles with Craftsman style details, all either free-standing and semi-detached, with detached or basement garages. Many of the houses feature front yards that work with the topography. They belong to that period of American architecture that freely incorporated revivalist features into the designs, while embracing the early-20th century modern car culture.

