



The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

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News Release

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LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION DESIGNATES ONE HISTORIC DISTRICT AND THREE INDIVIDUAL LANDMARKS

On **June 24, 2003** the Landmarks Preservation Commission voted to designate the **NoHo East Historic District** in Manhattan, the **Williamsburg Houses**, 229-247 Graham Avenue; 202-216 Graham Avenue; 196-200 Maujer Street in Brooklyn, **Erasmus Hall High School**, 899-925 Flatbush Avenue, also in Brooklyn and **Newtown High School**, 48-01 90th Street, in Queens.

NoHo East Historic District

“The NoHo East historic district represents a diverse enclave of Federal-style rowhouses and early commercial buildings in New York City,” said Robert B. Tierney, Chair of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. *“I am delighted to preserve this special area for future generations.”*

The NoHo East Historic District, which is located on Bleecker Street between the Bowery and Lafayette Street, consists of approximately thirty-five buildings constructed between the early nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The district’s low-scale houses on Bleecker Street and Elizabeth Street are a reminder of the area’s early residential history, while the larger store-and-loft buildings testify to New York’s growing importance as a hub of commercial activity in the 1900s. Today, this diverse group of small dwellings, apartment buildings, factories, lofts, and stables represents an intact and unusual mixed-use neighborhood in Manhattan.



Williamsburg Houses

“The Williamsburg Houses represent public housing and public architecture at their finest,” said Robert B. Tierney. *“The New York City Housing Authority’s recent restoration inspires all New Yorkers.”*

Constructed between 1935 and 1938, the Williamsburg Houses were a collaborative project of the Federal Public Works Administration and the newly established New York City Housing Authority. Among the ten architects who worked on the project, the best known are Richmond H. Shreve, of Shreve, Lamb & Harmon (the architects of the Empire State Building), and William Lescaze, the Swiss-born architect who helped introduce European-style modern architecture in the United States.



Lescaze was responsible for the overall design, which includes twenty T- and H-shaped, 4-story structures on four superblocks turned at a 15 degree angle to the street grid. To distinguish the complex from previous public housing projects, the building elevations are clad in light-colored brick and concrete, and the entrances are marked by dark blue tile and projecting stainless steel canopies. During the mid-1990s, the buildings underwent an extensive restoration, which included the replacement of all exterior materials.

“These two high schools designed by C.B.J. Snyder exhibit the highest standard of architecture for public education,” said Robert B. Tierney. *“It is a privilege for the Landmarks Preservation Commission to recognize these buildings.”*

Erasmus Hall High School

Erasmus Hall High School, erected in three building campaigns — 1903-11, 1925, and 1940 — was designed by C.B.J. Snyder in the Collegiate Gothic style. The buildings are constructed around a quadrangle in the center of which is the original Erasmus Hall Academy (a designated New York City Landmark), built in 1786. Snyder, Superintendent of School Buildings to the Board of Education for thirty years, was credited with the introduction of the Collegiate Gothic style to New York City public school architecture. His long tenure as superintendent resulted in the creation of a large body of distinguished buildings as part of a concerted effort by the city to expand its school system, following consolidation in 1898, to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population. In addition to its inspiring architectural design, Erasmus Hall High School’s impressive list of alumni, including entertainer, Barbra Streisand and builder, Sam LeFrak, have contributed to all aspects of American culture.



Newtown High School

One of Elmhurst’s most prominent buildings, Newtown High School is a reminder of the long history of commitment and dedication to public education by the City of New York. The building is a result of several building campaigns, which began with the construction of a small, wooden schoolhouse in 1866. The school’s first expansion took place in 1898-1900, when a much larger brick building, designed by the architectural firm Boring & Tilton, was added to the site. In 1917-18, C.B.J. Snyder designed an impressive Flemish Renaissance Revival-style addition to the school, which featured stepped gables and a dramatic 169-foot, centrally-placed tower topped by a cupola and turrets.



The Landmarks Preservation Commission is the New York City agency responsible for designating and regulating New York City’s landmarks.