



The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

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COMMISSION SCHEDULES HEARINGS ON PROPOSALS TO DESIGNATE FOUR INDIVIDUAL LANDMARKS AND A HISTORIC DISTRICT

Proposed Designations Include West Park Presbyterian Church, the Fort Washington Presbyterian Church, and the Audubon Park Historic District in Manhattan, the Ridgewood Theatre in Queens, and the Brooklyn Union Gas Co. Building in Brooklyn

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission today voted unanimously to calendar public hearings on proposals to give individual landmark status to **West Park Presbyterian Church** on the Upper West Side, **Fort Washington Presbyterian Church** in Washington Heights, the **Ridgewood Theatre** in Ridgewood, Queens, and the former headquarters of the **Brooklyn Union Gas Company** in Brooklyn Heights. It also agreed to hold a hearing on the proposed **Audubon Park Historic District** in Washington Heights.



Designed in the Romanesque Revival style and clad in deep red sandstone, the West Park Presbyterian Church complex at 165 Amsterdam Avenue was completed in 1889. In 1883 the architect Leopold Eidlitz designed a small chapel for the church. The congregation soon outgrew the chapel and selected Henry F. Kilburn to design the main sanctuary, which includes a soaring tower that anchors the northeast corner of 86th Street.

“We’ve had many discussions in the past two years with church representatives, elected officials, concerned residents and preservation advocacy groups about extending landmark protection to this remarkable building,” said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. “A public hearing is the natural outgrowth of these conversations.”

Chairman Tierney noted that the vote on West Park Presbyterian was scheduled to coincide with a vote to calendar Fort Washington Presbyterian Church at 21 Wadsworth Avenue in Washington Heights between West 174th and West 175th streets. The neo-Georgian church and designed by the architect Thomas Hastings of the renowned firm of Carrère and Hastings, was built in 1914 as an affiliate of West Park Presbyterian.

The church is located to the north of the proposed Audubon Park Historic District, which consists of 19 large, exuberant apartment houses constructed from 1905 to 1932 between West 155th and West 158th streets from Broadway and Edward M. Morgan Place to Riverside Drive. Designed in variations of the



Beaux-Arts and Renaissance Revival styles, the buildings reflect the area's transformation from a rural enclave to a densely developed residential neighborhood.



The Ridgewood Theatre in Queens, completed in 1916, was designed by the prominent theater architect Thomas Lamb in the Classical Revival style for the Fox movie chain. The theater seated 2,500 people and at its close in March 2008 was considered the longest continuously operating movie theater in the country.

The former headquarters of the Brooklyn Union Gas Co. at 180 Union Street, is a late work of the architect Frank Freeman. Constructed in 1916 in the Neo Classical style, the building is owned by St. Francis College.



The Landmarks Preservation Commission is the mayoral agency 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 more than 25,000 buildings, including 1,224 individual landmarks, 110 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks and 93 historic districts in all five boroughs. Under the city's landmarks law, considered the most powerful in the nation, the Commission must be comprised of at least three architects, a historian, a realtor, a planner or landscape architect, as well as a representative of each borough.