

The Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development Council

284 Park Place • Brooklyn, NY 11238 • (718) 623-1320

March 21, 2007

The Honorable Robert Tierney
Chair
Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street
New York, New York 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney,

On behalf of the Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development Council (PHNDC), I am writing to formally request that the Landmarks Preservation Commission evaluate the Prospect Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn for historic designation.

Prospect Heights is an area rich with the historic architecture that helps shape Brooklyn's special identity. The neighborhood contains blocks lined with beautiful Italianate and neo-Grec rowhouses, interspersed with churches, small commercial buildings and multi-family structures. Originally a quiet farm area crossed by the historic Flatbush Turnpike Road, Prospect Heights became a residential neighborhood in the second half of the nineteenth century after the completion of nearby Prospect Park. The area is widely recognized as an important historic neighborhood, and indeed, part of the neighborhood is listed on the National Register.

Prospect Heights has remained remarkably free from large-scale physical change, making it a perfect candidate for historic district designation. But without such designation soon, that may well change. As you know, the development of Atlantic Yards just adjacent to the proposed historic district will exert immense development pressures on the neighborhood, posing a threat to its sense of place and historic character.

In preparation for this Request for Evaluation, over twenty volunteers from the Prospect Heights community surveyed and photographed roughly 1,100 buildings in the area. More still undertook the task of assembling the data that was collected into a centralized database, which was submitted to the Commission in January 2007. The database includes photographs, underlying land use information and some data on architects and dates of construction from the National Register nomination. In the end, the Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development Council and the Municipal Art Society developed a list of more than 900 buildings that contribute to the character of the district.

PHNDC has found through surveys of community opinion (The Pratt Center, October 2004) that the architectural character of Prospect Heights is highly valued among neighborhood residents. Community Board 8 has also passed a resolution supporting PHNDC's work in advocating for historic district designation (attached). We hope that the Landmarks Preservation Commission will act quickly to save our historic neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Gib Veconi
Chairman

cc: Mayor Michael Bloomberg
Borough President Marty Markowitz
Councilmember Letitia James
Assemblyman Hakeem Jeffries
Assemblywoman Joan Millman
State Senator Velmanette Montgomery

State Senator Eric Adams
Mr. Robert Mathews, Chairman, CB8
Ms. Doris Alexander, District Manager