



Landmarks Preservation
Commission

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES
REGARDING DESIGNATIONS of
827-831 BROADWAY, SAMUEL H. and MARY T. BOOTH HOUSE, and STAFFORD "OSBORN" HOUSE
February 6, 2018**

Good morning Chair Adams and Subcommittee Members, my name is Kate Lemos McHale, director of research at the Landmarks Preservation Commission, and I am joined by Ali Rasoulinejad to present three recent designations by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. On October 31st, 2017, the Commission voted to designate the 827-831 Broadway Buildings as an individual landmark, following a public hearing held on October 17, 2017.

827 – 831 BROADWAY BUILDINGS

The 827-831 Broadway Buildings are twin, Civil War-era "commercial palaces" designed by Griffith Thomas in 1866-67 for tobacco heir Pierre Lorillard, which are significant for their associations with the prominent abstract expressionist artists Willem de Kooning, Elaine de Kooning, Paul Jenkins, Larry Poons, Jules Olitski, and Herbert Ferber. They represent the pivotal era in which New York became the center of the art world after World War II.

The Commission received written and verbal testimony from 22 people supporting designation, including then-Council Member Rosie Mendez, Borough President Gale Brewer, Senator Brad Hoylman, Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick, the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, the Municipal Art Society of New York, and the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Willem de Kooning Foundation, Victorian Society New York, Historic Districts Council, Society for the Architecture of the City, and Landmark West. The owner's representative and architect took a neutral position, and there was no opposition to the designation.

The buildings' architect, Griffith Thomas, is known for stores in the SoHo, NoHo, and Ladies' Mile historic districts, and the 827-831 Broadway Buildings capture his transitional work in a stone façade with cast iron quoins and columns. While the ground floors have been salesrooms of a number of retail tenants, the adaptable lofts were ideal studio spaces for artists, and in the 1950s, they began to attract artist tenants as part of a low-rent artists' enclave between Union and Washington Squares.

Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair

1 Centre Street, 9th FL, New York, NY 10007 ♦ 212-669-7855 ♦ www.nyc.gov/landmarks

SAMUEL H. and MARY T. BOOTH HOUSE

Council Members, the next two properties were identified as part of an extensive survey of City Island in the Bronx in 2009 to identify the best examples of its historic development and architecture. This resulted in the prioritization of several houses for consideration as individual landmarks. The two properties I will be presenting, the Booth House and the Stafford House, are representative of the 19th century and 20th century development of City Island, respectively, and are fine and remarkably intact examples of their architectural styles and periods. They were calendared and heard in 2011. Due to Local Law 76 of 2016 they were set sunset from the Commission's calendar without further action by the Commission by the end of 2017. The agency felt it was important to move these two properties forward, and the Commission voted to designate both houses on November 28, 2017.

The Samuel H. and Mary T. Booth House was constructed between 1887 and 1893, most likely by Booth himself, who had a prolific career as a house builder on City Island. The house is a fine example of the Stick style, a late-19th century style of wood frame house construction that combines the picturesque character of A. J. Downing's cottages with balloon framing.

At the June 28, 2011 public hearing, three people spoke in favor of designation including representatives of the Historic Districts Council, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, and the Victorian Society New York. No one testified in opposition.

Samuel Booth moved his family to City Island by 1880, and between 1887 and 1889 he purchased several parcels of land on Centre Street from William H. Scofield, a member of one of the island's oldest families. The Booth house was constructed between this time and 1893, when it first appeared on a Sanborn Map.

The 2-1/2 story wood frame house was designed in the Stick style popular in the end of the 19th century. Characteristic features include its asymmetrical plan and varied massing, cross gabled roofs with deep eaves, and use of wood clapboards, shingles and decorative sawtooth-pattern boards and bargeboards. The house passed out of the Booth family in 1959 but remained unchanged until the late 20th century when it was renovated by new owners, all with minimal affect to the historic character of the house's two



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50,000 homes, offering home buyers a choice between hundreds of designs in a range of prices and to varying levels of customization:

Sears' most popular home type was the American bungalow. The "Osborn" model chosen by the Staffords, which is typical of a Craftsman style bungalow, has low hanging, cross-gabled roofs that shelter deep porches, and was advertised as "from the Golden West" to evoke a warm California climate and a strong link to the outdoors. The Stafford house has seen remarkably few changes in its 87-year history, and retains a high level of integrity.

As a remarkably intact Sears "mail-order" house on City Island, the Stafford "Osborn" House represents an important period of technological and social innovation in the history of American housing, and reflects the pattern of suburban-style residential development that occurred on City Island and in the outer boroughs during the early 20th century.

Given the significance of the 827-831 Broadway Buildings, the Samuel H. and Mary T. Booth House, and the Stafford "Osborn" House, we recommend that the City Council uphold these designations.

Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair

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Presentation to the City Council Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Uses

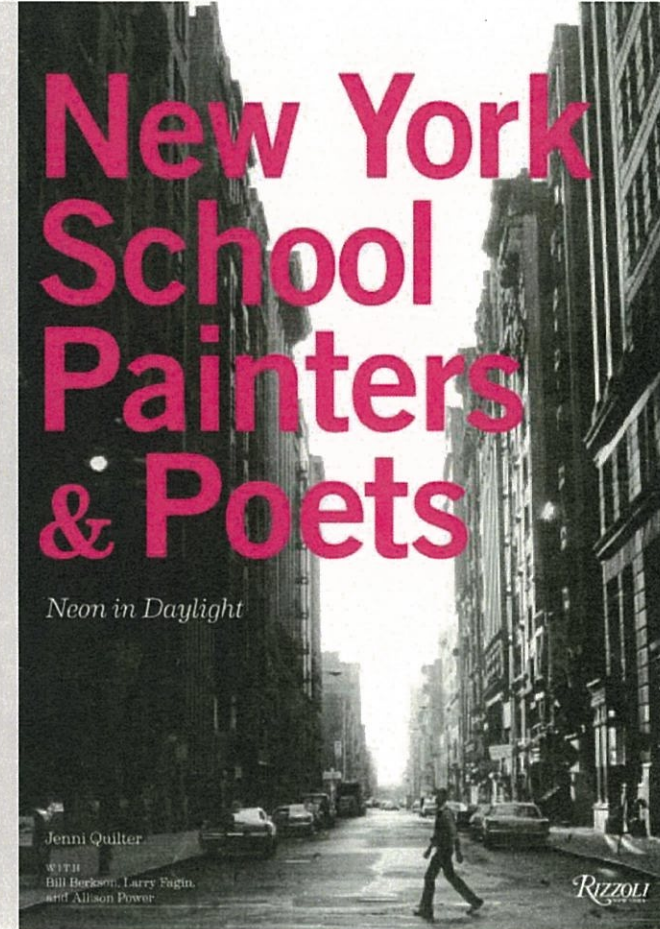
February 6, 2018

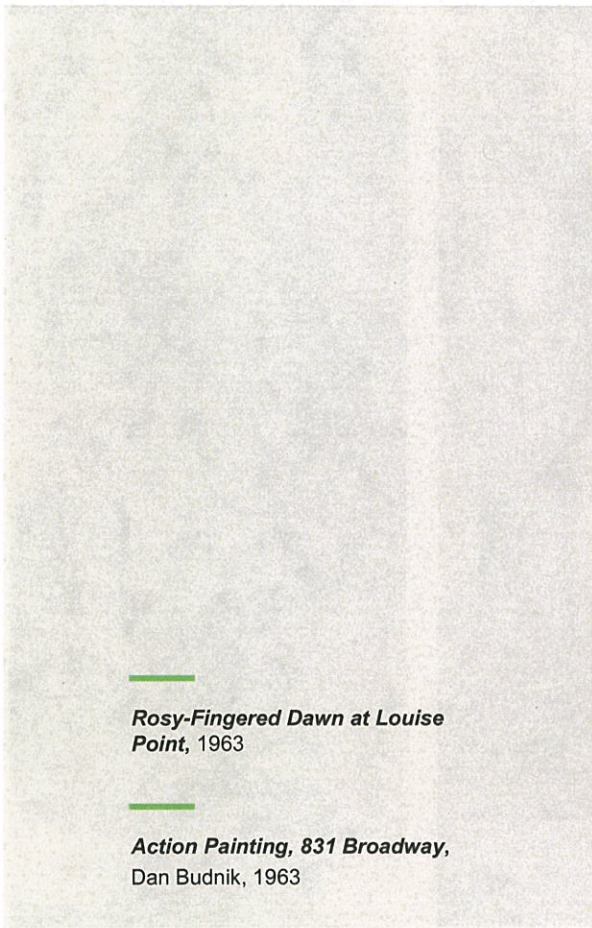




"Broadway, West Side, 12th to 14th St."
Wayne, Kratzer & Co. for Mail & Express,
1899

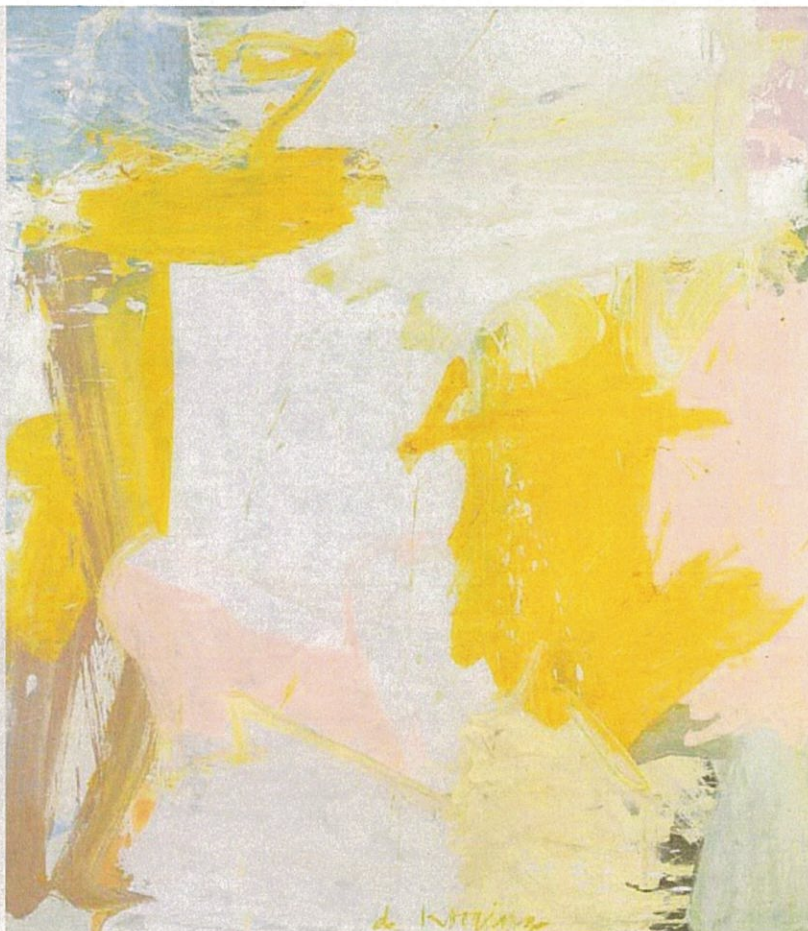
*Both sides of Broadway, from Bowling
Green to Central Park, New York City, 1910*





Rosy-Fingered Dawn at Louise Point, 1963

Action Painting, 831 Broadway,
Dan Budnik, 1963



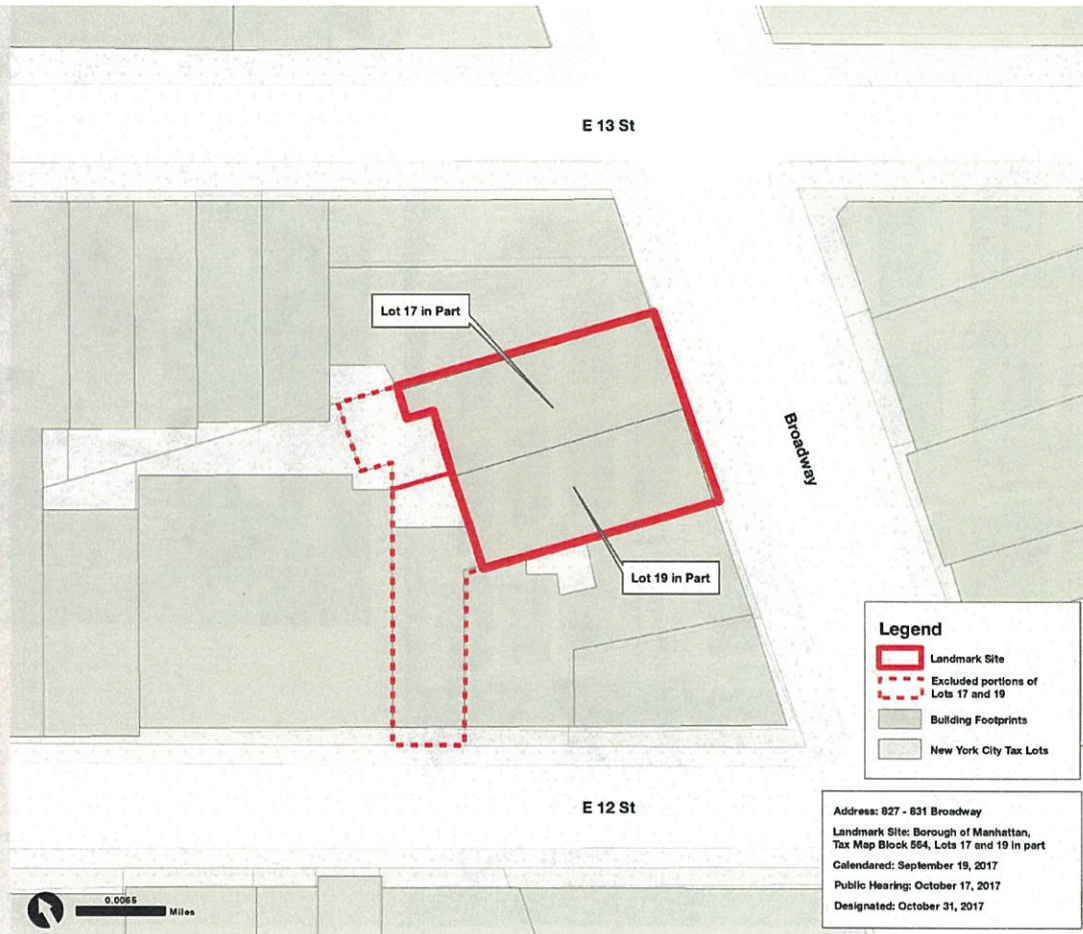
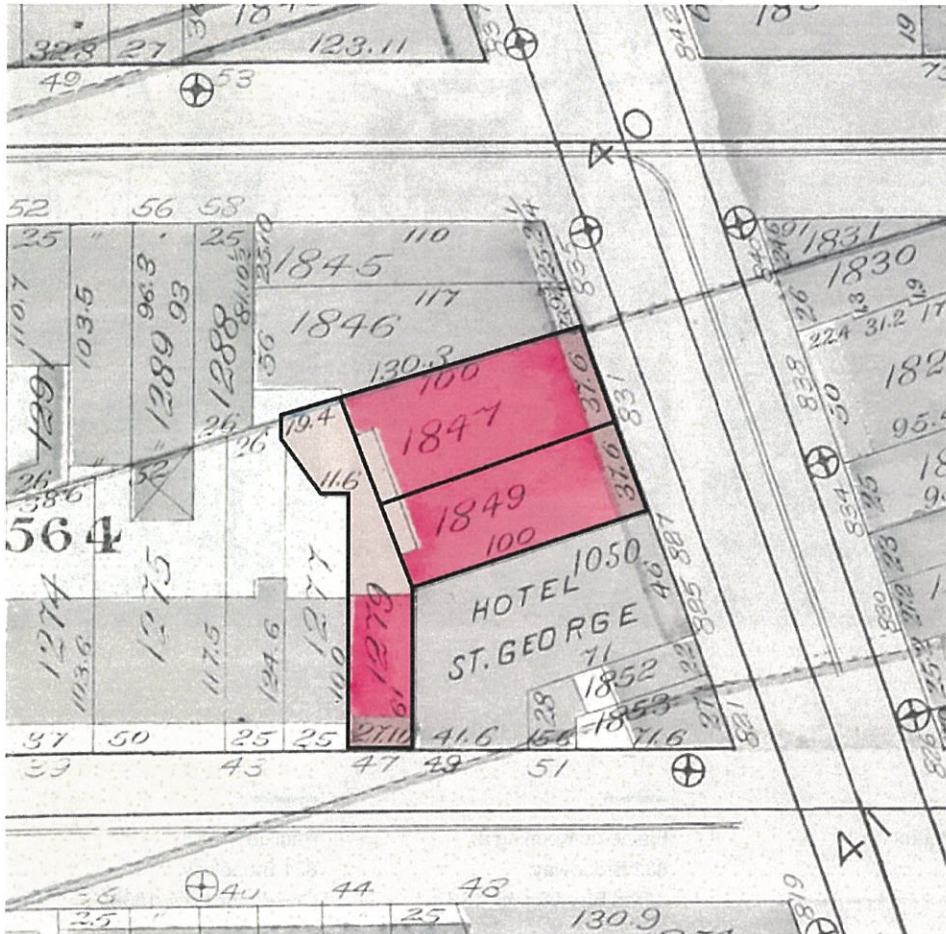


Portrait of Paul Jenkins at 831 Broadway,
David Hockney, 1963

At 831 Broadway with *Phenomena*:
831 Broadway, John D. Schiff, 1964

Phenomena: Yonder Near, 1964





Legend

- Landmark Site
- Excluded portions of Lots 17 and 19
- Building Footprints
- New York City Tax Lots

Address: 827 - 831 Broadway
 Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan,
 Tax Map Block 564, Lots 17 and 19 in part
 Calendered: September 19, 2017
 Public Hearing: October 17, 2017
 Designated: October 31, 2017

Samuel H. and Mary T. Booth House

Address: 30 Centre Street, The Bronx
Tax Map Block 5626, Lot 414

Built: c.1887-93

Builder: Samuel H. Booth (?)

Item Calendared: March 22, 2011

Public Hearing: June 28, 2011

Proposed for Designation: November 28, 2017





Tax Photo, c. 1940, Municipal
Archives



Booth House, 2017 LPC

Stafford “Osborn” House

Address: 95 Pell Place, City Island, the Bronx
Tax Map Block 5626, Lot 221

Built: 1930

Architect: Sears, Roebuck & Company

Style: Craftsman

Item Calendared: March 22, 2011

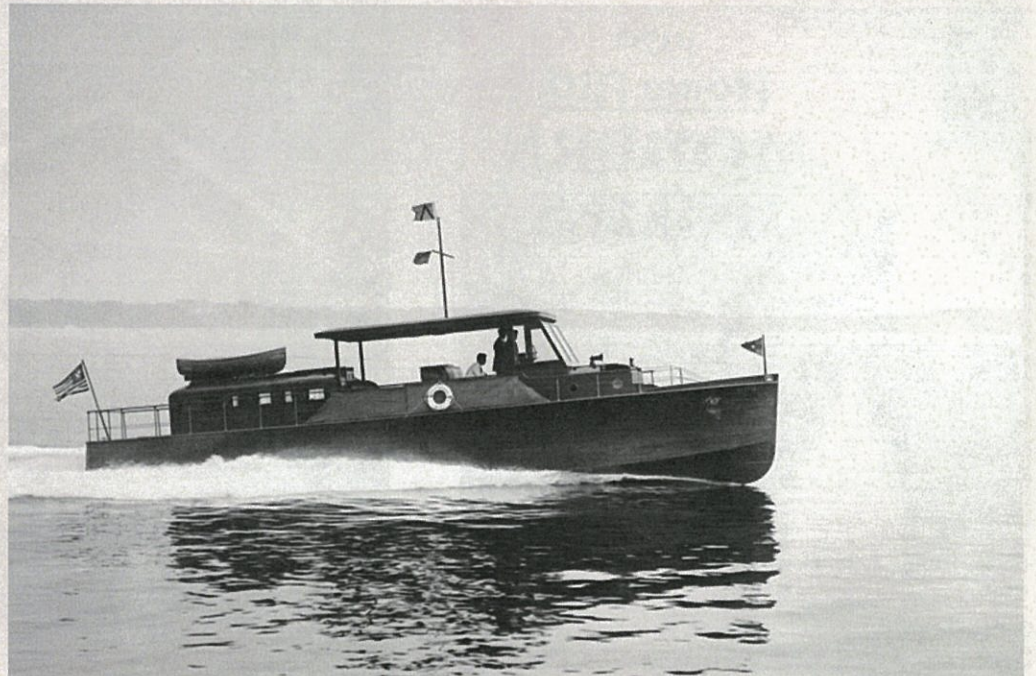
Public Hearing: June 28, 2011 and October 25, 2011

Item Proposed for Designation: November 28, 2017





City Island, Aerial, Flickr, David Oppenheimer



Corisande, The Caumsett Foundation





THE ADVOCATE FOR NEW YORK CITY'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

232 East 11th Street New York NY 10003
tel (212) 614-9107 fax (212) 614-9127 email hdc@hdc.org

February 6, 2018

New York City Council Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting & Maritime Use
Statement of the Historic Districts Council

Regarding the Landmark Designation of the Captain John H. Stafford House, 95 Pell Place and
the Samuel H. & Mary T. Booth House, 30 Center Street

The Historic Districts Council is the advocate for New York City's designated historic districts and neighborhoods meriting preservation. When the Landmarks Preservation Commission turned its attention to the historic resources of City Island in 2011, we proudly supported that initiative, which had been earlier proposed in 2008 by the Bronx Borough President's Landmarks Task Force, although in that instance, the suggestion had been for a small historic district on the island. The Landmarks Commission surveyed the community and came back instead with a handful of proposed individual landmarks, of which these two are the last to be considered. In truth, we felt this was a compromise that did not adequately represent the unique architecture and distinctive sense of place of City Island, but that does not mean it was a bad proposal nor did we regard the buildings considered to be less than meritorious.

The two buildings before the Subcommittee today represent different and distinct eras of City Island's history and development. The Booth House, built at the end of the 19th century, is a rambling house full of charming Queen Anne style details including multiple gables, decorative verge board, turned columns, and brackets. Even with its later additions, it remains a handsome example of Stick Style architecture in the community and has a long association with the Booth family, who could honestly be said to have built much of City Island. Similarly, the Stafford House was home for almost 60 years to Captain John Stafford, one of the pillars of City Island's maritime community. The house he built for his family was a Sears Roebuck "Osborn" bungalow, pre-cut and assembled on-site by a local carpenter (not the Booths). Although many laypeople might regard the idea of a "pre-fab" house having historic significance as absurd, the typology is enormously significant to the development of housing in America. The Stafford House is an especially intact example of the type, which is oddly rare in New York City. The house's striking resemblance to the catalog illustration speaks to its well-preserved state.

HDC understands the sense of burden which individual landmark designation can bring to property owners, especially owner-occupants whose home might represent their greatest single financial asset. The dread of government oversight with its specters of cost inflation, elongated schedules and bureaucratic gumminess can be daunting – it's hard enough to be a homeowner to begin with, much less an owner of an older home with added responsibilities. However, the Landmarks Preservation Commission has decades of experience in working with the private owners of historic properties to make their stewardship as easy as possible and to ensure that owning a historic home is a benefit, not a burden. There are loan programs available from our preservation colleagues, and even governmental grants if you qualify. More importantly, there is a deep well of knowledge and expertise in caring for a historic home which the LPC can and will



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provide free of charge. No one is born knowing how to reshingle a roof or repair a wood window, but the LPC and the organized preservation community can provide expertise to help maintain and enhance your investment in your home.

In this complex world, I do not like to speak of absolutes but sometimes one must. The most important aspect of landmark designation is not to ensure the regular maintenance of a historic property but to ensure its continued existence. By designating a property as a landmark, the City is saying that the continued existence of this particular site is important to the story of New York and that New Yorkers, as a community, would be lessened by its loss. That the retention of this building is important, not only to us today, but to the people who will follow us in the years to come. The best way to understand history is to physically encounter it and it is our responsibility to the future to have these buildings present, and not just as an old postcard in a picture book.

February 6, 2018

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE N.Y.C. CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES REGARDING THE DESIGNATION OF THE STAFFORD "OSBORN" HOUSE (95 PELL PLACE), AND THE SAMUEL H. AND MARY T. BOOTH HOUSE (30 CENTRE STREET); CITY ISLAND, THE BRONX AS INDIVIDUAL LANDMARKS

Good day Chair Adams and Council members. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy supports designation of the City Island buildings on today's calendar.

Ten years ago, the former Bronx Borough President's Historic Preservation Task Force recognized the historic significance of City Island and recommended that it be designated a historic district. While that goal is still far off, the designations before you today represent the buildings that instill City Island with its special sense of place.

30 Centre Street and 95 Pell Place recall different eras in the Island's development and parallel trends seen across New York. The Booth House at 30 Centre is a turn-of-the-century Queen Anne. The Stafford House is a fine model of the Sears catalogue Craftsman bungalows of pre-War suburban-style development. Both possess a picturesque quality that signifies City Island's charms. With their original massing and many intact decorative details, each exhibits a high degree of architectural integrity and certainly merit landmark designation.

City Island sometimes feels as though it is an idyllic world away. Yet its buildings connect it to the larger narrative of our metropolis. These houses are all worthy of the guidance and protection of the Landmarks law and we commend the Commission for designating them.

Several years ago the Conservancy provided a loan and project management assistance to the owners of 175 Belden Street to undertake the award-winning restoration of their Victorian Gothic cottage at the southern end of City Island. We would be happy to discuss those services with the owners of the buildings heard today.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the Conservancy's views.



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**MAS Comments for the New York City Council Subcommittee on
Landmarks, Public Siting, and Maritime Uses, Application No. 20185148
HKX (N 180166 HKX), 30 Centre Street, Bronx, NY**

February 6, 2018

The Municipal Art Society of New York (MAS) supports the designation of the Samuel H. and Mary T. Booth House as an individual New York City Landmark. We find the distinctive Stick style home is emblematic of the transition between Gothic Revival and Queen Anne architectural styles. Constructed between 1887 and 1893, the home is one of the best representative examples of the Stick style from late 19th century on City Island.

Samuel H. Booth, who likely designed and constructed the house, was a local carpenter on City Island who served what were likely workers in the oyster farming industry and later the shipbuilding industry.

The home itself is known for its asymmetrical massing and gabled roofs with deep eaves. The Landmark Designation would preserve this late 19th century architectural treasure for future generations.

We believe this building warrants protection. Therefore, to preserve the Booth House, MAS requests that the City Council approve the designation of 30 Centre Street as an individual NYC Landmark.

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MAS Comments for the New York City Council Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and Maritime Uses, Application No. 20185149 HKX (N 180169 HKX), 95 Pell Place, Bronx, NY

February 6, 2018

The Municipal Art Society of New York (MAS) supports the designation of the Stafford “Osborn” House as an individual New York City Landmark. The Craftsman style bungalow from Sears, Roebuck and Company is a stunningly well-preserved example of the “Osborn” house model advertised by Sears between 1916 and 1929.

Although Sears sold approximately 50,000 homes in 400 different styles between 1908 and 1940, this particular home is an authentic intact example of the model that would symbolize the suburban-style residential development that occurred in New York City and across the rest of the nation during the 20th century.

The house was constructed in 1930 for the family of yacht captain John H. Stafford and is recognizable by its front and side porches, low-pitched, cross-gabled roof, and its deeply overhanging eaves with exposed rafter ends.

In addition to the home itself, the Staffords also purchased a garage from Sears that sits to the rear of the main structure. Designation of this well-preserved early 20th Craftsman style bungalow would be a testament to the history of mail-order homes and the beginnings of suburbanization in the New York area.

We believe this building warrants protection. To preserve the Stafford “Osborn” House, MAS recommends that the City Council approve the designation of 95 Pell Street as an individual NYC Landmark.

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

0021+22

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Andrea Goldwyn

Address: _____

I represent: NY Landmarks Conservancy

Address: 1 Whitehall St NYC 1004

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Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0020 Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 02.06.18

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rachel Scall, Greenberg Traurig LLP

Address: 200 Park Ave., 15th Fl., New York, NY 10166

I represent: PH Broadway Owner LLC

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

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 in favor in opposition

Date: 2/6/18

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Name: Robert Joseph

Address: _____

I represent: Municipal Art Society of NY

Address: 488 Madison Ave

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Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 7-020422 Res. No. _____

Brook Landmarks in favor in opposition

(30th) 21422

Date: 2/6/18

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Name: SIMON BANETT

Address: _____

I represent: Historic District Council

Address: 250 E W St, NY 10003

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ali Basoulina

Address: 1 Canal St

I represent: LPC

Address: _____

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 2/6/18

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Name: Kate Lemas McTale

Address: _____

I represent: LPC

Address: _____