



**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES  
REGARDING DESIGNATION OF THE BEDFORD HISTORIC DISTRICT  
February 25, 2016**

Good morning, Chair Koo and Councilmembers. My name is Michael Owen, Community Outreach Program Manager at the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC). Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the designation of the Bedford Historic District. Consisting of 824 buildings within the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn, the district is unique for its remarkably well-preserved and concentrated collection of houses by celebrated Brooklyn architects and contains some of the boroughs most distinctive and well-preserved late-19<sup>th</sup> century streetscapes. The new district is culturally significant as a major residential district for African-American and Caribbean families since the 1920s.

On January 15, 2013, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Bedford Historic District (Item No. 2). The hearing was duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Thirty people spoke in favor of the District, including Council Member Vann, Borough President Markowitz, representatives of Community Board 3, The Victorian Society, The Society for the Architecture of the City, The Historic Districts Council, The New York Landmarks Conservancy, and 17 residents. Three people questioned the process (as to whether there was enough community notification), including a representative of the N.A.A.C.P., one resident of the District and an individual. Three people testified against designation, including one resident.

The Commission received 220 form letters stating that the sender wanted more information about the designation process. 37 of those were from residents in the District. The Commission received 356 form letters and emails in support of the District, 143 of those were from residents in the District. Recently, City Council Member Cornegy also expressed support for the District.



Located in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, the District extends from Monroe Street on the north to Macon Street and Verona Place on the south, and from just east of Bedford Avenue, eastward to Tompkins Avenue. (I've included copies of the District map for your reference).

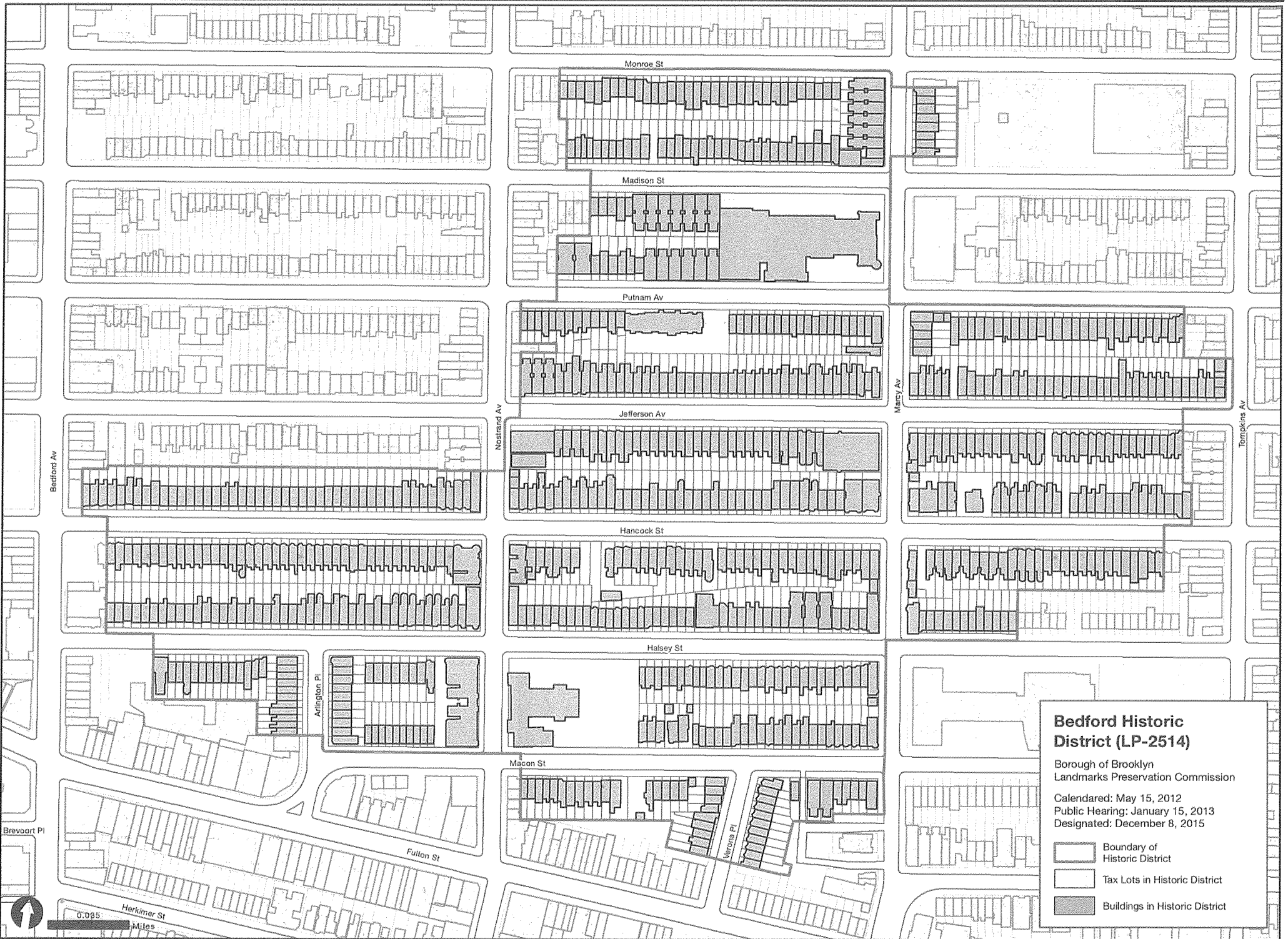
The District is a remarkably well-preserved section of Bedford-Stuyvesant representing the wealth of architectural styles that flourished in Brooklyn during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Constructed almost entirely between 1870 and 1900, the district illustrates the rapid development of row house design in Central Brooklyn during this period. Many of the District's buildings were designed by prominent late-19<sup>th</sup>-century local architects, including Parfitt Brothers, George P. Chappell, Rudolphe L. Daus, and Heins & LaFarge. The District is unique for its exceptionally intact and concentrated collection of houses by Montrose W. Morris, considered one of Brooklyn's greatest architects of the era.

The architectural development of the district was largely complete by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but significant cultural changes continued to occur there—most notably, its development, as part of the larger Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, into a major residential district for African-American and Caribbean-American families. African-American churches followed black residents to Bedford, including the Siloam Presbyterian Church, in 1944. Siloam's pastor, the Reverend Milton A. Galamison, continued the church's tradition of social and civil rights activism, becoming a prominent figure in the effort to integrate the city's schools. Bedford residents have worked to preserve the neighborhood's historic houses and streetscapes by participating in the brownstoning movement and through the work of block associations, which were active in Bedford by the 1940s.

The Commission has been working closely with community advocates and elected officials, and this designation follows the designation of three historic districts in Bedford-Stuyvesant: Alice and Agate Courts Historic District, designated in 2009; the Bedford-Stuyvesant/Expanded Stuyvesant Heights Historic District, designated in 2013, and the original Stuyvesant Heights Historic District which was designated in 1971. The Commission held three community meetings about Bedford-Stuyvesant in 2011 and 2012, including one specifically about this District, and heard the District in 2013.






On December 8, 2015 the Landmarks Preservation Commission unanimously approved the designation of The Bedford Historic District. Accordingly, the Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm this designation.



**Bedford Historic District (LP-2514)**

Borough of Brooklyn  
Landmarks Preservation Commission

Calendared: May 15, 2012  
Public Hearing: January 15, 2013  
Designated: December 8, 2015

-  Boundary of Historic District
-  Tax Lots in Historic District
-  Buildings in Historic District

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. Bedford Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2/25/12

Name: SIMON BANTON

(PLEASE PRINT)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: HDC

Address: 232 E 11 St NY 10003

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 20165266 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2/25

Name: Michael Owen

(PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 1 Centre Street

I represent: Landmarks

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 20165266 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Lisa Kersavage

(PLEASE PRINT)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: LPC

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: Claudette Brady

Address: 182 Hancock St

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

BEDFORD HD

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 2016574 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: LIRANNE WILSON

Address: 97 FRANKLIN ST

I represent: Bedford District designation

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: EVELYN COLLIER

Address: 437 MADISON ST

I represent: CB3 Brooklyn

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms