

September 17, 2018

Testimony before the New York City Council Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Uses regarding LU 0219-2018: Boerum Hill Historic District Extension, Brooklyn

Good afternoon Chair Adams and Subcommittee Members. I am Kate Lemos McHale, Director of Research at the Landmarks Preservation Commission, and I am joined by Ali Rasoulinejad. Thank you for the opportunity to present the Boerum Hill Historic District Extension in Brooklyn. The Landmarks Preservation Commission unanimously voted to designate this extension on June 26, expanding the original Boerum Hill Historic District designated in 1973 by approximately 288 buildings.

The extension includes three areas:

Area I to the west of the district is roughly bounded by Dean Street, Smith Street, Bergen Street, and Hoyt Street.

Area II to the southeast is roughly bounded by Bergen Street, Bond Street, Wyckoff Street, and Nevins Street.

Area III to the north includes portions of Atlantic Avenue and Pacific Street between Hoyt and Nevins streets.

The buildings in the extension are along blocks adjacent to the existing historic district with similar architectural character, scale, and typologies, and also incorporate an intact section of the historic Atlantic Avenue commercial corridor.

A request for this extension came to us from the Boerum Hill community with the strong support of the local councilmember, Stephen Levin. LPC does extensive owner outreach as part of the designation process, and we held meetings with property owners, the Atlantic Avenue BID and Local Development Corporation, the Boerum Hill Association, and Council Member Levin. At our public hearing on May 8, 16 people testified in favor of designation, including Council Member Stephen Levin, representatives of the Boerum Hill Association, Historic Districts Council, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, and ten individuals. Nine individuals spoke in opposition to the inclusion of a portion of Atlantic Avenue within the district, and the Commission received a petition with signatures of 16 individuals opposing the inclusion of Atlantic Avenue. LPC staff had additional meetings with these owners to hear their concerns and describe the regulatory process, and presented the Commission with additional analysis of Atlantic Avenue to inform their vote to designate the district as calendared. I'd like to take you through the analysis and touch specifically on the inclusion of Atlantic Avenue.

The 1973 Boerum Hill Historic District is made up of approximately 300 buildings, the majority of them being brick and brownstone row houses and built before the 1880s. These houses were built during two major eras of development, before and after the Civil War. The district was built in 19th century architectural styles and has a cohesive historic character.

The Boerum Hill Historic District Extension was primarily built during the same two periods of neighborhood development. In the late 1840s and 1850s, industrial growth along the South Brooklyn waterfront spurred the construction of speculative row houses in the western part of Boerum Hill. As you can see on this map, development had already begun in the district and surrounding area by 1850. At the same time, new transportation infrastructure such as the Long Island Railroad's Atlantic Avenue branch and local horse car lines along Atlantic Avenue and Bergen Streets offered Brooklyn residents much faster access to the South Ferry and Manhattan. Connecting this area known at the time as South Brooklyn to the port turned Atlantic Avenue into an important commercial corridor.

The second phase of residential development occurred after the Civil War in the southeastern section, coinciding with the opening of the Gowanus Canal and the arrival of factories and warehouses just south of the neighborhood. By 1886, nearly all of the lots within the Historic District Extension area were developed with row-house scale buildings in brick and brownstone, and a few frame structures still remained at this time.

The area was originally home to mainly German, Italian and Irish immigrants, and included merchants, business people and tradespeople who worked in the port or industry along the Gowanus Canal. Notably, Mohawk people began to arrive in Boerum Hill around the 1920s, and helped to build the skyscrapers of Manhattan. For many years Boerum Hill had the largest Mohawk population outside of a reservation, and the Cuyler Presbyterian Church, at 358 Pacific Street in the extension, was an important institution for their community.

In determining a boundary for Atlantic Avenue, we analyzed the integrity of buildings that share the qualities that characterize Boerum Hill's historic character: building age, style, materials, row-house typology and scale. This map shows intact buildings that share these characteristics in green; and buildings that due to combinations of larger scale, different construction period or typology, or heavy alterations are shown in red as non-contributing.

The building by building analysis informed an evaluation of more overarching factors such as cohesiveness and consistency of historic character in strong rows, on both sides of the street where possible, that support a distinct sense of place. This map shows this analysis, which defined a boundary that includes the strongest and most consistently intact rows of buildings that share the historic characteristics of Boerum Hill.

Special Zoning District and LPC Regulation:

We studied the overlap between historic district regulation and the Atlantic Avenue Subdistrict of the Special Downtown Brooklyn District, originally established in 1974 between Court Street and 4th Avenue. Goals for this special zoning district include protecting historic features of specified buildings and storefronts. The Boerum Hill extension includes a high concentration of "specified buildings", noted on the map in bold, as well as "specified storefronts", shown with black dots.

LPC regulation is closely aligned with the goals of the special zoning district.

Similar to the guidelines for specified buildings and storefronts in the zoning, LPC regulation is aimed at protecting historic character. For storefronts, that includes historic materials and features such as large show windows with solid bulkheads, doors with glazed transoms, cornices, and appropriate signage. Depending on the amount of historic fabric remaining our regulation can be flexible and often permits for storefronts in historic districts are issued at staff level. LPC does not regulate the interiors of buildings, and our review of exterior facades is hierarchical – with more focus on the street-facing facades and greater flexibility on secondary and non-visible facades. Most of the windows in this district were historically one-over-one sash, replacements for which can be approved at staff level if configurations and profiles match the historic. The Commission regularly approves expansions of buildings including rooftop additions and rear yard extensions, depending on appropriateness and visibility.

The district includes a cohesive row of mid-19th-century buildings with storefronts on the north side of Atlantic Avenue between Hoyt and Bond streets. On the south side of Atlantic Avenue, strong rows between Hoyt and Bond, and a portion of the block between Bond and Nevins streets. (A cluster of non-contributing buildings between these rows was included because of the strength of the rows on either side.)

Groups of buildings determined not to merit inclusion due to alterations and character not consistent with Boerum Hill defined the boundaries at the east and west edges of these cohesive rows. There is a notably different character and cohesiveness inside and outside the boundary.

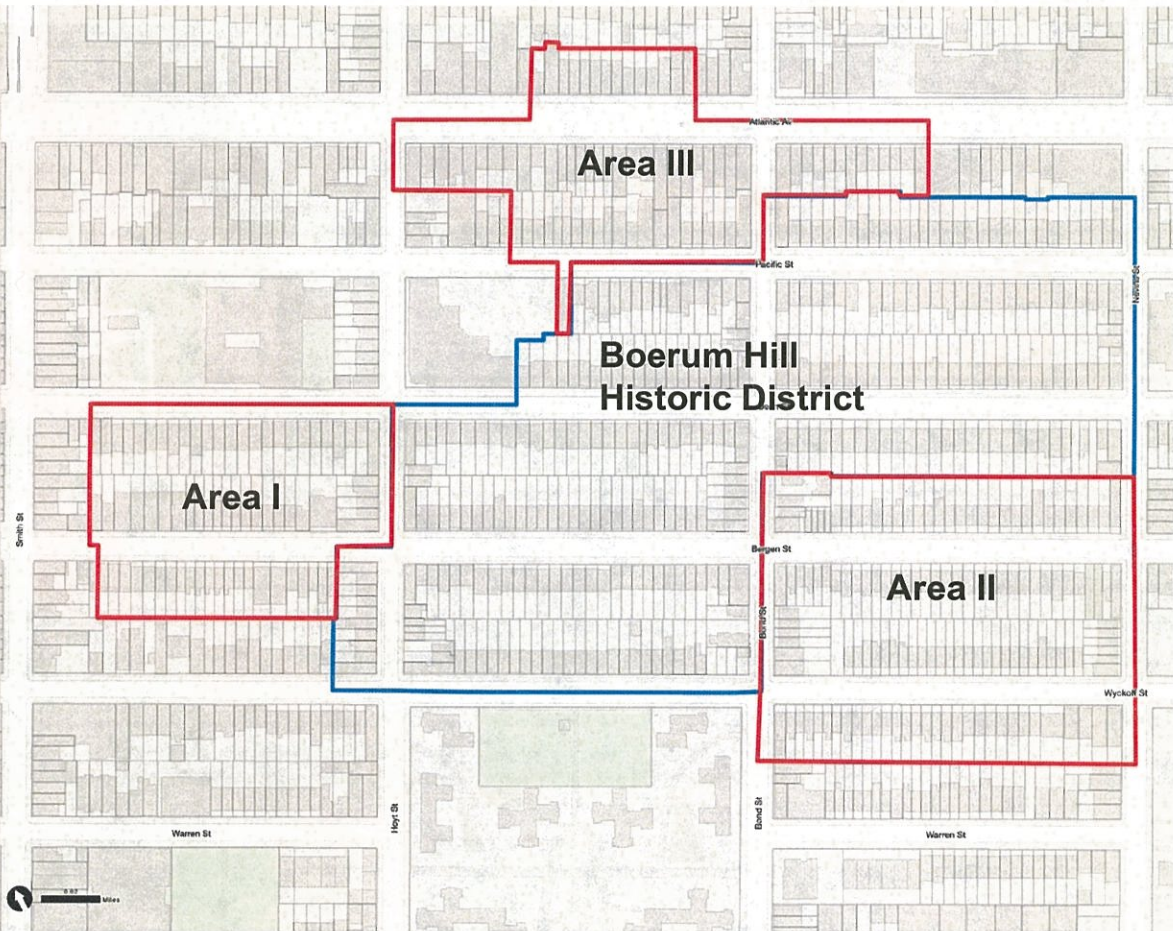
To conclude, the Boerum Hill Historic District Extension includes primarily 19th-century architecture representing major periods of construction and design in Brooklyn before and directly following the American Civil War. The intact residential blocks and commercial corridor of Atlantic Avenue offer a rich perspective on the middle- and working-class history of Brooklyn and its connection to its ports. This district extends the Boerum Hill Historic District's distinct sense of place to blocks sharing similar development history and architectural character, and LPC urges the Council to approve it as designated. Thank you.

Boerum Hill Historic District Extension

Bergen Street, north side,
between Smith and Hoyt, LPC, 2018



Boerum Hill Historic District Extension





220B to 210 Bergen Street
LPC, 2018



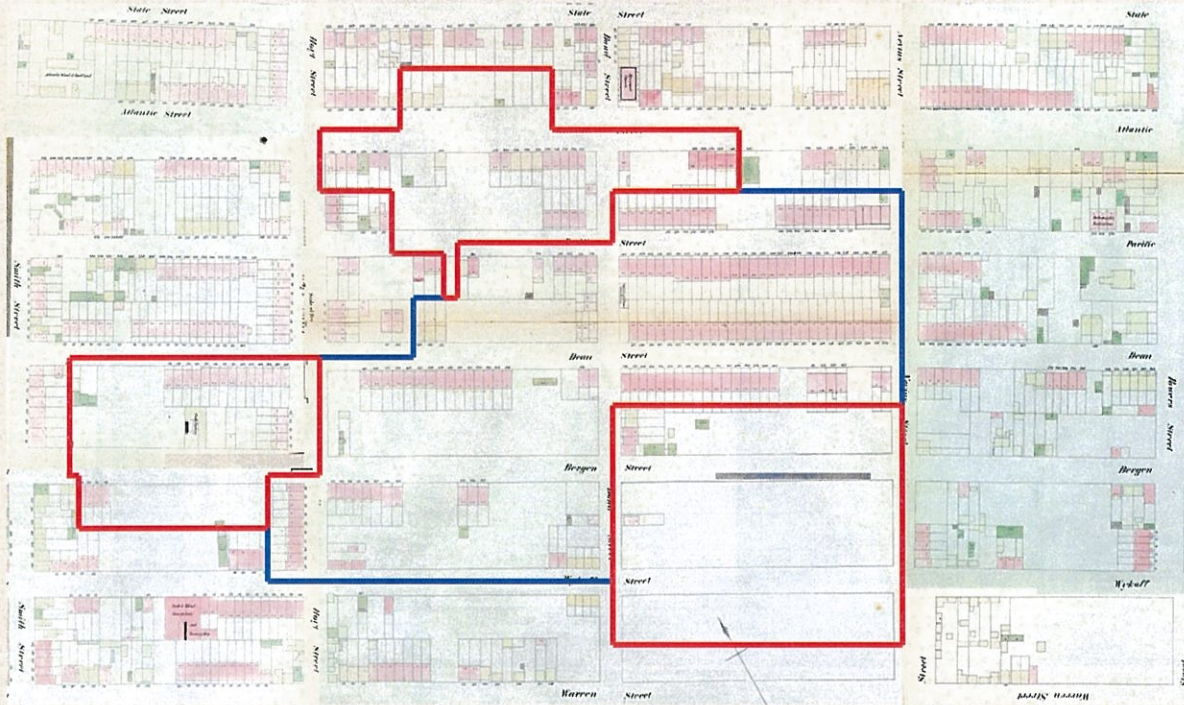
402 to 396 Atlantic Avenue
LPC, 2018

Boerum Hill Historic District

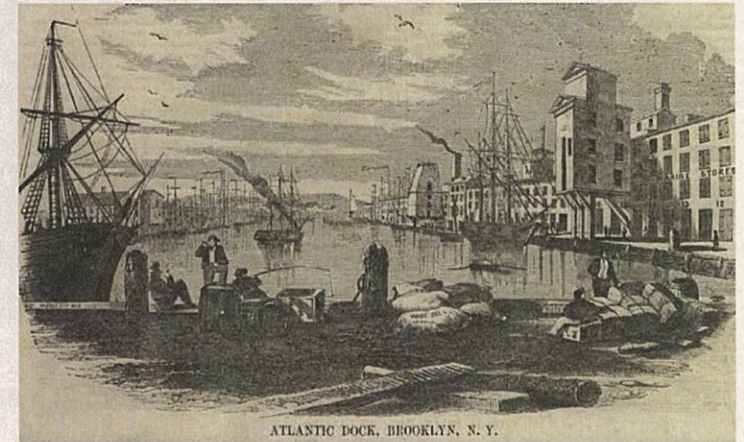
- Majority Row Houses
- Some Apartments/Tenements
- Largely built pre-1880

Bergen Street, south side, from Hoyt to Bond,
LPC, 2018

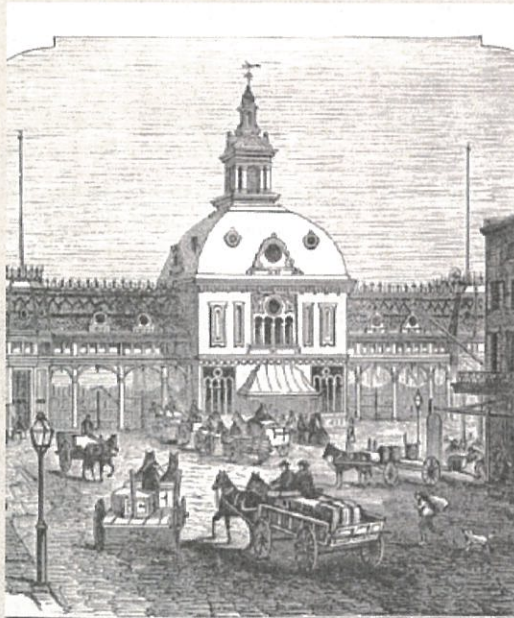




Perris Map, 1850, NYPL



Atlantic Dock, Brooklyn, 1851
NYPL



ATLANTIC STREET, OR SOUTH FERRY.

South Ferry Building at foot of
Atlantic, Brooklyn, Stiles' *History
of Brooklyn*, 1843

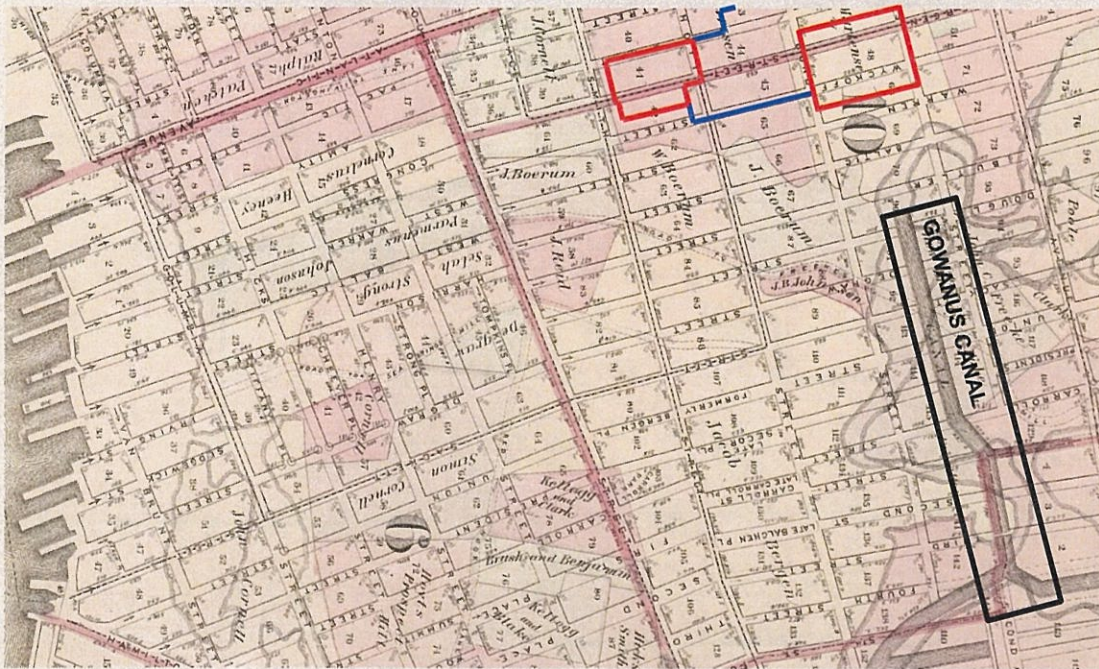


TUNNEL UNDER PART OF ATLANTIC AVENUE, BROOKLYN.
(From a Crayon Sketch.)

Atlantic Avenue Tunnel, Columbia
Street to Boerum Place, 1844-1861
Society of American Civil Engineers



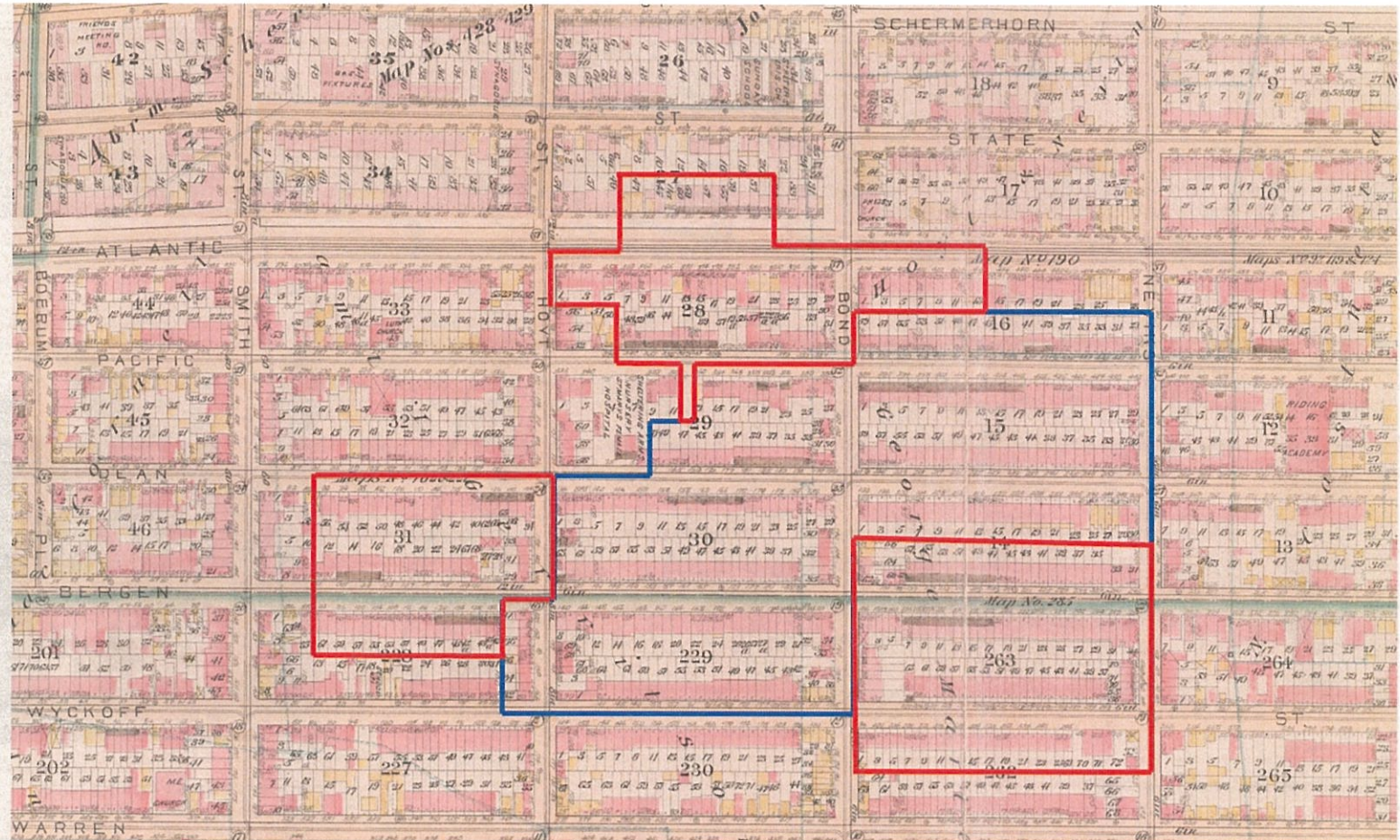
Atlantic Avenue, 1947, Brooklyn
Public Library



Gowanus Canal, 1874, NYPL



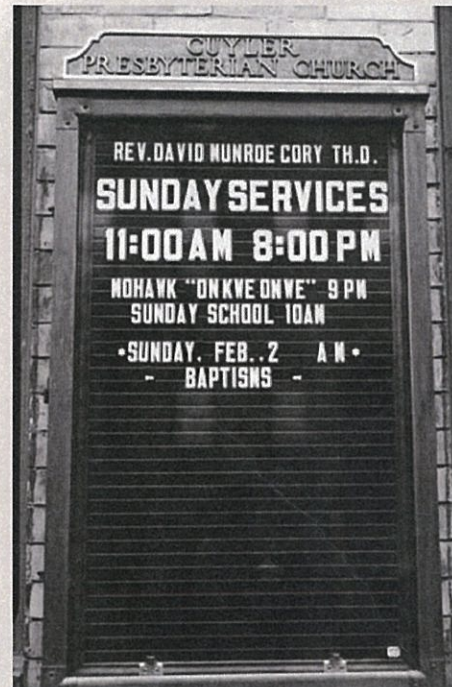
Gowanus Canal looking north
from Union Street, 1904, NYC
Municipal Archives



Robinson's Map, 1886, NYPL



Cuyler Presbyterian Church,
c.1910, Brooklyn Public Library



Cuyler Presbyterian Church Sign, 1940,
Museum of the City of NY



Mohawk Steel Workers building the Empire
State Building, Date Unknown, NYPL

Extension Analysis

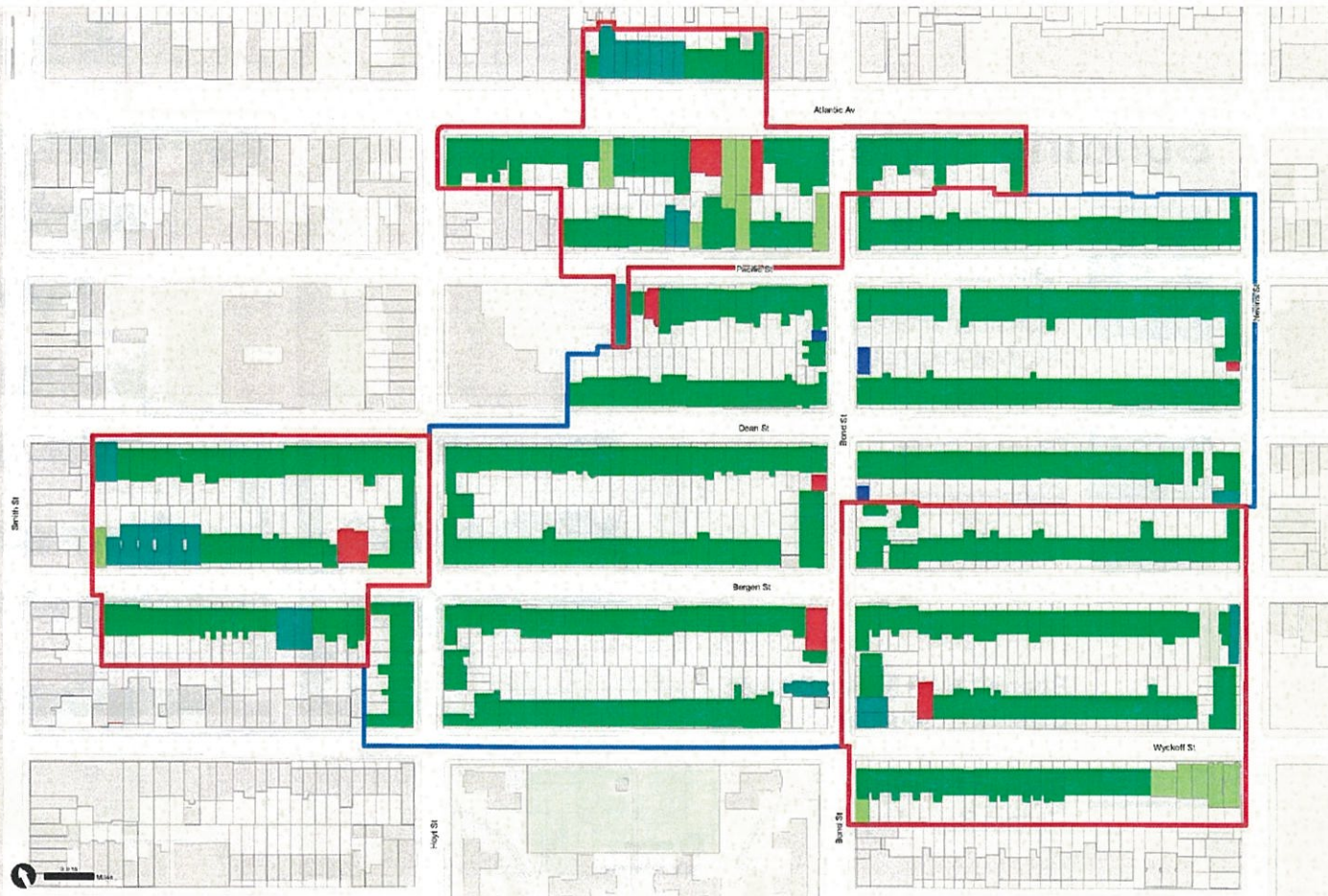
Wyckoff Street, south side, from Bond to Nevins,
LPC, 2018










Building Dates



- Pre-1880
- 1881-1900
- 1901-1920
- 1921-1940
- 1941-Present

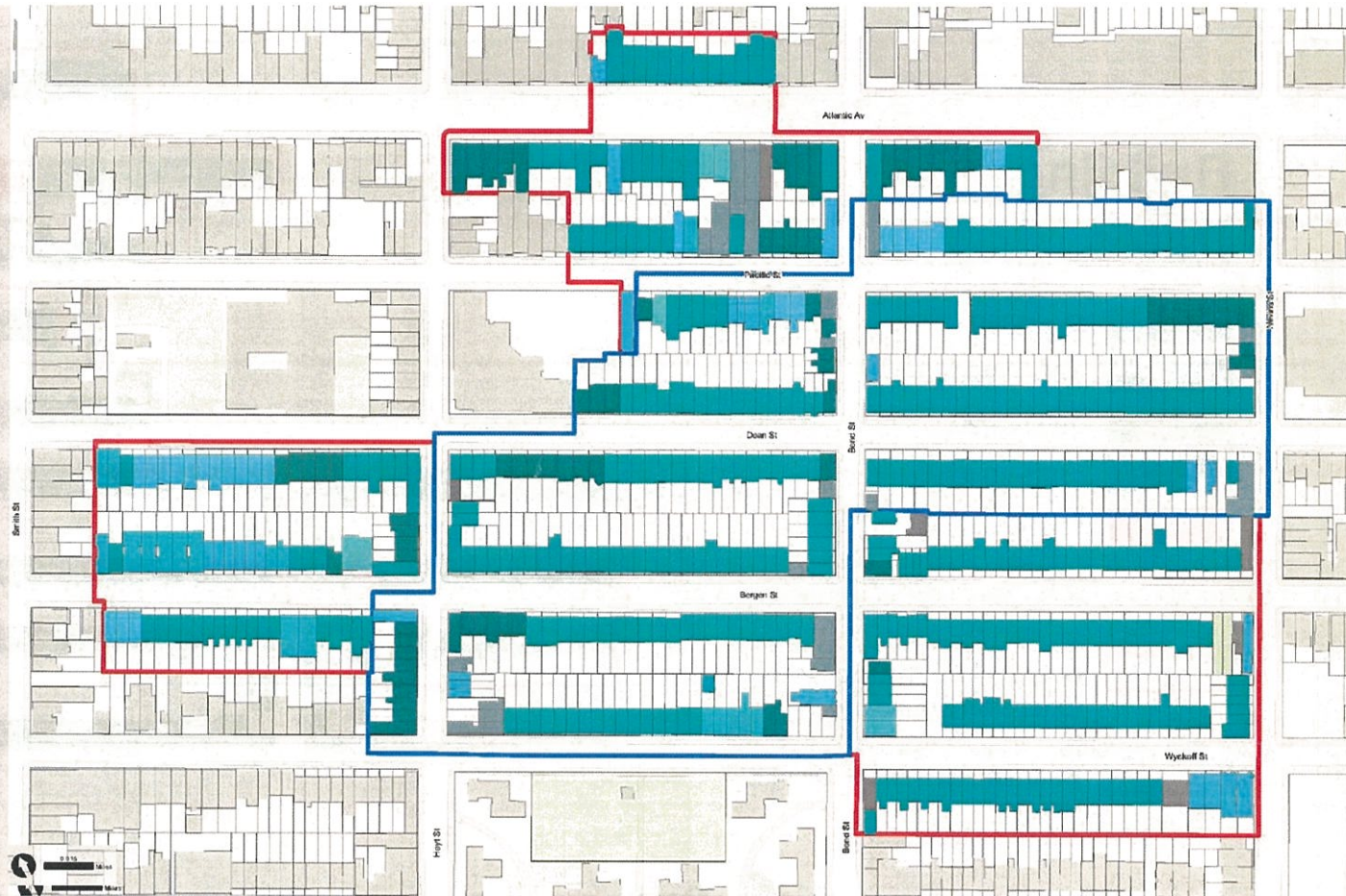
- Boerum Hill Historic District Extension Boundary
- Boerum Hill Historic District Boundary



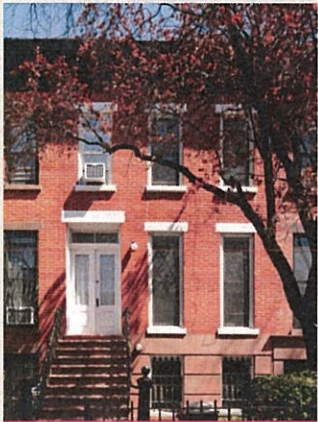
Building Styles

-  Greek Revival
-  Italianate
-  Transitional Greek Revival/Italianate
-  Neo-Grec
-  Revival Styles
-  Contemporary
-  Utilitarian

-  Boerum Hill Historic District Extension Boundary
-  Boerum Hill Historic District Boundary



Building Typologies



Row Houses



Apartment Buildings



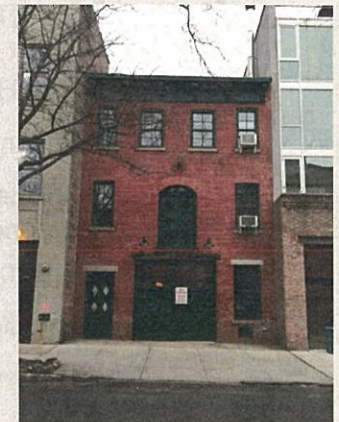
Residential with
Commercial Ground Floors



Institutional
Buildings



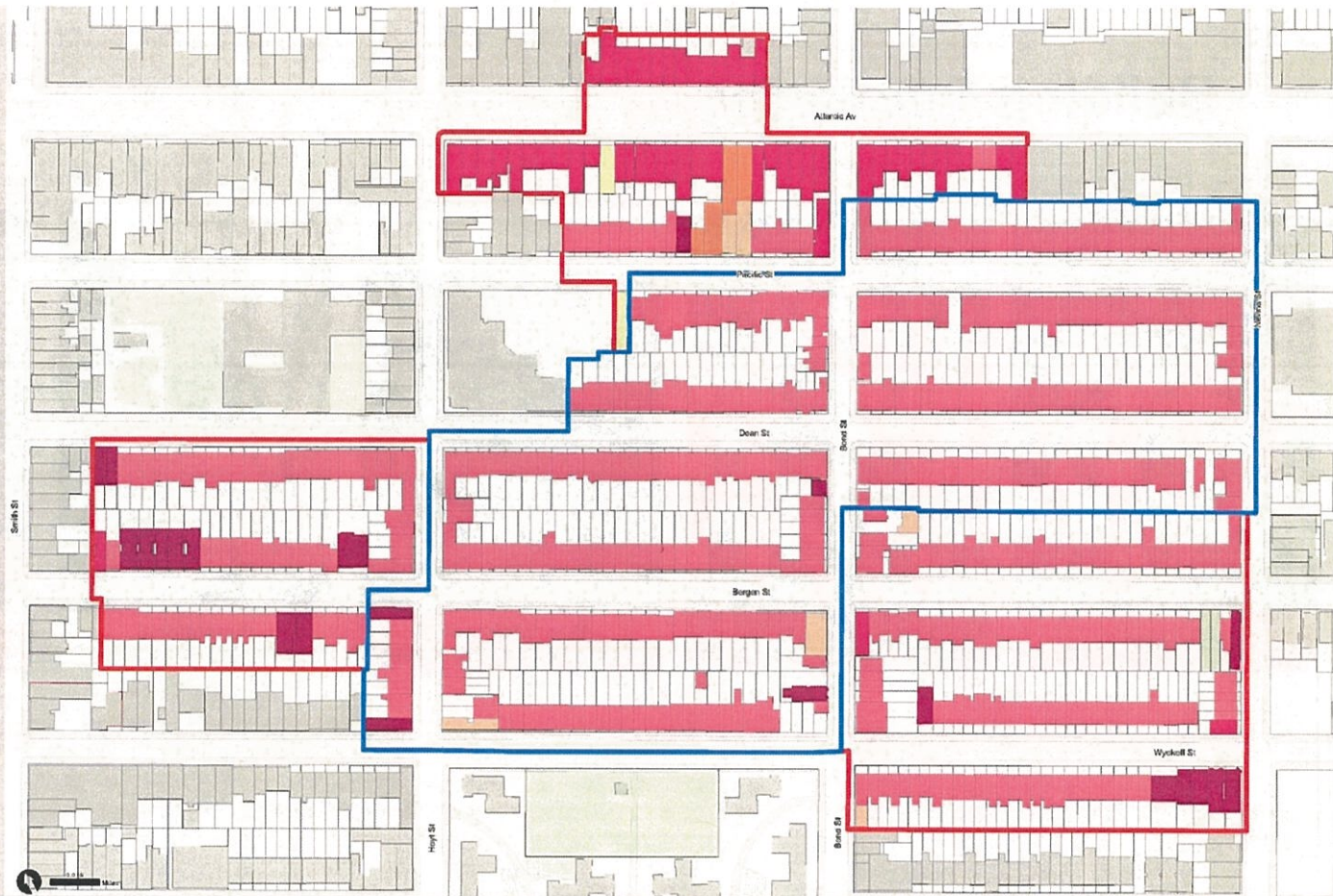
Commercial Buildings



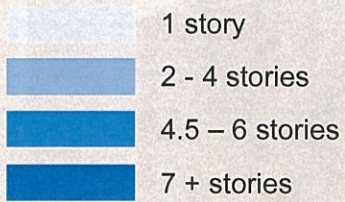
Garage and Stable
Buildings


Building Typologies


- Row House
- Apartment Building
- Residential with Commercial Ground Floor
- Commercial
- Institutional
- Stables and Garages
- Boerum Hill Historic District Extension Boundary
- Boerum Hill Historic District Boundary

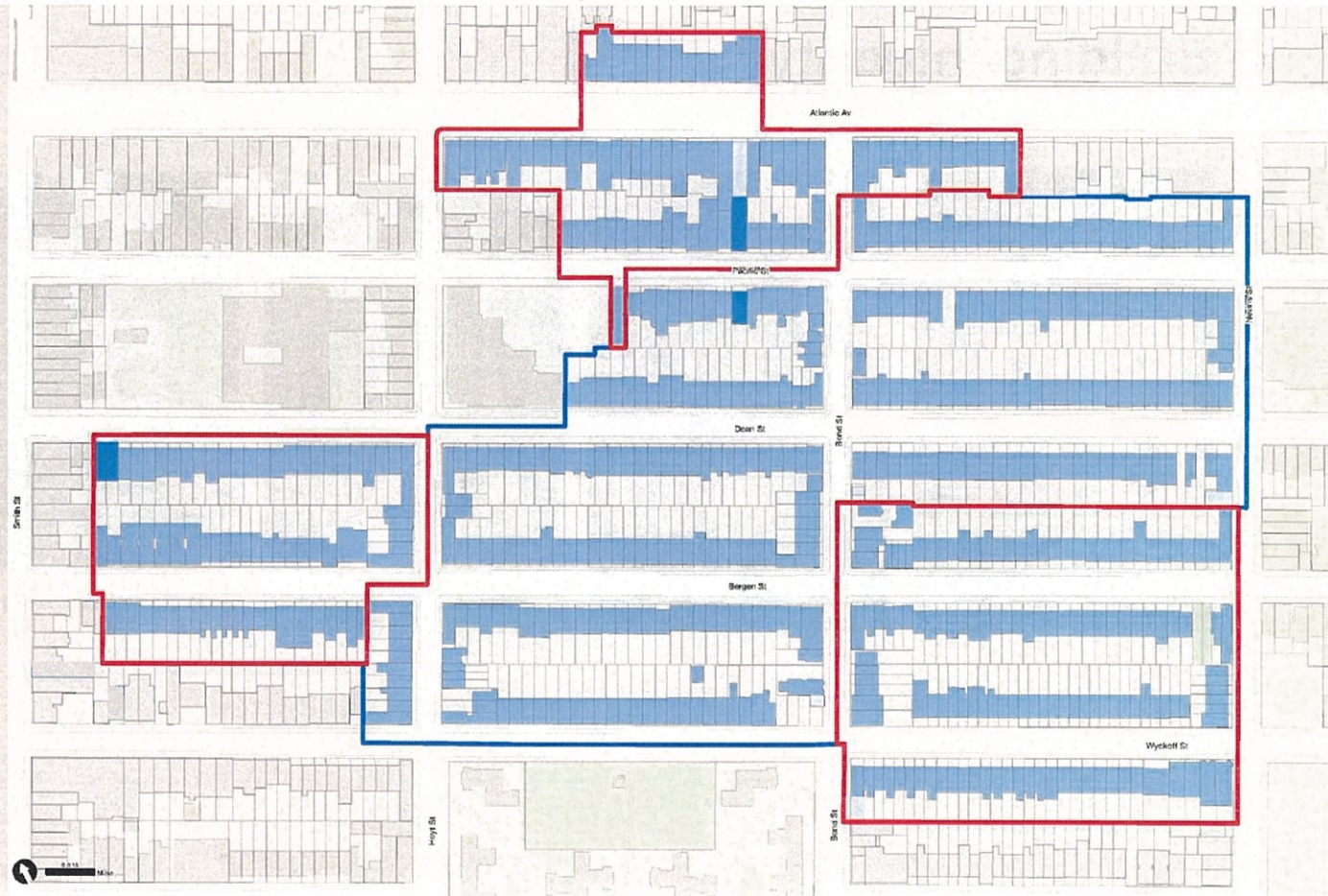


Building Heights



 Boerum Hill Historic District Extension Boundary

 Boerum Hill Historic District Boundary



Building Integrity



Intact



Minor Alterations



Moderate Alterations



Heavy Alterations



New Construction

Building Integrity

- Intact
- Minor Alterations
- Moderate Alterations
- Heavy Alterations
- New Construction

Boerum Hill Historic District Extension Boundary

Boerum Hill Historic District Boundary

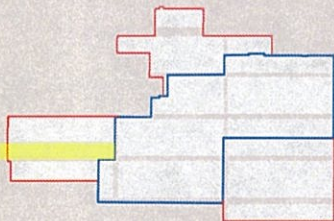


Streetscapes

Wyckoff Street, north side, from Bond to Nevins ,
LPC, 2017



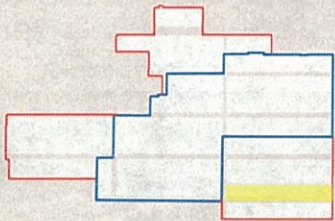
Streetscapes: Area I



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Bergen Street, north side, from Hoyt St to Smith St,
LPC, 2018



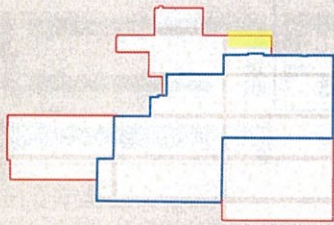
Streetscapes: Area II



Wyckoff Street, north side, from Nevins St to Bond St.,
LPC, 2018

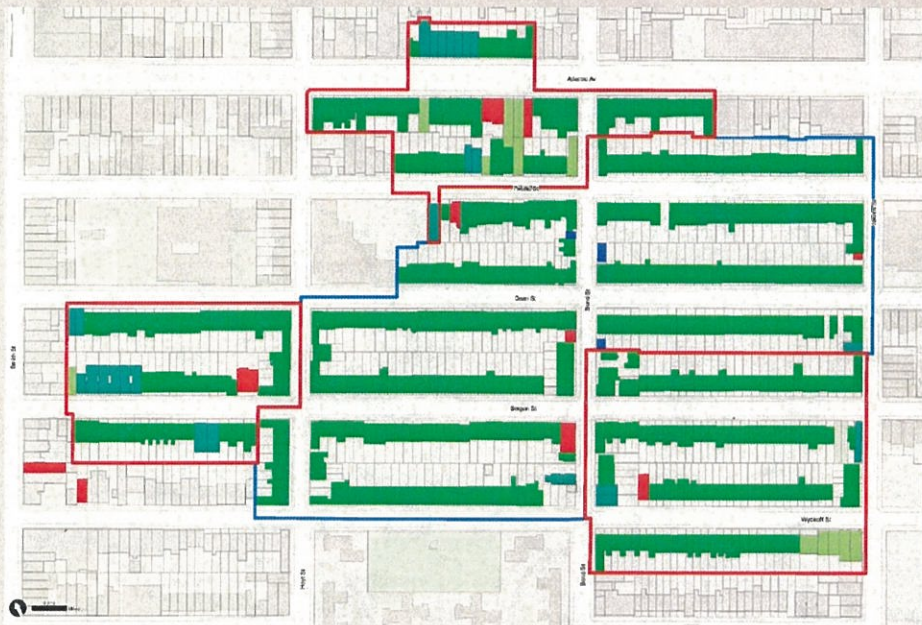


Streetscapes: Area III



Atlantic Avenue, south side, from Nevins to Bond,
LPC, 2018





Building Dates



Architectural Styles



416-412 Atlantic Avenue, south side,
from Nevins to Bond, LPC 2018







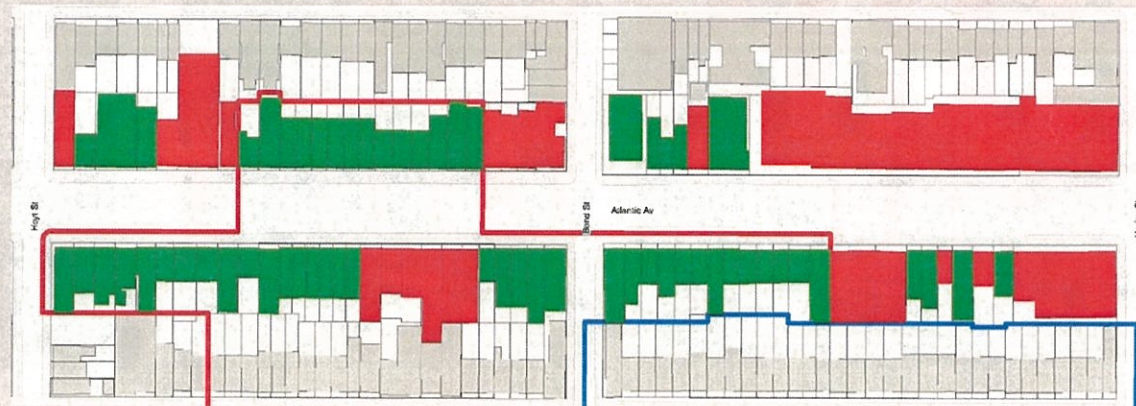
Hoyt Street, west side from Dean to
Bergen, LPC 2018



Dean Street, south side, from Hoyt to
Bond, LPC 1973

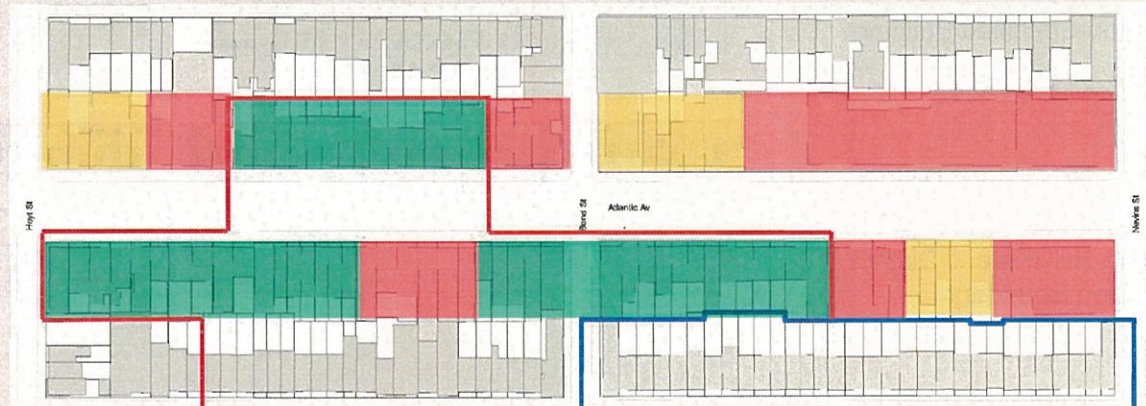
Contributing Character and Integrity

-  Contributing
-  Non-Contributing
-  Boerum Hill Historic District Boundary
-  Boerum Hill Historic District Extension Boundary



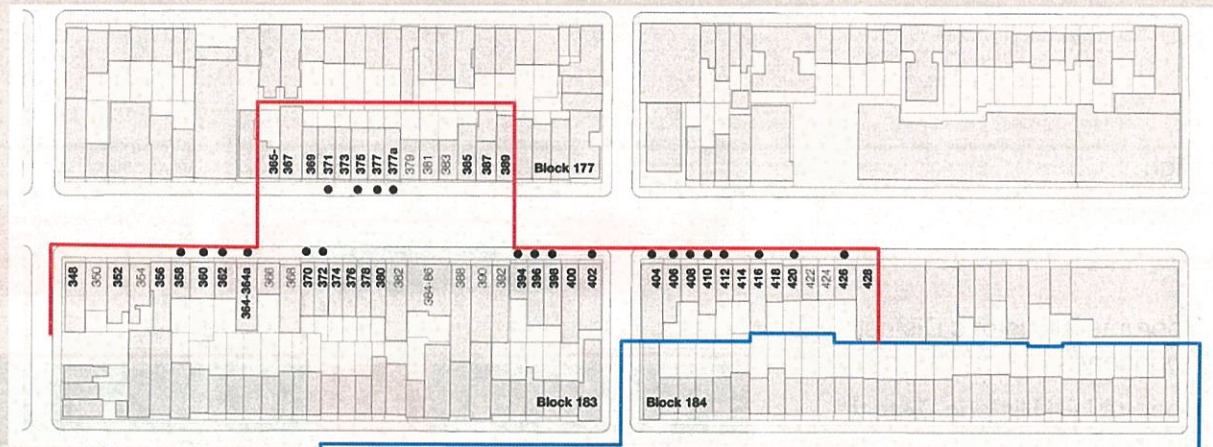
Cohesiveness, Historic Character and Sense of Place Consistent with Boerum Hill

-  High
-  Moderate
-  Low
-  Boerum Hill Historic District Boundary
-  Boerum Hill Historic District Extension Boundary



Special Zoning District and LPC Regulation

- 123 Specified Building
- 123 Non-Specified Building
- Specified Storefront
- Boerum Hill Historic District Boundary
- Boerum Hill Historic District Extension Boundary

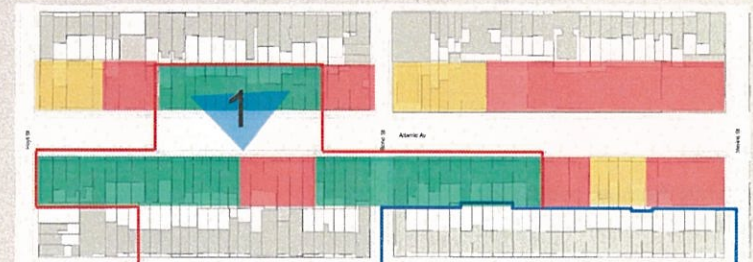


Cohesiveness, Historic Character and Sense of Place Consistent with Boerum Hill



1

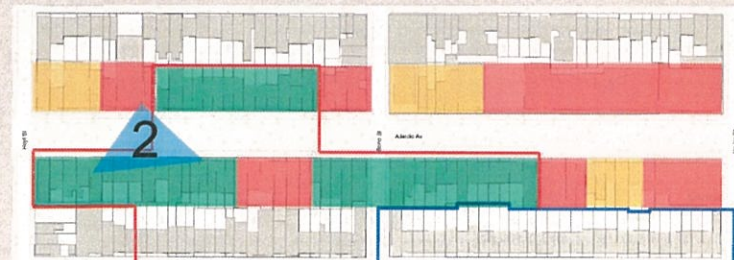
Atlantic Avenue, north side,
from Hoyt to Bond, LPC 2018



Cohesiveness, Historic Character and Sense of Place Consistent with Boerum Hill



2



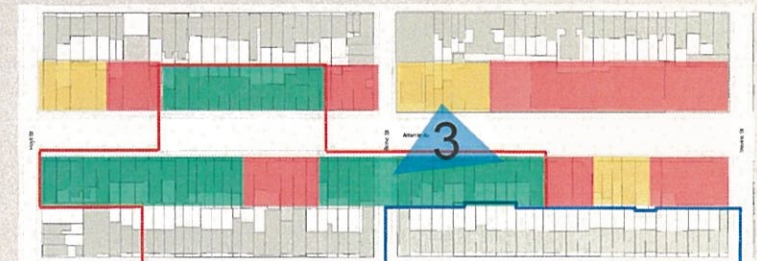
Atlantic Avenue, south side,
from Hoyt to Bond, LPC 2018

Cohesiveness, Historic Character and Sense of Place Consistent with Boerum Hill

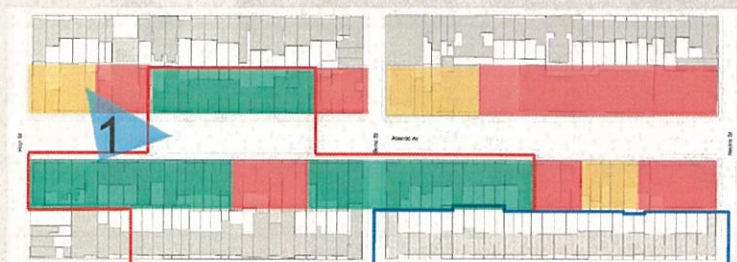


3

Atlantic Avenue, south side,
from Bond to Nevins, LPC 2018

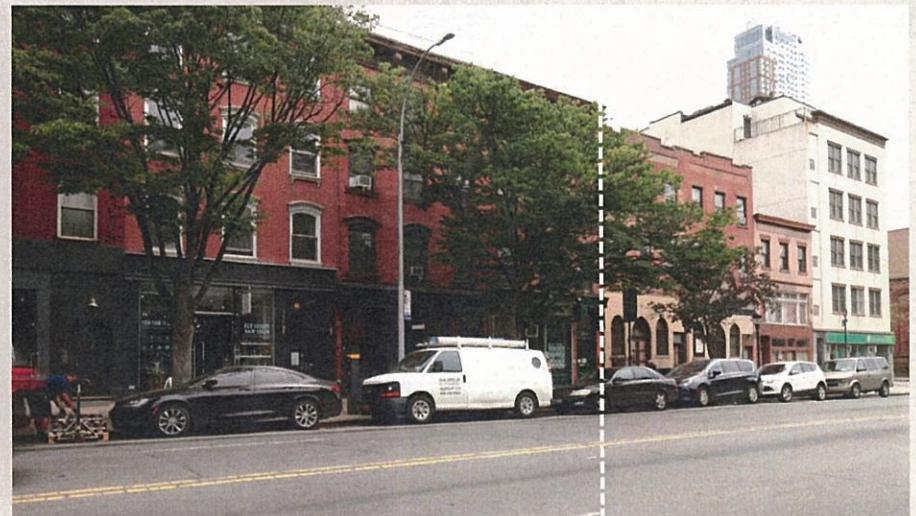
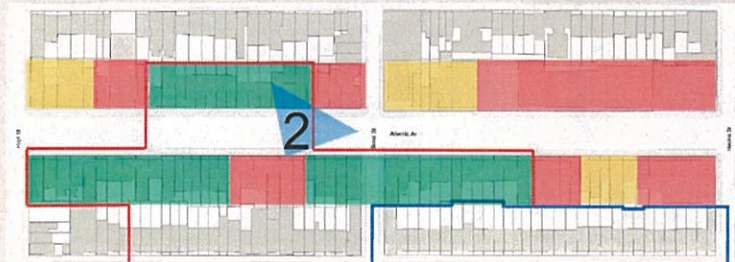


Boundary Analysis



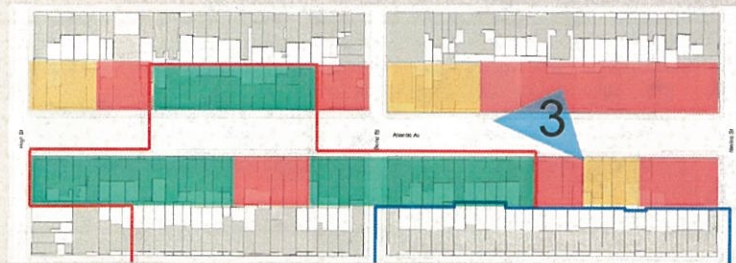
355-369 Atlantic Avenue, north side,
from Hoyt to Bond, LPC

Boundary Analysis



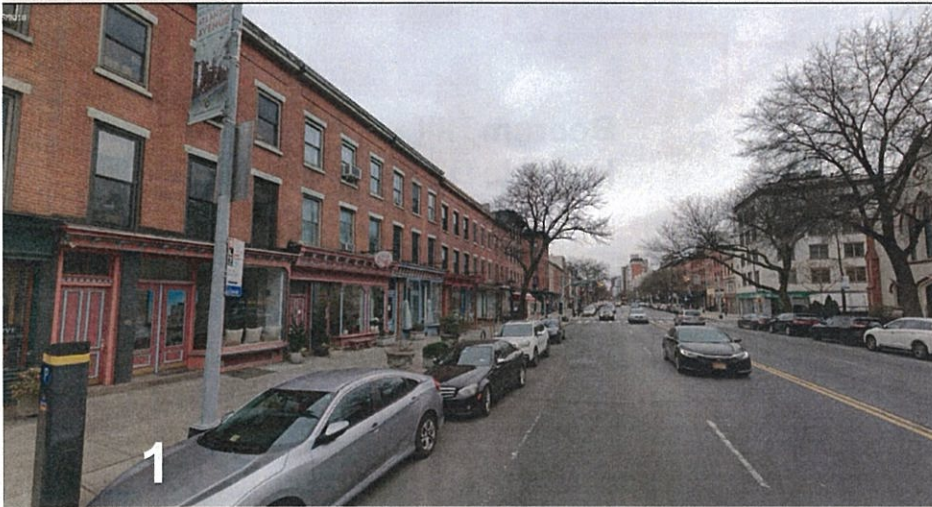
385-399 Atlantic Avenue, north side,
from Hoyt to Bond, LPC

Boundary Analysis

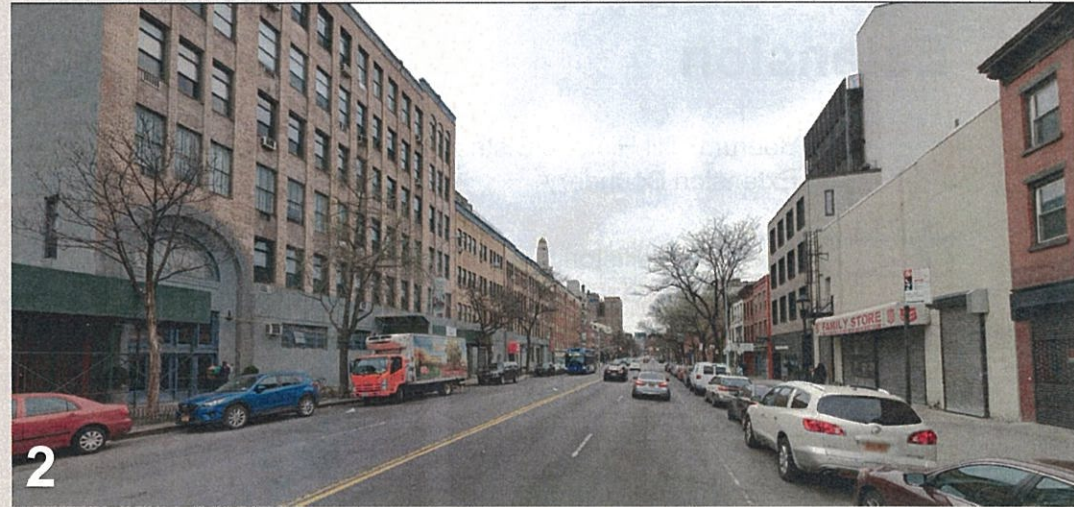


Atlantic Avenue, south side, looking southwest
between Nevins and Bond, Cyclomedia

Sense of Place





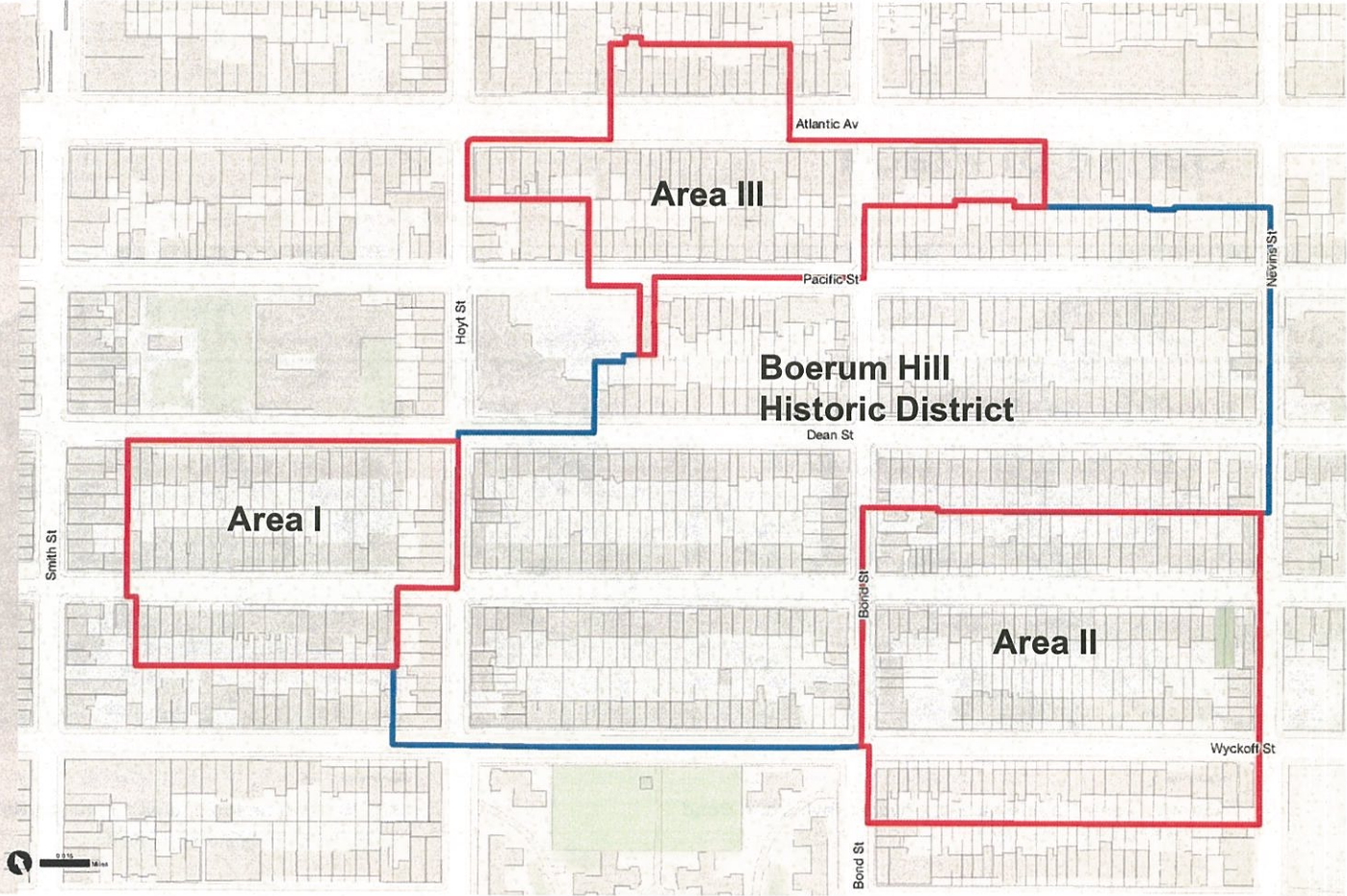
Atlantic Avenue looking west between Nevins and Bond
into extension, Cyclomedia



Atlantic Avenue looking east between Nevins and Bond
outside extension, Cyclomedia

Boerum Hill Historic District Extension

-  Boerum Hill Historic District Extension Boundary
-  Boerum Hill Historic District Boundary





**The New York City Council
Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and Maritime Uses
September 17, 2018**

ULURP No: C 160161 PQX/ LSSNY Early Child Center 2- 888 Westchester Avenue

**Testimony by
New York City Administration for Children's Services
Mickey Ronan, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Child and Family Well-Being**

Good Afternoon Chair Adams and members of the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and Maritime Uses. I'm Mickey Ronan, Assistant Commissioner in the Division of Child and Family Well-Being within the New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS). Thank you for the opportunity to testify this afternoon.

The Division of Child and Family Well-Being (CFWB) aims to engage families before they reach the child welfare system, with resources and services to help them thrive. CFWB focuses on the factors that contribute to family well-being—including health, education, employment, and culture—and uses place-based and population-based approaches to engage families and communities. CFWB's scope includes the agency's Community Partnerships Program networks, Safe Sleep Initiative, early care and education, primary prevention services, and a new Office of Equity Strategies that works to identify strategies to reduce inequities, implicit bias, and other factors that contribute to disparate outcomes for the families and communities we serve.

CFWB currently oversees the City's early care and education system, which includes the EarlyLearn contracted system and the provision of child care vouchers. Our system serves almost 100,000 children from ages 6 weeks to 13 years of age, approximately 30,000 of whom are served within EarlyLearn. ACS' EarlyLearn program is specifically developed to provide high-quality, holistic early child care that provides social and intellectual development for young children.

I've come before the subcommittee today regarding a lease renewal for one of ACS' EarlyLearn sites, Lutheran Social Services Early Life Center 2, located at 888 Westchester Avenue in the Bronx's Community District 2 and Council District 17.

The facility is located on a privately-owned lot on Westchester Avenue, at its intersection with Reverend James Polite Avenue. The one-story building, which is fully occupied by the day care

center, sits on a 10,961-square-foot lot, and includes a total floor area of 26,058 square feet, consisting of approximately 18,978 square feet of interior space and approximately 7,080 square feet of rooftop play area. LSSNY Early Life Center 2 is contracted to serve 137 children in ACS' EarlyLearn program, as well as DOE's 4K program. The effective contract rate per child per year is \$13,643, with an FY18 budget of \$1,869,136, including estimated parent fees of \$49,808.

This site has been used to provide child care since 1971 and was the subject of a previous acquisition, approved in 1990¹. A 20-year lease was implemented after the 1990 approval. The lease was in effect from June 9, 1996 to June 8, 2016. Since the expiration of the lease, the facility has operated under a month-to-month tenancy. The proposed action would allow the negotiation of a new lease. DCAS is currently negotiating a 10-year lease, with an option for one five-year renewal, as well as an option to terminate after five years. The landlord has not indicated any intention to sell or redevelop the property. As the Council is also aware, all EarlyLearn sites will be transferring to DOE in 2019, at which this program will fall under the supervision and requirements of the Department of Education.

The center at 888 Westchester has provided childcare services to children of the Longwood community for nearly 50 years. The new lease will allow Lutheran Social Services of New York to continue to provide high-quality childcare in a stable location for the next 10 years. Council approval of this application is critical to achieving this goal. I'm looking forward to answering any questions you may have regarding the application.

1. (C 900684 PQX, Cal. No. 1).

September 17, 2018

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES REGARDING THE DESIGNATION OF THE BOERUM HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT EXTENSION

Good day, Chair Adams and Council members. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to join community and preservation advocates in supporting designation of the Boerum Hill Historic District Extension.

In 1977, just three years after designating the original district, LPC staff issued a report noting "(s)ince Boerum Hill is historically and architecturally unified over a somewhat larger neighborhood than is comprised by the Historic District, consideration should be given to extending the district." This is just as true today.

Boerum Hill, once known as "Gowanus North," is a rare vernacular New York City historic district. Early residents were solidly middle-class merchants, small manufacturers, and civil servants. The district doesn't boast many architect-designed buildings and its buildings are not as high style as in nearby Cobble Hill and Brooklyn Heights, but they are no less handsome and cohesive. The bakeries, upholsterers and other merchants along mid-19th century Atlantic Avenue served this row house neighborhood much as the Avenue's small businesses, boutiques and restaurants serve the Boerum Hill community today.

The extension encompasses intact groups of houses on Bergen and Wyckoff Streets identical in Italianate style and 1850's period to those of the original district, as well as slightly later row houses on Pacific, Dean, and Bergen Streets and an historic stable. It embraces the neighborhood's diverse cultural history, including the former Cuyler Presbyterian Church, a center of the Native Canadian Mohawk ironworker community in the 1930's through the 1950's.

The district will preserve intact Atlantic Avenue buildings with commercial ground floors and residences above, constructed from the 1850's to the 1870's. Designation will offer the same protection to these rare survivors as was achieved 50 years ago on the west end of Atlantic Avenue, when Brooklyn Heights and Cobble Hill were designated.

These buildings in particular are at risk. Historic storefronts on Atlantic were included in a Special Zoning District in 1972, enacted to "protect the architectural integrity of this historic area in a way that would promote economic growth." However, this zoning overlay does not protect the buildings from demolition. Instead, a 2011 rezoning provided an incentive for redevelopment. Since then, historic properties along both sides of Atlantic have been replaced with seven and eight-story residential buildings, threatening the cohesive, historic low-scale and small-business character of the Avenue.

The time has come to protect Boerum Hill's historic sense of place and expand the historic district. We thank the Landmarks Commission for moving quickly to calendar and hear this extension and we urge the Council to affirm this designation.

The Conservancy looks forward to working with owners, and offering the services of our Historic Properties Fund, Technical Services staff, and Sacred Sites Program. Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

September 17, 2018

STATEMENT BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL, SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING & MARITIME USES REGARDING THE BOERUM HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT EXTENSION, BROOKLYN

Good day, Chair Adams and Council members. I'm Ann-Isabel Friedman, a resident and homeowner of the Boerum Hill Historic District for the past 29 years, and Co-Chair of the Boerum Hill Association's Historic District Extension Committee.

The Boerum Hill Association, representing neighborhood residents, has advocated for expansion of the historic district for many years. We have worked closely with LPC staff and City Council Member Levin for the last two years and are excited to be here today.

The expanded district includes portions of two blocks of Atlantic Avenue in the Atlantic Avenue Special Zoning District, established in 1972, at the same time as the original historic district. These 54 buildings represent an extraordinarily intact and cohesive mixed-use corridor of red brick rowhouses with commercial ground floors and residences above. Originally occupied by butchers, bakers, and furniture makers, these buildings supported and enhanced the life of our community in the 19th century, just as the salons, restaurants, boutiques, and delis of this portion of Atlantic Avenue support and enhance the life of Boerum Hill, and our many visitors, today.

In 1972, the Boerum Hill section of Atlantic Avenue was considered blighted, with vacant and deteriorated buildings. That is no longer the case; these are now very desirable blocks for both residential and commercial tenants. The Special Zoning District established in 1972 helped preserve the character of the historic storefronts east of Court Street, but did not prevent them from being demolished. Several significant historic buildings within the proposed extension have been marketed to developers for their potential replacement with 6 to 8 story, luxury apartment buildings.

Some owners have expressed concern about the impact of landmark designation on storeowners; but LPC storefront oversight will be very similar to the existing Special Zoning district rules. Today, the Boerum Hill section of Atlantic Avenue is just as vital and viable as the Brooklyn Heights and Cobble Hill blocks. For 50 years, LPC has done a fantastic job regulating and preserving the special character of Atlantic Avenue within the Brooklyn Heights and Cobble Hill Historic Districts, and LPC will do the same for the portion of Atlantic Avenue included in the expanded Boerum Hill Historic District. Brooklyn Heights institutions, like Sahadi's, have thrived and doubled in size under LPC regulation, while Brooklyn outposts of national chains like Urban Outfitters and Trader Joe's have flourished on the Cobble Hill side under LPC oversight, along with small businesses of all kinds in both districts.

That's because LPC has administered these districts fairly, offering preservation protection while being receptive to proposals for alterations, additions, and good new design in historic contexts. We are confident that LPC will continue to do so in the expanded Boerum Hill Historic District, while LPC's storefront rules will reinforce the goals of the Special Zoning District, preserving the special vitality and character of this portion of Atlantic Avenue.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



September 17, 2018

Statement by Jonathan Brecht of the Boerum Hill Association
Before the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Uses
Of The New York City Council
Regarding the Proposed Boerum Hill Historic District Extension

Good afternoon, Members of the Subcommittee.

My name is Jonathan Brecht, and I am speaking as a Member of the Board of the Boerum Hill Association.

The Association has led efforts to extend the proposed Boerum Hill Historic District. We are pleased to enthusiastically join neighborhood groups and preservationists throughout the City in support of the proposed Extension. And we are grateful for the vision, support and leadership of our local Councilman, Steve Levin.

In addition, we particularly want to acknowledge the efforts of the Landmark's Preservation Commission to protect an important part of our City's history.

The existing Boerum Hill Historic District is in fact, one of the smallest in the City. Expansion of the District was contemplated by the LPC staff as early as 1977 given the historical and architectural similarities between the existing district and its surrounding area.

The Boerum Hill Association itself has periodically studied district expansion, and some three years ago, it initiated a community-wide effort to promote the extension to the district.

To this end, the Association held a number of public events to present the proposed extension and to seek community input.

These efforts coincided with the LPC's own work on the area and with a superb study of Boerum Hill and Cobble Hill by Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture.

While much work remains to be done, especially with regard to important intact portions of State Street that are outside the scope of the plan before you, we are pleased that the proposed extension will double the size of the existing district. The expansion of the district will also preserve some of the finest intact examples of 19th century commercial architecture in New York City.

There are those who say "enough" with regard to the designation of a handful of commercial buildings on Atlantic Avenue along the northern perimeter of the proposed expansion. The Association would like to point out that the two blocks on Atlantic Avenue under consideration for designation support thriving business enterprises.

These buildings also house businesses that support the local community, exactly what predecessor businesses in those buildings did over a century ago. The buildings are, I believe, an integral part of Boerum Hill and its historic district.

Indeed, there is strong local precedent for including commercial buildings in Historic Districts. The vitality of the adjoining Atlantic Avenue commercial corridor that divides the existing Brooklyn Heights and Cobble Hill Historic Districts shows that a landmarks designation is neither a commercial nor a developmental burden.

The Boerum Hill Association will work with neighborhood commercial building owners, our local BID, and the LPC to ensure that considerations like commercial signage, lighting and storefront rules are well understood by all. This will ensure that storefront and facade repairs and modifications can be completed in a timely manner and to the satisfaction of all concerned.

In sum, given the broad support for the initiative, we strongly urge you to vote this important initiative forward

. Thank you.



110 Hoyt Street
Brooklyn, NY 11217

September 17, 2018

**STATEMENT BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL, SUBCOMMITTEE ON
LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING & MARITIME USES REGARDING
THE BOERUM HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT EXTENSION,
BROOKLYN**

My name is Howard Kolins, President of the Boerum Hill Association.

The BHA mission is, in part, to preserve and enhance the qualities of our neighborhood. The application to extend our historic district will do much to preserve and enhance our streets.

The extension of the blocks south of Atlantic Avenue was first proposed over 40 years ago and is long overdue for approval.

Homes in the historic district are often our most beautiful ones with values that reflect their history and desirability.

We believe Boerum Hill is a special place so the residential extensions and the include of Atlantic Avenue will reinforce that sense of place.

For many years, the landmark designation of Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn Heights has defined those blocks as a unique shopping and dining destination. The historic buildings are part of the vibrant streetscape that encourages small business to locate there.

In Boerum Hill, our many antique stores have been transformed into home furnishing and fashion boutiques. They make strolling along the avenue a pleasure that does not feel the same way large retailers do.

Again, we feel it's important to secure our history and keep our "specialness." Expanding our historic district to include Atlantic Avenue will be an important step in preserving our unique qualities that are part of our entire neighborhood.

I urge you to approve the application.

Atlantic Avenue has kept many of its historic buildings intact over the years and has become a special place, its now a destination for shopping, strolling and dining.

We need the Landmarks designation to preserve the historic atmosphere and the original low rise buildings that give our area its charm.

I have owned my building since 1987. It is between Hoyt & Bond and its one of the properties selected for Landmarking which I welcome.

Nearby Brooklyn Heights has had Landmark designation for many years without detriment to property owners and businesses and the house where I live on State St. is protected by Landmarks and we appreciate how this has helped prevent inappropriate alterations on the street.

My tenants on Atlantic love the atmosphere of the Avenue and this is because of the charming and original feel of the buildings and storefronts

There is so much new construction enveloping the area that we are in danger of losing the very appeal that the historic buildings offer to visitors and residents alike.

We need to move now and protect what we have on the Avenue and what we love about it and prevent any further development that threatens the original feeling and charm of these historic buildings.

Testimony Wendy Feuer 234 Bergen Street: Boerum Hill Historic District Extension
New York City Council Sub-Committee Meeting Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime
September 17, 2018

Good afternoon and thank you for considering the extension of the Boerum Hill Historic District. We first moved into the neighborhood in 1995 renting an apartment on Bergen between Hoyt and Bond Streets. Two years later, in 1997, we were fortunate to be able to purchase a brownstone, still on Bergen, but between Bond and Nevins. We had a dog at the time and for years after, and in my many walks, I noticed the brown and white signs that indicated streets that were included in the historic district and read with interest the larger signs (especially the one on Nevins between Dean and Bergen) that explained the boundaries of the district and the architectural history that made it worthy for inclusion. I thought my house and most of my neighbors' houses had similar characteristics to those within the district. For years, I wondered why we were not included in the district. I can say many on the block who signed the petition I brought around, agree. There were even offers to get more signatures. Extending the district – all parts of the extension including Atlantic Avenue that includes buildings that are at a scale and have storefronts so rarely seen in commercial areas in the City – will complete the designation of the area that was initiated and fell short over forty years ago.

Thank you.