

August 2, 2011

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE N.Y.C. LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE BEDFORD STUYVESANT/ EXPANDED STUYVESANT HEIGHTS HISTORIC DISTRICT IN BROOKLYN

Good afternoon, Chair Tierney and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of The New York Landmarks Conservancy.

The Conservancy strongly supports the designation of the expanded Stuyvesant Heights Historic District. We are pleased to join with neighbors, public officials, preservationists, and the dedicated community in doing so.

Like the original Stuyvesant Heights District, and the larger Bedford Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, the proposed extension is an extraordinary collection of architectural treasures with attractive streetscapes and a vivid sense of place. The groups of houses and apartments that comprise the District feature a dazzling array of the styles from the late 19th and early 20th century. While there have been alterations, the rows retain their low scale, original materials, and attractive details. The sense of place is heightened by the strong sense of community, with landscaping that competes for the greenest block in Brooklyn and families that have owned their homes for generations.

The Conservancy knows this area well. Over the years, we have received over 350 inquiries from residents of larger community, gone on dozens of site visits and spoken at community meetings. We've completed over 20 projects funded by low-interest loans to homeowners and grants to religious properties, mostly within the Stuyvesant Heights District; there's little doubt that this designation will spur more applications and more restoration.

Designation of this expanded District is long overdue. The only question left is when the Commission will address the other Bed Stuy study areas, including Bedford, Stuyvesant East, and Stuyvesant North, as well as several others that our staff submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office which found them eligible for listing on the State and National Registers. We urge you to calendar the other areas in Bedford Stuyvesant that have been surveyed, to provide much-needed protection and help ensure that the Commission returns to the process of considering designation of these districts in the near future.

Thank you for the opportunity to present The Landmarks Conservancy's views.