

November 29, 2016

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE PEOPLE'S TRUST COMPANY BUILDING, 181-183 MONTAGUE STREET, BROOKLYN, AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK

Good morning Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am Alex Herrera, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to support designation of the People's Trust Company Building, 181-183 Montague Street, Brooklyn.

According to the *Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, the People's Trust Company purchased the property at 181 Montague Street in 1899 with the intention to use it as their offices. The *Record and Guide* reported at the time that "there is also a rumor that the present building will be torn down, and a fine new office building erected on the site. Should this rumor prove correct, such a building would materially enhance values on this street."

The rumor proved true and the People's Trust Company commissioned the architectural firm of Mowbray and Uffinger to design their new building. The choice of architects was significant as the firm would become well-known for the more than 400 bank buildings they designed throughout the eastern United States, including the Dime Savings Bank on DeKalb Avenue, which was designated a New York City Individual Landmark in 1994.

Louis Mowbray and Justin Uffinger's two-story, classically inspired building for the People's Trust Company was featured in the July 28, 1906 edition of the *American Architect and Building News*, showing the newly completed structure with a gleaming white marble façade of four ionic columns supporting a opulently carved pediment with reclining allegorical figures representing "Industry" (male figure) and "Security" (female figure).

Though the People's Trust Company is no longer in business, the building is remarkable intact, still serving a financial institution as part of Bank Row on Montague Street and an exemplar of the Beaux-Arts Classicism used for the architecture of urban financial institutions before World War I. Accordingly, it is well deserving of landmark designation.

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