



**NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION
COMMISSION**

Robert B. Tierney
Chairman

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**PAUL RUDOLPH'S FORMER RESIDENCE AND TWO FEDERAL-ERA BUILDINGS IN
MANHATTAN AND A RARE CHURCH IN THE BRONX ARE NAMED LANDMARKS**

*Famed Architect's Midtown Modernist Experiment, a Pair of 180-Year-Old Federal Style Row
Houses in Little Italy and a Richardsonian Romanesque Church in Highbridge
Now Protected*

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission today voted unanimously to landmark the Paul Rudolph Penthouse and Apartments at 23 Beekman Place and two Federal style buildings at 190 and 192 Grand St. in Manhattan and the Union Reformed Church of Highbridge (now Highbridge Community Church) in the Bronx.

"The landmarks that were designated today are a mosaic of architectural styles that span 150 years of New York City history, culture and growth," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. "These buildings speak volumes about our shared heritage, and help define who we are now."

Today was also the first day on the Commission for architect Michael Goldblum, who replaces Stephen F. Byrns, also an architect, as the Bronx representative on the panel. Byrns stepped down from the Commission last year after more than six years of service. Commissioner Goldblum is a graduate of Columbia College, and received a Master of Architecture degree from the Columbia Graduate School of Architecture and Planning in 1984. He served as a member of the Bronx Borough President's Historic Preservation Task Force from 2008 to 2009.

In other business, the Commission voted to hold public hearings on proposals to protect a total of approximately 790 buildings off of West End Avenue on the Upper West Side of Manhattan through the expansions of the West End Collegiate and Riverside West End Avenue historic districts. Dates for those hearings were not immediately announced. The Commission also held a public hearing on a proposal to give landmark status to the Engineers Club building at 32-34 West 40th Street.

Descriptions of the newest landmarks follow below:



Paul Rudolph Penthouse & Apartments, 23 Beekman Place, Manhattan

Located in a quiet residential enclave between 50th and 51st streets, 23 Beekman Place is comprised of a five-story Neo-Classical style townhouse, and a four-story, steel-framed and concrete Modernist penthouse that cantilevers over the sidewalk. Paul Rudolph, one of the most innovative and acclaimed American architects of the 20th century, designed the penthouse for himself. He had lived in the townhouse since 1961, first renting a one-bedroom apartment and then buying the building in 1976.

"The juxtaposition of modern and traditional forms creates a dialogue between the old and the new, and makes this building one of the most provocative landmarks in

New York City,” said Chairman Tierney. “The Rudolph penthouse also is the City’s only landmark whose significance stems from a 1970s intervention.”

Rudolph was the chairman of the architecture department at Yale University from 1958 to 1965, and designed the Art and Architecture Building, now known as Paul Rudolph Hall. He studied under Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design, and designed an unrealized plan for the Lower Manhattan Expressway. He executed five projects elsewhere in the City, including two townhouses in Manhattan and Tracy Towers, Davidson Houses and Middletown Plaza in the Bronx.



Katharine Cornell, a renowned stage actress, and her husband, producer-director Guthrie McClintic, bought the townhouse in 1922 and lived there until 1951. The couple collaborated on 28 theatrical productions, with Cornell in the lead role.

The townhouse was originally constructed in the 1860s, and re-built in 1929 with a Neo-Classical style façade. The base has three round-arched openings, a wood-paneled door with an arched transom that features scalloped details, and a continuous flat metal awning between the ground floor and first story that’s supported by four metal columns.

The penthouse begins at the fifth floor and is constructed with exposed painted steel I-beams and metal panels that frame the face of the structure. Its rear face, which overlooks the East River, is also framed with painted steel, and each floor has a shallow terrace that extends the full width of the building.

Rudolph lived in the building until his death in 1997, and was then sold. It remains in use as a private residence and apartments.

190 and 192 Grand Street Houses, between Mott and Mulberry streets



Both houses were constructed around 1833 as part of a row of five contiguous, single-family investment properties by Stephen Van Rensselaer, one of New York State’s leading citizens who founded the predecessor school to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He served as a major in the Army in the War of 1812, in the U.S. House of Representatives and as lieutenant governor.

The structures are among the oldest buildings in Manhattan, and retain much of their original architectural fabric, including red brick laid in the Flemish bond pattern, molded brownstone lintels at the third story and a pitched roof with segmental dormers. Now located in the heart of Little Italy, they were constructed at a time when the area was an affluent residential enclave, and later housed a succession of German and Italian immigrants, artists and young professionals.

“Both of these houses are rare examples of the Federal period that have survived the past 180 years with very few changes, even as their surroundings changed dramatically,” said Chairman Tierney.

The first stories of both of 190 and 192 Grand streets were lowered to ground level for the installation of storefronts. The Piemonte Ravioli Company has continuously occupied the storefront of 190 Grand St. since 1930. Florio’s Restaurant, which opened in the mid-1960s, occupies the storefront of 192 Grand St.



The buildings are among 20 Federal-style houses that have been designated as New York City landmarks since 2003.

Union Reformed Church of Highbridge, 1272 Ogden Ave., the Bronx



The United Reformed Church of Highbridge, now the Highbridge Community Church, was built between 1887 and 1888 and designed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style by Alfred E. Barlow, an architect who specialized in suburban residences.

The congregation was established in 1860 by Protestants who lived in Highbridgeville, an area along the Harlem River located to the east of High Bridge, which was constructed to bring fresh water to New York City from the Croton Aqueduct system. The neighborhood was originally settled by Irish workers who constructed the aqueduct, bridge and railroad

along the river.

The congregation constructed a chapel in 1866, later affiliated with the Reformed Church of America, and rapidly expanded, prompting the construction of the new sanctuary. It was built by D.C. Weeks & Son, which was responsible for several major churches, institutions and office buildings in New York City, such as the first American Museum of Natural History.

The Richardsonian Romanesque style was named after Henry Hobson Richardson, an acclaimed 19th-century American architect who is known for his designs of Trinity Church in Boston and numerous other libraries and institutional buildings.

The one-story Union Reformed Church, built of rock-faced gneiss ashlar with red sandstone trim, features a taller square bell tower at the southwest corner. It has a steeply pitched roof, and three round-arched windows with voussoirs that are connected to the tower by a small turret. The eastern end of the building, where the altar is located, has a leaded stained-glass rose window that was manufactured by the Tiffany Glass Co. in 1889.

"It's a spectacular building," said Chairman Tierney. "It's one of the finest surviving Richardsonian Romanesque churches in New York City, and an unusual example of the style."

The Landmarks Preservation Commission is the mayoral agency responsible for protecting and preserving New York City's architecturally, historically and culturally significant buildings and sites. Since its creation in 1965, LPC has granted landmark status to more than 27,000 buildings, including 1,270 individual landmarks, 110 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks, 101 historic districts and 16 historic district extensions in all five boroughs. Under the City's landmarks law, considered among the most powerful in the nation, the Commission must be comprised of at least three architects, a historian, a realtor, a planner or landscape architect, as well as a representative of each borough.

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