

BARTOW-PELL MANSION, EXPANDED LANDMARK SITE, Pelham Bay Park, Shore Road, The Bronx.

Landmark Site: Tax Map Block 5650, Lot 1 in part.

The Landmarks Preservation Commission has under consideration the proposal to expand the Landmark Site of the Bartow-Pell Mansion, a designated Landmark. The proposed site will enlarge the presently landmarked site (the land on which the Mansion is situated) to include all additional property and improvements within the following described boundaries:

Beginning at the intersection of the southern right-of-way line of Shore Road (Pelham Bridge Road) and a line running along the western side of the Archery access lane, extending south four hundred and fifty feet, thence a line eastward at an obtuse angle of 120° to the point where it intersects the line of Average Maximum High Water (at the shoreline). Thence following this Average Maximum High Water line southwestward, westward and northwestward to the point where it intersects the southern right-of-way line of Shore Road. Thence following said right-of-way eastward to a point one hundred and fifty feet west of the center of the Main Driveway leading up to the Bartow-Pell Mansion, thence north to the paved surface of the roadway and eastward to a point one hundred and fifty feet east of the center line of the Main Driveway returning south to the right-of-way line from whence follows the line of right-of-way eastward to the point of beginning.

The Landmark and original Landmark Site were designated February 15, 1966 (LP-0125).

On November 15, 1977, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed amendment of the Landmark Site of the Bartow-Pell Mansion (Item 4). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Four people spoke in favor of the expansion of the Landmark Site. There were no speakers in opposition to the amendment.

#### DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The Bartow-Pell Mansion, an elegant country seat in the Federal style, stands on land which was once part of the Manor of Pelham. Surrounding the mansion -- the exterior was designated a New York City Landmark in 1966 and the first floor interiors were designated in 1975 -- are a number of significant features which are closely linked to the distinguished history of this impressive estate.

In 1654 Thomas Pell (1613-1669) purchased over 9,000 acres of land, later known as Pelham, from the Indians. Today the site of this historic transaction is commemorated by an elm tree, planted on the spot where the event took place. This tree stands northwest of the mansion and is now surrounded by an iron fence. Pell became the first Lord of the Manor of Pelham, which was named after him and confirmed by a Patent granted by Governor Nicolls on October 6, 1666. After Pell's death, the property passed through successive generations of Pells until 1790, when John Bartow, the son of Bathsheba Pell and Theophilus Bartow, purchased part of the land from the Pell family.

From 1794 on, Herman LeRoy (1758-1841), who had served as the first Consul General from Holland to the newly formed United States, began to purchase land in Pelham. In 1791 LeRoy, with his brother-in-law William Bayard, founded a shipping firm, LeRoy, Bayard & Co., which soon became one of the most respected and successful firms in the city. LeRoy also served as the president of the Bank of New York and was a director of the Bank of the United States. In 1813, he purchased 200 additional acres from John Bartow; the transaction was witnessed by Aaron Burr, who at that time was married to a Bartow. It was probably during the period of the LeRoy ownership of the land that the present Bartow-Pell mansion was erected. Designed in the Federal style and built of local stone, the mansion is an elegant and characteristically restrained example of the architecture of the period. In 1836 Herman LeRoy sold the 200 acres he had purchased from John

Bartow to Robert Bartow (d.1868), the grandson of John and the husband of Maria Rosina Lorillard. It was the well-to-do Bartow family who updated the interiors of the mansion to the then fashionable Greek Revival style.

Among the features which are to be found on the expanded Landmark Site are a stone stable, the walled gardens and a small family memorial plot. The stone stable, which stands to the northeast of the mansion may date from the period of the LeRoy ownership. Like the mansion, the stable is built of local stone. However, if a permanent stable structure were not part of the estate which Bartow purchased from LeRoy in 1836, Bartow certainly had the structure erected, perhaps in conjunction with the remodeling of the interior of the mansion. The stable, which is now in the process of being restored, is entered through an elliptical-arched doorway surmounted by a triple brick arch. At either side of the doorway is a square-headed window with stone lintel and brick enframements keyed to the stonework. The openings at the other sides of the stable vary in size and also have keyed brick enframements which create an effective contrast in color and texture with the stonework. Due to the irregular terrain of the site, the stable is two stories high on the southern side and three stories on the northern side.

The rear of the mansion opens on to a handsome terraced garden which was created during the restoration, begun in 1914 under the sponsorship of the International Garden Club. The garden is said to have been designed to resemble that which may have once been part of the original estate. It is enclosed on two sides by a seven-foot high stone wall. From the mansion, wide steps lead down the hill to a small square pool which is surrounded by flower beds. This central sunken area opens up on either side to a shorter flight of steps flanked by tall hedges. A tall wrought-iron fence -- with the completion date of the garden, 1916, above the center gate -- extends along the eastern end and closes off the garden from the land beyond.

Southeast of the garden, a rhododendron walk leads to another charming feature of the extensive estate, a small plot of land honoring some of the descendents of Thomas Pell. A number of tombstones were erected here in memory of various members of the Pell family who died in the 18th century and are buried elsewhere.

The several historic features situated near the Bartow-Pell Mansion, such as the elm tree commemorating Pell's transaction with the Indians and the stones erected in memory of the Pell family, greatly enhance the interest and significance of the estate. The stone stable is a particularly fine structure and effectively complements the large stone mansion nearby. The mansion and its surrounding property were turned over to the City of New York in 1888 by Mrs. Robert Bartow. The house was unused until 1914, when restoration was begun by the architectural firm of Delano & Aldrich under the auspices of the International Garden Club, which maintains it today as a house museum.

#### DESIGNATION

Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 63 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission amends its designation of the Landmark Site of the Bartow-Pell Mansion to include all additional property and improvements within the following described boundaries:

Beginning at the intersection of the southern right-of-way line of Shore Road (Pelham Bridge Road) and a line running along the western side of the Archery access lane, extending south four hundred and fifty feet, thence a line eastward at an obtuse angle of 120° to the point where it intersects the line of Average Maximum High Water (at the Shoreline). Thence following this Average Maximum High Water line southwestward, westward and northwestward to the point where it intersects the southern right-of-way line of Shore Road. Thence following said right-of-way eastward to a point one hundred and fifty feet west of the center of the Main Driveway leading up to the Bartow-Pell Mansion, thence north to the paved surface of the roadway and eastward to a point one hundred and fifty feet east of the center line of the Main Driveway, returning south to the right-of-way line from whence follows the line of right-of-way eastward to the point of beginning,

in part of the Borough of The Bronx Tax Map Block 5650, Lot 1.