

295 STATE STREET HOUSE, Borough of Brooklyn, Built 1872.

Landmark Site: Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 170, Lot 45.

On June 23, 1970, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the 295 State Street House and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 59). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Twenty-six witnesses spoke in favor of historic preservation in the Boerum Hill neighborhood and for the creation of the Boerum Hill Historic District. There were no speakers in opposition to designation of the houses on State Street.

#### DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

No. 295 State Street was erected as part of a row of six houses (Nos. 289-299), by Michael Murray, a local builder who lived at 240 DeKalb Avenue. Chandler F. Graves, a dentist, purchased the house in 1874 but did not occupy it until 1875.

These handsome residences were part of the Boerum Hill community which had formed the original Town of Breuckelen founded in 1646 by Dutch colonists. It was incorporated into the larger City of Brooklyn in 1834. The development of Boerum Hill as an urban community began in the 1840s and the 1870s. Many of the houses which remain from this period incorporated Greek Revival and Italianate elements in the row house design. These houses were built for merchants and professional people, many of whom worked in the Wall Street area or in the vicinity of the Fulton Street ferry.

Murray, the builder, acquired the land for Nos. 289-295 in 1872, and the land for Nos. 297 and 299 in 1874, from William Schermerhorn. The Schermerhorns were one of Brooklyn's old, wealthy Dutch families; Peter Schermerhorn, William's father, was, with his brother Abraham, one of Brooklyn's largest landholders. Schermerhorn Street, one block north of State Street, was named after them. The north side of State Street was largely undeveloped when Murray began erecting Nos. 289-295 in 1872. (No. 289 has been demolished.) Nos. 291-299 are five, almost identical, brownstone houses built in a late version of the popular Italianate style. They have undergone only minor alterations in the past one hundred years and the row retains an integrity and a unity which enhance the entire block.

No. 295 has a 25-foot wide brownstone front rising three stories above a rusticated basement. The two segmental-arched basement windows have beveled keystones. The arched doorway, above a high stoop, is flanked by smooth pilasters with grooved console brackets and foliate pendants, which support a bold segmental-arched pediment. The round arch over the door has a beveled keystone and beveled spandrel panels. Set within the doorway, wooden engaged colonnettes with Corinthian capitals flank the doors. The wood double doors extend up into the archway and have two long glass panels, with two small ones at the top, curved to conform to the shape of the round arch. The full-height parlor floor windows are set under projecting cornice slabs supported on brackets. Lintels with cap moldings, and sills supported on small

corbel blocks, accentuate the upper-story windows. The roof cornice at No. 295 is identical to those at Nos. 291 and 293, carried on a row of modillions and dentils with an unadorned frieze beneath it.

Balustered handrailings, terminating in hexagonal newel posts, at the stoop are in excellent condition. The newel posts and balusters are typical of the post-Civil War period. The use of cast iron became popular in New York City at this time when mass production made it readily available at reasonable prices.

#### FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the 295 State Street House has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that among its important qualities, the 295 State Street House, is a fine example of the late Italianate style of architecture, that it forms part of a handsome row of five houses, that this house contributes to the dignity of this street and that this house and its row add significantly to the overall character of the Boerum Hill neighborhood.

Accordingly, 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 designates as a Landmark the 295 State Street House, Borough of Brooklyn and designates Tax Map Block 170, Lot 45, Borough of Brooklyn, as its Landmark Site.