

364 VAN DUZER STREET HOUSE, Borough of Richmond. Erected c.1835.

Landmark Site: Borough of Richmond Tax Map Block 515, Lot 39.

On July 24, 1973, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the 364 Van Duzer Street House and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 3). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Five witnesses, including the representative of the owner, spoke in favor of designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

This handsome frame house, built in modified Greek Revival style, is one of the last remaining examples in the area. It is located in the old village of Stapleton which was developed by William J. Staples, after whom the village was named, and Minthorne Tompkins, the son of Daniel Tompkins who had played a major role in the development of Staten Island. Daniel Tompkins was vice-president of the United States in the Monroe administration and governor of the State of New York.

In 1833, Minthorne Tompkins and William J. Staples bought a tract of land from Cornelius Vanderbilt and his family that had originally been part of the Cornelius Corsen Patent; it was surveyed, subdivided and, in September 1834, the lot of number 364 Van Duzer Street was sold to Robert M. Hazard, who soon afterwards had the present house built. Hazard, a former sailmaker, was captain of the "Nautilus", a ferry boat owned by Daniel Tompkins, and served as postmaster of the Village of Tompkinsville.

The most striking feature of this house is the stately tetrastyle portico with its Doric columns rising two stories to an entablature below an overhanging spring-eave. The use of a spring-eave on a Greek Revival house, rather than a triangular gable, is unusual and is more characteristic of the so-called Dutch Colonial style. The overhanging spring-eave began to appear in New Netherland about the middle of the 17th century, possibly as a means of protecting the front wall of a house from the elements. It was often only a simple cantilevered projection but it was sometimes supported by columns or posts. On Staten Island, this type of eave was used well into the 19th century by builders and architects. Combined as here, with a classical portico, an interesting and indigenous variant of the Greek Revival style has been created. The tall, elegant windows that open onto the portico, the subtle curve of the spring-eave and the delicate railings at the parlor and second floor levels add to the dignity of the portico and lend to this simple house an unexpected grandeur.

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 364 Van Duzer 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 house at 364 Van Duzer Street is a fine example of a style of architecture developed on and indigenous to Staten Island, that this style is not to be found elsewhere, that it makes a significant contribution to our architectural heritage, and that it is one of the first houses built in Stapleton which later became one of the most important villages on Staten Island.

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 364 Van Duzer Street House, Borough of Richmond and designates Tax Map Block 515, Lot 39, Borough of Richmond as its Landmark Site.