

PROSPECT PARK (excluding the Friends' Cemetery), Borough of Brooklyn.

Landmark Site: Tax Map Block 1117, Lot 1.

BOUNDARIES

The Prospect Park Scenic Landmark consists of the property bounded by the eastern curb line of Prospect Park West, Bartel-Pritchard Circle roadway, the inner curb line of Bartel-Pritchard Circle enclosing the central island, Bartel-Pritchard Circle roadway, the northern and eastern curb lines of Prospect Park Southwest, Park Circle roadway, the inner curb line of Park Circle enclosing the central island, Park Circle roadway, the northern curb line of Parkside Avenue, the western curb line of Ocean Avenue, the western curb line of Flatbush Avenue, Grand Army Plaza roadway, the inner curb lines of the outer roadway enclosing the raised mall areas of Grand Army Plaza, Grand Army Plaza roadway, to the eastern curb line of of Prospect Park West.

TESTIMONY AT PUBLIC HEARING

On September 25, 1975, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of this Scenic Landmark (Item No. 6). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Ten witnesses, including Thomas Cuite, Vice President of the City Council, a representative of Brooklyn Borough President Sebastian Leone, Joseph Merz, Curator of Prospect Park, and Joseph Bresnan, Director of Historic Parks, spoke in favor of designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation. The witnesses favoring designation clearly indicate that there is great support for the designation of this Scenic Landmark. The Commission has also received many letters and other expressions of support for this designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Prospect Park, 526 acres of luxuriant landscape, is the pride of Brooklyn's park system. It was characterized by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux as one of their best and most successful creations of landscape architecture. Designed in 1865 and begun the following year, Prospect Park was Brooklyn's answer to New York's Central Park, as well as a response to the needs of the people in the City of Brooklyn.

The Background of the Park

The growth of the public park movement in this country was a reaction to increasing urbanization and the industrialization of American cities in the 19th century--cities which had originally made no provision for open green space or recreational areas. Those who began to agitate for a large public park in New York--men such as journalist and poet William Cullen Bryant and landscape gardener Andrew Jackson Downing--were influenced by parks they had seen in England and other parts of Europe. England felt the effects of industrialization even sooner than the United States, and in the 1830s a Select Committee was appointed by Parliament "to consider the best means of securing Open Spaces in the vicinity of populous Towns, as Public Walks and Places of Exercise, calculated to promote the Health and Comfort of the Inhabitants." The creation of Birkenhead Park in Liverpool, one of England's most industrialized cities, was the result of this act.

Such public parks in England were planned according to a tradition of landscape gardening which had begun a century earlier. Rather than using the geometric formality of such Continental gardens as those planned by the Frenchman Le Nôtre in the 17th century, the English landscapist created an environment which was an extension of the countryside--an environment both informal and unrestricted where the works of man were a complement to the works of Nature. The influence of such late 18th and early 19th century landscape gardeners as "Capability" Brown, Humphrey Repton, William Gilpin, and Sir Uvedale Price was felt by those landscape architects who later created America's public parks.

Central Park, a designated New York City Scenic Landmark, was begun in 1857 after over ten years of discussion and campaigning for such a park. Work began under the direction of Chief Engineer Egbert L. Viele. Frederick Law Olmsted was appointed Park Superintendent on September 11, 1857. In October the Park Commission announced a public competition for a design for the park, partially at the urging of Calvert Vaux. Acting on Vaux's initiative, Olmsted joined forces with him to produce the winning design, "Greensward." This led to their appointments as Architect-in-Chief and Assistant to the Architect-in-Chief of Central Park. Thus began a unique collaboration which was to have unforeseen and long-lasting consequences for the appearance of many American cities and the general well-being of the people who lived in them.

Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903) was introduced to the beauties of rural scenery as a boy by his parents. He also became familiar with the writings of several of the English landscape theorists at a young age. He had a background in engineering which he had studied for two-and-a-half years with Frederick A. Barton. His involvement in scientific farming in Owego, New York, and while living on Staten Island, his classic studies of the southern states for the New York Daily Times, and his travels through Britain and Europe had all stimulated his interest in landscape architecture and its role in urban development.

Calvert Vaux (1824-1895) was born in England where he received professional training in architecture while apprenticed to architects Lewis Nockalls Cottingham and George Truefitt. Truefitt developed Vaux's interest in landscape by taking him on walking tours of the English countryside and by encouraging him to capture his observations in a sketchbook. In 1850 Vaux came to the United States at the invitation of A. J. Downing, America's foremost landscape gardener who was looking for an architectural collaborator. The two partners received the prestigious commission to landscape the grounds of the Smithsonian Institution and the Capitol in Washington, D. C., in April 1851. After Downing's tragic death in 1852, Vaux remained in Newburgh, N. Y., to finish the firm's commissions. He moved to New York in 1857.

Each man with his unique background and training was able to bring to the design of Central Park, and later Prospect Park, a wide-ranging vision and a grasp of detail that would enable them to translate unsightly vacant land into magnificent parks with rich and varied rural landscape effects. So closely did they work together that in later years Olmsted was to write that he and Vaux were equally and indivisibly responsible for the design of Central Park. In the case of Prospect Park, Vaux, in the initial absence of Olmsted, was responsible for the boundaries, the plaza approach, and the placement of the Long Meadow and the lake, but in working out the specific details of the design, they claimed equal responsibility.

If Olmsted and Vaux were of like mind in determining what form the creation of a landscape should take, they had differing opinions on the significance of their profession. Vaux seemed to primarily view himself as an artist and felt that their partnership should concentrate on developing the profession of landscape architecture in America. In fact Vaux was responsible for coining the term "landscape architecture" for a field which previously had been called "landscape gardening." The nomenclature initially bothered Olmsted who felt that the new term was not precise enough and did not convey the full extent of what they were doing.

Olmsted, on the other hand, regarded himself as "a sort of social engineer, an educator of hearts, a refiner of minds, one whose function was to civilize men, to develop in them communicativeness, and to raise the general level of American society by exerting a beneficent influence on environment and by modifying unfavorable surroundings through art," to quote his recent biographer Laura Wood Roper. Writing to Vaux on August 1, 1865, Olmsted characterized himself: "I can combine means to ends better than most, and I love beautiful landscapes and rural recreations, and people in rural recreations--better than anybody else I know. But I don't feel strong on the art side. I don't feel myself an artist." Nonetheless, Vaux believed Olmsted's contribution as an artist was indispensable to "the translation of the republican art idea in its highest form to the acres [Prospect Park] we want to control."

The concept of Prospect Park as envisioned by these two men was the result of certain ideas and attitudes about one's relationship to nature and the city and the effects that they have upon one. The park not only incorporates certain landscape traditions, but it also reflects the intellectual climate in which it was conceived.

The rise of Transcendentalism as a force in American intellectual life had its effect on Olmsted. While he was living on Staten Island, he was a neighbor of Judge William Emerson, elder brother of the leading spokesman for Transcendentalism, Ralph Waldo Emerson. He was also familiar with the Utopian movement in this country and had visited the Fourierist community in Red Bank, New Jersey. Although he thought highly of this community, he was not uncritical of it because it lacked the civilizing influence of urban life. Olmsted and Vaux were not members of any particular sect or philosophical school, but they did share with their contemporaries a belief in the salutary effect of nature upon man. They believed that the future health of society and our cities depended on the spiritual health of the people which could be insured by re-establishing their link with nature that had been broken by rapid growth and industrialization of urban centers. Moreover, Olmsted felt it was the obligation of a democratic society to provide facilities to re-establish such a link with nature.

Such views affected the conception of the landscape artist, whether a painter or a landscape architect. In Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England (1851) Olmsted wrote: "What artist so noble has often been my thought, as he who with far reaching conception of beauty and designing power sketches the outline, writes the colors and directs the shadows of a picture so great that nature shall be employed upon it for generations before the work he has arranged for her shall realize his intentions." This is precisely what Olmsted and Vaux did when they created Prospect Park. Using the very materials of nature as an artist uses paint, they produced a result, developed over a period of years, that pictured the uplifting and spiritual qualities of nature at its highest. By using the materials and methods of nature, the landscape architects were able to achieve a perfect result, a result that nature, unaided, might not have been able to achieve.

History of the Park

The success of Central Park spurred interest among prominent citizens of Brooklyn for a similar facility for their city. By 1855, Brooklyn, with over 200,000 inhabitants, was the third largest city in the United States. Like New York it suffered from a restrictive street grid which made no provision for open green space. Greenwood Cemetery, established in 1838, was the prime recreational space for thousands of city dwellers. By 1858 Brooklyn's leaders clearly saw the need for a public park or series of parks. Naturally, there was the desire to compete with New York as well as to attract more people to the advantages of Brooklyn living. But a more altruistic and democratic conception was also present: such a park was perceived as vitally necessary to bring relief from the urban environment for many city dwellers.

On April 18, 1859, the New York State Legislature passed an act to authorize the selection and location of grounds for public parks in the City of Brooklyn. The Commission established by the act chose a number of

park sites including one which they called Mount Prospect Park. Another act authorizing the acquisition of the recommended site was passed on April 17, 1860, and a Board of Park Commissioners to oversee the planning and development of the park was also established. James S. T. Stranahan was named president.

James S. T. Stranahan (1808-1898) served for twenty-two years, until 1882, without remuneration as president of the Park Commission. Known as "the Father of Prospect Park," he consistently encouraged Olmsted and Vaux in their work. When Mayor Seth Low removed him from his position in 1882, a discrepancy of about \$10,000 was found in the books. Stranahan unquestioningly wrote a personal check for the apparent deficit to balance the books. On his retirement the Brooklyn Eagle wrote: "Prospect Park is pre-eminently his work. But for his foresight and perseverance we should not now be in possession of that noble resort; . . . The truth is, that Mr. Stranahan is one of the very few men who have creative genius. In the not remote future, the question will be asked by intelligent writers, who were the real architects of Brooklyn? who were the men who lifted her out of the cow-paths of village advance and put her on the broad track of Metropolitan importance? When that question is answered, the name named with greatest honor will be that of James S. T. Stranahan." For his epousal of the parkway and boulevard system proposed by Olmsted and Vaux in 1868, he became known as "the Baron Haussman of Brooklyn." Stranahan also directed the Union Ferry Company and the Atlantic Docks; in addition he was one of the most active of the promoters of the Brooklyn Bridge, completed in 1883.

The Commissioners saw a great need for the park, as they stated in their First Annual Report (January 1861): "Already a population of 300,000 demand space for exercise and recreation. How much more, when the population of the city has doubled, will a provision of this nature be required, to furnish to all the constant means of peaceful and healthful enjoyment, and to aid in the cultivation of cheerful obedience to law, and the general promotion of good order among its citizens."

Egbert L. Viele, Chief Engineer of the original plan for Central Park, was hired to design the new Prospect Park, according to boundaries established by the legislative authorization. The site was an awkward one, bisected by Flatbush Avenue, stretching north and east of Flatbush to Warren Street (now Prospect Place) and Washington Avenue, and extending south only as far as Ninth Street, with a jog from Ninth Avenue (the present Prospect Park West) to Tenth Avenue, between Third and Ninth Streets. The site included Prospect Hill with its commanding views and the Reservoir, both east of Flatbush Avenue.

The site also recommended itself for its historical associations. The battle of Long Island, the first major battle between the Continental Army under Washington and the British army in North America after the Declaration of Independence, took place on August 27, 1776, on land which is now a part of the park. Four hundred men from the Maryland and Delaware battalions under General Sullivan held off the British in a spot now known as Battle Pass to allow the American forces to retreat to Manhattan.

Viele's plan, a rather ungainly arrangement of such park attractions as a parade ground and flower garden, favored existing topographical features. As Viele wrote in 1861, the park "requires but little aid from art to fit it for all the purposes of health and recreation."

The outbreak of the Civil War in April 1861 prevented any work on the park for the duration of the hostilities. Nonetheless, the Park Commissioners wrote in 1862: ". . . the Prospect Park of the city of Brooklyn must always be conceded as the great natural park of the country; presenting the most majestic views of land and ocean, with panoramic changes more varied and beautiful than can be found within the boundaries of any city on this continent."

Apparently the Civil War interval brought doubts about Viele's plan to the minds of the Park Commissioners, for in early January 1865 Stranahan invited Calvert Vaux to survey the park site with him. Vaux was quick to recommend new park boundaries which he outlined in sketch form in a letter to his former partner, Frederick Law Olmsted, then in California.

At Stranahan's request, Vaux prepared a "Preliminary Report on Boundaries," published in February 1865 with the Commissioners' Fifth Annual Report. Vaux objected to the Flatbush Avenue bisection of the park site. He felt that the reservoir would seriously encroach on the eastern half of the park, and recommended that those lands east of Flatbush Avenue be sold. Instead, he recommended that the park site be expanded to the south and west to provide a "larger opportunity for landscape effect" and to make possible the excavation of a large lake, particularly suitable for a skating pond. Finally, Vaux offered a new idea for an approach and grand entrance to the park, namely the creation of an elliptical plaza at the junction of Flatbush, Vanderbilt, and Ninth (now Prospect Park West) Avenues.

Vaux's encouragement persuaded Olmsted that they should again join forces to plan Prospect Park; their report was submitted on January 24, 1866, to the Prospect Park Commissioners and was printed with the Sixth Annual Report. The Commissioners, who accepted the plan and Vaux's recommended boundary changes, noted that Messrs. Olmsted and Vaux were "landscape architects of acknowledged taste and skill." The Commissioners' report commended the three regions of distinct character which were planned:

- (1) a large open meadow with space for extensive playgrounds;
- (2) a hilly district with groves and shrubbery, shaded rambles and broad views; and
- (3) a lake district with ample provision for skating and rowing.

The different sections were to be connected by a carefully adjusted system of rides, drives, and rambles, while existing natural features were to be "accepted and made available."

For Olmsted and Vaux such planning to create pastoral effects had a definite purpose, namely, to create "a pleasure, common, constant and universal to all town parks, . . . [which] results from the feeling of relief experienced by those entering them, on escaping from the cramped, confined and controlling circumstances of the streets of the town; in other words, a sense of enlarged freedom is to all, at all times, the most certain and most valuable gratification afforded by a park."

Olmsted and Vaux were officially appointed as landscape architects of Prospect Park on May 29, 1866; work began on July 1, 1866 and continued at a steady pace, weather permitting, through 1873 when the park was largely completed according to the original plan. Because the State Legislature did not authorize the acquisition of the recommended land in accordance with the new boundaries until 1868, initial work was, of necessity, undertaken on the Plaza and the northeast section of the park. A map appended to the Eighth Annual Report (January 1868) shows the progress of construction.

Work had advanced well enough to allow the first park visitors to be admitted to the eastern section of the park in October 1867. George Templeton Strong, noted New York attorney and diarist of the 19th century, wrote on October 19, 1867: "Had my first glimpse of the unfinished 'Prospect Park' of Brooklyn, which will soon become a formidable rival of our 'Central Park.' It begins its career with well-grown trees, and I am told it commands a noble outlook over the two cities, the harbor and the sea."

Because of financial problems caused by the panic of 1873, construction virtually halted after that year for a number of years. The area in the vicinity of the Litchfield Villa, between the West Drive and Ninth Avenues from Third to Ninth Streets, was not actually completed until after 1885. Most of the work on the various park entrances which gave them their present classical appearance was undertaken between 1895 and 1905.

The Design of the Park and Its Notable Features

The original appearance of the Prospect Park Site was very different from the park one sees today. A series of hills lay along the ridge of the Harbor Hill (or Terminal) Moraine marking the furthest advance of the glacier that formed the western part of Long Island. Interspersed among the hills were gullies and swampy hollows. Below the hills the outwash plain was partially farmland; other land was vacant and covered with coarse grass and weeds. Clay and gravel pits as well as the excavations and embankments of old country roads also marred the site. The greatest advantage was a large group of trees, "not too old to be improved, yet already old enough to be of considerable importance in a landscape." Photographs in the collection of the Long Island Historical Society show the character of the land before construction was begun.

The skill and training of the landscape architects enabled them to see the possibilities in the site. A complete topographical survey, undertaken by Benjamin D. Frost, was necessary to know what preliminary work was essential. A thorough drainage of the ground and the construction of a vast underground drainage system were among the first things to be done. Almost simultaneously, the system of roads, bridle paths, and walks was laid out and graded, usually in accordance with the general topography of the ground. One of the largest tasks was the excavation and filling of the lake which took about four years. Of course, the collection, planting, and transplanting of trees and shrubs were essential for the creation of the desired landscape effects. The construction of a well and waterworks with adjacent reservoir was also necessary to supply the ponds, stream and lake with a sufficient supply of water.

The carefully planned circulation system is one of the more ingenious features of Prospect Park. Olmsted and Vaux successfully adapted the method they had used in Central Park of keeping carriage drives, bridle paths, and walks completely separate from each other. Each type was carefully planned to enable the park visitor to view and enjoy the natural scenery of the park and thereby be refreshed. However, in certain sections the drives, paths and walks functioned as a promenade running parallel to each other so persons could see and be seen, as well as enjoy each other's company. This was especially intended to be the case at the southern end of the park where the drive circles the lake. Olmsted and Vaux discussed this latter concern in the Eleventh Annual Report (January 1871).

Unlike Central Park, Prospect Park has no transverse roads. Instead, the park is surrounded by drives connected to parkways leading from one section of Brooklyn to another. These roads were suggested by and planned according to the recommendations of the landscape architects.

The main method used to separate the pedestrian from vehicular traffic is by means of a series of arches at strategic points which carry the drives over the walks. Two of these, Endale Arch, built 1867-69, and Meadowport Arch, built 1868-70, lead the pedestrian from the park entrance at Grand Army Plaza, beneath the East and West Drives respectively, into the grand expanse of the Long Meadow. Endale Arch, originally known as Enterdale Arch, is constructed of alternating bands of yellow Berea sandstone and New Jersey brownstone. Meadowport Arch, built of sandstone, has an unusual double portal which allows pedestrians to enter from two intersecting directions. Because of the swampy ground in that section of the park the foundations of both arches float on an elaborate caisson system, described by engineer C. C. Martin in the Eighth Annual Report (January 1868). Eastwood Arch, built 1867-68, allowed the pedestrian arriving from the Willink entrance to pass beneath the East Drive and a bridle path into the Nethermead by the Lullwater. Nethermead Arches, built 1868-70, incorporate three arches which allow the pedestrian walk, the stream, and the bridle path to converge beneath the Central Drive. Cleft Ridge Span, built 1871-72, was constructed under Breeze Hill to carry the main walk from the Plaza entrance to the Concert Grove, now the Flower Garden. More elaborately detailed than the other arches, Cleft Ridge Span was constructed of a patented concrete known as béton Coignet. It was the intention of Olmsted and Vaux that the arches be as unobtrusive as possible, "consistent with their objects, with sound permanent construction, and with an honest expression of their purpose." This was to be achieved by setting them in thickets of foliage and allowing the masonry to become covered with vines and creepers.

As one strolls through the park, one encounters a wide variety of landscape features. Entering from Grand Army Plaza, the vast pastoral expanse of the Long Meadow greets the eye. Over a mile in length and covering seventy-five acres, it was artfully planned to give the viewer an impression of infinite space. Bordering the Long Meadow are extensive wooded areas which Olmsted and Vaux called the East, West, and Mid Woods. These were skillfully adapted from old forest trees already in the area. Between the south end of the Long Meadow and the lake are the elevated lands of Quaker Hill, Breeze Hill, and Lookout Hill, 186 feet above sea level, the highest point in Prospect Park. The lower slopes of Lookout Hill gradually descend to the Nethermead by the Lullwater, a gently rolling meadow which was especially popular for picnics in the 19th century.

One of the most picturesque features of the park is the meandering water system which begins at Swan Boat Lake by the Long Meadow, originally known as the Pools. A stream, here known as the Ambergill, leads from Swan Boat Lake through a deep secluded ravine formed by glacial deposits which have left many boulders and continues on into the Mid Wood. As the woods open into the Nethermead the stream passes through the Binnen Water Pool and Lily Pond Lake, then empties over a waterfall into the Lullwater. The serene Lullwater with its serpentine design eventually leads to the fifty-seven acre lake, one of the most impressive achievements of the park design. The lake, which was especially popular for ice-skating in the 19th century, boasted a larger skating area than Central Park. The entire water system was man-made with the exception of a portion of the stream.

Other interesting landscape features are the Vale of Cashmere and the Pools, located between Flatbush Avenue and the East Drive. Planned in 1895 by Park Superintendent Rudolph Ulrich, the Pools were originally known as the Rose Garden. They replaced a children's playground which formerly occupied the site.

The trees and other plantings are an integral part of the overall landscape effect. Neither Olmsted nor Vaux were professional horticulturists, so they had to rely on trained assistants who knew precisely what trees and plants were necessary to create the exact landscape effects that the landscape architects desired. Among those who supervised the details of the planting were Ignaz Pilat, who had also worked on Central Park, H. W. S. Cleveland, G. D. and William McMillan, George Stockford, and O. C. Bullard. One of Olmsted's and Vaux's successful horticultural effects was the judicious opening-up of the natural woodlands by transplanting trees from one spot to another, greatly facilitated by the invention of engineer John Y. Culyer of a tree-moving machine.

While the park is rich in such original native tree specimens as many varieties of oak and maple, it has always been known for its many exotic plants and trees which are far too numerous to list here. The Twenty-Fifth Annual Report (January 1886) gives an extensive listing of the many kinds of trees growing in the park at that time. Trees and Shrubs of Prospect Park (1902, 1906) by Louis Harmon Peet and Tree Trails in Prospect Park (1968) by George Kalmbacher and M. M. Graff provide detailed botanical tours of the park for those who are interested. The park's most famous tree, commemorated in a poem by Marianne Moore, is the Camperdown Elm (Ulmus glabra camperdownii) which is over 100 years old. Created by grafting a prostrate form of the Scotch elm onto a short trunk of the normal Scotch elm, it develops limbs that twist and curve back on themselves in an intricate and exotic manner.

Olmsted and Vaux planned a number of formal spaces for the park. The Concert Grove, now the Flower Garden, was executed in 1870-74 on the eastern shore of the lake to allow visitors to enjoy promenade concerts. The musicians were located on a small island in the lake while the audience faced them seated beneath a grove of plane trees. The terraced area is divided and lined by handsome stone railings, walls, and parapets. Flower planters and fountain basins are also a part of the architectural decoration. All are carved with Victorian Gothic ornament incorporating plants, flowers, animals, and birds. The designs were probably by Calvert Vaux, possibly assisted by his architectural partner Jacob Wrey Mould. The detail is very similar to that used on the Terrace in Central Park which is known to have been designed by Mould.

The other formal element planned by Olmsted and Vaux is the Plaza approach, later renamed Grand Army Plaza. Originally the center island was occupied only by a fountain and a statue of Abraham Lincoln, which was later moved to the Flower Garden. The present fountain, designed by Eugene Savage, dates from 1932. The island is framed by thickly planted crescent mounds. Sculptured figures of Gouverneur Kemble Warren, Henry Warner Slocum, and Alexander J. C. Skene were added in 1896 and 1905. Dominating the Plaza is Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial Arch, a designated New York City Landmark, designed by John H. Duncan and built in 1889-92. Such formal classicism also manifests itself in the four giant Doric columns flanking the entrance drive--two were originally planned by Duncan--and the twelve-sided shelters between them, designed by Stanford White of McKim, Mead & White between 1894 and 1896.

The firm of McKim, Mead & White was also responsible for the classical appearance of a number of other park entrances. Limestone pedestals flanking the Third Street entrance, erected in 1895, were ornamented with bronze panthers designed by Alexander Phimister Proctor and unveiled on December 2, 1898. Flanking the entrance at Bartel-Pritchard Circle is a pair of giant columns with urns, inspired by a famous acanthus column of Delphi. Designed by Stanford White, they were erected in 1906. The Park Circle entrance is dominated by Frederick MacMonnies' Horse Tamers, completed in 1899. The pedestals and flanking walls designed by McKim, Mead & White were executed in 1895. The curved granite colonnade supporting a wisteria trellis at the Parkside-Ocean Avenue entrance was completed in 1904. Finally, the Willink entrance, flanked by twenty-foot high granite turrets, was executed in 1896. The Ninth Street entrance, although not by the firm, was also given a classical treatment by the addition of the Lafayette monument, executed by Daniel Chester French and unveiled in 1917.

This spirit of formal classicism, in contrast to the picturesque naturalism of Olmsted and Vaux, was inspired by the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 which led to the "City Beautiful" movement and the use of classical architectural elements as a tool of urban planning.

Olmsted and Vaux felt strongly that any building in the park should serve a secondary function--the landscape and the preservation of the natural setting were their foremost considerations. Nonetheless, they designed a number of structures which they felt enhanced the general appearance of the park. Among the first of these to be erected were a number of rustic shelters, designed to provide pleasant shady resting places and cover from the rain. Several of these have been reconstructed along the shores of the lake in recent years. A dairy house, no longer standing, was built in the Mid Wood in 1868-69. A refreshment house, also no longer extant, was provided in the Concert Grove in 1871-72. Olmsted's and Vaux's recommendation for a lookout tower and refectory at the top of Lookout Hill was never carried out. A portion of the Oriental Pavilion, built according to Vaux's design in 1874 as an open air cafe, can still be seen in the Flower Garden. Although partially damaged by fire in 1974, one can still observe the intricate cast-iron elements of the original structure. The Music Pagoda was built in 1888 in a new concert grove created by the Nethermead. Recently restored, the structure has an exotic Chinese character.

A number of structures were built in the early 20th century in the newly popular revivals of classical styles. These buildings tend to dominate rather than be subordinate to the park setting. Three of them are the work of the firm of Helmle, Huberty & Hudswell: the Boathouse on the Lullwater (1905), a designated New York City Landmark, inspired by the Sansovino Library in Venice; the Tennis House (1909-10) in the Long Meadow which has the air of a casino; and the Willink Entrance Comfort Station (1912), a handsome yet functional building designed in the classical mode. The Grecian Shelter, a designated New York City Landmark, was erected in 1903-04 on the South Lake Drive. Designed by McKim, Mead & White, it is variously known as the Croquet Shelter or the Classical Peristyle.

Two residential buildings, both designated New York City Landmarks, are also situated within the park boundaries. The Lefferts Homestead on Flatbush Avenue near the Willink entrance was moved to the park in 1918. A fine example of Dutch Colonial architecture, the house was built by Lt. Peter Lefferts following the destruction of his previous home during the battle of Long Island. The Litchfield Villa, near Prospect Park West, is the work of architect A. J. Davis. Completed in 1857 in the Italianate style for Edwin Clark Litchfield, the mansion is now the Brooklyn head-

quarters of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Administration.

In addition to the notable sculpture at the entrances, previously mentioned, a number of others should also be noted. Just inside the Grand Army Plaza entrance stands the bronze figure of James S. T. Stranahan, executed by Frederick MacMonnies and unveiled in 1891. Paid for by public subscription, this statue was a tribute to Stranahan's long years of service to Brooklyn and Prospect Park. MacMonnies, born and raised in Brooklyn, received also the city's commissions for the four eagles atop the Doric columns and the Quadriga and Army and Navy groups on the Memorial Arch, all of which can be seen at this entrance.

The largest group of sculptures can be found in the Flower Garden. Many are portrait statues of renowned musicians won for Brooklyn by local singing associations in national competition. Three monuments memorialize the battle of Long Island in 1776. The Battle Pass Marker by Frederick W. Ruckstuhl, erected in 1923, and the Dongan Oak Monument are both near the East Drive north of the Zoo. The Maryland Monument on Lookout Hill was erected in 1895.

Conclusion

Olmsted and Vaux had created Prospect Park for the people of Brooklyn, and the people were eager to enjoy its beauty and recreational benefits. Several years after the park was begun, the Park Commissioners "congratulated their fellow-citizens that Brooklyn has at length a Park worthy of the name, and commensurate with the wants of a great city. A spot richly garnished with natural beauty, whose quiet repose, luxuriant foliage, and ocean breezes may tempt from too engrossing business pursuits, and lead to better things. A broad precinct free of access; permanent in duration; guarded well from rude intruders--where genius may bring its offerings, and nature and art blend together to work out images of beauty; open to rich and poor; to the sick and well; the man of business and the man of work." Since the park's beginning, it has been the prime recreational site of Brooklyn and its most notable green space, offering a country-like respite from brick and concrete. Millions of New Yorkers visit the park every year, both to enjoy its scenery and to use its recreational facilities. In keeping with the original ideals of the park, it still belongs to all the people of New York.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, natural features, landscaping, waterways, architecture and other features of this park, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that Prospect Park 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, Prospect Park is one of the largest and most beautiful urban parks in this country, that it was laid out in accordance with a carefully prepared plan, that it provided a large open space for recreational purposes in Brooklyn, that its creation was guided with imagination and foresight by landscape architects Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, that the creation of the park was greatly facilitated by the efforts of James S. T. Stranahan, president of the Park Commission for twenty-two years, that the park is noted for its varied landscape effects of meadow, woods and lake, that the extensive variety of native and exotic plants and trees contributes to the beauty of the park, that the circulation system successfully separates three types of traffic--pedestrian, equestrian and vehicular--without encroaching on the scenery, and that Prospect Park continues to be enjoyed every year by millions of New York City residents.

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 Scenic Landmark, Prospect Park, Borough of Brooklyn, which consists of the property bounded by the eastern curb line of Prospect Park West, Bartel-Pritchard Circle roadway, the inner curb line of Bartel-Pritchard Circle enclosing the central island, Bartel-Pritchard Circle roadway, the northern and eastern curb lines of Prospect Park Southwest, Park Circle roadway, the inner curb line of Park Circle enclosing the central island, Park Circle roadway, the northern curb line of Parkside Avenue, the western curb line of Ocean Avenue, the western curb line of Flatbush Avenue, Grand Army Plaza roadway, the inner curb lines of the outer roadway enclosing the raised mall areas of Grand Army Plaza, Grand Army Plaza roadway, to the eastern curb line of Prospect Park West, and designates as its Landmark Site Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1117, Lot 1.

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