

DIME SAVINGS BANK, FIRST FLOOR INTERIOR consisting of the eastern DeKalb Avenue entrance vestibule and lobby; the banking room, including the rotunda and dome; the mezzanine above said DeKalb Avenue entrance lobby; and the fixtures and interior floor surfaces; windows; doors; chandeliers and lighting fixtures; decorative metalwork; balustrades; clocks; tellers' counters; and attached furnishings and decorative elements; 9 DeKalb Avenue, a/k/a 9-31 DeKalb Avenue and 86 Albee Square (formerly Fleet Street), Brooklyn. Built 1906-08; Mowbray & Uffinger, architects. Enlarged 1931-32; Halsey, McCormack & Helmer, architects.

Landmark Site: Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 149, Lot 75 in part, consisting of the property encompassed by a line beginning at the southeast corner of the lot, running 173'-4 1/2" west along DeKalb Avenue, then continuing along the outer edge of the southeast side of the portico, then running 46'-10 3/4" northwest along the front of the portico, then continuing along the outer edge of the northwest edge of the portico, then running 202'-2" northeast along Albee Square (Fleet Street), then continuing 89'-9 1/2" southeast, 25'-0" southwest, 9'-4" northwest, 17'-2" southwest, 9'-4" southeast, 80'-9 5/8" southeast, and 68'-0 3/4" south, to the point of beginning, as indicated on the Site Map.

On June 15, 1993, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as an Interior Landmark of the Dime Savings Bank **FIRST FLOOR INTERIOR**, consisting of the eastern DeKalb Avenue entrance vestibule and lobby; the banking room, including the rotunda and dome; the mezzanine above said DeKalb Avenue entrance lobby; and the fixtures and interior floor surfaces; windows; doors; chandeliers and lighting fixtures; decorative metalwork; balustrades; clocks; tellers' counters; and attached furnishings and decorative elements; and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 4). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. One witness spoke in favor of designation and no witnesses spoke in opposition to designation. A representative of the owner expressed uncertainty about the proposed designation and requested that the hearing be continued to a later date. The Commission subsequently received one written submission in favor of designation. The hearing was continued on September 21, 1993 (Item No. 4), at which time the representative of the owner did not express opposition to designation, but voiced concerns regarding the impact on banking operations, post-1930s elements of the interior, and the extent of the Landmark Site.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Summary

The home office of the Dime Savings Bank, incorporating a neo-Classical interior, was built in 1906-08 and vastly enlarged and altered in 1931-32. The building with its interior banking hall is among Brooklyn's most notable works of commercial architecture and stands as a symbol of that institution's long and significant role in the history of the borough. Founded

in 1859, the Dime has always maintained its headquarters in downtown Brooklyn and has been directed by many prominent Brooklynites who were instrumental in the historical development of Brooklyn. When the bank first acquired the unusually-shaped site on DeKalb Avenue, which it continues to occupy, it commissioned the firm of Mowbray & Uffinger to design an imposing structure. Built in 1906-08, it was articulated as a temple form encompassing a large, uninterrupted banking room interior surmounted by a central skylight. Following several decades of institutional growth, the bank building — by then serving the largest savings institution in the borough — was substantially altered in 1931-32; the new design reinforced the association of the bank with classical architecture and emphasized the visual continuity between the old and new buildings. The monumental stone-clad interior, expressed in a strongly geometric manner, features a central rotunda of marble columns supporting a soaring dome, polychromatic and patterned pavement and ceiling, and an ornamental program which appropriately allegorizes industry and progress, particularly through the symbol of the Winged Cap ("Mercury") dime. The alterations and additions were designed by the firm of Halsey, McCormack & Helmer, specialists in bank buildings. For much of the twentieth century, the Dime has ranked among the largest savings banks in the country and its impact on the development of Brooklyn has been pervasive. Though now established far beyond its Brooklyn borders, the bank has retained the DeKalb Avenue building as its headquarters and the first-floor interior remains remarkably intact.

History of the Site¹

Kings County formerly consisted of six towns, one of which was the Town of Brooklyn. During the first three decades of the nineteenth century, Brooklyn developed as both an important ferry-linked suburb of New York City and a significant urban community in its own right, far outpacing its fellow Kings County neighbors. Robert Fulton's ferry company, by introducing steam service across the East River in 1814, facilitated frequent, reliable transportation for passengers and freight. Contemporary population increases led to the incorporation in 1816 of a part of the Town of Brooklyn as the Village of Brooklyn, an area extending from the waterfront on the north and west, to the approximate locations of today's Atlantic Avenue on the south, a diagonal edge aligning with Red Hook Lane on the southeast, and Navy Street and the Navy Yard on the east. By the 1820s the Town was a bucolic suburb inhabited in part by the families of Manhattan businessmen, while the dense population of the Village promoted local commerce and industry. Increasing urbanization required administrative changes, leading in 1834 to the transformation of the Village and larger Town into the City of Brooklyn, and reinforcing the independence of the community from New York City.

Between 1834 and 1860 Brooklyn grew to be the nation's third largest city and contained over

ninety-five percent of the population in the county. Having consolidated with the City of Williamsburg and Town of Bushwick, the ever-growing hub expanded due to industrialization, improved means of transportation, and large groups of immigrants — particularly New Englanders and Europeans arriving to take advantage of the new employment opportunities. Across the East River, New York's emergence as the country's busiest trading port also had a spill-over effect in Brooklyn, fueling that city's rapid growth beyond the original Village lines. Development moved toward and eventually beyond what would become the busy intersection of Fulton and DeKalb avenues, adjacent to the future location of the Dime Savings Bank Building on the then-trapezoidal block defined by DeKalb Avenue, Fleet Street (part of which is now Albee Square), Lafayette Street (demolished), and DeBevoise Street. By the 1850s, that vicinity was developed with a mix of frame and brick dwellings and frame industrial buildings; among non-residential sites were a macaroni manufactory, a chocolate and mustard mill, and a coal and wood yard. The block on which the present bank building stands was occupied at mid-century by dwellings and manufactories, the Fleet Street Methodist Church (1852-53, demolished) and school, and a large oil cloth manufactory, which was replaced by Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church (1857-58, demolished).

The development of Brooklyn produced a great demand for the services of banks, real estate agencies, title insurance companies, and law firms, all of which sought to locate at the civic center around City Hall (now Borough Hall). The civic center was situated along the city's main spine of development, Fulton Street — which ran from the ferry terminal, past City Hall, and then eastward toward the growing community of Bedford — and was served by an expanding network of horsecar lines. Reinforcing the importance of the area was the erection of the Brooklyn Bridge (1867-83), which passed over the bustling waterfront and connected to land near City Hall. The bridge terminal was soon served by elevated, steam-powered railway lines; the Kings County Elevated Railway (begun in 1888 and commonly called the "Fulton Street El") followed the path of Fulton Street, passing by the present site of the Dime Savings Bank.

During the last two decades of the century, Brooklyn annexed the remaining parts of the county. By the time Brooklyn was consolidated into the City of New York in 1898, the public buildings and financial institutions of the expansive borough clustered around City Hall (subsequently Borough Hall) and were bordered on the east by a mercantile district of dry goods stores soon served by Brooklyn's third bridge, the Manhattan Bridge (1905-09), which further redirected traffic patterns. It connected Manhattan, via the Flatbush Avenue Extension, to Flatbush Avenue, one of the borough's principal thoroughfares. Coinciding with the extension of Flatbush Avenue, which replaced the eastern portion of block 2084 (now 149), yielding its current triangular shape, the Dime Savings Bank was erected in 1906-08 on the southwest corner of that block (see fig. 1).

Institutional History of the Dime Savings Bank²

The Dime Savings Bank of Brooklyn was chartered in April 1859, and opened for business in June of that year, at which time it was possible to open an account with only a dime. It first occupied a small room on the ground floor of the Post Office Building at 211 Montague Street. Its first president was John A. Cross, a popular politician and an alderman of the seventh ward. The first Board of Directors consisted of prominent Brooklynites, including Cyrus Porter Smith, George Hall, Samuel S. Powell, Conklin Brush, Daniel Chauncey, Alanson Trask, and Moses S. Beach. The majority of the early directors were prosperous merchants with

businesses in Manhattan, and several directors were former mayors of Brooklyn. The first depositor was one John Halsey (possibly the trustee with that name), who invested fifty dollars. After the first business day, the bank had ninety depositors and after a month that number grew to exceed one thousand.

Continued growth necessitated larger quarters and the bank relocated without sacrificing prime location. Its subsequent addresses were the Hamilton Building at 40-44 Court Street (later, the site of the Temple Bar Building) and the northern half of the Halsey Building (later the Arbuckle Building) at 67-73 Fulton Street, both facing City Hall. By 1884 the Dime had about 40,000 depositors, with about \$12 million of deposits; the institution's trustees continued to include the city's most prominent citizens: John W. Hunter, Abraham J. Beekman, Alfred Smith Barnes, and Jeremiah P. Robinson.³ Under the leadership of these men and their fellow trustees, the bank purchased the site of the Hooley Opera House for \$250,000 and built its own structure (1883-84, Mercein Thomas) on the site, located at the southwest corner of Remsen and Court streets (fig. 2).

The institution moved to its present location at the corner of DeKalb Avenue and Fleet Street (now Albee Square) in 1908, following the establishment of the transportation hub and adjacent businesses situated to the east of Borough Hall. Steady growth in the number of depositors and their deposits continued until 1910, after which prosperity absolutely boomed. The building was enlarged in 1918. By 1920 depositors and their deposits almost doubled from 1910 figures, and between 1920 and 1932 deposits nearly tripled to \$170 million. The opening of a branch bank in Bensonhurst in 1929 and the acquisition of the Navy Savings Bank in 1930 made the Dime Brooklyn's busiest savings bank and the only one in the borough with more than one branch. Reflecting this period of spectacular growth, the Dime's modernization program included opening a Flatbush branch in 1932 and vastly enlarging the home office in 1931-32. By 1933, the Dime was the seventh largest bank in the state; its 195,000 depositors were served by a home office on a newly-enlarged site, which was served by trolleys and subway lines, buses, and the Atlantic Avenue Terminal of the Long Island Railroad, and convenient to furniture stores, department stores, and many smaller businesses.

Interiors of Savings Banks in New York⁴

During the last decades of the nineteenth century and first decades of the twentieth century, the design of savings banks was affected greatly by the desire to be simultaneously convenient and impressive. Since savings banks, unlike commercial banks, did not need to be located on expensive downtown sites, they could afford to build for their own exclusive use — as opposed to providing office space to offset site acquisition costs — and the resulting structures were much smaller than those of commercial banks. On the other hand, compared to commercial banks, savings banks were more often visited by the general public and thus found it prudent to convey a reassuring image of stability in a time of volatile economic conditions.

Historic associations with the civic pride that gave rise to the treasuries and temples built in ancient Greece, as well as the innovative spatial arrangements reached by the architects of ancient Rome, who linked the idea of civic pride with their vaulted designs for large public shelters, law courts, and baths, prompted modern architects to return to these classical prototypes. The ancient Roman innovation of grand domed spaces had been revived by Renaissance architects and, repeated subsequently in a multitude of variations, became the source for the new banking temples. The type and its associated imagery were symbolic of a bank's wealth and stability, and were intended to inspire confidence in the investor.

Architectural firms produced impressive manifestations of stability through diverse architectural means. York & Sawyer's Franklin Savings Bank (1899, demolished), at the southeast corner of Eighth Avenue and West 42nd Street in Manhattan, featured a coffered, barrel-vaulted ceiling on flattened piers. Helmle & Huberty's Greenpoint Savings Bank (1906-08) at the southwest corner of Manhattan Avenue and Calyer Street, now in the Greenpoint Historic District, juxtaposed a Doric temple front exterior with an interior covered by a Guastavino dome. George B. Post's Williamsburgh Savings Bank (1870-75, with later additions) at 175 Broadway in Brooklyn, and R. H. Robertson's New York Bank for Savings (1896-97) at Eighth Avenue and West 14th Street (both designated New York City Landmarks) combine temple-like colonnades and Pantheon-inspired domes. The exemplar of the type is found in McKim, Mead & White's Bowery Savings Bank (1893-95, a designated Landmark) at

Grand Street and the Bowery, the sumptuous neo-Classical interior of which exhibited a Corinthian colonnade supporting an entablature and a deeply coffered, coved ceiling lit by a domed skylight. One design which closely followed Stanford White's lead at the Bowery — and did so quite successfully — was Mowbray & Uffinger's Dime Savings Bank.

Following the First World War, New York had achieved its status as a world financial center, and its new bank buildings continued to project the dignified and traditional image preferred by the world of finance.⁵ This was typically accomplished through the associations implicit in the neo-Renaissance and neo-Classical styles, combined with spatially impressive banking rooms. Examples are the neo-Classical Greenwich Savings Bank (1924, York & Sawyer, a designated Landmark and Interior) at West 36th Street, featuring an elliptical banking room crowned by a skylight in its domed coffered ceiling; the Central Savings Bank (1928, York & Sawyer), a designated Landmark (now the Apple Bank for Savings) at Broadway and West 73rd Street; and a branch of the Staten Island Savings Bank (1923-25, Delano & Aldrich) at 81 Water Street in Staten Island, which featured a round portico at its corner and an elliptical double-height banking room.

The Original Dime Savings Bank Building on the Site⁶

The new home office of the Dime (see fig. 3), the original bank building on the DeKalb Avenue site, was begun in 1906 and opened for business in December 1908, under president John Laurence Marcellus. The irregular site, purchased for \$230,000, posed a difficult design problem which was solved in an ingenious way. The bank interior, entered on the chamfered side of the building, was organized around a vast banking room lined with giant fluted pilasters and large windows and crowned by a circular forty-foot-diameter copper skylight, its leaded and stained glass decorated with classically-inspired motifs. Beneath the dome extended the large central tellers' area, separated from the customers by a counter screen of marble and highly decorated bronze. The architectural vocabulary and the high quality of the craftsmanship made this space another striking example of the classical trend in bank architecture.

The architects were Louis M. Mowbray and Justin M. Uffinger (dates unknown). Mowbray

belonged to a Brooklyn-based family of builders and real estate developers who were active in Manhattan and Brooklyn from the 1880s to the early twentieth century and specialized in residential work.⁷ The firm of Mowbray & Uffinger, listed in directories at several Manhattan addresses between 1895 and 1921,⁸ produced many residences: a row of limestone-fronted townhouses (1899-1900) now in the Riverside-West 105th Street Historic District; the Louis M. Mowbray Residence (1904), a neo-Georgian townhouse at 874 Carroll Street, and a freestanding neo-Federal mansion (1910) at 1 Montgomery Place, both now in the Park Slope Historic District. The firm also designed the neo-French Renaissance Newark (N.J.) City Hall (1902-06), and two neo-Classical bank buildings: the People's Trust Company Bank (1904) at 181-183 Montague Street in Brooklyn, and the Chatham & Phenix National Bank (circa 1916-17) at 205-209 East 57th Street (subsequently altered as the Sutton Theater) in Manhattan. No other information has been uncovered about Justin M. Uffinger, except that he had been a resident of Jersey City and by the end of the partnership he had moved to Summit, New Jersey.

In 1918, under the direction of bank president Russell S. Walker, a rectangular addition of seventy-one by fifty-seven feet, sheathed in granite and marble to match the original building, was erected along the Fleet Street side of the bank,⁹ replacing Nos. 67-69, 71, and 73 Fleet Street, three buildings of two stories on raised basements. It was designed by the firm of Russell Tracy Walker & Leroy P. Ward, Associate Architects. Little is known about the partnership of Walker & Ward, which is listed in Manhattan directories from 1914 to 1921, though several of Ward's projects built in the 1920s were published subsequently, including residential buildings in Great Neck, Long Island.¹⁰

Design and Construction of the Enlarged Interior¹¹

In 1931 the Dime was headed by president Frederick W. Jackson (1850-1932). A native of Brooklyn whose grandfather had owned the property which became the Brooklyn Navy Yard, Jackson began working in the glass business and transferred to the Banking Department of New York State before entering the employ of the Dime in 1894. By 1931, Jackson was president of the bank, the resources of which had increased six-fold since its move in 1908 to the present site yet

which had had only one modestly-sized expansion, as mentioned above. Therefore, an application to substantially alter the building was filed in March 1931, by the firm of Halsey, McCormack & Helmer, on behalf of the bank.

The design capitalized on the association of the bank with classical architecture (it was considered at the time of its completion to be "a modern adaptation of the Roman style,") and the visual continuity between the old and new interiors. The original spacious banking hall — lined with pilasters and large windows and featuring a circular skylight — was translated into a vast banking hall lined with pilasters and tall windows and featuring a lofty central rotunda. To ensure the greatest symbolic impact, the rotunda was reserved for new accounts and the estates department. Adjacent to the banking hall on the eastern and northern corners of the lot were five-story volumes containing offices and other private spaces of the bank; at the fifth story, the drum of the rotunda was surrounded by rooms which filled in the envelope of the exterior walls. Likewise, the basement was divided into smaller spaces to serve the needs of the bank.

The interior of the massive banking hall (figs. 4-6) assumes the shape of a triangle with two chamfered corners and one elongated corner. At its center is a rotunda of twelve gigantic Corinthian columns, an elaborate entablature, and a fifty-two-foot-diameter dome. Polychrome hexagonal patterns dominate the articulation of the marble floor and coffered ceiling. The eastern DeKalb Avenue entrance includes a vestibule and a triangular lobby, which connects to the banking hall via a short flight of stairs divided by two Corinthian columns which align with piers (figs. 7-8). That corner of the building contains a mezzanine level, the former Ladies' Lounge, which opens onto the main banking space. The western DeKalb Avenue entrance is simply an elongation of the main space (figs. 9-10). The third corner (fig. 11) and the northeast side of the banking hall give access to offices and service spaces (which are not subject to this designation). Long, bronze-trimmed marble tellers' counters, located along the perimeter of the banking room, were originally equipped with bronze-trimmed glass upper portions, now removed.¹² Other original interior finishes included hollow steel doors and trim, and bronze and copper Kalamein window and door frames.

The imaginative decorative program of the exterior, which appropriately allegorizes industry and progress, was continued throughout the interior. Within the lobby of the eastern DeKalb Avenue entrance, transom grilles and a bronze gate display the labors of humankind (figs. 13-14). In the banking hall, benches are inscribed with quotes extolling thrift from *Poor Richard's Almanac*. The image used most extensively on the interior is the Winged Cap dime or "Mercury" dime, the bank's quintessential symbol, since at the time of the bank's founding in 1859 one could open a savings account with just a dime. Designed by Adolph Alexander Weinman and minted from 1916 to 1945, the Winged Cap dime depicts Elsie Kachel Stevens dressed as Ms. Liberty in a close-fitting, brimless winged cap, and crowned by the word "LIBERTY"; the image was often mistaken for that of Mercury, the Roman god of eloquence and feats of skill, usually identified by his *petasos*, a flat and broad-brimmed winged hat. The opposite side of the coin bears an image of the ancient Roman *fascis*, or executioner's axe bound within a group of rods, which in Roman law connoted the power to kill mercifully by the blade or mercilessly by the rods.¹³ Representations of both sides of the dime appear in silver on the otherwise gilded capitals of the rotunda columns (fig. 16) and in the frieze beneath the dome and along the outer walls.

To avoid disrupting business, the addition was built first and, though meant ultimately for offices, was used for all banking activities while the original structure underwent extensive renovation. Work, which was assigned to the William Kennedy Construction Company, was completed in December 1932, and the whole building opened at that time. The entire area of the building had been increased by almost 14,000 square feet to over 29,000 square feet at a cost of \$2.5 million. New construction included sub-basements and a mezzanine level. Bank president Jackson died during construction, so the grand opening occurred under Philip A. Benson (1881/82-1946), who was widely known in banking circles. A Brooklyn native who had risen through the insurance and real estate fields before joining the Dime in 1917, he was president of the Savings Bank Association of New York, active in banking affairs at the national level, and a noted civic leader and philanthropist.

The Firm of Halsey, McCormack & Helmer¹⁴

The architects, Halsey, McCormack & Helmer, Inc., maintained an office at 286 Fifth Avenue, Manhattan, from 1928 or 1929 into the 1960s.¹⁵ In 1920 Hayward S. Halsey co-founded the architectural and real estate development company of Thomas Bruce Boyd and then changed its name to Halsey, McCormack & Helmer in 1925. George H. McCormack (d. 1954) started his professional career as a banker and was also an officer of the Boyd company before co-founding the firm which bore his name. Robert Helmer, whose name often followed the firm's full title in their advertisements ("Halsey, McCormack & Helmer, Inc., Robert Helmer, R.A., Architects and Engineers"), was a registered architect in New York.¹⁶ One can assume that he was the trained architect and supervisor of a staff of designers. The firm often contracted with consulting engineers, among whom were Lange & Noske.

For more than thirty years Halsey, McCormack & Helmer, Inc. specialized in bank buildings and was involved in the construction or enlargement of over two dozen such structures. From the Williamsburgh Savings Bank's 512-foot skyscraper (1927-29, a designated Landmark) in downtown Brooklyn to the Seamen's Bank for Savings (1955, now a branch of Chase Manhattan Bank) at 30 Wall Street, the firm designed bank buildings and branch offices for most of the leading savings banks in the metropolitan area as well as in upstate New York, Long Island, and New Jersey.¹⁷ During the Spring of 1931, as plans were filed for the enlargement of the Dime home office, two of the firm's recently-completed bank buildings were recognized by Chambers of Commerce as excellent designs: the Ridgewood Savings Bank in Queens and the Kings County Savings Bank in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. That the firm could maintain such a specialized practice recalls the near-monopoly on bank design which the firm of York & Sawyer sustained within the first three decades of this century. Halsey, McCormack & Helmer advertised assiduously in the *Savings Bank Journal* and representatives of the firm attended the annual meetings of the National Association of Savings Banks.¹⁸ Like Edward Palmer York, who had won many of his firm's large banking commissions,¹⁹ George McCormack was familiar with bankers and banking. Halsey, McCormack & Helmer's predominance in bank design in New York in the 1930s, '40s, and '50s can be attributed, in part, to McCormack's connections in banking circles.²⁰

The firm's success is also attributable to certain points of innovative construction. After the First World War, American architects and engineers continued to collaborate in the development of steel-frame construction in order to achieve even greater spatial flexibility than had been realized in the previous decades. For example, at Halsey, McCormack & Helmer's Williamsburgh Savings Bank Building the steel framing had to accommodate the sixty-three foot-high banking room and superimposed twenty-six-story office tower. New office towers offered only one of the challenges facing architects and their consulting engineers. Halsey, McCormack & Helmer was commissioned to enlarge existing bank buildings in 1931-32 — the home office of the Dime Savings Bank of Brooklyn, characterized by its unusually spacious banking hall, and the Onondaga County Savings Bank in Syracuse, New York.²¹ The wide experience gained with framing in such large commissions prompted these architects and engineers to adapt this flexibility to smaller buildings as well, such as at the firm's Brevoort Savings Bank (1931) at 1281 Fulton Street, in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn.

Of the many bank buildings Halsey, McCormack & Helmer designed before 1932, several are in the Romanesque and Art Deco styles, and at least a dozen are modern variations of neo-Classicism. Stylistically, the firm's early work reflects prototypes created by York & Sawyer, particularly the Romanesque/Byzantine East 42nd Street Branch of the Bowery Savings Bank and the neo-Classical Greenwich Savings Bank (see above) at Broadway and West 36th Street. The Greenwich Savings Bank is evoked by Halsey, McCormack & Helmer's home office of the Dime, a major example of that firm's classical design.

Description of the Interior

The neo-Classical character of the building is expressed in a strongly geometric manner (figs. 4-5), from the overall layout of the spaces to details such as floor and ceiling patterns. The bank interior includes a vast banking room, in plan roughly a triangle, measuring about 160 feet per side but with truncated corners, which circumscribes a central cylinder, and, at the eastern DeKalb Avenue entrance, a vestibule and triangular lobby surmounted by a mezzanine space.

The stars and hexagonal figures in the

patterned, polychromatic marble floor echo the shapes in the coffered polychromatic ceiling. The ceiling is furthermore edged in a band alternating circle-framed stars and rectangular-framed flowers. Walls terminate in a frieze featuring silver Winged cap dime medallions. Large windows and doorways capped by scrolled keystones pierce the relatively plain sandstone walls, which are rusticated at the bottom and articulated with fluted pilasters at the top (fig. 5). Marble balustrades edge the mezzanine balconies which overlook the main banking room.

Twelve fluted columns of dark red German marble, resting on black marble plinths and embellished with dime-enriched gilded Corinthian capitals, form a rotunda which rises through the center of the room to support the dome. The smooth underside of the dome, painted sky blue and illuminated by hidden lights, boldly contrasts with its polychrome entablature, which features garlands, dimes, rosettes, dentils, modillions, and acroteria. At the center of the rotunda is a bronze clock (fig. 12) with three faces, set on a tall pedestal of black marble, which is surrounded by a circular marble bench. Set between the columns and enclosing the central space are pink marble benches with scrolled sides, legs carved to represent animals, and inscriptions of quotations from *Poor Richard's Almanac*. From the columns extend bronze and glass customers' tables — some are original (fig. 15), others are later additions of somewhat simpler design.

Six bronze chandeliers (fig. 17) light the main space, around which are arranged the tellers' counters. Resting on a black marble base, each counter has a pink marble face with bronze vent grilles and wave-patterned bronze trim. (Areas behind the counters have been altered to accommodate current banking functions.) At the north apex of the triangle, surviving historic elements include wood benches on marble bases, a pink marble balustrade, and pink marble door posts at passages behind the counters (one opening retains its bronze door). The wall behind those features contains non-historic doors and windows with metal frames and transparent and opaque glazing. Another opening retains its bronze service door and paneled transom with central grille.

At the southwest corner (figs. 9-10), paired marble columns flank the main entrance which contains its elaborately decorated and crested

bronze surround; the metal-framed glazed doors are not historic. At the southeast corner (fig. 8), paired marble columns divide a marble staircase rising from a triangular lobby. The lobby features scalloped pilasters, a marble wainscot, a Greek key cornice, a coffered ceiling, and highly ornamented bronze screens that span the lobby doorways and gates that guard the entrance to the basement vaults (figs. 13-14). A small vestibule which connects the lobby to DeKalb Avenue has marble walls with bronze grilles and a coffered ceiling. Above the eastern DeKalb Avenue entrance, at the mezzanine, is the former Ladies' Lounge (fig. 8), decorated with scenic wallpaper between a marble wainscot and trim and polychrome cornice; the terrazzo flooring, edged in marble, reiterates the banking room's hexagonal motif. The bronze light fixture is a smaller version of those in the banking room and all details are harmonious with those of the larger space. The former Ladies' Lounge opens onto and is visible from the banking room below.

The spatial character, architectural elements, and finishes of the spaces described above survive remarkably intact. Non-historic elements added to the interior include: automatic teller machines and enclosures; metal-framed glazed doors and pendant light fixtures at the entrances; ceiling-mounted recessed spotlights; small light fixtures attached to the central columns; security cameras; merchandising signage; and wall-mounted recessed fluorescent lighting.

Subsequent History of the Dime Savings Bank²²

The Dime Savings Bank continued its phenomenal growth during the decades following the enlargement of its home office. Contemporaneous with that project was the opening of branches in Bensonhurst (1929) and Flatbush (1932), both already mentioned. The home office was again expanded in 1940 when the bank acquired an existing building at the northern corner of the block, using it for a time as a drive-

in bank, and in 1942 when the bank erected the surviving five-story addition (neither is subject to this designation). In recognition of the bank's beneficence, the borough of Brooklyn temporarily renamed the adjacent Macomber Square "Dime Square" in 1959.

Off site, later expansion took place in Coney Island and other Brooklyn neighborhoods, Valley Stream (Long Island), Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island, so that in recent years many branches have been operating in the metropolitan area. During the second half of the twentieth century, the Dime has been among the largest savings banks in the country, and twice the size of the next largest Brooklyn-based savings bank, The Williamsburgh. This success was achieved in part by expanding beyond the borders of Brooklyn; like other banks taking the same approach, in the 1970s the Dime Savings Bank of Brooklyn dropped its birthplace from its name in order to attract investors from other locales. During that same decade, as the Dime Savings Bank of New York, the organization was widely accused of redlining (refusing to make loans in specific low-income neighborhoods) in its home turf of Brooklyn. But in the 1980s it visibly redirected its mortgage lending activity (among the most publicized results was a bank branch within a supermarket at Restoration Plaza in Bedford-Stuyvesant) and hired as bank president Richard Parsons, a respected African-American attorney raised in Bedford-Stuyvesant. During the Summer of 1994, the Dime announced its merger with the Anchor Savings Bank; the resulting Dime Bancorp will be the fourth largest thrift institution in the country. Throughout the twentieth century, the Dime has relied on its historical ties to Brooklyn as a marketing tool: a 1988 advertisement mentions Nathan's hot dogs and the prospect of winning a trip to the Dutch town of Breukelen.

*Report prepared by
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NOTES

1. Block 149, on which the Dime Savings Bank is now located, was formerly known as Block 2084 and it is under the latter number that almost all permits are filed at the Brooklyn Department of Buildings. Research on the early history of the Dime was greatly facilitated by the staff of the Brooklyn Public Library, especially Judith Walsh of the History Division, and the LPC wishes to express its gratitude for that assistance.

This section is based on the following sources: William Perris, *Maps of the City of Brooklyn* (New York: William Perris, 1855), pl. 25; Matthew Dripps, *Map of the City of Brooklyn* (New York: M. Dripps, 1869),

pl. 6; G.W. Bromley & Co., *Atlas of the City of Brooklyn* (New York: Geo. W. Bromley & E. Robinson, 1880), pl. 4; George W. and Walter S. Bromley, *Atlas of the City of Brooklyn, N.Y.* (Philadelphia: G.W. Bromley, 1893), pls. 2, 5; *Atlas of the Borough of Brooklyn* (Brooklyn: E. Belcher Hyde, 1904), vol. 2, pl. 1. Brooklyn Eagle, *Historic and Beautiful Brooklyn* (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Eagle, 1946), vol. 1, 15 [map of the Village of Brooklyn in 1817]. David Ment, *The Shaping of a City. A Brief History of Brooklyn* (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Rediscovery and The Brooklyn Educational Alliance, 1979), 28-80; David Ment with Anthony Robins and David Framberger, *Building Blocks of Brooklyn. A Study of Urban Growth* (Brooklyn Rediscovery and The Brooklyn Educational Alliance, 1979), 45-59.

2. This account summarizes portions of several references on Brooklyn history. J. Lain, *The Brooklyn City Directory* (Brooklyn: J. Lain & Co., 1859). John Lomas and Alfred S. Peace, *The Wealthy Men and Women of Brooklyn and Williamsburgh* (Brooklyn: A.S. Peace, 1847), passim, lists the estimated possessions in real and personal property of the several hundred citizens whose worth exceeded \$10,000. Among them are fourteen of the thirty-one members of the Dime's first Board of Directors; the average estimated worth in 1847 among these individuals was almost \$33,000. Biographies on some of the early directors are found in Henry R. Stiles, ed.-in-chief, *The Civil, Political, Professional and Ecclesiastical History and Commercial and Industrial Record of the County of Kings and the City of Brooklyn, New York, from 1683 to 1884* (New York: W.W. Munsell & Co., 1884), I, 626 [the Dime], 146 [Hall], 149 [Smith], 153 [Brush], 485 [Powell], 625 [Chauncey], 785 [Trask]; II, 510-11 [Hunter], 626 [Beekman], 740-42 [Barnes], 637-38 [Robinson]. "The Dime Savings Bank of Brooklyn," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* [hereafter, *Eagle*], Jan. 2, 1898; *Eagle*, May 13, 1917; Henry Isham Hazelton, *The Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens, Counties of Nassau and Suffolk, Long Island, New York. 1609-1924* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1925), III, 1622. "Dime Savings Bank Celebrates Its 75th Anniversary," *Eagle*, June 1, 1934. See also, "Beach, Moses Sperry," *Who Was Who in America*, vol. IV (Chicago: A.N. Marquis, 1968), 47; "Dime Savings Bank in \$163,000,000 Merger; To Be Largest Institution of Kind in Brooklyn," *New York Times* [hereafter *NYT*], Aug. 26, 1930, p.4; *The Dime Savings Bank of Brooklyn* (N.p.: the Bank, 1932), a pamphlet found in the subject file in the Brooklyn Collection of the Brooklyn Public Library. "Deaths taken from the *Brooklyn Eagle*, copied and compiled by Gertrude A. Barber," vols. 14 [1870] and 27 [1880]: Brush's obituary appeared on July 5, 1870 and Trask's on April 23, 1880. Barnes's year of death is found in the card catalogue of the Brooklyn Historical Society, under Alfred Smith Barnes, *In Memory of Alfred Smith Barnes* [N.p.: n.p.], 1889.

New Hampshire-born Cyrus Porter Smith (1800-1876/77) was a wealthy attorney who served in many public positions throughout the 1830s, '40s, and '50s — including mayor and supervisor of Brooklyn and State Senator — and who managed transportation companies, co-founded the City Hospital, and was a strong supporter of public education. New Yorker George Hall (1795-1868), a painter and glazier who served as Brooklyn's first mayor, was active in many civic affairs and philanthropies. Samuel S. Powell (1815-1879), another New Yorker, worked his way up through the clothing business to become a political leader and also served as mayor and comptroller of Brooklyn. Conklin Brush (1793/94-1870), the wealthy head of nine highly prosperous mercantile firms and the Mechanics' Bank, moved to Brooklyn in 1827 and held several public offices, including mayor; he was responsible for the city's first public lamps, helped to select and secure a site for City Hall, and planned the Atlantic docks. Daniel Chauncey (d. 1883), a builder, moved to Brooklyn in the 1840s and expanded his interests into the worlds of insurance and banking. Alanson Trask (1808-1880), a native of Massachusetts, arrived in Brooklyn in 1834 and became a nationally important jobber and manufacturer of shoes and boots; he was involved in many benevolent institutions and was prominently connected with the Dime. Moses S. Beach (1822-1892), a widely-traveled inventor, was a noted newspaper publisher, first in Boston and then in Manhattan.

3. See note 2 for sources. Born in the Kings County village of Bedford, the Honorable John W. Hunter (1807-1900) worked his way up through the wholesale grocery business to the position of auditor at the New York Custom House; he served in several public offices, including mayor of Brooklyn, directed insurance and trust companies, and was devoted to public education. His contemporary, Henry R. Stiles, Brooklyn's most notable historian, credits much of the Dime's success to him. New Jersey-native Abraham J. Beekman (1810-?), descendant of the early settlers of New Amsterdam, worked in the dry-goods business until his premature retirement, during which time he became involved in banking and insurance companies in Brooklyn. A native of Connecticut, Alfred Smith Barnes (1817-?) was a notable school-book publisher who moved his expanding business to Brooklyn, an early promoter of rail transport, a director of several banks and insurance companies, a trustee of notable schools and universities, and a director of the Long Island (now Brooklyn) Historical Society. Jeremiah P. Robinson (1819-?) left Rhode Island in 1836 and attached himself to a Manhattan fish jobbing company, of which he eventually became the principal partner; having moved to Brooklyn in 1843,

he was a pioneering real-estate developer along the Brooklyn waterfront, investing, with William Beard, in the planning and building of the Erie Basin, piers, and warehouses in South Brooklyn and, as the president of the New York & Brooklyn Bridge Company, was a prominent supporter of the Brooklyn Bridge.

4. Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and John Massengale, *New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism, 1890-1915* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983), 177-181; Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Manufacturers Hanover Trust Building Designation Report* (LP-1633), prepared by Elisa Urbanelli (New York: City of New York, 1988). For information on particular buildings mentioned, see: LPC, *Bowery Savings Bank Designation Report*, LP-0184 (1966); LPC, *Greenpoint Historic District Designation Report*, LP-1248 (1982), 51; LPC, *Greenwich Savings Bank Designation Report* (LP-1766), prepared by Charles Savage (New York: City of New York, 1992).
5. For a discussion of bank design in New York during this period, see Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and Thomas Mellins, *New York 1930. Architecture and Urbanism between the Two World Wars* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), 171-183.
6. NYC, Department of Buildings, Brooklyn. Plans, Permits and Dockets, Block 149 (formerly Block 2084), Lot 75. NB 3626-1906. "Pentelic Marble Bank," *New York Tribune*, Dec. 8, 1907; "To Move \$31,000,000," *NYT*, Dec. 19, 1908, p.7; "Dime Savings Bank of Brooklyn, New York," *Architecture* 19 (Feb. 1909), pls. XI-XIII. The interior is clearly illustrated in an advertisement for Jno. Williams, Inc., "American Art in Bronze and Iron," *Architecture* 19 (Apr. 1909), xi. See also, Hazelton, vol. III, 1622. Though not illustrated in publications of the time, a three-story office block stood adjacent to the banking hall.
7. "People's Trust Company's Building, Montague Street," *American Architect & Building News* 90 (July 28, 1906), 32; Federal Writers' Project, *New Jersey. A Guide to its Present and Past* (New York: Hastings House, 1939), 334; LPC, *Riverside-West 105th Street Historic District Designation Report*, LP-0323 (1973), 7, 14-16; LPC, *Park Slope Historic District Designation Report*, LP-0709 (1973), 71, 91; LPC, *Hamilton Heights Historic District Designation Report*, LP-0872 (1974), 25-26; Norval White and Elliot Willensky, *AIA Guide to New York City* 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1978), 128; Dennis Steadman Francis, *Architects in Practice, New York City, 1840-1900* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1979), 29, 57, 77; Ment *et al.*, *Building Blocks of Brooklyn*, 48, 53; LPC, *Upper East Side Historic District Designation Report*, LP-1051 (1981), 1301; Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and John Massengale, *New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism, 1890-1915* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983), 209; *National Register of Historic Places — New Jersey* [microform] (Teaneck, N.J.: Chadwyck-Healy, 1984), 77; James Ward, *Architects in Practice, New York City, 1900-1940* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1989), 56.

The extent of collaboration among William E., Anthony, and Louis M. Mowbray is undetermined. However, it is known that William E. Mowbray designed distinctive residences now in the Hamilton Heights Historic District; Oscar B. Hammerstein's neo-Renaissance Manhattan Opera House (1901-07; later the Manhattan Center, now the Unification Church) at 311-321 West 34th Street; and, now in the Upper East Side Historic District, the neo-Renaissance Verona Apartments (1907-08) at the corner of Madison Avenue and East 64th Street and five rowhouses (1887-89, and altered to varying extents) on East 75th Street.

8. In 1897 the firm was listed as Ely, Uffinger & Mowbray, and nothing further is known of E.F. Ely.
9. NYC, Department of Buildings, Brooklyn. Plans, Permits and Dockets, Block 149, Lot 75. ALT 1098-1918.
10. See "Residence of S.L. Vandever, Esq.," *Architectural Record* 60 (Sept. 1926), 225-231; and "Some Recent Apartment Buildings," *Architectural Record* 63 (Mar. 1928), 236-237 and 259, which illustrates designs for Tuscan Court and the Kenwood Apartments.
11. NYC, Department of Buildings, Brooklyn. Plans, Permits and Dockets, Block 149, Lot 75. ALT 5360-1931. Regarding Jackson, see Hazelton, VI, 451-452. Despite the misleading title, progress in construction is documented by "New Quarters for Connecticut Banks," *Savings Bank Journal* [hereafter, *SBJ*] 13, no. 1 (Mar. 1932), 29-32. The opening of the renovated building was prominently covered by the press: "Dime Savings Bank Virtually New Building," *Eagle*, Dec. 4, 1932; "Open Enlarged Dime Savings Bank Tuesday," *Eagle*, Dec. 16, 1932; and "Dime Savings Bank Sets a Mark," *SBJ* 13, no. 11 (Jan. 1933), 28-30. For information on Benson, see Philip Benson obituary, *NYT*, Oct. 17, 1946, p.23.

12. The original configuration of the tellers' counter is documented in historic photographs. See New York Public Library, *Photographic Views of New York City, 1870s-1970s* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1981), fiche 0157/C1, C3.
13. For the history of the Winged Cap dime, popularly called the "Mercury dime," see Walter Breen, *Walter Breen's Complete Encyclopedia of U.S. and Colonial Coins* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 327-29. Stevens was the wife of award-winning poet and insurance executive Wallace Stevens (1879-1955); see "Stevens, Wallace," *Who Was Who in America*, vol. III (Chicago: A.N. Marquis Co., 1960), 819.
14. This section is based on the corresponding portion of LPC, *Dollar Savings Bank Designation Report*; as well as: "Prize Award to New York Bank," *SBJ* 12, no. 1 (Mar. 1931), 26-28; *SBJ* 12, no. 2 (Apr. 1931); Advertisement for Halsey, McCormack & Helmer, *SBJ* 13, no. 4 (June 1932), 51; *American Architects Directory*, George S. Koyl, ed., (New York: American Institute of Architects - R.R. Bowker, 1962), 501; H. D. Balcom, "Structural Frames of Banks," *Architectural Forum* 48 (June 1928), 945-48; LPC, *Williamsburgh Savings Bank Designation Report*, LP-0971 (New York, 1977); LPC, *Former New York Bank for Savings and Former New York Bank for Savings Interior Designation Reports*, LP-1634 and LP-1635 (New York, 1988), reports prepared by Charles Savage; Harold D. Lauf, *Design of Steel Buildings* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1949); George H. McCormack obituary, *NYT*, July 23, 1954, p.17; W. T. McIntosh, "Pre-Stressed Footings," *Construction Methods* 14 (May 1932), 33-35. See also New York County, County Clerk's Office, Division of Old Records, 9321-1920C, Certificate of Incorporation of Thomas Bruce Boyd, Inc., 1920; Certificate of Change of Name of Thomas Bruce Boyd, Inc. to Halsey McCormack & Helmer, Dec. 24, 1925.
15. Ward, 32, lists the firm at this address between 1928 and 1940. In George H. McCormack's obituary, 1929 is the year given for the firm's commencement; see George H. McCormack obituary, *NYT*, July 23, 1954. Adolf L. Muller of that firm was still at the address in *American Architects Directory*.
16. According to Ward, 34, Helmer was located at 286 Fifth Avenue from 1915 to 1917. Perhaps World War I interrupted his professional career. Then, in 1925, when he had returned to this address, he formed the corporation with Halsey and McCormack.
17. In a full-page advertisement of their representative bank buildings, small photos of buildings frame a map of the New York region. In addition to the Dime Savings Bank alteration, the advertised projects include other banks in Brooklyn (Flatbush, East New York, Brownsville, Williamsburgh, and Bensonhurst), Manhattan, and Queens (Ridgewood); in White Plains, Albany, Port Chester, Binghamton, Troy, Rockville Center, and Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.; and in Passaic, N.J. *SBJ* 13, no. 4 (June 1932), 51. Additional bank buildings by Halsey, McCormack & Helmer published in *SBJ* were located in Brooklyn (Flatbush, Greenpoint), Manhattan, Queens (Richmond Hill), and Staten Island (St. George); and in the communities of Cohoes and Syracuse, N.Y. See *SBJ* 7, no. 2 (Apr. 1931), 26; 7, no. 12 (Feb. 1932); 13, no. 8 (Oct. 1932), 29; 16, no. 7 (Sept. 1935); 17, no. 11 (Jan. 1937), 50-51; 17, no. 12 (Feb. 1937); 19, no. 8 (Oct. 1938), 52; 30, no. 12 (Feb. 1950), 21.
18. E. M. Benjamin, H.J. Dickson, and George McCormack represented the firm at the annual National Savings Banks Association meeting 1932 at the Waldorf-Astoria, *SBJ* 13, no. 4 (June 1932), 155.
19. Philip Sawyer, *Edward Palmer York*, preface by Royal Cortissoz (Stonington, CT, 1951), 23.
20. There were two other architecture firms that sustained extensive practices in bank design in the East: Tilghman-Moyer Company of Allentown, PA, and Hutchins & French in Boston.
21. Contracting with the civil engineers Lange & Noske in the initial framing alterations to enlarge the two-story banking room of the seven-story Onondaga County Savings Bank (1896-97, Robert W. Gibson) as well as the safe deposit department below it, Lange & Noske and the sub-contracted engineers Spencer, White & Prentis, slipped heavy girders under the building's third story. Work continued on the upper floors while the alterations were carried out below.
22. *The Dime Savings Bank of Brooklyn invites you to help celebrate The First Anniversary of our Coney Island Branch* (1951), a pamphlet found in the subject file in the Brooklyn Collection of the Brooklyn Public Library. *Telegraph*, Jan. 2, 1959; Advertisement in *Brooklyn Real Estate Board Year Book and Diary for 1964*, 6 [clipping in the subject file of the Brooklyn Collection]; "Dime Bank Raises Rates on Savings," *NYT*, June 25, 1966, p.35; Jon Ciner, "Why They Are What They Are: A Look At the Major Brooklyn Savings Banks," *The Phoenix*, Aug. 25, 1977, p.14; Stan Strachan, "Bank agency rift stalls branches," *New York Post*, Apr. 12,

1978, p.71; Chris Stankowski, "Community Forum," *The Phoenix*, Nov. 9, 1978, p.9; "Williams encourages groups to bank on the Dime," *New York Amsterdam News*, June 7, 1980, pp.4, 28; Jared McCallister, "Dime Savings branches out into Bed-Stuy," *Daily News*, Oct. 9, 1984, p.8; "Count Yourself a Brooklyn Original," advertisement in *Daily News*, Oct. 25, 1988; "Banking on a Dime," *Ebony* 44 (Dec. 1988), 156, 158; Saul Hansell, "Dime and Anchor Plan a Merger To Form No. 4 U.S. Savings Bank," *NYT*, July 7, 1994, pp.A1, D4; Laurence Zuckerman, "2 Banks Merge" *NYT*, July 10, 1994, sect. 4, p.2.

"Dime Bank Traces 1st Mortgage Loan," *Journal American*, Oct. 1, 1959, notes that the bank issued its first loan, of \$3,000, on Oct. 1, 1859 to William and Maria Taylor on property near the intersection of Bedford Avenue and Wilson Street. One hundred years later, the Dime was advancing over \$500,000 per day.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

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 Dime Savings Bank Interior has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City, and the Interior is one which is customarily open and accessible to the public, and to which the public is customarily invited.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Dime Savings Bank Interior, forming a significant part of one of Brooklyn's most notable works of commercial architecture, was created in 1931-32 by the firm of Halsey, McCormack & Helmer, specialists in bank design, to serve as the home office of the Dime Savings Bank; that the home office with its interior banking room was the most visible product of a vast modernization program which coincided with a period of spectacular growth for the bank; that the interior is the result of an extensive rebuilding of the bank's previous structure, reinforcing the association of the bank with classical architecture and the visual continuity with the old building, which was designed by the firm of Mowbray & Uffinger and erected in 1906-08; that the bank and particularly its grand banking hall are symbols of an institution with a long and significant role in the historical development of the borough; that this remarkably intact neo-Classical stone-clad interior, expressed in a strongly geometric manner, features a central rotunda of marble columns supporting a soaring dome, polychromatic and patterned pavement and ceiling, and an ornamental program which appropriately allegorizes industry and progress, particularly through the symbol of the Winged Cap ("Mercury") dime; that during the twentieth century, the Dime has ranked among the largest savings banks in the country while it was and continues to be administered from its home office; that, since its founding in 1859, the Dime has been directed by many prominent Brooklynites who were instrumental in the history of Brooklyn, and that the bank's impact on the development of Brooklyn remains pervasive; and that the interior continues to be accessible to the public.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as an Interior Landmark the Dime Savings Bank, First Floor Interior, consisting of the eastern DeKalb Avenue entrance vestibule and lobby; the banking room, including the rotunda and dome; the mezzanine above said DeKalb Avenue entrance lobby; and the fixtures and interior floor surfaces; windows; doors; chandeliers and lighting fixtures; decorative metalwork; balustrades; clocks; tellers' counters; and attached furnishings and decorative elements; 9 DeKalb Avenue, a/k/a 9-31 DeKalb Avenue and 86 Albee Square (Fleet Street), Borough of Brooklyn, and designates as its Landmark Site Brooklyn Tax Map Block 149, Lot 75 in part, consisting of the property encompassed by a line beginning at the southeast corner of the lot, running 173'-4 1/2" west along DeKalb Avenue, then continuing along the outer edge of the southeast side of the portico, then running 46'-10 3/4" northwest along the front of the portico, then continuing along the outer edge of the northwest edge of the portico, then running 202'-2" northeast along Albee Square (Fleet Street), then continuing 89'-9 1/2" southeast, 25'-0" southwest, 9'-4" northwest, 17'-2" southwest, 9'-4" southeast, 80'-9 5/8" southeast, and 68'-0 3/4" south, to the point of beginning, as indicated on the Site Map.

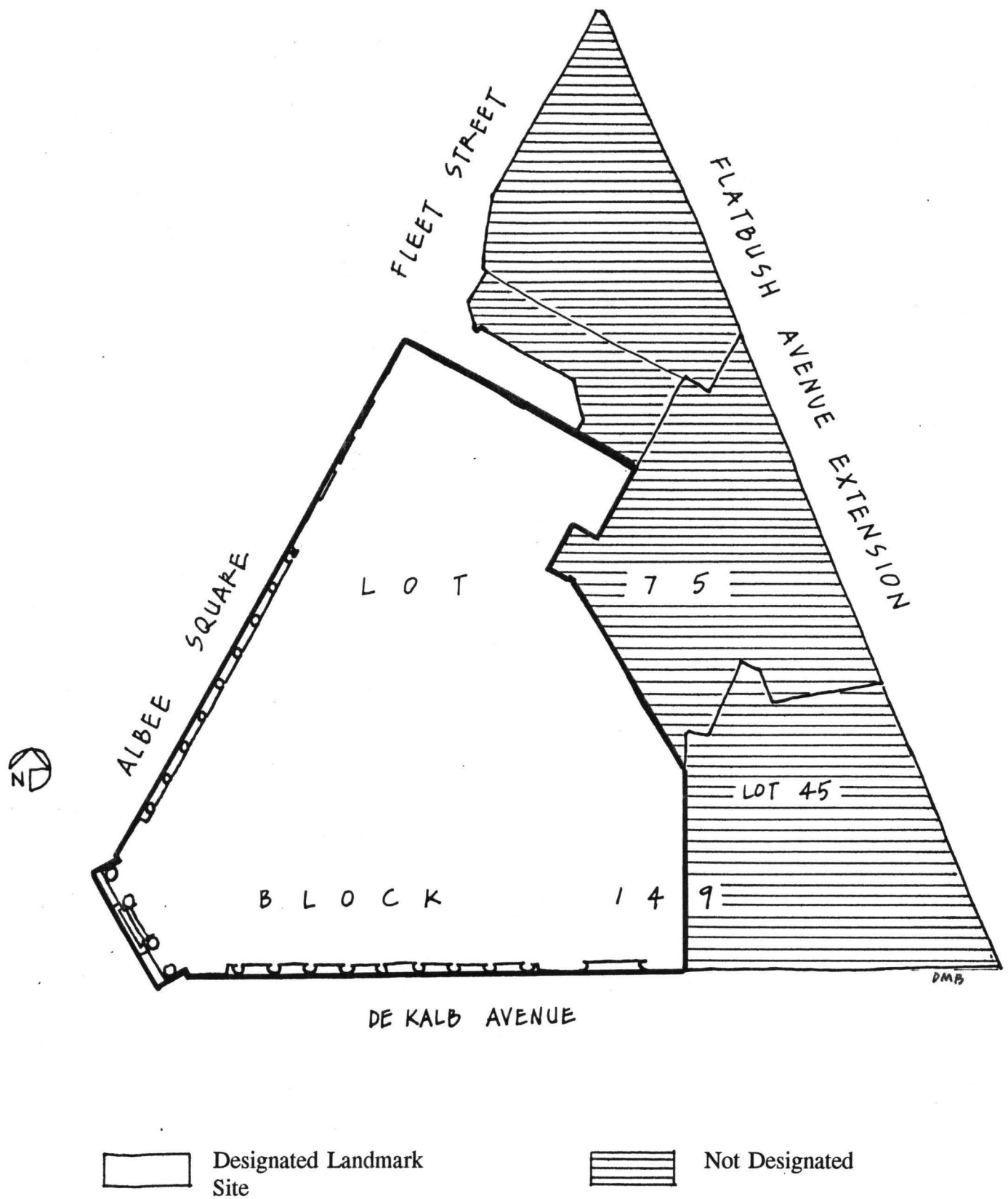
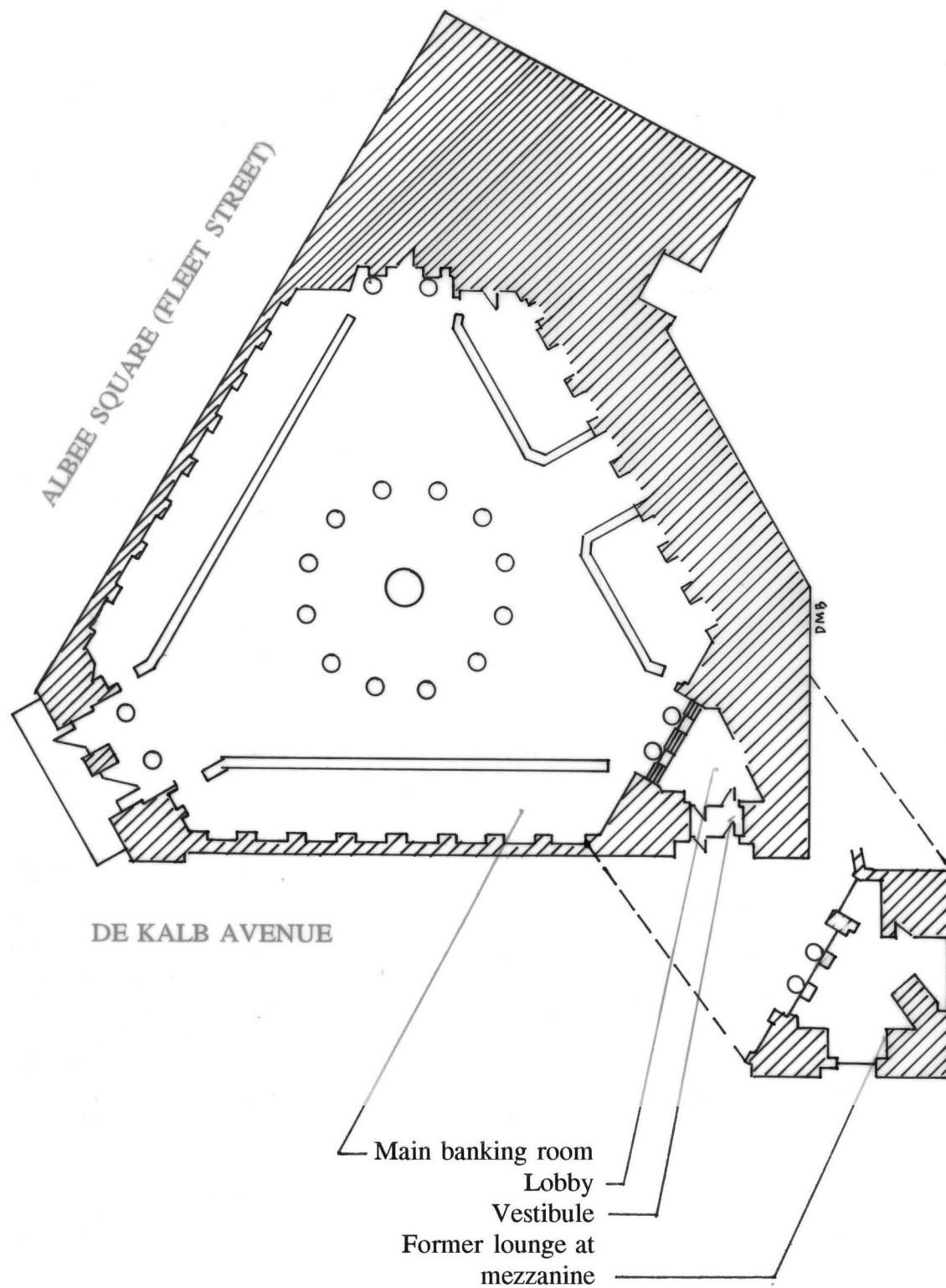


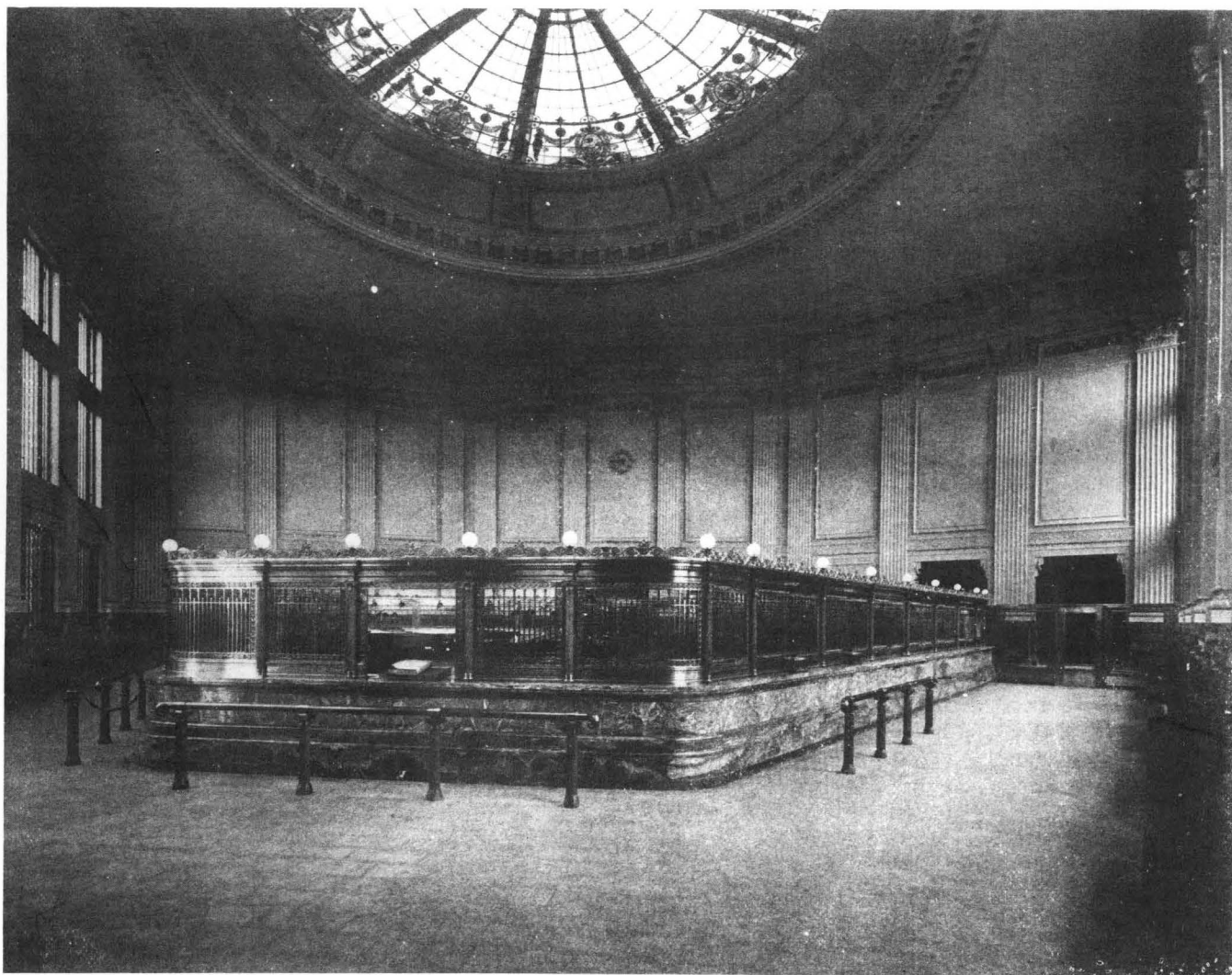
Fig. 1: DIME SAVINGS BANK, 9 DeKalb Avenue, Brooklyn .



- Designated Interior Landmark
- Not included in Interior Landmark



Fig. 2: DIME SAVINGS BANK, FIRST FLOOR INTERIOR, 9 DeKalb Avenue, Brooklyn
Source: Plans supplied by Facilities Manager, The Dime Savings Bank



BANKING ROOM, DIME SAVINGS BANK, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Mowbray and Uffinger, Architects.

Showing Bronze Counter Screen executed by Jno. Williams, Inc., New York

Fig. 3: Original interior (1906-08, Mowbray & Uffinger) of Dime Savings Bank
Source: Jno. Williams, Inc. advertisement, *Architecture* 19 (April, 1909), xi



Fig. 4: View of banking room from mezzanine

(C. Forster)



Fig. 5: View of banking room from dome

(C. Forster)



Fig. 6: View of banking room, windows, and tellers' counters

(C. Forster)

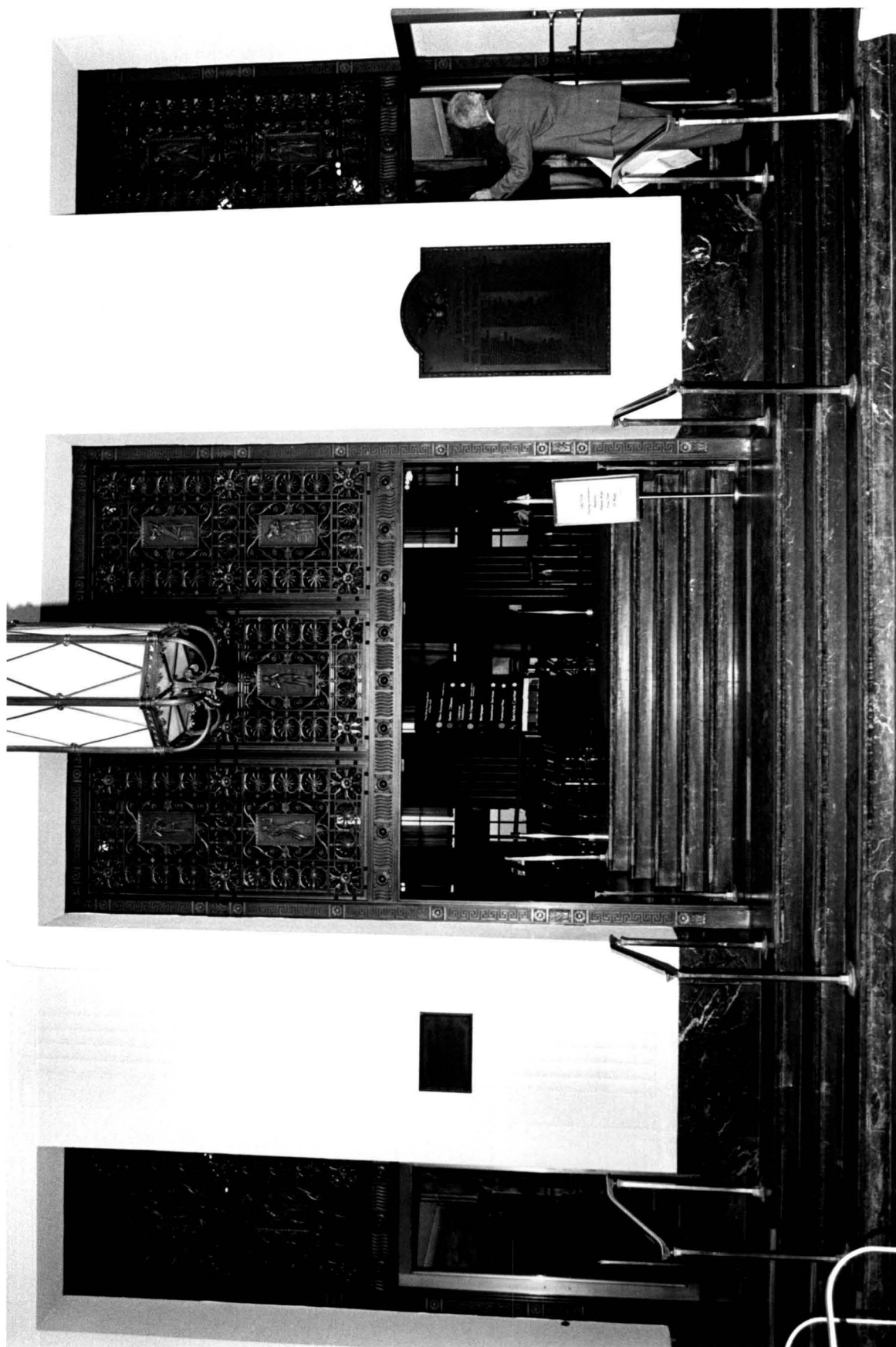


Fig. 7: View from lobby into banking room

(C. Forster)



Fig. 8: East DeKalb entrance and mezzanine



Fig. 9: West DeKalb entrance

(C. Forster)



Fig. 10: West DeKalb entrance detail



Fig. 11: North corner of banking hall

(C. Forster)



Fig. 12: Clock at center of rotunda

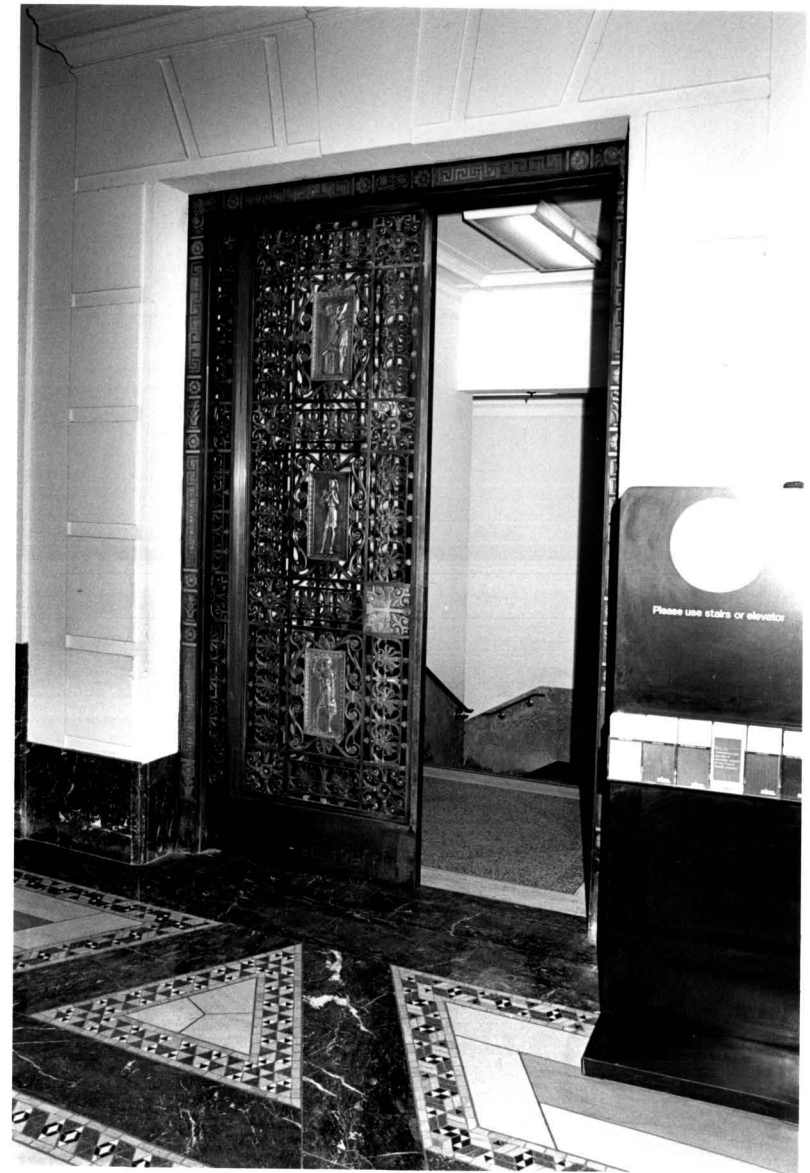


Fig. 13: Sliding gate from lobby to vault (C. Forster)

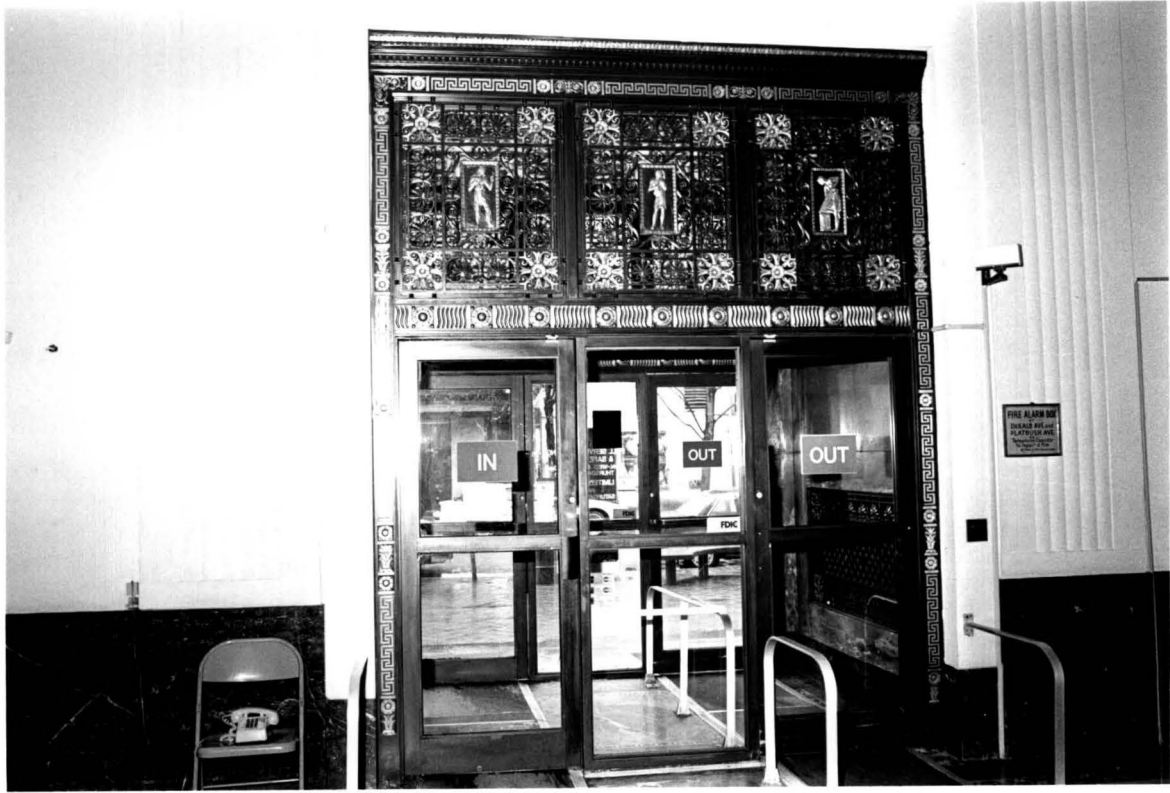


Fig. 14: View of doorway from lobby toward vestibule
Fig. 15: Original customers' table (C. Forster)

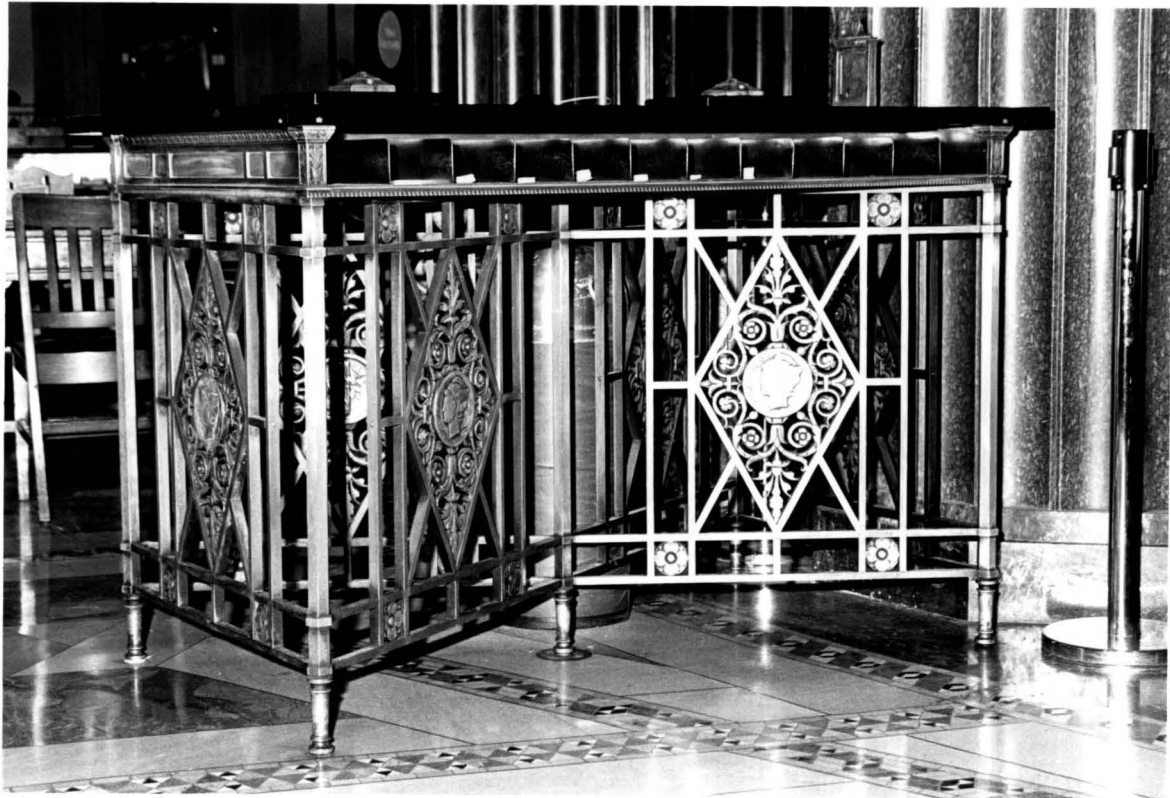




Fig. 16: Column capital with Winged cap dime motif



Fig. 17: Bronze chandelier

(C. Forster)

ATTACHMENT TO LP-1908

Landmarks Preservation Commission
July 19, 1994, Designation List 259
LP-1908A

DIME SAVINGS BANK, first floor interior, consisting of the eastern DeKalb Avenue entrance vestibule and lobby; the banking room, including the rotunda and dome; the mezzanine above said DeKalb Avenue entrance lobby; and the fixtures and interior floor surfaces; windows; doors; chandeliers and lighting fixtures; decorative metalwork; balustrades; clocks; tellers' counters; and attached furnishings and decorative elements; 9 DeKalb Avenue, (aka 9-31 DeKalb Avenue and 86 Albee Square, formerly Fleet Street), Brooklyn.

Landmark Site: Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 149, Lot 75.

Designated a New York City Interior Landmark as the Dime Savings Bank, first floor interior, on July 19, 1994

On May 14, 1996, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed amendment of the Interior Landmark designation of the Dime Savings Bank interior to incorporate the underscoring of the significant features identified in the Description section of the designation report as specified in the Rules for Alterations to Designated Bank Interiors (Item No. 2). The hearing was advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Two witnesses testified in favor of the amendment. Three representatives of various banks stated that they had no objections to the proposed amendment. There were no speakers in opposition to the amendment.

Description of the Interior of the Dime Savings Bank*

The neo-Classical character of the building is expressed in a strongly geometric manner (figs. 4-5), from the overall layout of the spaces to details such as floor and ceiling patterns. The bank interior includes a vast banking room, in plan roughly a triangle, measuring about 160 feet per side but with truncated corners, which circumscribes a central cylinder and, at the eastern DeKalb Avenue entrance, a vestibule and triangular lobby surmounted by a mezzanine space.

Banking Room

The stars and hexagonal figures in the patterned, polychromatic marble floor echo the shapes in the coffered polychromatic ceiling. The ceiling is edged in a band alternating circle-framed stars and rectangular-framed flowers. Walls terminate in a frieze featuring silver Winged Cap dime medallions. Large windows and doorways capped by scrolled keystones pierce the relatively plain sandstone walls, which are rusticated at the bottom and articulated with fluted pilasters at the top (fig. 5). Marble balustrades edge the mezzanine balconies which overlook the main banking room.

* This description has been excerpted and slightly modified from the original designation report for LP-1908. The plate numbers are those for the original report. Significant features in this interior space are underscored as specified in the Rules for Alterations to Designated Bank Interiors. "Significant features" are defined in Section 9-02 of the Rules.

ATTACHMENT TO LP-1908

Twelve fluted columns of dark red German marble, resting on black marble plinths and embellished with dime-enriched gilded Corinthian capitals, form a rotunda which rises through the center of the room to support the dome. The smooth underside of the dome, painted sky blue and illuminated by hidden lights, boldly contrasts with its polychrome entablature, which features garlands, dimes, rosettes, dentils, modillions, and acroteria. At the center of the rotunda is a bronze clock (fig. 12) with three faces, set on a tall pedestal of black marble, which is surrounded by a circular marble bench. Set between the columns and enclosing the central space are pink marble benches with scrolled sides, legs carved to represent animals, and inscriptions of quotations from *Poor Richard's Almanac*. From the columns extend bronze and glass customers' tables - some are original (fig. 15), others are later additions of somewhat simpler design.

Six bronze chandeliers (fig. 17) light the main space, around which are arranged the tellers' counters. Resting on a black marble base, each counter has a pink marble face with bronze vent grilles and wave-patterned bronze trim. (Areas behind the counters have been altered to accommodate current banking functions.) At the north apex of the triangle, surviving historic elements include wood benches on marble bases, a pink marble balustrade, and pink marble door posts at passages behind the counters (one opening retains its bronze door). The wall behind those features contains non-historic doors and windows with metal frames and transparent and opaque glazing. Another opening retains its bronze service door and paneled transom with central grille.

At the southwest corner (figs. 9-10), paired marble columns flank the main entrance which contains its elaborately decorated and crested bronze surround; the metal-framed glazed doors are not historic.

Lobby, Vestibule, and Mezzanine

At the southeast corner (fig. 8), paired marble columns divide a marble staircase rising from a triangular lobby. The lobby features scalloped pilasters, a marble wainscot, a Greek key cornice, a coffered ceiling, and highly ornamented bronze screens that span the lobby doorways and gate that guard the entrance to the basement vaults (figs. 13-14). A small vestibule which connects the lobby to DeKalb Avenue has marble walls with bronze grilles and a coffered ceiling. Above the eastern DeKalb Avenue entrance, at the mezzanine, is the former Ladies' Lounge (fig. 8), decorated with scenic wallpaper between a marble wainscot and trim and polychrome cornice; the terrazzo flooring, edged in marble, reiterates the banking room's hexagonal motif. The bronze light fixture is a smaller version of those in the banking room and all details are harmonious with those of the larger space. The former Ladies' Lounge opens onto and is visible from the banking room below.

The spatial character, architectural elements, and finishes of the spaces described above survive remarkably intact. Non-historic elements added to the interior include:

ATTACHMENT TO LP-1908

automatic teller machines and enclosures; metal-framed glazed doors and pendant light fixtures at the entrances; ceiling-mounted recessed spotlights; small light fixtures attached to the central columns; security cameras; merchandising signage; and wall-mounted recessed fluorescent lighting.

ATTACHMENT TO LP-1908

FINDINGS AND AMENDED DESIGNATION

The Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Interior of the Dime Savings Bank has significant features as identified in the Description section of the designation report (LP-1908) as designated by the Commission on July 19, 1994.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provision of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission amends its designation report to incorporate underscoring of the significant features in the Interior identified in the Description section of the designation report as specified in the Rules for Alterations to Designated Bank Interiors.