

Landmarks Preservation Commission  
June 28, 2005, Designation List 365  
LP-2179

**JOHN DE GROOT HOUSE**, 1674 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island  
Built, c. 1870; kitchen-addition, c. 1886-98; rear wing c. 1810-15, modified c. 1886-98

Landmark Site: Borough of Staten Island Tax Map Block 188, Lot 40

On May 17, 2005, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the John De Groot House and its related Landmark Site (Item No.3). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. There were nine speakers in favor of designation, including the owner, and representatives of City Council member Michael McMahon, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Westerleigh Improvement Society, the Preservation League of Staten Island, the Historic Districts Council, the Society for the Architecture of the City, and the West Brighton Restoration Society. No one spoke in opposition to designation. The Commission has received letters of support for the designation from Staten Island Borough Historian Richard Dickenson, Staten Island Community Board 1, and architect David John Carnivale.

Summary

Constructed c.1870, the John De Groot House is one of only three houses in the Second Empire Style that remain standing on Richmond Terrace between Sailors Snug Harbor and Port Richmond, recalling the period when that thoroughfare was lined with grand houses. John De Groot, the builder of this house, worked for over fifty years for the nearby New York Dyeing and Printing Establishment, a textile dyeing business that was the first and one of the most important early industrial concerns on the island. De Groot was a descendent of a prominent family that had settled on Staten Island around 1730 and intermarried with several of the island's leading families. This house occupies a portion of a tract of land that had been acquired by his grandfather in 1802 and incorporates part of an early vernacular house erected by his father in the 1810s. The front portion of the house, constructed by De Groot c. 1870, comprising a three-story mansarded main block and two-story mansarded dining room wing, is carefully sited to take advantage of the sloping topography. A fine example of the Second Empire Style, it retains its historic form and most of its historic detailing. Notable features, typical of Second Empire style, include the floor length parlor windows and double-door entry, heavy molded cornices and scrolled brackets, and the convex mansard roof that still retains its hexagonal slate shingles and gabled dormers. Convex mansards were less frequently employed than concave or straight sided mansards, and have not survived in great numbers, making this an unusual survivor.



## DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

### The Development of the Factoryville-West Brighton Neighborhood and the New-York Dyeing and Printing Establishment

The North Shore community now known as West Brighton was an important habitation and burial site for many Native Americans whose remains have been found in the Fountain Cemetery.<sup>1</sup> In the late seventeenth century, West Brighton was part of a 5,100-acre tract that Governor Dongan acquired in 1688 and named the Manor of Castleton. Dongan built a manor house on the Shore Road (now Richmond Terrace ) near present-day Dongan Street. In the eighteenth century portions of the former Dongan Manor were settled by farmers and fisherman and other workers in the maritime trades. Among the few buildings that survive from this early development phase are the Cornelius Cruser House (aka the Kruezer-Pelton House) at 1262 Richmond Terrace (1722, additions, 1770 and 1836), the 752 Delafield Avenue House (aka the Scott-Edwards House, early eighteenth century, remodeled c. 1840) and the Tysen-Neville House (aka the Neville House and the Old Stone Jug) at 806 Richmond Terrace (built c. 1800), all designated New York City Landmarks.

This rural community began to be transformed in 1819 when a group of New England industrialists and New York investors established Staten Island's first industrial enterprise, Barrett, Tileston & Co., a textile dye house, printing works, and fabric cleaning establishment. The business was located on a sixteen acre tract near the present-day intersection of Broadway and Richmond Terrace that incorporated several springs and a small mill pond that was enlarged to provide the pure clear water essential to the dyeing process. The dye works were housed in a "spacious and commodious building" and were said to operate on a scale "heretofore unknown in this country."<sup>2</sup> The business was a success from the start. In 1824, the company was incorporated as the New-York Dyeing and Printing Establishment. By 1835, it had added a number of new buildings and was the largest of the seven dye works operating in New York State, employing between 150 and 200 workers.

In 1835, another manufacturer, Charles Goodyear, opened a factory near Broadway and Castleton Avenue to produce rubber cloth for waterproof clothing.<sup>3</sup> When Goodyear's business failed following the Panic of 1837, his factory buildings were taken over by a wallpaper manufacturing firm that continued to operate for several decades. Another textile factory on Forest Avenue, Barrett, Nephews and Company, was established in 1851 by Nathan Barrett, one of the founders of the New-York Dyeing and Printing Establishment. Furniture and carriage manufacturers also opened plants in the neighborhood.

The factories brought new residents to the neighborhood, especially skilled textile workers and printers from New England and England. Businessmen, including several connected with the dye works, began to acquire land in the vicinity of the factories which they had mapped into small streets and house lots for workers' housing. One of the first tracts was mapped in 1836 for Nathan Barrett who named his development "Factoryville," a name that soon began to be applied to the entire neighborhood. Other developers included Ward Woodruff, who had Water Street (now Alaska Street) laid out in 1836, Captain John T. Barker, who headed the New York Dyeing and Printing Establishment in 1853 when he had Barker Street, Ann Street, and Trinity Place laid out, and Benjamin Franklin Roe, who had his family farm laid out into building lots and three streets, Roe Street, Elizabeth Street, and Caroline Streets in 1850. Many factory owners and managers built substantial homes on the south side of Richmond Terrace. One of the most impressive was the Italianate mansion erected by Captain Barker in 1851 immediately to the west of this house.<sup>4</sup> Anna Leonowens, the British schoolteacher, who wrote a famous memoir of her experiences as governess to the children of the King of Siam, also occupied a small house on Richmond Terrace at Tompkins Court, about a block east of this house, where she and her daughter Avis taught school. Factoryville also boasted several churches<sup>5</sup> and hotels, and a thriving commercial district, centered around the Castleton ferry landing at the foot of Broadway.

In the 1860s and 1870s, the residents of Factoryville began referring to their neighborhood as West New Brighton, perhaps hoping to take on some of the luster of the fashionable and well-known neighboring suburb of New Brighton. West New Brighton, later known as West Brighton, remained a

major industrial and commercial center until the 1930s. Richmond Terrace from Clove Road to Elm Street “was an important and thriving shopping center [with] businesses and services of every kind [lining] both sides of the thoroughfare although a few, handsome, well-kept residences still remained from the pre-Civil War period.”<sup>6</sup> Established at Van Street and Richmond Terrace in 1872 to produce machinery for handling bulk materials, the C.W. Hunt factory became the largest industrial plant on the island in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Both the New York Dyeing & Printing Establishment and Barrett, Nephews and Company expanded greatly in the 1860s and 1870s, “opening branch offices and agencies throughout the eastern United States, employing between four and five hundred workers, adding vast amounts of costly machinery, and consuming hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of dyestuffs, water and coal annually at each of their Staten Island plants.”<sup>7</sup> In 1895, a group of outside investors purchased and consolidated the two firms, under the name of Barrett, Nephews & Company, Old Staten Island Dyeing Establishment, at the New York Dyeing works Broadway site. The firm continued in operation until 1932.

### The De Groot Family<sup>8</sup>

The De Groots who built and lived in this house were descended from Jacob Pieterszen De Groot (b. Leiden, 1626) and Grietje Jans Eggert (b. Ditmarsin, c. 1632), who were married in the Dutch Reform Church in New Amsterdam in October 1652. Their son Pieter Jacobszen De Groot (1653-1715+) married Beletje Arianens Van Schaick (1663-1718) in New Amsterdam in 1681. By 1695 Peter and Beletje had settled in Hackensack, New Jersey. Their son Johannes De Groot, (1704-1788), a carpenter, and his wife Elizabeth Sickles De Groot (b. 1704, married 1726) moved from Hackensack to Staten Island by 1731 when their son Robert was baptized at the Dutch Reformed Church in Port Richmond. Johannes erected a house on the shore road (Richmond Terrace), just east of the Crusier homestead.<sup>9</sup> Their children married into some of the most prominent families on the island including the Posts and Crusers.<sup>10</sup> In 1802, Johannes and Elizabeth De Groot’s grandson, John De Groot (1753-1816), purchased a 3.3 acre tract fronting on Richmond Terrace at present day Alaska Street.<sup>11</sup> John De Groot built a house for his family on the eastern corner of the property. By the time John De Groot made his will in 1816, his second son John (1790-1843), a boatman, had built a small one-and-half-story house at the western corner of his father’s land. John De Groot (Sr.) specified in his will that the house belonged to his son but that the land on which it stood remained part of his estate.<sup>12</sup> He stipulated that following his death the land was to be surveyed and that his son was either to lease or purchase the house lot from his estate. The following year, John De Groot (Jr.) bought the land from his father’s executors.<sup>13</sup> The households of John De Groot and his widowed mother Mary [Wood] De Groot were listed next to one another in the federal censuses of 1820 and 1830, indicating that they continued to maintain independent but neighboring households.<sup>14</sup> In 1833 John De Groot (Jr.) purchased the balance of his father’s land and his parents’ house from his father’s executors.<sup>15</sup> In April 1836, real estate developer Ward Woodruff purchased the entire property, which extended as far south as the factory pond, from John De Groot (Jr.).<sup>16</sup> Woodruff immediately sold back to De Groot, a parcel extending seventy-five feet along Richmond Terrace and 104 feet along a new street (Water Street, now Alaska Street) that Woodruff was then having laid out.<sup>17</sup> Given the high price De Groot paid for this parcel (\$3,000 versus the \$4,800 Woodruff paid him), it seems likely that there was relatively new and substantial house on the site. De Groot’s earlier house also remained standing and eventually became part of this house. De Groot continued to reside in a house on his land until his death in 1843. His parents’ house was either demolished or renovated by Woodruff who moved to a house on the southeast corner of Richmond Terrace and Water Street.

In June 1842, shortly after his wife’s death, John De Groot made a new will in which he appointed his elder brother Jacob, a prosperous businessman and prominent local official, executor of his estate and guardian of his two minor children.<sup>18</sup> In the will De Groot stipulated that after his death his real estate was to be sold. He left small cash bequests to his adult daughters Angeline and Jane {Housman}, bequeathed one dollar to his son William stating that William had “so far forgotten his duty to me as his father as to erase from my heart almost every trace of paternal affection which I once had for him,”<sup>19</sup> and divided the balance of his estate between his son John (c. 1823-1906) and daughter Eliza (c. 1829-?), both minors. Jacob surrendered the guardianship of his niece and nephew

to William. John De Groot's house and lot remained in the estate until May 1844 when John (3) was able to purchase the property.<sup>20</sup>

Despite his having retained ownership of his parents' home, census records indicate that John De Groot lived elsewhere for the next twenty-five years.<sup>21</sup> A bachelor, during much of the time he boarded with families that lived in the vicinity of the New York Dyeing and Printing Establishment where he worked as silk finisher from the late 1840s through the late 1890s. De Groot may have chosen these homes because they placed him in close proximity to his sisters and brother.<sup>22</sup> Probably soon after his sister Eliza was widowed in 1867,<sup>23</sup> John De Groot began sharing a rental house with her and her children.

It seems likely that from the time he first acquired it, John De Groot began leasing his parents' house to tenants to supplement his income. By the early 1870s De Groot had either remodeled or rebuilt the house (see below for a discussion of the building's construction history). He and Eliza moved to the house by 1875 when the state census records they were occupying the house with four of Eliza's five children.<sup>24</sup> By 1880, Angeline De Groot was also residing with them.<sup>25</sup> By 1900 the elderly John and Eliza were alone in the house.<sup>26</sup> Eliza subsequently moved to her daughter's home. John De Groot became a "hermit" until his "feeble mental and physical condition" forced friends to remove him from the house and place him in the home of Ascension Church sexton Robert Spann, where he received nursing care.<sup>27</sup> He died in June 1906, one of the oldest residents on the Staten Island's North Shore. His sister Eliza became the administrator of his estate and she conveyed the house to her daughter Mary in 1908.<sup>28</sup>

#### The Design and Construction of the John De Groot House

A rare survivor, the John De Groot House is one of only three houses in the Second Empire style that remain standing on the Richmond Terrace between Sailors Snug Harbor and Port Richmond, recalling the period when that thoroughfare was lined with grand houses. An eclectic architectural style based on French Renaissance and Baroque models, most often characterized by the use of prominent mansard roofs, the Second Empire style developed in France during the reign of Napoleon III (1852-1870) and became popular in America around 1860. The style's dissemination was aided by the increasing availability of architectural publications during this period, especially architectural handbooks and builders' guides such as Calvert Vaux's *Villas and Cottages* (second edition, 1864), E.C. Hussey's *Home Building* (1875), Marcus F. Cummings and Charles C. Miller's *Architecture: Designs for Street Fronts, Suburban Houses, and Cottages* (1868), Woodward's *Architecture and Rural Art* (George E. Woodward, 1867-68), and *Bicknell's Village Builder* (A.J. Bicknell & Co., 1872).<sup>29</sup> The style was well represented on the North Shore where its popularity coincided with an increased demand for housing in the prosperous post-Civil War period and improvements in the North Shore ferry service which made it easier for residents to commute to Manhattan. Among the notable North Shore examples of the style were the U.S. Light-House Service, Third District, Staten Island Depot Office Building (Alfred B. Mullett c. 1865-71, a designated New York City Landmark), the magnificent mansion at St. Marks Place and Hamilton Avenue, built by John M. Pendleton in 1862 and sold to Anson Phelps Stokes in 1868 (demolished), and the imposing T. F. McCurdy House, later Garner Mansion, now a part of St. Vincent's Hospital, 701 Castleton Avenue. There were also many mansard-roofed Second Empire Style single- and double family houses erected on Westervelt Avenue and St. Marks Place in the 1860s and 1870s which have been preserved in the St. George/New Brighton Historic District. In addition to the De Groot House, examples on Richmond Terrace included the Weston mansion at the southeast corner of Bard Avenue, the cottage erected by Dr. Elliott near Bard Avenue, the O.D. Jewett residence on the southeast corner of Bement Avenue, and the G.W. Campbell Mansion on the southwest corner of Elizabeth Avenue.<sup>30</sup> Of these houses, only the Jewett and Weston residences survive. The Jewett house, which now has a Bement Avenue address, has had a number of window changes and the Weston house has been refaced with yellow brick. The De Groot House, on the other hand, retains its historic form and much of its historic ornamental detailing, and seems to have retained its original clapboard siding beneath its wood shingles.

The Second Empire Style De Groot House is comprised of a three-story mansarded main block flanked on the west by a mansarded two-story dining room wing. Set at an angle to Richmond Terrace, the house is sited to take maximum advantage of the sloping terrain which falls off sharply to the west. This allows the house to have a basement kitchen with two exposed walls with large windows (now sealed) which would have provided ample light to the interior. The elevated site would also have insured excellent views especially from the dining room wing. The main block is three bays wide and two bays deep and the wing is two bays wide and two bays deep. Both have the boxy form characteristic of Second Empire Buildings. The house was originally sheathed with clapboard (still visible beneath the shingle siding on a few areas of the façade) and retains most of its historic molded window surrounds. Like many village houses of the period, the main block of the house has a side hall plan, with the entrance on the west side of the façade. This entry still retains its handsomely detailed molded surround, double wood-and-glass doors, and transom. Floor length parlor windows open on to the one-story entrance porch which features handsome Ionic columns (probably installed in the early 1900s). Both the main block and the dining room are capped by strongly projecting cornices enriched by paired scrolled brackets and convex mansard roofs which retain their original hexagonal shingles, molded metal flashing, and gabled dormers with segmental-arch window openings and molded hoods supported by small scroll brackets. Convex mansards were less frequently employed than concave or straight sided mansards, and have not survived in great numbers, making this house an unusual survivor.

Because a house with a similar footprint and location appears on a survey map of 1853, there has been some speculation that the De Groot House might be an unusually early example of the Second Empire style. Given that the form and detailing of both the exterior and interior are totally in keeping with what one would expect of a house of the 1860s or 1870s, that the size of the house and interior finishes are relatively modest suggesting that it is a builder-designed house rather than an avant-garde architect-designed work, and what we know of John De Groot's biography, a date of around 1870 seems appropriate for this building. However, it appears that this house incorporates foundations from an earlier structure, perhaps a house built by John De Groot (Jr.) in the 1830s. It seems probable that as a rental that house would have remained relatively unchanged for some years and that when John De Groot (3) decided to provide a house for his sister and her four children he replaced his parents' house with a larger more up-to-date structure. Alternately, something may have happened to his parents' house which led De Groot to replace the earlier house with a new building in the early 1850s<sup>31</sup> which he then updated and enlarged around 1870. In either case the house now consistently "reads" as a Second Empire Style house with some later alterations.

The most significant of these changes was the addition of a kitchen and bathroom wing, presumably soon after sewer and water service became available in the neighborhood in 1886. Located at the rear of the house, this wing joined the main block of the house and the dining room wing to older structure that appears to be John De Groot's 1810s house. Because that building and the main house were aligned at different angles, the addition had an unusual wedge-shaped plan. Like the main house, it had a brick basement and was faced with clapboards (now covered with shingles). At the rear of the house a decorative cornice with scrolled brackets was employed to provide continuity with the Second Empire portions of the building. The gabled attic of the 1810s house was also raised to a full, albeit low, second story which connected to the second story bathroom of the new addition. The first story of the old house, which seems to have functioned as a summer kitchen, was linked to the new kitchen by both an interior door and a pass-through. The original entrance bay on the north side of the eastern façade was probably converted to a window at this point. Although its roof profile and fenestration have been changed and it has been re-clad with shingles, the survival of this two-bay-wide and one-bay-deep dwelling representative of a modest vernacular house type that once proliferated in the early decades of New York City's history but now has been almost entirely lost is indeed remarkable.<sup>32</sup>

#### Later History

When Eliza Donnelly was appointed administrator of her brother's estate, she began making some small alterations to the house and grounds to make it suitable for rental. Neither she nor her daughter

Mary Farrell chose to live in the house, which continued to be leased to tenants. In 1914, Catherine Charlestream, the wife of William Charlestream, a Swedish-born hardware store employee purchased the house, which they were then leasing.<sup>33</sup> The Charlestreats seem to have made a number of small alterations to the house, the most important of which was to convert the back parlor to a sun porch by introducing a large triple window on the south side of the house and converting a window opening to a door at the south corner of the east façade. In 1923, Catherine Charlestream, who had moved to Eaglebridge, New York, sold the house to Jonas Frankel, a Stapleton resident.<sup>34</sup> In 1925 the New York State census recorded that the building was being leased and had become a boarding house catering to blue collar workers. In 1955 Abraham Frankel sold the house to Samuel Silverman.<sup>35</sup> It remained in the ownership of the Silverman family until it was purchased by the present owner in 1971.<sup>36</sup>

### Description

The John De Groot House is located on a trapezoidal lot that extends about seventy-four feet along Richmond Terrace and about 172 feet along Alaska Street, its eastern boundary. The ground level slopes upward from Richmond Terrace and has been terraced behind a fieldstone retaining wall along the western property line. Non-historic metal post-and-wire fences extend along the northern and eastern property lines. In addition a non-historic wood picket fence extends along the southern property line and eastern edge of the back yard.

The house is set at an angle to Richmond Terrace and is set back from the streets. An early-mid twentieth-century concrete stair leads from the sidewalk along Richmond Terrace to a concrete path leading to the front stoop of the house. This entry is no longer in use. At present the house is accessed from a driveway constructed with historic paving blocks (probably an early twentieth century composite material) in the rear side yard of the property facing Alaska Street. A non-historic pathway partially lined with sections of fence leads from the driveway to the side yard and then curves around the house to approach the front stoop. The sections of fence lining the path incorporate historic elements salvaged from other sites but most of these do not appear to permanently affixed. There are also dog runs with non-historic fencing and non-affixed dog houses in both the front and rear yards. None of the sculpture in the yard or the porch is permanently affixed.

The house has an irregular plan. It is comprised of a three-story mansarded main block, which is three bays wide and two bays deep, a mansarded two-story plus basement dining room wing, a two-story kitchen-bathroom addition dating from the late 1800s, and an angled ell at the southwest corner of the building that was originally a one-and-a half-story gable-roofed Federal house and was raised to two-stories in the late 1800s. The exterior of the house was modified c.1915 when it changed hands and from the 1970s to 2005 as the present owner has sought to stabilize and restore lost elements to the exterior.

The house rests on a brick basement and fieldstone foundation walls which are visible on the west side of the house where the ground level declines sharply. All of the basement window openings have been sealed. The house's upper walls are sheathed with-historic wood shingles that conceal original clapboard siding. The windows have molded wood surrounds. Some windows have historic two-over-two wood sash dating from the 1870s; other windows at the rear of the house retain historic early twentieth-century surrounds and one-over-one wood sash. A number of windows have been replaced with non-historic wood six-over-six wood sash. Most of the windows are protected by non-historic storm windows. The convex mansard roofs on the main block and the dining room wing retain most of their original hexagonal slate shingles and molded metal flashings (The shingles at the northeast corner of the main block have been replaced with non-historic hexagonal shingles.). The gabled dormers retain their segmental arch window surrounds and decorative hoods enriched by small eared brackets. Many of the dormer windows retain their historic two-over-two wood sash but have non-historic one-over-one aluminum storms. The molded cornices beneath the mansards retain many of their paired scrolled brackets. Portions of the molded porch cornice and dining room wing cornice have been replaced in recent years with wood cornices that match the profile of the original moldings.

**Main Block** The house's **primary façade** facing Richmond Terrace has a three-bay design with the entry bay at the west corner of the façade. The one-story wood porch is approached by a wide non-

historic wood stoop. The porch rests on brick piers. The crawl space between the piers is screened from view by non-historic diamond pattern wood lattices. The porch has a wood floor laid over earlier wood flooring. The handsome unfluted wood columns with Ionic capitals, which historian Loring McMillen suggested date from the Federal period, were probably installed in the early twentieth century. The porch retains a historic ceiling which has a non-historic metal and glass light fixture near the entry.

The entrance at the west corner of the façade retains its historic molded wood surround and transom. The historic paired wood and glass doors with their delicate egg and tongue moldings may date from the early twentieth century. Resting above the transom bar is a non-historic wood sign reading "1674." The first story windows retain their original molded surrounds and their two-over-two wood sash which are protected by non-historic aluminum storm windows. At the second story, the windows also retain their molded surrounds but have six-over-six wood replacement sash and non-historic aluminum storm windows. The louvered shutters at both the first story and second story windows are historic but are not original to this house.

The fascia board beneath the overhanging eaves of the mansard roof is embellished with paired scroll brackets. The molded gutter at the edge of the eaves remains intact. The mansard is lit by two gabled dormer windows that retain their original two-over-two wood windows but have non-historic storm windows.

The **east façade** of the main block is articulated by a line of square-headed windows at the north end of the façade and by a first story entry and second story window at the south end of the façade. The first story window at the north corner of the façade retains its original double light upper wood sash; the bottom light has been replaced by a single light or lost its center glazing bar. The second story window has non-historic wood six-over-six sash. At the south end of façade the entry is approached by a low brick stoop that originally seems to have been faced with flagstones set in concrete. The stoop is now in disrepair and the underlying brickwork is partially visible. The entry, which appears to date from the early twentieth century, retains its original surround and paneled wood and glass door. There is a small non-historic box-like light fixture to the south of the entry. The southern second story window retains its historic molded surround and has historic six-over-six wood replacement sash. Leaks in the gutter system in the crowning cornice above the second story have caused splitting of the wood at the center of the cornice and required the recent installation of a non-historic diagonal downspout beneath the third story on this façade. New wood boards have been installed on the underside of the cornice and the wall above the second story window to protect the wall from further water damage. The mansard roof has a single dormer window near the southern end of the façade and a brick chimney on the north side of the façade. The dormer has a six-over-six wood sash window and a non-historic one-over-one storm window. The historic chimney at the north end of the façade is constructed with bricks laid in a Flemish bond pattern.

The **west façade** of the main block is largely concealed by the dining room wing. The northern section of the crowning cornice above the second story has been replaced. The dormers remain largely intact but have non-historic storm windows.

The **south (rear) façade** of the main block is articulated by an asymmetrical arrangement of windows. At the first story a historic early-twentieth-century molded wood enframing contains three one-over-one wood sash windows which are protected by non-historic storm windows. A taller, early-twentieth-century, square-headed window surround contains a one-over-one wood window that is protected by non-historic storm window. At the second story, the window at the center of façade has a non-historic wood surround and contains non-historic wood six-over-six sash. The western second story window retains its historic molded wood surround. It contains non-historic six-over-six wood sash and non-historic storm sash. Because of leaks in the gutter system in the crowning cornice on this façade, several of the scrolled brackets have been removed and a non-historic downspout has been installed. Many of the shingles beneath the cornice have been replaced with wood square-cut shingles in recent years. The single central dormer in the mansard roof retains its original two-over-two sash but, has a non-historic storm window.

**Dining Room Wing** The two-story plus basement dining room wing is square in plan and is set back about a foot from the main block. The high brick basement has large openings for windows at the

center of the north façade and at the south end of the west façade. Both windows are sealed with non-historic materials. At the first story both the north and west walls of the wing are pierced by two window openings. The windows on the north façade retain their original two-over-two wood sash; the windows on the west façade have non-historic surrounds and six-over-six wood window sash. All of the windows have non-historic storm windows. Many of the shingles near the southern window, the southern half of the fascia board beneath the cornice, and about two-thirds of the cornice have been replaced in recent years. At the second story the dormers on both the north and west facades retain their historic two-over-two wood sash but have non-historic storms.

**Kitchen-Bathroom Wing** Built to link to existing differently aligned buildings, this late-nineteenth century wing has an irregular wedge-shaped plan. It is somewhat taller than the dining room wing because it aligns with the second story of the main block. Like the older parts of the house it rests on a high brick basement and its frame upper walls are sheathed with shingles. The wing is capped by a flat roof which is set off by a molded sheet metal cornice. On the north and west sides of the wing the cornice has a relatively shallow profile. On the south side of the house, where the south wall of the wing reads as a continuation of the south wall of the main block, the cornice has a deeper projection and its articulation is matched to that of the main block. The narrow north façade has small square-headed windows at both the first and second stories. These have non-historic wood surrounds but retain their original one-over-one wood sash windows. The windows are protected by non-historic storm windows. A tall non-historic brick chimney projects from the corner junction between the dining room and kitchen wing.

The south wall of the kitchen-bathroom wing adjoins the south wall of the main wing and because of the shingling and uniform cornice reads as part of the same wall. The basement has a non-historic metal hatch providing access to the cellar. Two basement window wells retain their iron bars but the wells have been filled with earth. The first story has a small square-headed window opening containing a round arched wood window with a single lower sash surmounted by a double-light upper sash. The much taller west window contains a historic wood two-over-two window, which is protected by a non-historic storm window. The second story window has non-historic six-over-six wood sash and a non-historic one-over-one storm window.

**Rear Ell** Originally a small two-bay-wide, one-bay-deep, one-and-one-half-story, gable roofed Federal-era house this structure was raised to two stories when it was joined to the main house. The east facade retains its old entry now treated as a tall window containing a historic two-over-two wood window and a non-historic aluminum storm window. The south bay of the east façade has a historic six light wood window with a molded wood surround. The two smaller square-headed second-story windows have molded wood surrounds. These contain historic two-over-one wood sash windows and non-historic storms. The narrow south wall of this wing has a one-story enclosed entrance porch which was constructed within the last twenty-five to thirty years. The second story window has a non-historic one-over-one window. The west façade of the rear ell is distinguishable from the kitchen-wing only because of the difference in height between the two structures and because of a break in the brickwork of the basements of the two structures. Like the west façade of the kitchen wing the west facade of the ell was re-shingled in recent years. The wall is pierced by a single window at the first story which has a non-historic wood surround and contains a wood one-over-one light protected by a non-historic storm window.

Report Researched and Written by  
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## NOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> This section on the development of the Factoryville-West Brighton neighborhood and the New York Dyeing and Printing Establishment is based on the following sources Barnett Shepherd, "West New Brighton," in Kenneth Jackson, ed., *The Encyclopedia of New York City* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 1256; Dorothy Valentine Smith, *Staten Island: Gateway to New York* (New York: Chilton Book Co., 1970), 122-28; J.J. Clute, *Annals of Staten Island* (New York: Charles Vogt, 1877), 322-24; Ira K. Morris *Morris's Memorial History of Staten Island* (New York : Memorial Publishing Co., 1898), 411; *Holden's Staten Island: The History of Richmond County* edited and compiled by Richard Dickenson (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 2002); Charles L. Sachs, *Made on Staten Island* (New York: Staten Island Historical Society, 1988), 35-43; Charles W. Leng and William T. Davis, *Staten Island and Its People: A History, 1609-1929* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1930), v. 1, 225, 342, 352, 616, 646, 650, 654, 889; C. Coapes Brinley, "The Origin of Street Names of Old West Brighton," *Staten Island Historian*, v. 20, n. 1 (Jan-Mar. , 1959), 1-4; C. Coapes Brinley, "Columbia Street, West New Brighton, 1892-1902," *Staten Island Historian*, v. 10 n. 3 (July-Sept. 1949), 17; v. 10 n. (Oct.-Dec. 1949), 29; v. 11, n. 1 (Jan-Mar., 1949), 3-4; v. 11, n. 2 (Apr.-June, 1950), 9; v. 11, n. 3 (July-Sept. 1950), 23; Staten Island Historical Society, Staten Island Industries index card files, "New York Dyeing and Printing Establishment," "Barrett Tileston & Co."
- <sup>2</sup> Quoted in Smith, 122, 123; Staten Island Historical Society, New York Dyeing and Printing Establishment Collection.
- <sup>3</sup> A description of Goodyear's business appeared in the *Richmond County Mirror*, July 1837.
- <sup>4</sup> The Captain John T. Barker House was moved to 9-11 Trinity Place in 1928. The house was designated a New York City Landmark in 1979, but the designation was "returned without prejudice" by the Board of Estimate.
- <sup>5</sup> Among the churches in the neighborhood were Trinity Chapel, a chapel of ease for St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Richmond Town (opened 1800, replaced by Ascension Church, 1871), Trinity Methodist Church (erected 1839 at Jewett Avenue and Cary Avenue, replaced by a new church at Richmond Terrace and Dongan Street, 1853); St. Rose of Lima, a mission church of St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church (opened 1864 in a small building on Castleton Avenue and Roe Street 1864, became a separate parish with a new brick church and school, 1875); and Calvary Presbyterian Church (organized 1872, replaced by a new church in 1894).
- <sup>6</sup> Smith, 126.
- <sup>7</sup> Sachs, 40.
- <sup>8</sup> This material on the De Groot family is taken from the FamilySearch Ancestral File v 4.19 for Johannes De Groot; Clute, 371-72; Abstract of the will of Gerritt Post, Oct. 31, 1750, *The New-York Historical Society, Collections, Abstracts of Wills on File in the Surrogates Office, City of New York* (New York: the New-York Historical Society (1893-1913), v. 4, 121-122.
- <sup>9</sup> The De Groots' house has been demolished.
- <sup>10</sup> Johannes and Elizabeth's daughter Beletje (Blanche) married Cornelius Cruser, Jr., in 1757; their son Peter married Claartje Post. See Rosalie Bailey, *Pre-Revolutionary Dutch Houses and Families in Northern New Jersey and Southern New York* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1936), 155.
- <sup>11</sup> Richmond County, Office of the Register, Liber Deeds and Conveyances, Liber P, p. 454; Liber R., p. 181.
- <sup>12</sup> Richmond County, Office of the Surrogate, Probate file 198.
- <sup>13</sup> Conveyances, Liber T, p. 401.
- <sup>14</sup> *Population Schedules of the Fourth Census of the United States, 1820*, New York, Richmond County, Richmond County, Castleton, Roll 65, p. 122; *Population Schedules of the Fifth Census of the United States, 1830*, New York, Richmond County, Castleton, Roll 106, p. 36.

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- <sup>15</sup> Conveyances, Liber Z, p. 357.
- <sup>16</sup> Conveyances, Liber Z, p. 360.
- <sup>17</sup> Conveyances, Liber Z, p. 361. Subsequently, De Groot purchased additional parcels so that he eventually owned about 217 feet along Water Street.
- <sup>18</sup> Probate file 504.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>20</sup> Conveyances, Liber 14, p. 183.
- <sup>21</sup> *Population Schedules of the Seventh Census of the United States, 1850*, New York, Richmond County, Castleton, Roll 587, p. 6; *Population Schedules of the Eighth Census of the United States, 1860*, New York, Richmond County, Castleton, Roll 850, p. 130; *Population Schedules of the Ninth Census of the United States, 1870*, New York, Richmond County, Castleton, Roll 1086, p. 82.
- <sup>22</sup> In 1850, he and William boarded with hotelkeeper Henry Fountain, presumably at the Fountain House Hotel. In 1865, John De Groot boarded in a house on Richmond Terrace near Van Street with the family of Thomas Coffee, who lived next door to John De Groot's sisters, Angeline De Groot and Eliza Donnelly.
- <sup>23</sup> Richmond County, Office of the Surrogate, Letters of Administration, file 1058.
- <sup>24</sup> New York State Census, 1875, Richmond County, Castleton, 4<sup>th</sup> division, household 364.
- <sup>25</sup> *Population Schedules of the Tenth Census of the United States, 1880*, New York, Richmond County, Castleton. Also Staten Island Directories, 1882, 1884, 1886, 1890/91, 1893/94, 1897/98.
- <sup>26</sup> *Population Schedules of the Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900*, New York, Richmond, First Ward, E.D. 587, sheet 6. Three of Eliza's children Charles C. Donnelly (1853-1879), Isabella Donnelly (1859-1887), and Alice Donnelly (1861-1889) died in their early twenties. Her son Alfred (1863-1897) became a plumber and continued to live in this house until his death. Her daughter Mary married salesman Thomas R. Farrell in the mid 1890s and moved to Dongan Street. Charles, Isabella, Alice, and Alfred Donnelly, and Thomas Farrell share a gravemarker with John De Groot. They are buried near his parents John and Mary De Groot at the Fountain Cemetery. See William T. Davis, Charles Leng and Royden Vosburgh, "Staten Island Gravestone Inscriptions," mss. compiled and copied, 1924, at the Staten Historical Society, v. 1, 146-147.
- <sup>27</sup> "Death of John De Groot," *Staten Islander*, June 9, 1905, p. 5.
- <sup>28</sup> Letters of Administration file 4120; Richmond County, Office of the Register, Mortgages Liber 294, p. 139.
- <sup>29</sup> For architectural pattern books during this period see Daniel D. Reiff, *Houses from Books: Treatises, Pattern Books, and Catalogs in American Architecture, 1738-1950* (University Park, PA: Penn State Univ. Press, 2000); Robert Guter and Janet Foster, *Building by the Book: Pattern-Book Architecture in New Jersey* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1992); Lawrence Grow, *Old House Plans: Two Centuries of American Domestic Architecture* (New York: Main Street Press, 1978).
- <sup>30</sup> These houses were photographed by Percy L. Sperr in the 1930s and the photos are reproduced in New York Public Library, *Photographic Views of New York City, 1870s-1970s* (Ann Arbor University Microfilms, 1981). Also available on the internet at <http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/explore>.
- <sup>31</sup> This house appears to have been designed with a central heating system and a water closet, features which would suggest a date around 1850 or later. For the evolution of heating systems, see Merritt Lerley, *The Comforts of Home: The American House and the Evolution of Modern Convenience* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1999).
- <sup>32</sup> In addition to its early form, the house's age is confirmed by the heavy timber framing and brickwork apparent in the basement, and the by the wood paneling and framing of the staircase in its first floor

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interior, all consistent with a date c. 1810-15. None of the interior features of the house are under consideration for landmark designation.

<sup>33</sup> Conveyances, Liber 437, p. 144.

<sup>34</sup> Conveyances, Liber 570, p. 544.

<sup>35</sup> Conveyances, Liber 1330, p. 264.

<sup>36</sup> Conveyances, Liber, 1965, p. 218.

## 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 John De Groot House has a special character and special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the John De Groot House, is one of only three remaining houses in the Second Empire Style that remain standing on Richmond Terrace between Sailors Snug Harbor and Port Richmond, recalling the period when that thoroughfare was lined with grand houses; that John De Groot, the builder of this house, worked for over fifty years for the nearby New York Dyeing and Printing Establishment, a textile dyeing business that was the first and one of the most important early industrial concerns on the island; that De Groot was a descendent of a prominent family that settled on Staten Island around 1730 and intermarried with several of the island's leading families; that this house occupies a portion of a tract of land acquired by his grandfather in 1802 and incorporates part of an early vernacular house erected by his father in the 1810s at its rear; that the front part of the house, constructed by De Groot in 1870, consisting of a three-story mansarded main block and two-story mansarded dining room wing, is a fine example of the Second Empire Style; that it retains its historic form and most of its historic detailing and includes such notable features as the floor length parlor windows and double-door entry, heavy molded cornices and scrolled brackets, and convex mansard roofs that still retain their hexagonal shingles and gabled dormers; and that convex mansards were less frequently employed than concave or straight sided mansards, and have not survived in great numbers, making this an unusual survivor.

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 a Landmark the John De Groot House, 1674 Richmond Terrace, Borough of Staten Island and designates Borough of Staten Island Tax Map Block 188, Lot 40 as its Landmark Site.

Robert B. Tierney, Chair; Pablo Vengochea Vice-Chair  
Stephen Byrns, Joan Gerner, Roberta Brandes Gratz., Richard Olcott, Jan Pokorny, Elizabeth Ryan, Vicki Match Suna, Commissioners



John De Groot House, 1674 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, Photo Carl Forster



John De Groot House, 1674 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, Photo Carl Forster



John De Groot House, Detail of upper stories, Photo Carl Forster



John De Groot House, Dining room wing and kitchen-bathroom addition, Photo Carl Forster

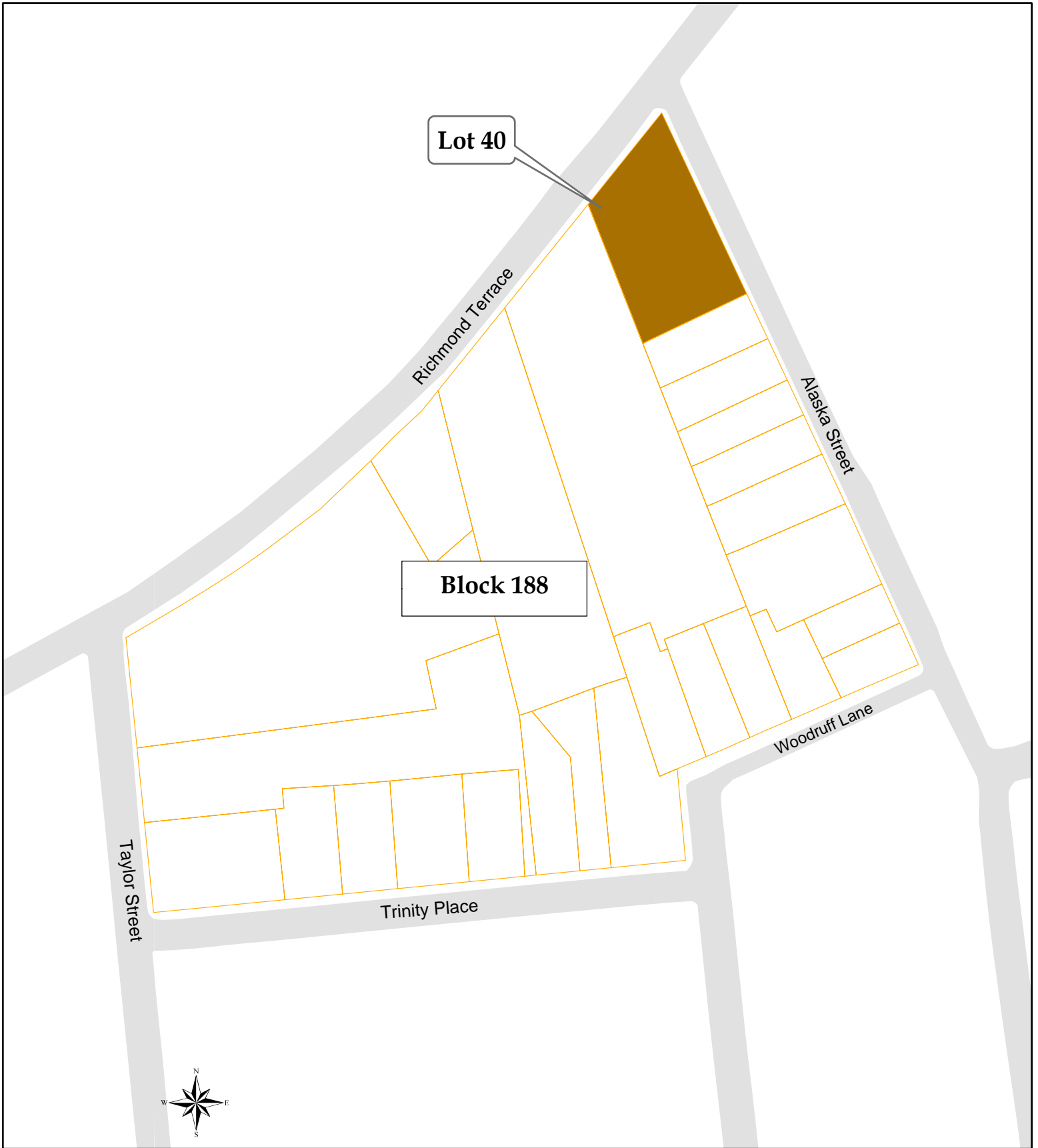




John De Groot House, Detail south (rear) façade, Photo Carl Forster



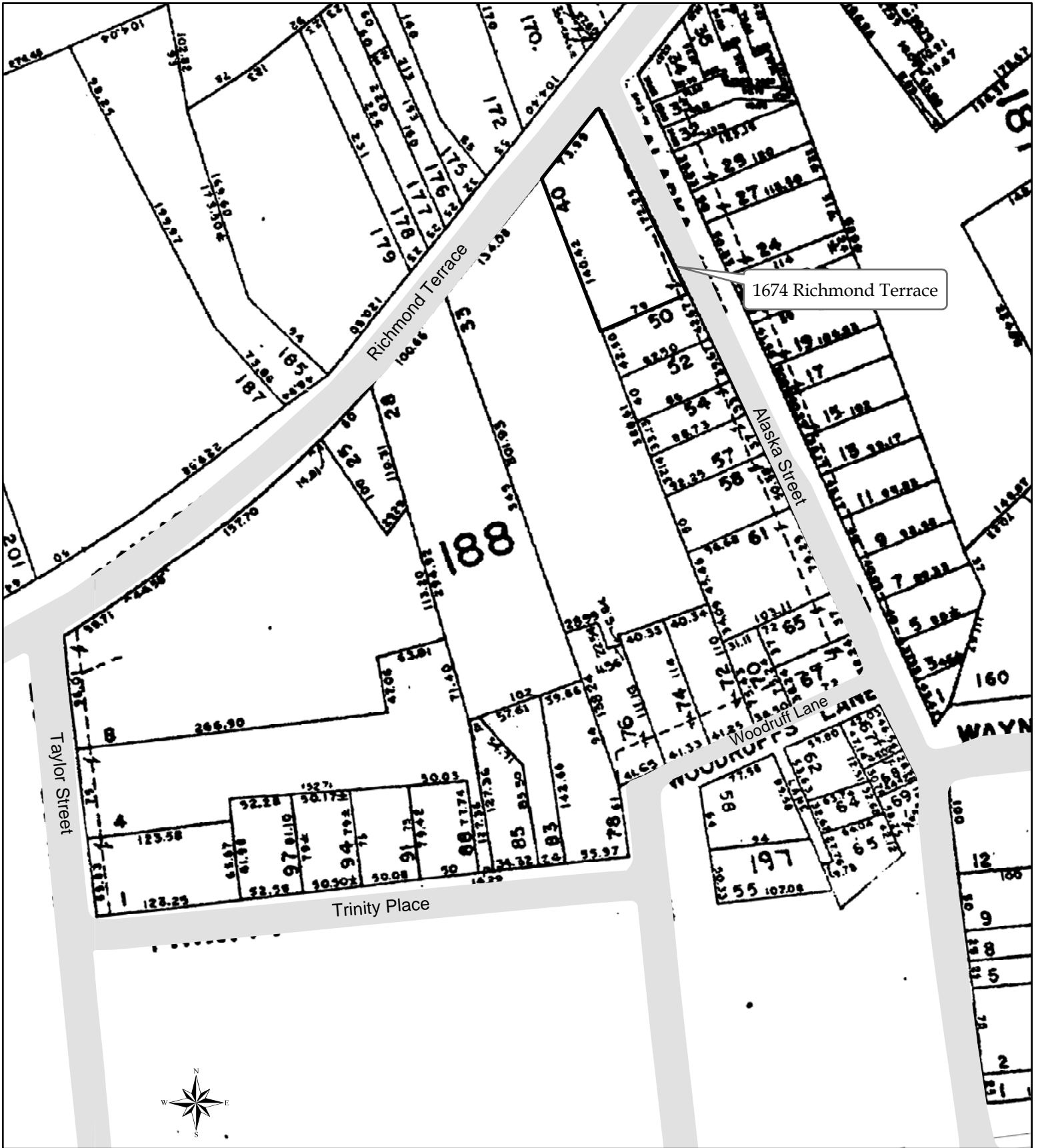
John De Groot House, Rear ell, built c. 1810-15, raised to two stories late 19th century, Photo Carl Forster



John De Groot House, 1674 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island

Landmark Site: Borough of Staten Island Tax Map Block 188, Lot 40

Graphic Source: New York City Department of City Planning, MapPLUTO, Edition 03C, December 2003



John De Groot House, 1674 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island  
 Landmark Site: Borough of Staten Island Tax Map Block 188, Lot 40  
 Graphic Source: Sanborn, Building & Property Atlas, (2004) Region 2, Volume 2, Page 214