

(FORMER) DOLLAR SAVINGS BANK, 2792 Third Avenue, the Bronx
Built 1919; addition 1926; Renwick, Aspinwall & Tucker, architect

Landmark Site: Borough of the Bronx Tax Map Block 2307, Lot 54

On December 15, 2009 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Dollar Savings Bank and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 1). The hearing was duly advertised according to provisions of law. Three witnesses spoke in favor of designation, including representatives of the Historic Districts Council, and the New York Landmarks Conservancy.

Summary

The Dollar Savings Bank was founded in 1887 by John Haffen of the prominent Haffen family, which controlled much of the Bronx in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was the first thrift institution to be organized in the Bronx, preceding its competitors by sixteen years. Structured as a mutual savings bank, it was managed for the benefits of the depositors, which assured that most savings would not leave the Bronx. The bank's early leaders moved quickly to organize development in the Bronx and used the savings deposits to fund improvements in the borough. As the



number of accounts increased, the bank's location in the Haffen building at 2808 Third Avenue was unable to accommodate its rapid growth, and the bank sought new and more spacious quarters.

Designed by the renowned firm of Renwick, Aspinwall & Tucker in 1919, the Classical Revival Style, and the free standing bank building illustrate the style adopted by savings institutions during the last decades of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th century. The bank's design has the visual continuity of classical architecture linked with civic pride that is symbolic of the bank's wealth and stability that typifies the characteristics of the Classical Revival bank building style. The impressive building is clad entirely in limestone, and sits on a trapezoidal corner lot with facades facing three streets; the window fenestration is distinct on each façade. The canted main entrance with central bracketed pediment, round-arched window, flanking paired Ionic pilasters, with laurel leaves all evoke the traditional classical design. The building is crowned by a stone frieze engraved with DOLLAR SAVINGS BANK. This distinctive bank building is a significant reminder of the Classical Revival style banks built in New York City at this time.

By the late 1940s, Dollar had become the sixth largest savings bank in the country. This building, the former Dollar Savings Bank at 2792 Third Avenue, served as the bank's headquarters from the time it was constructed until c. 1950, when the offices were moved to the Fordham branch at 2516 to 2530 Grand Concourse (a designated New York City Landmark). It is now the Bronx Temple of Seventh Day Adventist Church.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Bronx Development¹

The Native American tribe that settled in the Bronx prior to and during the first European settlements were the Reckgawawancs, traditionally associated with most of the island of Manhattan and, in the Bronx, the area adjoining the east bank of the Hudson River as far north as Yonkers and the area north of the East River (and east of the Harlem River) as far east as the Bronx River.²

The Bronx was originally part of Westchester County. The earliest Dutch settlement in the Bronx was situated along the Harlem River in 1639, in what is now Mott Haven. In 1874 the towns of Melrose, Morrisania, West Farms and Kingsbridge, all of which were west of the Bronx River, were annexed to the City of New York.³ In 1895 another bill annexed to the city the areas east of the Bronx River, consisting of the towns of Pelham and Eastchester, the village of Wakefield, and the town of Westchester. Then commonly known as the Great North Side the area was generally referred to as the “Annexed District” or “North Side,” but it remained fairly isolated.⁴ In 1898, all of the areas that had been annexed in 1874 and 1895 became the Borough of the Bronx. Soon after annexation, local residents, property owners, business owners, and booster groups like the North Side Association began agitating for improved infrastructure, including better transportation connections with Manhattan.⁵

Beginning in the 1890s the new Borough of the Bronx became the refuge of thousands of second-generation immigrants seeking to escape the crowded tenements of East Harlem and the Lower East Side. Between 1880 and 1930 the Bronx became one of the fastest growing urban areas in the country, with the population reaching well over a million by 1930.⁶

Improvements in transportation throughout the 19th century made the Bronx more accessible to Manhattan and contributed to its growth. As early as 1841, the New York & Harlem Railroad began regular commuter service between the Bronx and Manhattan. The New York & Harlem Railroad, following the Bronx River valley, was opened to White Plains by 1844 with stations in Morrisania, West Farms (Fordham), and Yonkers. However, transportation was still complicated for commuters bound for the Bronx as it involved transferring to the horse-drawn “Huckleberry line” and paying an extra fare to travel to northern areas in the Bronx. The Suburban Rapid Transit Company began an elevated train service that crossed the Harlem River in 1885. That would later become the Third Avenue El. While the Suburban was under construction, *Real Estate Record & Builders' Guide* predicted that it would have an enormous impact on the North Side, calling it, “a great thing for the [Annexed District], as well as for New York City. It will garner further residential development. We may expect many light manufacturing industries to become naturalized on the other side of the Harlem.”⁷ The suburban line connected Manhattan to the Bronx, and provided a more direct route in the northern and western sections. Services on the lines were expanded and improved between 1887 and 1902.⁸ In 1904 the first subway connecting the Bronx to Manhattan was opened. The new subway lines opened at this time and in subsequent years, along with the older Third Avenue elevated line, provided cheap rapid transit to and from Manhattan.

The Third Avenue elevated line was gradually extended northward and in the process trolley lines were connected to it, forming a rapid transit system that provided access from lower Manhattan to large expanses of undeveloped land. The new subway system sparked a wave of land speculation and a building boom, resulting in many apartment buildings and commercial buildings being erected along the corridor of the elevated line, which reached its northern

terminus at Gun Hill Road in 1920.⁹ With the new subway the old village of Melrose became known as the Hub of the Bronx.

History of Melrose¹⁰

Lewis Morris was granted the entire South Bronx by the English crown in 1697.¹¹ It remained under the ownership of Morris descendants until the 1840s. During this time period, it was customary for large landowners to own slaves, including the Morris family. The last held slave in the state of New York in 1827 belonged to the Morris family.¹² Lewis's grandson, Gouverneur Morris II, began to sell off parcels of his families' holdings and small villages were laid out as early as 1828.¹³ With the success of the village of Morrisania in 1848 Morris further developed his property and had surveyors Hampton Denman, Andrew Findley and Robert Elton lay out several more communities, resulting in the establishment of Woodstock, Melrose, Melrose East and South in 1850.

Melrose is centered in the south Bronx directly north of Mott Haven. It was a rural village populated largely by Germans immigrants seeking a healthier alternative to life on the Lower East Side. Melrose's main street, Courtlandt Avenue, was called the "Dutch Broadway"¹⁴ because of the high concentration of German shops, saloons, beer halls and gymnastic and singing societies. Melrose was a community of artisans, craftsmen, and small shopkeepers.

In 1874 the township of Melrose became part of New York City along with the rest of the western Bronx. With the 1888 opening of the elevated rail line along Third Avenue, the process of urbanization began to transform the Mott Haven, Melrose, and Morrisania sections of the western Bronx, and development only intensified after the arrival of the subway in 1904. Residential housing and small frame structures gave way to New Law apartments and large business buildings.¹⁵ Encouraged by this growth, grocery stores, restaurants, vegetable and fruit markets, tailors, and hardware stores were also established. By the turn of the century, the commercial heart of Melrose—with numerous theaters, shops, and banks—was centered around the intersection of East 149th Street, Melrose, Willis and Third Avenues, known as the Hub.¹⁶ It is the oldest major shopping district in the Bronx, with inhabitants throughout the borough patronizing its department stores, boutiques, movie palaces and vaudeville theaters. The intersection of 149th Street and Third Avenue became to known as the "42nd Street and Broadway" of the Bronx.¹⁷ As predicted, by 1911 the intersection was "the great business center of the north borough." Melrose continued to prosper well into the twentieth century.

Dollar Savings Bank¹⁸

The Dollar Savings Bank of the City Of New York was the most prestigious banking institution in the Bronx. Organized in 1887 through the endeavors of Thomas Mackellar,¹⁹ then president of the Twenty-Third Ward Bank, it was the first thrift institution in the Bronx. It received its charter in 1890 and opened its doors at 2771 Third Avenue, near the intersection of Third and Willis Avenues and 148th Street.²⁰ The bank's founder and first president, John Haffen (1847-1910), also was one of the organizers and served as vice-president of the Twenty-Third Ward Bank.²¹ He served as president of Dollar until his death in 1910. Within three years the new savings bank had 1,396 depositors and \$115,105 on deposit. Among the Dollar Bank's early trustees were Charles W. Bogart, president of the Twenty-Third Ward Bank and George E. Edwards (1869-?), Haffen's successor as president of the Dollar. These business leaders and their associates represented the vanguard of the borough's commercial developers in the first half of the century.²²

These business leaders thought of themselves as “progressives,” and moved quickly to control the new borough’s development. Establishing the Dollar Savings Bank as a mutual saving bank assured that most local savings would not leave the borough.²³ The Dollar Bank’s trustees used the savings deposits to fund improvements in the borough. By 1915 the bank’s depositors numbered to 35,000 and deposits grew to the sum of \$9,000,000. As the number of accounts increased it became necessary to seek new and more spacious quarters, as the bank’s location in the Haffen building at 2808 Third Avenue was unable to accommodate its rapid growth.²⁴ In 1919, Dollar opened its new headquarters on the corner of 147th Street and Willis and Third Avenues.²⁵ In 1926 the bank was enlarged and safe deposit boxes were installed in the basement for the benefit of depositors.²⁶ Depositors increased to 53,000 and assets to \$19,000,000 by 1919, and by 1926 depositors grew to 80,000 and assets surpassed \$67,000,000 with a surplus of more than \$7,000,000, making the Dollar Savings Bank the largest bank in the Bronx at that time.²⁷

John Haffen²⁸

John Haffen (1847-1910) was born in Brooklyn to immigrant parents. After his father Mathias Sr. retired in 1871, John and his brother Mathias Jr. took over the family brewery business. He served as president of the J. & M. Haffen Brewing Company until the brewery was purchased by Jacob Ruppert in 1914.

John Haffen grew up working in the family business he later inherited with his brother Mathias, however, his interests were centered on the banking industry. He was the first president and later vice-president of the Twenty-Third Ward Bank (later the Bronx County Trust Company), founder and president of the Dollar Savings Bank of the City of New York, treasurer of the Peoples Guaranty and Indemnity Company, and a director of the Union Surety Company. Mr. Haffen was also president of the Twenty-Third Ward Taxpayers Association, member of the North Side Board of Trade and president of the Talapoosa Club.²⁹

John Haffen’s youngest brother Louis Haffen was the first Borough President of the newly formed borough of the Bronx. He was regarded as the “Father of the Bronx”³⁰ and was re elected as borough president for three successive terms. During his fourth term, he was removed from office, six months before the expiration of his term, with allegations of mismanagement.

Banks and Architectural Imagery³¹

As industry, business, and commerce prospered after the Civil War, New York became the nation's financial capital. Apart from a few imposing buildings on Wall Street, however, prior to the 1880s and 1890s, banks were, for the most part, located in converted residences, or in office buildings, rarely in quarters designed for them. With high property values in the financial district, many commercial banks began to build office buildings, conducting business on the ground floor and renting out revenue-producing office space above. Savings banks, many of which catered to small private investors, were, in contrast, generally not located in the Wall Street area. They could take advantage of less expensive real estate, and were able to build monumental bank buildings for their exclusive use, many on corner sites.³² Among them were the Greenwich Savings Bank, designed by Robert W. Gibson (1892, demolished); the Bank for Savings at East 22nd Street and Fourth Avenue, designed by Cyrus L.W. Eidlitz (1892, partially demolished); the sumptuous Bowery Savings Bank, designed by McKim, Mead & White (1893-95); and R.H. Robertson's New York Bank for Savings at Eighth Avenue and 14th Street (1896-97). The last two are designated New York City Landmarks and Interior Landmarks.

This trend continued after the turn of the century. In 1909, the *Architectural Record* published a lengthy, illustrated survey, in which the author invoked the ancient Greek and Roman temples as ancestors to the modern bank building type; the recent banks, however, had evolved due to "the marvelous growth of modern consumerism."³³ The illustrations attest to the pervasiveness of the classical bank type, about which the author states: "The effect of the structure must be one of great importance and simplicity. It must make on the depositors the impression of being a perfectly safe place to leave their money and valuables."³⁴

This bank style developed, not only as the result of economic conditions, but also in response to the resurgence of the neo-Classical style, what has been termed Academic Classicism. American architects, influenced by the principles of the French Ecole des Beaux-Arts and the popularity of the "Great White City" -- the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago -- turned to the interpretation of Renaissance and neo-Classical prototypes. In part, Academic Classicism was popularized as a means to create an architecture characterized by order, clarity, and sobriety, qualities considered appropriate to the democratic ideals of the expanding nation, and particularly appropriate to the design of banks and public institutions. In making historical associations, American architects drew parallels between their own culture, the American neo-Classical past, and the enlightened Greco-Roman and Renaissance civilizations.³⁵

The Architects³⁶

The successor to the architectural practice of the eminent James Renwick, the firm of Renwick, Aspinwall & Tucker was formed in 1905 by William Whetton Renwick (1864-1933), James Lawrence Aspinwall (1854-1936), and Fitz Henry Faye Tucker (dates undetermined). Aspinwall was born in New York City, probably studied under French architect/engineer L. Colian, entered the office of James Renwick (a cousin of his wife) as a draftsman in 1875, and became a partner in 1883 in the firm of Renwick, Aspinwall & Russell. William Renwick, a nephew of James, was born in Lenox, Mass., graduated from the Stevens Institute of Technology in 1885 after studying mechanical engineering, entered the office of his uncle, and was admitted as a junior partner in 1890; the firm became Renwick, Aspinwall & Renwick in 1892 (after the senior Renwick's death in 1895, it became Renwick, Aspinwall & Owen, with Aspinwall as senior partner). In independent practice William Renwick specialized in ecclesiastical architecture and decoration. Little is known of Tucker, who was established as an architect in New York by 1904; the following year he joined with Renwick and Aspinwall in an association that lasted until 1925 (after which the firm continued as Renwick, Aspinwall & Guard). Among the commissions the firm received, executed in Gothic and neo-Classical styles, were the Grace Church Neighborhood House (1906-07, 98 Fourth Avenue),³⁷ Provident Loan Society Buildings (1908-09, 61 East 25th St. and 734 7th Ave.), Seaview Hospital, Sanitarium additions (1917), Staten Island,³⁸ Pictorial Review Co. Building (1919, 7th Ave. and West 59th St., demolished c. 1927), Dollar Savings Bank (1919, Willis Ave. and East 147th St., Bronx), and Lawyers' Mortgage Co. Building (1921-22, 56 Nassau St., demolished).³⁹

Subsequent History

Dollar Savings Bank enlarged its main offices at 2792 Third Avenue in 1926. The bank acquired Fordham Savings Bank in 1932, and constructed a branch office at 2516 Grand Concourse. After a series of expansions to the Fordham branch location, the last after Second World War, the Third Avenue branch ceased to be Dollar's main headquarters. In 1974 the bank was sold to the Northeastern Conference Corporation of Seventh Day Adventists.

Building Description

The Classical Revival style-building is clad entirely in limestone. The building sits on a trapezoidal corner lot with facades facing three streets; the window fenestration is distinct on each façade. At the base of the Third Avenue façade below each pair of pilasters is a narrow vertically oriented rectangular window with wrought-iron security grilles. This feature is repeated on the base of Willis Avenue façade. Below each window on the same façade is a horizontally oriented narrow window with wrought-iron security grilles, which graduates in size.

On the corner of Third Avenue is the canted main entrance with central bracketed, pedimented entrance, which features a round-arched window with keystone above, flanked by Ionic pilasters. Left of the central entrance are two sets of paired round-arched windows separated by paired Ionic pilasters, a design element that is repeated at the corner of each façade. On the 147th Street façade are a series of five large round-arched windows with keystones and separated by molded stone discs, flanked at the corners by one-over-one windows with transom, followed by a molded stone decorative panel featuring an eagle and laurel wreath, with a small casement window above nestled between paired Ionic pilasters. This window fenestration is repeated on the Willis Avenue façade. Willis Avenue also features a bracketed pedimented entrance, with a round-arched window and keystone above flanked by Ionic pilasters, and three, one-over-one windows with transoms, followed by a molded stone decorative panel featuring an eagle and laurel wreath, with a small casement window above. On all three facades the architrave is decorated with paired laurel leaves above each pilaster, crowned by a stone frieze engraved with DOLLAR SAVINGS BANK, followed by a acanthus leaf band and then, a denticulated cornice; the Willis Avenue façade is topped by an angular stone pediment. The northern façade is constructed of brick, it contains two window openings that are partially obscured. The second story is a later addition to the building, and is also constructed of limestone. There are two small one-over-one windows on the Third Avenue façade, five on the 147th Street façade, and two on the Willis Avenue façade. The addition is topped by a metal roof.

Report prepared by
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Research Department

NOTES

¹ Adapted from: James L. Wells, Louis F. Haffen, and Josiah A. Briggs, Eds., *The Bronx and its People A History 1609-1927* (New York: The Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1927), 98; Lloyd Ultan, Gary Hermalyn, *The Bronx in the Innocent Years 1890-1925* (New York: Harper and Row 1985), xi-xxviii; Stephen Jenkins, *Story of the Bronx*, (New York: Knickerbocker Press 1912).

² Eugene J. Boesch, PhD, *Archaeological Evaluation and Sensitivity Assessment of the Prehistoric and Contact Period Aboriginal History of the Bronx*, New York, July 19, 1996.

³ The Borough of the Bronx came into being in 1898, with New York City's consolidation. It was part of New York County until 1914, when Bronx County was created. See Gary D. Hermalyn and Lloyd Ultan, "Bronx," *The Encyclopedia of New York City* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995), 142-146.

⁴ See Gary D. Hermalyn, "Annexed District" and "North Side," *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 39, 854.

⁵ By 1902, booster groups pushing for improved rapid transit connections with Manhattan included the North Side Board of Trade, Twenty-Third Ward Property Owners' Association, South Bronx Association, University Heights Association and Bronx East Side Association. See "Rapid Transit for the Bronx," *New York Times*, (August 26, 1902), 3.

⁶ Adapted from: Evelyn Gonzalez, *The Bronx* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 4-6.

⁷ "Suburban Rapid Transit," *Real Estate Record & Builders' Guide*, December 12, 1885, 1362.

⁸ Kenneth T. Jackson, "Elevated Railways [Els]," *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 368-369; William Fullerton Reeves, *The First Elevated Railroads in Manhattan and the Bronx of the City of New York* (New York: The New-York Historical Society, 1936), 34-41; Edwin Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 1053-1056.

⁹ Adapted from: Robert A. Olmsted, "A History of Transportation in the Bronx", *350th Anniversary of the Bronx: Commemorative Issue*, (New York: Bronx County Historical Society, XXVI, 2, Fall, 1989), 80-83; The four-year period from 1917-1920 saw the greatest expansion of the of the rapid transit system in the history of the Bronx. The policy was to build all lines simultaneously and spread the benefits equally. <http://www.thirteen.org/bronx/history2.html>.

¹⁰ Adapted from: Gonzalez, 26-31; John McNamara, *History in Asphalt* (New York: The Bronx Historical Society, 1991), 343; originally part of the Morris family manor lands, the village boundaries were East 156th Street to East 163rd Street, from Park Avenue to Third Avenue.

¹¹ Wells, Haffen, Briggs, 138-142.

¹² Wells, Haffen, Briggs, 156.

¹³ In 1816, Gouverneur Morris II had his land surveyed, mapped, and farm lots laid out by John Randall, surveyor and engineer. In 1828 he sold two hundred acres at \$175 an acre to Jordan L. Mott.

¹⁴ Adapted from: Lloyd Ultan & Gary Herman, *The Bronx in the Innocent Years 1890-1825* (New York: Harper and Rowe, 1985), xi; "Dutch", a corruption of the word *deutsh*, was a popular term for Germans.

¹⁵ Adapted from: Gonzalez, 73-74; *Bronx Home News*, (April 3, 1908), (December 7, 1913); *Record and Guide* (November 4, 1911); Lots in the Hub had sold for slightly more than \$4,000 in 1901. Ten years later, these lots were selling for \$30,000 each.

¹⁶ "The Hub" is the unofficial name given to the intersection of East 149th Street, Melrose, Willis and Third Avenues. It is believed to have been coined around 1896 when Melrose Avenue was cut through to join Willis Avenue. Some believe that the term was used as early as the 1880s.

¹⁷ John Lewis, "History of Hearn's," *Daily News*, (September 23, 1979).

¹⁸ William E. Dunkman, *A Study of Savings and Savings Facilities in New York State, 1941-1950* (New York: New York State Bankers' Assoc., 1952); John Haffen obituary, *New York Times* (September 26, 1910), 13:6; New York (State) *Superintendent of Banks Annual Report... relative to Savings Banks and Trust Cos.*, (Albany: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Co. 1896), 125-128; James Hilton Manning, *Century of American Savings Banks* (New York: B. F. Buck & Co., 1917), 245-246; "Dollar Savings Bank to Have Assets of More than \$1000,000.00," *Savings Bank Journal* 13: 7 (Sept. 1932), 50; Franklin J. Sherman, *Modern Story of Mutual Savings Banks* (New York: J. J. Little & Ives Co., 1934).

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- ¹⁹ Thomas Mackellar was named the first vice-president of the Dollar Savings Bank. He was active in the bank for the first three years. He then became interested in endeavors out west and left the board of trustees in March, 1895.
- ²⁰ The Dollar Savings Bank was founded sixteen years before any comparable institution in the borough. The Bronx Savings Bank was founded in 1906. The Fordham Savings Bank was founded in 1923 and absorbed by the Dollar Savings Bank nine years later.
- ²¹ John Haffen's son, John Mathais Haffen (1872-?), succeeded his father as director of the Twenty-Third Ward Bank. Acquiring a controlling interest in the bank in 1919, he renamed it the Bronx County Trust Company six years later.
- ²² These included: Brian G. Hughes, vice president of the Dollar under Haffen and Edwards, then President; Frederick Alfred Wurzburg, a founder of the Bronx National Bank (1907); Frederick Berry, subsequently president of Bronx Trust Company; Lloyd I. Phyfe, architect and apartment builder; William Henry Steinkamp, president of the Fordham Savings Bank; George W. Fennell, president of the Bronx National Bank; Rodderick Stephens of the Stephens Fuel Company; Joseph Buckbee Hare, president of the Central Union & Northern Union Gas Company; and Howell T. Mason, successor to Hughes as president of the Dollar.
- ²³ Mutual savings banks were banks managed for the benefits of the depositor with the profits returned to the depositors as interest dividends, organized in the early nineteenth century in Scotland, the United States, and in England. The earliest in this country is the Philadelphia Savings Fund Society of 1816; the earliest in New York was The Bank for Savings.
- ²⁴ Adapted from: Manning, 245- 248; George E. Edwards was born in New York City, August 25, 1869, educated in the public schools, entered the employ of the Twenty-Third Ward Bank in 1888, held several positions and was elected trustee of Dollar Savings Bank in February 1899. Under the direction of George Edwards, Dollar grew quickly, mirroring proportionately the growth of the population in the Bronx, and in 1915 it became necessary to construct a new headquarters.
- ²⁵ Bronx County Office of the Register, Conveyances July 24, 1902, Liber 42, 357.
- ²⁶ Bromley *Atlas of the City of New York*, 1893, plate No.5; New York City, Department of Buildings ALT: 291-1926.
- ²⁷ Wells, Haffen, Briggs, 613.
- ²⁸ Adapted from: John McNamara, "The Haffen Family," *The Bronx Historical Society Journal* (X: 2, 1973), 53-65.
- ²⁹ Adapted from: "John Haffen Dead" *New York Times* (September 26, 1910); "The Twenty-Third Ward Bank of New York City" *The Bankers Magazine*, (LXIV January to June, 1902), 865-866; *Notable New Yorkers of 1896-1899* (New York: King, 1899), 545.
- ³⁰ Fordham Alumni Magazine, NY Times obit, Bronx Historical Society Journal, IV: 1(February1936), 17.
- ³¹ Adapted from: Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company Building Designation Report* (LP-1633), prepared by Elisa Urbanelli (New York, 1988).
- ³² A.C. David, "Private Residences for Banking Firms," *Architectural Record*, (July 14, 1903), 13-14. See also Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and John Massengale, *New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism, 1890-1915*, (New York: Rizzoli, 1983), 177.
- ³³ "Recent Bank Buildings of the United States," *Architectural Record*, 25: 1 (Jan. 1909), 1-3.
- ³⁴ M. Christine Boyer, *Manhattan Manners: Architecture and Style 1850-1900*, (New York: Henry L. Hintz, Publisher, 1985), 45.
- ³⁵ Richard Guy Wilson, "The Great Civilization," *The American Renaissance, 1876-1917* (New York: Brooklyn Museum 1979), 11-16.
- ³⁶ Aspinwall obit., *New York Times* (May 16, 1936), II, 9; Selma Rattner, "James L. Aspinwall," *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects* 1 (New York: Macmillan Co., 1982), 109-110; Landmark Preservation Commission, *Tribeca West Historic District Designation Report* (LP-1713) (New York: City of New York, 1991); Landmark Preservation Commission, architects files.
- ³⁷ This building is a designated New York City Landmark.
- ³⁸ This building is part of the N.Y.C. Farm Colony-Seaview Hospital Historic District.
- ³⁹ Rattner, Aspinwall obit; Aspinwall is credited with the design of the American Express Co. Building.

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 Dollar Savings Bank 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 Dollar Savings Bank was founded in 1887 by John Haffen of the prominent Haffen family, which controlled much of the Bronx in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; that it was the first thrift institution to be organized in the Bronx, preceding its competitors by sixteen years; that it structured as a mutual savings bank, it was managed for the benefits of the depositors, which assured that most savings would not leave the Bronx; that the bank's early leaders moved quickly to organize development in the Bronx and used the savings deposits to fund improvements in the borough; that as the number of accounts increased, the bank's location in the Haffen building at 2808 Third Avenue was unable to accommodate its rapid growth, and the bank sought new and more spacious quarters; that it was designed by the renowned firm of Renwick, Aspinwall & Tucker in 1919; that the Classical Revival Style, and the free standing bank building illustrate the style adopted by savings institutions during the last decades of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th centuries; that the banks design has the visual continuity of classical architecture linked with civic pride that is symbolic of the bank's wealth and stability that typifies the characteristics of the Classical Revival bank building style; that the impressive building is clad entirely in limestone; that it sits on a trapezoidal corner lot with facades facing three streets; that the window fenestration is distinct on each façade; that the canted main entrance with central bracketed pediment, round-arched window, flanking paired Ionic pilasters, with laurel leaves all evoke the traditional classical design; that the building is crowned by a stone frieze engraved with DOLLAR SAVINGS BANK; that this distinctive bank building is a significant reminder of the Classical Revival style banks built in New York City at this time; that by the late 1940s, Dollar had become the sixth largest savings bank in the country; that this building, the former Dollar Savings Bank at 2792 Third Avenue, served as the bank's headquarters from the time it was constructed until c. 1950, when the offices were moved to the Fordham branch at 2516-2530 Grand Concourse (a designated New York City Landmark); that it is now the Bronx Temple of Seventh Day Adventist Church.

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 Dollar Savings Bank Borough of the Bronx, and designates Bronx Tax Map Block 2307, Lot 54 as its Landmark Site.

Robert B. Tierney, Chair

Pablo E. Vengoechea, Vice-Chair

Stephen F. Byrns, Joan Gerner, Christopher Moore,

Margery Perlmutter, Elizabeth Ryan, Roberta Washington, Commissioners



Dollar Savings Bank
2792 Third Avenue (aka 495 Willis Avenue)
Borough of the Bronx
Tax Map Block 2307 Lot 54
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



Dollar Savings Bank, Borough of the Bronx (Willis Avenue façade)
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



Dollar Savings Bank, (Willis Avenue façade)
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



Dollar Savings Bank, (Third Avenue facade)

Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



Dollar Savings Bank, (Third Avenue facade)

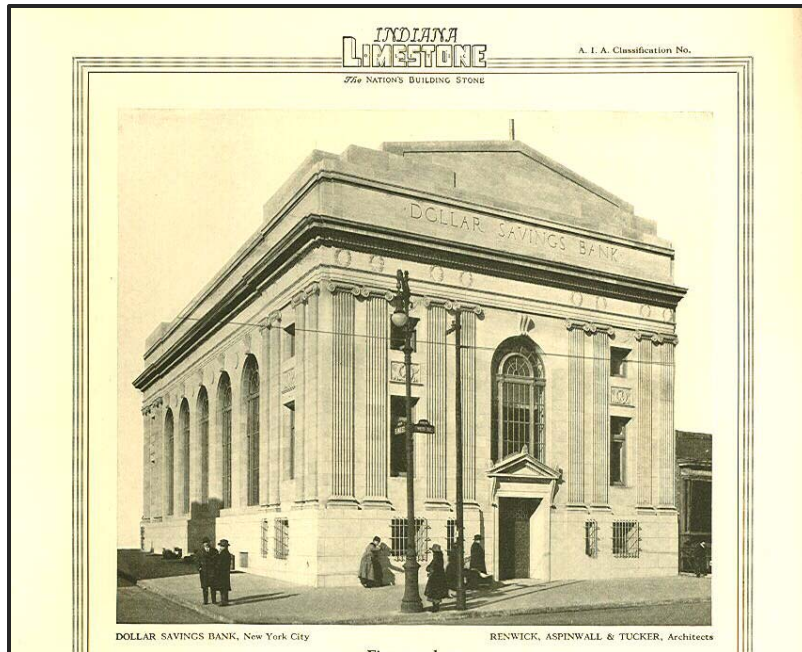
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



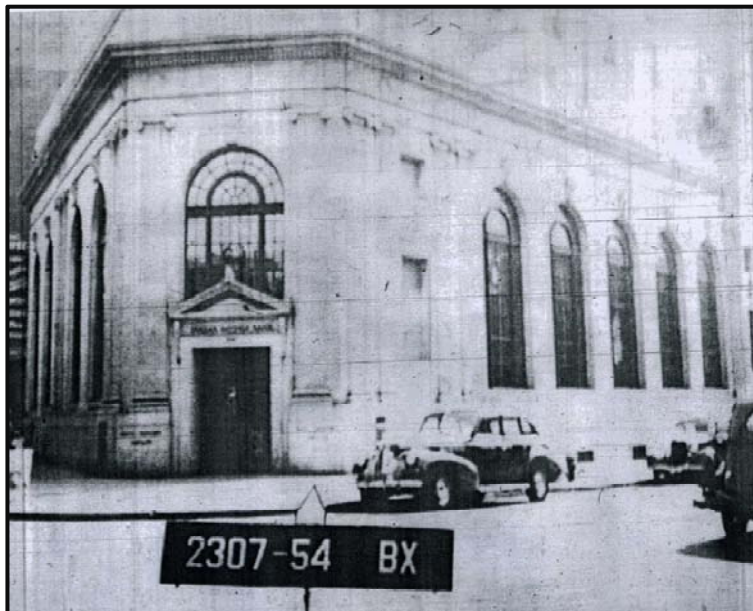
Dollar Savings Bank, (147th Street façade)
Photo: Theresa C. Noonan, 2009



Dollar Savings Bank, (northern facade)
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



Willis Avenue façade
Photo c.1925
Photo Source: New York Public Library



New York City Dept. of Taxes Photo c.1939
Photo Source: NYC, Dept. of Records and Information Services, Municipal Archive



Dollar Savings Bank, (detail)
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



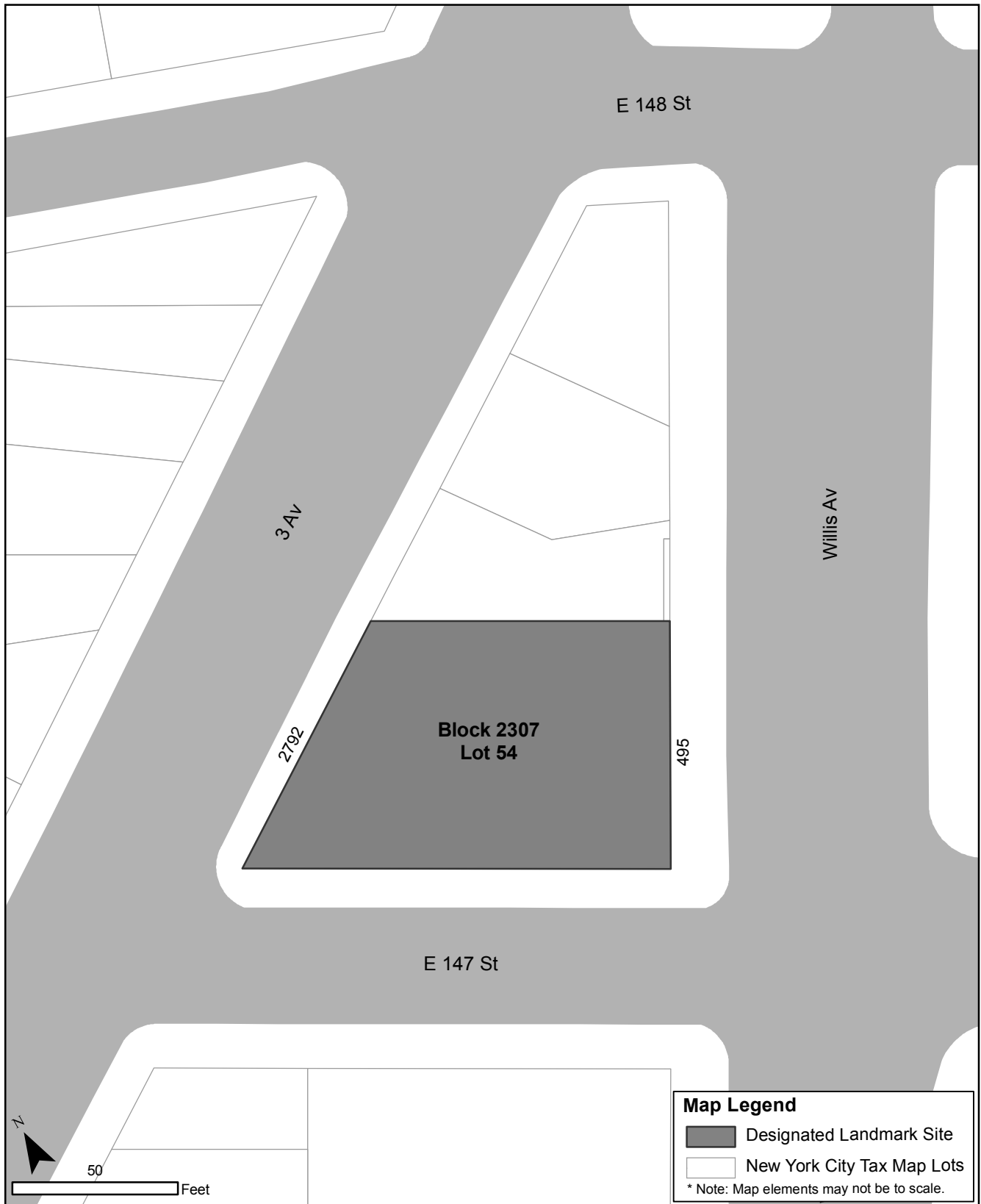
Dollar Savings Bank, (detail)
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



Dollar Savings Bank, (detail)
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



Dollar Savings Bank, (detail)
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2009



DOLLAR SAVINGS BANK (LP-2370), 2792 Third Avenue (aka 495 Willis Avenue).
 Borough of the Bronx, Tax Map Block 2307, Lot 54.

Designated: January 12, 2010