

Park Place Historic District Designation Report

June 26, 2012



Cover Photograph:
655 to 659 Park Place (J. Mason Kirby, 1889-90)
Christopher D. Brazee, 2012

Park Place Historic District Designation Report

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Park Place Historic District

Landmarks Preservation Commission

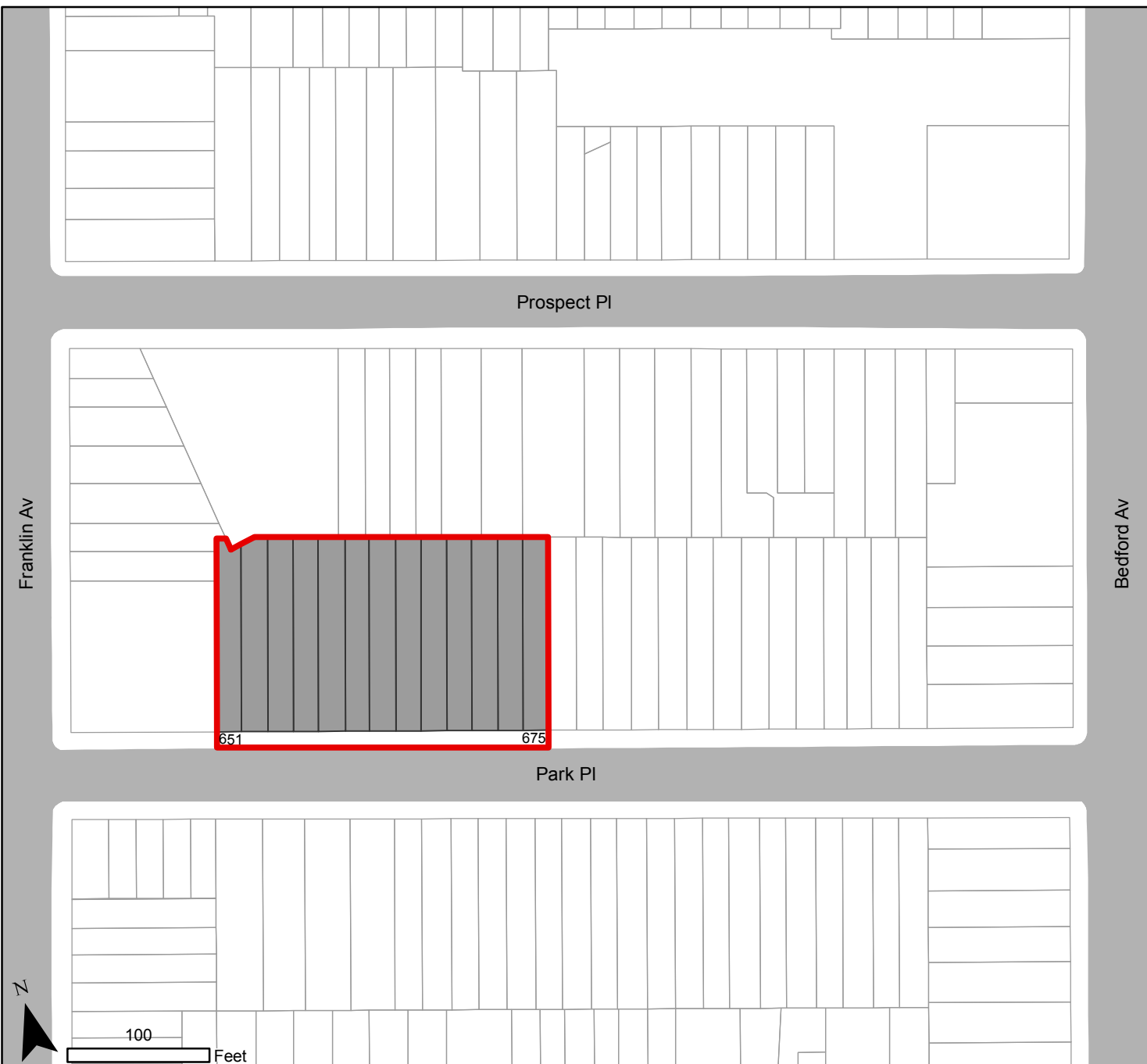
Park Place Historic District
Borough of Brooklyn, NY
[LP-2446]

Calendared: July 27, 2010
Public Hearing: October 26, 2010
Designated: June 26, 2012

-  Boundary of Historic District
-  Tax Map Lots in Historic District



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TESTIMONY AT THE PUBLIC HEARING

On October 26, 2010, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Park Place Historic District (Item No. 16). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Six people spoke in favor of designation, including Council Member Letitia James and representatives of the Crow Hill Community Association, Historic Districts Council, New York Landmarks Conservancy, and Victorian Society of New York. There was no testimony in opposition to the proposed designation. The Commission also received a letter in favor of designation from the Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development Council.

PARK PLACE HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

The Park Place Historic District consists of the properties bounded by a line beginning at a point in the northern curblineline of Park Place formed by its intersection with a line extending southerly from the eastern property line of 675 Park Place, then extending northerly along said line and property line, westerly along the northern property lines of 675 to 655 Park Place, westerly long the angled property lines of 653 and 651 Park Place, southerly along the western property line of 651 Park Place to the northern curblineline of Park Place, and easterly along said curblineline to the point of the beginning.

SUMMARY

The 13 residences of the Park Place Historic District are fine, largely intact examples of Brooklyn's richly diverse Queen Anne and Romanesque Revival style rowhouse architecture. Completed in 1889-90, the row was built by two Philadelphia brothers, Frederick W. and Walter S. Hammett, on property that had partially been owned by their father, Barnabas Hammett, "one of the pioneers of the coal business in Pennsylvania." It was designed by former Philadelphian Joseph Mason Kirby, a carpenter and house builder, who, in 1881, had constructed the 65-foot-high architectural folly in Margate, New Jersey now known as Lucy the Elephant. Three years later, Kirby designed and oversaw the construction of a 122-foot-high elephant on the Coney Island beach, which was destroyed by fire in 1896. The Park Place houses were constructed as single-family residences; among their earliest residents was the future architect Mott B. Schmidt, whose parents moved into the new house at 671 Park Place when he was one year old, and who would grow up there and continue to live in the house following his studies at Pratt Institute and during his early career. With the onset of the Depression, many families took in roomers, and at least four of the houses were converted to multiple dwellings by the end of the 1950s. The houses of the Park Place Historic District are of three types, arranged in a symmetrical configuration, and feature brick facades with rough-faced brownstone trim. Six of the houses have flat roofs with elaborate cornices, while the others have pitched roofs pierced by triangular and round, Jacobean style gables. Imbuing the row with a picturesque, varying roofline, Kirby united the houses with corbelled brick colonettes decorated with sunflower plaques. The houses feature large round-arch-headed openings that are characteristic of the Romanesque Revival style, as well as richly decorated and textured facades featuring terra-cotta sills decorated with rosettes, corbelled brick sills with sawtooth and beaded moldings and scalloped edges, triangular panels filled with terra-cotta strapwork, and patterned bricks ornamented with projecting knobs that give the row a romantic quality typical of the Queen Anne style.

THE HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARK PLACE HISTORIC DISTRICT

*History of the Area*¹

Before Europeans first made contact with Native Americans on what is now called Long Island, large portions of the island, including present-day Brooklyn, were occupied by the Lenape, or Delaware, Indians. The Lenape lived in communities of bark- or grass-covered wigwams, and in their larger settlements—typically located on high ground, adjacent to fresh water—they fished, harvested shellfish, and trapped animals. Although no known evidence indicates that large Lenape settlements existed in the vicinity of the Park Place Historic District, the area could have held one of their smaller inland campsites, where the Lenape hunted, gathered wild fruits and vegetables, and cultivated corn, tobacco, beans, and other crops.

Backed by the Dutch East India Company, English explorer Henry Hudson arrived in what is now New York Harbor in 1609, and by the 1630s, Dutch and English settlers were taking control of western Long Island.² In 1637, Dutch colonist Joris Hansen de Rapelje “purchased” about 335 acres around Wallabout Bay in present-day Brooklyn, and over the following two years, Director Kieft of the Dutch West India Company “secured by purchase from the Indians the title to nearly all the land in the counties of Kings and Queens.”³

By the 1660s, the area just north of the Park Place Historic District was known as Bedford. In 1662, Dutch authorities granted six men each “a parcel of free ... woodland there,” on the condition that they situate their houses in a manner “which would suit them best, but not to make a hamlet.”⁴ At the time of its settlement, Bedford was located along one of Long Island’s most important “cartways,” connecting Jamaica with the location now known as Fulton Ferry, where ferry service linked the then-separate cities of Brooklyn and New York. Beginning in the early 1700s, this cartway was improved and named the King’s Highway, and it would continue to be an important route for decades to come. Improved again in the early 19th century, the Brooklyn and Jamaica Turnpike, as it would become known, “straggled crookedly upward and backward” from Fulton Ferry, “out through Bedford Corners and away beyond Jamaica, even to Montauk Point, being ... the great highway of travel of Long Island itself.”⁵

By the time of the Revolution, Bedford Corners was a small village consisting of a tavern, a blacksmith’s shop, a schoolhouse, a brewery, and a handful of farmhouses centered near the current intersection of Bedford Avenue and Fulton Street. At the turn of the 19th

¹ This section is largely adapted from the introductory essays, by Michael Caratzas, to LPC, *Crown Heights North Historic District Designation Report* (LP-2204) (New York: City of New York, 2007), 7-37; and LPC, *Crown Heights North II Historic District Designation Report* (LP-2361) (New York: City of New York, 2011), 6-32.

² “English immigrants were permitted to settle on territory claimed by the Dutch on taking the oath of allegiance to the Dutch government,” according to Henry R. Stiles, *The History of the County of Kings and the City of Brooklyn, New York from 1683 to 1884* (New York: W.W. Mundell, 1884), 25.

³ Stiles, 43-44. The Lenape likely saw things differently: the European concept of holding title to land was foreign to them, and they probably viewed these “purchases” as little more than customary exchanges of gifts smoothing the way for settlers’ temporary use of the land for camping, hunting, fishing, and the cultivation of crops.

⁴ “In the Bedford Region: Settlement of an Important Part of Brooklyn,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, September 25, 1887, 17.

⁵ “Brooklyn of Long Ago: Its Houses, Thoroughfares, and Local Celebrities,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, January 19, 1890, 13. Fulton Street, which runs close to the turnpike’s former route, opened in 1854. See “Old Brooklyn Roads,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, September 11, 1887, 7.

century, Bedford was the home of many prominent, old Dutch families, but it was “especially the seat of the Lefferts family,” which had substantial local property holdings.⁶ Major landowners in the area included Leffert Lefferts Jr. (1774-1847), a slaveowner, whose holdings included an enormous farm southeast of Bedford Corners that was subdivided into 1,600 building lots and auctioned off by his heirs in 1854.⁷ The land beneath the Park Place Historic District formerly belonged to Rem Lefferts, the son of Barent (1736-1819) and Femmetie Lefferts (1739-1824), who were slaveholders.⁸ Little is known about Rem, who lived from 1770 to 1855; he married twice—the former Cornelia Remsen in 1802, and the former Maria Brower in 1823—and had no children.⁹

By the mid-19th century, transportation links between the neighborhood and the ferries along Brooklyn’s waterfront were laying the foundation for the neighborhood’s future growth. Brooklyn’s pioneering horsecar company, the Brooklyn City Railroad, was founded in 1853, and it soon established four lines radiating outward from Fulton Ferry, including one along Fulton Street, through Bedford, to East New York. In succeeding years, the Fulton Street line would be joined by additional horsecar routes that formed, by the 1870s, a “dense transit network” linking the area with other neighborhoods and waterfront ferries.¹⁰ In 1878, the Brooklyn, Flatbush & Coney Island Railroad opened between Brighton Beach and the Flatbush Avenue terminal of the Long Island Rail Road. It survives today as the Brighton (Q and B) Line of the New York City Subway and as the Franklin Avenue Shuttle, which connects the east side of Prospect Park with Fulton Street and includes a stop at Park Place, just west of the historic district.¹¹ In 1888, the Kings County Elevated Railway opened along Fulton Street between Fulton Ferry and East New York, spurring the construction of thousands of Neo-Grec, Romanesque Revival, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Renaissance Revival style rowhouses in the formerly suburban areas now

⁶ Stiles, 135.

⁷ This property, an irregularly shaped parcel extending southward from Atlantic Avenue almost to Lincoln Place, and northeastward from around Nostrand Avenue to Troy Avenue, encompasses nearly all of the Crown Heights North and Crown Heights North II Historic Districts.

⁸ The first United States Census (Brooklyn, Kings County, New York, 1790) shows that Barent and Femmetie had seven slaves.

⁹ Rem resided in his father’s former house in Bedford Corners, at the intersection of the Jamaica Turnpike and the road to Newtown (Cripplebush Road), only to replace it, in 1836, with “a new and costly mansion,” which has since been demolished. Rem is chiefly remembered as an eccentric figure who kept a \$1,000 bill in his house simply to frustrate the tax collector, who was forced to refuse Rem’s payment because he was unable to change the bill. See Teunis G. Bergen, *Genealogy of the Lefferts Family, 1650-1878* (Albany: Joel Munsell, 1878); and “The Lefferts Family: An Important Chapter in the History of Bedford,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, October 2, 1887, 6.

¹⁰ David Ment and Mary S. Donovan, *The People of Brooklyn: A History of Two Neighborhoods* (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Educational and Cultural Alliance, 1980), 16. Among these horsecar lines was the Grand Street, Prospect Park & Flatbush Railroad, commonly known as the Franklin Avenue Line, which ran along Franklin Avenue just west of the historic district; connecting the Grand Street ferry in Williamsburg with Prospect Park and Green-Wood Cemetery, it was upgraded from single-horse to two-horse “palace” cars in 1883 and converted to electric power in 1892. See “Being Rebuilt: The Franklin Avenue Railroad from End to End,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, March 31, 1883, 1; “Good Bye to the Bobtail,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, May 12, 1883, 6; and “The Trolley for Franklin Avenue,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, March 22, 1892, 6.

¹¹ For more on the Brighton line, see the introductory essay, by Michael Caratzas, to LPC, *Fiske Terrace-Midwood Park Historic District Designation Report* (LP-2208) (New York: City of New York, 2007), 14.

known as Bedford-Stuyvesant and Crown Heights North. The railroad included a stop at Franklin Avenue, eight blocks north of the district.¹²

Transportation improvements continued through the late 19th century and into the 20th. In 1898, the first electrified Kings County Railway train crossed the Brooklyn Bridge, providing a direct ride from the neighborhood to Lower Manhattan, and in 1899, the Brighton Line was acquired by the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company, which soon electrified it and extended it over the Brooklyn Bridge. Subway service came in 1920, with the opening of the IRT Subway extension under Eastern Parkway; stations included a stop at Franklin Avenue, four blocks south of the historic district. In 1936, the Independent, or IND, Subway, began running underneath Fulton Street, providing quick and direct access to Harlem and hastening the area's development into a predominantly African-American and Caribbean-American neighborhood. Although the Park Place Historic District and the area surrounding it were almost entirely white at the turn of the 20th century, the district lies today within a census tract that is more than 60% black. The white population, while much smaller, has been increasing in recent years, growing sevenfold between 2000 and 2010.

Lying at the far western edge of Crown Heights, the area immediately surrounding the Park Place Historic District has come to be known, in recent years, as Crow Hill. This revives a name that once covered much of Crown Heights, although its historic boundaries are unclear; according to an 1889 *Brooklyn Eagle* account, the name applied to most of the 24th Ward, which extended eastward from Franklin Avenue and southward from Atlantic Avenue to what was then the Brooklyn city line, an irregular boundary running close to present-day Empire Boulevard and East New York Avenue.¹³ The revival of this name has come largely through the efforts of the Crow Hill Community Association, which has spearheaded a number of local improvement projects over the past 25 years. Present-day Crow Hill, in the Association's view, comprises Franklin Avenue between Atlantic Avenue and Eastern Parkway, Bedford Avenue between Prospect Place and the parkway, and the blocks in between.¹⁴

¹² "Trains to run on the Kings County Elevated Next Tuesday," *Brooklyn Eagle*, April 21, 1888, 6.

¹³ Other accounts describe historic Crow Hill as much smaller in size, centered around the hills bordering present-day Eastern Parkway; according to a 1912 account, "Crow Hill comprised the area extending from Eastern Parkway south to Malbone Street [now Empire Boulevard], and from Rogers Avenue on the west to Schenectady Avenue on the east." See "Brooklyn's Transformed Crow Hill," *Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, April 6, 1912, 689. According to historian Craig Steven Wilder, Crow Hill was a derogatory name bestowed on the area by white Brooklynites in reference to its African-American residents. See Wilder, *A Covenant with Color: Race and Social Power in Brooklyn* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 113.

¹⁴ "Overview," Crow Hill Community Association website (www.crowhillcommunity.org/about/overview), accessed May 31, 2012.

*Joseph Mason Kirby*¹⁵

The architect of the Park Place Historic District, Joseph Mason Kirby, was born in New Jersey in 1837.¹⁶ By 1850, he was living in Plumsted Township, New Jersey, with his father and four sisters. As a young man, Kirby moved to Philadelphia, where he was listed as Joseph M. Kirbey, a carpenter, in 1861. He appeared sporadically in Philadelphia directories through the 1860s, and in 1870, census takers found him living in Philadelphia with his wife, Anna, noting that he had amassed a personal estate of \$800. Although Kirby was listed as a carpenter in the 1870 Census, he began to describe himself as a builder around this time, and was variously listed as a carpenter or builder in Philadelphia directories through the 1870s.

Kirby's career took an unusual and fortuitous turn in 1881, when he was hired to construct the 65-foot-high, wood-framed and tin-covered elephant in Margate, New Jersey now known as Lucy the Elephant.¹⁷ Lucy was the project of land speculator James V. Lafferty, Jr. of Philadelphia, who owned several lots south of Atlantic City, and who built the fantastic structure to lure potential buyers of his properties, which could be viewed from the elephant's rooftop "howdah."¹⁸ Following Lucy's completion, Lafferty patented the concept of "a building in the form of an animal," and in early 1884, he announced the formation of a company to construct a 122-foot-high, \$250,000 elephant-shaped building on the Coney Island beach.¹⁹ Kirby, who was appointed its architect, designed the building and oversaw its construction, supervising a crew of

¹⁵ Sources for this section include Dennis Steadman Francis, *Architects in Practice in New York City, 1840-1900* (Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1979), 47, 91; William Wade Hinshaw, *Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy, Vol. II: Pennsylvania and New Jersey*, 886, and *Vol. III: New York*, 194 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1991); William McMahan, *The Story of Lucy the Elephant: One of America's Strangest Architectural Structures and National Landmarks* (Egg Harbor City, New Jersey: Laureate Press, 1988); James Ward, *Architects in Practice in New York City, 1900-1940* (Union, New Jersey: J&D Associates for the Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1989), 43; "Coney Island to Be Surprised," *New York World*, February 21, 1884, 8; "An Elephant-Shaped Hotel," *New York Sun*, February 24, 1884, 3; "A Curious Structure: Coney Island's Elephant Building Rapidly Nearing Completion," *New York Evening Telegram*, April 1, 1884, 3; "A World's Fair Elephant," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, October 26, 1892, 7; "Deaths," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, March 31, 1916, 20; "Obituary Notes," *New York Times*, March 31, 1916, 11; Maurice E. McLoughlin, "Famous Coney Island Elephant Short Lived," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, September 19, 1939, 21; Rebecca C. Talbot-Perkins, "Recollects Builder of Elephant Hotel," *Brooklyn Eagle*, November 18, 1945 (Brooklyn Historical Society Scrapbook Collection); "They Were Pleased," *Brooklyn Eagle*, January 13, 1946 (Brooklyn Historical Society Scrapbook Collection); Brooklyn, New York City, and Philadelphia Directories (Microfilm, New York Public Library); *Gopsill's Atlantic City Directory for 1882-83* (Philadelphia: James Gopsill, 1882), 63; and United States Census (Plumstead, New Jersey, 1850; Philadelphia, 1870; New York City, 1900).

¹⁶ Although the 1870 Census shows Kirby as having been born in Pennsylvania, all other available records indicate that he was born in New Jersey. His death notice in the *New York Herald*, March 31, 1916, 7, also supports a New Jersey birthplace.

¹⁷ At the time of the elephant's construction, Margate was known as South Atlantic City.

¹⁸ Whether or not Kirby designed, as well as constructed, Lucy is unclear; while McMahan identifies Philadelphia architect William Free as Lucy's designer (and does not name the builder, calling him simply a "Philadelphia contractor"), one 1884 newspaper report called Kirby "the architect and builder" of the Atlantic City elephant, and an 1885 account noted that "Mr. J. Mason Kirby . . . designed the elephant that has decorated a plot of ground near Atlantic City, New Jersey. . . ." See "Coney Island to be Surprised" and *Carpentry and Building* (October 1, 1885), 7. Some of the confusion over Lucy's architect may be attributable to the nebulous nature of the term, which was often used interchangeably with "builder" or "mason" before the advent of architects' licensing in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. On this issue, see Cecil D. Elliott, *The American Architect from the Colonial Era to the Present* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, 2002), 82-4 and 158-61.

¹⁹ James V. Lafferty, "Building," U.S. Patent 268,503 (June 3, 1882; issued December 5, 1882).

more than 100 workers who completed it in just a few months.²⁰ Soon after it opened, *Scientific American* featured the elephant on its front page, describing the structure as a remarkable engineering achievement requiring the onsite formation of nearly all of its components and an innovative foundation to keep the gargantuan structure stable in the Coney Island sand.²¹

Although Kirby apparently returned to Atlantic City following the completion of the Coney Island elephant, he soon moved back to Brooklyn to construct 30 houses along Glenmore Avenue and Sackman and Powell Streets in East New York for Frederick W. Hammett, who, with his brother Walter S., would later construct the houses of the Park Place Historic District. Kirby, who first lived on Park Place between Classon and Franklin Avenues upon moving to Brooklyn, moved into one of the East New York houses by 1889, and was living there when he designed the Park Place houses. In 1891, Kirby designed two rows of whimsical Queen Anne style houses on Decatur and Bainbridge Streets in Bedford-Stuyvesant, and in the following year, Kirby and two partners announced plans to raise \$500,000 to construct a 200-foot-high elephant overlooking the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.²² In 1894, he designed a group of six-store-and-flats buildings on property he owned on Central Avenue in Bedford-Stuyvesant, but these have since been demolished.²³

In 1899, Joseph and Anna Kirby, and their four children, moved to Manhattan, first settling on West 125th Street before relocating, by 1900, to 2121 Fifth Avenue between 130th and 131st Street. During this time, Kirby primarily worked in the Bronx, designing a few buildings and buying and selling properties.²⁴ The Kirbys remained there through 1911 before moving back to Brooklyn, where they settled on Greene Avenue in Bedford-Stuyvesant. Kirby, who was a Quaker, died in 1916 and is buried in Friends Cemetery in Prospect Park.

Construction and History of the Park Place Historic District

When work on the historic district began in 1889, Park Place between Franklin and Bedford Avenues “was country. There were hills and lots with one or two houses from Park Place to Eastern Parkway.”²⁵ Although Park Place had been extended eastward from Hoyt Street

²⁰ The grand opening of the “Sea Beach Colossal Elephant” occurred on August 2, 1884. See “Coney Island: The World’s Greatest Pleasure Ground, Sea Beach Route” (Advertisement), *New York Herald-Tribune*, August 1, 1884, 7.

²¹ “The Colossal Elephant of Coney Island,” *Scientific American* (July 11, 1885), 1. A financial failure, the elephant was destroyed by fire in 1896. See “The Big Elephant in a Blaze: Coney Island’s Chief Landmark Destroyed by Fire,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, September 28, 1896, 14.

²² On the Decatur Street row (Nos. 587 to 611), see Norval White, Elliot Willensky, and Fran Leadon, *AIA Guide to New York City, Fifth Edition* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 683. These 15 houses, of four different types, are constructed in a symmetrical A-B-C-A-D-C-A-B-A-C-D-A-C-B-A configuration. Regarding the Bainbridge Street row, Kirby is described as “owner and contractor” in several records of mechanics’ liens published in the *Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide* (for example, on page 741 of the December 5, 1891 issue). The 10 houses at 505 to 523 Bainbridge Street are of three types, constructed in a symmetrical A-B-C-A-B-B-A-C-B-A configuration. Both of these rows are well-preserved. No evidence has been found to indicate that the Chicago elephant was constructed.

²³ These buildings were located on the west side of Central Avenue between Hancock Street and Jefferson Avenue. See “New Buildings,” *Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide*, May 19, 1894, 831.

²⁴ “The Building Department,” *New York Times*, December 20, 1899, 12; “The Building Department,” *New York Times*, December 22, 1899, 12; *Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide*, June 27, 1903, 1,278.

²⁵ Talbot-Perkins, “Recollects Builder of Elephant Hotel.”

to New Lots around 1854, no houses had been built on its north side between Franklin and Bedford Avenues by 1888.²⁶

On July 1, 1834, Rem Lefferts and his wife, Maria, sold two contiguous parcels extending westward from Clove Road to around present-day Classon Avenue, and from Bergen Street to just south of the future Park Place.²⁷ The eastern parcel, which fronted on Clove Road, was sold to Peter C. Bell; the larger, 40-acre parcel, which extended westward from a point just west of Bedford Avenue, and which included the land upon which the Park Place Historic District stands, was purchased for \$12,000 by Lemuel Green, a baker; Samuel H. Moser, a grocer; and Joseph Moser, described as a “gentleman.”²⁸ Green and the Mosers apparently purchased the parcel for speculative purposes, as they soon began selling shares in it.²⁹ By 1869, portions of the future historic district had been acquired by Barnabas Hammett of Philadelphia, who was “one of the pioneers in the coal business in Pennsylvania” and a partner in the firm of Noble, Hammett & Company, “the largest coal shipping house in the business.”³⁰ Hammett was an extremely wealthy man, with real estate holdings valued at \$200,000 in 1870.³¹ His reasons for acquiring the property are unknown.

Hammett died in 1873 at the age of 65, leaving, among several children, sons Frederick W. and Walter S. Hammett, both Philadelphia natives.³² The older and more prominent of the two, Frederick was born in 1859 and earned a law degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1881. After practicing law for two years, he began “devoting his sole attention to his large business enterprises,” serving as treasurer and president of a number of oil and coal-mining

²⁶ Park Place was known as Baltic Street until the early 1870s, according to the street guides included in 19th-century Brooklyn directories. One such directory from 1853 (on microfilm at the New York Public Library) shows Baltic Street as “open to Hoyt,” while the next year’s directory shows Baltic running from the East River east to what was then the Brooklyn city line at New Lots.

²⁷ Clove Road extended southward from Bedford Corners; it was the major route, well into the 19th century, for Flatbush farmers traveling to the Brooklyn market. Running a crooked path between present-day Bedford and Rogers Avenues, Clove Road provided passage “through the clove or cleft in the Bedford Hills” near present-day Eastern Parkway that formed the border between the towns of Brooklyn and Flatbush. See “Traces of Clove Road: An Historic Highway Now Almost Effaced,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, July 31, 1887. Only a small portion of Clove Road remains today, cutting through the block bounded by Montgomery Street, Empire Boulevard, and Nostrand and New York Avenues in southern Crown Heights.

²⁸ Kings County, Office of the Register, Conveyance Liber 41, 403 and 405 (July 1, 1834).

²⁹ See, for example, Conveyance Liber 44, 14 (October 15, 1834), which conveyed “all the 11 equal undivided 120th part of all 40 acres” from Joseph and Rachel Moser to Robert J. Crommelin for \$3,250; Conveyance Liber 44, 40 (September 1, 1834), which conveyed “all that undivided 40th part of all that certain piece or parcel of land” from George L. and Clarissa Meacham to Philetus H. Holt for \$1,000; Conveyance Liber 44, 64 (September 1, 1834), which conveyed “all the equal undivided fourth part of the 13 equal undivided 40th parts” of the property from George and Clarissa Meacham to Henry Holt for \$2,900; Conveyance Liber 44, 73 (September 1, 1834), which conveyed “all the 13 equal undivided 40th parts” of the property from Lemuel and Elisa Green to George L. Meacham for \$11,700; and Conveyance Liber 44, 364 (October 1, 1834), which conveyed “all the one equal undivided 60th part” of the property from Lemuel and Eliza Green to John Green for \$800.

³⁰ Conveyance Liber 958, 158 (October 1, 1869); Joshua L. Chamberlin, Ed., *Universities and Their Sons: University of Pennsylvania, Its History, Influence, Equipment, and Characteristics, Vol. II* (Boston: R. Herndon Company, 1902), 403.

³¹ U.S. Census (Philadelphia, 1870).

³² Death Notices, *New York Herald*, January 24, 1873, 8.

companies, as well as the president of two suburban streetcar lines near Philadelphia.³³ Walter, who was six years younger, first appeared in Philadelphia directories as a clerk in 1886. In the 1889 directory, he was listed as a “treasurer,” apparently of one of his brother’s firms. Between 1896 and 1900, Walter, his wife Marie, and their three children moved to Kearney, New Jersey, where he managed an oil company. In 1910, Walter continued in that profession, although by then, the Hammetts had moved to Quincy Street in Brooklyn. They remained there into the 1920s before moving to Lansdowne, Pennsylvania, where Walter worked as a real estate salesman.³⁴

Following their first Brooklyn project—the houses designed by J. Mason Kirby along Glenmore Avenue and Sackman and Powell Streets in East New York—Walter Hammett assembled the 234 feet of frontage on Park Place needed to construct the 13, 18-foot-wide houses of the historic district. On August 16, 1889, Walter paid real estate professional Benjamin Armstrong \$7,700 for two parcels comprising the western 75 feet, and eastern 25 feet, of the development.³⁵ Four days later, Kirby filed the Buildings Department application for the houses, estimating their construction cost at \$4,500 each, and in January of 1890, Walter paid \$8,600 to the executors of his father’s estate for the central 134-foot-wide section of the development.³⁶ The sale of the first house, No. 663, for \$7,500 in June of 1890, was followed in rapid succession by the sales of Nos. 661, 667, 669, and 673, but the next sale did not occur until March of 1891, when Edward M. Schmidt purchased 671 Park Place for \$7,000.³⁷ Schmidt and his wife Frances, who “lived on a gentleman’s income,” were the parents of future architect Mott B. Schmidt (1889-1977), who would grow up in the house and continue to live there following his studies at Pratt Institute and during his early career.³⁸ Schmidt was to become one of New York’s notable 20th-century architects, a “master” of “the language of American Georgian Classicism,” according to Robert A.M. Stern; Schmidt specialized in the design of city and country houses for wealthy clients, composing masterful Colonial Revival residences throughout his career.³⁹ Among Schmidt’s few public-sector commissions was the Susan Wagner Wing of New York’s Gracie Mansion (1965), which was praised by Ada Louise Huxtable for its “scholarly and appropriate good taste.”⁴⁰

³³ Chamberlin, 403; John W. Leonard, Ed., *Who’s Who in Pennsylvania: A Biographical Dictionary of Contemporaries* (New York: L.R. Hamersly & Company, 1908), 331.

³⁴ Philadelphia Directories; U.S. Census (Kearney, New Jersey, 1900; Brooklyn, 1910 and 1920; Lansdowne, Pennsylvania, 1930).

³⁵ Conveyance Liber 1908, 244 (August 16, 1889); Armstrong’s profession was listed as “real estate” in the 1880 U.S. Census for Brooklyn.

³⁶ Department of Buildings, City of Brooklyn, Detailed Statement of Specifications for Brick Buildings, No. 1842-1889 (August 20, 1889); Conveyance Liber 1939, 145 (January 10, 1890).

³⁷ Conveyance Liber 1908, 244 (June 5, 1890) for the sale of No. 663 to William J. Griffin; Conveyance Liber 1991, 147 (July 19, 1890) for the sale of No. 661 to Frank J. Blakeman; Conveyance Liber 1993, 210 (July 29, 1890) for the sale of No. 673 to Ella L. Carney; Conveyance Liber 1996, 316 (August 12, 1890) for the sale of No. 669 to Margaretta Madden; Conveyance Liber 1998, 5 (August 21, 1890) for the sale of No. 667 to Edward P. Chamberlin; Conveyance Liber 2033, 432 (March 20, 1891) for the sale of No. 671 to Edward M. Schmidt.

³⁸ Mark A. Hewitt, *The Architecture of Mott B. Schmidt* (New York: Rizzoli, 1991), 3. According to Hewitt, Schmidt attended Pratt Institute from 1904 to 1906; the 1910 U.S. Census lists him as an architect living at 671 Park Place with his mother, brother, and sister.

³⁹ Robert A.M. Stern, Introduction to *The Architecture of Mott B. Schmidt*, ix.

⁴⁰ Ada Louise Huxtable, “A Plan of Taste,” *New York Times*, January 12, 1965, 24.

Following Edward Schmidt's purchase of 671 Park Place, Nos. 655 and 659 sold in April and May of 1891. Demand for the houses may have been softening, as each of these homes sold for \$7,000, \$500 less than 663 Park Place, which was identical to Nos. 655 and 671.⁴¹ Nos. 651, 653, and 675 remained unsold in July of 1892, when Algarny V.E. Hammett, about whom little is known, purchased them for \$15,000 from Walter and his wife, Marie, and rented them out.⁴² One 1897 rental advertisement for No. 675 described it as a "modern two-story" with "cabinet trim; open plumbing; decorated; one and a half blocks from elevated station."⁴³

The historic district was a white, upper-middle-class row in 1900, with residents including English-born traveling salesman Thomas Smallwood, his wife Margaret, their three children, and their Italian-born servant at No. 657; editor Charles Skinner, his wife Ada, their two sons, and their Swedish-born servant at No. 659; and china importer Frank J. Blakeman and his wife Maud at No. 661. Seven of the row's families rented, rather than owned their homes, including the three families renting from Algarny Hammett, whose tenants included "money broker" James Bennett, his mother-in-law, daughter and son, and their servant, at 653 Park Place; and a tile manufacturer, his wife, and their young daughter and son at No. 675.⁴⁴

The makeup of the row's residents remained similar in 1910. All of the houses were single-family residences, their heads of household including a wholesale grocer at No. 655; two custom-house clerks, at Nos. 651 and 669; a produce merchant at No. 665; and a bank clerk at No. 675. Several immigrants had moved into the row, including German-born newspaper editor Ferdinand Seineke, who lived with his American-born wife Marie and their four children, along with a doctor who lodged with them, at No. 653; tailor Joseph Rutz and his wife Bertha, both German-born, who lived with their three daughters at 659 Park Place; and bookkeeper Edward Bourke and his wife Bridget, both born in Ireland, who had four young children and shared the house at 667 Park Place with two cousins.⁴⁵ The row's demographics changed little between 1910 and 1920, but by 1930, with the onset of the Depression, six families had taken in roomers. Many of the roomers were immigrants, from Canada, Ireland, and Scotland, and included, at No. 653, Joseph and Pauline Levine, a Russian-Jewish couple; Joseph apparently ran a dress shop, which Pauline worked in as a salesperson.⁴⁶ The houses at 659 and 663 Park Place each housed two families, including, at No. 659, Helen Schilling and her sister Anna, both telephone operators; and at No. 663, automobile painter Frederick Morris and his wife Helen—both immigrants from Nova Scotia—and their American-born son. In 1940, many of the residences housed multiple families or families who had taken in roomers. But No. 657, now owned by an Italian-American couple, the Riccios—Frank Riccio worked as a street sweeper for the City of New York—had returned to being a single-family residence without roomers. Although the Depression continued to hold firm in that year, most residents with occupations reported that they had worked the entire year of 1939.⁴⁷ By the end of the 1950s, Nos. 657, 663, 667, and 673

⁴¹ Conveyance Liber 2039, 186 (April 17, 1891) for the sale of No. 655 to Hattie Frew; Conveyance Liber 2046, 399 (May 19, 1891) for the sale of No. 659 to Eugenia Auer.

⁴² Conveyance Liber 2126, 56 (July 9, 1892); Algarny Hammett may have been Walter and Frederick's younger brother, listed as Alger in the 1870 U.S. Census for Philadelphia.

⁴³ "Modern Two-Story" (Advertisement), *Brooklyn Eagle*, April 11, 1897, 26.

⁴⁴ United States Census (Brooklyn, New York, 1900).

⁴⁵ United States Census (Brooklyn, New York, 1910).

⁴⁶ United States Census (Brooklyn, New York, 1920, 1930).

⁴⁷ United States Census (Brooklyn, New York, 1940).

had officially been converted to multiple dwellings, with one apartment on each of their first, second, and third stories.⁴⁸ Reflecting the growth of the neighborhood's African-American and Caribbean-American population, owners of the Park Place houses began advertising for tenants in the historic black newspaper the *New York Amsterdam News* by the early 1960s.⁴⁹

*Design of the Park Place Historic District*⁵⁰

The Park Place Historic District comprises 13 fine, largely intact rowhouses combining elements of the Queen Anne and Romanesque Revival styles. The Queen Anne style began to develop in England in the 1860s and was introduced to the United States in 1874, with the completion of Henry Hobson Richardson's Watts-Sherman House in Newport, Rhode Island. Its popularity grew following the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876, and it soon made its way to New York, where Bruce Price employed it for his flats building at 21 East 21st Street (1878, within the Ladies' Mile Historic District), one of the city's oldest extant apartment houses. Despite its name, the style had little to do with architecture under Queen Anne, who ruled from 1702 to 1714, but was based upon the "Old English" style developed by Richard Norman Shaw, the leading practitioner of Queen Anne architecture in Britain, which recalled the modest dwellings "that surrounded the great Gothic churches of the Middle Ages."⁵¹ Indeed, one of the chief characteristics of American Queen Anne style architecture is its picturesque mixing of classical and medieval forms and details typical of the Jacobean period of the English Renaissance, a century before Queen Anne's reign. Romantically recalling a bygone era, the style was widely employed for country houses, including one of the nation's finest extant examples, Glenmont (Henry Hudson Holly, 1880), the home of Thomas and Mina Edison in West Orange, New Jersey. Queen Anne style houses generally feature exuberantly detailed, richly textured, asymmetrical facades composed of freely mixed materials and decorative elements that are loosely based upon medieval and classical precedents; their picturesque, steeply pitched roofs, often crowned by multiple gables covered with patterned slate shingles, contribute to their strong vertical thrust.

Queen Anne style buildings in New York City were generally constructed of brick and stone rather than wood. Favorite decorative motifs included ribbed and gauged brickwork, keystones, swags, grotesques, roundels, classical moldings, and inset frieze panels, often of deep-red terra cotta, inspired by 17th-century parquetry. Sunflowers, adopted from Pre-Raphaelite painting, are an emblem of the style. In New York, the Queen Anne was employed for rowhouses as well as apartment houses and commercial and institutional buildings, including the

⁴⁸ Department of Buildings, Borough of Brooklyn, City of New York, alteration records 3971-1958 (No. 657), 236-1953 (No. 663), 162-1958 (No. 667), and 4703-1952 (No. 673).

⁴⁹ "4 Room Apartment" (Advertisement)," *New York Amsterdam News*, April 1, 1961, 25; "655 Park Place" (Advertisement), *New York Amsterdam News*, September 15, 1962, 34.

⁵⁰ Portions of this section are adapted from LPC, *Astral Apartments Designation Report* (LP-1194) (New York: City of New York, 1983), prepared by James T. Dillon; LPC, *Century Building Designation Report* (LP-1539) (New York: City of New York, 1986), prepared by Gale Harris; and the introductory essay by Michael Caratzas to LPC, *Crown Heights North II Historic District Designation Report*, 11-15. Other sources include: Mary Mix Foley, *The American House* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 175-195; Virginia and Lee McAlester, *Great American Houses and Their Architectural Styles* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1994), 152-89; Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 262-307; and Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1969), 114-40.

⁵¹ *Great American Houses and Their Architectural Styles*, 165.

Central Park Apartments (Hubert, Pirsson & Co., 1883, 1885, demolished); the Century Building (William Schickel, 1880-81); and the New York House and School of Industry (Sidney V. Stratton, 1878).⁵² Through the 1880s, the style spread rapidly throughout the developing rowhouse districts of Brooklyn, including Park Slope, Prospect Heights, and Crown Heights North; many freestanding houses were also built in Brooklyn in the Queen Anne style, as were the Astral Apartments (Lamb & Rich, 1885-86, a designated New York City Landmark) in Greenpoint. Throughout New York City, the Queen Anne was frequently combined with the Romanesque Revival style, or more specifically, the style as redefined by H.H. Richardson beginning in the late 1870s. Before Richardson, the Romanesque Revival had primarily been used for churches and public buildings; Richardson extended it into the residential sphere, designing residences and a wide variety of other types of buildings that were distinguished by their fortress-like, rough-faced stone facades, carved medieval-inspired detailing, and massive round-arched openings.

The Hammetts' previous Brooklyn rowhouses, designed by J. Mason Kirby and completed in 1887 or 1888 in East New York, were constructed "on the regulation Philadelphia plan, with alleyways in the rear and bay windows protruding from the rear second-story bedrooms."⁵³ Apparently, these "Philadelphia style houses did not take well in Brooklyn," and the Hammetts' next venture, on Park Place, adhered more closely to Brooklyn rowhouse conventions, with deep rear yards extending to the center of the block.⁵⁴ The 13 houses of the Park Place Historic District are of three types, arranged in a symmetrical, A-B-A-B-B-C-A-C-B-B-A-B-A configuration. Each of the houses retains its original high stoop and iron stoop railings, and features a brick first and second story set off by rough-faced brownstone at its basement, as quoining flanking the first-story entrance and window openings, and surrounding the second-story windows.⁵⁵ Corbelled brick second-story colonettes decorated with sunflower plaques separate each of the houses and provide continuity to the row. Each of the houses originally featured carved-wood bead-and-reel brickmolds and window mullions, which remain intact at No. 659.

The "A" houses, which bookend the row, are distinguished by their triangular second-story gables, each of which pierces a pitched roof originally covered with patterned slate shingles, many of which remain. Within each gable is a slightly projecting, round-arch-headed window opening with a corbelled sill decorated with sawtooth and beaded moldings and a scalloped brick lower edge. The top portion of the gable features a triangular panel filled with terra-cotta strapwork, surrounded by bricks ornamented with small studs or knobs. Each of the second-story window openings originally contained a tripartite window with colonette-style mullions and square-headed double-hung sashes; the upper portion of the opening was filled with an arch-headed wood panel containing carved squares, but these panels have all been replaced or

⁵² Both the Century Building and New York House and School of Industry are designated New York City Landmarks.

⁵³ Rebecca C. Talbot-Perkins, "East New York Homes First to be Sold on Installment Plan," *Brooklyn Eagle*, July 16, 1939, 6E. The author of this article, whose father was Hammett's agent, claimed that "these were the first houses sold in Brooklyn under the installment plan." All of these houses appear to have been demolished, but they are visible in the circa-1939-to-1941 New York City "tax photographs" housed at the Municipal Archives.

⁵⁴ Talbot-Perkins, "Recollects Builder of Elephant Hotel."

⁵⁵ The second-story window surround of No. 663 has been removed.

covered.⁵⁶ The “C” houses are similar in design, but are crowned by round, Jacobean style gables with keystones that enhance roofline’s picturesque quality. Six of the row’s houses are of type “B.” Unlike the others, these houses have flat roofs and are crowned by elaborate bracketed cornices with sawtooth and rope moldings, many of which retain their original large end brackets with finials. Each of these houses has two segmental-arch-headed window openings at its second floor and a second-story sillcourse decorated with terra-cotta rope moldings and rosettes. The houses retain most of their historic fabric and appearance, and are fine examples of Brooklyn’s richly diverse Queen Anne and Romanesque Revival style rowhouse architecture.

⁵⁶ A similar panel remains largely intact at 505 Bainbridge Street, within the row of 10 Kirby-designed houses at 505 to 523 Bainbridge.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this area, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Park Place Historic District contains buildings and other improvements which have a special character and a special historic and aesthetic interest and value and which represent one or more eras of the history of New York City and which cause this area, by reason of these factors, to constitute a distinct section of the city.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Park Place Historic District comprises 13 residences that are fine, largely intact examples of Brooklyn's richly diverse Queen Anne and Romanesque Revival style rowhouse architecture; that it was built in 1889-90 by Frederick W. and Walter S. Hammett and designed by Joseph Mason Kirby, a carpenter and house builder, who, in 1881, had constructed the 65-foot-high architectural folly in Margate, New Jersey now known as Lucy the Elephant; that Kirby also designed and oversaw the construction of a 122-foot-high elephant on the Coney Island beach, which was destroyed by fire in 1896; that the houses of the Park Place Historic District were constructed as single-family residences and included, among their earliest residents, the future architect Mott B. Schmidt, whose parents moved into the new house at 671 Park Place when he was one year old, and who would grow up there and continue to live in the house following his studies at Pratt Institute and during his early career; that at least four of the houses were converted to multiple dwellings by the end of the 1950s; that the houses of the Park Place Historic District are of three types, arranged in a symmetrical configuration, and feature brick facades with rough-faced brownstone trim; that six of the houses have flat roofs with elaborate cornices, while the others have pitched roofs pierced by triangular and round, Jacobean style gables; that Kirby imbued the row with a picturesque, varying roofline and united the houses with corbelled brick colonettes decorated with sunflower plaques; and that the houses feature large round-arch-headed openings that are characteristic of the Romanesque Revival style, as well as richly decorated and textured facades featuring terra-cotta sills decorated with rosettes, corbelled brick sills with sawtooth and beaded moldings and scalloped edges, triangular panels filled with terra-cotta strapwork, and patterned bricks ornamented with projecting knobs that give the row a romantic quality typical of the Queen Anne style.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 (formerly Section 534 of Chapter 21) 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 Historic District the Park Place Historic District, consisting of the properties bounded by a line beginning at a point in the northern curblineline of Park Place formed by its intersection with a line extending southerly from the eastern property line of 675 Park Place, then extending northerly along said line and property line, westerly along the northern property lines of 675 to 655 Park Place, westerly along the angled property lines of 653 and 651 Park Place, southerly along the western property line of 651 Park Place to the northern curblineline of Park Place, and easterly along said curblineline to the point of the beginning.

Robert B. Tierney, Chair

Frederick Bland, Michael Devonshire, Joan Gerner, Christopher Moore, Margery Perlmutter, Roberta Washington, Commissioners

BUILDING PROFILES

PARK PLACE (ODD NUMBERS)

651 Park Place

Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1231, Lot 83

Date: 1889-90 (NB 730-1889)

Architect/Builder: J. Mason Kirby

Original Owners: Frederick W. & Walter S. Hammett

Type: Row house

Style: Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival

Stories: 2 and basement

Material(s): Brick; brownstone

Decorative Metal Work: Historic iron stoop railings

Significant Architectural Features: Round-arch-headed main-entrance and first-story window openings with quoined surrounds, crowned by round moldings; round-arch-headed second-story window opening with quoined surround, crowned by rough-faced stone voussoirs; gable containing terra-cotta strapwork surrounded by bricks with ornamental studs; corbelled colonette with foliate terra-cotta tile at western end of second floor; ornate cornice decorated with bead-and-reel, sawtooth, and egg-and-dart moldings

Alterations: Doorbell and light fixtures on main-entrance reveal; water meter reader at basement; east basement security grille altered to accommodate air conditioner; cameras at eastern end of first story; decorative corbelling below second-story sill removed, and brick between first-story openings and second-story sill replaced; basement, first-, and second-story window frames and mullions removed or covered with panning; decorative arch-headed panel above second-story windows replaced or covered; pitched roof coated with non-historic material; rooftop satellite dishes

Building Notes: One of 13 row houses (651 to 675 Park Place).

Site Features: Metal areaway hatch; non-historic fence and gate surrounding landing at foot of stoop; areaway converted to parking pad

South Facade: Designed (historic, basement and stone portions of facade resurfaced; brick replacement between first- and second-story openings)

Stoop: Resurfaced stoop (original gate under stoop)

Door(s): Replaced primary door

Windows: Replaced (upper stories); replaced (basement)

Security Grilles: Historic (basement)

Roof: Pitched - coated with non-historic material (historic)

Cornice: Original

Sidewalk Material(s): Concrete

Curb Material(s): Bluestone

Areaway Wall/Fence Materials: Historic iron fence and gate removed



Areaway Paving Material: Concrete

West Facade: Not designed (historic)

Facade Notes: Entire facade parged

653 Park Place

Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1231, Lot 82

Date: 1889-90 (NB 730-1889)

Architect/Builder: J. Mason Kirby

Original Owners: Frederick W. & Walter S. Hammett

Type: Row house

Style: Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival

Stories: 2 and basement

Material(s): Brick; brownstone

Decorative Metal Work: Historic iron stoop railings

Significant Architectural Features: Round-arch-headed main-entrance and first-story window openings with quoined surrounds, crowned by round moldings; terra-cotta second-story sill course with rope moldings and rosettes; segmental-arch-headed, quoined second-story window openings crowned by rough-faced stone voussoirs; original bead-and-reel wood brickmold at western second-story window; corbelled colonette with foliate terra-cotta tile at western end of second floor and at eastern end of second floor, shared with No. 655; bracketed cornice decorated with rosettes and bead-and-reel, sawtooth, and egg-and-dart moldings

Alterations: Wood-and-glass door installed in front of understoop gate; doorbell on main-entrance reveal; door knocker and kick plates on main-entrance doors; numerals on main-entrance door glass; water meter reader, conduit, and light fixture at basement; original window brickmolds and mullions at basement, first story, and eastern second-story windows removed or covered with panning; loss of bracket and other detail from bracket atop western colonette; end finials missing from top of cornice; rooftop satellite dish

Building Notes: One of 13 row houses (651 to 675 Park Place).

Site Features: Large planting bed and hatch in areaway



South Facade: Designed (historic, painted, some portions of brownstone trim resurfaced)

Stoop: Resurfaced stoop (original gate under stoop)

Door(s): Original primary door

Windows: Replaced (upper stories); replaced (basement)

Security Grilles: Historic (basement)

Cornice: Original

Sidewalk Material(s): Concrete

Curb Material(s): Bluestone

Areaway Wall/Fence Materials: Replacement front areaway fence on historic stone curb (replaced under gate); replacement fence along west areaway border

Areaway Paving Material: Concrete

655 Park Place

Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1231, Lot 81

Date: 1889-90 (NB 730-1889)

Architect/Builder: J. Mason Kirby

Original Owners: Frederick W. & Walter S. Hammett

Type: Row house

Style: Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival

Stories: 2 and basement

Material(s): Brick; brownstone



Decorative Metal Work: Historic iron stoop railings

Significant Architectural Features: Round-arch-headed main-entrance and first-story window openings with quoined surrounds, crowned by round moldings; ornate corbelled second-story sill with sawtooth and beaded moldings, and scalloped lower edge; round-arch-headed second-story window opening with quoined surround, crowned by rough-faced stone voussoirs; gable containing terra-cotta strapwork surrounded by bricks with ornamental studs; corbelled colonette with foliate terra-cotta tile at western end of second floor, shared with No. 653; ornate cornice decorated with bead-and-reel, sawtooth, egg-and-dart, and rope moldings

Alterations: Main-entrance door frame replaced with frame with wide side panels; doorbell set into main-entrance surround; water meter reader at basement; doorbell and light fixture with conduit at basement, adjacent to understoop opening; basement, first-, and second-story window mullions removed or covered with panning; decorative arch-headed panel above second-story windows replaced or covered; finial missing from top of west colonette shared with No. 653; portions of cornice rope molding missing

Building Notes: One of 13 row houses (651 to 675 Park Place).

Site Features: Metal hatch and projecting vertical pipe in areaway; areaway converted to parking pad; non-historic metal fence separating parking pad from stoop landing

South Facade: Designed (historic, painted, portions of brownstone trim resurfaced)

Stoop: Resurfaced stoop (original gate under stoop)

Door(s): Replaced primary door

Windows: Replaced (upper stories); replaced (basement)

Security Grilles: Altered (basement)

Roof: Pitched - patterned slate (original)

Cornice: Original

Sidewalk Material(s): Concrete

Curb Material(s): Bluestone

Areaway Wall/Fence Materials: Historic fence along west areaway border; non-historic front gate and fence; remainder of historic areaway fence removed

Areaway Paving Material: Concrete

657 Park Place

Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1231, Lot 80
Date: 1889-90 (NB 730-1889)
Architect/Builder: J. Mason Kirby
Original Owners: Frederick W. & Walter S. Hammett
Type: Row house
Style: Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival
Stories: 2 and basement
Material(s): Brick; brownstone



Decorative Metal Work: Historic iron stoop railings
Significant Architectural Features: Round-arch-headed main-entrance and first-story window openings with quoined surrounds, crowned by round moldings; terra-cotta second-story sill course with rope moldings and rosettes; segmental-arch-headed, quoined second-story window openings crowned by rough-faced stone voussoirs; corbelled colonette with foliate terra-cotta tile at western end of second floor and at eastern end of second floor, shared with No. 659; bracketed cornice decorated with rosettes and bead-and-reel, sawtooth, and egg-and-dart moldings, and crowned by finials at each end

Alterations: Light fixture at main entrance; postal release box on main-entrance reveal; water meter reader at basement; doorbell on east stoop face, adjacent to understoop opening; original window brickmolds and mullions at basement, first-, and second-story windows removed or covered with panning; rooftop satellite dish

Building Notes: One of 13 row houses (651 to 675 Park Place).

Site Features: Large planting bed with non-historic lamp post, and hatch, in areaway

South Facade: Designed (historic, painted, basement and upper-story brownstone trim resurfaced)

Stoop: Resurfaced stoop (Gate under stoop - replaced)

Door(s): Replaced primary door

Windows: Replaced (upper stories); replaced (basement)

Security Grilles: Historic (basement)

Cornice: Original

Sidewalk Material(s): Concrete

Curb Material(s): Bluestone

Areaway Wall/Fence Materials: Replacement front areaway fence and gate on historic stone curb; replacement fence along west areaway border

Areaway Paving Material: Concrete

659 Park Place

Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1231, Lot 79
Date: 1889-90 (NB 730-1889)
Architect/Builder: J. Mason Kirby
Original Owners: Frederick W. & Walter S. Hammett
Type: Row house
Style: Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival
Stories: 2 and basement
Material(s): Brick; brownstone



Decorative Metal Work: Historic iron stoop railings

Significant Architectural Features: Round-arch-headed main-entrance and first-story window openings with quoined surrounds, crowned by round moldings; terra-cotta second-story sill course with rope moldings and rosettes; segmental-arch-headed, quoined second-story window openings crowned by rough-faced stone voussoirs; corbelled colonette with foliate terra-cotta tile at western end of second floor, shared with No. 657, and at eastern end of second floor, shared with No. 661; original wood bead-and-reel mullions and brickmolds at basement, first-, and second-story windows; original bracketed cornice decorated with rosettes and bead-and-reel, sawtooth, and rope moldings, and crowned by finials at each end

Alterations: Doorbell and light fixture at main entrance; round metal grille on east stoop face; doorbell and light fixture with conduit at basement, adjacent to understoop opening; camera at east end of first story; rooftop HVAC units

Building Notes: One of 13 row houses (651 to 675 Park Place).

Site Features: Metal areaway hatch; areaway converted to parking pad

South Facade: Designed (historic, painted, brownstone portions of facade patched)

Stoop: Resurfaced stoop (original gate under stoop)

Door(s): Replaced primary door

Windows: Replaced (upper stories); replaced (basement)

Security Grilles: Historic (basement)

Cornice: Original

Sidewalk Material(s): Concrete

Curb Material(s): Bluestone

Areaway Wall/Fence Materials: Historic fence on historic stone curb along west areaway border; replacement front fence on historic stone curb at western end of areaway; rest of fence and historic curb removed

Areaway Paving Material: Concrete

661 Park Place

Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1231, Lot 78
Date: 1889-90 (NB 730-1889)
Architect/Builder: J. Mason Kirby
Original Owners: Frederick W. & Walter S. Hammett
Type: Row house
Style: Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival
Stories: 2 and basement
Material(s): Brick; brownstone



Decorative Metal Work: Historic iron stoop railings

Significant Architectural Features: Round-arch-headed main-entrance and first-story window openings with quoined surrounds, crowned by round moldings; ornate corbelled second-story sill with sawtooth and beaded moldings, and scalloped lower edge; round-arch-headed second-story window opening with quoined surround, crowned by rough-faced stone voussoirs; semicircular gable containing bricks with ornamental studs; corbelled colonettes with foliate terra-cotta tile shared with Nos. 659 and 663; original wood bead-and-reel mullion and brickmold at basement windows; ornate cornice decorated with bead-and-reel, sawtooth, and egg-and-dart moldings and splayed keystone

Alterations: Facade repointed with wide joints; light fixture and doorbell at main entrance; mailbox on east stoop face; doorbell, light fixture, and outlet box at basement, adjacent to understoop opening; original window brickmolds and mullions at first- and second-story windows removed; decorative arch-headed panel above second-story windows removed or covered with panel; pitched roof covered with asphaltic material

Building Notes: One of 13 row houses (651 to 675 Park Place).

Site Features: Metal areaway hatch; areaway converted to parking pad

South Facade: Designed (historic, repointed, brownstone portions of facade painted and patched)

Stoop: Resurfaced stoop (original gate under stoop)

Door(s): Replaced primary door

Windows: Replaced (upper stories); replaced (basement)

Security Grilles: Historic (basement)

Roof: Pitched - asphaltic coating (replaced)

Cornice: Original

Sidewalk Material(s): Concrete

Curb Material(s): Bluestone with concrete patching

Areaway Wall/Fence Materials: Historic front iron areaway fence and front gate with non-historic spikes and additional newel post, partially converted to driveway gate; portion of historic front stone curb remains; historic iron fence along west areaway border

Areaway Paving Material: Concrete walkway; permeable concrete and grass parking pad

663 Park Place

Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1231, Lot 77
Date: 1889-90 (NB 730-1889)
Architect/Builder: J. Mason Kirby
Original Owners: Frederick W. & Walter S. Hammett
Type: Row house
Style: Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival
Stories: 2 and basement
Material(s): Brick; brownstone



Decorative Metal Work: Historic iron stoop railings

Significant Architectural Features: Round-arch-headed main-entrance and first-story window openings with quoined surrounds, crowned by round moldings; ornate corbelled second-story sill with sawtooth and beaded moldings, and scalloped lower edge; corbelled colonettes with foliate terra-cotta tile at western and eastern ends of second floor, shared with Nos. 661 and 665; triangular gable crowned by ornate cornice with bead-and-reel, sawtooth, and egg-and-dart moldings

Alterations: Light fixture at main entrance; replacement door frame with wide side panels; rod for former awning over main entrance; mailbox on east stoop face; water meter reader on basement window frame; postal release box at basement, adjacent to understoop opening; original window brickmolds and mullions at basement, first-, and second-story windows removed or covered with panning; round-arch-headed second-story window opening with decorative arch-headed panel converted to rectangular opening, and decorative panel removed or covered over; non-historic brick veneer flanking second-story window opening and within gable; pitched roof covered with asphalt shingles

Building Notes: One of 13 row houses (651 to 675 Park Place).

Site Features: Metal areaway hatch; areaway converted to parking pad

South Facade: Designed (historic, painted, gable and central portion of second story faced with non-historic brick veneer)

Stoop: Resurfaced stoop (original gate under stoop)

Door(s): Replaced primary door

Windows: Replaced (upper stories); replaced (basement)

Security Grilles: Historic (basement)

Roof: Pitched - asphalt tile (replaced)

Cornice: Original

Sidewalk Material(s): Concrete

Curb Material(s): Bluestone

Areaway Wall/Fence Materials: Replacement front gate and areaway fence, including front driveway gate; portion of historic front stone curb remains; historic fence along west areaway border

Areaway Paving Material: Concrete

665 Park Place

Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1231, Lot 76
Date: 1889-90 (NB 730-1889)
Architect/Builder: J. Mason Kirby
Original Owners: Frederick W. & Walter S. Hammett
Type: Row house
Style: Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival
Stories: 2 and basement
Material(s): Brick; brownstone



Decorative Metal Work: Historic iron stoop railings

Significant Architectural Features: Round-arch-headed main-entrance and first-story window openings with quoined surrounds, crowned by round moldings; ornate corbelled second-story sill with sawtooth and beaded moldings, and scalloped lower edge; round-arch-headed second-story window opening with quoined surround, crowned by rough-faced stone voussoirs; portion of original wood bead-and-reel brickmold at second-story window; semicircular gable containing bricks with ornamental studs; corbelled colonettes with foliate terra-cotta tile shared with Nos. 663 and 667; ornate cornice decorated with bead-and-reel, sawtooth, egg-and-dart, and rope moldings and splayed keystone

Alterations: Replacement door frame with wide side panels; doorbell on main-entrance surround; water meter reader at basement; doorbell at basement, adjacent to understoop opening; portion of molding over main-entrance arch, and second-story window quoining damaged; original window brickmolds and mullions at basement and first-story windows removed or covered with panning; original second-story mullions and portion of original second-story brickmold removed or covered with panning; pitched roof partially replaced with asphaltic material

Building Notes: One of 13 row houses (651 to 675 Park Place).

Site Features: Metal hatch, vertical pipes, and remnant of non-historic lamp post in areaway

South Facade: Designed (historic, painted)

Stoop: Resurfaced stoop (original gate under stoop)

Door(s): Replaced primary door

Windows: Replaced (upper stories); replaced (basement)

Security Grilles: Historic (basement)

Roof: Pitched - asphaltic and patterned slate (replaced)

Sidewalk Material(s): Concrete

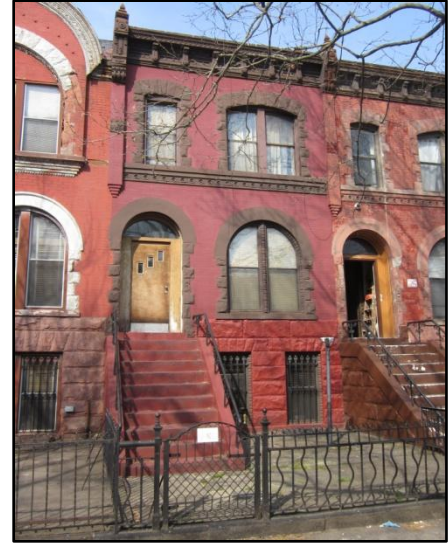
Curb Material(s): Bluestone

Areaway Wall/Fence Materials: Replacement front areaway fence on historic stone curb; gate removed; historic fence along west areaway border

Areaway Paving Material: Concrete

667 Park Place

Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1231, Lot 75
Date: 1889-90 (NB 730-1889)
Architect/Builder: J. Mason Kirby
Original Owners: Frederick W. & Walter S. Hammett
Type: Row house
Style: Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival
Stories: 2 and basement
Material(s): Brick; brownstone



Decorative Metal Work: Historic iron stoop railings

Significant Architectural Features: Round-arch-headed main-entrance and first-story window openings with quoined surrounds; terra-cotta second-story sill course with rope moldings and rosettes; segmental-arch-headed, quoined second-story window openings crowned by rough-faced stone voussoirs; corbelled colonette with foliate terra-cotta tile at western end of second floor, shared with No. 665, and at eastern end of second floor, shared with No. 669; original wood bead-and-reel brickmolds at basement windows, and original wood bead-and-reel mullion and brickmold at first-story window; original bracketed cornice decorated with rosettes and bead-and-reel, sawtooth, and egg-and-dart moldings, and crowned by finials at each end

Alterations: Replacement main-entrance door frame; water meter reader and doorbell at basement, adjacent to understoop opening; moldings removed from tops of main-entrance and first-story window arches; original window brickmolds and mullions at second-story windows removed or covered with panning

Building Notes: One of 13 row houses (651 to 675 Park Place).

Site Features: Metal hatch and non-historic lamp post in areaway

South Facade: Designed (historic, painted)

Stoop: Resurfaced stoop (original gate under stoop)

Door(s): Replaced primary door

Windows: Replaced (upper stories); replaced (basement)

Security Grilles: Historic (basement)

Cornice: Original

Sidewalk Material(s): Concrete

Curb Material(s): Bluestone

Areaway Wall/Fence Materials: Historic front areaway fence (top railing replaced) on historic stone curb; historic front gate; replacement fence along west areaway border

Areaway Paving Material: Concrete

669 Park Place

Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1231, Lot 74
Date: 1889-90 (NB 730-1889)
Architect/Builder: J. Mason Kirby
Original Owners: Frederick W. & Walter S. Hammett
Type: Row house
Style: Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival
Stories: 2 and basement
Material(s): Brick; brownstone



Decorative Metal Work: Historic iron stoop railings

Significant Architectural Features: Round-arch-headed main-entrance and first-story window openings with quoined surrounds; terra-cotta second-story sill course with rope moldings and rosettes; segmental-arch-headed, quoined second-story window openings crowned by rough-faced stone voussoirs; corbelled colonette with foliate terra-cotta tile at western end of second floor, shared with No. 667; original wood bead-and-reel brickmolds at basement windows; original bracketed cornice decorated with rosettes and bead-and-reel, sawtooth, and egg-and-dart moldings, and crowned by finials at each end

Alterations: Replacement main-entrance door frame; doorbell embedded within main-entrance surround; sign adjacent to main entrance; light fixture on west basement security grille; water meter reader at basement, adjacent to stoop; moldings removed from tops of main-entrance and first-story window arches; cameras below second-story sill; original brickmolds and mullions at first- and second-story windows removed or covered with panning

Building Notes: One of 13 row houses (651 to 675 Park Place).

Site Features: Areaway converted to parking pad; non-historic "no parking" sign in areaway

South Facade: Designed (historic, painted)

Stoop: Resurfaced stoop (Gate under stoop - replaced)

Door(s): Replaced primary door

Windows: Replaced (upper stories); replaced (basement)

Security Grilles: Historic (basement)

Cornice: Original

Sidewalk Material(s): Concrete

Curb Material(s): Bluestone

Areaway Wall/Fence Materials: Front areaway fence removed; non-historic fence along west areaway border

Areaway Paving Material: Concrete

671 Park Place

Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1231, Lot 73

Date: 1889-90 (NB 730-1889)

Architect/Builder: J. Mason Kirby

Original Owners: Frederick W. & Walter S. Hammett

Type: Row house

Style: Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival

Stories: 2 and basement

Material(s): Brick; brownstone



Special Windows: Historic multipane main-entrance transom sash

Decorative Metal Work: Historic iron stoop railings

Significant Architectural Features: Round-arch-headed main-entrance and first-story window openings with quoined surrounds, crowned by round moldings; ornate corbelled second-story sill with sawtooth and beaded moldings, and scalloped lower edge; round-arch-headed second-story window opening with quoined surround, crowned by rough-faced stone voussoirs; gable containing terra-cotta strapwork surrounded by bricks with ornamental studs; corbelled colonette with foliate terra-cotta tile at western end of second floor; original wood bead-and-reel mullion at basement; original wood bead-and-reel brickmolds at basement and first-story windows; ornate cornice decorated with bead-and-reel, sawtooth, and egg-and-dart moldings; slate roof

Alterations: Light fixture and intercom at main entrance; metal kickplates and brass numerals on

Building Notes: One of 13 row houses (651 to 675 Park Place).

Site Features: Metal hatch, vertical pipe, small planting bed, and non-historic lamp post in areaway

South Facade: Designed (historic, brownstone portions of facade patched)

Stoop: Resurfaced stoop (original gate under stoop)

Door(s): Historic primary door

Windows: Replaced (upper stories); replaced (basement)

Security Grilles: Historic (basement)

Roof: Pitched - patterned slate (original)

Cornice: Original

Sidewalk Material(s): Concrete

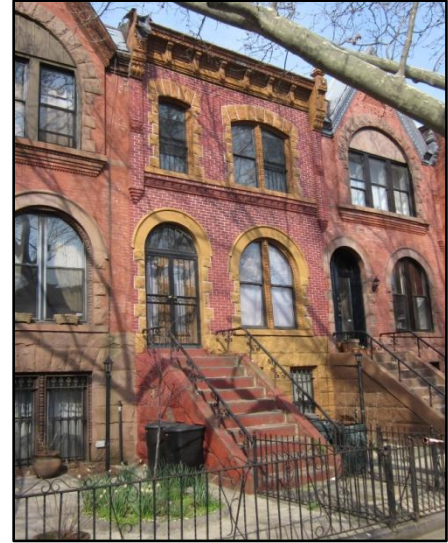
Curb Material(s): Bluestone

Areaway Wall/Fence Materials: Non-historic front areaway fence and gate on historic stone curb; replacement iron fence along west areaway border

Areaway Paving Material: Concrete

673 Park Place

Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1231, Lot 72
Date: 1889-90 (NB 730-1889)
Architect/Builder: J. Mason Kirby
Original Owners: Frederick W. & Walter S. Hammett
Type: Row house
Style: Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival
Stories: 2 and basement
Material(s): Brick; brownstone



Decorative Metal Work: Historic iron stoop railings

Significant Architectural Features: Round-arch-headed main-entrance and first-story window openings with quoined surrounds, crowned by round moldings; terra-cotta second-story sill course with rope moldings and rosettes;

segmental-arch-headed, quoined second-story window openings crowned by rough-faced stone voussoirs; corbelled colonette with foliate terra-cotta tile at western end of second floor and at eastern end of second floor, shared with No. 675; original wood bead-and-reel brickmolds at basement windows, and original wood bead-and-reel mullions and brickmolds at first- and second-story windows; original bracketed cornice decorated with rosettes and bead-and-reel, sawtooth, and egg-and-dart moldings, and crowned by finial at eastern end

Alterations: Main-entrance gate and transom grille; doorbell on main-entrance surround; mailboxes on east stoop face; water meter reader at basement; wiring protruding from basement facade adjacent to understoop opening; west cornice bracket damaged, with missing finial

Building Notes: One of 13 row houses (651 to 675 Park Place).

Site Features: Hatch and non-historic lamp post in areaway; non-historic fence in areaway, in front of stoop

South Facade: Designed (historic, repointed)

Stoop: Resurfaced stoop (original gate under stoop)

Door(s): Historic primary door

Windows: Replaced (upper stories); replaced (basement)

Security Grilles: Historic (basement)

Cornice: Original

Sidewalk Material(s): Concrete

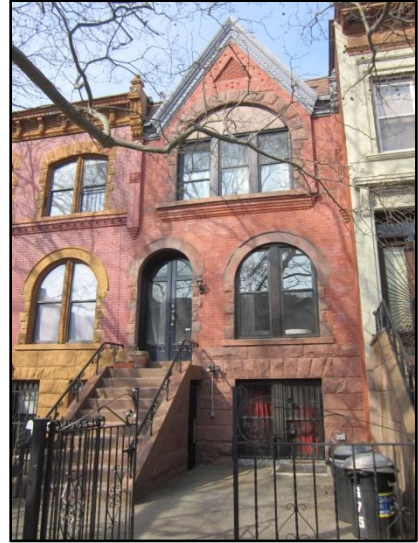
Curb Material(s): Bluestone

Areaway Wall/Fence Materials: Non-historic front areaway fence and gate on historic stone curb; replacement iron fence along west areaway border

Areaway Paving Material: Concrete

675 Park Place

Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 1231, Lot 71
Date: 1889-90 (NB 730-1889)
Architect/Builder: J. Mason Kirby
Original Owners: Frederick W. & Walter S. Hammett
Type: Row house
Style: Queen Anne/Romanesque Revival
Stories: 2 and basement
Material(s): Brick; brownstone



Decorative Metal Work: Historic iron stoop railings

Significant Architectural Features: Round-arch-headed main-entrance and first-story window openings with quoined surrounds; ornate corbelled second-story sill with sawtooth and beaded moldings, and scalloped lower edge; round-arch-headed second-story window opening with quoined surround, crowned by rough-faced stone voussoirs; portion of original wood bead-and-reel brickmold at second story; gable containing terra-cotta strapwork surrounded by bricks with ornamental studs; corbelled colonette with foliate terra-cotta tile at western end of second floor, shared with No. 673, and at eastern end of second floor; ornate cornice decorated with bead-and-reel, sawtooth, and egg-and-dart moldings; slate roof

Alterations: Doorbell and light fixture adjacent to main entrance; wood plank attached to understoop gate; water meter reader and spigot at basement; light fixture with conduit, and doorbell, at basement adjacent to understoop opening; decorative arch-headed panel above second-story windows replaced or covered; original window mullions and brickmolds at basement and first stories removed or covered with panning; original window mullions at second story removed or covered with panning; portion of original wood second-story brickmold removed

Building Notes: One of 13 row houses (651 to 675 Park Place).

Site Features: Metal areaway hatch; areaway converted to parking pad

South Facade: Designed (historic)

Stoop: Original stoop (original gate under stoop)

Door(s): Historic primary door

Windows: Replaced (upper stories); replaced (basement)

Security Grilles: Not historic (basement)

Roof: Pitched - patterned slate (original)

Cornice: Original

Sidewalk Material(s): Concrete

Curb Material(s): Bluestone

Areaway Wall/Fence Materials: Non-historic front areaway fence and gate on portion of historic stone curb; eastern portion of front curb removed; non-historic driveway gate; replacement fence along west areaway border

Areaway Paving Material: Concrete



651 to 655 Park Place

Photo: Christopher D. Brazee (2012)



653 to 661 Park Place

Photo: Christopher D. Brazee (2012)



665 to 673 Park Place

Photo: Christopher D. Brazeo (2012)



671 to 675 Park Place
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee (2012)