

**FIREHOUSE, ENGINE COMPANY 83, HOOK & LADDER COMPANY 29,**  
618 East 138<sup>th</sup> Street (aka 618-620 East 138<sup>th</sup> Street), the Bronx. Built 1904-05; Robert D. Kohn,  
architect.

Landmark Site: Borough of the Bronx Tax Map Block 2550, Lot 28

On May 15, 2012, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Firehouse, Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29 and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 3). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. There were two speakers in favor of designation: representatives of the Historic Districts Council and The Victorian Society New York. There were no speakers in opposition to designation. In addition, the Commission received a communication from the Fire Department of the City of New York in support of designation.

### Summary

The imposing two-story neo-Classical style Firehouse, Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29, in the Mott Haven section of the South Bronx, was constructed in 1904-05 during the period when an enormous number of public structures were being placed in neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs following the Consolidation of Greater New York in 1898. The architect of this firehouse was Robert D. Kohn, a graduate of Columbia University and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, who emerged around this time as one of the few American architects (like Emery Roth early in his career) who produced major designs influenced by the Vienna Secession, between about 1905 and 1915. An early example of the two-vehicular-bay firehouse, a type that predominated in New York City for the next quarter century, this building is clad in salmon-colored brick with a monumental three-bay limestone enframing on the first story and a bracketed terra-cotta cornice. Within the elegantly composed neo-Classical ornamental vocabulary are subtle Secessionist references. Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29 has continuously served the neighborhood in this building since 1906.



## DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

### Firefighting in New York<sup>1</sup>

Even in the colonial period, the government of New York took the possibility of fire very seriously. Under Dutch rule, all men were expected to participate in firefighting activities. After the English took over, the Common Council organized a force of 30 volunteer firefighters in 1737, operating two Newsham hand pumpers that had recently been imported from London. By 1798, the Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY), under the supervision of a chief engineer and six subordinates, was officially established by an act of the New York State Legislature.

As the city grew, this force was augmented by new volunteer companies. In spite of growing numbers of firefighters and improvements in hoses and water supplies, fire was a significant threat in an increasingly densely built up city. Of particular significance was the “Great Fire” of December 16-17, 1835, which caused more damage to property than any other event in New York City. The damages resulting from several major fires which occurred between 1800 and 1850 led to the establishment of a building code, and an increase in the number of firemen from 600 in 1800 to more than 4,000 in 1865. Despite rapid growth, the department was often criticized for poor performance.<sup>2</sup> Intense competition between companies began to hinder firefighting with frequent brawls and acts of sabotage, often at the scenes of fires. During the Civil War, when fire personnel became harder to retain, public support grew for the creation of a professional firefighting force, similar to that established in other cities and to the professional police force that had been created in New York in 1845.

In May 1865, the State Legislature established the Metropolitan Fire District, comprising the cities of New York (south of 86<sup>th</sup> Street) and Brooklyn. The act abolished the volunteer system and created the Metropolitan Fire Department, a paid professional force under the jurisdiction of the state government. By the end of the year, the city’s 124 volunteer companies with more than 4,000 men had retired or disbanded, to be replaced by 33 engine companies and 12 ladder companies operated by a force of 500 men. Immediate improvements included the use of more steam engines, horses, and a somewhat reliable telegraph system. A military model was adopted for the firefighters, which involved the use of specialization, discipline, and merit. By 1870, regular service was extended to the “suburban districts” north of 86<sup>th</sup> Street and expanded still farther north after the annexation of part of the Bronx in 1874. New techniques and equipment, including taller ladders and stronger steam engines, increased the department’s efficiency, as did the establishment, in 1883, of a training academy for personnel. The growth of the city during this period placed severe demands on the Fire Department to provide services, and in response the department undertook an ambitious building campaign. The area served by the FDNY nearly doubled after the Consolidation of Greater New York in 1898, when the departments in Brooklyn and numerous communities in Queens and Staten Island were incorporated into the city. After the turn of the century, the Fire Department acquired more modern apparatus and motorized vehicles, reflecting the need for faster response to fires in taller buildings. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the department endeavored to keep up with the evolving city and its firefighting needs.

### Firehouse Design<sup>3</sup>

By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the firehouse as a building type had evolved from the wooden storage shed used during the 17<sup>th</sup> century to an imposing architectural expression of civic character. As early as 1853, Marriott Field had argued in his *City Architecture: Designs for Dwelling Houses, Stores, Hotels, etc.* for symbolic architectural expression in municipal buildings, including firehouses. The 1854 Fireman's Hall, 153 Mercer Street, with its highly symbolic ornamentation, reflected this approach, using flambeaux, hooks, ladders, and trumpets for its ornament.<sup>4</sup> Between 1880 and 1895, Napoleon LeBrun & Son served as the official architectural firm for New York's Fire Department, designing 42 firehouses in a massive effort to modernize the facilities and to accommodate the growing population of the city. Although the firm's earliest designs were relatively simple, later buildings were more distinguished and more clearly identifiable as firehouses. While the basic function and requirements of the firehouse were established early in its history, LeBrun is credited with standardizing the program, and introducing some minor, but important, innovations in the plan.

Placing the horse stalls in the main part of the ground floor to reduce the time needed for hitching horses to the apparatus was one such innovation.<sup>5</sup> Firehouses were usually located on mid-block sites because these were less expensive than more prominent corner sites. Since the sites were narrow, firehouses tended to be three stories tall, with the apparatus on the ground story and rooms for the company, including dormitory, kitchen and captain's office, above. After 1895, the department commissioned a number of well-known architects to design firehouses. Influenced by the Classical Revival which was highly popular throughout the country, New York firms such as Hoppin & Koen, Flagg & Chambers, Horgan & Slattery, and Robert D. Kohn created facades with bold Classical style designs.

### Growth of Mott Haven and the Bronx<sup>6</sup>

The site of the Firehouse, Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29 was originally part of the extensive land holdings purchased in 1670 by the Welsh-born Richard Morris (died 1672) and inherited in 1691 by his son Lewis Morris (1671-1746), later an Acting Governor of New York and Governor of New Jersey. Their estate, known as "Morrisania," was part of Westchester County during the late 18<sup>th</sup> and most of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>7</sup> In 1828, Jordan L. Mott, inventor of the coal-burning stove, bought a large tract of land in the southwestern part of Morrisania and established the Mott Haven Iron Works on the Harlem River at Third Avenue and 134<sup>th</sup> Street. The area around this business was developed with houses for Mott and his workers and became known as Mott Haven. Even though the larger area of Morrisania continued as a quiet, rural district, this section of Mott Haven developed more rapidly because of the expansion of the iron works and the advent of other industrial enterprises attracted by the Mott Haven Canal, which led from the Harlem River north to 138<sup>th</sup> Street. The New York & Harlem Railroad, incorporated in 1831, expanded over the Harlem River in 1840, bringing goods and people to the industrial community of Mott Haven. As the railroads and streetcars crossed the area, beginning in the 1860s, streets were laid out and land speculation began in earnest.

In 1874, the townships of Morrisania, West Farms and Kingsbridge split from Westchester County and became the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Wards of the City of New York, this area of the Bronx becoming known as the Annexed District. Beginning in the early 1880s, booster organizations such as the North Side Association advocated for infrastructure improvements; streets were paved, sewers dug, and mass transit lines brought the elevated trains to the Bronx. The El spurred tenement construction. By 1897, just a decade after the El began operation, the once vacant blocks east of Third Avenue were almost completely built over with solid brick buildings. This area held a mixture

of building types: single-family rowhouses built in the late 1880s; multi-story apartment houses, built with increasing frequency in the 1890s; and various industrial and manufacturing establishments located along the neighborhood's southern fringe. The population of the Bronx grew rapidly – in 1890, there were 89,000 people living in the area of the Bronx known as the North Side, ten years later the population had more than doubled to over 200,000, and by 1915 the number had increased threefold to 616,000. As the population and number of new buildings increased, protection from the ever present danger of fire became increasingly important. The firefighters of Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29 played a vital role in the Mott Haven community.

#### Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29<sup>8</sup>

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, as the Mott Haven Iron Works and the neighborhood's residential development expanded, fire protection in Mott Haven became increasingly important. A volunteer company, J. & L. Mott Ladder 2, was established in a three-story wooden building at 2608 Third Avenue. With the annexation of this section of the Bronx to New York City in 1874, this volunteer squad was disbanded and replaced at the same location with Hook & Ladder Company 17, which moved in 1877 into a rented four-story brick stable nearby at 589 (later re-numbered 341) East 143<sup>rd</sup> Street. By 1891, this company had 12 men and officers stationed here, with two horses, and one roller-frame hook-and-ladder truck with a fifty-foot extension ladder. That year they fought 60 fires, out of the total 158 fires that occurred in the entire lower Bronx. Following the Consolidation of Greater New York in 1898, when the entire Bronx became part of the city, it benefitted, as did all five boroughs, from the construction of an enormous number of new public structures, placed in all neighborhoods. Hook and Ladder Company 17 received a new two-bay firehouse (1906-07), designed by Michael J. Garvin.<sup>9</sup>

Immediately after Consolidation, plans were made for a second engine company and firehouse to be located in Mott Haven. A three-story \$24,000 firehouse was proposed for 898 (later re-numbered 618) East 138<sup>th</sup> Street near Cypress Avenue in 1899, and plans were produced by architect Manly N. Cutter, Deputy Building Superintendent of the Fire Department, but these were not acted upon. In December 1903, the Fire Department signed a contract with architect Robert D. Kohn to prepare plans and specifications. Kohn filed for a two-story firehouse in July 1904, and construction occurred between January and October 1905 at a cost of \$41,698. The contractor was Alfred Nugent & Son, a firm that built numerous public buildings, such as schools and firehouses, during this period. The *Real Estate Record & Builders Guide* noted that "The site for the new building is in a district crowded with factories and tenements. At present there is no firehouse within a radius of half a mile."<sup>10</sup> The firehouse is an early example of the two-vehicular-bay firehouse, a type that predominated in New York City for the next quarter century. Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29 was officially organized in February 1906. It has continued to serve the neighborhood since that time.

#### The Architect: Robert D. Kohn<sup>11</sup>

Robert David Kohn (1870-1953), born in Manhattan, graduated from the College of the City of New York (1886) and Columbia University (1890), then attended the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris (1891-95). Upon his return to New York, he worked for a number of architectural firms before establishing his own independent practice in 1896. Among Kohn's early commissions were town houses designed in an abstracted Beaux-Arts style, including 352-353 Riverside Drive (1899-1901); River Mansion, 337 Riverside Drive, and the neighboring 322 West 106<sup>th</sup> Street (1900-02); and 46 East 74<sup>th</sup> Street (1901-02).<sup>12</sup> He was associate architect, with Carrere & Hastings, of the abstracted

neo-Renaissance style New York Society for Ethical Culture School (1902-04), 33 Central Park West<sup>13</sup> (Kohn was a close personal friend of Dr. Felix Adler, the founder (1876) of the Society, and was a member and, later, president, of the congregation). His practice came to encompass warehouses, factories, and residential, commercial, office, and institutional buildings. Kohn emerged as one of the few American architects (like Emery Roth in his early career) who produced major designs influenced by the Vienna Secession, between about 1905 and 1915. These works, all aesthetically noteworthy and among Kohn's most interesting work, included the Hermitage Hotel (1905-07; demolished), 592 Seventh Avenue, a bachelor apartment hotel; New York Evening Post Building (1906), 20 Vesey Street; Spero Building (1907-08), 23 West 21<sup>st</sup> Street, a store-and-loft structure for a wholesale millinery goods firm; and New York Society for Ethical Culture (1909-10), 2 West 64<sup>th</sup> Street.<sup>14</sup> Kohn was married in 1905 to the sculptress Estelle Rumbold, who collaborated on the Evening Post and Ethical Culture projects.

Kohn's Firehouse, Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29 (1904-05), an imposing two-story neo-Classical style building, is clad in salmon-colored brick with a monumental three-bay limestone enframement on the first story and a bracketed terra-cotta cornice. Within the elegantly composed neo-Classical ornamental vocabulary are subtle Secessionist references, such as the concave segmental arches of the first-story enframement, the entablatures of the central pedestrian entrance and first-story enframement, and the end terminating elements of the roof parapet.

Kohn later explored a different modern aesthetic that sometimes referenced his earlier Secessionist influence, and presaged or paralleled such stylistic trends as modern Classicism and Art Deco. He designed the 11-story Auerbach & Sons factory (1915), 628-644 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, which features vertical articulation, wide horizontal windows, and stylized geometric ornament, and additions to the R.H. Macy & Co. Department Store (1922-31), Seventh Avenue and West 34<sup>th</sup> Street.<sup>15</sup> Kohn was a founder (1921) and president (1929) of the New York Building Congress and served as president of the American Institute of Architects (1930-32), director of the housing division of the Public Works Administration (1933-34), and vice president of the New York World's Fair (1939-40), as well as a member of the fair's board of design. He received the medal of honor in 1933 from the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Certain of his commissions were executed under the firm name of Robert D. Kohn & Associates.

Kohn's office address after 1917 was the same as architect Charles Butler's,<sup>16</sup> and he apparently formed a partnership with Butler that lasted, informally and formally, to at least 1952.<sup>17</sup> They entered the competition for the design of the Nebraska State Capitol in 1919, and were responsible for the A.I. Namm & Son Department Store (1924-25, 1928-29), 454 Fulton Street, Brooklyn,<sup>18</sup> and the 12-story Dorothy Gray Building (1928), 683 Fifth Avenue, which received a silver medal from the Fifth Avenue Association in 1929.<sup>19</sup> Kohn and/or Butler joined with Clarence S. Stein on a number of projects. Stein (1883-1975), born in Rochester, New York, trained as an architect at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts (1908-11) and entered the office of Bertram G. Goodhue, where he became chief designer. Stein became best known as a pioneering planner, with Henry Wright, of housing projects and planned communities, including Sunnyside Gardens (1924-28), Queens, and Radburn, New Jersey (1928-32), for which Kohn was one of the architectural consultants. Among the collaborations of Kohn, Butler and Stein were: Parkwest Hospital (1925-26, Butler and Stein), 170 West 76<sup>th</sup> Street;<sup>20</sup> Fieldston School buildings (1927-28, Kohn and Stein), operated by the Ethical Culture Society in Riverdale, the Bronx; Temple Emanu-El (1927-29, Kohn, Butler and Stein, with Mayers, Murray & Phillip), 840 Fifth Avenue;<sup>21</sup> and Fort Greene Houses (1942-44, Butler and Stein, with numerous other architects), Brooklyn.

## Description

### *Historic:*

Two-story neo-Classical style firehouse; salmon-colored brick cladding with three-bay, first-story limestone enframement; outer bays have historic pull-down paneled wood doors and historic FDNY company names; central bay has pedestrian entrance surmounted by entablature with bronze dedication plaque and segmental-arched window with leaded glass panes; three second-story tripartite windows with one-over-one double-hung wood sash; flagpole at central second-story window; bracketed terra-cotta cornice; roof parapet with stone coping and end terminating elements

### *Alterations:*

Metal pedestrian door; sidelights of central first-story leaded glass window; first-story electrical conduits and lighting fixtures

West Wall: painted brick cladding, with a door; ventilating pipe

Report researched and written by  
Jay Shockley  
Research Department

## **NOTES**

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<sup>1</sup> This section is taken from: Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), *Fire House, Hook & Ladder 17 (also now Engine Company 60) Designation Report* (LP-2046)(New York: City of New York, 2000), prepared by Virginia Kurshan.

<sup>2</sup> Firemen often served for various reasons, in addition to their desire to help their city. Participation in fire companies was seen as a starting point for political careers, and seven mayors elected after 1835 had initially served as firefighters.

<sup>3</sup> LPC, *Fire House, Hook & Ladder 17*.

<sup>4</sup> This building, located within the SoHo-Cast Iron Historic District, no longer functions as a firehouse. In an attempt to remove the political influence of Tammany Hall on the Fire Department, the Common Council banned the construction of new buildings in the 1860s. It was not until after the professionalization of the fire department that money was again expended on the construction of these desperately-needed civic structures.

<sup>5</sup> LeBrun is also credited with the creation of vertical hose-drying towers to accommodate this necessary activity in a space-saving manner.

<sup>6</sup> LPC, *Fire House, Hook & Ladder 17*.

<sup>7</sup> The Morris family were slave owners.

<sup>8</sup> LPC, *Fire House, Hook & Ladder 17*; NYC, Dept. of Buildings, Bronx, Plans, Permits and Dockets (NB 1919-1899, NB 487B-1904); New York State Parks & Recreation, Division of Historic Preservation, "Engine Company 83, Hook and Ladder 29 Building-Nomination Form" (1980), prepared by Erin Drake; "Fire Department," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle Almanac* (1899), 392; "Projected Buildings: Borough of Bronx," *Real Estate Record & Builders Guide (RERBG)*, Dec. 9, 1899, 905; NYC, Fire Dept., *Annual Report* (1903), 149, (1904), 52, 153, 193, 194, (1905), 173; "The Building Department," *New York Times (NYT)*, July 8, 1904, 14; "Projected Buildings: Borough of Bronx," *RERBG*, July 9, 1904, 90; *The City Record*, Oct. 14, 1905, 8707, Oct. 20, 1905, 8849, and May 11, 1906, 4518.

<sup>9</sup> This is a designated New York City Landmark.

<sup>10</sup> "Bids Opened," *Real Estate Record & Builders Guide*, Dec. 3, 1904, 1223.

<sup>11</sup> Dennis S. Francis, *Architects in Practice, New York City 1840-1900* (New York: Comm. for the Pres. of Archl. Recs., 1979); James Ward, *Architects in Practice, New York City 1900-1940* (New York: Comm. for the Pres. of

Archl. Recs., 1989); Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin and John Massengale, *New York 1900* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983); Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin and Thomas Mellins, *New York 1930* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987); Robert A.M. Stern, Thomas Mellins, and David Fishman, *New York 1960* (New York: Monacelli Pr., 1995); Kohn obit., *NYT*, June 17, 1953, 83; “Robert David Kohn,” *Who Was Who in America* 3 (Chicago: Marquis Who’s Who, 1967), 487, and *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* 46 (New York: 1967), 201-202; LPC, *New York Society for Ethical Culture Designation Report* (LP-0831)(New York: City of New York, 1974) and Architects files; [Spero Building] “Development of the Loft Building,” *RERBG*, Apr. 4, 1908, 594; “The Store Building for the Lindner Company,” *The Western Architect* (Apr. 1919), 34; Mary-Peale Schofield, *Landmark Architecture of Cleveland* (Pittsburgh: One Park Assocs., 1976), 110, 115; Clay Herrick, Jr., *Cleveland Landmarks* (Cleveland: Landmarks Publ. Co., 1986), 140-141; [101 East 19<sup>th</sup> Street], *American Architect* (May 1921); [Macy’s], *NYT*, Feb. 9, 1922, 11, July 1, 1923, RE2, Sept. 5, 1929, 58, and Sept. 28, 1930, 16; [Macy’s warehouse], *NYT*, July 20, 1922, 33; [18-22 East 48<sup>th</sup> Street], *NYT*, Nov. 13, 1927, RE1, and Mar. 6, 1928, 47; [444 Madison Ave.], *NYT*, Apr. 8, 1930, 57; “R.D. Kohn Receives Architects’ Medal,” *NYT*, Mar. 3, 1934, 11; Butler obit., *Architectural Record* (July 1953), 292; “Charles Butler,” *Who’s Who in New York* (1952), 163; Pamela Scott, “A List of American Architectural Competitors,” [www.sah.org](http://www.sah.org) website; [Mt. Sinai Hospital], *NYT*, Jan. 16, 1922, E19, Mar. 13, 1927, RE2, and May 22, 1930, 15; [Dorothy Gray Bdg.], *NYT*, Mar. 3, 1928, 32, and Nov. 4, 1928, 196, and *RERBG*, Mar. 2, 1929, 8; Stein obit., *NYT*, Feb. 8, 1975; “Temple Emanu-El Designs Approved,” *NYT*, Mar. 27, 1927, E1; [Fieldston School], *NYT*, Oct. 16, 1927, 18, and Nov. 25, 1928, X16.

<sup>12</sup> The River Mansion and 322 West 106<sup>th</sup> Street house are located within the Riverside Drive-West 105<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District; the latter house is located within the Upper East Side Historic District.

<sup>13</sup> The school is located within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

<sup>14</sup> The Evening Post and Ethical Culture buildings are designated New York City Landmarks; the latter is also located within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. The Spero Building is located within the Ladies’ Mile Historic District. Other Secessionist projects by Kohn included Seaman Bros. warehouse (1905; altered), 131-133 Perry Street, located within the Greenwich Village Historic District Extension.; H. Black & Co. clothing factory (1907) and Lindner Coy Store (1915), for women’s clothing, Cleveland.

<sup>15</sup> Kohn’s later commissions included a 12-story loft building at 101 East 19<sup>th</sup> Street (1920-21); the 11-story R.H. Macy & Co. warehouse (c. 1922; demolished), 420 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue; a 22-story office building at 20 East 48<sup>th</sup> Street (1927-28, with Lafayette A. Goldstone and Louis E. Jallade); a 30-story office building for the Vanderbilt estate at 503 Madison Avenue (1929-30, with Frank E. Vitolo); a 43-story office building at 444 Madison Avenue (1930-31, with Frank E. Vitolo and John J. Knight); and Macy’s Department Store (1947, with John J. Knight and Richard C. Belcher), 89-22 165<sup>th</sup> Street, Jamaica, Queens.

<sup>16</sup> Charles Butler (1870-1953), born in Scarsdale, N.Y., graduated from Columbia College (1891), then attended the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. In 1899, he formed a partnership with Benjamin Wistar Morris, Jr., and Cary Seldon Rodman, which became Butler & Rodman around 1901 (and Butler, Rodman & [Marshal F.] Oliver briefly in 1905). The firm of Butler & Rodman, which continued after Rodman’s death in 1911, was listed in directories to around 1925. Butler became known as a hospital specialist, one of his works being the Children’s Hospital (1909) of Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore. He also participated in the design of the Interior Department Building (1915-17), Washington, D.C., with the Office of the Supervising Architect (this building was a predecessor to the later Dept. of the Interior Building). Butler was also one of the design consultants for the New York World’s Fair.

<sup>17</sup> Kohn and Butler’s collaborations were variously listed under the firm names of Robert D. Kohn and Charles Butler, Associated; Kohn & Butler; and Robert D. Kohn, Charles Butler & Associates.

<sup>18</sup> It is a designated New York City Landmark.

<sup>19</sup> They designed buildings for Montefiore Hospital; the Nurses’ Home and Training School (1927) and a building for patients of moderate income (1930-31), Mt. Sinai Hospital; and Welfare Hospital for Chronic Diseases (1939), Welfare Island.

<sup>20</sup> This building, now apartments, is located within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

<sup>21</sup> The synagogue is located within the Upper East Side Historic District.



## **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 Firehouse, Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29, has a special character, and a 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 imposing two-story neo-Classical style Firehouse, Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29, in the Mott Haven section of the South Bronx, was constructed in 1904-05 during the period when an enormous number of public structures were being placed in neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs following the Consolidation of Greater New York in 1898; that the architect of this firehouse was Robert D. Kohn, a graduate of Columbia University and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, who emerged around this time as one of the few American architects (like Emery Roth early in his career) who produced major designs influenced by the Vienna Secession, between about 1905 and 1915, shown in this firehouse by subtle Secessionist references within the elegantly composed neo-Classical ornamental vocabulary; that, an early example of the two-vehicular-bay firehouse, a type that predominated in New York City for the next quarter century, this building is clad in salmon-colored brick with a monumental three-bay limestone enframingent on the first story and a bracketed terra-cotta cornice; and that Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29, has continuously served the neighborhood in this building since 1906.

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 Firehouse, Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29, the Bronx, and designates Borough of the Bronx Tax Map Block 2550, Lot 28 as its Landmark Site.

Pablo E. Vengochea, Vice Chair  
Frederick Bland, Michael Goldblum, Margery Perlmutter, Elizabeth Ryan, Roberta Washington,  
Commissioners





**Firehouse, Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29, 618 East 138<sup>th</sup> Street, Bronx**

Source: Mand Library and Learning Center, Fire Dept., City of New York (no date)



**Firehouse, Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29**

Source: Mand Library and Learning Center, Fire Dept., City of New York (no date)





**Firehouse, Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29**

Photo: Christopher D. Brazee (2012)



**Firehouse, Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29**

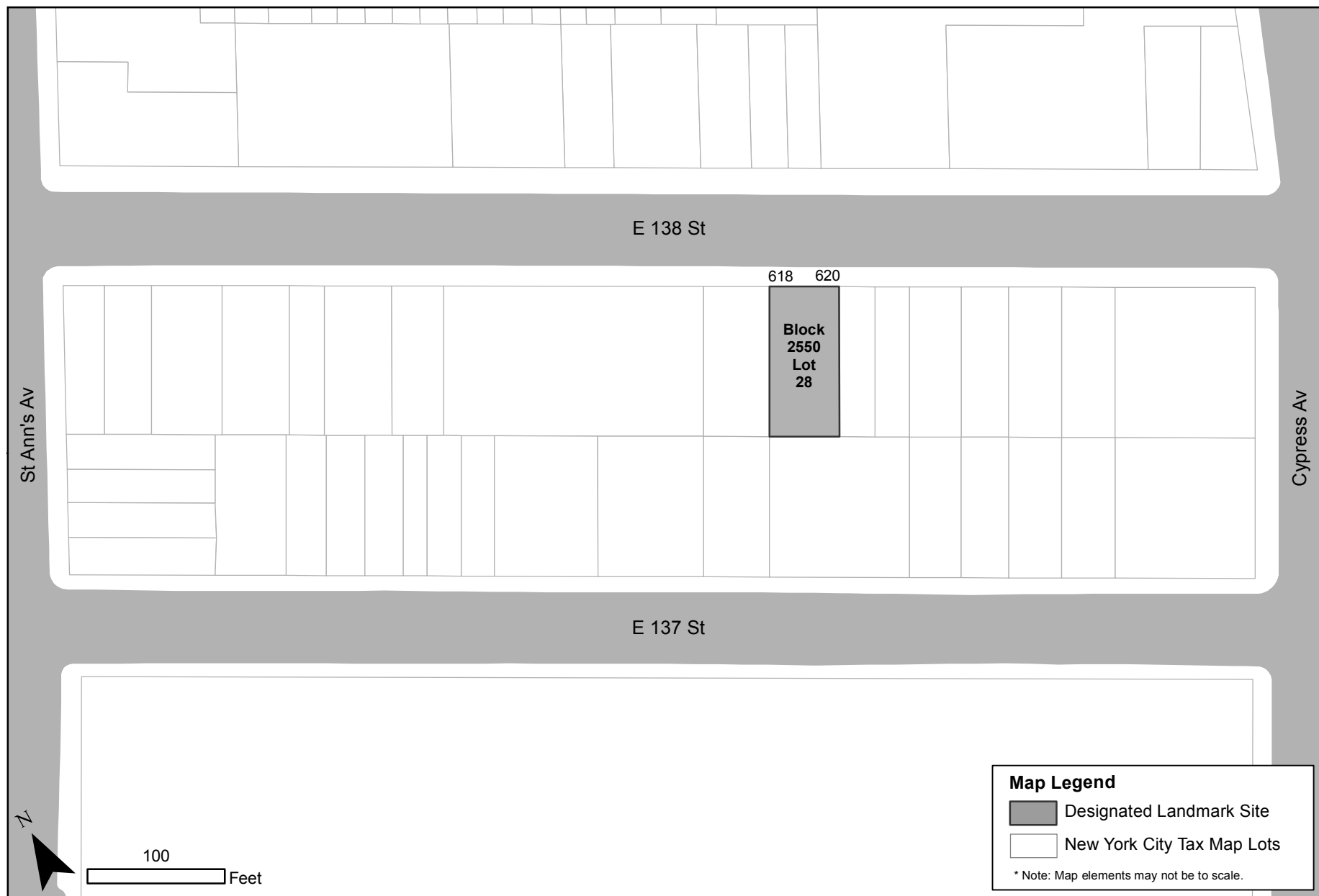
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee (2012)





**Firehouse, Engine Company 83, Hook & Ladder Company 29, entrance**

Photo: Christopher D. Brazee (2012)



FIREHOUSE, ENGINE COMPANY 83, HOOK & LADDER COMPANY 29 (LP-2520), 618 East 138th Street (aka 618-620 East 138th Street)  
 Landmark Site: Borough of the Bronx, Tax Map Block 2550, Lot 28

Designated: June 12, 2012