

COMMANDANT'S HOUSE, Quarters A, Hudson Avenue and Evans Street, New York Naval Shipyard, Borough of Brooklyn. Begun 1805, completed 1806, architect Charles Bulfinch associated with John McComb, Jr.

Landmark Site: Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 2023 in part, consisting of the land on which are situated the described building, its greenhouse and its gate house and the remainder of the land bounded by York Street, Hudson Avenue and Evans Street and within the retaining wall on the east and the shipyard boundary wall on the west.

On September 21, 1965, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Commandant's House as a Landmark and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. (Calendar No. 2). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Five witnesses spoke in favor of designation of the building including the Deputy Borough President of Brooklyn representing the Borough President of Brooklyn. In a letter to the Commission, a local representative of the Department of the Navy asked that this building be deleted from the Calendar. In another letter the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Properties and Installations took the position that the Commission cannot exercise any authority over buildings owned by the United States.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The Commandant's House is a two-story frame house with an attic and a basement. This mansion built for the chief officer of one of our important naval establishments is entirely worthy of its assigned role. The house represents the Federal Style of architecture at its zenith and is indeed the only building in the five boroughs attributed to the eminent architect, Charles Bulfinch. The building has always been maintained by the Navy and is in good condition. It has many interesting architectural details including round-headed dormer windows and an outstanding cornice. The carving of the front entrance with its leaded fanlight constitutes one of our three or four finest Federal doorways.

The question has been raised by the Federal Government as to whether this building should be designated by New York City as a Landmark. The Commission wishes to honor a building of which New Yorkers are proud. The Commission is cognizant of the jurisdictional question. Nevertheless, it is very important for the Government of New York City to state officially its deep concern that this building be preserved. There should be no uncertainty about this in anyone's mind.

The Commission would be negligent if it failed to act in this situation. At some time in the future this building may be in jeopardy. Our designation will be especially helpful in alerting New York City's elected representatives in Washington of the importance of saving this building. At present the Commission's specialists can be of service in providing advice so that the architectural integrity of this building is maintained. Indeed a fine relationship already exists with many local representatives of the Federal Government.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

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 Commandant's House has a special character, 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 Commandant's House is a distinguished country house of the Federal Style of architecture and that it remains in an exceptional state of preservation with notable details of the Federal Period in New York City.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 8-A of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Commandant's House, Quarter A, Hudson Avenue and Evans Street, New York Naval Shipyard, Borough of Brooklyn and designates as its Landmark Site that part of Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 2023 which contains the land on which are situated the described building, its greenhouse and its gate house and the remainder of the land bounded by York Street, Hudson Avenue and Evans Street, and within the retaining wall on the east and the shipyard boundary wall on the west.