

Landmarks Preservation Commission
April 19, 1966, Number 3
LP-0128

RIVERDALE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 4765 Henry Hudson Parkway West, Borough of The Bronx. 1863, architect James Renwick.

Landmark Site: Borough of The Bronx Tax Map Block 5912, Lot 13.

On January 11, 1966, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Riverdale Presbyterian Church and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. (Item No. 30). One witness spoke in favor of designation. The Commission continued the public hearing until February 8, 1966 (Item No. 29). At that time no speakers appeared to testify. Both hearings were duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. There were no speakers in opposition to designation at either meeting. In a letter to the Commission, the Board of Trustees of the Church said that it is pleased to have this building designated.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

This charming little parish church, designed by a noted architect, is one of the most cherished buildings to be found in New York City today. This small stone church with its steep slate roof is not only extremely picturesque but is a particularly fine example of late Gothic Revival architecture. In the deep re-entrant angle of its plan there is a small square tower literally embraced by the wings with a handsome copper steeple added at a later date. The main entrance has a projected stone vestibule and a handsome pointed-arch doorway with niche above. The main end-wall gable rises just behind this porch with an attractive triangular shaped window containing within it three traceried trefoils of stone.

This church has much of the quality of the small English parish church which undoubtedly provided the inspiration for its design. It has served the once small residential community of Riverdale since Civil War days and is a much beloved symbol of religious faith in that community.

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 Riverdale Presbyterian Church 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 Riverdale Presbyterian Church is a fine example of late Gothic Revival church architecture, that it is beautifully constructed of enduring materials, that it is well proportioned and displays some fine details, and that it is a picturesque and attractive addition to a community which respects its long tradition of ecclesiastical service.

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 Riverdale Presbyterian Church, 4765 Henry Hudson Parkway West, Borough of The Bronx and designates Tax Map Block 5912, Lot 13, Borough of The Bronx, as its Landmark Site.