

THE WEEPING BEECH TREE, 37th Avenue between Parsons Boulevard and Bowne Street, Flushing, Borough of Queens. 1847.

Landmark Site: Borough of Queens Tax Map Block 5012, Lot 60.

On January 11, 1966, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Weeping Beech Tree and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. (Item No. 44). At that time no speakers appeared to testify. The Commission continued the public hearing until February 8, 1966 (Item No. 43). At that time two speakers favored designation. 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, Park Commissioner Thomas Hoving recommended designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

It is unfortunate that no one has immortalized "The Weeping Beech" tree in American literature as Longfellow did the "Village Chestnut Tree", but to local citizens and to many thousands from far and wide "The Weeping Beech" is known, admired, and venerated as a mighty tree, survivor of a past era.

Standing in the center of a small, neatly landscaped park in a residential part of Flushing, and protected by an iron fence about one hundred feet in diameter, this extraordinary gift of nature with a spread of almost eighty-five feet stands in its imposing majesty for all to admire. A walkway, concentric with the outer circumference of the fence, and comfortable benches, placed at strategic points, allow visitors to enjoy this beautiful old tree from all sides. The seasonal changes of the colors of the leaves, whether seen in bright sunlight or the deep shadows of dense foliage, allow observers to enjoy hours in contemplation of this natural phenomenon. A sense of reverence overcomes those who come to pay their respects to this renowned veteran.

Historically, it is interesting to note that, while travelling in Europe, Samuel Parsons, a Flushing nurseryman, purchased a section from a tree on the estate of Baron DeMann, in Beersal, Belgium, and planted it on this site. Today it is over sixty feet high and has a spread of about eighty-five feet. The circumference of the trunk is fourteen feet.

At the public hearing, the representative of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects said in reference to The Weeping Beech, "This is a nomination of rare perception. We, as architects, realize the great importance of nature to man's environment and wholeheartedly endorse this tree for designation as the great Landmark it is. We cannot be enthusiastic enough for this giant among trees."

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 Weeping Beech Tree 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 Weeping Beech Tree is a natural phenomenon which by rare good fortune has prospered and grown to great size in the heart of the City, that it is situated in an attractive setting for all to see, and that it is a joy to all nature lovers.

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 Weeping Beech Tree, 37th Avenue between Parsons Boulevard and Bowne Street, Flushing, Borough of Queens and designates Tax Map Block 5012, Lot 60, Borough of Queens, as its Landmark Site.