

Landmarks Preservation Commission
April 19, 1966, Number 7
LP-0144

CORNELIUS VAN WYCK HOUSE, 37-O4 Douglaston Parkway (126 West Drive), Douglaston, Borough of Queens. Built about 1735, architect unknown.

Landmark Site: Borough of Queens Tax Map Block 8056, Lot 62.

On January 11, 1966, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Cornelius Van Wyck House and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. (Item No. 46). At that time no speakers appeared to testify. The Commission continued the public hearing until February 8, 1966 (Item No. 45). At that time four speakers spoke in favor of designation, including the representative of the owner of the building. Both hearings were duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. There were no speakers in opposition to designation at either meeting.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

This picturesque Eighteenth Century Dutch Colonial house with its hand-hewn shingles and salt-box type roof faces Little Neck Bay on Long Island. It is situated in a beautifully landscaped property that leads down through a garden to a sandy beach. The initial portion of the house was built by Cornelius Van Wyck in 1735, and consisted of what are today the dining room, the master bedroom and the living hall. These rooms have superb oak beams. Between the years 1735-1770 the house was expanded to the south and west. The present kitchen-wing dates from 1930. There are handsome Georgian mantelpieces in the present living room and in the downstairs bedroom. The present study has an excellent, fully panelled fireplace-wall with a classic box cornice.

The history of this house is intimately connected with that of the Dutch settlers. Cornelius Van Wyck was the eldest son of Johannes Van Wyck, whose father had emigrated from Holland in 1660. Cornelius had three sons, Stephen, Cornelius II and Gilbert. Stephen inherited the property and added to the house. He became a delegate to the Continental Congress. The Van Wyck family sold the house in 1819 to Winant Van Zandt who added 120 acres to the property, including an area to the north known as "The Point".

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 Cornelius Van Wyck 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 Cornelius Van Wyck House is an outstanding example of an early Eighteenth Century Dutch Colonial house, that it is notable for its interesting details of the Dutch period, that it makes a significant contribution to our legacy of early Colonial craftsmanship and that, situated in an attractive setting, it is one of the very few Dutch Colonial houses remaining 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 Cornelius Van Wyck House, 37-O4 Douglaston Parkway (126 West Drive), Douglaston, Borough of Queens and designates Tax Map Block 8056, Lot 62, Borough of Queens as its Landmark Site.