Landmarks Preservation Commission
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LP-0745

293 STATE STREET HOUSE, Borough of Brooklyn, Built 1872.

Landmark Site: Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 170, Lot 46.

On June 23, 1970, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the 293 State Street House and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 58). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Twenty-six witnesses spoke in favor of historic preservation in the Boerum Hill neighborhood and for the creation of the Boerum Hill Historic District. There were no speakers in opposition to designation of the houses on State Street.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

No. 293 State Street was erected as part of a row of six houses (Nos. 289-299) by Michael Murray, a local builder who lived at 240 DeKalb Avenue. The first owner of this house was Anne M. Crane, a widow, who purchased it in 1874.

These handsome houses were part of the Boerum Hill community which had formed the original Town of Breuckelen founded in 1646 by Dutch colonists. It was incorporated into the larger City of Brooklyn in 1834. The development of Boerum Hill as an urban community began in the 1840s and continued into the 1870s. Many of the houses which remain from this period incorporated Greek Revival and Italianate elements in the rowhouse design. These houses were built for merchants and professional people, many of whom worked in the Wall Street area or in the vicinity of the Fulton Street ferry.

Murray, the builder, acquired the land for Nos. 289-295 in 1872 and the land for Nos. 297 and 299 in 1874 from William Schermerhorm. The Schermerhorns were one of Brooklyn's old, wealthy Dutch families; Peter Schermerhorn, William's father, was, with his brother Abraham, one of Brooklyn's largest landholders. Schermerhorn Street one block north of State Street, was named after them.

The north side of State Street was largely undeveloped when Murray began erecting Nos. 289-295 in 1872, (No. 289 has been demolished). Nos. 291-299 are five, almost identical, brownstone houses built in a late version of the popular Italianate style. They have undergone only minor alterations in the past one hundred years and the row retains integrity and a unity which greatly enhance the entire block.

No. 293 is similar in design to the other houses in this row. The brownstone front rises three stories above a rusticated basement which has two segmental-arched windows with beveled keystones and their original iron grilles. The arched doorway, above a high stoop, is set under a bold segmental-arched pediment supported on grooved console brackets above plain pilasters which flank the entrance. The round arch over the door has a beveled keystone and beveled spandrel panels. Engaged wood colonnettes, terminating in Corinthian captials, flank the doors. The glazed double doors are set under an arched glass transom. Projecting cornice slabs carried on brackets surmount the full-height parlor floor windows. The windows of the upper two stories have cap moldings above the lintels and sills supported on small corbel blocks. The roof cornice, crowning the front is returned to the wall at the ends and has modillions and dentils above an unadorned frieze.

The small front yard is enclosed by a balustered cast-iron railing similar in style to those of the handrailings at the stoop. Square posts at the yard railing gate and at the handrailings of the stoop, replace the originals. The balusters are typical of the post-Civil War period. The use of cast-iron railings, such as these, became popular in New York City at this period when mass production made them readily available at reasonable prices.

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 293 State Street 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 293 State Street House is a fine example of the late Italianate style of architecture, that it forms part of a handsome row of five houses, that this house contributes to the dignity of the street, and that this house and its row add significantly to the overall character of the Boerum Hill neighborhood.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 63 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 293 State Street House, Borough of Brooklyn and designates Tax Map Block 170, Lot 46, Borough of Brooklyn, as its Landmark Site.