

# Carroll Gardens a Landmark

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By ROBERTA B. GRATZ

Seven years after its first consideration, the Landmarks Preservation Commission today announced the designation of Carroll Gardens as the city's 21st Historic District and the fourth for Brooklyn.

The new district—bounded by President, Carroll, Smith and Hoyt Sts.—contains 169 structures built between 1869 and 1884 primarily for commuting Manhattan businessmen. One of the currently active brownstone renovation areas, Carroll Gardens contains many architecturally unified structures, primarily because they were all built within a relatively short time. The buildings illustrate a number of the popular styles of the later 19th century, including late Italianate and French neo-Grecian.

The Landmarks Commission report on the designation points out: "The tree-lined streets, with long rows of low two-and-three story houses, set back uniformly behind carefully tended gardens, exhibit to a degree unusual in an urban environment, an awareness of the values of open space, a remarkable degree of architectural unity and quiet dignity."

#### Part of Red Hook

The neighborhood was formerly considered part of Red Hook. In the mid-1960's it became known as Carroll Gardens, named after Charles Carroll, Maryland signer of the Declaration of Independence, in honor of the Maryland regiment which defended a position in the village of Governors during the Revolutionary War.

Every structure in an historic district carries the same legal protection as an individually designed landmark—it cannot be demolished or externally altered without approval of the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

District designation has proven to have a positive

effect on areas around the city, particularly those that had experienced a period of neglect. New homeowner pride increased community spirit, spurred renovations and rising property values have been seen in the four boroughs. (Staten Island is the only borough without one.)

Carroll Gardens was first considered for designation at a public hearing by the commission in 1966 and rebared in 1970. The other three Brooklyn districts are Brooklyn Heights, Cobble Hill and Stuyvesant Heights in Red Hook-Stuyvesant. Brooklyn's Park Slope and Boerum Hill areas are also under consideration for landmark status and it is expected that the commission will designate them as well in the near future.

In 1970, the Landmarks Commission declared a moratorium on designations because of reported staff and money shortages. At that time, seven historic districts and 48 individual proposals—all considered at public hearings in 1970 and some for a second time—were left pending. Eighteen districts and 360 individual landmarks had already been designated since the Landmarks Preservation Law was passed in 1965.

A New York Post series in January of this year focused on the weaknesses of the 1965 law on widespread criticism of the commission's apparent reluctance to make full use of the powers, though limited, given it under the law. Since the series, the commission has been under considerable pressure to lift the moratorium and move ahead more aggressively with designations.

#### Moved on 7 Districts

In April, the commission moved on two of those seven pending historic districts, designations. The two West Side blocks—the Central Park W-26th St. Historic District and the Riverside-IV, 105th St. Historic District—had, like Carroll Gardens, first been considered at public hearings in 1966. Neighborhood residents and community spokesmen have complained that the seven-year delay allowed for considerable inappropriate architectural alterations.

Although three of the seven districts pending since the Commission's 1970 moratorium have now been designated, designations on the remaining four are expected within months—the Commission apparently remains reluctant to designate more than a few of the 86 individual proposals still pending.

In March and April, six of those buildings were designated. One is in Brooklyn—the Brooklyn City Railroad Co. Bldg. near the site of the old Fulton Ferry. Five are in Manhattan—the Frick Collection at Fifth Av. and 10th St., the New World Foundation Bldg. at Park Av. and 85th St., and a row of three mid-19th century garden-front residences with cast-iron stoops and verandas at 326-330 E. 18th St.

Among the 80 sites still pending, many of which were first considered in the mid-1960s, are: seven buildings on Welfare Island; the Jew-

ish Museum at 83d St. and Fifth Av. (the former Felix Warburg mansion); the Renaissance Revival Police Headquarters on Centre St.; the E. 49th St. row of grand carriage houses between Second and Third Aves. (one of the last blocks of its kind in the city).

Also pending are the 1913 Woodworth Building at 233 Broadway—a Gothic skyscraper with unmatchable terra cotta detail—and the 1868 Bayard-Corbell Building at 65 Bleecker St., the only New York building by Chicago architect Louis Sullivan, teacher of Frank Lloyd Wright.

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## The Newest Landmark 5/7/73



Photo by Richard Gorman

Carroll Gardens, the Brooklyn district whose tree-lined streets are also lined with brownstones built between 1869 and 1884, today becomes the city's 21st Historic District. The Landmarks Preservation Commission said Carroll Gardens has 169 two and three-story brownstones, originally built for commuting Manhattan businessmen, and is currently one of the most active renovation areas in the city. Story on Page 10.

Carroll Gardens mentioned  
in "Commission Ready to  
OK 7 Landmark Areas"  
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