

M.H. RENKEN DAIRY COMPANY, Office Building, 582-584 Myrtle Avenue (aka 192 Classon Avenue), and **Engine Room Building**, 580 Myrtle Avenue, Brooklyn
Built: **Office Building**, 1932; Koch & Wagner, architects
Engine Room Building, circa 1860, architect not determined; main facade 1936-37, Koch & Wagner, architects

Landmark Site: Borough of Brooklyn, Tax Map Block 1909, Lot 32 in its entirety and Lots 1001 and 1002 in part, consisting of that portion of Lots 1001 and 1002 lying north of a line beginning at a point on the eastern boundary line of Lots 1001 and 1002 that is 61.21 feet south of the northern boundary line of Lots 1001 and 1002, thence running westerly, parallel with the northern boundary line of Lots 1001 and 1002, to a point on the western boundary line of Lots 1001 and 1002.

On June 2, 2015, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office and Engine Room Buildings and the proposed designation of the related Landmark site (Item No. 3). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Two people spoke in favor of designation, including representatives of the Historic Districts Council and New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Commission also received letters in favor of designation from Council Member Laurie A. Cumbo, Community Board 2, and the Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn Partnership. There were no speakers in opposition to designation. This followed two earlier hearings in which the two buildings were heard individually. The M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office Building was previously heard on April 2, 2013 (Item No. 2). At that hearing, four people spoke in favor of designation, including representatives of the Historic Districts Council, Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn Partnership, New York Landmarks Conservancy, and Society for Clinton Hill. There were no speakers in opposition to designation. The M.H. Renken Dairy Company Engine Room Building was previously heard on October 29, 2013 (Item No. 3). One person, a representative of the Historic Districts Council, spoke in favor of designation. The public hearing was then closed and reopened to hear the testimony of a representative of the building's owner, who spoke in opposition to designation. In 2013, the Commission received a letter in support of designation of the Renken Office Building from then-Council Member Letitia James.

Summary

The M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office and Engine Room Buildings are two structures with a unified design located at the corner of Myrtle and Classon Avenues in Brooklyn's Clinton Hill neighborhood.

German immigrant Martin H. Renken founded his dairy in 1888; around 1903, it moved to the block on which these buildings stand, and by 1914, the company had built up an impressive dairying complex. In the 1930s, Renken was at its peak: the third-largest dairy in New York City, it pasteurized and bottled more than seven million quarts of fresh milk annually, operated 300 delivery routes, and owned several creameries in Upstate New York and Pennsylvania. Reflecting its prosperity, in 1932, the company erected a new office building at 582-584 Myrtle



Avenue designed by the prolific Brooklyn firm of Koch & Wagner. Four years later, Koch & Wagner renovated the circa-1860 building at 580 Myrtle Avenue to contain an engine room and storage space, with a new front facade that matched the design of the Office Building and gave both buildings the look of a single structure.

“Modernistic” in design and faced in tan enameled brick to convey a hygienic and efficient image, the Renken buildings are primarily Art Moderne in style, featuring patterned- and dark-brick “speed lines” and bracketless, streamlined cornices, as well as Art Deco touches. The buildings also incorporate International Style influences, which are visible in the buildings’ balanced asymmetry and creative interplay of projecting and receding rectangular planes. At its opening, the Office Building housed a “model Renken dairy store,” the storefront of which remains essentially intact.

Renken ended milk processing at this location in 1959, and both buildings housed a variety of businesses afterward. Remarkably well-preserved, these buildings are strikingly early examples of American architecture incorporating International Style influences, and distinguished remnants of a once-bustling dairy complex. Dating from the period in which New York was renowned for having “the best milk supply of any large city in the world” following decades of innovation and reform, they also recall the city’s leading role in improving milk’s safety and quality, and in making fresh cow’s milk a major part of the American diet.

BUILDING DESCRIPTION¹

Office Building (582-584 Myrtle Avenue/192 Classon Avenue, Lot 32)

Myrtle Avenue (north) facade: Three-story Art Moderne style office building with Art Deco and International Style elements, and with original ground-story storefront opening and 3½-story tower with asymmetrical stepped crown at western end of facade; running-bond tan brick with brown and black brick patterning and striping; granite step in front of main entrance; polished black-granite base and main-entrance surround with gold-colored metal lettering (“M.H. RENKEN DAIRY CO.”) within overdoor; bronze doors with interior grilles, molded bronze door frame, transom sash, and transom bar decorated with chevron pattern; flagpole attached to east tower face; brown-brick lettering (“RENKEN’S”) on east and west tower faces; possibly historic alarm box at second story; copper cornice; stone coping; square-headed window openings filled with one-over-one, double-hung black sashes with handles on top sashes; single-pane sash within top tower opening; historic storefront infill, including black-granite bulkhead with copper or bronze louvers, metal-and-glass door with geometric chevron-like motif, bronze window and door frames, display windows with vertical muntins, molded bronze transom bars, and leaded-glass transom sashes with small frosted lights; recessed storefront entryway with light-colored terrazzo pavement and “RENKEN’S” spelled out in contrasting dark terrazzo. *Alterations:* Postal release box and intercom with conduit on main-entrance reveal; historic lettering (“OFFICE”) within main-entrance overdoor removed, leaving ghosts of previous letters and stubs of mounting pins, replaced with non-historic numerals (“584”); modern light fixture with conduit over main entrance; sprinkler signage and water meter reader east of main entrance, between entrance and storefront opening; portion of ground story flanking main-entrance surround painted; siamese connection in storefront bulkhead; window air conditioner within storefront transom; storefront gate box and roll-down security gate; bracket sign and stubs of mounting pins from original Renken’s sign over storefront.

Classon Avenue (east) facade: Three stories; historic light fixture at basement stairs; running-bond tan brick with brown and black brick striping; metal railing in front of northernmost second-story window opening; all second- and third-story window openings except for openings within northernmost bay grouped within projecting surround with ribbed piers; pin-mounted metal lettering (“M.H. RENKEN DAIRY CO”) and black brick coursing above third-story window openings; cornice and coping continued from Myrtle Avenue facade; historic northernmost ground-story square-headed window opening; square-headed window openings at second and third stories filled with one-over-one, double-hung sashes with handles; historic storefront infill, including black-granite bulkhead, bronze window frame, molded bronze transom bar, and leaded-glass transom sash with small frosted lights. *Alterations:* Basement and basement steps parged; replacement basement door; ground-story window openings within first, second, fourth, and fifth bays lowered, resulting in removal of original brick striping below these windows (after 1969); ground-story door openings within third and sixth bays filled with tan and red brick (after 1969); ground story mostly painted; replacement storefront window sash; storefront gate box and roll-down security gate; original brown brick over second-story window openings replaced with red brick; first- and second-story window grilles.

Rear (south) facade: Three stories; running-bond tan brick with brown and black brick striping; projecting brick ground-story window sills; second and third stories ribbed; copper leader head; possibly historic rooftop hoisting bracket; one-over-one, double-hung black sashes with handles at second and third stories; black brick coursing at cornice line. *Alterations:* Basement parged; basement and ground-story conduit and vent pipes; window grilles at ground and second stories; replacement downspout.

West facade (visible from Emerson Place): West face of tan-brick main-entrance tower; common-bond brick; tan-brick chimney; third-story square-headed window opening.

Rear yard: Concrete stairs to basement entrance surrounded by concrete curb with metal pipe railing.

Engine Room Building (580 Myrtle Avenue)

Myrtle Avenue facade: Three-story Art Moderne style building with International Style elements; polished black-granite base; running-bond tan brick with brown and black brick striping; projecting brick coursing at ground story; copper cornice; stone coping. *Alterations:* Ground-story display-window opening altered to accommodate non-historic door, resulting in removal of portion of granite base; non-historic infill within display-window opening; storefront gate box and angled box awning; metal box adjacent to storefront entrance; water meter reader and louver at ground story; ground story painted; replacement second- and third-story window sashes; non-historic window grilles and gates at second and third stories; portion of cornice damaged, exposing wood framing underneath.

Rear (south) facade (visible from Emerson Place): Three third-story square-headed window openings. *Alterations:* Facade painted or parged; non-historic window grilles; third-story satellite dish.

SITE HISTORY

Clinton Hill and Myrtle Avenue²

The M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office and Engine Room Buildings stand at the northern edge of Clinton Hill, a largely residential neighborhood that is also home to Pratt Institute, which opened in 1887, and St. Joseph's College, established in 1916. Located on high ground overlooking Wallabout Bay, Clinton Hill gained much of its present character in the early-to-mid 1870s, when hundreds of substantial Italianate, Second Empire, and Neo-Grec style rowhouses were built for affluent businessmen, many of whom commuted to Manhattan using new streetcar and ferry lines. Following the 1898 annexation of Brooklyn into Greater New York City, Manhattan became the city's preeminent borough, Clinton Hill's prestige declined, and many of its wealthiest residents left. Several of their mansions were replaced in the 1920s with apartment houses, while some were converted to rooming houses, and others were donated to Pratt Institute or St. Joseph's College, which use and maintain them today.

Following World War II, Clinton Hill suffered from the widespread decline that gripped many of Brooklyn's older sections, and in 1954, a five-block area south of Pratt Institute was cleared for urban renewal. By the 1970s, many of Clinton Hill's early rowhouses were being restored as part of the "brownstone revival" that was transforming Brooklyn Heights, Park Slope, and other historic Brooklyn neighborhoods. In 1981, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designated the Clinton Hill Historic District encompassing most of the neighborhood's residential blocks, and designated several individual landmarks, including portions of the Pratt Institute campus.³ Restoration of many of the neighborhood's derelict buildings continued over subsequent years, aided by federal historic-preservation tax credits. In 1987, the *New York Times* reported that Clinton Hill was being "retrieved from abandonment and decay" by "an integrated mix of middle-income New Yorkers."⁴

Myrtle Avenue is the dividing line between Clinton Hill and the Wallabout neighborhood to its north.⁵ In 1888, the Myrtle Avenue Elevated line opened between the Brooklyn Bridge and Grand Avenue in Clinton Hill.⁶ Myrtle Avenue differed in character from most of Clinton Hill: a busy thoroughfare crowned by a noisy elevated railroad, Myrtle was lined with walk-up apartment buildings with ground-floor stores. For most of its history, the Myrtle Avenue El was a vital link to the nearby Brooklyn Navy Yard, but following the shipyard's closure in 1966, ridership sharply declined. Service on the Myrtle Avenue El between Downtown Brooklyn and the Broadway station in Bedford-Stuyvesant ended in 1969, and the elevated structure was subsequently removed.⁷ Myrtle Avenue's revitalization trailed that of the greater Clinton Hill neighborhood, but in 1999, local property owners formed the Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project, choosing as their chairman the president of Pratt Institute. The organization worked toward improving the avenue's commercial climate, seeking out retailers for vacant storefronts, pushing for the installation of new streetlamps, and overseeing facade restorations aided by state grants. Since then, Myrtle Avenue's commercial vacancy rate has plummeted and new condominiums and Pratt Institute buildings have opened along the avenue.

Milk Production and Processing in New York City⁸

Until the mid-1800s, fresh cow's milk was a very small part of the American diet. The elevation of cow's milk into a commonplace food largely resulted from the rise of the industrial city, technological advancements in transportation and milk processing, and the work of

progressive public officials, public-health advocates, and urban reformers who were especially active in New York City.

The presence of milk cows in the city dates to its earliest days as a Dutch colony. In the early 1800s, farmers on the city's outskirts sold their milk to vendors who peddled it from door to door in buckets. The 1820s and 1830s saw the rise of "swill dairies" on the grounds of local distilleries, where cows kept in fetid, cramped conditions were fed on grain mash left over from the distilling process. These cows produced a thin, bluish milk, often contaminated with bacteria, that was adulterated with starch, plaster, chalk, or other additives to give it a natural appearance. Regular milk shipments from rural dairy farms began in 1842, when the Erie Railroad first carried fresh milk in special ice-cooled cars from Goshen, New York to its terminal in New Jersey, where it was transported by ferry to Manhattan, and by 1850, millions of gallons of milk were being shipped every year to the city by railroad. Milk consumption increased, especially among children, as breastfeeding fell out of favor among the upper-middle class—who emulated the wealthy, but could not afford their nurses—and among working-class women, whose jobs took them away from their children for much of the day. By the 1880s, the city's "milk shed" sprawled over hundreds of miles, encompassing dairy farms in New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, Pennsylvania, and rural New York State.

Despite the increasing availability of milk from country farms, the city's milk supply remained unsafe, even deadly, especially for children. A potential carrier of typhoid and tuberculosis from diseased cows, milk was often contaminated during its handling, transportation, and sale as "loose milk," which was purchased by the ladleful from open cans in neighborhood groceries. Efforts to address this health crisis began in the 1830s, and over subsequent decades, reformers and muckraking journalists pressed the government for regulations that would improve the city's milk supply. Their efforts were fruitful, as New York banned swill dairies and the adulteration of milk in the 1860s and 1870s and started requiring permits for milk vendors in 1896, inaugurating "the present effective system of controlling and protecting the milk supplies of cities."⁹ In 1906, all dairy farms and milk retailers serving New York City were required to submit to inspection. Technological advancements, including the introduction of the milk bottle in the 1880s and the adoption of pasteurization in the early 1890s, played a major role in improving milk's safety. In 1893, Nathan Straus, the co-owner of the Macy's and Abraham & Straus department stores, opened the first of his charitable milk dispensaries, where poor families could purchase pasteurized bottled milk at a nominal price. Straus' milk depots contributed to a rapid drop in the children's death rate and were copied in other cities. By 1914, pasteurization was required for all milk sold in New York City.

In addition to improving milk's safety, pasteurization and bottling encouraged the mechanization of milk processing in large high-volume plants. "As a result," according to historian E. Melanie DuPuis, "the freshness and purity of milk became the product of an industrial system," and the modern bottling plant came to symbolize clean, wholesome milk, rapidly delivered from cow to consumer in sparkling, sealed bottles.¹⁰ At least one New York milk processor provided viewing balconies in its plant so that consumers could witness firsthand the efficient, hygienic nature of its bottling process.¹¹ By the 1920s, milk delivered by the city's largest dairy companies was "uniformly pure, fresh, and of good keeping quality," providing New York City with "the best milk supply of any large city in the world."¹²

Before World War II, dairies' centralized urban locations and proximity to rail lines facilitated the intake of bulk milk, as well as the transportation of bottled milk to neighborhood distribution centers and along home-delivery routes. But in the years leading up to and following

the war, tanker trucks largely replaced railroads, disposable paper cartons replaced glass bottles, and supermarkets became the main retail channel for dairy products. Home deliveries steeply declined, and by the 1950s, many dairies had relocated to the outskirts of the city.

In the early 1930s, at least 29 pasteurization plants operated in New York City, but today, only one is left.¹³ Few distinctive reminders still stand of an industry that once had an architectural presence, through its pasteurization and bottling plants, distribution centers, garages, and stables, in virtually every New York City neighborhood. Remarkably intact, the Renken Dairy buildings are distinguished remnants of both a once-bustling dairying complex and a vanished era. Dating from the period in which New York City's milk was renowned for its outstanding quality following decades of innovation and reform, they are also reminders of the city's signature role in improving milk's safety and quality, and in making fresh cow's milk a major part of the American diet.

The M.H. Renken Dairy Company and its Buildings¹⁴

Martin Henry Renken was born in 1856 in the village of Huttenbusch in Germany's northern flatlands, and came to the United States as a teenager in 1872. Soon after arriving, he found work as a bartender. In 1886, he and his wife Margaret, who had immigrated from a small village near Huttenbusch, had a son, Henry, and in 1888, Renken founded a dairy at Park Avenue and Spencer Street in Brooklyn. At its start, the dairy had only one route, which was served by a single horse and wagon driven by Renken. Soon after its founding, Renken took on a fellow German immigrant, Henry Quell, as his partner, and the dairy grew rapidly. By 1896, it had moved around the corner to 864 Bedford Avenue, where it became known as the Bedford Dairy. The company established its first creamery in Upstate New York, where milk was received from area farmers and shipped, on a train car refrigerated with ice, to Hoboken. In Hoboken, Renken and Quell's wagons picked up the milk, carried it on ferries across the Hudson River, and took it across the Brooklyn Bridge to the dairy to be filtered, chilled, and bottled. Along with its home-delivery routes, the dairy supplied grocery stores and bulk users with 40-quart cans and cases of bottled milk. Among its largest customers was Henry C. Bohack, also a German immigrant, who had five grocery stores in 1900, and whose company would grow into a major supermarket chain in the 20th century.¹⁵

With the success of the Bedford Dairy, the Renkens moved to Germany in 1900 and left its day-to-day operations in Quell's hands. Seeking larger quarters, Quell and Renken purchased property a few blocks away from the dairy, in the middle of the block bounded by Myrtle and Willoughby Avenues on the north and south, and by Classon Avenue and Emerson Place on the east and west.¹⁶ By 1903, the firm's offices had moved to 204 Classon Avenue (since demolished), and by 1904, it was listed as both the Bedford Dairy and the M.H. Renken Dairy. The Renkens returned permanently from Germany around 1905, with their son joining them in the business. At that point, the company had one wholesale route and ten home-delivery routes, and was continuing to grow, adding a new distribution center in Borough Park and additional creameries in Upstate New York and Pennsylvania. Renken and Quell continued to expand their holdings on the block and officially incorporated the firm, in 1912, as the M.H. Renken Dairy Company.¹⁷ By 1914, the company had moved its office to 131 Emerson Place (since demolished) and had built up an impressive dairying complex extending from Emerson Place to Classon Avenue. In 1930, it opened an "ultra-modern" distribution plant with a completely motorized delivery fleet in Nassau County, extending the company's reach deep into suburban

Long Island.¹⁸ At that point, Renken was New York City's largest "independent" dairy, behind national conglomerates Borden and Sheffield Farms.

As it grew, the firm acquired additional property on its block, including the three lots at the southwestern corner of Classon Avenue—580, 582, and 584 Myrtle Avenue—that would become the site of the M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office and Engine Room Buildings.¹⁹ The dairy purchased 584 Myrtle in 1923, and moved its offices from Emerson Place into a wood-framed building that stood, at that time, on the lot. It then acquired the lots at 580 Myrtle in 1930, and 582 Myrtle in 1931. In 1932, work began on the firm's new, modern headquarters at 582-584 Myrtle Avenue, designed by Koch & Wagner. A pre-1867 brick building at 582 Myrtle, and the wood-framed building at 584 Myrtle, were demolished; Koch & Wagner also altered the interior of the building at 580 Myrtle to provide temporary office space for the company while its new headquarters was being built. At that time, the front facade of No. 580, a brick building constructed circa 1860, was essentially left unchanged.²⁰ The new office structure at 582-584 Myrtle, which included and extended eastward from the main-entrance tower to the corner of Myrtle and Classon Avenues, featured a storefront containing a "model Renken dairy store," and was completed in December of 1932.²¹ This storefront remains essentially intact, retaining its original black-granite bulkhead, Art Deco style entrance door, bronze window and door frames, and leaded-glass transoms. The recessed storefront entryway retains its original light-colored terrazzo paving with the word "Renken's" spelled out in contrasting dark terrazzo.

In 1934, Martin H. Renken died at the age of 77 and was succeeded by his son, Henry Renken, as president. At that time, the company was at its peak, operating about 300 delivery routes—most of which continued to be served by horse-drawn wagons—and employing about 600 people, including those working for its United Creameries subsidiary. Two years later, Koch & Wagner filed plans to add a rear extension to 580 Myrtle Avenue, and to replace its brick front facade with a new tan-brick facade with brown- and black-brick striping, and copper cornice, matching those of 582-584 Myrtle. The firm's alteration application stated that the building's first floor would house an engine room, while its cellar and second floors would be used for storage.²² Although this work provided both buildings with a unified appearance and connected them internally, 580 Myrtle Avenue and 582-584 Myrtle remained on separate lots.

Renken marked its 50th anniversary in 1938 with a celebratory dinner-dance at Brooklyn's St. George Hotel. At that point, its complex fronting on Myrtle Avenue, Classon Avenue, and Emerson Place pasteurized and bottled all of Renken's milk—more than seven million quarts each year—and included electrical generators, ice production and refrigeration facilities, and wagon houses. A Koch & Wagner-designed garage and repair shop located one block north of the complex housed and serviced Renken's growing fleet of motorized vehicles.²³

In the 1950s, Renken began to succumb to the trends away from home milk delivery and toward the suburbanization of dairy processing and packaging. In 1951, it closed its Ridgewood distribution center and sold its garage in Hollis, Queens, and in 1959, it shut down milk processing at its main complex. Although the company continued to deliver and market milk under its name, it moved its offices to Richmond Hill, transferred processing to the Sealtest Dairy, and, in 1965, moved its production again to the Elmhurst Milk and Cream Company of Jamaica, Queens. Elmhurst then took over Renken's home-delivery routes, while Renken continued to make wholesale deliveries. In 1968, Renken sold all but a few of its creameries, and, in subsequent years, it shifted its processing to other local dairies. In 1986, Renken Dairy was sold to Beyer Farms, which continued to sell milk under the Renken label for several years.

Renken Dairy sold 580 and 582-584 Myrtle Avenue in 1962 to Peter H. Reinke, who had operated a luncheonette there since 1954. The buildings had several subsequent tenants.²⁴ Relatives of Peter Reinke sold 580 Myrtle in 1978 and 582-584 Myrtle in 1981, and both buildings have changed hands several times since then.²⁵ In recent years, nearly all of the buildings comprising the former M.H. Renken Dairy complex have been demolished.

Koch & Wagner, Architects²⁶

Arthur R. Koch (1874-1952) and Charles C. Wagner (1876-1957) formed a partnership in 1910 that they maintained until 1951, when Wagner retired to Florida. During that period, they designed numerous industrial, commercial, and residential properties, primarily in Brooklyn and Queens. Both men were born in Brooklyn, graduated from Pratt Institute, and served terms as president of the Brooklyn Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Prior to 1910, Wagner worked for several years on the design of Manhattan's Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

Both Koch and Wagner were the sons of German immigrants, and Koch was professionally connected with both Martin Renken and Henry C. Bohack, who served concurrently with him as directors of the Peoples National Bank of Brooklyn. Koch was also a director of the Bohack Realty Corporation, and he and Wagner designed and renovated several buildings for the firm, including a circa-1941 Colonial Revival style store and residence at 154-156 Henry Street (within the Brooklyn Heights Historic District), which originally housed a Bohack market. Institutional commissions included the neo-Classical style Ridgewood Masonic Temple (c. 1919-20, a designated New York City Landmark) at Bushwick and Gates Avenues, and the circa-1926 Bay Ridge Sanitarium (now the St. Nicholas Home) at 425 Ovington Avenue. Among the firm's most notable extant buildings are several banks, including the neo-Classical style Hamburg Savings Bank (c. 1929) at 1451 Myrtle Avenue. Their Hamburg Savings Bank branch (c. 1932) at Fulton and Crescent Avenues, and Lincoln Savings Bank (c. 1934) at Fifth Avenue and Bay Ridge Parkway in Brooklyn, elegantly mix classical and Art Deco influences. Although the firm designed relatively few freestanding houses, its work includes a 1927 neo-Tudor style house in Kew Gardens, Queens, which has been designated an official New York City Landmark as the Ralph Bunche House. Prior to joining Wagner, Koch designed a freestanding residence at 758 East 17th Street in Brooklyn that is now within the Fiske Terrace-Midwood Park Historic District.

In addition to designing the Renken building at 582-584 Myrtle Avenue and remodeling the front facade of 580 Myrtle Avenue, Koch & Wagner renovated and designed other buildings within the Renken complex in the 1930s and 1940s, and designed a driveway portal at 574 Myrtle Avenue, built in 1943, that remains extant.²⁷

Design of the M.H. Renken Dairy Company Buildings²⁸

Upon their opening in December of 1932, the Renken Dairy offices were described as being "modernistic in design."²⁹ "Modernistic" was the prevailing term in America for architecture that eschewed the revivalism and eclecticism of previous decades in seeking a signature design language for the modern era. It was an umbrella term, encompassing the styles that would ultimately come to be known as Art Deco and Art Moderne. Art Deco was a product of the booming 1920s, characterized mainly by its exuberant, highly stylized ornament executed in shining metals, polished stone, colored brick, and polychrome terra cotta; Art Moderne, which emerged during the early years of the Depression, embodied the spirit of the Machine Age, expressing "an intense fascination with speed" and the promise of a "scientifically advanced,

effortlessly hygienic world.”³⁰ The use of light-colored brick, stucco, or porcelain-enamel facing, curved corners, flat roofs, and strongly horizontal elements such as ribbon windows, cantilevered door and window hoods, and “speed lines,” contributed to the style’s efficient, streamlined appearance.

While Modernistic design flourished in the United States, a different kind of architecture had been developing in Europe since the end of World War I. Dubbed the International Style in 1932, its practitioners—most prominently, Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, and J.J.P. Oud—conceived of architecture as an expression of volume rather than mass, stressed regularity and balance over axial symmetry, and avoided applied decoration. One of the major foundations of the International Style was the work of Dutch architects of the 1910s and 1920s, many of whom, like Oud, were associated with the *De Stijl*, or neoplasticist, movement. Strongly inspired by both Frank Lloyd Wright and Piet Mondrian, they created an architecture that combined Wright’s abstract rectangular masses and floating, intersecting planes with Mondrian’s grid-like composition and dynamic but balanced asymmetry. Few International Style buildings had been completed in the United States by the early 1930s, but as the decade progressed, the style was often mixed with the Modernistic styles—especially the streamlined Art Moderne—creating buildings that were amalgams of the major American and European trends of the time.

“Implicit in ... Modernistic buildings of the 1920s and 1930s was the idea of the building as advertisement,” and this was a key function of the Renken buildings.³¹ Well aware of milk’s checkered history and dicey reputation, dairies been designing their buildings to express the wholesomeness of their products even before the dawn of the Modernistic styles. In 1909, the Sheffield Farms Slawson-Decker Company opened a new pasteurization and bottling plant in West Harlem that was promoted as being “sanitary even to the minutest detail”;³² the cleanliness of the building’s interior was expressed on its exterior by its white glazed terra-cotta facade. Two decades later, Renken was equally keen on projecting a modern, efficient, sanitary image. In 1928, a *Brooklyn Eagle* advertorial noted that

The Renken Company has within the past year put into operation its new up-to-date city plant at 584 Myrtle Avenue, where its milk is received, chemically and biologically tested, pasteurized, and bottled ... at the rate of 6,480 bottles an hour. Bottles are washed, filled, and capped without being touched by a human hand.³³

Despite its technologically advanced production process, the company’s headquarters was housed at that time in an old-fashioned, wood-framed building constructed in the early 1880s. The Renken complex itself was a jumble of buildings, including some erected by the firm and many other older structures that it had acquired and adapted for its use. Renken’s new headquarters needed to project an up-to-date image.

The Renken buildings are primarily Art Moderne, a style that advertised the efficiency of the company’s operations and the cleanliness and healthfulness of its products. Koch & Wagner faced the buildings with tan enameled brick, which, as a glazed material, was associated with hygiene.³⁴ Moderne style “speed lines” in black and brown brick are complemented by the buildings’ bracketless, streamlined cornices; ribbed patterns of header brick create vertical speed lines on the Classon Avenue facade. The buildings’ few expressly Art Deco features are primarily at the main entrance, including a chevron-patterned transom bar and flattened, polished-granite door surround crowned by dark brick laid in a zigurat pattern. Their most

prominent decorative feature is the pin-mounted, bright metal lettering spelling out the company's name in a clean sans-serif typeface on the Classon Avenue facade. This signage, as well as the word "Renken's" in dark brick on the east and west tower faces, advertised the company to riders of the Myrtle Avenue El.

Among the most remarkable features of the Renken buildings is their incorporation of International Style influences, particularly those of Dutch modernism. Reflecting the style's emphasis on balance rather than axial symmetry, neither the Myrtle nor Classon Avenue facades, nor the composition as a whole, is symmetrical; the integrity of Koch & Wagner's design relies on a creative interplay of projecting and receding rectangular planes and a sense of dynamic asymmetry. Reflecting its specialized function, the entrance and stair tower is differentiated from the rest of the Myrtle Avenue facade. Pierced by slit windows, the tower is the buildings' strongest vertical element, projecting forward from the Myrtle Avenue facade, cleaving its horizontal banding and Wrightian cornices, and extending above the roof, where it terminates in an asymmetrical stepped apex. Koch & Wagner's handling of the Classon Avenue facade, and its engagement with the main facade, was particularly inventive. Above the first floor of the Classon Avenue facade, all but two windows are grouped within a vertically ribbed surround crowned by the firm's name and an implied cornice, of black brick, that projects above the adjacent roofline. At the surround's northern edge, this vertically oriented plane slides into the horizontally oriented Myrtle Avenue facade, which turns the building's corner, piercing the surround with its cornice. Set behind this cornice and in front of the building's corner, the surround seems simultaneously to project in front of, and recede behind, the rest of the building wall. The presence of the cornice at the edge of the surround implies the capital of an abstracted fluted pilaster, rendering the otherwise symmetrical surround asymmetrical. At the southern edge of the surround, three brown-brick bands above the third-story are matched by bands at the western edge of the Myrtle Avenue facade, subtly tying both facades, and the entire composition, together.

The Renken Office Building was constructed in the year of the Museum of Modern Art exhibition that gave the International Style its name. At that time, only a handful of International Style buildings had been constructed in the United States and even fewer existed in New York City, including the New School for Social Research (Joseph Urban, 1930-31) and the McGraw-Hill Building (Raymond Hood, Godley & Fouilhoux, 1931), which, like the Renken buildings, combined the International Style with the Streamline Moderne.³⁵ The Renken Dairy Company buildings are exceptional survivors of this era, creatively incorporating International Style influences with American Modernistic design at a time when European modernism was first making an impact on American architecture.

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Research Department

NOTES

¹ References for this section include New York City Department of Taxes photograph (Block 1909, Lot 32, c.1939-41); architectural drawings in the Department of Buildings file for Block 1909, Lot 31 (former lot number of present-day lots 1001 and 1002) associated with alteration permit 13819-1936; and photographs taken by Patrick Cullinan in 1969 from the Myrtle Avenue Elevated and posted to the website smugmug.com. These photographs, which were accessed on June 15, 2015, were located at: http://pcullinan.smugmug.com/Brooklyn/The-Myrtle-Avenue-El/Myrtle-Ave-El-Oct-1969/2075217_wHdr3P#!i=774997464&k=xMwsNrt; http://pcullinan.smugmug.com/Brooklyn/The-Myrtle-Avenue-El/Myrtle-Ave-El-Oct-1969/2075217_wHdr3P#!i=782708132&k=HXJCNMq; and http://pcullinan.smugmug.com/Brooklyn/The-Myrtle-Avenue-El/Myrtle-Ave-El-Oct-1969/2075217_wHdr3P#!i=812250259&k=Vv3nB65.

² Portions of this section are adapted from the Historical Introduction, by Andrew S. Dolkart, to LPC, *Clinton Hill Historic District Designation Report* (LP-2017) (New York: City of New York, 1981), 1-7. Other sources include Andrew S. Dolkart, *Wallabout Cultural Resource Survey* (Brooklyn: Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project, 2005), 1-9; LPC, *Wallabout Historic District Designation Report* (LP-2445) (New York: City of New York, 2011), 4-24; Elizabeth Reich Rawson, "Clinton Hill," in Kenneth T. Jackson, Ed., *The Encyclopedia of New York City Second Edition* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2010), 272; "Remembering the Myrtle Avenue El," Metropolitan Transportation Authority website (<http://www.mta.info/news/2011/10/19/remembering-myrtle-avenue-el>), accessed June 15, 2015; John B. Manbeck, Ed., *The Neighborhoods of Brooklyn* (New Haven, Connecticut: Citizens Committee for New York City, Yale University Press, 1998), 58-61; Joseph Lelyveld, "80-Year-Old Myrtle Avenue El to Run for Last Time in October," *New York Times*, July 20, 1969, 1; Alan S. Oser, "Brooklyn Rehabilitation Entrepreneurs," *New York Times*, May 21, 1982, B6; Seth Mydans, "Two Youths Charged in Murder of Pratt Student," *New York Times*, November 11, 1983, B1; Michael deCourcy Hinds, "Gentrification: The Case of Clinton Hill; Brooklyn Neighborhood Retains Its Racial Mix," *New York Times*, February 8, 1987, R1; Mervyn Rothstein, "Clinton Hill: The Past Serving the Present," *New York Times*, December 5, 1993, R1; Somini Sengupta, "Pratt Mends Fences and Finances Along With Auditorium," *New York Times*, February 18, 1996, CY9; Amy Waldman, "Slow Going for Recovery on Myrtle," *New York Times*, November 23, 1997, CY9; Tara Bahrapour, "New Lamps Where El Once Cast a Shadow," *New York Times*, September 2, 2001, CY7; Lisa Chamberlain, "Square Feet/Myrtle Avenue, Brooklyn: Transforming an Unappealing Street," *New York Times*, December 5, 2004, RE11; Suzanne Hamlin, "An Anchor Bookstore for a College and Its Neighborhood," *New York Times*, January 12, 2005, C5; Suzanne Hamlin, "Living in Clinton Hill, Brooklyn: Into the Big Leagues, With Prices to Match," *New York Times*, January 9, 2005, J7; Courtney Reimer, "Racy Store, Ruffled Neighbors," *New York Times*, July 17, 2005, CY7; Jennifer Bleyer, "Fort Greene/Clinton Hill: In the Details, a Small-Town Feel," *New York Times*, July 27, 2009, P6; Gregory Beyer, "Living In Clinton Hill, Brooklyn: Elegance is Abundant; Groceries Are Less So," *New York Times*, March 23, 2008, RE7; Kareem Fahim, "Muggings Revive Memories of an Area's Bad Old Days," *New York Times*, July 5, 2008, B1; Manny Fernandez, "Growing Pains Come and Go in Bed-Stuy: Life on the Fringes of the New Brooklyn," *New York Times*, July 27, 2008, 21; Fred A. Bernstein, "Pratt Institute Takes an Interest in Making a Neighborhood Nicer," *New York Times*, February 16, 2011, B10; and Rebecca Olles, "Brooklyn's Myrtle Avenue Makes the Grade," *Crain's New York Business*, November 27, 2011 (http://www.crainsnewyork.com/article/20111127/REAL_ESTATE/311279979/brooklyns-myrtle-avenue-makes-the-grade), accessed June 15, 2015.

³ These individual landmarks include St. Mary's Episcopal Church at 230 Classon Avenue; Pratt Institute's Main Building, South Hall, and Memorial Hall; the Pratt Library; and the Pratt Faculty Rowhouses at 220 to 234 Willoughby Avenue. See LPC, *St. Mary's Episcopal Church Designation Report* (LP-2014) (New York: City of New York, 1981), prepared by Andrew S. Dolkart; LPC, *Pratt Institute Main Building Including Attached South Hall and Memorial Hall Designation Report* (LP-2010) (New York: City of New York, 1981), prepared by Marjorie Pearson; LPC, *Pratt Institute Library Designation Report* (LP-2011) (New York: City of New York, 1981), prepared by Marjorie Pearson; and LPC, *Pratt Institute Faculty Rowhouses Designation Report* (LP-2012) (New York: City of New York, 1981), prepared by Marjorie Pearson.

⁴ Hinds.

⁵ In 2012, the *New York Times* described the Wallabout neighborhood as "sloping down from Myrtle Avenue to the walled fortress of the Brooklyn Navy Yard Industrial Park, and bisected by the rumbling equator of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway." In 2011, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designated a portion of both sides of Vanderbilt Avenue between Myrtle Avenue and Park Avenue (the location of the BQE) as the Wallabout Historic

District. See John Freeman Gill, "Where History Meets Industry," *New York Times*, January 20, 2012; and LPC, *Wallabout Historic District Designation Report*.

⁶ The line was extended eastward to Wyckoff Avenue in 1889, westward across the Brooklyn Bridge to Park Row in 1898, and eastward again to Metropolitan Avenue in Queens in 1906. *Brooklyn Eagle*, June 19, 1898, 51; Brian Cudahy, *How We Got to Coney Island* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), 157-69.

⁷ Portions of the line east of Broadway remain in use as part of the subway system's M Line.

⁸ The main sources for this section are Thomas D. Beal, "Dairying," in *The Encyclopedia of New York City Second Edition*, 341-42; Tamara Coombs, *Sheffield Farms Stable National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (New York: State Historic Preservation Office, 2005); E. Melanie DuPuis, *Nature's Perfect Food: How Milk Became America's Drink* (New York: New York University Press, 2002); Mary Habstritt, "Manhattanville and New York City's Milk Supply" (LPC files); Brian Solomon and Mike Schafer, *New York Central Railroad* (St. Paul, Minnesota: MBI Publishing, 2007), 132-133; Deborah Valenze, *Milk: A Local and Global History* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2011), 178-278; R.J. O'Hare, "Development of Milk Transportation," *American Creamery and Poultry Produce Review* (June 25, 1930), 376-79; and Henry Doherty, "The Story of a Milk Train," *American Milk Review* (August 1947), 18-20.

⁹ Chester Roadhouse and James Lloyd Henderson, *The Market-Milk Industry, Second Edition* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1950), 7, cited in DuPuis, 40.

¹⁰ DuPuis, 82.

¹¹ "\$500,000 Building for Sanitary Milk," *New York Times*, July 11, 1909, 8.

¹² DuPuis, 87.

¹³ Josh Kosman, "Dairy Wants to Milk City," *New York Post*, December 21, 2012 (nypost.com/2012/12/21/dairy-wants-to-milk-city), accessed September 17, 2013. According to the Elmhurst Dairy in Jamaica, Queens, "In 1970, there were approximately 30 milk processing facilities in New York City, and today Elmhurst Dairy is the only plant remaining" (<http://www.elmhurstdairy.com/about/our-story/>, accessed June 15, 2015).

¹⁴ The main sources for this section are "Our Neighborhood the Way It Was," *Ridgewood Times*, February 9, 1989 and February 23, 1989. These articles are in the "Industry-Dairies" clippings file of the Archives at Queens Library. Other sources include Brooklyn Directories (Microfilm, New York Public Library); "Renken Dairy Co. Opens New Plant," *Long Island Daily Press*, September 10, 1930, 4; "Heart Stroke Kills Martin H. Renken, Dairyman, at 77," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, August 25, 1934, 9; "Martin Renken Dies; Dairy Company Head," *New York Times*, August 26, 1934, 26; "Henry Quell Dies; Dairy Treasurer," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 15, 1939, 15; "Rail-Truck Unit Starts," *New York Times*, October 22, 1940, 36; "Brooklyn Milk Firm Uses New Technique," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, October 28, 1940, 17; "Three Major Dairies Supply Most of Brooklynites' Milk: Borden, Sheffield and Renken Share Field with Smaller Ones," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, October 26, 1941, 12H; and "Renken Co. Sells Garage in Hollis," *New York Times*, August 23, 1951, 48.

¹⁵ In 1913, Bohack and Martin H. Renken were among the founders of the Plattdeutsche Home Society, which opened a senior residence in Franklin Square, Long Island in 1922. Bohack served as the organization's first president, and Renken served as its second. The Plattdeutsche Home Society continues today, operating the original home and additional apartments constructed in 1994 and 2000. "Our History," Plattdeutsche Home Society website (<http://www.plattduetschehome.com/HISTORY.HTM>), accessed May 9, 2013.

¹⁶ Kings County, Office of the Register, Conveyance Liber 24 (Section 7), 402 (November 20, 1902).

¹⁷ Kings County, Office of the Register, Conveyance Liber 3180, 393 (November 9, 1909); Liber 3206, 517 (April 14, 1910); Liber 3370, 316 (June 12, 1912); Liber 3488, 217 (April 28, 1914); and Liber 4157, 257 (June 15, 1922).

¹⁸ "To Serve You Better" (Advertisement), *Long Island Daily Press*, September 10, 1930, 4.

¹⁹ Kings County, Office of the Register, Conveyance Liber 4248, 317 (April 5, 1923); Liber 5159, 506 (October 29, 1930); Liber 5228, 204 (October 2, 1931).

²⁰ Bureau of Buildings, Borough of Brooklyn, new building permit 3925-1932 and alteration permit 3684-1932. No information has been found regarding the construction of 580 Myrtle Avenue. It appears on the 1869 *Map of the City of Brooklyn* by Matthew Dripps (New York: M. Dripps, 1869), and appears to date from before 1867 judging from Brooklyn tax assessment records of the time, although these records are somewhat difficult to decipher. The building's original facade, which is shown in Koch & Wagner's 1932 rendering for the Office Building (and was

reproduced in the article “Dairy Occupies New Home,” cited below), appears to have been a restrained Italianate style design similar to the building still standing at 578 Myrtle. Koch & Wagner’s rendering also appears on the website of the Brooklyn Public Library, at http://brooklyn.bibliocommons.com/item/show/11361324062906_office_building,_m_h_renken_dairy_co (accessed June 15, 2015).

²¹ “Dairy Occupies New Home,” *The Daily Star* (Long Island City, N.Y.), December 22, 1932, 3.

²² City of New York, Office of the President of the Bureau of Buildings, alteration permit 13819-1936.

²³ *Wallabout Cultural Resource Survey*, 19. The Renken complex is shown in *Insurance Maps of the Borough of Brooklyn, City of New York, Volume Two* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1915, Revised 1939), 54.

²⁴ These tenants included the Clinton Hill Medical Center, in 1963; Interfaith Health Association, in 1964; the Central Brooklyn Economic Development Project of the City of New York, in 1969 and 1970; administrative offices of the Lyndon B. Johnson Health Complex, in 1974 through 1978; and the Central Brooklyn Youth Development project of the Community Council of Kings County, in 1980. In 1986, tenants included an electrical repair shop, an attorney, a church, and a restaurant called Renken’s Diner.

²⁵ Kings County, Office of the Register, Conveyance Reel 986, 1671 (April 7, 1978); Reel 1243, 651 (June 8, 1981). A summary of later transactions is available from the ACRIS website of the New York City Department of Finance (<https://acrisweb.csc.nycnet/cp/>).

²⁶ This section is largely adapted from LPC, *Fiske Terrace-Midwood Park Designation Report* (LP-2208) (New York: City of New York, 2007), 42; and LPC, *Ralph Bunche House Designation Report* (LP-2175) (New York, City of New York, 2005), prepared by Virginia Kurshan. Other sources include United States Census (Brooklyn, Kings County, New York, 1920); “Plans Completed for \$130,000 New Bay Ridge Hospital,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 25, 1926, 2D; “Peoples National Bank Progressive Institution,” *Brooklyn Standard Union*, March 9, 1928, 15; “Plans Filed for Queens Buildings,” *Queens Borough Daily Star*, June 12, 1929, 19; “Hamburg Savings New Home Ready,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, August 3, 1929, 19; “Lincoln Savings to Build Larger Bay Ridge Unit,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, March 13, 1934, 30; “New Home of the Bay Ridge Savings and Loan Association,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, December 18, 1938, 2E; and “Building Plans Filed,” *New York Times*, August 28, 1941, 36.

²⁷ “With Buyers and Builders,” *New York Tribune*, September 1, 1912, IV:13; Bureau of Buildings Certificates of Occupancy 61810 (August 8, 1931) and 66981 (March 18, 1932); “Building Plans Filed,” *New York Times*, August 7, 1943, 19.

²⁸ Sources for this section include William J.R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1987), 75-185; David Gebhard, *The National Trust Guide to Art Deco in America* (New York: J. Wiley, 1996); Martin Greif, *Depression Modern: The Thirties Style in America* (New York: Universe Books, 1975); Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, *The International Style* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995); Henry-Russell Hitchcock, “Wright’s Influence Abroad,” *Parnassus* (December 1940), 11-15; and Richard Guy Wilson, “Architecture in the Machine Age,” in *The Machine Age in America 1918-1941* (New York: Harry N. Abrams Publishers, 1986), 149-202.

²⁹ “Dairy Occupies New Home.”

³⁰ Gebhard, 9-10.

³¹ Wilson, 161.

³² \$500,000 Building for Sanitary Milk.” This building, at 632 West 125th Street, is now Prentis Hall of Columbia University.

³³ “Notes of Food Show,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, March 4, 1928, A21.

³⁴ Historian Russell Holt Newbold notes that “the use of glazed brick has always been attached to the idea of cleanliness.” For further discussion, see Newbold, *Historic Enameled and Glazed Brick: Its Significance, History, and Conservation* (New York: Master’s Thesis in Historic Preservation, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Columbia University, 1998), 19.

³⁵ The McGraw-Hill building is a designated New York City Landmark. The New School is an interior landmark, and is located within the Greenwich Village Historic District.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of the buildings and site, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office Building and Engine Room Building have 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 their important qualities, the M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office Building was constructed in 1932 to the designs of Koch & Wagner, the M.H. Renken Dairy Company Engine Room Building was constructed circa 1860 and remodeled in 1936-37 to the designs of Koch & Wagner, and that the two buildings feature a unified design that is primarily Art Moderne in style; that they were constructed or remodeled by the M.H. Renken Dairy Company, which was founded in Brooklyn in 1888, and which built up an impressive dairying complex on the block upon which these buildings stand by 1914; that at the time of the construction of the Office Building and remodeling of the Engine Room Building, the M.H. Renken Dairy Company was at its peak as the third-largest dairy in New York City; that the buildings are “modernistic” in design and faced in tan enameled brick to convey a hygienic and efficient image, featuring patterned- and dark-brick “speed lines” and bracketless, streamlined cornices, as well as Art Deco touches; that the buildings incorporate International Style influences, particularly those of Dutch modernism, which are visible in the buildings’ balanced asymmetry and creative interplay of projecting and receding planes; that at its opening, the Office Building housed a “model Renken dairy store,” the storefront of which remains essentially intact; that both buildings are remarkably well-preserved and strikingly early examples of American architecture incorporating International Style influences, and distinguished remnants of a once-bustling dairy complex; and that the buildings date from the period in which New York City was renowned for the quality of its milk following decades of innovation and reform, recalling the city’s leading role in improving milk’s safety and quality and in making fresh cow’s milk a major part of the American diet.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office Building and Engine Room Building, and designates Borough of Brooklyn, Tax Map Block 1909, Lot 32 in its entirety and Lots 1001 and 1002 in part, consisting of that portion of Lots 1001 and 1002 lying north of a line beginning at a point on the eastern boundary line of Lots 1001 and 1002 that is 61.21 feet south of the northern boundary line of Lots 1001 and 1002, thence running westerly, parallel with the northern boundary line of Lots 1001 and 1002, to a point on the western boundary line of Lots 1001 and 1002, as their Landmark Site.

Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair

Frederick Bland, Diana Chapin, Wellington Chen, Michael Goldblum, John Gustafsson,
Adi Shamir-Baron, Kim Vauss, Commissioners



M.H. Renken Dairy Company
Office Building at 582-584 Myrtle Avenue/192 Classon Avenue
(left, extending from corner of Myrtle and Classon Avenues to and including main-entrance tower)
Engine Room Building at 580 Myrtle Avenue (right)
Primary north facades
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2015



M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office and Engine Room Buildings
Primary Classon Avenue (left) and Myrtle Avenue (center and right) facades
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2015



M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office Building
Storefront

Photo: Michael Caratzas, 2015

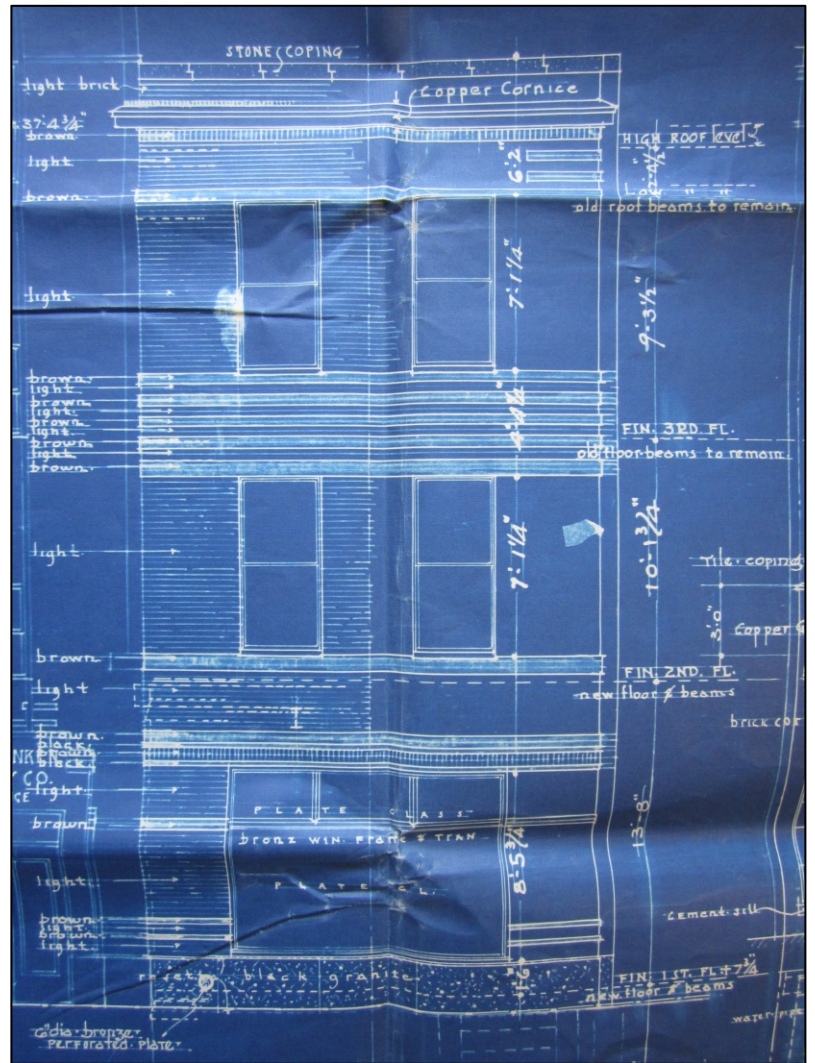


M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office Building
Storefront

Photo: Michael Caratzas, 2015



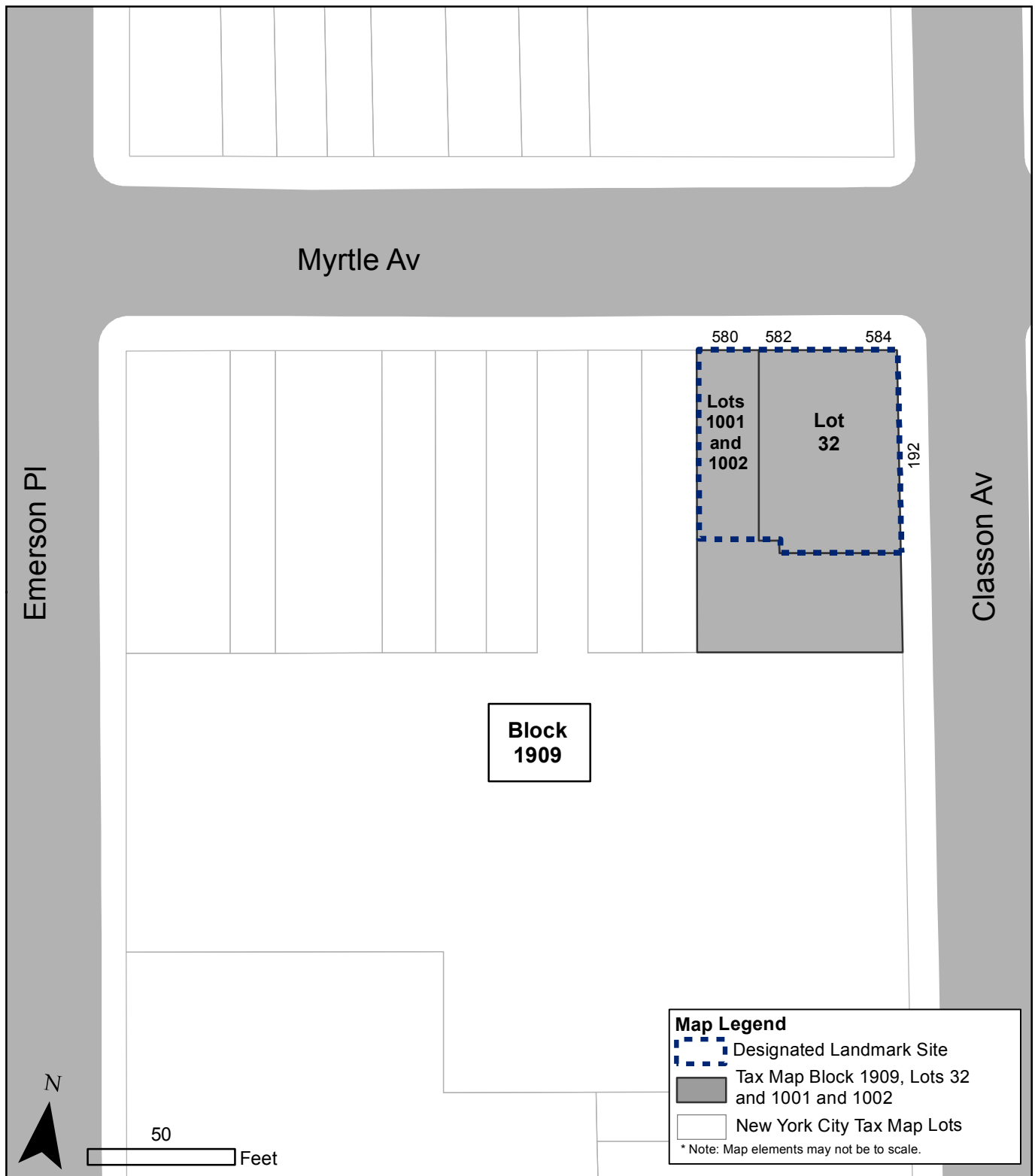
"Dairy Occupies New Home"
The Daily Star (Long Island City, N.Y.)
 December 22, 1932, 3
 Showing new Renken Office Building at
 582-584 Myrtle Avenue



1936 Koch & Wagner rendering of new facade of
 Renken Engine Room Building at
 580 Myrtle Avenue
 City of New York, Bureau of Buildings
 Alteration permit 13819-1936



M.H. Renken Dairy Company Office and Engine Room Buildings
Photo: New York City, Department of Taxes (c. 1939-41), Municipal Archives



M.H. RENKEN DAIRY COMPANY OFFICE BUILDING AND ENGINE ROOM BUILDING (LP-2519)

582-584 Myrtle Avenue (aka 192 Classon Avenue) and 580 Myrtle Avenue

Landmark Site: Borough of Brooklyn, Tax Map Block 1909, Lot 32 in its entirety and Lots 1001 and 1002 in part, consisting of that portion of

Lots 1001 and 1002 lying north of a line beginning at a point on the eastern boundary line of Lots 1001 and 1002 that is 61.21 feet south of the northern boundary line of Lots 1001 and 1002, thence running westerly, parallel with the northern boundary line of Lots 1001 and 1002, to a point on the western boundary line of Lots 1001 and 1002.

Calendared 11/20/2012 and 9/17/2013

Public Hearings 4/2/2013, 10/29/2013 and 6/2/2015

Designated 6/16/2015