



IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated December 23, 2016, from the Executive Director of Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the designation of the Protestant Reformed Dutch Church of Flushing (Bowne Street Community Church) (Block 5022, Lot 1), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on December 13, 2016 (Designation List No. 492/LP-2137) Borough of Queens, Community District 7.

Pursuant to Section 3020.8(b) of the City Charter, the City Planning Commission shall submit to the City Council a report with respect to the relation of any designation by the Landmarks Preservation Commission, whether of a historic district or a landmark, to the Zoning Resolution, projected public improvements, and any plans for the development, growth, improvement or renewal of the area involved.

On December 13, 2016, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the Protestant Reformed Dutch Church of Flushing (Bowne Street Community Church), located at 143-11 Roosevelt Avenue (Block 5022, part of Lot 1), as a City landmark. The landmark site is located at the northeast corner of Roosevelt Avenue and Bowne Street, within Queens Community District 7.

Originally built for the Protestant Reformed Dutch Church, this building is significant as an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival style, especially notable for its prominent corner tower, decorative brickwork, and opalescent stained-glass windows. Several of the windows were designed by artist and congregant Agnes Fairchild Northrop of Tiffany Studios.

The Reformed Dutch Church denomination traces its roots to the founding of New Netherland as a Dutch colony, with many additional Reformed congregations established throughout the metropolitan area in the 19th century. As the town of Flushing developed and prospered, a Reformed congregation was established in 1842. It quickly outgrew its original building, and in 1873 the congregation acquired a lot at the northeastern corner of today's Roosevelt Avenue and Bowne Street. Nearly twenty years later, construction began in October of 1891 and the church was dedicated in November 1892.

George E. Potter, an architect with a practice in Springfield, Massachusetts, and later in Hartford, Connecticut, most likely designed the church. He was responsible for approximately 25 churches in New England and Long Island. One of his commissions, the Memorial Hall in Monson, Massachusetts, is similar in design to the Flushing Reformed Dutch Church. Edward Richardson was the building contractor. He was born in Wales, worked as a carpenter's apprentice, and then came to Flushing in 1871. As a successful businessman, he was active in both the building trades and real estate.

The Romanesque Revival style, and in particular architect H. H. Richardson's version of the style, was popular for churches during the second half of the 19th century as a modern adaptation of a medieval aesthetic. The church features arched openings, intricate brickwork, stone details and a prominent corner bell tower. One Richardsonian feature of this church is the contrast of the massive bell tower with the low, squat arcade along the front elevation. In addition to the main auditorium assembly space, the building incorporates rooms at the north end for a chapel, Sunday school, library, and upstairs kitchen. A 1925-26 brick annex (not part of this designation) is attached to the first floor of the east façade at the north end of the building. Overall, with minor exceptions, the building retains its original design, materials and details.

In 1974, the Reformed Church merged with the First Congregational Church of Flushing. The building is now associated with the Reformed Church in America, the United Church of Christ, and, since 1988, with the Taiwanese Zion Christian Church. In addition, the New York Yeram Church, an independent Korean congregation not affiliated with a particular denomination, has its services and offices at the Bowne Street Community Church. The Church congregations have continued to diligently and sensitively maintain the church building, one of downtown Flushing's most prominent and significant religious structures.

The landmark site is located within an R6 zoning district, which permits a maximum residential floor area ratio (FAR) of up to 2.43 (or 3 under the Quality Housing program). Community facility development is allowed at an FAR of 4.8. The 45,260-square-foot lot could be developed with approximately 109,982 square feet of floor area. The church contains 9,450 square feet of floor area. The site, therefore, has 100,532 square feet of unused development rights to transfer.

Pursuant to Section 74-79 of the Zoning Resolution, a landmark building may transfer its unused development rights to a lot contiguous to the zoning lot occupied by the landmark building or one which is across the street and opposite to the zoning lot occupied by the landmark building, or in the case of a corner lot, one which fronts on the same street intersection as the lot occupied by the landmark. There are eight potential receiving sites for the transfer of the landmark's unused floor area.

Pursuant to Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution, landmark buildings or buildings within Historic Districts are eligible to apply for use and bulk waivers upon application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

The subject landmark does not conflict with the Zoning Resolution. Furthermore, the Commission is not aware of any conflicts between the subject landmark designation and projected public improvements on any plans for development, growth, improvement or renewal in the vicinity of the landmark building.

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