



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

August 9, 2006/Calendar No. 11

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IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated July 3, 2006, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of Orchard Beach Bathhouse and Promenade, 895 Pelham Shore Road (also known as 1 Orchard Beach Road, Pelham Bay Park), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on April 20, 2006 (List No. 377/LP-2197), Borough of The Bronx, Community District 10. The Landmark Site is located at:

The portion of Borough of the Bronx Tax Map Block 5650, Lot 1 in part, incorporating the Orchard Beach Bathhouse and Promenade which is bounded by a line beginning at the point that is at the southern end of the eastern edge of the promenade, extending northwesterly, northerly, and northeasterly along the curved eastern edge of the promenade (including all stairs) at its juncture with the beach, extending northerly along the northeastern polygonal end of the promenade to the point at which the beach ends, southwestly and southerly along a curved line that is fifteen feet northwesterly and westerly from the northern and western paved edge of the promenade (and incorporating the outer perimeter of the comfort stations), westerly and southerly along the northern and western edges of the paved curving paths located north and northwest of the bathhouse, southerly along a line that is a southerly continuation of the western edge of the path on the (north)east side of the bathhouse (adjacent to and west of the stairs leading to the bathhouse upper terrace) to the path south of the stairs and (south)east of the bathhouse, southerly and easterly along the western and southern edges of the paved curving paths located southwest and south of the bathhouse, southeasterly along a curved line that is fifteen feet southwestly from the southwestern paved edge of the promenade (and incorporating the outer perimeter of the comfort stations), and northerly along the southeastern polygonal end of the promenade, to the point of beginning.

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 development, growth, improvement, or renewal of the area involved.

The landmark site is located in Pelham Bay Park, fronting on Long Island Sound, and was constructed between 1934 and 1937 during the administration of Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia and Park Department Commissioner Robert Moses with funds obtained largely from the Work Progress Administration. Since 1936, Orchard Beach has served as a major waterfront recreation complex for Bronx residents. It is an example of the federally funded public works projects executed during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Planned on a massive scale, its construction required landfill and a mile-long seawall to connect Hunter Island to the mainland, creating an entirely new, artificial landscape. Architect Aymar Embury II and landscape architects Gilmore D. Clarke and Michael Rapuano were in charge of the design for the facility that contains a bathhouse in a Modern Classical style and a wide promenade, the plan of which was influenced by Beaux-Art principles. The landmark designation for the bathhouse and promenade includes the upper and lower bathhouse terraces, upper terrace benches and ticket booths, stairways and flanking walls, lighting fixtures, flagpole, railings, paving, seating areas, trees and comfort stations. The concrete, brick, and limestone bathhouse, embellished with tile and terrazzo finishes, features two monumental colonnades that radiate outward from a raised central terrace. The crescent-shaped promenade, which follows the curve of the beach, is paved with hexagonal blocks and edged by cast-iron railings evoking a nautical motif. Situated on the promenade are Moderne style concession and supply buildings, park benches, drinking fountains, and modernistic lamp posts.

Orchard Beach, a major accomplishment of engineering and architecture, and New York City's most ambitious park project of the New Deal, is recognized as being among the most remarkable public recreational facilities ever constructed in the United States.

The landmark site is located within Pelham Bay Park and is therefore not subject to zoning. There are no development rights which are available for transfer pursuant to Section 74-79 of the Zoning Resolution.

All landmark buildings or buildings within Historic Districts are eligible to apply for use and bulk waivers pursuant to Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution.

The Commission notes that since this landmark is city-owned, the Landmark Preservation Commission would issue an advisory report rather than a permit for any alteration to the building.

There are no projected public improvements or plans for development, growth, improvement or renewal in the vicinity of the landmark building.

The subject landmark designation does not conflict with the Zoning Resolution, projected public improvements or any plans for development, growth, improvement or renewal in the vicinity of the landmark.

AMANDA M. BURDEN, AICP, Chair

KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, Esq., Vice Chairman

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