



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

August 9, Calendar No. 24

N 070002 HKQ

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated June 29, 2006, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Astoria Park Pool and Play Center (24-02 to 24-36 19th Street) (Block 898, Lot 1) by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on June 20, 2006 (List No.377/LP No. 2196), Borough of Queens, Community District 1.

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.

The Astoria Park Pool and Play Center is one of a group of eleven immense outdoor swimming pools funded by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) which were opened in the summer of 1936 by Mayor LaGuardia and Parks Commissioner Robert Moses. Located at 24-02 to 24-36 19th Street, the subject site includes a bathhouse, wading pool, diving pool, filter house, bleachers, brick perimeter walls, piers and cast iron fencing and roof-top observation decks. The play center adjoins the Astoria Park pool and consists of a playground, comfort station and ball court. With a capacity of 6,200 people, the Astoria Park Pool is New York City's largest public pool (54,450 square feet) and commands a panoramic view of midtown Manhattan framed by the Hell Gate and Tri-borough bridges. The pool complex hosted the U.S. Olympic Trials in swimming, diving and water polo in 1936 and remains a distinguished example of the successful contribution New Deal projects made to New York City during the Great Depression.

Sited in what is now a densely wooded slope that descends to the water's edge, the Astoria Park pool complex was designed by consulting Parks Department architect John. M. Hatton. The bath house structure makes extensive use of glass block and decorative brickwork. Among the more striking features of the play center, which is built in the Art Moderne style, are the whimsical saucer-like roofs atop the upper portion of the filter house. The comfort station is designed in a similar style.

The landmark site is located within Astoria Park and is therefore not subject to zoning. There are no development rights which are available for transfer pursuant to Section 74-49.

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 Landmarks Preservation Commission will issue an advisory report rather than a permit for any proposed alteration to the building.

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

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.

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