



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

February 8, 2012 / Calendar No. 13

N 120155 HKQ

IN THE MATTER OF a communication dated December 30, 2011, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the landmark designation of the Daniel and Abbie B. Eldridge House, 87-61 111th Street (Block 9301, Lot 101), by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on December 20, 2011 (List No. 450/LP-2473), Borough of Queens, Community District 9.

Pursuant to Section 3020.8(b) of the New York 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 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 20, 2011, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated the Daniel and Abbie B. Eldridge House as a city landmark. The landmark site is located at 87-61 111th Street (Block 9301, Lot 101) on the east side of 111th Street between Jamaica Avenue and 91st Avenue in Richmond Hill, Queens, Community District 9.

The Daniel and Abbie B. Eldridge House, built around 1867, remains a rare, relatively intact example of an Italianate-style villa in Queens. The house was constructed in the farming community of Clarenceville, which was later incorporated into the Village of Richmond Hill. The construction of the house predates the development of the area as a commuter suburb of Manhattan. Although it cannot be determined when construction of the house began or by whom it was designed, the house was completed in 1870.

By 1850, suburban villas like the Eldridge house were a distinctive feature on the American landscape. The 2.5-story Italianate-style villa, with its cubic form, hipped roof with projecting eaves, square cupola, segmental-arched entrance with elaborate doorhood, and angular bay

windows may have been influenced by the cottage and villa designs popularized by the pattern books of Andrew Jackson Downing and Henry W. Cleaveland. The introduction of the Italianate-style to Richmond Hill coincided with the area's transition from a sparsely populated rural area to suburban one. While the house was altered with a rear addition in 2002, it has retained much of its original detailing and stands as a unique and important reminder of the area's mid-19th century development.

Little is actually know about Daniel Eldridge beyond what is recorded in the 1870 census. He was employed as a clerk in the Water Department, at the time when such positions were among the plum patronage jobs controlled by the corrupt political boss William Marcy Tweed. Eldridge, characterized as a member of the Tweed Ring, is said to have watched for the arrival of the police to arrest him for embezzlement charges from the cupola of his house.

After Eldridge's arrest, the house and property had several owners including Oliver Fowler and Alexander Steel who were very active in the development of Richmond Hill during the 1870s and 1880s. The current owners bought the house and property in 1986 and converted the entire building for use as a childcare facility and school for the arts.

The landmark site is located in an R3-1 zoning district. Pursuant to Section 74-79 of the Zoning Resolution, transfer of development rights is not permitted for landmark sites located in R3-1 zoning districts. 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 subject landmark does not conflict with the Zoning Resolution. In addition, the Commission is not aware of any conflicts between the subject landmark designation and projected public improvements or any plans for development growth, improvement or renewal in the vicinity of the landmark.

AMANDA M. BURDEN, FAICP, Chair
KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, Esq., Vice Chairman
ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA, RAYANN BESSER, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E.,
ALFRED C. CERULLO, III, BETTY Y. CHEN, MARIA M. DEL TORO,
RICHARD W. EADDY, ANNA HAYES LEVIN, ORLANDO MARIN,
SHIRLEY A. MCRAE, Commissioners