



## **CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

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**IN THE MATTER OF** a communication dated September 25, 2008, from the Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding the designation of the Tompkinsville (Joseph H. Lyons) Pool exterior and the Tompkinsville (Joseph H. Lyons) Pool Bath House, first floor interior by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on September 16, 2008 (Exterior Designation: List 405/LP-2234 and Interior Designation: List 405/LP-2235) located at Block 487, Lots 80, 110, and 112 in part, and portions of the adjacent public way, Borough of Staten Island, Community District 1.

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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 September 16, 2008, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designated the Tompkinsville (Joseph H. Lyons) Pool as a city landmark. The landmark designation applies to the bath house, swimming pool, diving pool, wading area, mechanical equipment enclosures, perimeter walls and fencing enclosing these structures, and street level brick retaining walls. The interior designation consists of the domed interior of the entry foyer to the bath house, including the telephone alcove, fixtures and interior components, including the wall, floor, and ceiling surfaces, doors, ticket and parcel booth fronts, metal signage, and vents.

The 2.56 acre site is located at the eastern spur of Victory Boulevard and Murray Hulbert Avenue in Tompkinsville, Staten Island. It is one of a group of eleven immense outdoor swimming pools opened in the summer of 1936 in a series of grand ceremonies presided over by Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia and Park Commissioner Robert Moses. All of the pools were constructed largely with funding provided by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). While each of the 1936 swimming pool complexes is unique, the Lyons Pool shares many of the same basic components with the other eleven facilities, such as low-cost building materials, streamlined and curvilinear forms of the popular 1930s Art Moderne style, swimming, diving and wading pools, a large bath house with locker room sections that doubled as gymnasiums in non-swimming months, perimeter seating and rooftop promenades and galleries, and innovative

mechanical systems for heating, filtration, and water circulation.

The Lyons Pool site was constrained by the shoreline on the east side and the Staten Island Railway on the west Side. Designers fit a bathhouse with a slender, L-shaped footprint into the west and north edges of the site, so that it serves as a buffer from adjacent train traffic. The east side of the facility is open, thereby giving patrons views of the harbor.

The streamlined and curvilinear form of the Art Moderne-style bath house presents an attractive design. Accents created by alternating recessed and flush brickwork, horizontal window bands, cast-concrete window sills, and a ribbon-like steel railing at the rooftop observation deck help to emphasize the characteristic horizontality of the style. Entering patrons are welcomed by the monumental feel of the double-height interior entrance lobby, which is set in a rotunda with light colored walls in a clerestory at the upper level, Flemish bond brick walls at the first floor level, and starburst-patterned terrazzo flooring.

The Lyons Pool officially opened on July 7, 1936, and quickly established itself as a popular social center for residents of Staten Island. In 1938 it was renamed in honor of Joseph H. Lyons, an ambulance corps veteran of World War I. It was the only WPA-funded pool on Staten Island, and continues to be an amenity to the community today.

The designated landmark building is located in mapped parkland. Therefore, Sections 74-79 and 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution do not apply. The Commission notes that since the landmark is city-owned, the Landmarks Preservation Commission would issue an advisory report rather than a permit for any proposed alteration to the 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.

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