

1973

Landmarks Preservation Commission
November 20, 1973, Number 22
LP-0765

322 STATE STREET HOUSE, Borough of Brooklyn. Built c. 1850.

Landmark Site: Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 176, Lot 21.

On June 23, 1970, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the 322 State Street House and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item no. 78). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Twenty-six witnesses spoke in favor of historic preservation in the Boerum Hill neighborhood and for the creation of the Boerum Hill Historic District. There were no speakers in opposition to designation of the houses on State Street.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

No. 322 State Street dates from about 1850, although its Greek Revival front has been modified since that date. John J. Tilton, who operated a fruit business in the Washington Market, acquired the property in November 1846 for investment purposes. He sold the lot to Charles Parsons, a lithographer, in 1849. Parsons had the house built and was living in it by 1850.

This house was part of the Boerum Hill community which had formed the original Town of Breuckelen founded in 1646 by Dutch colonists. It was incorporated into the larger City of Brooklyn in 1834. The development of Boerum Hill as an urban community began in the 1840s and continued into the 1870s. Many of the houses which remain from this period incorporated Greek Revival and Italianate elements in the house designs. These houses were built for merchants and professional people, many of whom worked in the Wall Street area or in the vicinity of the Fulton Street ferry.

All the land on this block had originally been part of the Jacob Van Brunt farm. He willed it to his daughter Jane, wife of Samuel T. Gerritsen, in 1824. State Street was originally known as Gerritsen Street. The Gerritsens and the Van Brunts, both old Dutch families, had long been interconnected by marriage and had some of the largest landholdings in Kings County. Charles Hoyt and Russell Nevins, two Manhattan real estate developers with extensive interests in Brooklyn, acquired the properties on this block in 1833. Both Hoyt and Nevins had streets named after them to the east of this block.

No. 322 is a three-story wood frame structure on a brick foundation, the only remaining house on the block so built. At the present time it has a stuccoed front. The main entrance was moved to basement level when the building was converted to multi-family use but the original entrance enframingent was retained. Short pilasters with Doric capitals support a horizontal entablature, remnants of the original Greek Revival facade. The window lintels with their slightly projecting cap moldings are also typical of the Greek Revival. The roof cornice appears to be of a later date judging from the paired Italianate brackets which support it.

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FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the 322 State Street House has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as a part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that among its important qualities, the 322 State Street House is an example of modified Greek Revival architecture, that it is a house which can contribute to the quality of the street and that this house adds significantly to the overall character of the Boerum Hill community.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 63 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the 322 State Street House, Borough of Brooklyn and designates Tax Map Block 176, Lot 21, Borough of Brooklyn, as its Landmark Site.