

CHRIST CHURCH, 5030 Riverdale Avenue, Riverdale, Borough of The Bronx,
1866, architect Richard Upjohn.

Landmark Site: Borough of The Bronx Tax Map Block 5833, Lot 4265 in part, consisting of the land on which the described main church building is situated.

On December 13, 1966 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the main building of Christ Church and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. (Item 6). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The charm of this little Gothic Revival Church of the late sixties is evident in its architectural elements of stone and brick and other picturesque features. A work of the architect, Richard Upjohn, this up-town church is a representative example of the romantic Victorian Gothic style. The combination of local quarried stone, with the warm colorful brick, produces a pattern and texture of admirable quality. A notable feature of this building is the pierced wall belfry rising above the gable of the west elevation, which contains a pointed arch stained glass window framed with handsome stone tracery. The steep pitch of the slate covered roof cuts a sharp angle against the sky and adds to the picturesque appearance of this church. Characteristic of Upjohn's later work is the wood framing of the entry porch and of the fine doorway. Another virtue of this small church is that it has been kept in such good repair, with but few alterations, and consequently it is an authentic unchanged example of its style and period.

The good qualities of the small English parish church are apparent in its design and architectural features. It was consecrated in 1866, when Riverdale was a part of Yonkers. Last year Christ Church celebrated a century of dedicated service to this community, which became a part of New York City in 1892.

The Landmarks Preservation Commission recognizes that the Landmark on the property in question (and the Landmark Site) is wholly used for religious and directly related charitable purposes by Christ Church and that the needs of Christ Church for such uses may change in the years ahead, entailing alterations in the existing structure or creation of other structures on the Landmark Site. By this designation of the Landmark above described and the Landmark Site on which it is located it is not intended to freeze the structure in its present state or to prevent future appropriate alterations needed to meet changed requirements of use for religious and directly related charitable purposes. The Commission recognizes it has the obligation and, indeed, it has the desire to cooperate with owners of Landmarks who may wish to make changes in their properties. In this connection the Commission wishes to state at this time that it recognizes that Christ Church may want to erect new buildings on its grounds in the future. The Commission recognizes that Christ Church may also wish to make exterior alterations to its existing building. The Commission looks forward to working with the representatives of Christ Church when the Church desires to erect new buildings on its grounds or to make exterior alterations on its existing building.

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 main building of Christ Church has a special character, special historic and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the main building of Christ Church is an outstanding example of Victorian Gothic architecture, displaying many fine details, that is well proportioned and constructed of enduring materials, that it is in an excellent state of preservation, that it is both charming and picturesque and that it adds prestige and distinction to the community which it has served for one hundred years.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 8-A 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 main building of Christ Church, 5030 Riverdale Avenue, Riverdale, Borough of The Bronx and designates as its Landmark Site that part of Borough of The Bronx Tax Map Block 5833, Lot 4265, which contains the land on which the main building of Christ Church is situated.