

1966

NEW UTRECHT REFORMED CHURCH, 18th Avenue at 83rd Street, Borough of Brooklyn.
1828; architect unknown.

Landmark Site: Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 6327, Lot 10 SE in part,
consisting of the land on which the described building is situated.

On February 8, 1966, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the New Utrecht Reformed Church and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. (Item No. 73). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Three witnesses spoke in favor of designation including the minister of the church, Rev. Martin Paul Luther, who said that the proposed designation was very much welcomed. There were no speakers in opposition to designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

This very early Gothic Revival edifice, in meeting house style, was erected in 1828 with stone from an earlier church of 1699 which was destroyed to make way for the present structure. Built of fieldstone this church has painted brick arches and a handsome stone tower with wooden Gothic pinnacles. A late Federal period round window pierces the wall over the main entrance, and an attractive cornice extends around the building. This blending of several architectural styles in one structure resulted in creating a rural church building of great charm and individuality. Surrounded with old trees and some boxwood, it is enclosed by an old iron fence. This church is an excellent example of a rural church in a picturesque setting.

The Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of New Utrecht was organized in October 1677, but for several years prior to that date, the inhabitants of the town of New Utrecht formed a part of and worshipped with the congregation of Flatbush, Flatlands and Brooklyn. In the War of the Revolution, the original church was used by the British as a hospital and a riding school.

The New Utrecht Liberty Pole stands on the church grounds and this is the sixth one erected in succession. A bronze tablet on the site carries the following text. "This Liberty Pole marks the spot over which the American flag first waved in the town of New Utrecht. The original pole was erected by our forefathers at the Evacuation of the British, November 1783, amid the firing of cannon and demonstration of joy".

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 New Utrecht Reformed Church has a special character, special historical 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 New Utrecht Reformed Church is an admirable example of an early rural church in a picturesque setting, that the building represents an early example of Gothic Revival architecture, that it is constructed of excellent stone masonry and that the church has been intimately connected with the early history of the New Utrecht community.

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 New Utrecht Reformed Church, 18th Avenue at 83rd Street, Borough of Brooklyn, and designates as its related Landmark Site that part of Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block 6327, Lot 10 SE which contains the land on which the described building is situated.

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