



A GUIDE TO HISTORIC NEW YORK CITY NEIGHBORHOODS

LANDMARKS UNDER CONSIDERATION CITYWIDE





The Historic Districts Council is New York's citywide advocate for historic buildings and neighborhoods. The Six to Celebrate program annually identifies six historic New York City neighborhoods that merit preservation as priorities for HDC's advocacy and consultation over a yearlong period.

The six, chosen from applications submitted by community organizations, are selected on the basis of the architectural and historic merit of the area, the level of threat to the neighborhood, the strength and willingness of the local advocates, and the potential for HDC's preservation support to be meaningful. HDC works with these neighborhood partners to set and reach preservation goals through strategic planning, advocacy, outreach, programs and publicity.

The core belief of the Historic Districts Council is that preservation and enhancement of New York City's historic resources—its neighborhoods, buildings, parks and public spaces—are central to the continued success of the city. The Historic Districts Council works to ensure the preservation of these resources and uphold the New York City Landmarks Law and to further the preservation ethic. This mission is accomplished through ongoing programs of assistance to more than 500 community and neighborhood groups and through public-policy initiatives, publications, educational outreach and sponsorship of community events.



**Council on
the Arts**



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LANDMARKS UNDER CONSIDERATION

In November 2014, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) announced a plan to clear 95 properties that had been on its calendar for five years or more, but not yet designated as landmarks. The wholesale removal of these properties without considering each one's merits would have represented a severe blow to the properties and to the city's landmarks process in general, sending a message that would jeopardize any future effort to designate them. The properties represented years of research and support from New Yorkers, elected officials, community groups and the Commission itself. To broadly reject all of that through an administrative action would be disrespectful to the efforts and judgment of previous LPC Commissioners and staff. Further, the removal of these 95 sites from the LPC's calendar would render the LPC powerless in the case of any proposed work or demolition project involving those sites.

The Historic Districts Council acted strongly in opposition to this action, and advocated for a more considered, fair and transparent approach. To further prioritize this advocacy, HDC made the initiative one of its Six to Celebrate in 2015, calling it "Landmarks Under Consideration." As part of this effort, HDC worked with Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and a coalition of other preservation organizations to submit an alternative plan for the LPC's consideration. The plan eventually formed the basis for the LPC's initiative, entitled "Backlog95," calling for a series of public discussions to evaluate the properties in geographical groupings. Announced in July 2015, the LPC's initiative was the direct result of the advocacy of preservation groups and concerned New Yorkers, over 200 of whom wrote to the LPC to demand a fair process for considering the sites on their individual merits.

In fall 2015, the LPC held four "special hearings" in which the items were grouped according to their location by Community District, with roughly 5-12 items per group. At these hearings, the public was given the opportunity to comment. HDC wrote and delivered statements for nearly every item. In February 2016, the LPC held another special hearing to discuss and vote on how to proceed. The Commission was given three choices for the fate of each property: prioritize for designation by the end of 2016; remove from the calendar by voting not to designate (based on a lack of merit); or remove from the calendar by issuing a no-action letter (this allows an item to be taken off the calendar without prejudice, meaning it could be brought forward for designation at a later date). On that day, 30 items were prioritized for designation, five were removed from the calendar with a vote not to designate and the rest were removed from the calendar by issuing a no-action letter. The five properties that the Commission voted not to designate were largely irreparably altered or had been demolished.

This brochure highlights some of the sites considered throughout this 15-month process. HDC chose the following sites in order to provide a snapshot of the geographic, historic, cultural and typological diversity of the 95 sites considered by the LPC in its historic "Backlog95" action. This selection was not influenced by the outcome of the hearings. However, most of the sites featured in this brochure are moving forward toward designation (with the exception of sites 4, 11, 14, 17 and 21).

RESIDENCES

I

65 SCHOFIELD STREET
The Bronx (c. 1860)



City Island, an unusual New York City enclave, is a small maritime community that has been embraced but not engulfed by its urban surroundings. One of its gems is 65 Schofield Street, a remarkably intact farmhouse designed in the Italianate style with Greek Revival elements, characterized by a square plan, tall windows, and a flat roof with an overhanging cornice and elaborate brackets. Perhaps its most striking feature is the porch that runs across the width of the building. The house has retained its original wood clapboard, evoking a sense of architectural antiquity in a way much more common to small New England towns than The Bronx. Aside from its physical integrity, research has uncovered direct connections between this building and the Pell and Schofield families, prominent families involved in the 19th century development of City Island.



LEGEND OF DESIGNATIONS

National Historic Landmark:	NHL
National Register of Historic Places—District:	NR-D
National Register of Historic Places—Property:	NR-P
New York City Historic District:	NYC HD
New York City Individual Landmark:	NYC IL
New York City Interior Landmark:	NYC INL

2

LADY MOODY-
VAN SICKLEN HOUSE
27 Gravesend Neck Road,
Brooklyn
(c. early 18th century)



The Lady Moody-Van Sicklen House is a rare surviving example of an 18th century Dutch-American farmhouse and a reminder of Brooklyn's agricultural past.

In addition to being one of the oldest houses in Brooklyn, it is also the borough's only extant house of its age and type to be built of stone. While it is unlikely that any part of the house dates to her ownership of the property, the house sits on a lot once owned by Lady Deborah Moody, an English settler who founded Gravesend and one of the first women to be granted land in the New World. The house features a gable roof with overhanging eaves and an end chimney, typical features of 18th century Dutch-American farmhouses. It is one of only two extant houses that adhere to the original four-square plan laid out for the colonial town of Gravesend. This plan is unique in New York City, consisting of 16 acres per square, and is still visible in the modern street grid. The house is, therefore, integral to Gravesend's history and identity. Subsequent owners included the prominent Van Sicklen family and William E. and Isabella Platt, who renovated the house in the Arts and Crafts style in the early 20th century, and advertised its association with Lady Moody.

While Stapleton Heights boasted the mansions of Manhattan-based businessmen and officials of local breweries, Harrison Street, also located in Stapleton, was made up of the less grand, but no less dignified homes of the neighborhood's merchants and professionals. Thanks to the efforts of dedicated homeowners, many of these "modest" homes now rival their neighbors up the hill. 92 Harrison Street is thought to be the oldest house on the street. It was built for Susan M. Tompkins Smith, the daughter of Daniel D. Tompkins, New York's fourth governor and Vice President of the United States under James Monroe. Perched on an incline, the stately clapboard house was designed in the Greek Revival style with a graceful doorway, a porch with large columns, windows with louvered shutters and a gable roof with a semi-circular window.

3

92 HARRISON STREET
Staten Island
(c. 1830s)



4

**REUBEN AND MARY
WOOD HOUSE**
5466 Arthur Kill Road,
Staten Island
(*c. 1852*)



The Reuben and Mary Wood House has retained its mid-19th century character, including its many historic details, such as window lintels and sills, shutters, door surround, lacey bargeboards and brick chimney. The house, with its symmetrically-planned center hall and side-gabled roof fronted by a cross gable, is an example of a once-common, now rare mid-19th century rural house, its details applied in an unusual mix of Greek Revival, Gothic and Italianate styles. The craftsmanship of the woodwork is remarkable, not least because of its survival. The house, while in need of care, has an imposing presence on its corner lot.

There has continuously been a lighthouse on this site since as early as 1826. For the past 150+ years, this lighthouse and keeper's quarters have weathered the sea with grace, as the rusticated brownstone façades still read as crisp. Lighthouses are landmarks in every sense of the word: they withstand the test of time and harsh elements, and demarcate the relationship between town and sea. This lighthouse is now owned by New York State, and set within a public park known as the Mount Loretto Unique Area. The hike up to the lighthouse is a destination and a specific draw of the park, which commands beautiful views of Raritan Bay.



5

**PRINCE'S BAY
LIGHTHOUSE &
KEEPER'S HOUSE**
Hylan Boulevard,
Staten Island
(1864)



6

412 EAST 85TH STREET
Manhattan (*c. 1860*)

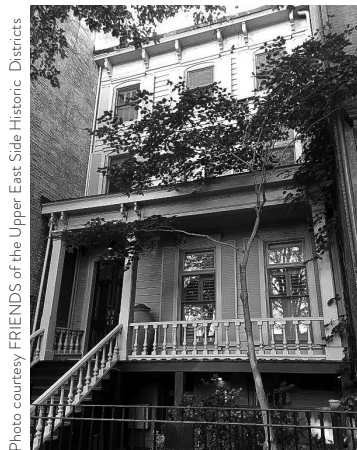


Photo courtesy FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts

This Italianate style house stands as a reminder of Yorkville's transition from farmland and country estates to a denser, residential character. The building appears to date to circa 1860, though it is possible that it was built earlier as an ancillary farm structure, moved to this location and renovated in the Italianate style, as this was a common practice. If it was, in fact, constructed circa 1860, it is one of the last frame buildings to be constructed before the city fire code outlawed wood frame construction south of 86th Street. The house has sustained some changes over the years, including conversion to apartments with a commercial ground floor, the removal of some of its details and the re-cladding of the façade. However, it has been cared for time and time again. In 1996, a major restoration was undertaken to simulate the building's original appearance.

COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

7

183-195 BROADWAY
Brooklyn
(William B. Ditmars,
1882)



183-195 Broadway is considered one of the finest surviving cast-iron buildings in Brooklyn. Its iron was cast by the Atlantic Iron Works of Manhattan, which cast pieces for many buildings in Tribeca and Soho. The cast-iron façade remains intact, and features inventive ornamentation in the form of calla lilies, stylized drapery, and wreaths on the building's pilasters. A similar spiral floral concept can be seen on other buildings, but the use of the calla lily is considered unique. The building was likely built as a shoe dealer's factory and warehouse. In 1937, the building became home to the Forman Family, manufacturers of chromium tableware and metal gift items. Their signage remains between the second and third floors, though the building now houses loft-style apartments. While cast-iron buildings could once be found throughout Brooklyn, the four surviving cast-iron buildings clustered along this section of Broadway are among the borough's only survivors, and the only substantial group outside of Manhattan.



8

PEPSI-COLA SIGN
4600 Fifth Avenue,
Queens (1936)

The Pepsi-Cola Sign has illuminated the East River waterfront since 1936. While not a traditional “landmark,” the sign has

become iconic for its vintage lettering, adding a special character to the all-but-developed Long Island City. Built by Artkraft Signs, the display is made up of steel and porcelain enamel channel letters and a Pepsi-Cola bottle, all illuminated by neon. The sign was originally perched atop the Pepsi bottling plant, which closed in 1999, but was located in what is now the northern section of Gantry Plaza State Park. As a nod to the departed industry that was once a dominating presence in Long Island City, the Pepsi-Cola sign was preserved and given pride of place in the park in 2009, long after its host building was demolished. In 21st century New York, vestiges like this remind us of our city’s vibrant past as an industrial powerhouse.

9

LOEW’S 175TH STREET THEATER
4140 Broadway, Manhattan
(Thomas W. Lamb, 1929-30)



The Loew’s 175th Street Theater was built as one of the Loew’s Wonder Theatres, five extravagant flagship movie palaces constructed in 1929-30 in the vicinity of New York City. The theater is a veritable palace, its exterior a flamboyant display built during a time of extreme austerity, undoubtedly meant to uplift Depression-era audiences. When it opened in 1930, the massive, freestanding theater had seats for roughly 3,600. Its architectural style is difficult to pinpoint due to its extravagant terra-cotta ornament featuring iconography from an array of cultures. The same treatment is found on the interior, itself another masterpiece. After Loew’s closed in 1969, the United Christian Evangelistic Association purchased the theater for use as a worship space, restoring the building and renaming it the Palace Cathedral. In 2007, it also began functioning as a performance space and cultural center: the United Palace, as it is widely known today.



10

BERGDORF GOODMAN BUILDING
754 Fifth Avenue, Manhattan
(Ely Jacques Kahn, 1927-28; alterations to the
base: Allan Greenberg, 1984)

Constructed as seven individual but architecturally unified stores, this structure replaced the Cornelius Vanderbilt II mansion, one of the grandest Gilded Age residences in the city. Its distinct seven- and nine-story massing pays homage to the demolished Vanderbilt structure. Bergdorf Goodman, established in 1899 by Herman Bergdorf and Edwin Goodman, was one of the building’s first tenants. They eventually acquired the entire building, and further expanded into two adjacent buildings in 1959. In 1984, the building received a new base, designed to unify the previously separate storefronts in a way that would relate to the rest of the building. In addition to being home to an iconic New York retailer, the structure is significant for its refined design and strong classical organization, featuring a series of bays with a tight rhythm of windows. Its white South Dover marble façade, capped by a slate roof, features shallow changes of planes to create lines, shadows and decorative figures. The building is also significant for its intended role as part of a tableau with the nearby Squibb building (also by Kahn), as well as the Pierre, Sherry Netherland and Plaza Hotels.

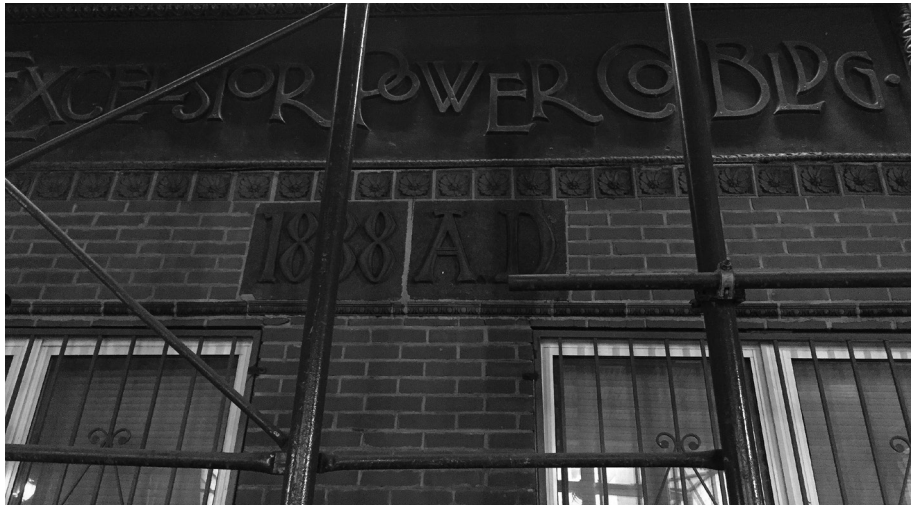
INDUSTRIAL SITES



11

CONEY ISLAND PUMPING STATION
230I Neptune Avenue, Brooklyn
(Irwin S. Chanin, 1937-38) — NR-P

The Coney Island Pumping Station replaced an older, outdated station in 1937-38. The need for a high pressure water system in this area was dire, as the previous one failed during the Dreamland fire of 1911 and a catastrophic fire along the boardwalk in 1932. The new station, a project of the Works Progress Administration, was rendered, unusually for an industrial building, in the elegant Art Moderne style by prominent architect Irwin S. Chanin. It was his only public work. The elliptically-shaped building is faced in limestone over a granite base and originally featured prismatic glass windows with steel surrounds. The building stands in the center of a large grassy plot, which originally had symmetrical plantings. Three wide, concrete walks still lead to the station, and paired Art Deco statues of Pegasus, symbol of Neptune, originally flanked the entrance. The statues were removed in 1981 and put on display at the Brooklyn Museum, but advocates hope that someday they may be returned to their home in Coney Island.



12

**EXCELSIOR POWER COMPANY
BUILDING**

33-43 Gold Street, Manhattan
(William Milne Grinnell, 1888)



The Excelsior Power Company Building is the oldest power generating station in New York City. 11 power plants, whose energy helped grow New York into the city that it is, have been demolished throughout the five boroughs. The monumental Romanesque Revival style building, complete with rough-cut ashlar and rounded, springing arches, features Queen Anne terra cotta details, while the Art Nouveau letters that read “Excelsior Power Co. Bldg 1888 A.D.” add the final touch. The building, an architectural anomaly in the Financial District, has overcome functional obsolescence in its conversion to residences. Its successful adaptive reuse is a gift to Gold Street.

13

**INTERBOROUGH RAPID
TRANSIT POWERHOUSE**

850 12th Avenue,
Manhattan
(McKim, Mead & White, 1904)



Stanford White was able to design in 1904 what today seems like a minor miracle: a highly elegant and ornate utilitarian structure. It was all in a day's work for White

and other City Beautiful proponents who believed that public improvements should be built to create a city that is both functional and beautiful. This monumental structure is a remarkable example of Beaux-Arts design applied to a utilitarian building; its architectural grandeur meant to convince the public to embrace the subway, a major new mode of transportation in 1904. Designed as a

showpiece, it now stands as a monument to progress and rapid transit. In addition to its architecture, the building holds an important place in industrial history. When it opened, it was the largest powerhouse in the world and provided the energy needed to run the first subway line along Manhattan's west side, which in turn created and enabled the modern city of New York. Despite the unfortunate loss of its original smokestacks, the IRT Powerhouse remains a commanding presence and a dynamic anchor for an ever-changing west side.

14

**D. G. YUENGLING BREWERY
COMPANY COMPLEX**

Manhattan
*(various, late 19th century
— early 20th century)*



The Yuengling Brewing site in Harlem is the last surviving brewing complex in Manhattan. In the late 19th century, beer brewing was an industry as big as finance or real estate in 21st century New York, yet very few buildings survive to tell this story. This complex predates residential development in Harlem, which was chosen due to its relative isolation at the time. A brewery operated on this site as early as 1860, and the earliest buildings in the complex date to 1876, with significant expansion and alterations dating to 1903. The complex closed in 1920 with the advent of Prohibition, but the buildings have been excellent containers for adaptive reuse. The buildings, designed mostly in the American Round Arch style popular for industrial buildings at the time, retain a strong sense of place and serve as reminders of a great industry.

RELIGIOUS STRUCTURES

15

ST. BARBARA'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

138 Bleecker Street, Brooklyn

(Helmle & Huberty, 1907-10)



St. Barbara's Roman Catholic Church is instantly recognizable from all around for its exuberant ornament and for the soaring height of its towers, rising above low-rise Bushwick. The yellow brick building with white and cream terra-cotta trim features elaborate exterior massing with a grand dome and two 175-foot tiered towers. Its entrance bay resembles a triumphal arch, with columns and a rounded pediment. The interior is equally elaborate in its Baroque-inspired design, with statuary, carvings, frescoes and stained glass windows. Its architectural style has been described as Spanish Mission Revival or neo-Plateresque, but it is likely that Helmle & Huberty were influenced by German Baroque ecclesiastical architecture, given that St. Barbara's served a congregation of German immigrants in its early years. The church is said to be named for Barbara Epping, the daughter of local brewer Leopold Epping, who donated funds to construct the church. Many of its German parishioners worked in the breweries in Bushwick, including Epping's. The congregation evolved over the years to serve the area's changing population of Italians and, more recently, Latin Americans.

16

UKRAINIAN CHURCH IN EXILE/ HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL

177 South 5th Street, Brooklyn

(Helmle & Huberty, 1906)



This structure was built for the Williamsburg Trust Company during a wave of development spurred by the opening of the Williamsburg Bridge and Continental Army Plaza, a park completed in conjunction with the bridge in 1903. The neo-Classical style building, clad in opulent white terra cotta and crowned by a dome, remains intact despite its long history of adaptive reuse. Only ten years after its opening, the bank went under and the building was converted to serve as the Fifth District's Magistrates Court. When the court system changed, the building was rendered obsolete. In 1961, a Ukrainian immigrant population bought the building for use as a worship space and has been active here ever since.

17

OLD CALVARY CEMETERY GATEHOUSE Gale Avenue & Greenpoint Avenue, Queens (c. 1890s)



In 1847, faced with cholera epidemics and a shortage of burial grounds in Manhattan, the New York State Legislature passed the Rural Cemetery Act authorizing nonprofit corporations to operate commercial cemeteries. That same year, the Old St. Patrick's Cathedral purchased land in Maspeth and built Calvary Cemetery. By 1852 there were 50 burials a day and by the 1990s there were nearly 3 million burials here. It is today one of the largest cemeteries in the country. Designed in an array of architectural styles, cemetery gatehouses serve as picturesque portals. The Old Calvary Gatehouse was designed in the Roman Vernacular Queen Anne style, which is not found elsewhere in Queens. It features warm brick and terra cotta treatment, a picturesque arrangement of dormers and gables and a conical belfry.

18

BOWNE STREET COMMUNITY CHURCH

38-01 Bowne Street,
Queens

(Edward Richardson, 1892)

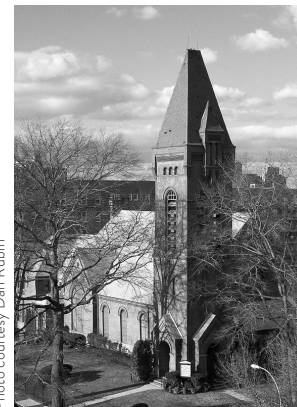
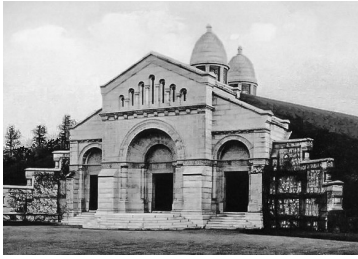


Photo courtesy Dan Rubin

The Bowne Street Community Church stands out as a shining star in Flushing, a neighborhood that has changed dramatically over the years. The church was originally built for the Reformed Dutch Church of Flushing, established in 1842. To accommodate the congregation's rapid growth, this new church building was completed in 1892, designed in the Romanesque Revival style of red brick, with arches topping each of the windows and intricate brickwork and terra cotta details. The church is adorned with stained glass windows manufactured by the Tiffany Glass Company of Corona and designed by Agnes Fairchild Northrup, a colleague of Louis Comfort Tiffany and a life-long member of the church. The eastern annex, designed to match the existing architecture, was added in 1925. In 1974, the congregation merged with the First Congregational Church of Flushing to form the Bowne Street Community Church.



19

VANDERBILT MAUSOLEUM
Inside Moravian Cemetery,
Staten Island
(Richard Morris Hunt, 1881-89)

Cornelius Vanderbilt and his son William Vanderbilt donated roughly 12 acres (which was later greatly expanded) for Moravian Cemetery, setting aside a private section for a grand family mausoleum. For its design, they commissioned Richard Morris Hunt, a noted architect and champion of the Beaux-Arts style in America. Hunt's extant works are rare in New York City, but include the Fifth Avenue façade of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The Romanesque Revival style stone mausoleum, abounding in round arches and intricate carvings, is capped by two small domes. The private lot is approached through a massive stone arch with an inset iron gate, referencing the arches of the mausoleum beyond. The surrounding landscape was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, considered to be the father of landscape architecture in America, who often collaborated with Hunt. In fact, their collaboration on the mausoleum and its grounds would inspire the Vanderbilts to hire the pair to design the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina, perhaps the most famous landmark associated with the Vanderbilt family.



20

**ST. MICHAEL'S EPISCOPAL
CHURCH COMPLEX**
227 West 99th Street, Manhattan
(Robert W. Gibson, Charles Merry
1891-1913)
— NR-P



The congregation of St. Michael's Episcopal Church has been worshipping on this site since 1807, outgrowing its previous two buildings before this complex was constructed. The church, parish house and rectory were completed over roughly 25 years, all in the same rock-faced Indiana limestone. The church was designed in the Northern Italian Renaissance or Romanesque-Byzantine style and completed in 1891. Its square clock and bell tower is visible throughout the surrounding neighborhood. It also features Spanish tile roofs and magnificent stained glass windows by Louis Comfort Tiffany. The parish house, set back from the street, was completed in 1896-97, and the rectory, the final piece of the complex, was completed in 1912-13. The complex is striking in its materials and monumental scale.

INTERIORS

21

**EDGAR J. KAUFMAN CONFERENCE ROOMS
LECTURE HALL & ELEVATOR LOBBY**
809 United Nations Plaza, Manhattan
(Alvar & Elissa Aalto, 1964-65)

Alvar Aalto was the most important Finnish architect of the 20th century and a central figure in International Modernism. The Edgar J. Kaufman Conference Center is the only example of his work in New York City and one of only four Aalto structures remaining in the United States. Designed by Aalto, along with his wife Elissa Aalto, the

space is an artistic entirety; everything in it was designed and produced to create a harmonious effect. Serene and light-filled, the curved forms of ash and birch create an abstract, forest-like sculpture of sinuous bent wood. Combined with blue porcelain tiles and modern lighting, the Conference Center is an architectural gem. Located on the 12th floor of the Institute for International Education, the intact rooms are some of the most significant post-World War II spaces in the city. The rooms were commissioned in 1961 by Edgar J. Kaufmann Jr., a scholar and patron of Modern architecture and design, whose family also commissioned "Fallingwater" from Frank Lloyd Wright.

