



A GUIDE TO HISTORIC NEW YORK CITY NEIGHBORHOODS

BUSHWICK AVENUE

BROOKLYN





The Historic Districts Council is New York's citywide advocate for historic buildings and neighborhoods. The Six to Celebrate program annually identifies six 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**

**NYC Cultural
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The Six to Celebrate is generously supported by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature. Additional support is provided by New York City Councilmembers Erik Bottcher, Gale A. Brewer, Cristopher Marte, Keith Powers and Lincoln Restler.



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BUSHWICK AVENUE

This area of Brooklyn was originally inhabited by the Canarsie, a band of Munsee-speaking Lenape. Due to its dense woodlands, Dutch settlers named the area *Boswijck*, meaning “heavy woods,” and by the early 1800s, farms and residences clustered around what would later become Bushwick Avenue. This growth spurred the establishment of community institutions like the South Bushwick Reformed Church (**Site 10**) and the Home for the Aged of the Little Sisters of the Poor (**Site 9**).

The incorporation of Bushwick to Brooklyn in 1854 sparked a period of rapid development and population growth. The significant influx of German immigrants, combined with favorable natural conditions, allowed the area to evolve into a thriving industrial center—particularly renowned for its brewing industry. One of the few remnants of this golden age of manufacturing is the William Ulmer Brewery (**Site 2**), alongside the grand mansions built by industry magnates like Caterina Lipsius (**Site 4**) and Gustave Doerschuck (**Site 14**). Bushwick Avenue soon became one of Brooklyn’s most prestigious residential streets, attracting a number of prominent figures like lumber magnate Louis Bossert (**Site 15**), lawyer and politician Peter P. Huberty (**Site 16**), builder Frederick Doering (**Site 14**), and attorney Samuel M. Meeker (**Site 17**).

The opening of the elevated rail line connecting to Manhattan in 1888 ushered in a new type of residential development, multi-family homes and apartment buildings (**Sites 5, 6, 12, 19, and 20**). Institutions related to education (**Sites 1 and 8**), entertainment (**Site 3**), and charitable organizations (**Site 18**) were also expanded to serve the growing population.

This era of prosperity came to a sudden halt with the enactment of Prohibition in 1919, which led to the closure of most neighborhood breweries. After World War II, many Italian and German families moved out to the suburbs, while Black and Latin American families began to settle in the area. Although the building stock remained largely intact, it suffered from decades of neglect, poor maintenance, and abandonment.

Despite these challenges, community members have consistently advocated for the restoration and preservation of Bushwick’s architectural and cultural heritage. In 1971, both Bushwick Avenue and Northeast Bushwick were studied by the Landmarks Preservation Commission, though no designations followed. Preservation efforts continued with a historic resource survey in 2011, a Community Plan in 2014, and the founding of the Bushwick Historic Preservation Association (BHPA).

Today, BHPA maintains its efforts to protect Bushwick from out-of-scale development and further deterioration due to neglect. Through this partnership with HDC, the organization aims to advance its proposed list of landmark designations and preservation priorities.

This brochure was developed by the Historic Districts Council in partnership with the Bushwick Historic Preservation Association. The featured sites offer a glimpse into the neighborhood’s rich history, inviting you to explore further and support efforts to protect, preserve, and celebrate its unique legacy.

I

THE SCHOOLHOUSE

330 Ellery St

(1883, James W. Naughton)



Originally built as a branch primary school for P.S. 24, this three-story brick structure features details from the Italianate and Victorian styles. The design incorporated improvements in ventilation and natural light access, as well as ample circulation spaces. It was the work of James N. Naughton, the second Superintendent of Buildings for Brooklyn’s Board of Education.

Naughton held this position from 1879 until 1898, and was responsible for the design and construction of over 100 schools in the borough.

The school was eventually renamed P.S. 52, serving the children of Bushwick until 1945, when it was closed and the building sold to a manufacturing company. In

1981, the interior of one of the third-floor classrooms was dismantled and rebuilt in the New York State Museum in Albany. The property became available once again in 1996 and was rented by local artist Erin McGonigle who established an artist’s collective. By 2015 all floors were utilized by the collective, which became famous for its art shows, performances, and events.

LEGEND OF DESIGNATIONS

National Historic Landmark	NH L
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

The William Ulmer Brewery complex was one of the most prominent industrial sites in 19th- and 20th-century Bushwick and Brooklyn, and it remains largely intact today.

Born in Germany, William Ulmer began working in a brewery owned by his uncles in the 1850s. In 1871, he co-founded the Vigelius & Ulmer Continental Lagerbier brewery, becoming the sole proprietor in 1878 and renaming it the William Ulmer Brewery. During the 1880s and 1890s, Ulmer expanded the business by erecting an ice house, engine-, machine- and wash-room additions, a large storage and stable building, and a remarkable Romanesque Revival-style office building.

Designed by prominent Brooklyn architect Theobald Engelhardt, the two-story red brick structure was the architectural highlight of the complex, featuring arched and dormered windows, a squat mansard roof clad in slate, and terra cotta ornament. It was separated from the larger brewery by a passage with an elaborate iron gate.

The other buildings in the complex feature details characteristic of the American round arch style, including round arch-headed and segmentally arch-headed window and door openings, projecting brick pilasters, and decorative brickwork.

During Prohibition most of the breweries in Brooklyn closed, including Ulmer. The factory buildings were sold and converted for light manufacturing, but the family maintained the office building for their real estate business until 1952. After changing owners a couple of times, the property is currently being converted for commercial and residential use. It was designated as a NYC Landmark in 2010.

WILLIAM ULMER BREWERY

31 Belvidere St

2

(Office, Engine & Machine House: 1885, T. Engelhardt; Main Brew House & Addition: 1872, T. Engelhardt; Stable & Storage Building: 1890, F. Wunder)
NYC IL



3

ARION HALL

11-27 Arion Pl

(1887, Theobald Engelhardt)

Designed by prolific Brooklyn architect Theobald Engelhardt, Arion Hall was home to the Arion Singing Society, a German choral group founded in Brooklyn in 1867.

During the late 19th century, Brooklyn was home to a large group of German immigrants fleeing political and social turmoil. Among their many contributions to the development of the area was the establishment of singing societies, which actively supported artists and cultural institutions like the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

The Arion Singing Society purchased this property in 1886 and commissioned Engelhardt to design and construct their permanent headquarters. The Romanesque Revival, three-story structure has a brick and terra cotta façade, with a double entrance on the first floor and double windows on all floors. Amenities included three bowling alleys, a billiard room, dining room, wine vault, and a ballroom. The singing hall occupied the top floor. After closing in 1920, the building hosted clubrooms and a catering hall. It was converted for residential use in 2003, maintaining most of its original features.

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LIPSIVS - COOK HOUSE

670 Bushwick Ave

(1889-90, Theobald Engelhardt)

NYC IL



During the second half of the 19th century, a thriving community of German immigrants formed in the Eastern District of Brooklyn, prompting the establishment of dozens of breweries in the area. Among them was the Claus Lipsius Brewing Company, owned and managed by Catherina Lipsius after the passing of both her husbands, Henry Claus and Rudolph Lipsius.

This elaborate American Round-Arched mansion was commissioned by Lipsius to architect Theobald Engelhart in 1889. This red brick, two-and-a-half-story building features stone and terra cotta trim, highlighted by an imposing rounded corner tower and a tall mansard roof adorned with pilastered dormers, ornate chimneys, and intricate cornice detailing. The main entrance is distinguished by a columned stone portico.

The Lipsius family sold the house in 1902 to Dr. Frederick A. Cook, a successful physician and later Arctic explorer who claimed to be the first man to reach the summit of Mount McKinley. It was designated as a NYC Landmark in 2013.

During the second half of the 19th century, William Ulmer established himself as one of Brooklyn's most noted businessmen, with a large brewery complex at the corner of Belvidere and Beaver Streets (Site 2). His success led him to invest in real estate, acquiring several lots along Bushwick Avenue.

In 1890, Ulmer began building this group of five Queen Anne rowhouses as single-family residences. He hired Theobald Engelhardt, who had also designed his brewery and several other houses in the area.

All five two-and-a-half-story brick buildings feature brownstone cladding and detailing, tin roofs, and iron cornices. Most notably, each one is distinguished by a uniquely shaped window bay. Early residents were mostly physicians, among them Dr. Frederick A. Cook who lived at No. 687 from 1899 to 1902. He later moved to the former Lipsius mansion (Site 4) across the street.

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ULMER ROWHOUSES

683-703 Bushwick Ave

(1890, Theobald Engelhardt)



6

HOUSES AT BUSHWICK AVE

714-706 Bushwick Ave

(1885-86, John Kramer)



This group of five two-story frame houses are among the last remaining examples of this typology in the area. They were built by John Kramer and John Rueger, with Theobald Engelhardt listed as the architect for Nos. 710 and 712. Not much is known about Kramer and Rueger, except that they were very active between 1870 to 1890, with the former passing away in the late 1800s.

Although most of the houses have been altered, No. 710 and No. 712 maintain most of their original features, including wood cornices and porches with turned pillars.

Noted residents included German immigrant Alfred Winkopp, who purchased No. 712 as his family home shortly after it was completed. He worked as a hotel and saloon manager, and was the administrator of the Arion Hall (Site 3).

For over 40 years, No. 706 was the home of Dr. Ignazio B. Loncao, an Italian immigrant highly regarded within Brooklyn's Italian-American community.

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MANSION AT BUSHWICK AVE

751 Bushwick Ave
(Ca. 1885)



This two-and-a-half-story, raised-basement Queen Anne house is one of the last Bushwick Avenue mansions still extant. Despite some alterations over the years, the brick structure maintains the original masonry, incised stone lintels, a wrought iron fence/gate, a finial at the crest of the roof, projecting two-story bay window, a covered front porch, and a green slate roof.

It is unclear who built it, but in 1890 it was owned by local developer John Auer. That year, Auer hired the firm of D. Acker & Sons to design two brick extensions: a two-story structure that gave the façade its unique character, and a smaller one-story structure to the rear. The property was purchased in 1897 by noted businessman Arnold Behrer, who remained there with his family until 1901.

In recent years, the house became a shared living space and art collective called “The Cedar House,” with the basement used for art and music studios, and a performance space.

The Brooklyn Public Library’s DeKalb Branch was one of the first to be built in the borough with Andrew Carnegie’s multi-million-dollar donation. It was designed by noted architect William B. Tubby, who served on the Architects’ Commission for the Brooklyn Carnegie branches. He created important buildings in a variety of styles, but was especially known for his Romanesque revival style designs like the Charles Millard Pratt House at the Clinton Hill Historic District.

The Classical Revival, free-standing brick and limestone structure followed the stylistic guidelines determined by the Commission. It features double-height windows that provide ample light and air, while a rounded apse at the rear allows for a spacious, two-story area for book stacks.

Over the years, the library has undergone a series of renovations and refurbishings to continue serving the community. It was designated as a NYC Landmark in 2004.

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY, DEKALB BRANCH

790 Bushwick Ave
(1905, William B. Tubby)
NYC IL

8



This large complex originally housed the Home for the Aged of the Little Sisters of the Poor, a Roman Catholic religious institute that provided care for the elderly poor, as well as other services to the community.

The congregation was established in France in 1839 and came to the United States in 1868, where they operated 29 of these establishments. In Brooklyn, they initially settled in three small two-story houses on De Kalb Avenue near Nostrand Avenue, purchasing land to build larger facilities between 1869 and 1870. The first four-story structure was built in 1876, followed by a three-story structure in 1879 and extensions in 1881, 1885, and 1891. The chapel was erected in 1897 in the center section. Each wing had sitting rooms, dining rooms, offices, and bedrooms for the internees, separated by gender.

The Home was closed in 1970 due to changes in building regulations, and the property was leased and later sold to the City of New York for a school. It currently serves as the Bushwick Leaders High School for Academic Excellence.

BUSHWICK LEADERS HS FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

797 Bushwick Ave

(1870-79, *Anthony Wanner*; 1881-91, *Parfitt Bros.*; 1897, *Schick & Ditmas*)

9



REFORMED CHURCH OF SOUTH BUSHWICK

855 Bushwick Ave

(1852-53, *Morgan Architects*)

NYC IL / NR IL

10



Established in 1831, the Reformed Church of South Bushwick was built on land gifted by parishioners Andrew and Abram Stockholm, with funds raised by the community and a donation from the Collegiate Dutch Church of New York. Construction began in 1852 and was completed the following year, with a schoolhouse added in 1881.

The church's design combines elements from the 19th century Greek Revival and the 18th century Gibbians classical styles. The entrance features a portico with large fluted Ionic columns that support an entablature. Above it rises a central tower with a square base and an octagonal lantern and spire.

In August of 2007, a tornado caused considerable damage to the spire and roof of the church. Structural stabilization and restoration work was done in 2020 thanks to a grant by the New York Landmarks Conservancy. It was designated as a NYC Landmark in 1968, and listed on the National Register in 1982.

During the 1880s and 1890s, Bushwick underwent a building boom due to the opening of the Broadway elevated line, and the vernacular frame house became one of the most popular typologies in th area. Many middle-class families opted for these more affordable structures that were made possible since the neighborhood was outside the Brooklyn “Fire District.” Few examples of these houses survive today, especially those that maintain their original detailing.

Commissioned by Frederick and Rosa T. Doehring, the house was originally located at 44 Goodwin Place. The two-and-a-half-story frame structure has a brick basement and a habitable attic with a slightly pitched roofline, with clapboard siding on the façades and a blend of Neo-Grec and Queen Anne detailing.

The design was by prominent Brooklyn architect Theobald Engelhardt, who was also responsible for moving it to this site after Henry C. Bohack acquired it in 1902. Bohack was the founder of a grocery store chain, and wanted the land at Goodwin Place for a warehouse and distribution center. He resided at the house until 1921. It was designated as a NYC Landmark in 2014.

**DOEHRING-BOHACK
HOUSE**
1090 Greene Ave
(1887, Theobald Engelhardt)
NYC IL



I2
MAYOR'S ROW
945-965 Bushwick Ave
(1886-89, James E. Dwyer)



959 in 1886. In 1889, To complete the row, Murr built three more houses (Nos. 961 to 965) in 1889, without citing an architect, but maintaining the same characteristics of those designed by Dwyer.

Among the group’s most noted residents was John Francis “Red Mike” Hylan, Mayor of New York from 1918 until 1925. He lived at No. 959 with his wife, Marian Louise “Minnie” O’Hara, until 1930. Hylan was famous for speaking out against the influence of Standard Oil and international banking, and also advocated the building of a publicly owned subway, which became the IND.

This unique group of 11 two-and-a-half-story Neo Grec rowhouses makes up one of the most cohesive and intact blocks in the area. They maintain the original brownstone façades, wooden cornices and carved lintels above the main entrance and windows, as well as wrought iron fences.

The group was developed by Jacob Murr, who hired local architect James Dwyer to design Nos. 945 to

MT. OF OLIVES 7TH-DAY
ADVENTIST CHURCH

13

975 Bushwick Ave
(1905-06, Carl Otto)



This two-story stone structure was originally the Bushwick Avenue German Presbyterian Church. The congregation was established in 1868 as a mission church affiliated with the Throop Avenue Presbyterian Church. In 1873, they built their first church on Hopkins Street, which they sold in 1904 to purchase this property. Construction of the new building began in 1905, and the church was dedicated in 1906.

Architect Carl Otto designed the Romanesque Revival church and parish house. He was a graduate of Pratt Institute and Columbia University, and attended L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Throughout his career, Otto designed banks, churches, and office buildings in Brooklyn, partnering in 1908 with noted architect Rudolph Daus to establish the firm Daus & Otto. Together, they designed landmarks like the Church of Notre Dame in Morningside Heights (NR, 1980), and the John W. Weber Mansion in Park Slope (NYC HD, 1973).

The congregation merged with Westminster Bethany Presbyterian in the early-1980s, selling the property to the Mount of Olives Seventh-day Adventist Church.

GUSTAVE DOERSCHUCK
HOUSE

14

999 Bushwick Ave
(1890)



In 1890, German-born businessman Gustave Doerschuck purchased a large portion of this block at Bushwick Avenue with plans to build his family home. He was the owner of Empire Brewery and the North American Brewing Co., as well as a partner at Claus Lipsius Brewing Co.

The towered Romanesque Revival mansion is a stand-out in the area, with a brick and rock-face granite façade, a two-story rounded bay, and dentil cornices. The house was sold in 1922 when Doerschuck passed away and his family relocated to residential hotels in the area. After briefly being owned by the Haskel family, it was converted into a two-family home and hosted a variety of uses through the years, including the home and office of gastrointestinal surgeon Dr. Walter Puderbach, whose name is still on the iron gate.

It currently serves as a group home owned by Services for the Underserved (SUS), a non-profit organization that provides support and resources to people with disabilities and people in poverty and homelessness.

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LOUIS BOSSERT HOUSE

1002 Bushwick Ave
(1887, *Theobald Engelhardt*)

Lumber magnate and real estate developer Louis Bossert built this house in 1887 for himself and his second wife, Philippine Louise Krippendorf. Born in Germany, Bossert emigrated to the US in the late 19th century, settling in Bushwick. He served as an officer during the Civil War and later established a successful lumber business, fueled by Brooklyn's rapid population growth.

By the end of the 19th century, his company, Louis Bossert & Son, had its headquarters on Grand Street, with extensive operations including lumberyards, planing mills, warehouses and offices along the Newtown Creek. The company also ventured into house manufacturing and real estate

development, most notably the Bossert Hotel in Brooklyn Heights.

This two-story Queen Anne brick residence was designed by Theobald Engelhardt, the architect of choice for Brooklyn's German-American communities in the borough. In 2012, the building was purchased by a developer who constructed an apartment complex at the rear of the property, while preserving the mansion's historic exterior.

In 1900, noted lawyer and politician Peter P. Huberty purchased this lot for the construction of his family home. He emigrated to the US in 1867 and worked as a teacher for almost 20 years before becoming deputy chief clerk of the Brooklyn Police Department. While there, he studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1893, establishing his own practice. He was married to Rosa Maurer, the daughter of a Brooklyn builder.

The house was designed by Ulrich J. Huberty, their eldest son who later, in partnership with Frank J. Helmle and William H. Hudswell, Jr., designed several prominent Brooklyn landmarks. The two-and-a-half-story, Colonial Revival, brick structure features a red-brick façade with contrasting quoins, a prominent semi-circular portico in the center bay flanked by angled bays, and a wide Palladian dormer set within the hipped roof. A series of additions that harmonize with the original design were made between 1909 and 1928 at the rear and side, all by renowned architectural firms. It was designated as a NYC Landmark in 2017.

PETER & ROSA HUBERTY
HOUSE

1019 Bushwick Ave

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(1900, *Ulrich J. Huberty*; Additions:
1909, *Helmle & Huberty*; 1920,
Boris W. Dorfman; 1926, *L. M.*
Kaufman; 1928, *Horn & Ligeti*)

NYC IL



This group of 32 brick and brownstone rowhouses was built between 1885 and 1901 by various Brooklyn architects in a series of styles representative of late-19th century architecture.

The area remained mostly rural under the English during the 18th and early 19th centuries, but public transportation improvements brought in a wave of speculative residential development.

In 1872, both sides of Linden Street between Broadway and Bushwick Avenue were owned by prominent lawyer and founder of Williamsburgh Savings Bank Samuel M. Meeker. He built a large stand-alone house in 1852 at the corner facing Bushwick Avenue (bottom image), and gradually developed or sold the land by lots. This resulted in a group of Neo-Grec, Queen Anne, Renaissance Revival, and Romanesque Revival rowhouses that share common features such as height, materials, color, continuous decorative cornices, and slightly recessed entries.

Nos. 53 to 37 were designed by architect Frank Keith Irving in the Queen Anne-style, displaying an extensive use of decorative terra cotta and stained-glass transom windows. Next to them are Nos. 35 to 21, a group of neo-Grec row houses designed by Edward F. Gaylor that feature incised-lintel designs and tall stoops with decorative ironwork. At the end of this row are Nos. 19 to 15, designed by Benjamin Finkensieper with Renaissance Revival-style details.

Across the street stands a row of 11 Romanesque/Renaissance Revival-style houses designed by Charles E. Palmer, characterized by rough-faced brownstone, alternating flat facades, and projecting full-height angled bays.

Due to its integrity, the area was designated as a Historic District in 2023 by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

LINDEN ST HISTORIC DISTRICT

53-15 & 34-14 Linden St

(1888, Frank Keith Irving; 1885, Edward F. Gaylor; 1901, Benjamin Finkensieper; 1894-95, Charles E. Palmer)

NYC HD

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The Free and Accepted Masons are one of the oldest fraternal and benevolent organizations in the world. They established chapters in the United States in the mid-19th century, and by the early 20th century almost every city and town in the nation, and many neighborhoods in New York City, had at least one Masonic Lodge.

The classically-inspired Ridgewood Masonic Temple follows the same criteria used in the design of fraternal buildings, selecting prominent sites in prestigious neighborhoods for the location of monumentally-scaled buildings.

The brick structure features an ornate main façade with a rusticated stone base, terra cotta details, two-story arched bays, and Ionic columns at the entry portico. The project was commissioned to the firm Koch & Wagner, which designed numerous residential, commercial, and institutional buildings over 40 years, primarily in Brooklyn and Queens—including the Ralph Bunche House in Kew Gardens (NR 1976, NYC Landmark 2005). In 2014, the Lodge was designated as a NYC Landmark.

**RIDGEWOOD MASONIC
TEMPLE**
18 1052-1054 Bushwick Ave
(1919-20, Koch & Wagner)
NYC IL



**BUSHWICK UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH**
19 1139 Bushwick Ave
(1911-12, George W. Kramer)



partnered with noted church designer Jacob Snyder in 1879, developing what would be known the “Akron plan” for classrooms in Sunday schools. In 1885 Kramer established the firm of Kramer & Weary, relocating to New York in 1894 and founding George W. Kramer & Son. During his 55-year career, Kramer designed 2,200 churches and many public buildings, as well as memorials at Gettysburg and buildings at institutions of higher learning.

Currently, the basement of the church hosts an arts rental space.

In 1887, a one-story frame structure was built at the corner of Bushwick Avenue and Madison Street for the Bushwick Central Methodist Episcopal Church. The congregation had been founded the previous year, hiring architect W. J. Browne for the design. The original building was expanded over the years, until it was replaced in 1911 by this Romanesque Revival style, brick, and terra cotta building designed by George Washington Kramer, and renamed the Bushwick United Methodist Church. One of its main features is the massive octagonal tower, built in polytonal red sandstone and gray brick.

Born in Ashland, Ohio, Kramer began his career working for a contractor, starting his own practice in 1873. He

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TENEMENT AT BUSHWICK AVE

1274-1290 Bushwick Ave
(1889, Frank A. Ames)



wooden cornice caps the group.

Although often categorized as tenements, each building originally had one apartment per floor—offering a higher standard of living while remaining affordable. The development, with an investment equivalent to \$26 million today, was owned, designed, and constructed by local developer Frank A. Ames. Born in Delaware, Ames was active in the late 19th and early 20th centuries before relocating with his family to Huntington, Long Island.

This distinctive row of nine multi-family buildings spans the entire west side of Bushwick Avenue between Eldert and Halsey Streets, forming a cohesive group. It consists of seven three-story brick buildings, flanked by four-story brick buildings at each end. Shared design elements include brownstone lintels, sills, and awnings, as well as decorative checkered brickwork beneath the windows. The corner buildings also feature angled bays and dual entrances, while a continuous, understated

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