

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Grand Concourse Historic District

and or common

## 2. Location

street & number 730-1000; 1100-1520; 1560; 851-1675 Grand Concourse \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Bronx \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of

state New York code 036 county Bronx code 005

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	_____ agriculture	_____ museum
_____ building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	_____ commercial	_____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
_____ structure	_____ both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	_____ educational	_____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
_____ site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	_____ entertainment	_____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
_____ object	NA in process	_____ yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	_____ scientific
	NA being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	_____ industrial	_____ transportation
		_____ no	_____ military	_____ other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Various

street & number

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bronx County Courthouse

street & number 851 Grand Concourse

city, town Bronx \_\_\_\_\_ state N.Y.

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title NA has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_\_\_ yes  no

late \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>NA</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Grand Concourse Historic District extends for over a mile along the Grand Concourse in Bronx County, New York and includes all or part of thirty-six blocks. The historic district is a cohesive area of residential and institutional buildings developed around an important man-made feature--the Grand Concourse itself. The district extends from north of East 160th Street to East 174th Street and the Cross Bronx Expressway and includes all of the contributing buildings and one park which front on the Grand Concourse. On the east side of the Grand Concourse, the boundary is drawn to include No. 730, approximately 375 feet north of East 155th Street. Immediately south of 730 are commercial buildings of little historical or architectural interest. On the east side of the Grand Concourse, the historic district includes all of the buildings north to Mt. Eden Avenue, excluding 1020 Grand Concourse at the southeast corner of 165th Street, the entire frontage between 165th and 166th streets, and the middle of the block between 172nd Street and Mt. Eden Avenue. To the north of Mt. Eden Avenue is a large modern hospital complex and a mix of residential buildings that lack the cohesive quality of the blocks within the historic district. On the west side of the Grand Concourse, the boundary of the historic district begins with the Bronx County Courthouse at 851 Grand Concourse. To the south of the Bronx County Courthouse is Franz Sigel Park, which predates the period of significance of the historic district. On the west side of the Grand Concourse, the historic district extends north to 174th Street, which is parallel to the Cross Bronx Expressway. The site of the Cross Bronx Expressway, which runs along a major geological rift, has always been an important physical division in the Bronx. To the east and west of the boundaries of the Grand Concourse Historic District are blocks built up primarily with apartment buildings. Many of these date from the same period of construction as the buildings within the historic district, but these buildings lack the social and architectural importance of those built on the Concourse itself. To the south of the historic district are Franz Sigel Park, commercial buildings, and schools. The Bronx Post Office (NR listed) is several blocks to the south of the district. To the north of the historic district, the buildings facing on the Grand Concourse lack the cohesive quality of design and integrity found within the district. The exception to this is the stretch of the Grand Concourse from 192nd Street north to East Bedford Park Boulevard, which is being studied and evaluated for National Register eligibility. The historic district consists of 83 contributing buildings and one contributing site (park). The Grand Concourse itself is not considered a contributing element within the historic district because it has been altered and retains few original design features. There are two modern intrusions within the boundaries of the historic district, as well as one older building that has been so heavily altered that it no longer contributes. There is also one building (No. 930) that is non-contributing due to age only. The contributing buildings retain their integrity to a high degree. There have been few major alterations. Many buildings also retain significant original interior public spaces such as ornate lobbies.

The vast majority of the buildings in the Grand Concourse Historic District are apartment houses. There are also two buildings that were erected in the 1920s as private residences. All of the contributing buildings were erected between 1916 and 1941. The design of these buildings ranges from the

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historically derived styles of the 1910s and 1920s to the Art Deco designs of the 1930s and early 1940s. Buildings of various decades are interspersed throughout the historic district since the Grand Concourse was not developed in a planned manner from south to north, but by speculative builders who erected apartment houses along the boulevard as building lots and financing became available. Although the styles vary, the apartment buildings are related in scale, materials, and use of ornament and they form a cohesive street wall extending the length of the historic district. All of the contributing apartment buildings are constructed of brick with stone, cast-stone, and/or terra-cotta trim. Detail is limited on most buildings to entrance enframements, window lintels, and cornices. The entrances are inevitably the most ornate features. Almost all of the buildings are symmetrically massed with rhythmic fenestration. The earlier structures in the historic district have double-hung sash, while most of the later, Art Deco style buildings have metal casements and corner windows. A number of the apartment houses have had their original wood windows or metal casements replaced by aluminum windows. Most of the buildings in the historic district are five or six stories tall. The tallest building is ten stories. Thus, there is a fairly uniform scale throughout. All of the apartment buildings are built out to the building line which accentuates the idea of a solid street wall along the Concourse. The five contributing institutional buildings interspersed throughout the historic district are more varied in height and design, but they too are symmetrically massed masonry structures and they use the same ornamental vocabulary found on the apartment houses.

Almost all of the apartment buildings erected between 1916 and 1928 display neo-Renaissance style architectural detail to some degree. The earliest buildings, such as the five-story apartment houses at Nos. 1220-1244 (Charles Meyers, 1916; photo 5) and Nos. 1454-66 (Charles Kreyborg, 1920-21) are extremely simple, with decorative detail reduced to modest entrance enframements and limited window detail. The larger, six-story buildings of the 1920s often have handsome facades with more ornate neo-Renaissance embellishment.

Two of the finest examples of neo-Renaissance design from the 1920s are Rockwood Hall (Leo Stillman, 1926; photo 9) at No. 1555 and the Louis Mintoff (Charles Schaeffer, 1927-28) at No. 1560. Rockwood Hall extends along the entire block between Rockwood Street and Hawkstone Street. The facade focuses on a one-story pedimented stone entrance pavilion and the building is enlivened by arched windows, diaper patterns of brick, and a scalloped cornice. No. 1560, the Louis Mintoff, combines neo-Renaissance style ornament with a neo-Gothic style entrance. This large building, with three front light courts and three rear light courts, has a superb lobby with marble walls and a coffered ceiling.

Besides the neo-Renaissance style buildings in the district, there are also examples of the Colonial Revival, neo-Tudor, and Mediterranean styles. At

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Nos. 1350 and 1352 are a pair of red brick Colonial Revival style buildings designed in 1923 by Charles B. Meyers. Both of the buildings are ornamented with Federal-inspired terra-cotta detail. Of note are the ornate entrances with such forms as fanlights, colonnettes and a column screen, arched terra-cotta fans above the third floor windows and a Doric entablature at the roofline. Also in the Colonial Revival style is the Concourse Plaza Hotel built on the entire eastern blockfront of the Grand Concourse between 161st and 162nd streets. Designed by the Manhattan firm of Maynicke & Frank in 1922, the ten-story building has a two-story base with upper floors faced with brick and trimmed with terra cotta. Of interest are the carved stone garlands of the second floor, the stone and terra-cotta balustrades, and the urns on the rooftop.

Perhaps the finest Mediterranean style building is the large picturesquely massed structure designed in 1928 by A.B. Bates and T.E. Heindsman at 1235 Grand Concourse. This building displays a round-arched entrance set into a gabled porch, crenellated corner towers, Spanish tile parapets, gables, corbelled oriels, etc. Other Mediterranean buildings are Concourse Plaza South and Concourse Plaza North at 940 and 960 Grand Concourse built in 1927 to designs by Springsteen & Goldhammer. Ornament on these buildings includes twisted columns, corner towers with Spanish tile roofs, and Spanish tile parapets.

One of the finest buildings in the historic district is Buckingham Manor at 1515 Grand Concourse(photo 8). This is a neo-Tudor style apartment house designed by H.I. Feldman in 1926. The corner building has mock half timbering, a rubble stone base, and a pair of entrance lobbies with such medieval-inspired detail as tile floors, vaulted ceilings, and imitation wood paneling done in plaster.

The institutional buildings erected in the historic district during the 1920s complement the apartment buildings. They were designed with Renaissance and Classical detail and were constructed of brick and/or limestone. The Andrew Freedman Home at 1125 Grand Concourse (photo 10) is the grandest of the institutions from this period. It is a symmetrical limestone building with Renaissance-inspired features such as horizontal massing, a rusticated base with round-arched openings, a piano nobile with alternating segmental-arched and triangular pediments, and a projecting cornice. The former Adath Israel Synagogue at 1275 Grand Concourse is an austere limestone building with an, arched entrance set within a monumental portico composed of Corinthian columns flanked by Corinthian pilasters.

Almost all of the Art Deco style buildings in the Grand Concourse Historic District are faced with buff colored brick (two notable exceptions are 1001 and 1035 Grand Concourse, which have red brick facades). Most of the buildings in this style are found in small groups, which adds to their interest. Notable Art Deco units can be seen at 730-750 Grand Concourse



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Building List

What follows is a list of all of the buildings and structures within the boundaries of the Grand Concourse Historic District. Each entry contains the address of the building, architect, date of construction, and major alterations. Notable lobby features are noted where known (a complete survey of lobbies could not be undertaken since many are not accessible to the public. Minor changes, such as alterations to doors and windows, have not been noted. Buildings on the east side of the Grand Concourse are listed first, followed by those on the west side of the street.

EAST SIDE

East 155th Street to East 156th Street

- No. 730. Six-story Art Deco style buff brick building. Jacob M. Felson, architect, 1937-39. Building is identical to No. 740.
- No. 740. Six-story Art Deco style buff brick building. Jacob M. Felson, architect, 1937-39. Building is identical to No. 730.
- No. 750. Six-story Art Deco style buff brick building with red brick bands. Jacob M. Felson, architect, 1936-37. Superb lobby with terrazzo floor, marbleizing, panels with palms, central column with mirrors and lamps.

East 156th Street to East 158th Street

- No. 760. Six-story neo-Renaissance style brick building with terra-cotta trim. Jacob M. Felson, architect, 1926.
- No. 780. The "Franz Sigel." Six-story simplified neo-Renaissance style brick building with limestone trim. Architect unknown, 1926. Identical to No. 790.
- No. 790. The "Virginia." Six-story simplified neo-Renaissance style brick building with limestone trim. Architect unknown, 1926. Identical to No. 780.
- No. 800. Six-story brick modern building. Hyman I. Feldman, architect, 1953-55. Non-contributing building (photo I-1).

East 158th Street to East 159th Street

- No. 840. "Thomas Gardens." Five- and six-story simplified neo-Renaissance style brick building with terra-cotta trim. Garden with Japanese detail. Andrew J. Thomas, architect, 1926-27. See significance statement for discussion of this complex. (photo 1).

East 159th Street to East 161st Street

- No. 860. Six-story Art Deco style buff brick building with terra-cotta detail and stone entrance enframingent. Charles Kreyborg, architect, 1940-41.
- No. 888. Six-story Art Deco style buff brick building with cast-stone base and mosaic entrance. Emery Roth, architect, 1937. See significance statement for discussion of this building. (photo 2).

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East 161st Street to East 162nd Street

No. 900. "Concourse Plaza." Ten-story red brick and stone Colonial Revival style hotel. Now a senior citizen's center. Maynicke & Frank, architects, 1922-23. See significance statement for discussion of this building.

East 162nd Street to East 163rd Street

- No. 910. "Dillerwood Apartments." Eight-story Art Deco style buff brick building. Israel L. Crausman, architect, 1937. Lobby with terrazzo floor, wall mural, and original mirrors and elevator doors.
- No. 930. Eleven-story Art Deco style buff brick building. H. Herbert Lilien, architect, 1944-48. Lobby with terrazzo floor, etched glass doors, and metal elevator doors. Non-contributing due to age only. (photo I-2).

East 163rd Street to East 164th Street

- No. 940. "Concourse Gardens South." Six-story red brick Mediterranean style building with terra-cotta trim and Spanish tile. Springsteen & Goldhammer, architects, 1927.
- No. 960. "Concourse Gardens North." Six-story red brick Mediterranean style building with terra-cotta trim and Spanish tile. Springsteen & Goldhammer, architects, 1927.

East 164th Street to East 165th Street

No. 1000. Ten-story Art Deco style buff brick building. Sugarman & Berger, architects, 1935. See Significance statement for discussion of this building.

[No. 1020 Grand Concourse between East 164th Street and East 165th Street and the entire blockfront on the east side of the Grand Concourse between East 165th Street and East 166th Street are not included in the historic district]

East 166th Street to McClellan Street

- No. 1100. The "John Ericsson." Six-story beige brick neo-Renaissance style building with terra-cotta trim. Gronenberg & Leuchtag, architects, 1927-28. Very similar in design to No. 1075.
- No. 1118. Three-story Classical Revival style limestone and brick courthouse (Children's Court). Architect unknown, c.1929. Poor condition.
- No. 1130. Bronx Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children/later Bronx Y.M. & Y.W.H.A./now Girls Club. Three-story Classical Revival style red brick and limestone building with Corinthian portico. Ralidris & LaVelle, architects, 1925-26.

McClellan Place to East 167th Street

No. 1150. Six-story Art Deco style buff brick building with dark brick bands, cast-stone entrance enframement, and mosaic entrance panel. Horace Ginsbern, 1936-37. Round lobby with terrazzo floor (photos 3-4).

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No. 1166. Six-story Art Deco style buff brick building with cast-stone entrance enframingent. Jacob M. Felson, architect, 1938. Lobby with terrazzo floor, wall mosaic of antelopes, birds, and seahorses, and a fireplace.

No. 1188. Six-story Art Deco style buff brick building with dark brick detail, marble entrance enframingent, and cast-stone detail. Jacob M. Felson, architect, 1936-38.

East 167th Street to East 168th Street

No. 1212. Six-story Art Deco style buff brick building with commercial frontage on East 167th Street. Horace Ginsbern, architect, 1936-37.

No. 1220. Five-story simplified neo-Renaissance style brick building with stucco trim. Charles B. Meyers, architect, 1916-17. Identical to Nos. 1228, 1236, and 1244.

No. 1228. See No. 1220. (photo 5).

No. 1236. See No. 1220. (photo 5).

No. 1244. See No. 1220. (photo 5).

No. 1250. Five-story simplified neo-Renaissance style brick building. Margon & Glaser, architects, 1922. (photo 5).

East 168th Street to East 169th Street

No. 1266-68. "Lavender Court." Five-story simplified neo-Gothic style brick building with cast-stone trim. Charles Kreyborg, architect 1923-24.

No. 1272-78. Five-story simplified neo-Renaissance style brick building with cast-stone trim. Charles Kreyborg, architect, 1922.

East 169th Street to Marcy Place

No. 1290. "Berger Court." Six-story simplified neo-Renaissance style red brick building with stone trim. Sommerfeld & Slechler, architects, 1922.

No. 1304. Five-story simplified neo-Renaissance style pale beige brick building with cast-stone trim. Margon & Glaser, architects, 1923-24.

No. 1314. Five-story simplified neo-Renaissance style red brick building. Springsteen & Goldhammer, architects, 1922-23.

No. 1326. Five-story neo-Renaissance style brick building with terra-cotta trim. Gronenberg & Leuchtag, architects, 1922-23.

Marcy Place to East 170th Street

No. 1350. Six-story Colonial Revival style red brick building with terra-cotta and cast-stone trim. Charles B. Meyers, architect, 1923-24. One of a pair with No. 1362.

No. 1362. Six-story Colonial Revival style red brick building with terra-cotta and cast-stone trim. Charles B. Meyers, architect, 1923-24. One of a pair with No. 1350.

No. 1384. Six-story neo-Renaissance style beige brick building with limestone and terra-cotta trim. Charles Kreyborg, architect, 1922-23. One of a pair with No. 1398.

No. 1398. Six-story neo-Renaissance style beige brick building with limestone



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and terra-cotta trim. Charles Kreyborg, architect, 1922-23. One of a pair with No. 1384.

East 170th Street to East 171st Street

- No. 1400. Six-story astylar red brick building with cast-stone and brick detail. Irving Margon, architect, 1916-17. One of a pair with No. 1410. See significance statement for discussion of these buildings.
- No. 1410. Six-story astylar red brick building with cast-stone and brick detail. Irving Margon, architect, 1916-17. One of a pair with No. 1400.
- No. 1420-24. "Astor Concourse Apartments." Seven-story neo-Renaissance style brick building with stone base and terra-cotta trim. Aymar Embury II, architect, 1924-25. Built for Vincent Astor. Large central court. See significance statement for a discussion of Embury and this building.

East 171st Street to East 172nd Street

- No. 1454. Six-story neo-Renaissance style brick building with cast-stone and tile trim. Charles Kreyborg, architect, 1920-21. Identical to Nos. 1460 and 1466.
- No. 1460. See No. 1454.
- No. 1466. See No. 1454.

East 172nd Street to Mt. Eden Parkway

- No. 1500. Six-story Art Deco style buff brick building with dark brick bands and cast-stone and glass block trim. Jacob M. Felson, architect, 1935. (photo 6).
- No. 1520. Five-story neo-Renaissance style brick building. Architect unknown, c.1920.
- Nos. 1526 and 1540 are outside of the boundaries of the historic district.
- No. 1560. The "Louis Mintoff." Six-story neo-Renaissance style building with neo-Gothic detail. Brick with terra-cotta trim. Charles Schaefer, Jr., architect, 1927-28. Expansive lobby with marble walls and coffered ceiling

WEST SIDE

East 158th Street to East 161st Street (Lou Gehrig Plaza)

- No. 851. Bronx County Courthouse (also known as Bronx County Building). Nine-story stylized Neoclassical style limestone building used as courthouse and municipal offices. Joseph Freedlander and Max Hausle, architects, 1931-34. Sculpted frieze by Charles Keck. Monumental freestanding sculpture groups supervised by Adolf A. Weinman and designed by Weinman, George H. Snowden, Joseph Kiselewski, and Edward F. Sandford, Jr. Listed on the National Register.

East 161st Street to East 164th Street

- Joyce Kilmer Park. Approximately seventeen-acre park. Flat landscape with trees and formal walks. Two sculptures--at corner of East 161st Street

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and Walton Avenue is statue of Louis J. Heintz (photo 11) by French sculptor Pierre-Luc Feitu; at north end of park is the Heinrich Heine Memorial by Ernst Herter. See significance statement for a discussion of this park.

East 164th Street to East 165th Street

- No. 1001-9. Six-story Art Deco style red brick building with limestone entrance enframingent. Original aluminum address numbers. Horace Ginsbern, architect 1940-41.
- No. 1015. Six-story Art Deco style buff brick building with cast-stone entrance enframingent. H. Herbert Lilien, architect, 1941.
- No. 1025. Two-story Mediterranean style stucco residence with stone trim. Now "Medicos Hispano." Thomas Dunn, architect, 1922.
- No. 1027. Four-story simplified neo-Renaissance style brick residence with limestone trim. Now Oblate Sister of the Most Holy Redeemer Convent. Emil Paulsen, architect, 1922.
- No. 1035. Six-story Art Deco style red brick building with brick detailing. Entrance with original aluminum address lettering. Horace Ginsbern, architect, 1939.

East 165th Street to East 166th Street

- No. 1049. Five-story simplified neo-Renaissance style pale yellow brick building. Gronenberg & Leuchtag, 1917.
- No. 1055. Five-story simplified neo-Renaissance style red brick building. Gronenberg & Leuchtag, architects 1918.
- No. 1075. The "David Farragut." Six-story neo-Renaissance style beige brick building with terra-cotta trim. Gronenberg & Leuchtag, architects, 1927-28. Similar to No. 1100.

East 166th Street to McClellan Street

- No. 1125. Andrew Freedman Home. Three-story Italian Renaissance style limestone building. Joseph H. Freedlander and Harry Allan Jacobs, architects, 1924-28. (photo 10).

McClellan Street to Tudor Place

- No. 1153. Six-story neo-Renaissance style pale yellow brick building with cast-stone trim. Charles Kreyborg, architect 1921-22. Almost identical to Nos. 1173 and 1183.
- No. 1173. See No. 1153.

Tudor Place to East 167th Street

- No. 1183. See No. 1153.
- No. 1197. Five-story astylar brick building with stone entrance enframingent. Architect unknown, c.1920.

East 167th Street to East 168th Street

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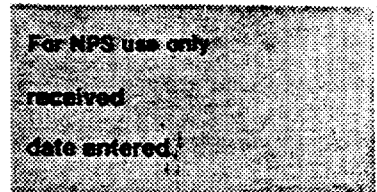
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- No. 1215. Five-story simplified Colonial Revival style brick building with cast-stone trim. Springsteen & Goldhammer, architects, 1919. See significance statement for discussion of this building. (photo 7).
- No. 1227. Six-story Art Deco style buff brick building with dark brick bands. William Shary, architect, 1937.
- No. 1235. Six-story Mediterranean style pale yellow brick building with picturesque massing of towers, parapets, oriels, and gables. A.B. Bates and T.E. Heindsman, architects, 1928-29.

East 168th Street to East 169th Street

- No. 1269. The "Joseph Arms." Five-story simplified neo-Renaissance style red brick building with cast-stone trim. Theodore F. Price, architect, 1923-24.
- No. 1275. Congregation Adath Israel/now Grand Concourse Seventh Day Adventist Temple. Two-story Classical Revival style limestone synagogue. Architect unknown, c.1927.

East 169th Street to Clarke Place

- No. 1295. "Sagmore Apartments." Six-story Art Deco style buff brick building with dark brick bands and granite and cast-stone entrance enframingent. Herman M. Cohn, architect, 1938.
- No. 1299. Five-story simplified neo-Renaissance style red brick building with cast-stone trim. Nathan Rotholy, architect, 1922.

Clarke Place to Marcy Place

- No. 1325. Six-story neo-Venetian Renaissance style beige brick building with stone detail. Margon & Glaser, architects, 1923-24.
- No. 1345. Roman Catholic Church of Christ the King School. Modern building. Non-contributing structure. (photo I-3).

Marcy Place to Elliott Place

- No. 1355. Five-story neo-Renaissance style red brick building with stone trim. Jacob M. Felson, architect, 1922.
- No. 1375. Five-story simplified neo-Gothic style beige brick building with cast-stone trim. Theodore F. Price, architect, 1923.

Elliott Place to East 170st Street

- No. 1387. Six-story neo-Renaissance style red brick and stucco building. M. Landesedel, architect, 1923-24.
- No. 1401. Five-story simplified neo-Renaissance style red brick building with cast-stone trim. Irving Margon, architect, 1921-22.

East 170th Street to East 171st Street

- No. 1403. Five-story neo-Renaissance style brick building. George and Edward Blum, architects, 1916. Identical to Nos. 1411 and 1417.
- No. 1411. See No. 1403.
- No. 1417. See No. 1403.

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No. 1421-25. Six-story neo-Renaissance style brick building. George and Edward Blum, architects, 1916-17.

East 171st Street to East 172nd Street

No. 1455-99. "Roosevelt Gardens." Charles S. Clark, architect, 1922-23. Six-story complex with large central court. Heavily altered. Non-contributing structure. (photo I-4).

East 172nd Street to Rockwood Street

No. 1505. Eight-story Art Deco style buff brick building with pale brick bands. H. Herbert Lilien, architect, 1938.

No. 1515. "Buckingham Court." Six-story neo-Tudor style brick building with rubble stone base and stucco, stone, and half-timber trim. Pair of lobbies with medieval-inspired detail including tile floors, plaster paneling in imitation of wood, and vaulted ceilings. H.L. Feldman, architect, 1926-27. (photo 8).

Rockwood Street to Hawkstone Street

No. 1555. "Rockwood Hall." Six-story neo-Renaissance style beige brick building with rusticated stone base and terra-cotta and brick trim. Leo Stillman, architect, 1926. (photo 9).

Hawkstone Street to Mt. Eden Avenue

No. 1565. Five-story neo-Renaissance style red brick building with cast-stone trim. Goldner & Goldberg, architects, 1919-20. Similar to No. 1575.

No. 1575. Five-story neo-Renaissance style red brick building with cast-stone trim. Goldner & Goldberg, architects, 1919-20. Similar to No. 1565.

Mt. Eden Avenue to East 174th Street

No. 1645. "Mt. Eden Plaza." Six-story neo-Renaissance style beige brick building with stone trim. George G. Miller, architect, 1925-26.

No. 1665. Five-story neo-Renaissance style beige brick building with limestone trim. Andrew J. Thomas, architect, 1919-20.

No. 1675. Six-story Art Deco style buff brick building with dark brick spandrels and bands. Jacob M. Felson, architect, 1936.

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1941	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1916-1929 and 1934-1941 **Builder/Architect** various

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Grand Concourse Historic District is architecturally significant for its intact concentration of early twentieth century apartment houses and institutional buildings erected along the southern portion of the Grand Concourse, a major speedway and parkway planned in 1893 to connect Central Park in Manhattan with the expansive parks of the north Bronx. Although the parkway itself does not retain enough integrity of its original landscape design to be considered a contributing component of the nomination, its presence was a primary catalyst in the district's development and the broad boulevard lends an important visual quality to the district. The buildings in the district, erected between 1916 and 1941, were designed in a variety of early twentieth century eclectic styles, including the Neo-Renaissance, Neo-Tudor, Colonial Revival, and Mediterranean styles. Also included in the district is a group of distinguished Art Deco style apartment houses. The vast majority of the buildings were designed by local Bronx architects, including Jacob M. Felson and Horace Ginsbern. Several buildings were designed by Manhattan architects, including Joseph Freedlander, Harry Allan Jacobs, Aymar Embury, Emery Roth, Andrew J. Thomas, and the firm of Maynicke & Frank. The buildings in the district, set along the edge of a natural ridge, are all related in scale, materials, and use of ornament, and they form an impressive and cohesive street wall extending the length of the entire district.

The contributing buildings of the Grand Concourse Historic District were erected as a direct result of the planning and construction of the Grand Concourse itself. The Grand Concourse runs north-south through the West Bronx. The West Bronx, formerly a part of Westchester County, was annexed by New York City in 1874. It was referred to as the "annexed district" or as the 23rd and 24th wards. The West Bronx has the hilliest topography in New York City, consisting of hills, valleys, and rock outcroppings that have always made travel through the area difficult. One of the most notable geologic features of the West Bronx was a ridge running north-south across the area approximately one-half mile from the Harlem River. This ridge became the site of the Grand Concourse.

In the late nineteenth century, the West Bronx was still sparsely populated with settlement concentrated in a few old villages such as Melrose and Morrisania. Elsewhere in the West Bronx were a few large rural estates. Since the Bronx remained largely undeveloped, New York City established a commission in 1884 to acquire parkland. Approximately four thousand acres were acquired, primarily in the North Bronx, including the land that is now Van Cortlandt, Bronx, and Pelham parks. After this vast acreage was acquired,

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it remained relatively inaccessible to people living in the densely populated city since there were no roads or mass transit lines leading to the parks. In 1891, the city established the Department of Street Improvement for the 23rd and 24th Wards. This department's mandate was to lay out streets throughout the West Bronx. One of its finest achievements was the Grand Concourse, which finally linked New York City's population center with the parks.

The first commissioner of the new department was Louis J. Heintz (Heintz is commemorated in a statue done by French sculptor Pierre-Luc Feitu that was erected in 1909 and is now located in Joyce Kilmer Park; see photo 11). He appointed Louis S. Risse as his chief engineer. It was Louis Risse who was directly responsible for the Grand Concourse. Risse (1851-1923) was born in St. Avoild, Lorraine, France. He came to the United States at the age of seventeen. In America he studied civil engineering and topography and worked as a railroad surveyor before moving to the Bronx where he helped lay out Morrisania and surveyed many areas of Westchester County. He had spent a great deal of time walking and hunting in the West Bronx and was familiar with the topography of the area.

Risse thought of the idea for the Grand Concourse as a response to a campaign by the Rider and Driver Club of New York City for the construction of a speedway on which to run horses and carriages. In about 1891, the club proposed a speedway along the west side of Central Park, but this idea ran into opposition. Soon after this, John De La Vergne, president of the club and head of the De La Vergne Refrigerating Company of the Bronx, suggested to Louis Heintz that a speedway should be constructed along Jerome Avenue (Jerome Avenue is a few blocks west of the Grand Concourse). Heintz asked Risse for his opinion. In 1902, Risse wrote about the genesis of the Grand Concourse plan:

That night I pondered the subject long and earnestly. Coupled with this matter of a Speedway I was giving serious consideration to the necessity of supplying that missing link between the upper and lower park systems [Central Park and the Bronx parks] which the Commission had failed to provide in 1884.<sup>1</sup>

Risse felt that the ridge which ran to the east of Jerome Avenue would be the ideal site for as "broad and grand avenue"<sup>2</sup> that would serve as both a speedway and as a connection between the Manhattan and Bronx parks. As Risse later noted:

Nature has provided a Grand Boulevard and Concourse for the North Side [the Bronx] and the City of New York such as no other city in the world possesses. Northward from the Cedar Parks, west to the Harlem Railroad and between Jerome and Webster Avenues, stretches a magnificent ridge extending all the way to Mosholu Parkway near Van Cortlandt Park, a distance of four and one quarter miles. Its

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varied topography, charming views, natural condition and peculiar adaptability for a Grand Boulevard and its location, geographically considered, in the centre of the upper half of New York City, where means of access to the entire Metropolis can be furnished....The summit of the ridge, which it would be a sacrilege against Nature to disturb, is the line upon which the Concourse is located....In a word, Nature seems to have specially designed this ridge for a grand approach to the New Parks.<sup>3</sup>

Of major importance to the success of Risse's plan was his contention that construction of the Grand Boulevard & Concourse would immediately increase the value of land adjacent to it. Risse was not the first to see the importance of a parkway in increasing adjoining land values. Earlier in the nineteenth century, Frederick Law Olmsted had argued that the construction of Eastern Parkway (1870-74; NR listed) and Ocean Parkway (1874-76; NR listed) in Brooklyn would increase land values along their routes. Olmsted believed that one of the positive effects that urban parks had was to increase real estate values on the streets bordering the parkland. This proved to be the case in many instances; in New York City, this is evident on residential streets such as Fifth Avenue and Central Park West bordering Central Park and Prospect Park West adjacent to Prospect Park. Although a rise in real estate values was not the major reason why Olmsted championed parkways, he did anticipate that extending parks along parklike streets would, in effect, extend the edges of the parks and increase real estate values along the parkways as well. Olmsted believed that first class housing would be developed along his parkways. Like Olmsted, Risse believed that his parkway, The Grand Boulevard and Concourse, would increase the value of adjoining land and lead to the construction of large homes. He reported that he told Commissioner Heintz that "the great enhancement in real estate values which the construction of the Concourse must necessarily produce will repay the City many times over the original cost of the undertaking."<sup>4</sup>

As originally constructed, the Grand Boulevard and Concourse consisted of a street that was 144 feet wide and was bounded on either side by twenty-two-foot-wide sidewalks. The central speedway was fifty-eight feet wide and was divided by a relatively narrow mall. Six-foot-wide malls divided the speedway from thirty-seven foot wide service roads. The service roads allowed for access to buildings on the Concourse and to local streets. The Concourse was planned to "provide walks, sidewalks, promenades, bicycle paths, driveways, etc."<sup>5</sup> Traffic on major cross streets was planned to pass under the Concourse on transverse roads.

Early in 1893, Risse presented his plans for the Grand Boulevard and Concourse to the public and received extensive local endorsement. In 1895, the New York State Legislature passed a bill allowing the land along the Grand Concourse right-of-way to be taken and paid for. Soon after, the plans were officially

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filed for the Grand Boulevard and Concourse and condemnation proceedings began. Title to the land was vested to the city in 1897. Construction did not officially begin until 1897. Work on the Concourse was scheduled to take one thousand days, but it actually took seven years due to widespread corruption and problems that arose because of the solidity of the bedrock along the route. The Grand Boulevard and Concourse was officially opened in November 25, 1909.

The original Grand Concourse began at Cedar Park on East 161st Street. The roadway was reached from Manhattan via the Macombs Dam Bridge (opened in 1895). South of East 161st Street the Grand Concourse ran into Mott Avenue. The entrance to the Concourse from 161st Street consisted of a curving road and a group of small open park plots. This entrance was removed when it and all of the open space between the Concourse and Walton Avenue and from East 161st Street to East 164th Street were incorporated into Joyce Kilmer Park in c.1924. The Heine Monument, also called the Lorelei Fountain, anchored the entrance. This fountain has been placed within the present park.

The Concourse was such a successful road that in July 1924, Logan Billingsley, a West Bronx realtor, suggested extending the Concourse south along Mott Avenue to East 138th Street.<sup>6</sup> This extension runs past the Bronx County Courthouse and along the side of Cedar Park (now Franz Sigel Park). Franz Sigel Park, the courthouse, and several contributing apartment buildings on the east side of the Concourse's extension between East 153rd and East 161st streets are included in the historic district.

The look of the Concourse has changed since it was originally laid out. In the early 1930s construction of the IND subway beneath the street caused the road surface to be dug up. After subway construction was completed in 1933, the Concourse was repaved and the central mall removed. The side malls were reduced in size and replanted. At this time, the original trees were removed to Pelham Park. Although the parkway itself does not retain enough integrity of its original landscape design to be considered a contributing component of the nomination, the broad boulevard still lends an important visual quality to the district.

When it opened, the Grand Concourse ran through a sparsely settled area. To the east of the historic district were the Melrose Yards of the New York City and Harlem River Railroad and the working-class community of Melrose. To the west, towards the Harlem River, were a few scattered buildings. To the south, across the tracks of the Spuyten Duyvil and Port Morris Branch of the New York Central Railroad, was the community of Mott Haven with its frame houses, masonry tenements, and factories. None of these communities bordered on the Grand Concourse and the boulevard was ripe for residential development.

Residential development within the historic district began in 1916 when New York City Building's Department applications were submitted for the



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construction of ten buildings. The development of the historic district can be divided into two periods. The first period extends from 1916 through 1928. During these twelve years, fifty-seven of the seventy-six contributing apartment houses (approximately 75%) were erected. All of these buildings were designed in the historicist styles popular during the second and third decades of the twentieth century. The earliest buildings in the district--four apartment buildings designed by Charles Meyers in 1916 at Nos. 1220, 1228, 1236, and 1244 (photo 5), Irving Margon's pair of apartment houses at Nos. 1400 and 1410 (1916-17), and Springsteen & Goldhammer's apartment house at No. 1215 (1919; photo 7), for example--are extremely simple five-story walkups. These buildings have brick facades and generally have extremely restrained ornamentation. The limited ornament on most of these buildings, as well as the balanced rhythmic fenestration, is derived from the vocabulary of Renaissance architecture and the style of most of these buildings can be referred to as simplified neo-Renaissance. These buildings were erected for people of modest incomes. At the time these buildings were being erected, the West Bronx was just beginning to be developed with apartment houses. Speculative development in this untried neighborhood was probably seen as being somewhat risky and, as in most New York City neighborhoods, the earliest buildings entailed only a moderate financial outlay. These early buildings were not all erected in one location, but can be found throughout the historic district. Although simple in their exterior design, the early Grand Concourse buildings did not pass without notice in the architecture press. On June 23, 1917, the Real Estate Record and Builders Guide wrote an article on 1400 and 1410 Grand Concourse, commenting both on the character of their design and layout and on the intended tenants:

The planning of these buildings is quite unusual in a number of respects and the completed structures will embody some interesting features not generally encountered in apartment houses that are designed for the return of moderate rentals.<sup>7</sup>

Among the features that the article discusses are the large central court around which the two buildings were laid out, the large and well-proportioned rooms, the excellent provisions for light and ventilation, and the privacy of the stair halls. In 1917, the Real Estate Record also had an article about George and Edward Blum's buildings at 1421-25 Grand Concourse.<sup>8</sup>

In 1920, Springsteen & Goldhammer's building at 1215 Grand Concourse (photo 7) won a Medal of Honor from the Architectural League of New York for the non-fireproof class of multi-family house architecture. In 1921, Architectural Record discussed the design of this apartment house:

This building itself indicates how a very simple and straightforward architectural design may add good proportion and dignity to the material most commonly in use for this class of building, without adding unnecessary detail and expense to the result. For certainly

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it would be difficult to find anywhere among our apartment house facades, a structure using less embellishment and depending so much upon good proportions and an intelligent use of brickwork for the success and interest of its appeal.<sup>9</sup>

In 1917, the Real Estate Record and Builders Guide noted that:

Quite a large number of multi-family dwellings have been erected in this vicinity [near East 170th Street] during recent months and there is still opportunity for other speculative builders and investors to build additional houses of a like nature.<sup>10</sup>

In the years following the publication of these comments, a large number of new buildings, both modest apartment houses and more ornate structures, were erected in the historic district. As has been noted, ten buildings were begun in the first year of construction within the district. In the next two years only two buildings were begun, but between 1919 and 1927, at least three buildings were begun in every year except 1924 and 1925 (in these years and in 1928 one building was begun each year). The onset of the Depression in 1929 brought a halt to all building in the historic district.

Some of the buildings from the 1920s are simple five-story walkups, but most are six-story structures with ornamental facades, large apartments, grand lobbies, and elevators. These apartment houses were erected largely for middle-class families who were escaping the slums and ghettos of Manhattan. A large number of Jewish families from the Lower East Side moved into the Grand Concourse apartment buildings as they were completed. The majority of the apartment buildings erected in the 1920s were also designed in the neo-Renaissance style. Approximately half of the buildings in the district exhibit some form of Renaissance-inspired detail. The detail on some of these buildings from the 1920s is almost as simple as that found on buildings from the earlier decade. Buildings such as the Franz Sigel and Virginia (1926, architect unknown) at 780 and 790 Grand Concourse have little ornament. However, such buildings as Rockwood Hall (Leo Stillman, 1926; photo 9) at No. 1555 and the Louis Mintoff (Charles Schaefer, 1927-28) at No. 1560 have very handsome facades with ornate Renaissance detail. Buildings in other styles also display fine ornament. Examples include the Colonial Revival style buildings designed by Charles B. Meyers in 1923 at 1350 and 1352 Grand Concourse, A.B. Bates and T.E. Heindsman's Mediterranean style building at No. 1235 (1928-29), and H.L. Feldman's neo-Tudor style Buckingham Manor of 1929 at 1515 Grand Concourse (photo 8).

The most unusual apartment building in the historic district is Thomas Gardens at 840 Grand Concourse. Thomas Gardens was built in 1926 with money provided by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. The complex was named for its architect, Andrew J. Thomas. Thomas Gardens is located on the entire block bounded by the Grand

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Concourse, Concourse Village West (originally Sheridan Avenue), East 158th Street, and East 159th Street. The building was planned as a non-profit cooperative where co-ops would purchase apartments from the sponsor or cooperative, pay a monthly maintenance charge, and receive the purchase price back at the time they moved out. The apartment could not be sold at a profit. The buildings were planned as "a step...toward solving the problem of supplying at moderate cost attractive modern and healthful homes for the families of workers in New York City."<sup>11</sup>

Non-profit cooperatives flourished in the Bronx in the 1920s. Contemporary with Thomas Gardens were the United Workers Cooperative Apartments (NR listed) on Bronx Park East and Amalgamated Houses on Van Cortlandt Park South. Thomas Gardens differed from most of the other non-profit cooperatives in that it was sponsored and financed by a private capitalist and not by a union or by building residents. Rockefeller limited his return on the Thomas Gardens investment to 6%. At the time he was involved with Thomas Gardens, Rockefeller was also building the Dunbar Apartments (NR listed), a non-profit cooperative for black families in Harlem.

The idea for Thomas Gardens is supposed to have originated with needle trade unions. Rockefeller agreed to become involved and the five- and six-story complex with 175 apartments of from four to seven rooms was erected. Rockefeller commissioned the design from Andrew J. Thomas, a major proponent of decent housing for working people. Thomas designed many notable housing complexes in New York City including Dunbar and garden cooperatives in Jackson Heights, Queens. Thomas Gardens is a modified U-shaped structure built around a garden. According to a promotional statement about the building and its architecture, the "architectural effect will be obtained principally by mass treatment with occasional details to relieve the larger lines. The buildings will be constructed of Holland brick, of light buff and variegated colors."<sup>12</sup> The brick is quite unusual, particularly at the entrances on East 158th and East 159th streets (photo 1). Each of these round-arched entrances is surrounded by radiating bands of bricks that get wider as it gets farther from the entrance. The sunburst-like brick panel is framed by a stone enframingent and at the crest of the brick pattern is a terra-cotta peacock with its feathers unfolded.

The garden of the complex is extraordinary, both for its original design and for its survival. The garden was planned with a Japanese feeling:

In the center will be a Japanese Rockery with a native footbridge across running water. The garden will be set with shrubbery and walks arranged in artistic landscaping. From the interior windows the effect created is that the garden is a recess off Franz Sigel Park.<sup>13</sup>

This relationship between the garden and Franz Sigel Park is no longer evident

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since the Bronx County Courthouse was erected across the street in 1931-34 on a portion of the park land. The original Japanese bridges, lanterns, much of the planting, and other features of the garden are extant.

Another important residential-related building from the 1920s is the Concourse Plaza Hotel at 900 Grand Concourse between East 161st and East 162nd streets. This imposing Colonial Revival style structure was the first hotel in the Bronx and was a prestigious transient and residence hostelry. The hotel was dedicated in October 1923 by Governor Alfred Smith. It was planned to "enable the social life of the borough to assemble amid luxurious surroundings."<sup>14</sup> For many years this was the most socially prestigious place for weddings, bar mitzvahs, political dinners, and other events in the Bronx. The building was designed by the Manhattan firm of Maynicke & Frank. This firm designed a large number of commercial buildings in Manhattan during the first decades of the twentieth century and is best known for its somewhat Mannerist-inspired buildings in the Ladies Mile area. This is Maynicke & Frank's only known work in the Bronx. The hotel deteriorated in the 1960s and 1970s and was closed. It has been rehabilitated and in 1982 it reopened as senior citizen housing.

Between 1929 and 1934, no residential construction was undertaken in the historic district. In 1935, construction began again and between that year and 1941 nineteen new apartment houses were erected. All of these are Art Deco style buildings reflecting the change in architectural taste that occurred in the 1930s. The West Bronx has one of America's largest concentrations of Art Deco style residential buildings and some of the finest examples are within the Grand Concourse Historic District. The first major Art Deco apartment building in the Bronx was the Park Plaza Apartments (NR listed) at 1005 Jerome Avenue of 1929-31.<sup>15</sup> By the time building activity began to rebound in the mid-1930s, the popularity of this style had totally replaced the historically based styles popular in earlier decades. Among the major Art Deco monuments within the Grand Concourse Historic District is 888 Grand Concourse (photo 2), designed in 1937 by Emery Roth, one of New York City's most fashionable and talented apartment house architects. According to Steven Ruttenbaum, in his study of Roth and his work, the building is "one of the city's most distinguished Moderne compositions."<sup>16</sup> Also of exceptional note are No. 1150 (photos 2-3), designed by Horace Ginsbern in 1936 and best known for an extraordinary mosaic of fish that is set to the left of the entrance, and No. 1500 (photo 6), a beautifully detailed building designed by Jacob M. Felson in 1935. These buildings, and their contemporaries on the Grand Concourse, were erected at the height of the Jewish migration to the West Bronx. They housed many of the most affluent families moving into the area.

An Art Deco building of special interest is 1000 Grand Concourse, designed by Sugarman & Berger in 1935. This ten-story building, the first apartment building on the Concourse of over six stories, is reputed to have been "the first high class apartment house to be built of reinforced concrete in the

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East."<sup>17</sup> According to the New York City building code of the day, six stories was the maximum height for non-fireproof residential construction.<sup>18</sup> The existence of solid rock on the building site of 1000 Grand Concourse made the construction of a non-fireproof building impossible since such a building was required to have a basement. Thus, a fireproof building of reinforced concrete was constructed. The building has concrete floor slabs and can be seen as the progenitor of the luxury apartment buildings constructed in New York in the 1980s. Among the other interesting features of the building are "the fact that it has as many corner windows as Architects Sugarman & Berger could squeeze into the plan, and every bedroom has a bathroom."<sup>19</sup>

The final building erected within the historic district in its period of significance is No. 1015, an Art Deco structure designed by H. Herbert Lilien in 1941. There is, however, one later building that contributes to the district in all but date of construction. No. 930, an Art Deco style building designed by Lilien in 1944 and completed in 1948, is classified as non-contributing due to age only.

Almost all of the apartment buildings in the historic district were the work of architects who specialized in the design of multiple dwellings. Many of these architects had offices in the Bronx, while others had Manhattan offices, but worked extensively in the Bronx. Little is known about most of these local architects. The most prolific architect represented in the historic district was Charles Kreymborg (1878-?) Between 1921 and 1940, Kreymborg designed eleven buildings that are within the Grand Concourse Historic District. He is one of only two architects whose work is represented in both periods of the district's architectural development. Kreymborg's buildings include a large number of modest five- and six-story neo-Renaissance style structures and a single Art Deco style work. Kreymborg was raised in the Bronx and apprenticed in the office of local architect Charles Stegmeyer.<sup>20</sup> He opened his own office in about 1920 and some of his earliest designs were for buildings in the historic district.

One of the most interesting firms active in the historic district during the early years of development was Springsteen & Goldhammer. George W. Springsteen (1879-1954) studied architecture at Pratt Institute while his partner Albert Goldhammer (1890-1956) studied at Cooper Union. Their partnership began as early as 1919 when the award-winning 1215 Grand Concourse (photo 7) was designed. Elsewhere in the district they designed a neo-Renaissance style building at No. 1314 (1922) and Concourse Gardens South and North at 940 and 960 Grand Concourse (1927). The two Concourse Gardens buildings have large garden courts opening onto the street and Joyce Kilmer Park beyond. This courtyard form is typical of Springsteen & Goldhammer's work. It appears at the United Workers Cooperative Apartments (NR listed) and the Amalgamated Houses, both of which they designed.

Leo Stillman, architect of Rockwood Hall (1926; photo 9) at 1555 Grand

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Concourse, one of the largest and finest neo-Renaissance style buildings in the historic district, was born in Russia and educated at City College. He is known to have designed apartment buildings in Rego Park, Queens and in Manhattan, as well as in the Bronx. Also responsible for one contributing building in the district was Hyman I. Feldman (1899-c.1985) whose Buckingham Court (1926-27; photo 8) is at 1515 Grand Concourse. A native of Austria, Feldman was educated at City College, Cornell, Yale, and the Columbia School of Architecture. He opened his architectural office in 1921 and is reputed to have designed over 4000 buildings, including the Pierrepont Hotel in the Brooklyn Heights Historic District (NR listed), LaGuardia Houses, and apartment buildings all over New York City.

The majority of the Art Deco buildings in the historic district were designed by two very talented architects. Jacob M. Felson (1866-1962) was born in New York and educated at Columbia University and Pratt Institute. He established his own firm after World War I. Nine buildings in the district are Felson's work. Two of these are neo-Renaissance style buildings dating from 1922 and 1926 (Nos. 1355 and 760) and seven are Art Deco style structures. Felson's designs are notable for their use of structural polychromy. Almost all of his buildings are enlivened by a use of horizontal and vertical brick banding and spandrel panels that contrast with the buff brick facing.

Horace Ginsbern (1900-1969) was responsible for four exceptional Art Deco style buildings. Ginsbern was born in New York City and educated at Columbia.<sup>21</sup> By 1921, he had organized his own office, which was extremely active in Bronx apartment house construction. Ginsbern specialized in the design and layout of apartments and, besides his Bronx work, he was asked to assist in the planning of the Harlem River Houses (NR listed), New York City's first federally financed public housing complex. How much input Ginsbern had in the facade designs for his Grand Concourse buildings is unclear. According to Ginsbern's assistant, Marvin Fine, after 1928 Ginsbern left the design of the elevations of his buildings to other architects. Except for a period in the late 1930s (possibly during the time that several of the apartment buildings in the historic district were designed), Fine was responsible for the facade designs.

Also active in the historic district during the second period of development was H. Herbert Lilien (1898- ). Lilien was responsible for some of the last buildings erected in the district. Lilien was educated at the School of Fine Arts and Engineering at Fawcett, New Jersey and worked in that state until coming to New York in 1929. The Depression dampened Lilien's career in New York, but by the late 1930s, as construction activity increased, Lilien became a successful apartment house architect.

Israel L. Crausman (1899- ), one of the Bronx's most active architects, designed a single Art Deco building in the historic district (No. 910 in 1941). Crausman was born in Russia and came to the United States in 1913.

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After studying at Cooper Union he established his firm in 1922, designing over three hundred buildings in his first seven years in practice.

Several prominent New York City architects designed buildings in the historic district. As has already been noted, Emery Roth designed 888 Grand Concourse and the firm of Maynicke & Frank was responsible for the Concourse Plaza Hotel. Andrew J. Thomas, architect of Thomas Gardens, also designed the earlier, and much more modest building at 1665 Grand Concourse in 1919. Just as John D. Rockefeller, Jr. sought out Andrew J. Thomas for his Thomas Gardens project, so Vincent Astor commissioned the well-known architect Aymar Embury II to design his Grand Concourse project, the Astor Concourse Apartments at No. 1424 (1924-25). Aymar Embury II (1880-1966) was a native New Yorker who was educated at Princeton. Embury favored traditional design modes and his Grand Concourse building is a restrained neo-Renaissance style structure. Much of Embury's work of the 1920s has the severe simplicity seen at the Astor Concourse. Embury's most famous work dates from the 1930s, when he designed the Triborough and Bronx-Whitestone bridges in association with engineer O.H. Ammann; he was also responsible for many structures erected by the New York City Parks Department, including several WPA swimming pools and the Prospect Park Zoo. The Astor Concourse is a six and seven story building erected around a large central court. It followed in the tradition of the Astor family's earlier courtyard apartments--the Apthorp (NR listed) on Broadway and West 79th Street and the Graham Court on Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard and West 116th Street. Nothing is known about the other architects who designed apartment houses in the historic district.

Coinciding with the development of apartment buildings on the Grand Concourse was the construction of buildings and parks by institutions and the government. Along the entire length of the Grand Concourse are synagogues, churches, clubs, courthouses, and parks. Within the Grand Concourse Historic District are five institutional buildings and one park. The most prominent institutional building in the historic district is the Bronx County Courthouse (NR listed) at 831 Grand Concourse. This monumental nine-story limestone building was erected at the northern end of Franz Sigel Park. Stylistically, it reflects the severe Neoclassicism popular during the 1930s, particularly for government buildings. Built in 1931-34, the Bronx County Courthouse was designed by Joseph H. Freedlander (1878-1943) and Max Hausle (1897-?). Freedlander trained at M.I.T and at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. The symmetrical facades, axial plan, and extensive sculptural embellishment on the building reflects the influence of Freedlander's Beaux-Arts training. Freedlander is best known as the architect of the Museum of the City of New York on Fifth Avenue. Hausle was born and trained in Switzerland. After coming to America he worked on buildings in the Bronx. The Bronx County Courthouse is the only time that Freedlander and Hausle worked together and Hausle was probably involved in the project because of his Bronx political connections and the fact that he had previously designed two courthouses in the borough. The extensive sculptural design on the building was undertaken by several noted

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Grand Concourse H.D.

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sculptors including Charles Keck and Adolph Weinman.

Joseph Freedlander also worked on the historic district's other major institutional building, the Andrew Freedman Home (1924-29) at 1125 Grand Concourse. Freedlander designed this building in association with Harry Allan Jacobs (1872-1932), a well-known architect who designed many townhouses in the Upper East Side Historic District (NR listed). The imposing Italian Renaissance inspired Freedman Home is constructed of limestone and is set back from the Concourse behind an extensive garden. Andrew Freedman, a Russian immigrant, was a contractor who was often referred to as the "Father of the New York Subway."<sup>22</sup> Freedman established this home for "aged and indigent gentlefolk...of culture and refinement."<sup>23</sup> His idea was to create a pleasant environment for elderly indigent people who had once been affluent. The building is now vacant.

The district also includes several other institutional buildings, although they are less grand in scale than the Bronx County Courthouse and the Andrew Freeman Home. These include Congregation Adath Israel (now Grand Concourse 7th Day Adventist Temple, c.1927, architect unknown), an imposing Classical Revival style synagogue at the southwest corner of East 169th Street; a vacant Classical Revival style building at 1118 Grand Concourse that was built for Children's Court (c. 1929, architect unknown); and the Bronx Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (later a YM-YWCA; now a Girls Club; Ralidris & LaVelle, architects, 1925-26), a Neoclassical style building with an unusual portico and front stairway, at 1130 Grand Concourse.

The historic district also contains a park, Joyce Kilmer Park, named in 1926 for the Bronx-born poet killed in World War I. Joyce Kilmer Park was planned in the mid-1920s, during the period when the Grand Concourse was developing as a major residential boulevard. The park incorporates the site of the original entrance to the Grand Concourse at East 161st Street. The original entrance was planned for carriages, but with the increase in automobile traffic, it became unnecessary. This park has lawns, formal walks lined with trees, and includes two pieces of sculpture. Just north of East 161st Street is the Louis J. Heintz statue already mentioned. At the north end of the park is the Heinrich Heine Memorial, also known as the Lorelei Fountain. This is the work of German-born sculptor Ernst Herter. The fountain was originally located at the entrance to the Concourse but was moved when the park was established. The monument has been vandalized.

1. Louis A. Risse, The True History of the Conception and Planning of the Grand Boulevard and Concourse in the Bronx. (1902) p. 60.

2. Ibid.



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3. Louis A. Risse, History in Brief, of the Conception and Establishment of the Grand Boulevard & Concourse in the 23rd and 24th Wards. (n.d.) n.p.
4. Risse, 1902, p.7.
5. Risse, n.d, n.p.
6. Logan Billingsley, "Zig-Zag Concourse not Wanted," Journal of the Chamber of Commerce (May 1927) 2-3.
7. "Improvement on Grand Concourse," Real Estate Record and Builders Guide 99(June 23, 1917) 887.
8. "Elevator Houses for the Bronx," Real Estate Record and Builders Guide 99(March 10, 1917) 325.
9. Frank Chouteau Brown, "Tendencies in Apartment House Design: Part VI-- 'Open Court Types,'" Architectural Record 50(December 1921) 503.
10. "Improvement on Grand Boulevard."
11. "Thomas Garden Apartments," prospectus, c.1925, p.5.
12. Public relations release in the Edith Elmer Wood Collection, Avery Archive, Avery Library, Columbia University [c. 1926], pp. 3-4.
13. Ibid.
14. "Bronx in Tabloid," quoted in Anna Quindlen, "A Bit of History Lives Again on the Grand Concourse," New York Times, October 6, 1982, p.B3.
15. see Anthony W. Robins, "Park Plaza Apartments," designation report. New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, 1981.
16. Steven Rutenbaum, Mansions in the Clouds: The Skyscraper Palazzi of Emery Roth (NY: Balsam Press, 1986), p.169.
17. "Concrete-Framed and Corner-Windowed," Architectural Forum 63 (November 1935) 530.
18. Hotels such as the Concourse Plaza were exempt from this rule.
19. "Concrete-Framed..."

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National Park Service

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20. Donald Sullivan and Brian Danforth, Bronx Art Deco Architecture An Exposition (NY: Hunter College Graduate Program in Urban Studies, 1976) and Brian Danforth and Victor Caliandro, Perception of Housing and Community: Bronx Architecture of the 1920's (NY: Hunter College Graduate Program in Urban Planning, 1977). The biographical notes in these two publications are the source of much of the information on the architects who worked in the historic district.

21. see Robins op cit for further information on Ginsbern.

22. "Andrew Freeman Home" designation report, New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, 1974.

23. Ibid.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approx. 50 acres

Quadrangle name Central Park

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	8	5	9	0	6	2	0	4	5	1	9	3	2	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

B 

1	8	5	9	0	6	0	0	4	5	1	9	7	6	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

C 

1	8	5	9	0	0	0	0	4	5	2	0	6	2	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

D 

1	8	5	9	0	7	6	0	4	5	2	1	9	0	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

E 

1	8	5	9	1	0	6	0	4	5	2	0	2	2	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

F 

Zone	Easting						Northing							

G 

Zone	Easting						Northing							

H 

Zone	Easting						Northing							

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See map

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code NA

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Merrill Hesch, Field Representative

organization New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

date May 1987

street & number Empire State Plaza, Agency Bldg. 1

telephone 518-474-0479

city or town Albany

state N.Y.

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Julia S. Stoker

title Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation

date 7/2/87

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Inventory—Nomination Form**

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Bronx, N.Y.

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Report researched and written by:

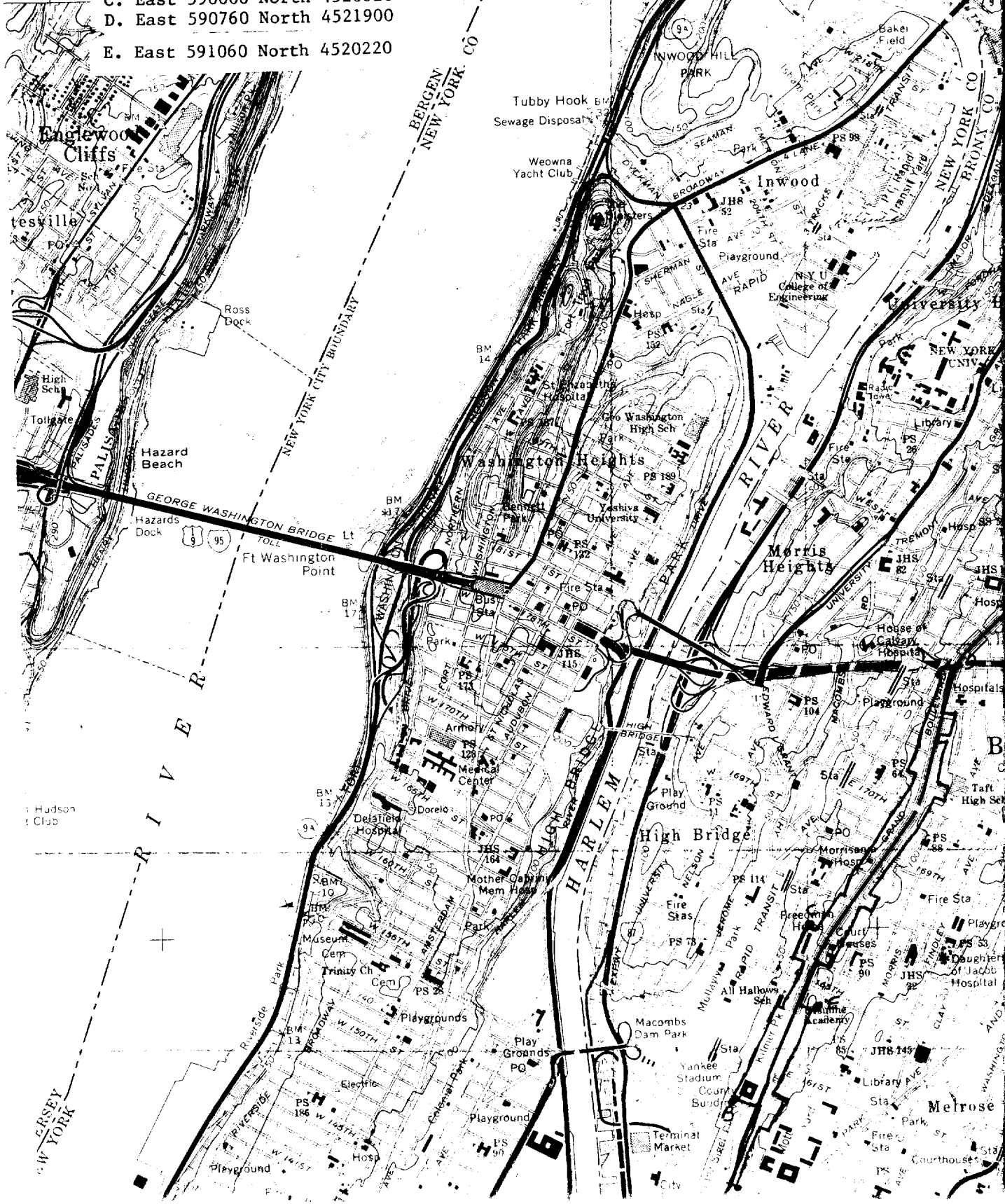
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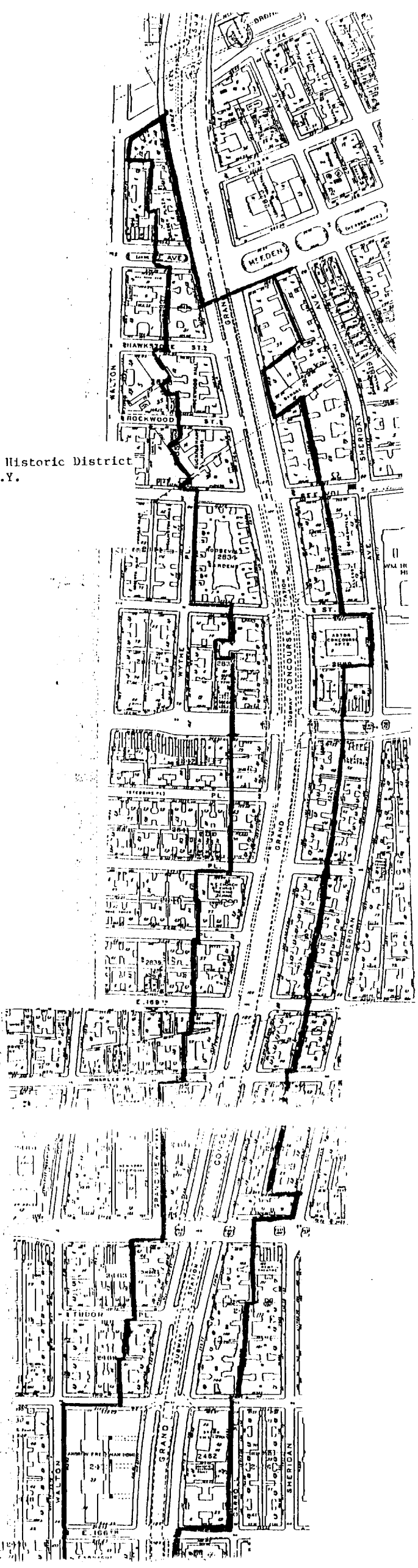
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 D. East 590760 North 4521900  
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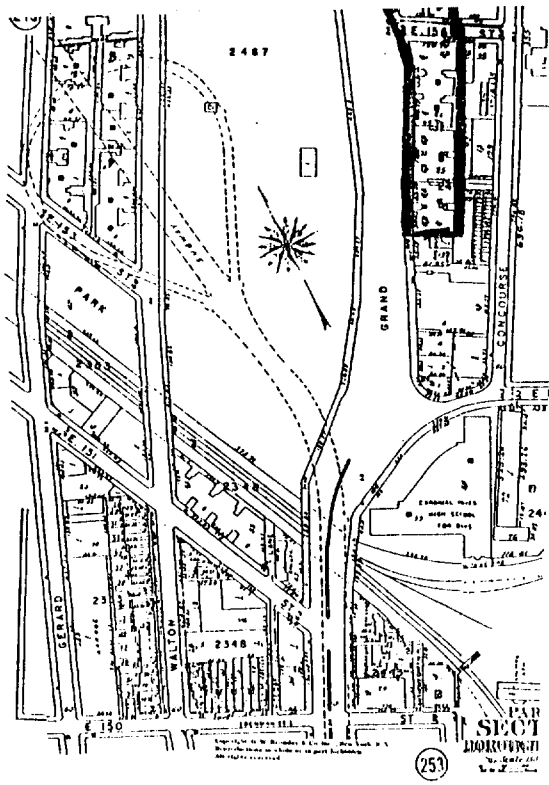
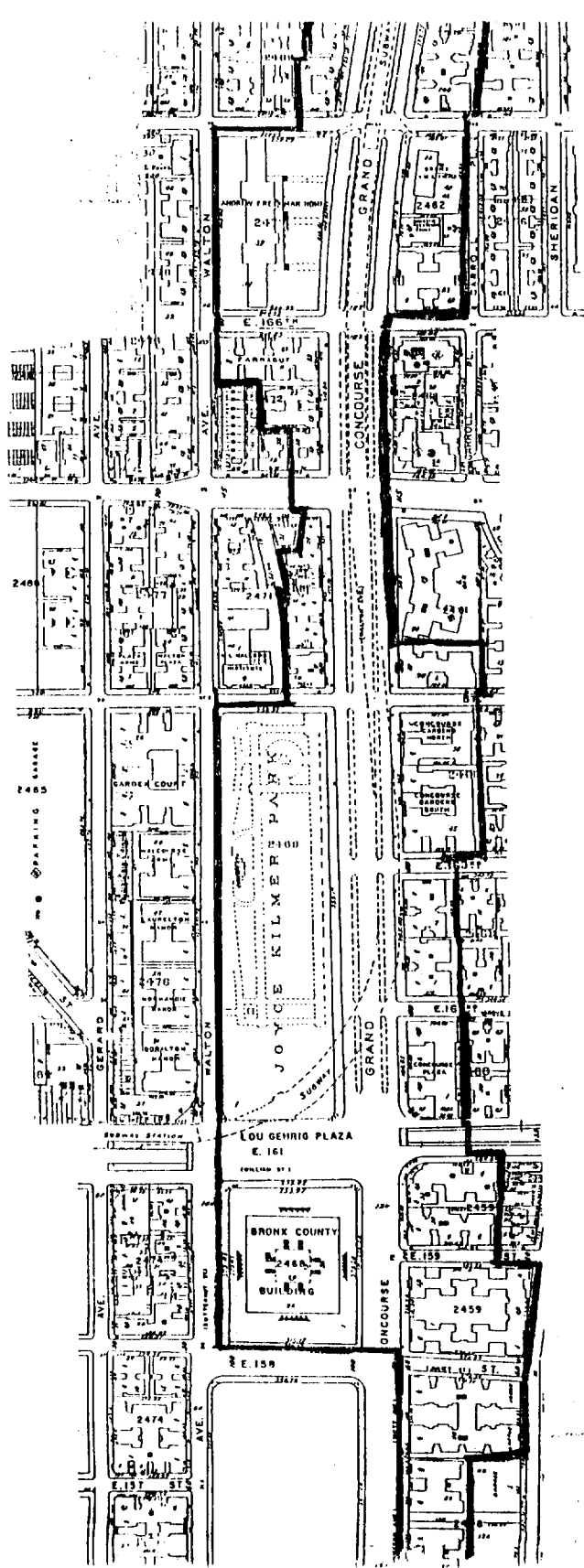
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Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
District Map  
Scale 1"=320'







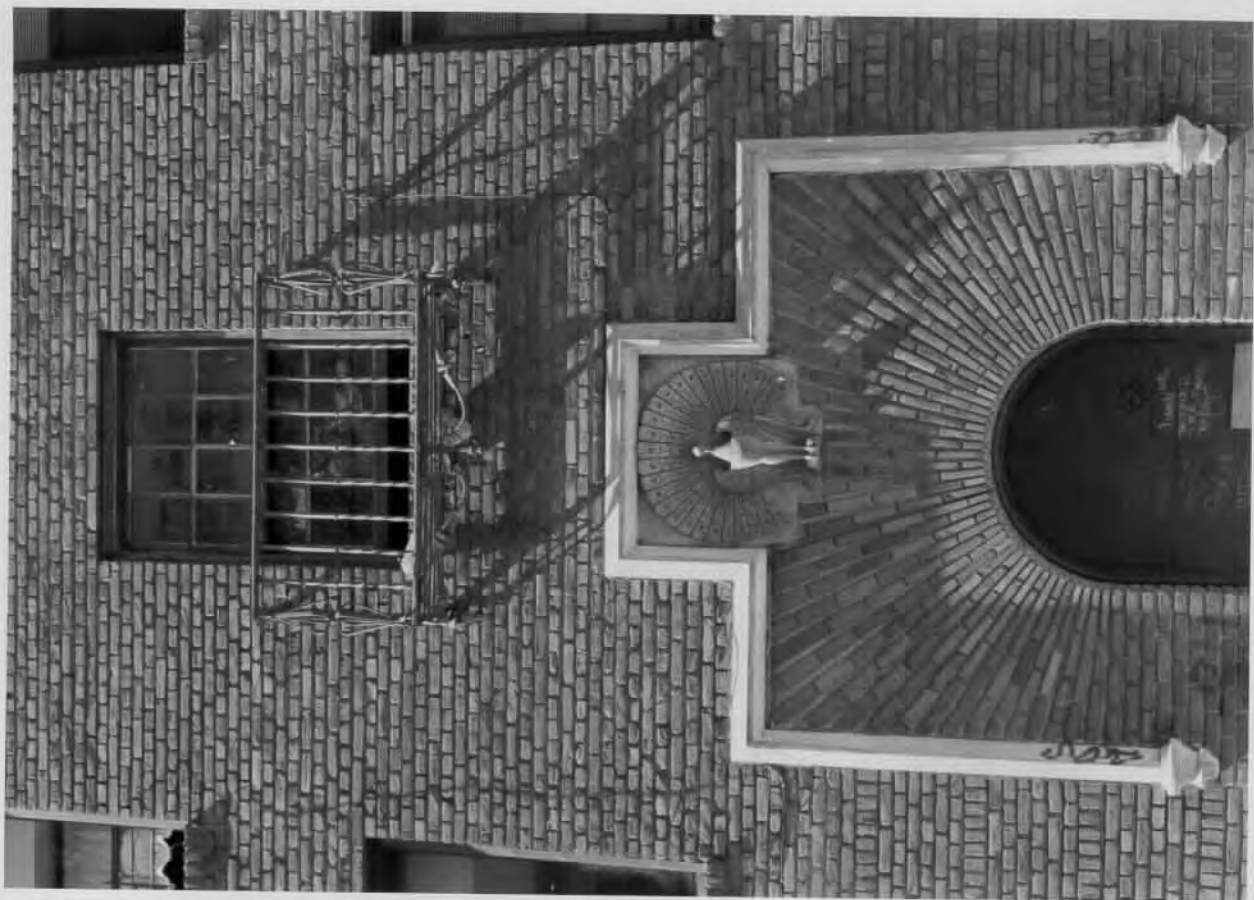


Photo 1  
Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
Thomas Gardens, 840 Grand Concourse  
Doorway detail  
View looking north  
Photo: A. Dolkart 8/86  
Neg: 116 Pinehurst Ave. NYC

Photo 2  
Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
888 Grand Concourse  
View looking southeast  
Photo: A. Dolkart 8/86  
Neg: 611 Pinehurst Ave. NYC



Photo 3  
Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
1150-1188 Grand Concourse  
View looking northeast  
Photo: A. Dolkart 8/86  
Neg: 611 Pinehurst Ave. NYC

Photo 4  
Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
1150 Grand Concourse, entrance detail  
View looking southeast  
Photo: A. Dolkart 8/86  
Neg: 116 Pinehurst Ave. NYC

Photo 5



Photo 5  
Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
1228-1250 Grand Concourse  
View looking northeast  
Photo: A. Dolkart 8/86  
Neg: 116 Pinehurst Ave. NYC

Photo 6  
Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
1500 Grand Concourse  
View looking northeast  
Photo: A. Dolkart 8/86  
Neg: 116 Pinehurst Ave. NYC





Photo 7  
Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
1215 Grand Concourse  
View looking southwest  
Photo: A. Dolkart 8/86  
Neg: 116 Pinehurst Avenue NYC

Photo 8  
Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
Buckingham Court, 1515 Grand Concourse  
View looking southwest  
Photo: A. Dolkart 8/86  
Neg: 116 Pinehurst Avenue, NYC



Photo 9  
Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
Rockwood Hall, 1555 Grand Concourse  
View looking northwest  
Photo: A. Dolkart 8/86  
Neg: 116 Pinehurst Ave. NYC

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Photo 10  
Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
Andrew Freedman Home, 1125 Grand Concourse  
View looking southwest  
Photo: A. Dolkart 11/86  
Neg: 116 Pinehurst Ave. NYC



Photo 11  
Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
Louis J. Heintz Statue and Joyce Kilmer Park  
View looking northeast  
Photo: A. Dolkart 11/86  
Neg. 116 Pinehurst Ave. NYC



Photo I-1  
Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
800 Grand Concourse  
View looking northeast  
Photo: A. Dolkart 8/86  
Neg: 116 Pinehurst Ave. NYC

Photo I-3  
Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
Christ the King School, 1345 Grand Concourse  
View looking southwest  
Photo: A. Dolkart 8/86  
Neg: 116 Pinehurst Ave. NYC

Photo I-4  
Grand Concourse Historic District  
Bronx County, N.Y.  
Roosevelt Gardens, 1455-99 Grand Concourse  
View looking northwest  
Photo: A. Dolkart 11/86  
Neg: 116 Pinehurst Ave. NYC