

Landmarks Preservation Commission
February 1, 1966, Number 6
LP-0093

MARINERS TEMPLE, 12 Oliver Street, Borough of Manhattan. Completed 1842; architect Minard Lafever.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 279, Lot 69.

On October 19, 1965, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of Mariners Temple and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. (Item No. 65). A representative of the owner asked that the hearing be continued until the Commissioner's November public hearing. In accordance with this request, the Commission continued the public hearing until November 17, 1965 (Item No. 7). At that time no speakers appeared to testify. Both hearings were duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. There were no speakers in opposition to designation at either meeting.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

This small rectangular building was the basic type of church structure during the Greek Revival period of the 1830's and 40's. The recessed portico with its two handsome Ionic columns is flanked on either side by plain wall surfaces relieved only by the introduction of simple panels. This composition is crowned by a well proportioned low-angled gable (pediment). The sidewalls have full length windows which light the aisles and the galleries above them. This scheme resulted in a practicable plan suited to American requirements while basically retaining the Classical temple-form.

The importance of this building lies in its achievement of great Classical dignity in a relatively small structure with little use of costly detail or materials. It makes use of a plan suited to the needs of its builders while representing good Classical design. This scheme, with modifications, served as the basic design for many larger, more costly Greek Revival churches throughout the City.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that Mariners Temple has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Mariners Temple is a fine local expression of Greek Revival architecture stated in its simplest terms and that it uses inexpensive materials which nevertheless produce an overall effect of great dignity.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 8-A of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark Mariners Temple, 12 Oliver Street, Borough of Manhattan and designates Tax Map Block 279, Lot 69, Borough of Manhattan, as its Landmark Site.