



August 4, 2020

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL 48, 155-02 108TH AVENUE, QUEENS AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK

Good morning Chair Carroll and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to join elected officials, neighbors, and advocates to support designation of Public School 48.

PS 48 (now known as P75Q at Public School 48, The Robert E. Peary School) merits designation for its impressive architecture and its place in New York City history.

The monumental Art Deco building was part of the portfolio of Walter C. Martin, Superintendent of Buildings for the Board of Education for ten years, starting in 1928. He followed his predecessor CBJ Snyder in designing some schools in the revival styles which were Snyder's hallmark. However, Martin looked to more contemporary architecture in buildings such as PS 48, which was completed in 1936, and in the landmarked Herman Ritter Intermediate School in the Bronx. (A restoration of that building received the Conservancy's Moses Award in 2008.) This school is also eligible for listing on the State and National Register of Historic Places.

PS 48 was one of several new schools in Queens built in the first part of the 20th century, as transportation improvements encouraged a population influx into areas such as South Jamaica that had recently been farmlands. The streamlined structure, with its industrial influences, replaced a wood schoolhouse, signaling the rapid urbanization of this area.

The intact building is a neighborhood landmark. We appreciate the stewardship of the School Construction Authority in maintaining this property and the Landmarks Commission for recognizing its significance. This is an important designation for a Jamaica community that is underserved with landmark protections. We hope it will be the first of many more.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the Conservancy's views.