

Landmarks Preservation Commission  
March 15, 1966, Number 5  
LP-0153

LITCHFIELD VILLA, Prospect Park West at 5th Street, Borough of Brooklyn.  
Completed 1856; architect Alexander J. Davis.

Landmark Site: Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block lll7, Lot 1 in part, consisting of the land on which the described building is situated.

On February 8, 1966, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Litchfield Villa and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. (Item No. 54). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Eight speakers spoke in favor of designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation.

#### DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

This romantic mansion commanding a small hill in Prospect Park is one of the finest "Italian Villa" Style houses in the country. Unique in plan, the two irregular shaped towers and a tall slender turret are all attached to the main building and combine to form a picturesque architectural composition. An interesting colonnade of wood flanks the castle on the right and then runs free as an open portico to connect the main house to a large separate building added at a later date. A terrace, retained by a low wall, sets off the villa most handsomely. One of the unusual features of this mansion is to be found in tops of the columns of the colonnade in which the Classical decorations are replaced by our native plants, corn and wheat. Balconies, balustrades and elaborate cornices enrich the design to make this one of the outstanding mansions of Brooklyn.

Litchfield Villa is one of the last remaining examples of a palatial Italianate mansion in New York City and stands as a fine example of the romantic villa so rapidly disappearing from the American scene. Brooklyn should cherish this unique reminder of an early period of our history.

#### 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 the Litchfield Villa 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 Litchfield Villa is part of the romantic American past, that the mansion ranks as an outstanding example of the "Italian Villa" Style executed in the grand manner, that it is notable for its refinement of detail and that it makes a significant contribution to the architectural beauty of the City.

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 Litchfield Villa, Prospect Park West at 5th Street, Borough of Brooklyn and designates as its related Landmark Site that part of the Borough of Brooklyn Tax Map Block lll7, Lot 1 which contains the land on which the described building is situated.