



## The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

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### LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION DESIGNATES THE DOUGLSTON HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT IN QUEENS

*“Douglaston Hill represents an important part of the wide-ranging and diverse residential development of New York City,”* said Robert B. Tierney, Chairman of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. *“Today’s vote underscores the Commission’s continued efforts to designate historic districts throughout the City, in all five boroughs.”*

The Douglaston Hill Historic District, located in northeastern Queens near the border of Nassau County, is a significant example of an early twentieth-century suburb that reflects principles of mid-nineteenth and early twentieth-century community planning and development. The district consists of thirty-one single-family homes that offer fine examples of many late nineteenth and early twentieth-century architectural styles, including Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Shingle, Arts and Crafts and Tudor Revival. With its park-like setting, architectural expression and social history, the district is representative of the evolution of the commuter suburb, and is a precursor to the speculative suburban development which remade Queens in the twentieth-century.



This transformation of Queens from colonial villages, estates, and small farms to commuter suburbs is typical of American settlement patterns in many parts of the country. The dramatic spatial change that this pattern of growth brought about – and the parallel development of a quintessential American lifestyle – were due to several factors. Rapid advances in transportation, particularly the steam railroad in the first half of the nineteenth century, made long distance commuting possible. New levels of personal wealth following the Civil War, coupled with the pervasive cultural values of mainstream Victorian society, gave rise to a middle class that embraced virtues of domesticity, home ownership, and life in a suburban setting. These values were made manifest in the commuter suburb, a distinct form of community, which places the single-family house in a non-urban setting, convenient to the city by rail.

In the Douglaston Hill Historic District, New York’s history of community planning and development, from the 1850s to the 1920s, can be read in the district’s topography, layout, and architecture. Most of the houses in the district combine the stylistic elements drawn from

popular architectural styles from the 1890s to the 1920s, which contribute to the district's visual coherence.

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The Landmarks Preservation Commission is the New York City agency responsible for designating and regulating New York City's landmarks. To date, the Commission has designated 1,116 individual landmarks, 104 interior landmarks, 9 scenic landmarks, and 83 historic districts.