

BATTERY PARK CONTROL HOUSE, State Street and Battery Place, Manhattan. Begun 1904, completed 1905; architect Heins & LaFarge.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 3, Lot 1 in part, consisting of the land on which the described improvement is situated.

On September 25, 1973, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Battery Park Control House and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site, (Item No. 11). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. A representative of the New York City Transit Authority spoke in favor of designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The Battery Park Control House is an entrance and exit for the Bowling Green Station of the Lexington Avenue Interborough Rapid Transit Line. It stands near the original shoreline of Manhattan Island, close to the site of the western bastions of Fort Amsterdam, first laid out in 1625-26, and to the site of the first windmill erected in New Netherlands, prior to 1628.

Construction of the station was begun in 1904 and completed in 1905. Designed by the noted architectural firm of Heins & LaFarge, this structure of brick, stone and glass, is an example of the influence of the French Ecole des Beaux Arts. It is one of the last remaining examples of a type of monumental subway entrance which expressed the City's pride in the great accomplishment of its first subway system. The building is scheduled for restoration and renovation in connection with the enlarged Bowling Green Station currently under construction. A long future life is thus assured for the structure serving the same purpose for which it was originally built.

Each corner of the yellow brick building is marked by limestone quoins, and an elaborate triglyph with guttae and cresting ornament. Smooth limestone banding, which encircles the building just below the triglyphs, ties it together horizontally. Below this band, the plain brick walls, on the east and west sides, are pierced by simple high windows. The entire building rests on a dark granite base. The gable ends of the building are decorated with a central bull's-eye with four radiating keystones. A banded wreath follows the curve of the bull's-eye and is crowned by an arched stone coping which descends along the sides of the gables. At the southern end, the bull's-eye is still filled with its original terra-cotta sunburst.

The northern front of the Control House has a projecting limestone porch with square engaged columns supporting a stylized pediment on brackets. The pediment over the doorway is crowned by a decorative motif consisting of a small rosette flanked by volutes. The southern front has a brick extension with three exit doors. The enframing of the central exit is identical to that of the northern entrance. The extension is edged by plain stone quoins and topped by a copper entablature and roof.

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 Battery Park Control House 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 Battery Park Control House has historical significance because it is one of the original stations built for the City's first subway line and one of the last remaining, that it is architecturally expressive of the French Beaux Arts influence of the early 20th century and that it was designed by Heins & LaFarge, one of the most notable architectural firms of the period.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 63 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 The Battery Park Control House, State Street and Battery Place, the Borough of Manhattan, and designates as its related Landmark Site that part of the Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 3, Lot 1 which contains the land on which the described improvement is situated.