

Landmarks Preservation Commission
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LP-0384

POILLON HOUSE, 4515 Hylan Boulevard, Staten Island. Built about 1720.
Remodeled during 19th Century.

Landmark Site: Borough of Richmond Tax Map Block 5378, Lot 30.

On September 13, 1966, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Poillon House and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. (Item No. 73). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Three witnesses spoke in favor of designation including the owner, who favored the proposed designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The original character of the 1720 one and one-half story, one-room farm house is discernible behind the Nineteenth Century enlargement of this handsome country house. The exterior of the old portion has interesting architectural features which include massive stone arches over the windows in the basement and first floor areas.

This small farm house was remodeled on two occasions, first in 1837, when Dr. Samuel Akerley enlarged this simple stone building to make it a thirteen room house, and later, by Frederick Law Olmsted, the noted landscape architect, in 1848, who added a one and a half story wood extension by raising and extending the existing roof line. The attic story is pierced by "tummy on the floor windows", and porches were added on three sides of the house. The original stone door arches were enclosed, and two pairs of windows were added in each arched opening. Above the narrow porch the house was sided with wide clapboards.

The first owner of the property was Dominic Petrus Tessenmaker who acquired a patent on the property from Governor Thomas Dongan on November 3, 1685. Through conjecture, we can recreate his one room stone shelter, which now forms one half of the basement of the existing structure. In 1696, Jacques Poillon, Road Commissioner under Governor Slaughter, acquired the property and enlarged the basement into a Flemish Style farm house. By 1723, three generations of the Poillon family had lived in this farm house and during the Revolutionary War, John Poillon, a member of the Committee of Safety for Richmond County, helped bring about the famous, though ill-fated, Peace Conference in the Billopp House.

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 Poillon 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 Poillon House is a distinguished residence whose architectural development can be visibly and concretely traced to the early Eighteenth Century and that its long record of additions and modifications tangibly memorialize those personages who inhabited the house and entered into the illustrious history of Staten Island.

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 the Poillon House, 4515 Hylan Boulevard, Staten Island, Borough of Richmond and designates Tax Map Block 5378, Lot 30, Borough of Richmond, as its Landmark Site.