HISTORIC DISTRICTS COUNCIL

THE ADVOCATE FOR NEW YORK CITY'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

October 13th, 2026

Lisa Kersavage, Chair
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
253 Broadway, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Subject: HDC's Suggestions for the Historic and Cultural Resources of the South of Prospect Neighborhood Plan.

Dear Chair Kersavage,

I am writing on behalf of the Historic Districts Council (HDC), the citywide organization devoted to advocating for New York's historically, architecturally, and culturally significant buildings and neighborhoods. We support preservation efforts in all five boroughs and work with more than 500 neighborhood groups to preserve the places that matter to them.

In March of this year, the Department of City Planning (DCP) announced the South of Prospect Neighborhood Plan to create more affordable housing along the major thoroughfares of McDonalds and Coney Island Ave, connecting with the Interborough Express Train (IBX). HDC welcomes this opportunity to address the current housing crisis and bring about a new phase of history for the neighborhood.

Both McDonald and Coney Island Avenues are marked by low density apartment buildings, commercial structures, warehouses and a few single family homes. Large parts of both thoroughfares are located near transportation and thriving businesses. HDC came to the conclusion that this is an excellent location for rezoning. We support the addition of new housing, particularly affordable housing, as a means to generate new life and community into the neighborhood.

As part of HDC's work we partner with local community organizations to evaluate areas proposed for rezoning to make sure that historic resources are identified and protected as part of the rezoning effort. Last month,

HDC conducted a site visit of McDonald Ave and Coney Island Avenue to survey these blocks for possible historic resources. HDC has also reached out to our community partners in the area to identify priorities around preservation during the phase of development.

After conducting our survey, we offer the following recommendations:

- To consider the designation of the Kensington Post Office (421 McDonald Ave), P.S. 230 The Doris L. Cohen School (1 Albemarle Rd) and the former Astoria Federal Savings Bank (101 Church Ave) as individual landmarks. All three buildings are located on McDonald Ave and reflect the importance of the thoroughfare through the existence of key institutional and civic buildings.
- To clearly define the boundaries and affected site areas of the proposed rezoning, to respect the boundaries of the historic districts adjacent to Coney Island Avenue, namely Ditmas Park, Beverly Square West and Prospect Park South.
- To continue to evaluate the undesignated blocks of Beverly Square West where homeowners have requested additional designation of similar style houses that make up the neighborhood.

To reiterate, HDC welcomes the prospect for new development and housing opportunities in the site area. The neighborhoods have a fascinating, if often overlooked history, and deserves a new opportunity to be meaningful to more residents. We echo the existing community sentiment by asking for development that is cognizant of the neighborhood's history and context.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have, and we would be happy to participate in a follow up conversation if necessary.

Warm Regards,



Frampton Tolbert
Executive Director

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