United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

DRAFT

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Fulton Park Plaza

other names/site number

name of related multiple property listing N/A

2. Location

street & number 1711 Fulton Street ☐ not for publication

city or town Brooklyn ☐ vicinity

state New York code NY county New York code 061 zip code 11233-1811

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this _X_ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property _X_ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide _X_ local

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

DRAFT – Fulton Park Plaza | Kings County, New York
Name of Property | County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- [X] private
- [ ] public - Local
- [ ] public - State
- [ ] public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

- [X] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4		buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
5	0	**Total**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling
COMMERCE/specialty store

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling
COMMERCE/specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE
walls: BRICK, METAL/aluminum
roof: SYNTHETICS
other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

Constructed between 1972 and 1974, the Fulton Park Plaza is located at 1711 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, Kings County, New York. The complex consists of four contributing buildings and one contributing site: one large residential building with four separate addresses; one small commercial building; two small garage buildings; and the landscaped site with two interior courtyards, a playground, and two surface parking lots. The complex occupies 3.85 acres along Fulton and Chauncey streets on the west side of Malcolm X Boulevard. The primary resource is the six-story Modern Movement apartment building comprising four discernible but interconnected blocks that form a "S"-shaped plan, with the bottom of the "S" facing west. The building footprint provides for two interior courtyards, connected by a first-story passageway. The building also includes addresses 94, 110, and 120 Chauncey Street, which correspond to the entrances along that street. Brick clads the reinforced concrete structure. A small brick commercial building (1974) located at 1723-1747 Fulton Street sits at the southeast corner of the site, facing the intersection of Chauncey Street and Malcolm X Boulevard. The two small concrete block garage buildings occupy the northeast and southwest corners of the site. The first parking lot, which dates to the initial development of the property, wraps the east and south sides of the building, while the second is located to the west. Upon its opening, Fulton Park Plaza featured 287 apartment units, ranging in size from studios to four-bedroom units, a preschool space, and a community facilities space. The same number of apartments exist to this day in their original layouts. The preschool and community facilities spaces are extant as well, though the school has experienced some updates of finishes, primarily including the flooring. The property continues to retain its historic integrity as a publicly subsidized, privately owned affordable housing complex constructed in the mid-1970s.

Narrative Description

Setting

Fulton Park Plaza is located in a largely urban setting in Brooklyn, New York (*Map 1*). The site sits at the southeastern edge of Bedford Stuyvesant, also known as Stuyvesant Heights. South of the immediate neighborhood is Crown Heights. Just south along Atlantic Avenue is a commercial corridor. To the immediate west of the site are residential brownstone rowhouses occupying the same block. The surrounding area to the east, west, and north is primarily residential, with a number of convenience stores and restaurants scattered throughout. The site is adjacent to the Bedford Stuyvesant/Stuyvesant Heights Historic District (Boundary Increase) that ends at Fulton Park to the west and at Chauncey to the north. To the east by less than half a mile is the Brevoort Houses, a New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) complex constructed in 1956.

The site is in immediate proximity to three public parks. Abutting the site to the west is the Elizabeth Stroud Playground. Across Stuyvesant Avenue is Fulton Park, which features a number of walking paths, green spaces, and a public restroom. Across Malcolm X Boulevard is Jackie Robinson Park, primarily featuring recreational amenities like tennis and basketball courts.

Site and Landscape **1 contributing site**

The complex is situated on a roughly 3.85-acre site occupying the majority of a block bounded by Fulton Street to the north, Stuyvesant Avenue to the east, Chauncey Street to the south, and Malcolm X Boulevard to the east (*see maps in section 10*). The site features two large concrete-paved parking lots. The first wraps the building to the south to the east creating two distinct parking areas containing in total about fifty stalls. This lot is accessed by a gated drive on either side of the southwest garage building on Fulton Street. The second parking area is located to the west of the apartment building and the commercial building; it contains approximately sixty stalls. Parking in the area adjacent to the apartment building and adjacent to the commercial building is separated by a row of concrete bollards. Each section features its own entrance. The apartment stalls are accessed by a gated drive adjacent to the northeast garage building on Chauncey Street. The entrance to the commercial stalls is open and located at the northeast side of the commercial building. At the north, the complex features a grassy fenced area abutting a sidewalk adjacent to the north lot. At the south, the site abuts the Chauncey Street sidewalk.

The site features two interior courtyards created by the S-shaped plan of the apartment complex, with trees, sidewalks, benches, and a central design feature with a ring of sloped brick leading down to different levels of pavement (*Photos 13-16*). The east courtyard (*Photos 13 and 14*) is accessed by one of three entrances at the east, by the stair tower of 94 Chauncey Street, or through the gate separating the courtyard from the sidewalk. A passageway is located below the north side of 110 Chauncey Street, connecting the east courtyard with the west (*Photo 14*). The west courtyard (*Photos 15 and 16*) is comparable in design; however, the sloped brick leads upwards in a ring. At the interior of the ring, wood steps lead back down. This courtyard features entrances to the south sides of 110 and 120 Chauncey Street. Simple concrete ramps with metal railings leading to the basement are located at the northeast and southwest corners of the complex (*Photo 17*).

At the northwest corner of the site a small, paved playground fills the space between the building and the edge of the site, serving the preschool (*Photo 7).* It is separated from the southwest parking lot and from Chauncey Street by a chain link fence and gate.

At the southeast corner of the site, the single-story commercial building abuts the south side of the east courtyard *(Photo 17).* At the northeast corner of the site is a small single-story garage. At the rear of the building is a basement access ramp abutting the west courtyard. At the southeast side of the building, the site abuts a curved public plaza adjacent to a bus stop and wide sidewalk.

Fulton Park Plaza Apartment Building **1 contributing building**

The apartment building itself is the primary resource on the property. The brick and aluminum exterior contains multiple elevations due to the overall S-shaped plan. The length of each elevation is composed of alternating brick projections and aluminum-panel-clad insets at the majority of elevations. In some cases, brick projections feature clad bays with windows that are flush with the brick. The building does not have a true façade; however, the Fulton Street entrance (1711 Fulton Street), highlighted by landscaping and located off the north parking lot, is considered the primary entrance (*Photo 2*). The exterior of the complex was rehabilitated circa 1996; however, the rehabilitation was minimal and did not change any major elements of the exterior.

The projecting brick masses feature centered window bays clad in aluminum, and aluminum panels clad the bays between projecting masses. Wrapping window units adorn the corners of the brick projections. Windows and doors at the building are largely historic, dating to the construction of the building. Generally, a combination of window configurations is used across the elevations. Window types include:

- Clad bays with a single 1/1 window
- Clad bays with paired 1/1 windows
- Clad bays with a run of three 1/1 ganged windows
- Corner bays of brick projections with a configuration of two windows, one larger than the other, and a matching smaller window around the corner.
- Narrow, tall, single-light windows within recessed entry areas

The four main entrances that correspond to the four separate addresses (1711 Fulton, 94, 110, and 120 Chauncey) consist of a glass and a metal-clad entrance which leads to the interior vestibule and lobby. All other entrances feature utilitarian, single-leaf painted metal doors.

The four main blocks of the building are split up and assigned to different addresses due to the building's size, but there is no distinguishable difference as one address transitions to another (*Map 2*). Due to this, the elevations of certain addresses are shared between an elevation, creating a single, visually cohesive elevation.

The configuration of each individual feature, including the window types, projecting bays, clad inset bays, and general materiality, are the same at all elevations, with most extending upwards to all stories. While each elevation is largely comparable, the number of bays and combination of these elements may differ slightly. The slight differentiation between elevations, including the window types, number of bays, and combination of alternating projecting/inset bays, speaks to the interior layout and use and differs very slightly. The remaining exterior elevation descriptions below provide a basic summary of the configuration of each elevation, including the number of bays and any major differences from one elevation to the next. Unless otherwise specified, each element is as described above.

South Elevation (Photo 1 and 13): The south elevation fronts Fulton Street and faces the landscaped grassy area and parking lot. This elevation includes the visually cohesive street-facing elevations of 1711 Fulton Street (west) and 110 Chauncey Street (center), and the south elevation of 120 Chauncey Street (east). These are referred to as the "Street Elevations." The two remaining south elevations face the courtyards and belong to 94 Chauncey Street, as well as the cohesive combined elevations of 110 and 120 Chauncey Street. These are the "Courtyard Elevations."

Fulton Street Elevations (Photo 1): The combined south elevation of 1711 Fulton Street and 110 Chauncey Street is located at the west end of the building. Eighteen bays organize this portion of the elevation, which alternate between four brick projections with central clad window bays and three clad insets. The elevation is largely symmetrical, aside from the 1711 Fulton Street entrance and vestibule in the fourth bay from east at ground level. Some windows at ground level feature metal security grates.

The southernmost portion of the south elevation of 120 Chauncey Street is separate from the combined 1711 Fulton Street and 110 Chauncey Street elevation. This portion faces Fulton Street and the Commercial Building

at the southeast side of the site. The windowless, unadorned elevation features a projecting brick stair tower with a utilitarian single-leaf metal door.

Courtyard Elevations (South – Photo 13): Within the courtyards are the two remaining south elevations. The west courtyard features the south elevation of 94 Chauncey Street (*Photo 48*). The east courtyard features the remaining portions of the south elevations of 110 and 120 Chauncey Street (*Photo 65*), which are visually combined.

The south elevation of 94 Chauncey Street faces the west courtyard and features six bays. The central four bays project with four bays, while the outermost are clad insets. The ground story of this elevation differs from all others at that level. Here, a series of single-story recessions are cut out from the projection. The corners of the recessions feature tall, narrow, single-light windows. At the easternmost bay of 94 Chauncey at ground level is an entrance. Projecting from this bay to the west is the brick stair tower.

The remaining portions of the south elevations 110 and 120 Chauncey Street align and blend with one another. Their combined elevation faces the east courtyard. This elevation is ten bays wide and features two brick projections. The projections feature three bays. The center two bays are set back.

West Elevation (Photo 3): As is typical of the building, there are multiple west elevations, including the combined elevations of 94 Chauncey and 1711 Fulton Street facing the northeast lot and west playground, and the separate courtyard-facing west elevations of 110 and 120 Chauncey Street.

Parking Lot/Playground Elevations (West – Photo 3): The visually cohesive west elevation of 94 Chauncey Street and 1711 Fulton Street (*Photos 10 and 20*) abuts the playground, as well as the portion of the parking lot at the northeast. The elevation features three brick projections and two clad insets. Fixed to the brick west of the southernmost clad section of the projection is an external metal ventilation shaft leading from a first-story window. Below grade at this projection is a utilitarian double-leaf metal basement door at the base of a ramp.

At the center bay of the central projection at the first story is a slightly recessed entrance providing access to the school space which accommodates Community Parents Head Start (the preschool).

The two clad insets differ at this elevation. While they remain set back at the second to sixth stories, the ground story instead features a single-story brick projection extending beyond the other brick projections at this elevation. At ground level, the single-story brick projections feature two bays. The southernmost single-story projection features a painted, single-leaf metal utilitarian door around the side of the projection as well.

Courtyard Elevations (West): The west elevation of 110 Chauncey (*Photo 26)* faces the west courtyard and is thirteen bays wide. It features two brick projections and two clad insets. The southernmost projection is followed to the north by alternating insets and projections, ultimately terminating at the south with clad insets. The northernmost projection features four bays, with the typical corner window configuration at the outermost bays.

At ground level, where 110 Chauncey Street meets 1711 Fulton Street, a single-story opening provides access to the east courtyard, as well as both addresses (*Photos 56 and 57)*. Within the passageway, walls are painted

brick, with each entrance located at center with painted glazed storefront entrances. A pair of double-hung windows is located adjacent to the 1711 Fulton St entrance.

Within the east courtyard beyond the passageway, the west elevation of 120 Chauncey Street is seven bays wide. This elevation features a single brick projection flanked by two insets. The projection is four bays wide, At ground level of this bay is a recessed opening in the brick leading to a single-leaf utilitarian metal door with a small vision panel providing access to the building.

North Elevation (Photo 8): Like the south elevation, the north elevation features multiple addresses. Abutting Chauncey Street is the north elevation of 94 Chauncey Street to the northwest side of the site, and to the east, the combined north elevation of 110 and 120 Chauncey Street. The north elevation of 1711 Fulton Street is located within the west courtyard. The north elevations along Chauncey Street are divided by an opening between 94 Chauncey Street and 110 Chauncey Street, which is gated and leads to the east courtyard.

Chauncey Street Elevations (North – Photos 8-10): The north elevation of 94 Chauncey Street is ten bays wide and features two brick projections with the typical corner window treatment and central cladded bay. Between the two projections is a two-bay inset clad area with double-hung ganged windows. Within the inset area, the east bay features the typical entrance. The easternmost bay features an additional matching clad inset. Projecting to the east from the east elevation of the building is the brick stair tower.

The combined north elevation of 110 and 120 Chauncey Street is symmetrical and features four brick projections, each with the same configuration of bays, windows, and clad bays as seen at the north elevation of 94 Chauncey Street. The entrance to 110 Chauncey is located in the fourth bay from west within the westernmost inset. Similarly, the entrance of 120 Chauncey Street is located is located in the fourth bay from east, within the easternmost inset.

Courtyard Elevation (North): The north elevation of 1711 Fulton Street faces the west courtyard and is eleven bays wide with two brick projections and three clad insets.

East Elevation (Photo 12 and 15): The east elevation of the complex includes the combined elevations of 94 Chauncey and 1711 Fulton that faces the west courtyard, as well as the separate elevations of 110 and 120 Chauncey Street. The east elevation of 110 Chauncey Street faces the east courtyard, while 120 Chauncey Street faces the east parking lot.

Parking Lot Elevation (East – Photo 12): The east elevation of 120 Chauncey Street is eleven bays wide and faces the east parking lot. Below ground level, accessed by a ramp at the northernmost side of the building, is a utilitarian, metal double-leaf basement door. At the southernmost side of the elevation at ground level is a single-leaf door providing access to the stair tower. The elevation features two large brick projections. The southernmost projection is four bays wide. The northernmost projection is five bays wide. The southernmost clad section is one bay wide. The northernmost clad section is two bays wide.

The central clad inset is at the approximate center of the elevation and features two bays.

Courtyard Elevations (East – Photo 12): The combined east elevation of 94 Chauncey Street and 1711 Fulton Street is largely symmetrical, eight bays wide and faces the west courtyard. This elevation features just one

small brick projection and two large insets featuring a combination of brick and clad bays. The elevation is reflective of that of those at the west, with the ground story differing from the second through sixth. The ground story across all bays features brick, with single-story projections below the upper story clad bays. The central brick projection features a recessed entrance with a double-leaf painted metal utilitarian door. All corners of the projection at the ground level, including those within the recession, feature the narrow single-light corner window configuration seen at other ground story elevations. At the southernmost side of the elevation beneath the clad section is a recessed area that provides access to both 94 Chauncey Street and 1711 Chauncey Street.

The southern single-story projection features one bay. The north single-story projection features two bays. At the north side is a gate and fence. Air conditioning units and ventilation penetrate the brick beside the windows. At the upper stories, window configurations and cladding are consistent.

An additional portion of 94 Chauncey Street's east elevation is located at the northeast side of the west courtyard. The elevation is unadorned.

The east elevation of 110 Chauncey Street faces the east courtyard and is eleven bays wide. The elevation features two brick insets with differing arrangements of central clad bays. The southernmost projection features four bays. At ground level of the brick projection is the opening leading to the west courtyard. Between the southernmost two bays is the brick wall which connects to the Commercial Building and separates the east courtyard from Fulton Street.

Roof: The roof of the complex is a flat, synthetic roof which is shared across the different addresses. It was replaced in-kind in 1988. It features rooftop ventilation equipment, as well as elevator and stair penthouses. The roof is accessed by all stair towers. A brick parapet with concrete coping runs along the perimeter of the roof. The roof is otherwise unadorned.

Interior (Photos 18-32): The interior is entirely interconnected between each of the four addresses and largely comparable in layout and materials at all levels. Though comprising four different addresses, the building was designed to function as a whole. Due to this it will be described as a single entity. The interior of the complex is served on all floors by a centrally located double-loaded corridor. Double-leaf fire doors are located intermittently throughout the corridors across all sections of the building. The first floor differs from the upper floors with a school and community space, as well as vestibules and lobbies. Materials and finishes, aside from those within the unique first floor spaces, are otherwise consistent across the different addresses, throughout the entire complex. Corridors at all levels feature vinyl tile flooring and replacement vinyl baseboards. Threshholds to units are terrazzo, and unit doors are simple, single-leaf painted metal units. Connecting the corridors of 1711 Fulton Street and 110 Chauncey Street at all levels is a walk-through stairwell with doors at either end of the landing, allowing passage between corridors.

The building includes a range of apartment sizes, from studio to four-bedroom units, with the units at the corners of each corridor section being the largest at three-to-four bedrooms. Between corners are a mixture of studio-to-three-bedroom units. Four-bedroom units are only found at the ends/corners of corridors. Units are largely in the state which they were originally designed, featuring vinyl tile flooring, painted gypsum board walls, and painted concrete panel ceilings. The original layout of the units has been retained; however, as is typical with large affordable housing units, some feature a limited number of modern fixtures and finishes.

Vertical Access: Vertical access is provided by a series of stairwells and elevator banks located in each building. Vertical access points are located at the corners of the plan where corridors change direction near entry lobbies, as well as at the ends of the lines of building. In total, there are four elevator-stairwell pairs, one serving each building. The remaining three vertical access points feature only a stair, with no elevator.

Pairs of single elevator cabs and stairs can be accessed in elevator lobbies located directly off of the courtyards near the primary entrance to each address. Off the west courtyard, an elevator and stair are located to the southwest and northwest. In the east courtyard, a stair and elevator are located to the northwest and the northeast. An additional stair is located within the corridor at the east side of 1711 Fulton Street. The stairwell can be walked through at the west and east. A fire stair is also located at the each end of the the building, including the east end of 94 Chauncey Street, and the south end of 120 Chauncey Street. Materials in stairwells are primarily utilitarian, with painted concrete treads and original metal handrails, and painted concrete landings and floors.

First Floor (Photos 18-24): The first floor of the complex is defined by three primary functions; residential space, educational/school space, and community space. At the first floor of the complex, the central corridors are accessed by vestibules/primary entrances in each individual building. The building can also be accessed internally by a number of secondary entrances located off the two courtyards. The complex is primarily devoted to residential functions; however, at the south side of 1711 Fulton Street is a single-level preschool complex with classrooms, bathrooms, offices, a kitchen, and storage. The first floor within 94 Chauncey Street features a community facilities space with a kitchen, storage, and bathrooms.

The *community facilities space (Photo 22)*, located in the northeast portion of 94 Chauncey Street, is accessed from the interior corridor/lobby. A single-leaf painted metal door leads to a painted brick landing that sits slightly higher than the remainder of the space. A simple painted wood rail surrounds the landing and a set of painted brick steps leading down into the space. The primary space of the facility is large and open, with a line of columns at center encased in painted gypsum wall board. Featured at the northeast side of the room is a double-leaf utilitarian fire door at the top of a few painted concrete steps, which provides access to the street. Other materials in the open space include vinyl tile floors, painted gypsum board walls, and lowered gypsum board ceilings. The community facilities space also features four smaller rooms along the north wall. This includes a kitchen, bathrooms, and storage space/offices. A small window is cut out of the wall between the kitchen and primary open space. Bathrooms feature non-original replacement ceramic tile floors and half-walls. The smaller secondary spaces feature matching flooring and walls to the main space; however, the ceilings are painted gypsum wall board.

The interior of the *preschool* (*Photos 23 and 24)* features a number of unique features and materials and has been updated with modern materials over the years. The school, accessed off the northeast parking lot, features a simple vestibule created by two double-lead, utilitarian, painted metal doors with vision panels. Materials in the vestibule feature brick floors and walls, and painted gypsum board ceilings. The reception area and primary corridors are located beyond the vestibule down a few steps of brick stairs with replacement painted metal railings fixed to brick walls. The corridor is double-loaded, and runs north-south, with offices at the north, classrooms in the middle, and a kitchen to the south. Across from the preschool entrance, a secondary corridor branches off to the east, providing access to a double-leaf painted metal utilitarian door which leads to the west

courtyard. The reception area and corridors feature non-skid rubber floors with a vinyl tile perimeter, gypsum board walls, and dropped acoustic tile ceilings. Classrooms feature individual bathrooms. Some feature their own single-leaf doors leading to the courtyard. Classrooms feature non-original replacement finishes with large vinyl tiles, painted gypsum board, and dropped acoustic tile ceilings. The kitchen, offices and bathrooms feature ceramic tile flooring and lowered acoustic tile ceilings. The kitchen features ceramic tile walls. The thresholds are marble and are likely replacements.

Within the residential portion of the first floor, the primary entrances to three of the addresses are located on Chauncey Street, and one is on Fulton Street. The layout and finishes of lobbies and vestibules in 1711 Fulton Street and 94 and 120 Chauncey Street match one another almost exactly, with an interior glazed vestibule created by two storefront walls (one at the interior and one at the exterior), an open area adjacent to the vestibule, and elevators across from the vestibule. There is not a full interior vestibule for 110 Chauncey Street, but it is otherwise comparable. Instead, a single storefront leads from the exterior directly into a small entry corridor within the lobby. Vestibules feature glazed brick flooring, red brick walls and painted gypsum board ceilings. Lobbies are set at a slightly lower level than corridors and feature glazed brick flooring. Glazed brick steps with simple painted metal rails lead to the slightly higher corridor levels. The walls surrounding the entrances and around the elevator are painted brick. In 1711 Fulton Street, the open space west of the entrance is devoted to mailboxes. In the other two lobbies, these areas are empty.

Corridors at the first level are as generally described; however, the ceilings at this level are flat. It is unclear if the ridges created by the concrete panel ceilings found elsewhere in the building have been infilled, or if this treatment is original. A laundry room is located at the east side of 1711 Fulton Street. The laundry room features large, square terrazzo tiles, painted gypsum board walls, and dropped acoustic panel ceilings. The management offices are located in a converted unit (1U) in 1711 Fulton Street. Within the management offices, flooring has been replaced with modern wood-look LVT, and terrazzo thresholds have been replaced with marble. Doors to the public spaces, including the management offices and laundry room, are simple, painted utilitarian metal doors with glazing in the upper portion of the door.

The first floor features four four-bedroom units, eight three-bedrooms units, fourteen two bedroom units, three one-bedroom units, and one studio unit, which has since been converted into the management offices (1U).

Upper Floors: The upper five stories (*Photos 25-32*) are devoted entirely to corridors, vertical access, and apartment units. The central corridor plan remains consistent, with units around the perimeter of the plan in all sections of the building. Finishes are as described at the first floor, with the exception of the ceilings, which feature painted concrete paneling. This ceiling treatment can be found in both the corridors and units at the upper levels. As the upper floors have more space and do not feature the community space and preschool of the first floor, there is more space for additional units. The upper floor features five four-bedroom units, thirteen three-bedroom units, twenty-one two-bedroom units, eleven one-bedroom units, and one studio unit.

Basement: The basement features two separate sections beneath limited portions of the building. The plans of each section are irregular, serving the necessary utilitarian and maintenance functions for the entire complex. The southwest section of the basement, accessed by a ramp, features tenant storage, and mechanical and trash rooms. The northeast section of the basement is also accessed by a ramp. This section features the boiler room

to the east, mechanical rooms at the center, additional storage, and an additional trash room. Finishes in the basements feature painted concrete floors, painted cast-in-place and concrete block walls, and painted concrete panel ceilings matching that at the upper floors.

Commercial Building **1 contributing building**

The Commercial Building (*Photos 17, 33 and 34*) is freestanding at the southeast corner of the site and faces Fulton Street. It is one story tall with a basement. The building features five commercial units and is clad in painted brick. At the rear of the building at the north of the east courtyard of the apartment complex is a concrete loading ramp leading to the basement of the commercial building. The ramp is separated from the courtyard with a low brick wall.

The plan of the building is generally rectangular; however, at the southwest corner, the façade projects out at an angle and curves back in to meet the rest of the façade that faces Fulton Street, creating a slight J shape. The building has a flat, synthetic membrane roof with a parapet.

South and East Elevations (façade – Photo 17): The façade of the Commercial Building faces both south towards Fulton Street, and briefly east towards Malcolm X Boulevard as it curves back around to the south (*Photos 43-45*). The building accommodates five different commercial spaces. The angled, northwest side of the façade features two replacement aluminum storefronts serving a supermarket, likely installed in the 1990s. The storefronts are flanked by painted red brick on either side. Above is a non-historic running seam awning, as well as non-historic faux wood cladding along the parapet. Where the façade curves around to the north and faces east are two storefronts with replacement aluminum storefront entrances beneath an aluminum clad parapet and overhang. Where the façade once again faces south at the easternmost side of the building are three additional storefronts with non-historic storefront entrances.

The true east elevation at the northeast side of the building is simple, featuring brick cladding, non-historic signage, and a door at the northeasternmost corner. The door is protected by a roll-down metal security screen.

North Elevation: The north elevation of the building (*Photo 46)* is clad entirely in brick and features a number of shaped parapets creating a stepped design. The section at center is the largest, and the parapet steps up to create the highest point of the elevation. On either side, the top portion of the brick wall alternates between wide brick parapet sections and lower slightly set back sections with vented louvers. The south elevation also features the brick wall surrounding the rear ramp, as well as a brick wall between the commercial building and apartment building, which provides security to the east courtyard.

West Elevation*:* The west elevation (*Photo 41)* is completely unadorned and features a simple brick plain. At the rear of the building, a wall providing access from the street to the east courtyard of the apartment complex intersects with the elevation.

Interior (Photos 33 and 34): The interior of the building is dedicated to storefronts and back-of-house space.

Commercial Units: Five individual stores are arranged in a J-shaped plan. A corridor provides the three easternmost units, which are largely rectangular, with access to stairs leading to the basement stair at the west. The fourth unit from east features a medical care facility with an irregular plan with a number of offices and

exam rooms. The fifth and largest unit at the west functions as a supermarket and is completely open in plan. The supermarket features its own stair at the northwest corner of the plan. Materials in these units have been largely replaced with new vinyl tile flooring, gypsum board walls and ceilings.

Basement: Only two units provide private access to the basement storage areas: the east supermarket unit and the third unit from the east. All other units share access via a rear corridor at the north side of the building which provides access to a stairwell and stair lobby. Materials are completely utilitarian, including concrete floors and painted cement panel ceilings, and a mix of painted concrete and concrete blocks walls.

Garage Buildings **2 contributing buildings**

The two garage buildings on the site are single-story, one-room buildings with flat roofs constructed of painted concrete block. They are located at the southwest and northeast sides of the site's respective parking lots. These small, semi-permanent buildings are completely utilitarian, but likely original to the site and therefore contributing resources.

Integrity

Location and Setting: Fulton Park Plaza is in its original location. When constructed in the 1970s, it was in a primarily residential area of southern Bedford Stuyvesant with a number of mixed-use buildings with storefront at the ground level, as well as a few purely commercial single-story buildings. The setting has remained largely the same, with some instances of recladding or new residential buildings. Overall, the setting has minimally changed since the mid-twentieth century.

Design, Materials, and Workmanship: Fulton Park Plaza has undergone minimal exterior alterations since initial construction in 1974. The complex retains its original massing and form. Most units appear to feature their original layout and finishes. Replacement finishes have been largely comparable to those original materials which exist, such as in-kind replacements of vinyl tile flooring in the classroom spaces. A recent survey of the building confirmed that the original layout of the majority of units remains. The conversion of a first-floor unit (1U) to management offices has not severely impacted the design of public space in the building because the alterations were contained within the existing unit perimeter walls. While the exterior of the complex was rehabilitated ca. 1996 and the roof replaced ca. 1988, the exterior of the complex and the general distribution of apartments and shared spaces at the interior is much the same as its original conception, with two-hundred and eighty-seven total units ranging from studio apartments to four-bedroom apartments. Fulton Park Plaza therefore retains integrity.

Though there is little ornamentation present at the building, the materials and simple workmanship at the exterior, including its brick and aluminum cladding, corner window configurations, and insets have been largely retained, maintaining the building's design. The facade also features minimal ornamentation as originally designed. Most original interior materials remain, including the terrazzo thresholds in unit entrances, vinyl tile flooring, and simple painted gypsum board walls. Vinyl baseboard was likely replaced at some point in the 1990s. At the interior, the original exposed concrete, brick, vinyl tile flooring, and gypsum board walls remain largely the same.

Feeling and Association: Fulton Park Plaza was designed as a low-to-middle-income affordable housing complex. Interior alterations are minimal. The overall massing, form, and appearance of the complex, as well as layout, site, and setting have been largely retained, maintaining the feeling and association of the site as an affordable housing development. As it stands today, the feeling and association of the complex with the history of Vest Pocket Housing within the late 1960s Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan is preserved through its minimal design features and setting amongst commercial and recreational neighborhood amenities.

DRAFT – Fulton Park Plaza Kings County, New York
Name of Property County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [X] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [ ] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [ ] A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] B removed from its original location.
- [ ] C a birthplace or grave.
- [ ] D a cemetery.
- [ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] F a commemorative property.
- [ ] G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

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Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1972-1974

Significant Dates

1972

1974

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

L.E. Tuckett & Thompson (Architect)

Jackie Robinson Construction Corporation (Builder)

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for the building is 1972 to 1974, beginning when construction started and ending when the complex was completed.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph
(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Fulton Park Plaza is **locally significant** under **Criterion A** in the area of ***Social History*** as a publicly subsidized, privately owned affordable housing complex developed with considerable input from the neighborhood's Black community organizations.

The complex, constructed between 1972 and 1974, is located in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant, which became one of New York City's two major Black neighborhoods by the mid-twentieth century (along with Harlem in Manhattan). The micro-neighborhood of Fulton Park—defined by the twin thoroughfares of Fulton Street and Atlantic Avenue—was historically the heart of the borough's Black community. The lingering presence of the Fulton Street elevated and the Atlantic Avenue LIRR tracks, coupled with racially motivated disinvestment and redlining, led to the mounting perception of Fulton Park as a "blighted" neighborhood in need of renewal. In 1964, the city announced an urban renewal project for Fulton Park incorporating a return to the much-criticized "bulldozer" slum clearance techniques of previous decades.

Bedford-Stuyvesant already had a strong network of community organizations, and they quickly organized in response to the urban renewal plans. Most notable were the Central Brooklyn Coordinating Council (CBCC) and the Fulton Park Community Council (FPCC), both championed by local activist Elsie Richardson. When it came to urban renewal, the FPCC and CBCC in fact "maintained a pragmatic ambivalence." On one hand, these groups acknowledged their constituent's fears and staunchly opposed the indiscriminate use of eminent domain, demolition, and the construction of large, tower-in-the-park superblock developments. On the other hand, they also advocated for government funding and neighborhood investment through available programs, including federal urban renewal programs. In the end, what these groups sought (and ultimately achieved) was community input into the form these renewal projects would take, who would build them, and who would operate them once completed.

The city abandoned the bulldozer approach to Fulton Park and eventually undertook a much more nuanced method of urban renewal under the national Model Cities program. Fulton Park Plaza was developed by the New York State Urban Development Corporation (UDC), which was brought on board at the request of the local community groups. In Fulton Park, part of Bedford-Stuyvesant, where sound housing was deteriorated, two community sponsors asked UDC to act as redeveloper. In 1972, UDC, the city, and the community signed an agreement which outlined the community's preferences for lower-rise buildings, for retaining two Black architects, and for hiring a Black developer and sub-contractors.

Fulton Park Plaza fulfilled all of the community's requests. In form, the complex was a vest-pocket development situated on a relatively small site and fitting in with the low-scale character of the neighborhood. It was designed by the firm of L.E. Tuckett & Thompson, founding members of the New York Coalition of Black Architects, and developed by famed baseball player and integrator Jackie Robinson. The construction contracts for the project included extensive equal opportunity provisions, and Robinson committed his company to hiring and training local Black contractors. The period of significance for Fulton Park Plaza begins when construction began in 1972 and ends in 1974, when the building was completed.

Narrative Statement of Significance

History of Bedford-Stuyvesant

Bedford-Stuyvesant (also known as Bed-Stuy) is a neighborhood in Central Brooklyn, roughly bounded by Broadway to the east, Atlantic Avenue to the south, Classon Avenue to the west, and Flushing Avenue to the north. The neighborhood name is derived from two nineteenth-century communities located in Central Brooklyn, Bedford and Stuyvesant Heights. The Bedford neighborhood was located to the west side and the Stuyvesant Heights neighborhood was located to the central and east side of the current neighborhood boundaries.[1] By the mid-twentieth century, the community was colloquially known as Bedford-Stuyvesant (also known as Bed-Stuy).

Historically, the land that now constitutes Bedford-Stuyvesant was occupied by the Lenape, the indigenous people who inhabited the land for 1,500 years by 1500.[2] It was not until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that the area was settled by Dutch immigrants as a farming town.[3] Urbanization of the area occurred during the nineteenth century.[4] Up through the mid- to late-nineteenth century, the predominant population in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood was largely middle class with sections of upper-middle- and lower-middle-class white immigrants of German and Irish descent.[5] The building types typical of urban neighborhoods in Brooklyn during this time included three- and four-story brownstones, rowhouses, religious buildings, schools, civic buildings, and commercial businesses (see Figure 1).[6] The primary modes of transportation at the end of the nineteenth century were trolleys and elevated rail lines along major arterials. The elevated rail line above Fulton Street was constructed in the late 1880s and was a major impetus for the development of Fulton Park. The neighborhood became a commuter town during this time, serving other sections of Brooklyn as well as Manhattan. By 1900, the general area was fully developed. At this time, the private dwellings in the neighborhood were considered some of the best in the city.[7]

Even greater accessibility between Manhattan and the Brooklyn neighborhoods occurred following the completion of the Williamsburg Bridge in 1907. As a result of increased access to Manhattan and new job opportunities in Brooklyn, the population grew steadily during the first few decades of the twentieth century. At the time, Brooklyn was one of the county's most important industrial centers, with a great number of industrial jobs in factories producing women's wear, food products and tobacco, and leather goods, making it a great

[1] "Bedford-Stuyvesant," Brooklyn Public Library, accessed January 19, 2024. https://www.bklynlibrary.org/sites/default/files/documents/brooklyn- collection/Bed%20Stuy%20Project%20Packet%20-%20Middle%20&%20High.pdf.
[2] "How Harlem and BedStuy Became Black," Make New York Grimey Again, accessed June 2, 2025, https://makenewyorkgrimeyagain.com/2019/06/04/how-harlem-and-bedstuy-became-black-a-senior-thesis/.
[3] Brooklyn Public Library, "Bedford-Stuyvesant."
[4] J.H. Colton, "Map of the City of Brooklyn" (New York: J.H. Colton, 1849), Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library, https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/88de1870-c5aa-012f-a98b-58d385a7bc34.
[5] Kathy Howe, NY PARKS DOE Form, "Bedford Historic District," August 4, 2014.
[6] "Bedford-Stuyvesant at Broadway Area," New York Cultural Resource Information System, last modified December 21, 2017; 1940s Tax Department photographs, Department of Finance Collection, New York City Municipal Archives, https://nycrecords.access.preservica.com/1940s-tax-photographs/.
[7] Harold X. Connolly, *A Ghetto Grows in Brooklyn* (New York: New York University Press, 1977), 43.

location for working-class residents and their families. In addition to greater job opportunities, Brooklyn became a popular destination during the Great Migration, in which millions of Black Americans moved from the rural south to northern cities to seek better work opportunities and living conditions. Up until the early twentieth century, the predominant population within the Bedford and Stuyvesant Heights neighborhood had largely been white.[8] With factors like the Great Migration, better working-class job opportunities, and increased housing, the neighborhood population had become more ethnically diverse, including Black, Jewish and Central American immigrants.[9] However, this overall increase in the neighborhood's population directly contributed to a greater demand for housing that continued for decades to come.

To accommodate this growth, extant brownstones and rowhouses that were previously single-family homes were subdivided into multi-family units to accommodate growing numbers of residents, generally of working-class status.[10] By the 1930s, the Black population had grown even larger in the Bedford and Stuyvesant Heights neighborhoods. Following the Great Depression, many relocated from Harlem and other neighborhoods in Manhattan to Bedford and Stuyvesant Heights, which promised smoke-free air, private homeownership, and good schools for their families.[11] In fact, it was during the 1930s that the neighborhood's colloquial term "Bedford-Stuyvesant" came to be, as noted by Michael Woodsworth:

> The term "Bedford-Stuyvesant" came into common usage in the 1930s, just as large numbers of African Americans were moving into the neighborhoods of Bedford and Stuyvesant Heights. Thereafter, the boundaries of Bed-Stuy were progressively enlarged to match the spreading radius of black settlement.[12]

This spurred large-scale real estate blockbusting campaigns against Black residents for the larger part of the 1930s and 1940s.[13] During the Great Depression, unemployment rates were high, and many people could not make their mortgage payments, resulting in country-wide foreclosures. To assist people in keeping their homes, the federal government established the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC), which offered refinanced mortgages with better terms and lower interest rates to help people afford payments. To determine what loans they would give to whom, the HOLC sent appraisers to neighborhoods in cities across the United States. Appraisers documented the types of housing in these neighborhoods and gathered information about the people who lived there. They also catalogued "detrimental influences," which included the racist ideas that "infiltration of Negroes" and "mixed races" were characteristics that lowered a neighborhood's values.[14]

[8] Jack Newfield, *Robert Kennedy: A Memoir* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1969), 96.
[9] New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (NYC LPC), *Bedford Historic District: Designation Report* (New York: City of New York, 2015), 28-29.
[10] Brooklyn Public Library, "Bedford-Stuyvesant."
[11] NYC LPC, *Stuyvesant Heights Historic District Designation Report* (New York: City of New York, 1971), 5.
[12] Michael Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy: The Long War on Poverty in New York City* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017), 13.
[13] NYC LPC, *Stuyvesant Heights Historic District*, 5.
[14] "A Brief History of Redlining," Environment & Health Data Portal, New York City Department of Health (NYC DOH), January 6, 2021, https://a816-dohbesp.nyc.gov/IndicatorPublic/data-stories/redlining/.

In the 1930s, one of these appraisers went to Brooklyn to assess Bed-Stuy and summarized the neighborhood's prospects. Many brownstones were reported to be in "obsolescence and poor upkeep."[15] The surveyor also noted that "colored infiltration" had created an "adverse influence on neighborhood desirability."[16] The government-sponsored HOLC drew a line around Bed-Stuy on a map, and colored the area red. It was given a "D," the worst grade possible, denoting a hazardous place to underwrite mortgages, influenced largely by the diverse immigrant and Black populations.[17] This process was called "redlining," which entailed drawing boundaries around neighborhoods based on race and depriving them of resources and opportunities.[18]

Economists now believe that redlining, as displayed on the HOLC maps, did more than identify disparities that already existed. The lines they helped draw, based largely on the belief that the presence of Black people and other minorities would undermine property values, altered what would happen in these communities for years to come. Though the maps alone did not create segregated communities, they played a powerful role.[19] Areas that were redlined were starved of investment and deteriorated in ways that invigorated white flight and segregation. These maps defined who was worthy of home loans at a time when homeownership was rapidly expanding after World War II. People living in poorly rated neighborhoods had difficulty obtaining mortgages for homes there, regardless of their individual credit, good or bad.[20] By 1940, the Black population of Bed-Stuy was 25 percent of the total. The following decade, the Black population grew to over 50 percent.[21] Despite the difficulties created by redlining, the neighborhood became a rare example of Black homeownership, much of which was assisted through Black real estate agents and communal efforts.[22] Many who did not have access to conventional home loans had to turn to alternatives such as contract sales that entailed steep interest rates.[23]

During the early mid-century period, prior to the construction of Fulton Park Plaza, the surrounding blocks of the subject site within Bed-Stuy remained characterized by a combination of low-rise residential and commercial buildings, such as brownstones and other multi-level buildings with housing above a storefront. The general residential nature as shown in available 1940s WPA photographs and the 1951 historic aerial (*Figures 1 and 2*).

By World War II, housing shortages within the neighborhood had risen.[24] In 1937, Brooklyn's brownstone stock was reaching its limits. Townhouses on average were fifty years old, and in the eyes of many residents

[15] Emily Badger, "How Redlining's Racist Effects Lasted for Decades," *New York Times*, August 24, 2017, sec. The Upshot.
[16] Badger.
[17] "1938 Home Owners' Loan Corporation Map of Brooklyn" (Washington, DC: Hagstrom Map Company, 1938), National Archives and Records Administration.
[18] NYC DOH, "A Brief History of Redlining."
[19] "1938 Home Owners' Loan Corporation Map of Brooklyn."
[20] "1938 Home Owners' Loan Corporation Map of Brooklyn."
[21] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant: An Area Study* (New York: Center for Urban Education, 1967), 4.
[22] NYC LPC, *Stuyvesant Heights Historic District*, 5
[23] "1938 Home Owners' Loan Corporation Map of Brooklyn."
[24] NYC LPC, *Stuyvesant Heights Historic District*, 5.

and brokers, were out of date. For many residents, however, the aging housing stock was not the primary problem. It was the fact that outsiders from a different economic class and race were already moving in.[25]

An incentive to modernize the neighborhood through "slum" clearance came from the notion that the "undesirable," poor and Black population must be kept at bay. In retaliation, many pushed back on that idea. The Brooklyn Better Housing Committee indicated that "slum prevention was equally important with slum clearance," and that "an immediate organize program" to modernize the "well located and well-constructed existing buildings in our Borough" was necessary.[26]

For a brief period, the war provided increased job opportunities for Black residents at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, Schaefer brewery and other small firms specializing in the production of various goods like clothing, musical instruments, paints, and paper; however, this surge of industrial job opportunities was only temporary.[27] As war plants within the city slowed production following the war, many working-class Black residents in neighborhoods like Bedford-Stuyvesant lost their jobs. Jobs were generally awarded to returning veterans and, in many instances, employers and trade unions refused to hire Black workers.[28]

The end of World War II marked the start of major housing shortages throughout the country and the construction of post-war housing became a necessity for veterans and their families. At about the same time, the federally funded urban renewal program authorized by the Housing Act of 1949 was embraced by New York City Planning Commissioner Robert Moses who used federal funds to conduct slum-clearance in working-class areas of the city.[29] This operation forced many working-class families from their neighborhoods in Manhattan and the Bronx into neighborhoods like Bedford-Stuyvesant and Harlem.[30] With housing shortages already ubiquitous throughout the city, these neighborhoods became even more overcrowded than they already were.

At this time, new political strategies and city programs in New York were established to assist with the worsening conditions. One example is the Youth Board, which, through career development programs, aimed to combat the increasingly problematic poverty and overcrowding problem in New York City's struggling neighborhoods through the creation of job opportunities and economic mobility. The goal of programs like these aimed to encourage youth to participate in activities that promoted status and recognition among peers in socially acceptable, safe environments.[31] An example of a "gang-framework" activity they used was team sports, where the individual or larger group received recognition for their efforts in a game. These local programs also helped youth search for jobs. While the combined efforts of local programs did help address shortcomings of the government on assisting neighborhoods like Bedford-Stuyvesant, the government's involvement in providing aid to problems like overcrowding, discriminatory business and real estate practices, or deteriorating building stock, was far from adequate.

[25] "The Plan to Segregate Bed-Stuy (1937)," Brownstone Detectives, February 26, 2021, https://www.brownstonedetectives.com/27-halsey-the-plan-to-segregate-1937/.
[26] "The Plan to Segregate Bed-Stuy (1937)."
[27] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 53.
[28] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 53.
[29] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 35.
[30] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 35.
[31] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 30.

During this period and throughout the mid-century, the section of Bedford Stuyvesant in which Fulton Park Plaza was constructed saw a large amount of demolition and redevelopment, resulting from a number of urban renewal efforts, such as that of the public-private partnership of the Bedford Stuyvesant Redevelopment and Restoration Corporation, which resulted in much economic development overlapping with the boundaries of the future Model Cities area. Some of the earliest efforts of urban renewal by the New York City Housing Authority include a number of affordable housing developments in the nearby neighborhood of Crown Heights, including the 1941 Kingsborough Houses, the 1948 Marcy Houses, and the 1950 Albany houses. In Bed-Stuy, equally close to Fulton Park Plaza as the Crown Heights properties, are the Brevoort Houses, east of the site, which were built in 1955. The construction of developments such as these involved the demolition of a number of residential blocks.[32]

By 1960, the Black population in Bed-Stuy totaled 284,342, with 74 percent being Black and 11 percent being Puerto Rican. The Black population continued to grow, expanding into the surrounding areas of Crown Heights, Flatbush. Brownsville, East New York, Bushwick, and Williamsburg.[33] After decades of racial and political tension between the Black and minority populations and the white population, police, and government, tension came to a head. Following the death of a Black, fifteen-year-old boy at the hands of a white police officer, the Harlem Riot of 1964 erupted in Harlem and spread to the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood. This brought national attention to the living conditions of Bedford-Stuyvesant and to the systemic government neglect of the neighborhood.[34] Emergency meetings occurred among city and state officials to seek solutions to the growing issues in the neighborhood.

By 1967, 65 percent of the Bed-Stuy remained devoted to residential use. Commercial and industrial uses occupied 25 percent of the remaining area. Parks and playgrounds accounted for 10 percent. Some sections of Bed-Stuy still retained the tree-lined streets and two-to-three story brownstones and brick rowhouses which were constructed in the previous century and occupied previously by the middle and upper-middle classes. Many areas of the neighborhood, however, were defined by abandoned and derelict houses, reflecting the general physical deterioration and social unrest of the area. Little had been constructed in Bed-Stuy since 1939.[35] As the situation grew more dire, it became clear that a new take on urban renewal and redevelopment was necessary.

Community Led Urban Renewal Efforts in Bedford Stuyvesant

The Great Depression of the 1930s impacted Bed-Stuy immensely, catalyzing the neighborhood's long history of community activism. During this period, the neighborhood saw the minimization of municipal services, including police protection, sewer maintenance, and adequate street lighting. Bed-Stuy became notably neglected, and criminal activity rose. Properties became liabilities to poor building owners, particularly those

[32] "Guide to the Citizens Housing & Planning Council Records," Marian Sameth and Ruth Dickler Library, Citizens Housing & Planning Council of New York, June 2012, 27, https://chpcny.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/CHPC-Records-Finding-Aid-as-of-July-3-2012.pdf.
[33] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 4.
[34] Alfred E. Clark, "Gang Wars Upset Area in Brooklyn," *New York Times*, May 2, 1961.
[35] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 4.

facing foreclosure. Many publications reported on the deteriorating conditions in neighborhood, outlining the failure of city officials to take action.[36]

Black Brooklyn residents were largely ignored by the Democratic Party that dominated the borough's politics. In the 1940s, however, the community built a network of their own civic clubs, block associations, social-outreach initiatives, and other benefit societies to address the issues in their neighborhoods.[37] These groups restored local brownstones, planted trees, and organized their communities. Early in the dream for the neighborhood's revitalization, these leading activists were hard at work creating the blueprints for the neighborhood's future.[38]

Bed-Stuy began testing and pioneering ideas about urban reform and community action in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Policymakers and local organizers focused particularly on projects designed to alleviate juvenile delinquency and teen gangs in the area, which had become a major problem. The first formal initiative was the Brooklyn Council for Social Planning, which utilized social-work techniques that later inspired a new government agency, the New York City Youth Board. The Youth Board's gang-outreach programs advocated active participation by citizens of the affected neighborhoods in the planning and administering of new programs.[39] In the late 1950s, under Mayor Wagner, the city sought to control and prevent delinquency by addressing discrimination, family breakdown, decaying housing, and poverty.[40] Initially, the archetypical delinquent was white, and early efforts in Bed-Stuy focused on the Italian and Irish population. By the mid-1950s, however, perceptions about crime and delinquency had become racialized, and efforts began targeting groups of African Americans and Puerto Ricans.[41]

Central Brooklyn Coordinating Council

In 1957 local activist Elsie Richardson, alongside several other politically minded Central Brooklyn locals, founded the Central Brooklyn Coordinating Council (CBCC) for the purpose of pursuing the improvement of the Bed-Stuy neighborhood. Seventeen organizations banded together to form the CBCC, including block associations, churches, fraternities, business groups, community centers, and civil- rights organizations. Initially, their focus continued the efforts targeting the youth population.[42]

Though originally focused on youth delinquency, the CBCC inevitably expanded its work to include activism surrounding proposed urban renewal projects, and began offering education and skills training, drug addiction treatment programs, employment workshops, mental health programs, cultural programs, police-community relations, and housing redevelopment, etc., in addition to youth services.[43] The CBCC became an advocate for general community reform, renewal, and redevelopment, utilizing various outreach methods. This included

[36] NYC LPC, *Bedford Stuyvesant/Expanded Stuyvesant Heights Historic District Designation Report* (New York: City of New York, 2013), 25.
[37] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 3.
[38] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 5-6.
[39] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 21.
[40] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 13.
[41] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 18-19
[42] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 75.
[43] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 4.

public radio broadcasts, community newsletters, and conferences.[44] The group began serving as a liaison between Brooklyn's Black citizens and the municipal government. Soon the CBCC began lobbying Mayor Wagner for more comprehensive efforts to help alleviate the issues of juvenile delinquency, poor housing conditions, and the lack of jobs.[45] The CBCC grew to become an important fixture of the community, advocating for much more than the suppression of youth delinquency. It had evolved to support a greater vision of overall community renewal in Central Brooklyn."[46]

One of the many groups which were established beneath the umbrella of the CBCC was the Fulton Park Community Council (FPCC), founded sometime between 1957 and 1963. It is likely that Elsie Richardson founded this sub-group as well, as she was the person most frequently associated with the FPCC.[47] The Fulton Park Community Council functioned as a member of the CBCC, which had become exceedingly well-organized, representing ninety-three member grassroots organizations by 1963. The Fulton Park Community Council was composed of residents of the proposed Fulton Park renewal project area. Members were primarily low-income homeowners, many of whom feared renewal because of what they had heard of observed at other projects constructed previously in New York City. They were extremely concerned about displacement and the general destruction of their homes and greater neighborhood.[48]

The CBCC coordinated the efforts of its member organizations toward the achievement of specific community-wide objectives, including the construction of moderate rental housing and major community facilities and institutions, such as hospitals and a community college, among others. Each of the umbrella groups of the CBCC had long been pursuing the betterment of their neighborhoods in their own ways. However, because the city had largely ignored or mishandled revitalization in suffering areas of the city, most of these groups were suspicious of newly proposed renewal programs and remained skeptical of the city's motivation.[49]

Pratt Center for Community Involvement

In 1963, the Pratt Center for Community Improvement was founded by George M. Raymond, a prominent urban planner and professor at Pratt Institute, which located at the eastern border of Bed-Stuy. The center's aim was to help "equalize the knowledge of level of city and community representatives concerning issues in urban renewal, and to gain the confidence of local residents and enhance their participation in decision making."[50] They offered educational and technical assistance to community members, hosted local and city-wide conferences, conducted a survey of Bed-Stuy, advocated for a vest-pocket park program, and helped develop

[44] "Guide to the Central Brooklyn Coordinating Council Publications," NYU Special Collections Search Portal, Center for Brooklyn History, https://findingaids.library.nyu.edu/cbh/arc_163_central_brooklyn_coordinating_council/.
[45] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 4.
[46] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 45.
[47] Ronald Shiffman and George M. Raymond, "The Pratt Center for Community Improvement: A University Action Program," *Pratt Planning Papers* 4, no. 7 (January 1967): 7.
[48] Shiffman and Raymond, "Pratt Center for Community Improvement," 7.
[49] Shiffman and Raymond, "Pratt Center for Community Improvement," 7.
[50] Shiffman and Raymond, "Pratt Center for Community Improvement," 1.

the Model Cities program in the area. Based on their work, the center argued that Bed-Stuy was one of the most deserving and ready to receive a Model Cities program.[51]

The aforementioned report of Bed-Stuy was undertaken by the Church Community Services Commission, another member of CBCC, in collaboration with the center. The report called for immediate city action and was ultimately endorsed by Robert C. Weaver, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, among others. The publication of the report was followed by the support of the Fulton Park Community Council, which called for assistance as well and desired to draft a survey of the Fulton Park Renewal Area. Their support was an important part of the renewal process, involving community members who, as noted, were suspicious of the city's motives.[52]

The understanding of the city's renewal program by the average Bed-Stuy resident was minimal prior to the educational offerings of the center. What they understood about renewal programs was based on hearsay or impressions gained from the city's other renewal projects. Their fears initially led them to oppose the program. However, after a series of broadly representative community meetings at the center following the Fulton Park Community Councils' endorsement and involvement, other participant organizations accepted the center's offer to help investigate whether or not there were any renewal alternatives that they might find more acceptable than those they were familiar with.[53]

To aid in their understanding of the possibilities, the Pratt Center for Community Involvement, in conjunction with the CBCC, scheduled a series of field trips to Baltimore and New Haven, where new rehabilitation-type renewal programs had received national praise and prominence. The objective of these trips was to help residents develop an understanding of renewal based not on what they'd seen or heard about local projects, but on their actual experience of projects developed elsewhere. Over 100 members of the CBCC, the Fulton Park Community Council, and various other umbrella organizations took part in these trips. [54]

To further garner the support of the community, the center assisted the Central Brooklyn Coordinating Council by hosting a series of community-wide conferences on the "War on Poverty". They also held conferences on housing and urban renewal. Over 500 community leaders attended these in total.[55] In November of 1964, the Housing and Renewal Workshop of the "War on Poverty" Conference generated a comprehensive plan for the Total Renewal and Rehabilitation of Bedford Stuyvesant. The approach the plan recommended was similar to what would become the Federal Model Cities program once allocations were approved. Created by and for the community with the help of the center, the plan had the support of neighborhood leaders and groups who now had a solid understanding of the problems and opportunities associated with the revitalization of Central Brooklyn.[56]

[51] Shiffman and Raymond, "Pratt Center for Community Improvement," 1.
[52] Shiffman and Raymond, "Pratt Center for Community Improvement," 7.
[53] Shiffman and Raymond, "Pratt Center for Community Improvement," 7.
[54] Shiffman and Raymond, "Pratt Center for Community Improvement," 7.
[55] Shiffman and Raymond, "Pratt Center for Community Improvement," 7.
[56] Shiffman and Raymond, "Pratt Center for Community Improvement," 7.

Robert F. Kennedy and the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation

By the middle of the decade, Elsie Richardson of the CBCC was frustrated by her lack of leverage with New York City politics. She changed her strategy, looking higher up the political ladder, and invited New York's U.S. Senators Robert Kennedy and Jacob Javitz to tour Bed-Stuy. As supporters of the federal "War on Poverty," the senators were powerful figures who could aid in their plan's realization. Senator Kennedy accepted the CBCC's invitation. The senators toured the neighborhood in February of 1966, meeting with longtime residents and many other community members. The last stop on the tour was at the YMCA on Bedford Avenue, where Richardson chaired a meeting of local residents. In response to their meeting, the senator proposed a study of Bed-Stuy, something which had already been accomplished through collaborations with the Pratt Center. Elsie Richardson's powerful response impressed upon Kennedy the urgency of the situation. "We've been studied to death," she said, "what we need is bricks and mortar!"[57]

The level of sophistication and local understanding of the issues, thanks to the programs that were made available by the Pratt Center for Community Involvement, gave leadership in Bed-Stuy an early claim on a Model Cities program in their neighborhood. The community pointed out that, while one such program covering a vast portion of the blighted areas of a smaller community might be sufficient, New York City needed at least two such programs; one in Harlem, and one in Bedford-Stuyvesant; the two areas most affected by the Harlem "Riots" of 1964.[58]

The meeting and tour in Bed-Stuy alongside Elsie Richardson's tenacity pushed Kennedy to take action. As a leader of the CBCC, Richardson had helped to develop a comprehensive neighborhood renewal plan. Understanding that she was the perfect person for the job, Kennedy asked Richardson to form a new committee to start collaborating with local, state, and federal governments. Ten months after Kennedy's tour, the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation (BSRC) was born.[59] The BSRC was established to consolidate and carry forward community-led revitalization efforts and set out to finally rebuild the neighborhood and its economy.[60]

Action inevitably came in multiple forms, both private and public. Come the latter portion of the decade, multiple groups did indeed pursue additional surveys, which further illuminated the needs and desires of the community. In July of 1967, John F. Kennedy and the Ford Foundation sponsored a study involving eighty men and women of varied age, education, and background. Participants were recruited through formal and informal community resources for the purposes of the privately funded study. All recruits had residency in the area and were unemployed. They were trained in basic survey techniques, giving them new skills potentially useful in other realms of the workforce.[61] The objective of the survey was to gather data on various social, physical and economic aspects of Bed-Stuy. They went on to gather information on housing conditions, rent, home ownership, household composition, employment, education, income, and the attitudes of the residents toward

[57] "Elsie Richardson: Investing in Bed-Stuy," Museum of the City of New York (MCNY), May 13, 2020, https://www.mcny.org/story/elsie-richardson-investing-bed-stuy.
[58] Shiffman and Raymond, "Pratt Center for Community Improvement," 8.
[59] T. A. Davies, "Black Power in Action: The Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, Robert F. Kennedy, and the Politics of the Urban Crisis." *Journal of American History* 100, no. 3 (December 2013): 1-3. https://doi.org/10.1093/jahist/jat537.
[60] MCNY, "Elsie Richardson."
[61] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 2.

community problems, public services, suggested improvements and possible action-proposals. These efforts had been made before; however, this survey represents an exercise of citizen participation and community involvement as advocated for by Kennedy himself.[62] Though privately sponsored for a different economic renewal program led by the Ford Foundation, the survey area comprised about 650 predominantly residential blocks, including the future site of the subject building, and helped illuminate the neighborhood's conditions and needs.[63]

At the time of the survey, the Black community constituted 87 percent of the 3,075-household sample, Puerto Ricans 8 percent, and whites and other groups 5 percent. Due to racist hiring practices and a lack of jobs nearby, the primary issues of the neighborhood included housing and employment. Nearly one out of every four sample households was found to be receiving at least some welfare assistance.[64] Unemployment among those heads of the household in the labor force was 9 percent, roughly twice the 4.3 percent rate reported for all of New York City in 1967.[65] The median income for all survey households that reported was $5,557.00, which was only 72 percent of the national median income for white households in 1966.[66] However, in Bed-Stuy, this number was 25 percent higher than the national median 1966 income for non-white households. Unusual to Bedford Stuyvesant, however, was the relatively high rate of ownership, with 24 percent of the sample homes being owned by the occupant. Tenants of public housing composed only 9 percent of the sample.[67]

Most respondents had lived in their homes for five years or more, and a third for ten or longer. Considering people were generally staying in one place, an increase in population and the overcrowding of families caused major issues. The survey revealed that the typical Bed-Stuy household was found to have increased in size since 1960. Since few housing units had been built since the 1930s, housing congestion and overcrowding had increased significantly. More than half of the total population of the survey households were large families of five or more people. The problem of large families with inadequate income further intensified the housing problem.[68] The need for more space and the desire for a better place were the primary reasons people moved.[69]

Most classrooms were also considered by interviewees to be overcrowded, outlining a need for more schools.[70] Other less pressing conditions included the disorderliness of the public streets, the need for more police protection, and the lack of sufficient recreational facilities. The repair and improvement of housing and construction of new schools remained at the top of the residents' desires. The demolition of vacant, derelict buildings fell not far behind.[71]

[62] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 3.
[63] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 3.
[64] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 17.
[65] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 17.
[66] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 11.
[67] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 11.
[68] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 19.
[69] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 18.
[70] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 17.
[71] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 15.

Public housing had a general lack of appeal to most residents of the community. The majority of surveyed people in the Bed-Stuy area preferred buildings of a smaller size or developments of a more intimate scale than those which characterized a lot of the housing developments in Bed-Stuy. In this community too, there was a strong desire to live in the suburbs, to live in modern buildings, and to own homes, although apartment dwellings, city living and rehabilitations of old buildings had a strong appeal to other large sections of the population as well.[72] When asked about new housing projects, 82 percent of interviewees considered new development to be important.[73] Concerning public versus private housing, Black respondents expressed a preference for an apartment in a privately managed building over one in a public housing project. Homeowners in particular were strong in their preference for privately managed buildings. Of those residents that were presently living in public housing projects, the majority said they would prefer public housing again if they were to move, but even among this group, a significantly large number, running at 44 percent, said they would prefer a privately managed building.[74] Two thirds of the residents interviewed expressed an interest in a modern building, even with the same amount of space they currently had, rather than being in an older building with more space. Older buildings seemed to have a rather negative appeal. [75]

The preference for elevator buildings smaller than ten stories, compared to those having fifteen or twenty stories, was overwhelming. In almost every respondent category, three-quarters favored lower-rise buildings. Among public housing tenants, this preference ran at an even higher percentage.[76] Of the qualities that respondents expressed to be most important in potential new housing, light and air, heat in the winter and coolness in the summer, safety for children, a high number of bedrooms, a larger amount of space, and modern plumbing ranked highest. Also ranking high was security against robbery, and freedom from pests.[77]

The results of the survey outlined the priorities of the community clearly. Job training, the stimulation of commercial activities, and the introduction of more businesses and industries into the neighborhood ranked the highest, with the desire for decent and rehabilitated housing following. The proposal to rehabilitate the existing housing stock received the highest endorsement at 31 percent, with the proposal to build more housing projects being 16 percent. The construction of more modern school facilities also received 31 percent. The demolition of vacant and abandoned buildings also ranked height on the list at 28 percent. There was considerable recognition that more community facilities were needed, including libraries, parks, and playgrounds.[78]

Respondents were also asked to share if it made a difference whether their employer was Black or white. Interestingly, most interviewees expressed that there was no difference. However, this response is complicated by their reasons for preferring one or the other. Those who expressed a preference for working for a white person predominantly cited economic reasons. The greater financial opportunity and stability of a white employer remained appealing. Those who preferred a Black employer rarely cited financial advantage. Instead,

[72] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 16.
[73] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 25.
[74] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 26.
[75] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 26.
[76] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 31.
[77] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 36.
[78] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 24.

they cited a common bond, a betterment of understanding, and the desire to help their employer make progress. While the first may speak more to available opportunity, the latter speaks to community engagement and building.[79] With employment being such a key issue contributing to the degradation of the community, reinvesting in jobs for those living in the neighborhood became a primary goal for many local renewal programs.

In December of 1967, a meeting was held between the Housing and Development Administration and the Bedford Stuyvesant Better Housing Committee. The meeting was held to review responses to the city's ad regarding sponsorship of "vest pocket" housing projects in Bedford Stuyvesant. The year prior, New York City Mayor John Lindsay announced the "scatter-site housing" program, the precursor to vest pocket.[80] The scattered-site concept involved the de-concentration and dispersal of housing developments across the city. Sites in outlying sections of the city received priority, and borough residents could not override the government's decision on site development selection.[81] The frequent use of vacant and underutilized sites was also characteristic of vest pocket housing; however, the goals of vest pocket housing were more sensitive to the tensions created by "scattered site" housing, in that residents had a say in their development. The vest pocket model envisioned "community participation on an unprecedented scale," "more housing and minimum uprooting," and an "emphasis on neighborhood design [with] buildings of a scale to fit into the neighborhood."[82]

During the 1967 meeting, criteria which governed the selection of sponsors for the new moderate-income vest pocket sites were decided upon. The first priority for sponsorship was that its sponsors were bona fide Bed-Stuy organizations.[83] In the event that an organization wanted to join with an outside organization as a co-sponsor, a request was filed with the Better Housing Committee for approval. Second, all sponsors had to agree to develop their sites in accordance with the overall plan and design criteria specified in the Vest Pocket Plan, as approved by the Board of Estimate. No changes were made in the approved plan and design criteria without the approval of the Better Housing Committee, in conjunction with the Housing and Development Administration (HAD). Third, the Better Housing Committee and HAD determined which sponsors developed which sites, though sponsors could indicate their preferences in writing prior. Fourth, all sponsors had to agree to require all firms or individuals hired by them to hire local Bedford-Stuyvesant residents in all categories of work wherever possible, as a first priority, and all sponsors had to require the firms or individuals hired to make every effort to make union positions available to non-union local residents they employed. This applied to contractors, architects, lawyers, and other persons employed by the sponsor.[84]

[79] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 61-62.
[80] Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, *Community Attitudes in Bedford-Stuyvesant*, 61-62.
[81] Michael N. Danielson and Jameson W. Doig, *New York: The Politics of Urban Regional Development* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1982), 8-9.
[82] Susanne Schindler, "Model Cities Redux," Urban Omnibus, October 26, 2016, http://urbanomnibus.net/2016/10/model-cities-redux/.
[83] "Meeting Between Housing and Development Administration and Bedford Stuyvesant Better Housing Committee" (Brooklyn, New York: Housing Development Administration, December 7, 1967), 1, The Center for Brooklyn History.
[84] "Meeting Between Housing and Development Administration and Bedford Stuyvesant Better Housing Committee," 1.

Urban Renewal Plan for Fulton Park and Community Response

By the mid twentieth century, the boundaries of Bedford-Stuyvesant had expanded in the popular consciousness to encompass most of Central Brooklyn where Black residents lived—including portions of what is now considered Clinton Hill, Crown Heights, and Ocean Hill-Brownsville.[85] Within this expansive area were several distinct sub-neighborhoods including a small area known as Fulton Park.[86] This micro neighborhood was defined by the thoroughfares of Fulton Street and Atlantic Avenue, which run parallel across the Borough of Brooklyn. During the early twentieth century, Brooklyn's slowly growing Black population was "most heavily settled along a lengthy narrow axis extending along Fulton Street and Atlantic Avenue from the downtown and Fort Greene areas through the Bedford and Stuyvesant sections"—likely due in large part to the fact that "Atlantic Avenue and Fulton Street, [were] both less than desirable locations because of the noisome presence of the Long Island Railroad on the former and the El on the latter."[87] In subsequent decades, the borough's Black community expanded into the row house blocks north and south of these thoroughfares, but "the Fulton-Atlantic axis retained its residential primacy."[88]

This expansion of Bedford-Stuyvesant's Black community was aided by opening of the new subway under Fulton Street in 1936. This line—now the A train—linked the neighborhood with the New York's other prominent Black neighborhood, Harlem in Manhattan. As one scholar noted, "The Fulton Street subway, contributed manifestly to the racial transformation of the neighborhood…One black realtor predicted that 'with the coming of the new subway, we expect a great influx of [Black] people in this borough."[89] The elevated line above Fulton Street was discontinued in May of 1940 and the structure demolished in 1941.[90] The introduction of the Fulton Street Subway was intended to connect Bed-Stuy with Manhattan and attract more white-collar workers. However, the two years following the elevated line's abandonment in 1940 left the eyesore of the no-longer-functional railway structure. Its long construction period also impacted the desirability of the neighborhood. Together, these initial problems drove the intended population away. Additionally, as noted, Bed-Stuy became a convenient ride away from Harlem. A rider could travel from 125th Street and Eighth Avenue in Harlem to Central Brooklyn in half the time previously required. The possibility of Black homeownership was more possible in Brooklyn, and rental costs were lower. It became an attractive choice for many Harlemites. One Black realtor predicted that "with the coming of the new subway, we expect a great influx of [Black] people in this bureau."[91] Harlemites could move to the less crowded, more affordable neighborhood of Bed-Stuy and still have easy accessibility to community, culture, and employment in Harlem.[92]

[85] See 1967 map reproduced in Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy,* 49.
[86] The eponymous park was created by the city around 1902.
[87] Connolly, *A Ghetto Grows in Brooklyn,* 44-45.
[88] Connolly, *A Ghetto Grows in Brooklyn,* 54-55.
[89] Connolly, *A Ghetto Grows in Brooklyn,* 74-75.
[90] Charles S. Small, "The Railway of the New York and Brooklyn Bridge," *The Railway and Locomotive Historical Society Bulletin,* no. 97 (1957): 7–20.
[91] Connolly, *A Ghetto Grows in Brooklyn,* 73-75.
[92] Connolly, *A Ghetto Grows in Brooklyn,* 73-75.

The lingering presence of the Fulton Street elevated and the Atlantic Avenue LIRR tracks, coupled with racially motivated disinvestment and redlining, led to the mounting perception of Fulton Park as a "blighted" neighborhood in need of renewal. It took years of advocacy by Bedford-Stuyvesant's community organizers to win substantive re-investment by the city, state, and federal governments, but ultimately they were successful not only in securing urban renewal funding for their neighborhood but also in determining the form that renewal would take.

New York City first proposed an urban renewal project for Fulton Park in April 1964.[93] In a controversial move, it announced a return to the slum clearance policies of previous decades, although somewhat tempered by community involvement. The *Times* noted that the new program "would tear down some of the worst slums without tearing apart the lives of the occupants. In part, the program would mean a return to the bulldozer—the only way of dealing with the hard-core slums, in the opinion or most experts. But…that would be buffered by a wide range of techniques for relocation and social aid."[94] One of the chief proponents of the plan, City Planning chair William Ballard, noted that, "it's an indication that urban renewal is coming of age…We've been trying to do urban renewal without taking down any buildings, moving any people or hurting anybody…Now, in a very limited way, we're going again into the areas that have to be bull-dozed." [95]

The proposed urban renewal process was anticipated to take years to accomplish. The first step would be a series of studies, which would "fall into two categories. One category is technical, a compilation of statistics on housing conditions, population and income. The second category is personal, an exchange of ideas, plans and hopes among the residents of Fulton Park and the city."[96] The city would then host two public hearings by the Planning Commission and Board of Estimate before formally designating the area as an urban renewal area. Then the Housing and Redevelopment Board would prepare a detailed plan, followed by two more public hearings about plan. Finally, the plan would need Federal approval for it to allocate slum clearance funding to the project.

This extended timeline gave the Bedford-Stuyvesant activists plenty of time to organize a coordinate response to the plan. Leading this effort was the Fulton Park Community Council (FPCC), which "represented local tenants and homeowners of modest means…Many [of whom] were women."[97] The FPCC was "Led by the voluble Elsie Richardson, whose house on Prospect Place sat just south of the renewal zone," and the group was closely affiliated with the CBCC, also headed by Richardson.[98] By June 1964 the FPCC had formed an urban renewal study committee to spearhead the community response to the city's plan. Louise Bolling was elected

[93] Seven areas were identified for renewal. Three of these—Fulton Park, along with Millbank Recreation Center (Manhattan) and Averne (Queens)—were cited as having "some of the most serious social, economic and physical conditions in the city." The other four were Jumel Place, Manhattanville, Gansevoort Market (all in Manhattan), and Bronxchester (Bronx).
[94] "Worst City Slums Dues for Renewal in New Program," *New York Times*, April 14, 1964, 1, quoted in Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 208.
[95] "Worst City Slums Dues for Renewal in New Program," 1.
[96] "Fulton Park Area Studied," *Brooklyn World-Telegram*, April 20, 1964, B1.
[97] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 209.
[98] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 209.

president while Richardson was selected as the recording secretary.[99] In announcing the committee, the local Black press noted that "Fear is also being evidenced by homeowners who feel that the city will ruthlessly take many of the homes in the community. At the present time, representatives from the City Planning Board are attempting to quell the fear but residents do not have too much faith in the hinted promises."

When it came to urban renewal, the FPCC and CBCC in fact "maintained a pragmatic ambivalence."[100] On one hand, these groups acknowledged their constituent's fears and staunchly opposed the indiscriminate use of eminent domain, demolition, and the construction of large, tower-in-the-park superblock developments. On the other hand, they also advocated for government funding and neighborhood investment through available programs including federal urban renewal programs. In the end, what the FPCC sought (and ultimately achieved) was community input into the form these renewal projects would take, who would build them, and who would operate them once completed.

Under pressure from the local groups, the city soon dropped the bulldozer proposal for Fulton Park. This also, however, led to further delays in bringing government funding to the area. As one newspaper article noted, "the Planning Commission is in the process of working out a new approach to urban renewal and is holding up any new projects in the meantime."[101] Richardson was particularly impatient with the process and in 1965 wrote Mayor Wagner a pointed letter requesting urban renewal funding for her neighborhood, noting that, "Minorities want first-class neighborhoods with first-class citizenship."[102]

Central Brooklyn Model Cities Community Development Plan

Government funds for Fulton Park were finally secured under Mayor Lindsay, who took office January 1966, through the national Model Cities program. The Model Cities program was established as an element of President Lyndon B. Johnsons War on Poverty and was authorized under the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966, which replaced the Urban Renewal model that had begun in the late 1940s.[103] The program was administered through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and made appropriations for subsidized projects including low-and-moderate income housing, demolition, renovation, and redevelopment, the construction of hospitals, schools, community centers, parks and recreational facilities, and worked in tandem with social service programs.[104] The Model Cities program appointed committees in the cities and then opened headquarters in the particular neighborhoods in which the plans were focused. The purpose was to create an inclusive, collaborative alternative to the previous urban renewal methodology that was specifically tailored to a particular community.[105]

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[99] "Elect Louise Bolling Prexy of Fulton Pk. Renewal Group," *New York Recorder*, June 20, 1964, 1 and 9; "Fulton Renewal Meeting July 21," *New York Recorder*, July 4, 1964, 1.
[100] Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 110.
[101] "Fulton Renewal Stymied," *Brooklyn World-Telegram*, September 2, 1965, B1.
[102] Quoted in Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 110.
[103] Jason T. Bartlett, "Model Cities," Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia, accessed December 20, 2024, https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/essays/model-cities/.
[104] "Model Cities Program," National Plan to End Poverty, accessed December 20, 2024, https://nationalpovertyplan.org/timeline/model-cities-program/.
[105] New York City Planning Commission, "Central Brooklyn Model Cities," *Plan for New York City 1969* (New York, 1969), vol. 3,

The Central Brooklyn Model Cities Community Development Plan (*Figures 5 and 6*), the name for the project which focused on the Central Brooklyn Model Cities Area, was initially developed in 1968. The program provided for the acquisition of properties within Bed-Stuy, East New York, Brownsville, and Fulton Park, which occurred during 1969 and 1970. In terms of housing, the urban renewal plan focused particularly on "Vest Pocket" new construction of low- and moderate-income housing on a scale to fit into the existing neighborhoods.[106] With the aforementioned two Vest Pocket projects already underway, the Central Model Cities Development Plan embraced the concept and integrated it into their planning.

The Central Brooklyn Model Cities Community Development Plan outlined a particular focus on housing, as well as developing additional community facilities, such as industrial areas, commercial areas, open space and other amenities. The initial development of industrial areas first occurring in East New York was intended to provide employment and training for individuals residing within the greater Model Cities Area. Additional jobs and commercial opportunities were also planned to be generated by a proposed shopping center in Bed-Stuy, among smaller commercial spaces (such as that at Fulton Park Plaza) within the boundaries of the renewal area. The commercial and industrial elements of the plan were intended to assure proper order and balance in the physical and economic redevelopment of Central Brooklyn.[107]

The Model Cities legislation and New York City directives called for the program priorities and plans to be developed by the person's most directly affected, namely the residents of the Model Cities areas. These directives did not have detailed specific requirements for engagement. This was instead left up to the Central Model Cities Committee, as established by Mayor Lindsay, who coordinated and administered the citywide program through Neighborhood Directors to establish local policy committees in each of the three Model Cities areas, one of which was Fulton Park.[108]

Like other renewal plans in the area, the Model Cities Plan first pursued meetings, survey and information gathering. The first direct involvement of community residents in the Model Cities decision-making process began in September 1967 when the Central Model Cities Committee sent over 2,000 letters describing Model Cities, including the position of Neighborhood Director, and asking for recommendations for candidates. The names were compiled by the Human Resources Administration and the City Planning Commission after consulting with other city agencies and the borough president. In addition, the central committee invited nearly fifty people, including elected officials and representatives of community boards, planning committees, school boards, civil rights organizations, and business groups to attend a meeting. At this meeting, a nine-member ad-hoc personnel committee was formed, consisting of three representatives from each of the three communities of Beford-Stuyvesant, East New York and Brownsville, to screen applicants for the position of director and to

48, Lionel Pinus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library, https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/c42cb93f-8de1-ca65-e040-e00a18064e5c.
[106] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan" (Brooklyn, New York: Central Brooklyn Model Cities, 1968), 1 The Center for Brooklyn History.
[107] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan," 3.
[108] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan," 3.

recommend candidates to the mayor. Ultimately, Horace L. Morancie was appointed by the mayor, assuming his duties on January 8, 1968. [109]

The City Planning Commission and the Board of Estimate approved the overall concept for the Central Brooklyn Community Development Plan in 1968.[110] Within this plan, Fulton Park was pursued as an urban renewal area through a Neighborhood Development Program (NDP). All NDP's were part of the area-wide Model Cities program. In NDP projects, several project areas received federal funds as a group, in a single "action year" package." Non-cash grant credits beyond those needed for the local share could be transferred from any NDP Area to another NDP Area during the action year.

Due to the size of the area, it was decided that a single committee would either be too large to be effective, or it would not give adequate representation to the community. Instead, they established a committee for each neighborhood, each composed of twenty-five members. It Bed-Stuy, the first meeting took place on March 1, 1968, in a small basement room of Youth In Action's Neighborhood Action Center. About 200 delegates attended. At the second meeting the following week, some 700 delegates attended the auditorium of a local public school. By the third meeting on March 14, five delegates-at-large and members of five committees were elected. The lengthy process indicated that community participation, especially in struggling areas, was not a finished product, but an ongoing process.[111]

A community like Bed-Stuy posed a number of challenges when it came to gaining the participation of its members. First was the general disorganization of what the plan called "deprived" areas. A lack of faith in representative government manifested in community meetings, and complaints about lack of sufficient notice were frequent. Delegates were not fully confident they could make decisions for those they represented and expressed a general distrust of the government. Still, following an impassioned speech by Morancie which was well-received, they were inspired to be active participants.[112]

During the fall of 1968, the various committees met to discuss proposals and formulate plans in their assigned areas. City agencies, including Police, Fire, Human Resources Administration, Housing and Development Administration, New York City Housing Authority, the City Planning Commission, provided resource people and did research and analysis for the committees, all directed by the neighborhood director and staff.[113] During this period, the staff of the City Planning commission's Community Renewal Program, collaborating with the Model Cities staff, with assistance from other agencies, was working up figures for a needs analysis for use by the committees and staff in developing a problem analysis and programs for Model Cities. In mid-October, the material was presented, including a quantitative analysis of the current level of municipal services and projections for 1975. Following a series of meetings, the neighborhood director and staff were approved to

[109] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan," 1.
[110] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan," 1-3.
[111] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan," 3.
[112] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan," 6-7.
[113] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan," 11.

complete the work on the plan for HUD, using as its basis the information gathered, as well as the conversations from previous meetings.[114] The goals of the plan were defined as follows:

Summary of the Goals of the Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan

- To remove substandard and unsanitary structures and improvements, to eliminate blighting environmental influences,
- Eliminate impediments for land assemblage and development, to provide convenient community facilities and other services,
- Strengthen code enforcement and other public services
- Improve maintenance of as many existing structures as possible and foster owner occupancy,
- Provide new and rehabilitated housing for low- and moderate-income families built to high standards of design, privacy, light, air, and open space,
- Coordinate all design and architectural elements to assure high quality and consistency within each neighborhood and the Central Brooklyn Area as a whole,
- Create relocation housing resources in advance of future relocation,
- Provide new commerce and industry and job opportunities, and finally,
- Coordinate physical development goals and plans with other social and economic programs active in the Central Brooklyn Area.[115]

Under prior local urban renewal designations, two Vest Pocket housing programs were already under way in the Central Brooklyn Model Cities Areas. The two programs were known as the Bedford-Stuyvesant-I and East New York-I Community Development Plans. These two ongoing Vest Pocket Housing Programs, which became a part of the Model Cities Program, provided an opportunity for immediate action to provide Model Neighborhood residents with employment and training opportunities in demolition, construction, and relocation services. To carry out the Vest Pocket program, residents had to be relocated. The Model Cities Committee, acting through the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), instituted a program in which Model Neighborhood residents were given on-the-job training during the relocation process as Relocation Aides and Housing Assistance in the career ladder Civil Service System. Residents of this program were immediately placed on payroll and are assigned to their local Housing Authority site offices where they were given training.[116]

The Central Brooklyn Model Cities Vest Pocket redevelopment plan was guided by the preservation of the character of each area as predominantly residential for low- and moderate-income families. Recreational and

[114] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan," 13.
[115] Fulton Park Urban Renewal Project Sites 2 & 4: Contract for Sale of Land for Redevelopment by the New York State Urban Development Corporation, April 20, 1972, New York City Department of Finance, Borough of Brooklyn Reel 595, Page 1356, in Automated City Register Information System (ACRIS), https://www.nyc.gov/site/finance/property/acris.page.
[116] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan - Overview" (Brooklyn, New York: Central Brooklyn Model Cities, 1969), 2, The Center for Brooklyn History.

other facilities were also included in the Community Development Plans. The resulting design of housing and community facilities epitomized the low-rise character of the neighborhood. The design also called for underground parking and large sized apartments.[117] Ground was expected to be broken on all of the plan sites by the Fall of 1969.[118]

As part of the program, community-based sponsorships were fostered, a first for New York City.[119] As an economic development component of the Model Cities Program, it was decided that the Vest Pocket Housing Program should be used as a vehicle to provide entrepreneurial, employment and training opportunities in the demolition and construction trades industries. The demolition industry generally employed large numbers of minority workers but almost no minority demolition contractors. In addition, no minority demolition contractors were awarded contracts with public agencies. Minority contractors had been unable to provide performance bonds and/or insurance certificates to be eligible for such contract awards and/or union membership. The Model Cities Committee, acting through the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), instituted a program of contract unit packaging which resulted in demolition contracts below the sum of $10,000, thereby legally permitting NYCHA to institute a system of invitational competitive bidding rather than publicly advertising bids, allowing them to employ Model Neighborhood residents.[120] At the same time, the Model Cities Staff and Committee together with the Manpower Career Development Agency executives and the executive staff of NYCHA negotiated with officials of the Building and Construction trades Council and the Building Trades Employers' Association to effect on-the-job training programs resulting in employment and union membership. The negotiations resulted in an agreement by the unions and employers to participate and cooperate in a training program for the construction and demolition phase of the program.[121]

In identifying and examining proposed sites within the renewal area, the City Planning Commission held multiple public hearings. Residents of several sub-areas of Central Brooklyn participated in the hearings and planning process. The results of these hearings and planning meetings were compiled in a report of findings which was submitted in 1972.[122]

This collaborative process was noted as an "unprecedented give-and-take of community dialogue took place in developing the plan in order to assure that the renewal activities in this area would not cause increased hardship to the local residents."[123] Within a determined project area, properties assessed for redevelopment of the proposed area were considered based on the following factors; if the property was an old tenement, it was considered suitable for redevelopment or rehabilitation. Sites which were structurally sound or showed signs of less severe deterioration could be considered for rehabilitation. If the property was not suitable for conservation/preservation, it could be considered for redevelopment. Most important, however, the selection of these properties needed to be compatible with the wishes of the local community.

[117] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan – Overview," 3.
[118] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan – Overview," 3.
[119] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan – Overview," 3.
[120] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan – Overview," 6-7.
[121] "Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan – Overview," 7.
[122] Fulton Park Urban Renewal Project Sites 2 & 4, 1288.
[123] Fulton Park Urban Renewal Project Sites 2 & 4, 1355.

Ultimately, both government officials and community leaders deemed the Fulton Park area appropriate for urban renewal. The lack of adequate housing, both in numbers and quality, designated the area a good candidate for an affordable housing development, among other community amenities. Thus, a demolition campaign along Fulton Street, made way for the new high school at 1700 Fulton Street, the Jackie Robinson playground, a new traffic pattern with Utica Avenue now crossing Fulton Street, and Fulton Park Plaza.

Mitchell Lama and the Urban Development Corporation

Access to affordable housing was limited through the early mid-century, partially because public funding narrowed possibilities and complicated application processes. Though the New York City Housing Authority had been active for a number of decades, an aversion to large projects, in addition to new development and rehabilitation proposals from NYCHA, were viewed negatively.[124] NYCHA's "slum clearance" and the public housing developments that replaced older housing had resulted in displacement.[125] The thresholds for public housing were also unattainable by many who barely exceeded the definition of "low-income," or who could not navigate the paperwork and governmental processes necessary to apply.[126] A study of the planning needs of twenty-six local communities revealed the shortcomings of many government housing programs. Public housing projects were again criticized for their "impenetrable social and economic barrier[s] in the larger community."[127]

One of the most substantial middle-income programs was the Mitchell-Lama program, signed into law in 1955.[128] In response to the red-tape involved with NYCHA developments and low-income public housing, the Mitchell-Lama program provided a more flexible alternative. Mitchell-Lama, alongside other affordable housing programs, arose during a period when local and federal governments came to the conclusion that government had a responsibility to resolve overcrowded, dilapidated, and substandard housing conditions, elements which were seen in Bed-Stuy at that time. Governments believed these conditions were contributing to the breakdown of communities and urban living. [129] In 1955, the Limited Profit Housing Law was enacted simultaneously, allowing state loans to be issued at a low interest rate over long durations of time. Municipalities could grant tax abatements which originally ranged from 40 percent to 60 percent. Many projects were constructed on federally subsidized urban renewal land, which further reduced the costs of development. The Mitchell-Lama program was intended to last indefinitely, with a no buy-out provision integrated into the original law.[130]

Mitchell-Lama was inspired by the union-built cooperative housing and limited dividend co-ops pioneered by the United Housing Foundation. It was sponsored by New York State Senator MacNeil Mitchell and

[124] Walter Thabit, *How East New York Became a Ghetto* (New York: NYU Press, 2005), 70.
[125] Thabit, *How East New York Became a Ghetto*, 70.
[126] Thabit, *How East New York Became a Ghetto*, 71.
[127] Thabit, *How East New York Became a Ghetto*, 70.
[128] "Mitchell-Lama Program," New York City Housing Preservation and Development (NYC HPD), accessed May 16, 2024, https://www.nyc.gov/site/hpd/services-and-information/mitchell-lama-program.page.
[129] NYC HPD, "Mitchell-Lama Program."
[130] NYC HPD, "Mitchell-Lama Program."

Assemblyman Alfred Lama.[131] The program was to be supervised either by New York City or New York State; funding could be sourced from either.[132] Mitchell-Lama housing complexes provide either affordable rental or cooperative housing to moderate and middle-income families.[133]

The program was based on the Rochdale Principles of Cooperation, which had initially been outlined for the development and operation of cooperative housing; however, Mitchell-Lama integrated these concepts into rental housing as well.[134] The Rochdale Principles consisted of eight points which aimed to create equity in housing. The first principle was open membership, which aimed to dispel the discriminatory practices of landlords throughout the city. The second principle was democratic control, meaning that the building was owned and operated by its members. The third was a limited return on capital, meaning that the development was not to make a profit. Any surplus profit was to be distributed to members of the co-op. Fourth was honest business practices. Cooperatives were to deal openly, honestly, and honorably with their members and the general public. Fifth was the ultimate aim of advancing the common good. Sixth was education. Co-ops were expected to educate their members, officers, and employees and members of the general public in the principles and the techniques of cooperations, both economic and democratic. The final seventh principle was cooperation among cooperatives, meaning that co-ops should actively be cooperative with one another in every practical way.[135]

In 1959, Nelson Rockefeller amended the Mitchell-Lama program to further incentivize private developers to build more Mitchell-Lama rentals. To achieve this, the amendment lowered the amount of equity a developer needed to put into a project by half, bringing it to a mere 5 percent of the total development costs, and allowed the option to 'buy-out' of the program, or become a private development after a certain period of time.[136]

The design of Mitchell-Lama buildings was often reminiscent of public housing projects; boxy, high-rise towers with minimal ornamentation. Unlike NYCHA or other contemporary public housing, city-subsidized Mitchell-Lama developments did not have to meet the state and federal push for minimal budgets.[137] The Mitchell-Lama program did not have design requirements outlined in the program, meaning that depending on the developer and their particular budget, architects and designers had more flexibility, often resulting in more architectural interest and expression than that seen in public housing.[138] Within the new methodologies for urban renewal, this meant that communities could have more input on the type of housing and design they would prefer. This fit well into the evolving requirements for community input in the renewal programs of the late 1960s and 1970s.

[131] Camille Rosca, "From Affordable to Profitable: The Privatization of Mitchell-Lama Housing & How the New York Court of Appeals Got It Wrong," *Seton Hall Law Review* 45 (2015): 945.
[132] NYC HPD, "Mitchell-Lama Program."
[133] NYC HPD, "Mitchell-Lama Program."
[134] "History of Mitchell-Lama," Cooperators United for Mitchell-Lama, accessed May 16, 2024, https://cu4ml.org/all-about-the-mitchell-lama-housing-program/history-of-mitchell-lama.
[135] Cooperators United for Mitchell-Lama, "History of Mitchell-Lama."
[136] Cooperators United for Mitchell-Lama,"History of Mitchell-Lama."
[137] "High Rise for the Middle Class: Mitchell-Lama Housing in the 1970s," Urban Archive, accessed May 16, 2024, https://www.urbanarchive.org/stories/a2UTmNfgp3V.
[138] Urban Archive, "High Rise for the Middle Class."

The New York State Urban Development Corporation

The Mitchell-Lama program paired nicely with other progressive housing and urban renewal plans that were developed in the mid-twentieth century. One such organization that utilized Mitchell-Lama funding was the New York State Urban Development Corporation (UDC), the initial developer of Fulton Park Plaza. The UDC was a public benefit corporation created by state legislature in response to the shortage of affordable housing in the state. Official approval of the UDC would not be seen until the end of the decade, nor would the appropriation of Model Cities funding. By late September 1967, the U.S. Congress had still not appropriated any of the $537 million approved for Model Cities by the Senate. The city did, however, approve the new vest pocket program, which increased the budget from $15 to $25 million. Committee members emphasized that they "were voting only for housing, not for Model Cities."[139] The committee was on board with the idea of Model Cities but remained skeptical of establishing a new planning process which promised to empower residents.

If and how the plans for vest-pocket housing were subsequently implemented varied greatly. Everywhere, sites were identified by residents for housing construction and were then acquired by the city through eminent domain. Unlike many renewal projects in New York City, in Central Brooklyn, many projects were realized. As the programs for vest-pocket and Model Cities evolved, the UDC took shape, quelling many financing concerns for sponsors and developers.

In 1968, the Urban Development Corporation of New York State (UDC) was officially founded through the passing of legislation following Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination. It was established as the only state development corporation in the nation and was headed by Edward Logue, a major leader in postwar urban renewal in the northeast.[140] Initially proposed by Governor Rockefeller, Urban Development Corporations, which in addition to having financing powers like the HFA, would also be able to initiate, build, and operate its projects. A UDC could act as the primary developer, or collaborate with private businesses in redevelopment, and unlike the HFA, it would also be able to fund commercial and industrial projects.[141]

The UDC was innovative in the planning, design, and financing of affordable housing. It could supersede local planning and zoning and invoke eminent domain to secure property. They focused on underdeveloped or infill sites. Their designs for affordable housing represented a departure from the high-rise apartments characteristic in public housing. The UDC had the power "to override local zoning laws and building codes, the freedom from

[139] Susanne Schindler, "Product and process: New York's Model Cities vest-pocket housing and rehabilitation programme," *Planning Perspectives* 39, no. 1 (January 2, 2024): 31–57. https://doi.org/10.1080/02665433.2023.2293600.
[140] Nicolai Ouroussoff, "By the Architects, for the People: A Trend for the 2010s," *New York Times*, May 3, 2010, sec. Arts; "Challenge: New Communities" (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, August 1972), 7.
[141] "Housing Lessons," Policy and Design for Housing: Lessons of the Urban Development Corporation 1968-1975, accessed December 19, 2024, http://udchousing.org/.

various restrictions that would prevent rapid development, and a particularly flexible and independent financing mechanism."[142]

Federal funds, state appropriations, and bond sales provided funding to bring UDC affordable housing to fruition. Once the sites were planned and designed, private companies constructed, acquired and managed them, thereby assisting in bolstering the economy and creating jobs. The UDC also departed from the typical public housing formula by opening up their developments to a range of incomes, and to seniors as well, ultimately diversifying the tenant populations. The UDC also developed commercial and industrial sites, the former of which is seen at Fulton Park Plaza.[143]

The UDC obtained some mortgage money through Mitchell-Lama while drawing upon Section 236 subsidies. The UDC was given the authority to issue its own bonds and was designed to 'tap all existing funding sources.'" including the use of financing through the Mitchell-Lama program.[144] The typical terms included site acquisition at nearly no cost, property tax abatements, subsidized mortgages secured for up to 95% of the project expense. "In exchange, developers were obliged to meet regulations regarding rent and tenant selection and limit the annual return on their investment to 6 percent."[145]

In February 1969, a preliminary plan for the Fulton Park Urban Renewal won the backing of community residents at a meeting sponsored by the Fulton Park Community Council. At the meeting, slides were shown depicting the proposed plans for the project. Approximately 200 people attended.[146] Though the community was officially in support, additional pieces needed to come together to make it a reality, including the approval of sites at the city level. It was not until May 21, 1969, that Mayor Lindsay officially invited the New York UDC to develop sites for housing developments, of which Fulton Park was one. Mayor Lindsay had insisted that the UDC only take on renewal areas where citizen involvement and approval of site selection as well as site acquisition had already been completed or substantially progressed, rather than allow it to initiate its own projects. Of course, in Bed-Stuy, this process was years in the making. The neighborhood was prepared.[147]

The establishment of the UDC shifted the trajectory of vest-pocket housing toward larger scale developments. By advertising its own interest in "good design," it moved affordable housing into the realm of critical reception among architects. However, the UDC did not have unlimited power over design decisions and depended on private-sector cooperation, which often conflicted with its goal of operating in "partnership" with the local communities. This sometimes affected UDC's goal of providing "better design."[148]

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[142] Melissa J. Andrade, Jill Miller, and Virginia H. Adams, "Pines of Perinton Apartments," National Register of Historic Places Form (Washington, DC: US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2022), Section 8, 12-14.
[143] Andrade, Miller, and Adams, "Pines of Perinton Apartments," 12-14.
[144] Ife Vanable, "Working the Middle: Harlem River Park Towers and Waterside Plaza," *Avery Review* 30 (March 2018), https://averyreview.com/issues/30/working-the-middle.
[145] Vanable, "Working the Middle," 3.
[146] "'OK' Fulton Renewal: Residents Vote Fulton Approval," *Bedford-Stuyvesant New York Recorder* 15 (February 1969): 2.
[147] Susanne Schindler, "The Housing That Model Cities Built: Context, Community and Capital in New York City, 1966-76" (PhD diss., Universität der Künste, Berlin, 2018), 41, https://doi.org/10.3929/ethz-b-000306628.
[148] Schindler, "Housing That Model Cities Built," 235.

The Central Brooklyn Model Cities and Vest Pocket housing plans, and the establishment of the UDC made way for the planning, development, and construction of Fulton Park Plaza. The funding opportunities and regulations on community involvement allowed it to become a reality largely driven by the community and inspired by the specific needs of this area of Bed-Stuy. In September of 1972, two community sponsors asked the UDC to act as redeveloper in Bed-Stuy. Before construction began, the UDC, the city and the community signed an agreement which recognized the community's desire for buildings not more than six stories tall, for retaining two Black architects who helped plan the development, and for hiring a Black developer and sub-contractors. The sites, which were within the city renewal plan's "disposition area" were then purchased by the UDC, which would manage the project under the Development Plan until complete.[149]

The two resulting projects in the Fulton Park area were Smith-Woodward Plaza, located at Fulton and Herkimer Street and Schenectady and Troy Avenues, and Fulton Park Plaza, at Fulton, Bainbridge and Chauncey Streets and Reid Avenue. Both were planned and financed in conjunction with the UDC and shared a common developer, the Jackie Robinson Construction Company.[150] A spokesman for Jackie Robinson was quoted in a *Daily News* article outlining his company's involvement with the two projects, stating that that the developments were "made possible by a 40-year mortgage from the New York State Urban Development Corporation."[151] The two projects cost a total of $17 million and offered units for the elderly and low and moderate wage earners.[152] In an *Amsterdam News* article from 1972, Louise E. Benjamen, then chair of the Fulton Park Community Council, noted that "new housing at prices our neighbors can afford is a main step in stabilizing our community. We hope that other Black businessmen will take similar action to help us help our own."[153]

Fulton Park Plaza

The Fulton Park project boundary and land use plan was initially submitted to the New York City Board of Estimate in December of 1969, alongside all other project areas/neighborhoods within the Central Brooklyn Community Development Plan. Fulton Park's land use plan was revised in 1970 and in 1972.[154] The updated plan was approved by the City Planning Commission and Board of Estimate under Title 1 of the Housing Act of 1949. Fulton Park Plaza was to include a number of "ancillary facilities", such as a day care center, which was to be 7,500 square feet, a commercial space, which was to be 12,500 square feet, and off-street parking for 50 percent of the proposed units, all elements which exist at the site today. This met the requirements and goals of the overall urban renewal plan, adding commercial to provide balance to an otherwise residential project.

The property acquired for the project was within a Neighborhood Development Program (NDP) area, which, to be part of the plan, was then acquired by the UDC, which submitted construction plans.[155] The Neighborhood

[149] Schindler, "Product and Process."
[150] "Robinson Concern Plans Housing for Brooklyn," *New York Times*, September 6, 1972, 39.
[151] "Robinson Concern Plans Housing for Brooklyn," 39.
[152] *Westchester Observer*, September 16, 1972, 10.
[153] "Start Work on Multi-Million Dollar Housing," *Amsterdam News*, September 9, 1972, C-1.
[154] Jones and Darby, Inc., *Central Brooklyn Model Cities Master Redevelopment Plan: Summary Report* (New York: Jones and Darby, Inc., 1973).
[155] "Fulton Park Urban Renewal Project Sites 2 & 4."

Development Program functioned under Title I of the Housing Act of 1949 and was established in 1968 to provide funding for selected renewal initiatives and require citizen participation in the planning process.[156] The program was eliminated with the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.[157]

Ownership by the UDC was temporary. Following the development and construction of these properties, they were sold or leased by the UDC to a qualified, suitable, local corporation. The site was then to be managed by the local corporation, serving as a vehicle for community training in real property management. In the case of Fulton Park Plaza, this was a non-profit corporation established for these explicit purposes called Fulton Park Site 4 Houses, Inc.[158]

NDP projects managed by the UDC put particular emphasis on integration and equal opportunity for minorities in both the construction, management, and occupancy of the buildings within the project area. The contracts for the developments outlined extensive considerations regarding these factors. The Black-owned architecture firm of Tuckett & Thompson was hired by the UDC for the design. Bennie Thompson, principal of the firm, had grown up in Harlem and was all too familiar with the challenges and needs of adequate affordable housing in New York City's struggling Black communities. The Jackie Robinson Construction Corporation, formed by the eponymous baseball star and civil rights leader and his wife, Rachel, was selected as the contractor. Based on other projects managed by the UDC, the UDC likely hired the contractors. However, considering the shared goals of the UDC and the Robinson Company, the two may have collaborated.

Jackie Robinson, having been a notable civil rights activism for much of his varied career, stated that his construction firm would "employ minority contractors and workers."[159] Ultimately, 95 percent of the project was funded by a forty-year mortgage provided by the State Urban Development Corporation (UDC); however, Jackie Robinson's firm covered the remaining 5 percent.[160]

Fulton Park Plaza began construction in July of 1972 and was planned to be occupied by 1974. The primary goals of the complex were to provide a safe and secure housing development that made tenants feel a sense of comfort and pride, as opposed to the typical public housing complexes, which infiltrated many Black and minority communities, displacing many and gaining a reputation for doing more harm than good. For this reason, the architects wanted to avoid the typical public housing aesthetic, which at this time was heavily skewed towards red-brick high rises with little ornamentation. The building was limited to six stories and was designed with as much architectural interest as the budget allowed.[161] The carefully developed complex, planned in conjunction with the community, was to create new housing at affordable prices to help stabilize the community.[162]

[156] "AH History," Atlanta Housing, accessed December 19, 2024, https://www.atlantahousing.org/about-us/ah-history/.
[157] John E. Mogk and George J. Mager, "Urban Renewal after the 1974 Housing Act," *Journal of Urban Law* 52 (1975), https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/lawfrp/417.
[158] "Fulton Park Urban Renewal Project Sites 2 & 4."
[159] "Jackie Bats for Bed-Stuy Housing," *Daily News*, September 5, 1972, 312.
[160] "Jackie Bats for Bed-Stuy Housing," 312.
[161] "Building Pride Into A Project," *Daily News*, June 10, 1973, 32.
[162] "Jackie Bats for Bed-Stuy Housing," 312.

The groundbreaking ceremony was held on September 6, 1972, in Fulton Street Park adjacent to the future Fulton Park Plaza site.[163] Fulton Park Plaza opened by 1974, featuring an interesting S-shaped plan with a range of apartment sizes and responding to the community-outlined desire for a mid-rise complex with larger apartment sizes to accommodate growing family sizes. The building had 287 apartments, ranging from studio to four-bedroom units, uncommon for affordable housing complexes of this size, but sensitive to the needs of the community.[164] Also included within the building were the planned day care center, commercial space, and a community facility space, as well as off-street parking for 50 percent of the units.[165] These elements remain major features of the complex today.

Jackie Robinson and the Jackie Robinson Construction Corporation

Jackie Robinson's legacy is undeniably tied to his civil rights efforts and achievements.[166] Though his athleticism gained him nationwide fame, his less-celebrated civic achievements had long-lasting impacts rooted in the mid-twentieth century Civil Rights Movement. Fulton Park Plaza was developed by the Jackie Robinson Construction Corporation toward the end of his life, representing a direct attempt to impact the lives of Black Americans through community planning and job creation.. His life building up to his collaborations with his wife, Rachel Robinson, who pursued the continuation of his legacy following his death, were rooted in their experience as a young Black Americans.

Jack Roosevelt Robinson was born in Cairo, Georgia, in 1919 to sharecroppers. Upon abandonment by his father, Jackie and his mother soon moved across country to join family in Pasadena, California. The family moved to a majority white neighborhood, where they often suffered racial discrimination and harassment. Still Robinson found success, attending Pomona Junior College and, later, UCLA. Throughout his schooling, Robinson was well-known for his athletic skill. He excelled in tennis, track, football, and what ultimately brought him world-wide fame, baseball. During Robinson's time at UCLA, he became the first player to win varsity letters in all four sports he participated in.[167]

In the early 1940s, Robinson was drafted into the segregated army and stationed at Fort Riley in Kansas. After a number of military successes, while on a military bus in Texas, Robinson was asked to move to the back by the driver. At this time, military buses in Texas were not segregated by law, and Robinson refused to move. Unfortunately, military superiors sided with the bus driver, and the encounter resulted in his honorable discharge from the military.[168] Following this, Robinson began his professional baseball career. Robinson joined an all-Black team, the Kansas City Monarchs, playing in the Negro League, which was completely segregated from Major League Baseball. In an extremely controversial move, Robinson was approached by the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1945 to play for their team. Though team owners had previously honored a "gentlemen's

[163] "Jackie Bats for Bed-Stuy Housing," 312.
[164] "Jackie Bats for Bed-Stuy Housing," 312.
[165] "Fulton Park Urban Renewal Project Sites 2 & 4," 1406.
[166] Although not eligible for its connection to Jackie Robinson under Criterion B, Jackie Robinson's association with the project is a significant part of the property's development.
[167] Rebecca Bratspies, *Naming Gotham: The Villains, Rogues & Heroes Behind New York's Place Names* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2023), 27.
[168] Bratspies, *Naming Gotham*, 26.

agreement" to exclude Black players, the recently enacted Ices-Quinn Act had made it illegal for a New York employer to refuse to hire a person based on race. Because Major League Baseball was incorporated in New York, this law applied.[169]

New York City mayor Fiorello LaGuardia established a committee, including Branch Rickey, to study racial discrimination in baseball. The committee published a report which referred to segregation in the sport as "sheer prejudice" and called on Major League Baseball to end segregation. In 1945, Robinson was signed to play for the Dodgers, making him the first Black player in the National League. In a newspaper column he wrote about his new contract, Robinson stated that he would not forget that he represented a "whole race of people" who were pulling for him. After first excelling while playing a season for the Montreal Royals, a top minor league farm team for the Dodgers, Robinson finally made his major-league debut with the major league Dodgers in 1947. Jackie Robinson was an All-Star from 1949 to 1954 and played in six World Series. In 1962, he was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame.[170]

Jackie Robinson's accomplishments in breaking down segregation in sports extended well beyond his baseball career. His work beyond was done largely in partnership with his wife, Rachel. Their 1946 union became particularly powerful in the realm of civil rights activism in Black neighborhoods in New York City. Between 1957 and 1964, Jackie Robinson worked as vice president for personnel at Chock Full O' Nuts, becoming the first Black person to serve as vice president for a major American corporation. Alongside his work in business, Robinson was an active member of the National Association for the Advancement for Colored People (NAACP).[171] In 1956, he was awarded the NAACP's highest achievement, the Spingarn Medal, in recognition of "superb sportsmanship, his pioneer role in opening up a new field of endeavor for young Negroes, and his civic consciousness."[172] Robinson went on to chair the NAACP's million-dollar Freedom Fund Drive in 1957 and remained on the board of directors until 1967.[173]

Jackie Robinson harnessed his national celebrity for the cause of equal rights through a number of outlets. First, Jackie and Rachel Robinson began their annual "Afternoon of Jazz" concerts, the proceeds of which were sent to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to support civil rights work and voter registrations drives in the South. He also helped found the Freedom National Bank, serving as board chairman.[174] Despite his successes, following the end of his career as vice president of Chock Full O' Nuts, few opportunities presented themselves to Robinson. Still, with optimism, he persevered, not only for himself, but for Black Americans across the country. Robinson was quoted saying that "the time is ripest now for the Negro to gamble and go into serious business for himself because the opportunities are greatest today."[175] Robinson launched or helped launch a handful of new ventures including banking, public relations, books, radio, television broadcasting, life

[169] Bratspies, *Naming Gotham*, 26-27.
[170] Bratspies, *Naming Gotham*, 27-29.
[171] "Robinson's Later Career: 1957 to 1961," Library of Congress, accessed December 3, 2024, https://www.loc.gov/collections/jackie-robinson-baseball/articles-and-essays/baseball-the-color-line-and-jackie-robinson/1957-to-1961/.
[172] Arnold Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson: A Biography* (New York: The Random House Publishing Group, 1998), 302.
[173] "Robinson's Later Career."
[174] "Robinson's Later Career."
[175] Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson*, 383.

insurance, and real estate development and construction.[176] Of note in New York City was the Freedom National Bank, which was founded in partnership with Robinson in Harlem. Inevitably, the bank opened a branch in Bedford Stuyvesant in Brooklyn. Robinson remained chair of the board while the bank became the most successful Black-controlled bank in the United States.[177]

Frustrated by the federal government's lack of action regarding Black economic issues, Robinson was inspired to act on his longtime interest in working towards better housing in Black communities. Nearing the end of his life, one of his last major acts of civil rights activism resulted in the Jackie Robinson Construction Corporation, founded to build low- and moderate-income housing.[178] "Housing is the first thing. Unless he's got a home he wants to come back to, it doesn't matter what kind of school he goes to."[179] Jackie Robinson reached an agreement with three young successful real estate developers: Arthur Sutton, Mickey Wissman, and Richard Cohen, who contributed $50,000 to launch the Jackie Robinson Construction Corporation. Though his partners were white, Robinson sought profit for all and, most important, long-term benefit for the Black community through the construction of low- and middle-income housing. The hope was that the company would become a "truly interracial company dedicated to training contractors who had never worked on big projects."[180] Robinson believed that affordable housing was key to stabilizing communities and encouraged other Black businesses to invest in their own neighborhoods.[181] The company had a goal of keeping all payroll money within the communities they were working in, sharing the profit not only with the developers, but with the community as well. The construction company supported the Robinson family for a number of years following Jackie's death in 1972.[182]

Following Jackie's death, Rachel took over the Jackie Robinson Construction Corporation and renamed it the Jackie Robinson Development Corporation.[183] Under this new name, the corporation went on to build six housing developments in fifteen years, including 1,600 low-to-moderate income housing units. Echoing the intent of her late husband, Rachel was quoted about the importance of living conditions, "It is really about having succeeded to a certain degree but feeling that until the masses of people are living decently, none of us have secured our place in America."[184]

The Jackie Robinson Development Corporation played a large part in the successful development of Fulton Park Plaza. The company's goals aligned with those of the Neighborhood Development Program, New York State's Urban Development Corporation, and those of the Central Brooklyn Model Cities Development Plan. Ultimately, Robinson's legacy of work within the civil rights movements of the 1960s and 70s recognized the

[176] Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson*, 383.
[177] Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson*, 383.
[178] "Robinson's Later Career."
[179] Red Smith, "Death of an Unconquerable Man," *New York Times*, October 25, 1972, 53.
[180] Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson*, 435-438
[181] "Jackie Bats for Bed-Stuy Housing," 213.
[182] Rampersad, *Jackie Robinson*, 435-438
[183] "Rachel Robinson's Legacy," Jackie Robinson Foundation, accessed December 12, 2024, https://jackierobinson.org/timeline/rachel-robinson/.
[184] Rita Thorpe Lamb, *Dimensions of Justice: English Teachers Perspectives on Cultural Diversity* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2010), 42.

far-reaching and broad necessities of positive change and progress within Black communities, including that of affordable housing, community employment, and economic development.

Affordable Housing Developments in the Fulton Park Area of Bed-Stuy: A Comparative Analysis

Between 1970 and 1980, the Jackie Robinson Construction Corporation, (later the Jackie Robinson Development Corporation), constructed three separate, large-scale, mid-rise housing complexes in Bedford Stuyvesant. Included was Fulton Park Plaza (Site 1), Smith-Woodard Plaza (Site 2), and Risley Dent Towers (Site 3), which were included in the Central Brooklyn Model Cities plan. In 1980, following the death of Jackie Robinson, his company, now led by his wife, followed through on its mission and completed the third complex: Risley Dent Towers. The three complexes share similar design qualities and an almost identical planning and development history. The three buildings utilized Black architects, a shared Black construction company, and the context of Fulton Park neighborhood within Bed-Stuy. Though they do not share architects, those which were uncovered, including Henri A. LeGendre and Robert L Wilson, were influential African American architects in the city of New York, with LeGendre being the first Black architect hired by the New York City Department of Public Works and Robert L. Wilson being the founder of the New York Coalition of Black Architects.[185] Wilson, LeGendre, and Tucket & Thompson were all members of the New York Coalition of Black Architects. The choice of architects and builders at the three Fulton Park Urban Renewal Area sites reflect the urban planning philosophies applied in the this area, which aimed to lift up the ideas of Black designers, create work for Black locals, and generally serve the local Black population. The three complexes also reflect the commitment of Robinson in the Bed-Stuy community. Together, these complexes reflect the ongoing Model Cities Plan in the late 1970s and 1980s and the transformation of this area of Bed-Stuy.

Reflecting an earlier step towards urban renewal related housing is the 1955 Brevoort Houses to the east of Fulton Park Plaza, which was developed by the New York City Housing Authority. Though initially unrelated to the Model Cities program and the Jackie Robinson Construction Co., the development is one of the first large-scale affordable housing developments in Bed-Stuy. It was also later included in the Model Cities Plan as a focus of the rehabilitation portion of the plan.

Brevoort Houses (1955)

The Brevoort Houses were constructed in 1955, prior to the Central Brooklyn Model Cities Development Plan. The thirteen, seven-story buildings within the complex were developed by the New York City Housing Authority between Bainbridge and Fulton streets, just a block to the west of the future Fulton Park Plaza site and within the future boundaries of the Model Cities Plan. The brick buildings within the complex are arranged in a scattered yet symmetrical, diagonal composition. They are almost completely unadorned. Window configurations are simple, unlike those of Fulton Park Plaza, which features a number of different types. Being a NYCHA property, the Brevoort Houses differ from Fulton Park Plaza, which had a number of funding sources from state to private. The result for the Brevoort Houses was a large scale, very simple design that served the bare minimum needs of the largely minority Bed-Stuy population, which at this time had already grown exponentially. Unlike those complexes developed under the Model Cities Plan, this complex, built earlier in the evolution of the history of affordable housing, would not have pulled as much direction from the community. Instead, decisions would have been made directly by city officials. While simpler and more disconnected from

[185] "Robert L. Wilson," Docomomo, accessed June 2, 2025, https://docomomo-us.org/designer/robert-l-wilson.

the history of the population in Bed Stuy, the Brevoort Houses reflect the early efforts of the government to fund housing and urban renewal in an overcrowded neighborhood. It also shows the aspect of the Model Cities Program that included the rehabilitation of existing buildings.

Smith-Woodward Plaza (1974)

Smith-Woodward Plaza was Site 2 in the Fulton Park Urban Renewal Plan. It developed at the same time as Fulton Park Plaza in 1974, less than a mile away, to the east, down Fulton Street. The complex is smaller at 142 units and much simpler in plan to that of Fulton Park Plaza, but features similar projections and insets, brick construction, and mid-rise design. It differs in materials, featuring primarily brick, and fewer window types. Smith-Woodward Plaza, designed by Henry A. LeGendre & Associates, reflects another example of the Jackie Robinson Construction Co.'s work while Robinson still led the company. This complex would have utilized the community development tactics involved in the Model Cities Plan, and would have been constructed by members of the community, a commitment of the Jackie Robinson Construction Co. The complex features more replacement elements than those of Fulton Park Plaza, with new storefront entrances, and new parapet cladding.

Risley Dent Towers (1980)

The Risley Dent Towers, Site 3 in the Fulton Park Urban Renewal Area, is a middle-income housing complex constructed after the end of the Brooklyn Model Cities Plan. Though not completed until 1980, the complex received approval within the Fulton Park urban renewal area in 1975. Like Fulton Park Plaza, the complex was constructed by the Jackie Robinson Development Company; however, the planning of this complex occurred after Jackie Robinson's death. Risley Dent Towers, designed by Robert L. Wilson, reflects many of the same design qualities as the previous complexes described here, with 248 units.[186] Wilson was a founder of the New York Coalition of Black Architects, which also included LeGendre and Tucket & Thompson. The building was designed to preserve the low-rise character of the surrounding neighborhood.[187] The project was funded by the Section 236 Federal mortgage-interest subsidy program. [188] Like the Model Cities program, the project was sponsored by a local community group.

Conclusion

Fulton Park Plaza is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Social History for its association both with the Jackie Robinson Construction Co., as well as its place in the brief history of the Central Brooklyn Model Cities Development Plan. The need for housing in Bed-Stuy in the mid-twentieth century resulted in numerous efforts, subsidized by government programs in collaboration with the community and local businesses. Under the Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan, new options for community collaboration and a particular sensitivity to the design of large-scale buildings within their immediate neighborhoods, resulted in the construction of mid-rise apartment complexes with options for larger families. The selection of builders and designers produced complexes which not only answered community deficits but also integrated community members directly. Fulton Park Plaza is an excellent example of a jointly developed low-to-middle income affordable housing complex in Bed-Stuy that provided expanded housing options in an area which desperately needed it.

[186] Carter B. Horsley, "City Reports 10 Projects In Housing 'Pipeline,'" *New York Times*, August 10, 1975, sec. 8, 1 and 4.
[187] "Housing Is Voted For Fulton Park," *New York Times*, March 23, 1975, 94.
[188] Horsley, "City Reports 10 Projects In Housing 'Pipeline.'"

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

_X_ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
____ previously listed in the National Register
____ previously determined eligible by the National Register
____ designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

_X_ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

DRAFT – Fulton Park Plaza Kings County, New York
Name of Property County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.99 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 40.679872 Longitude: -73.929718

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nomination boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the attached map with scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses the housing project—residential building, commercial building, garages, and surrounding landscape—and reflects the boundary of the property during the period of significance.

DRAFT – Fulton Park Plaza Kings County, New York
Name of Property County and State

1:12,000
0 500 1000 ft

Fulton Park Plaza

New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N

Mapped 06/30/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

DRAFT – Fulton Park Plaza Kings County, New York
Name of Property County and State

1:1,200
0 50 100 ft

Nomination Boundary (3.99 ac)

New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N

New York State Orthoimagery Year: 2023

Mapped 06/30/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

DRAFT – Fulton Park Plaza
Name of Property

Kings County, New York
County and State

1:1,200
0 50 100 ft

Nomination Boundary (3.99 ac)
Tax Parcels

New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N

Kings County Parcel Year: 2024

Mapped 06/30/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

DRAFT – Fulton Park Plaza Kings County, New York
Name of Property County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nika Faulkner/Project Coordinator; revised and edited by Christopher D. Brazee, NYSHPO

organization Heritage Consulting Group date September 2025

street & number 15 W. Highland Avenue telephone (215) 248-1260

city or town Philadelphia state PA zip code 19118

e-mail nfaulkner@heritage-consulting.com; projects@heritage-consulting.com

Additional Documentation

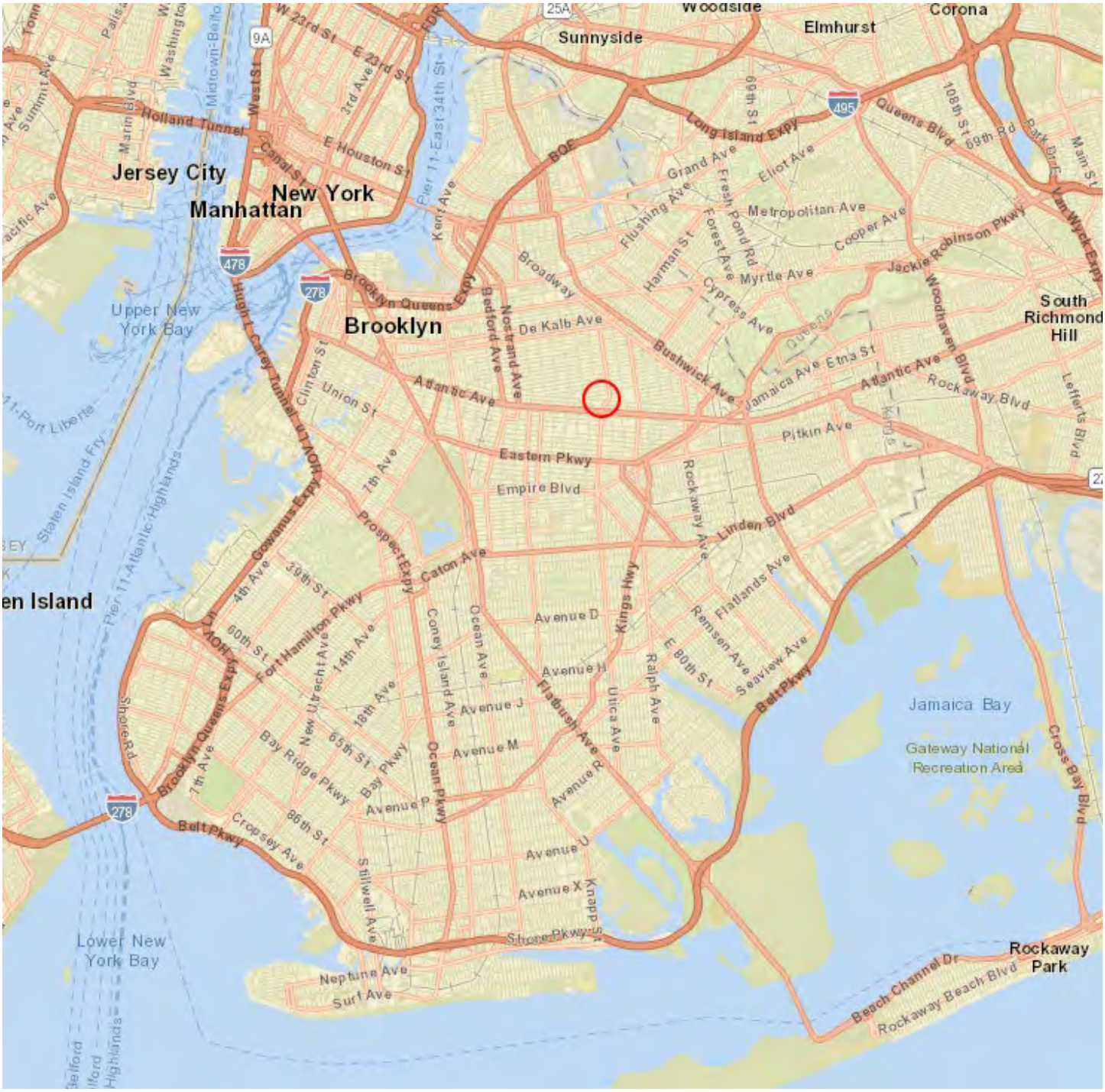
Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps**
  - A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
  - A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

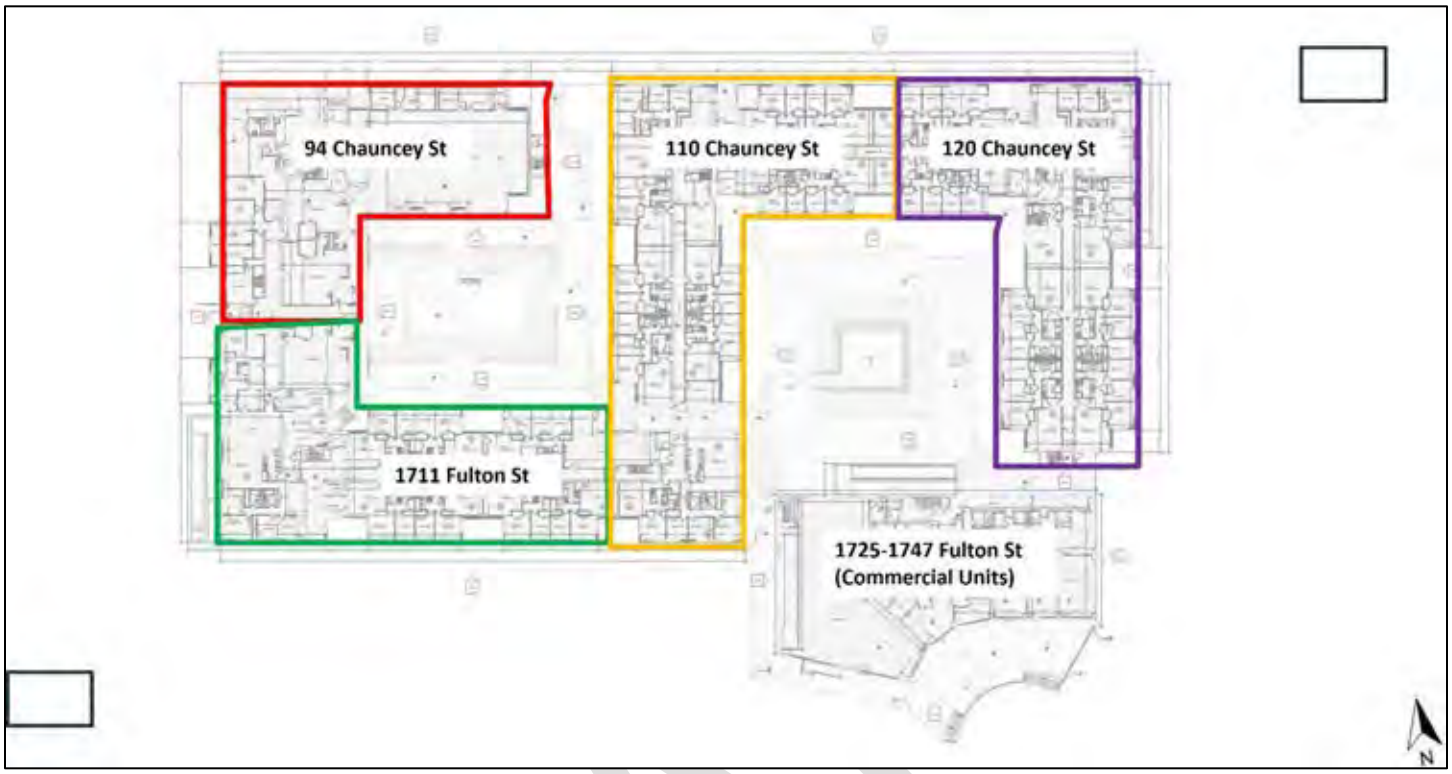
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Maps and Figures

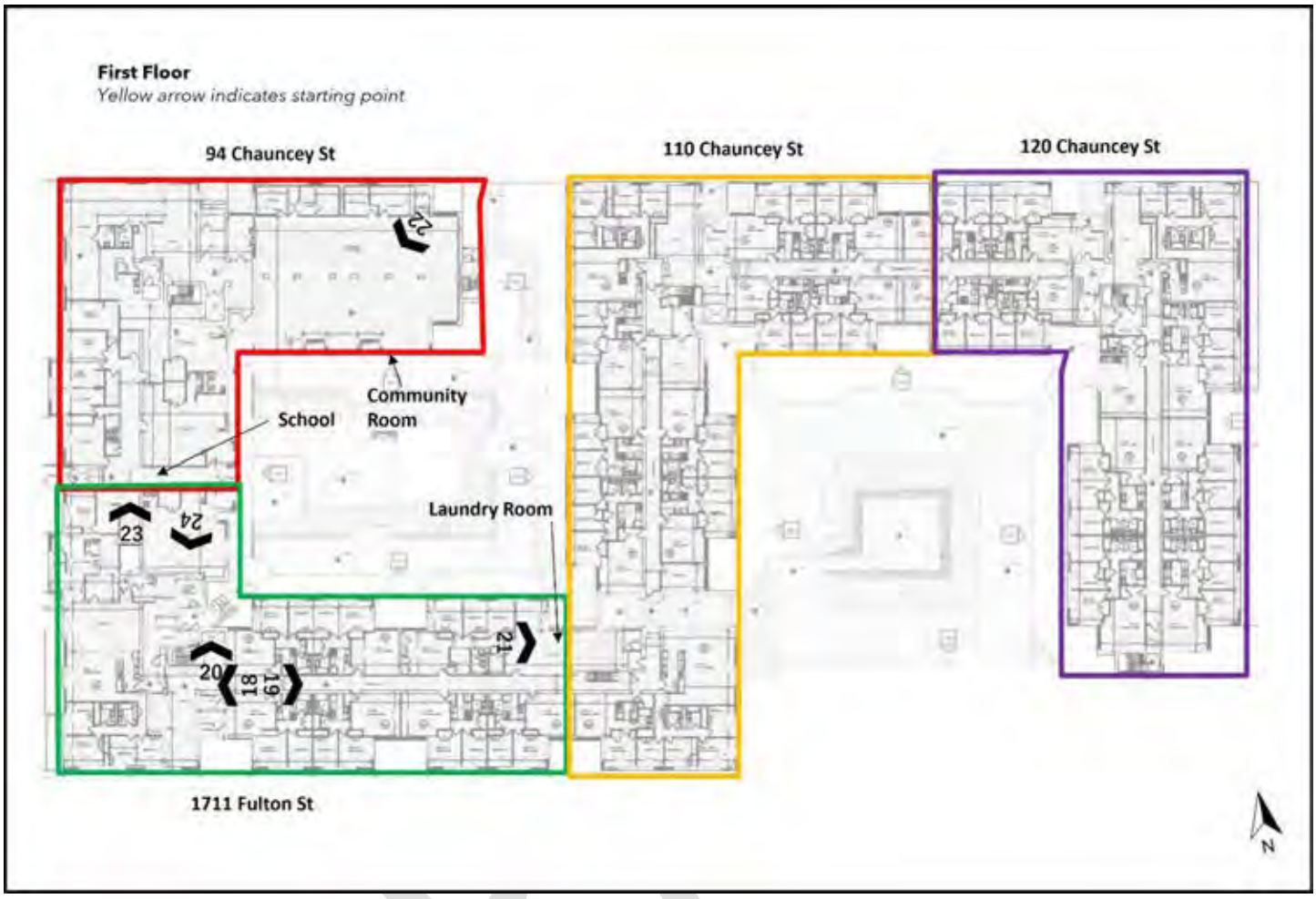


Map 1: Location of Fulton Park Plaza within Brooklyn.
(Basemap source: New York State Cultural Resource Information System.)



Map 2: Site map showing the residential and commercial buildings.
(Basemap source: Robotic Imaging, 2024.)

Map 3: Photo key, exterior.
(Basemap Source: Newman Design.)



Map 4: Photo key, first floor.
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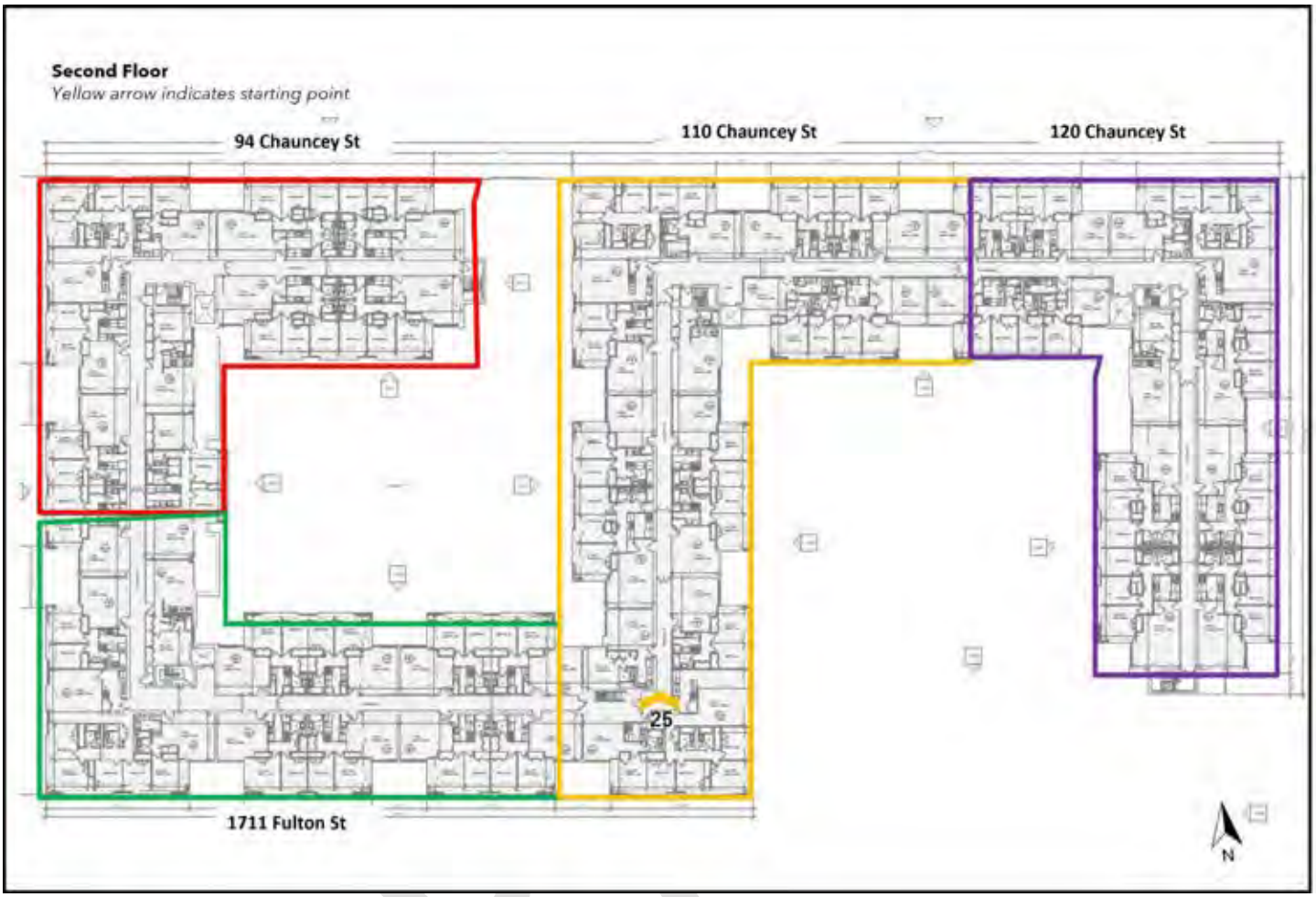
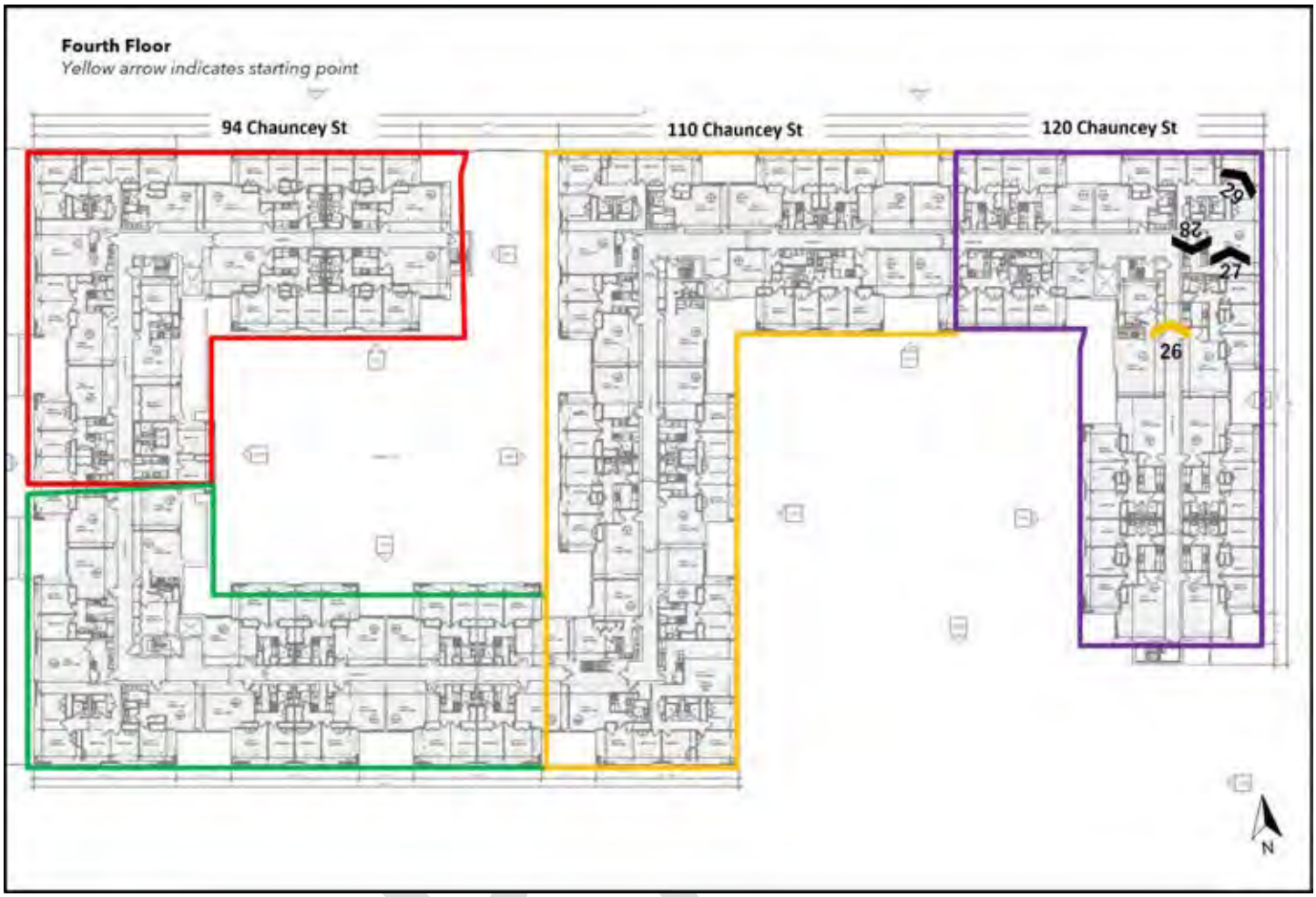
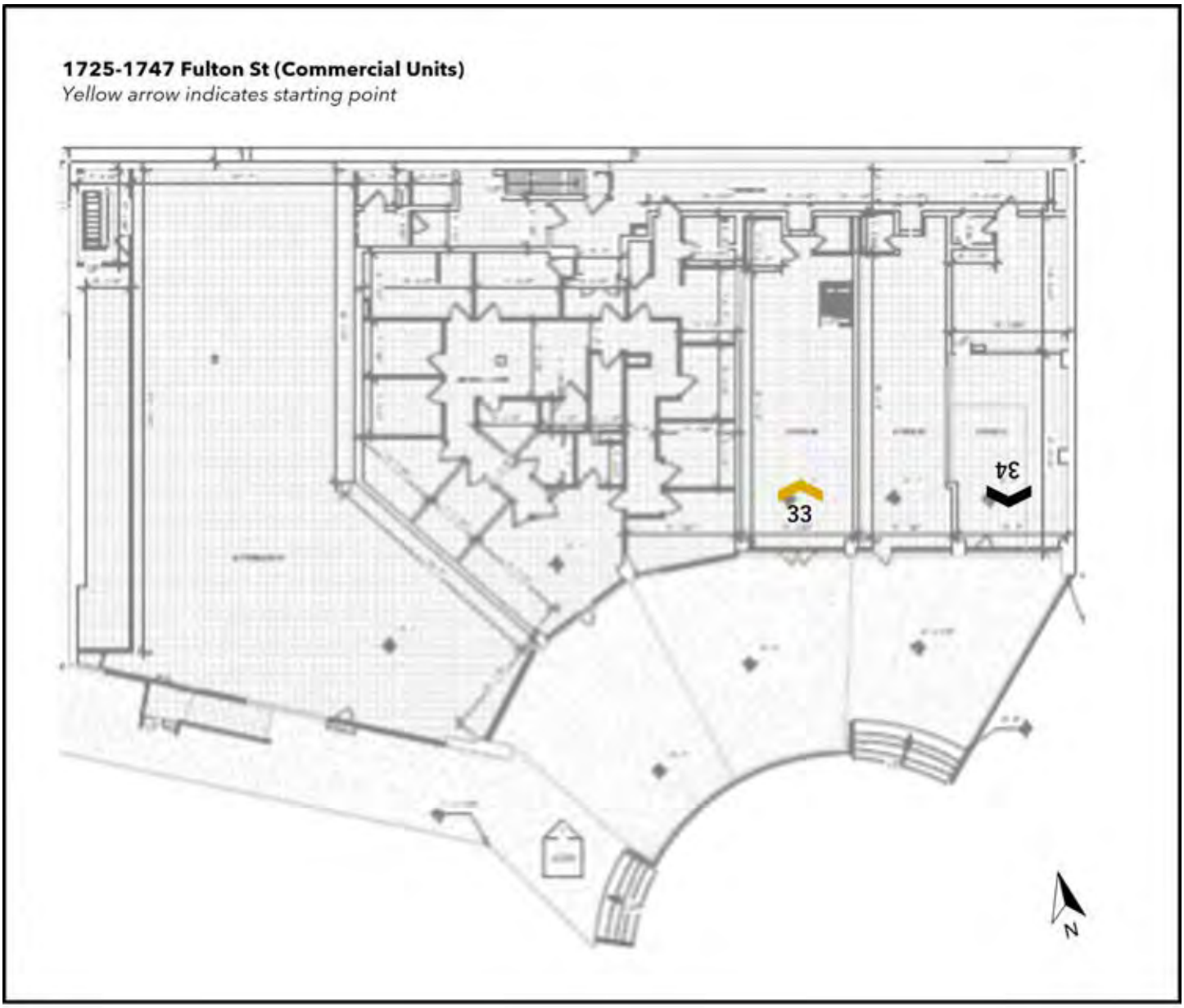


Map 5: Photo key, second floor.
(Basemap source: Newman Design.)



Map 6: Photo key, fourth floor.
(Basemap source: Newman Design.)

Map 7: Photo key, sixth floor.
(Basemap source: Newman Design.)



Map 8: Photo key, commercial units, first floor.
(Basemap source: Newman Design.)

Figure 1: 1940s WPA photographs.
(Source: New York City Municipal Archives.)

Figure 2: 1951 aerial.
(Source: New York Public Library.)

Figure 3: 1966 aerial showing subject site in red.
(Source: Historic Aerials)

Figure 4: 1980 aerial showing subject site in red.

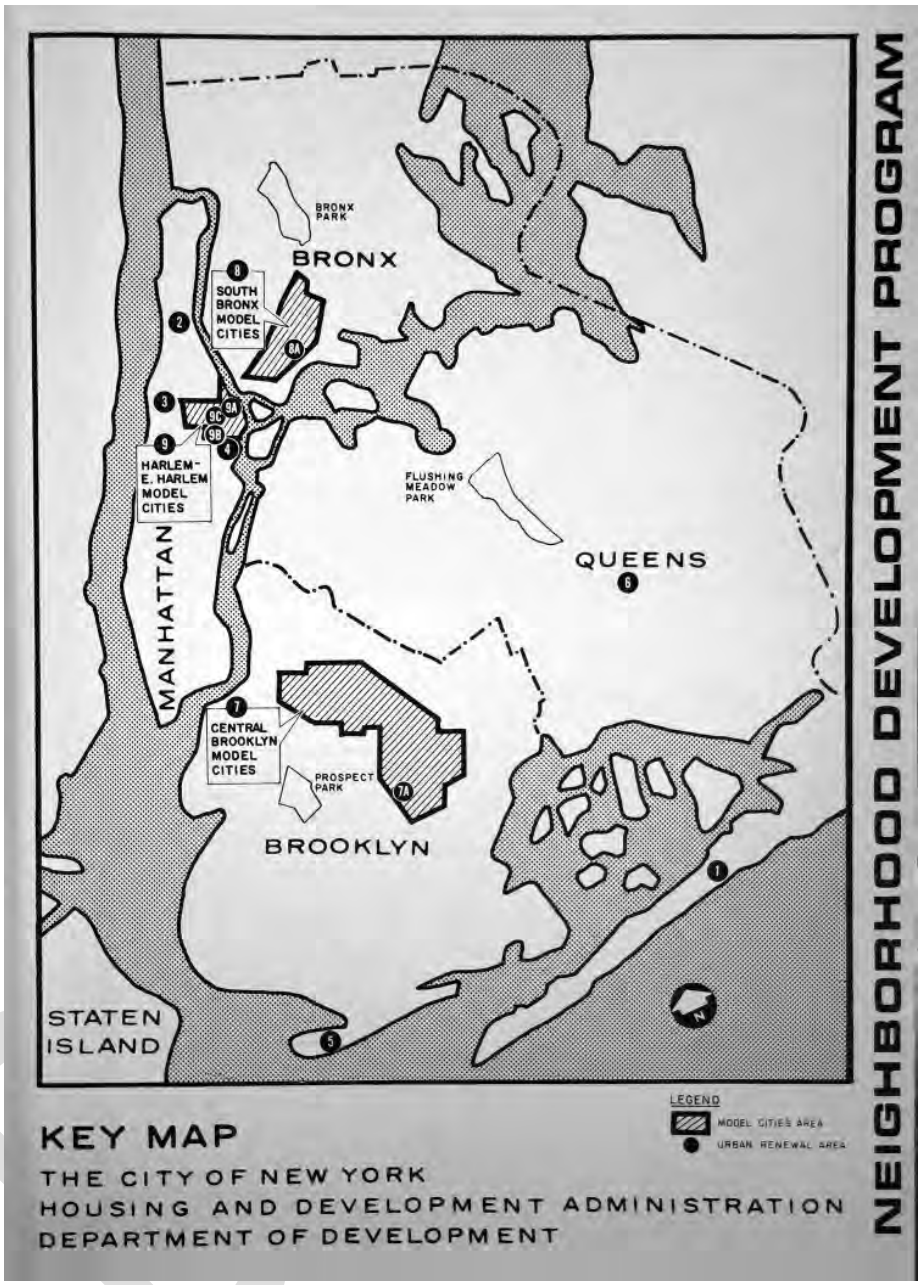


Figure 5: Key Map showing the location of the Model Cities areas.
(Source: Central Brooklyn Model Cities Development Plan.)

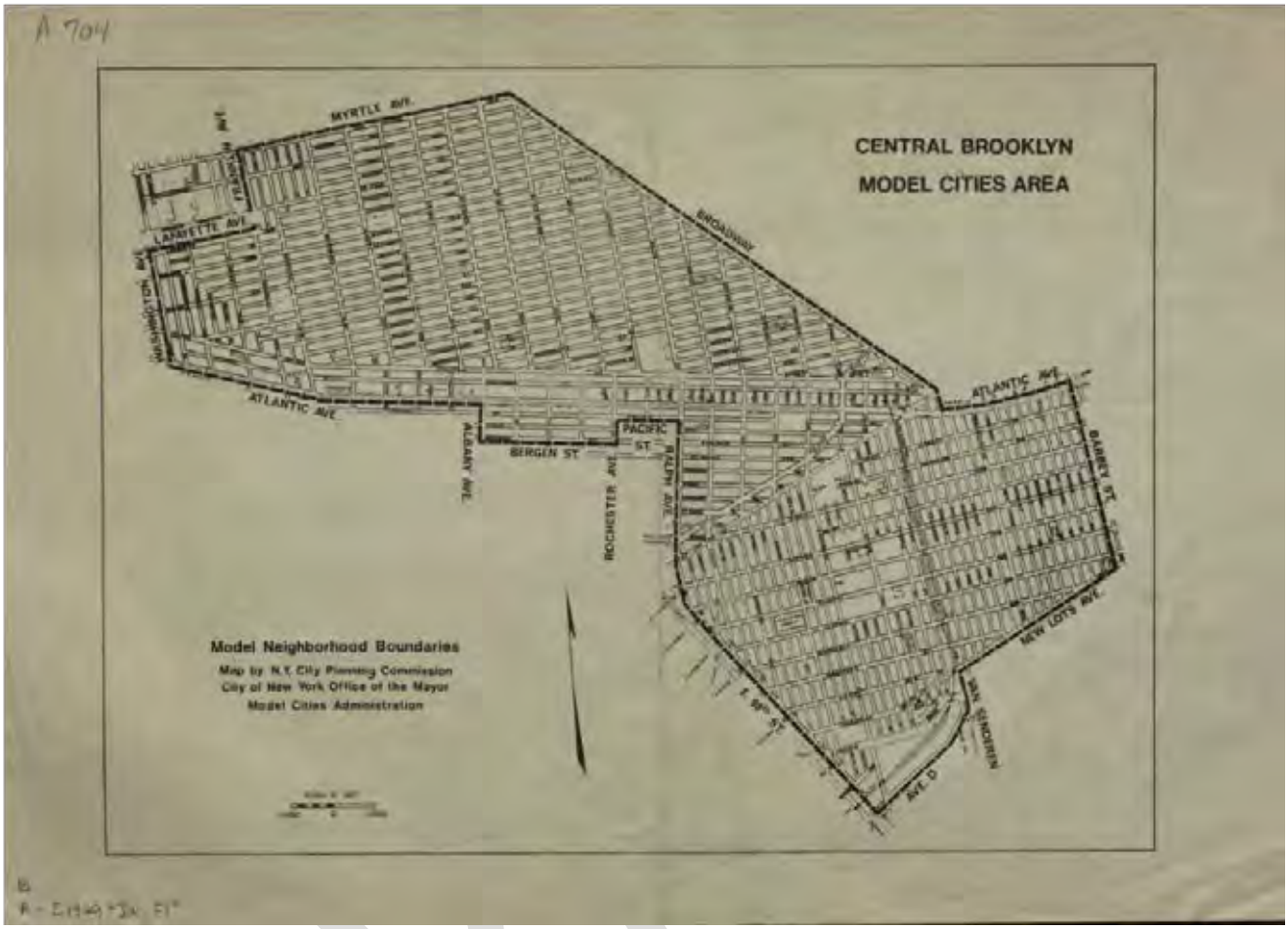


Figure 6: Map showing the boundaries of the Central Brooklyn Model Cities area.
(Source: Central Brooklyn Model Cities Development Plan, 1969, Center for Brooklyn History.)

DRAFT – Fulton Park Plaza Kings County, New York
Name of Property County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Fulton Park Plaza
City or Vicinity: Brooklyn, NY
County: Kings County State: New York
Photographer: Nika Faulkner, Heritage Consulting Group
Date Photographed: December 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of 24 Exterior, view looking northwest at south elevation of 110 Chauncey and 1711 Fulton.

2 of 34 Exterior, view looking north at south elevation of 1711 Fulton.

3 of 34 Exterior, view looking northeast at south (left) and east (right) elevations of 1711 Fulton.

4 of 34 Exterior, view looking northwest at south and east elevations of west storage garage.

5 of 34 Exterior, view looking north at west elevation of 1711 Fulton and ramp to west basement.

6 of 34 Exterior, view looking east at west elevation of 1711 Fulton and 94 Chauncey.

7 of 34 Exterior, view looking south at west elevation of 94 Chauncey and daycare playground.

8 of 34 Exterior, view looking southeast at north and west elevations of 94 Chauncey.

9 of 34 Exterior, view looking south at north elevation of 110 Chauncey.

10 of 34 Exterior, view looking southwest at north and east elevations of 120 Chauncey.

11 of 34 Exterior, view looking southeast at north elevation of east storage garage.

12 of 34 Exterior, view looking west at east elevation of 120 Chauncey.

13 of 34 Exterior, view looking northwest at west courtyard, east and south elevations of 94 Chauncey.

14 of 34 Exterior, view looking southeast at west elevation of 110 Chauncey and south elevation of 1711 Fulton.

15 of 34 Exterior, view looking west at east courtyard and east elevation of 110 Chauncey.

16 of 34 Exterior, view looking west at east elevation of 110 Chauncey.

17 of 34 Exterior, view looking west at east elevation of 120 Chauncey.

18 of 34 First Floor, 1711 Fulton, lobby, view looking west.

19 of 34 First Floor, 1711 Fulton, corridor, view looking east.

20 of 34 First Floor, 1711 Fulton, elevator lobby, view looking north.

21 of 34 First Floor, 1711 Fulton, laundry room, view looking east.

22 of 34 First Floor, 94 Chauncey, community room, view looking southwest.

23 of 34 First Floor, 94 Chauncey, preschool corridor, view looking north.

24 of 34 First Floor, 94 Chauncey, preschool classroom, view looking southwest.

25 of 34 Second Floor, 110 Chauncey, corridor, view looking north.

26 of 34 Fourth Floor, 120 Chauncey, corridor, view looking north.

27 of 34 Fourth Floor, 120 Chauncey, Unit 4G, view looking northwest.

28 of 34 Fourth Floor, 120 Chauncey, Unit 4G, view looking west.

29 of 34 Fourth Floor, 120 Chauncey, Unit 4G, view looking northeast.

30 of 34 Sixth Floor, 1711 Fulton, corridor, view looking south.

31 of 34 Sixth Floor, 94 Chauncey, Unit 6B, view looking southeast.

32 of 34 Sixth Floor, 94 Chauncey, Unit 6B, view looking northwest

33 of 34 Commercial Building, Unit 3, looking north.

34 of 34 Commercial Building, Unit 1, view looking south.

NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0001

NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0002

NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0003

NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0004

NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0005

NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0006

NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0007

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NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0015

NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0016

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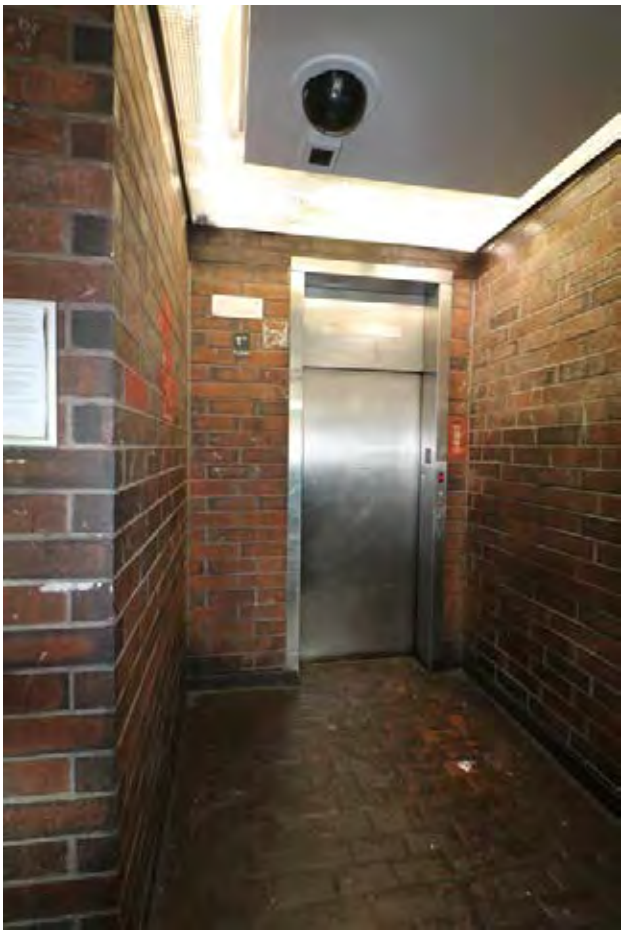
NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0018

NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0019



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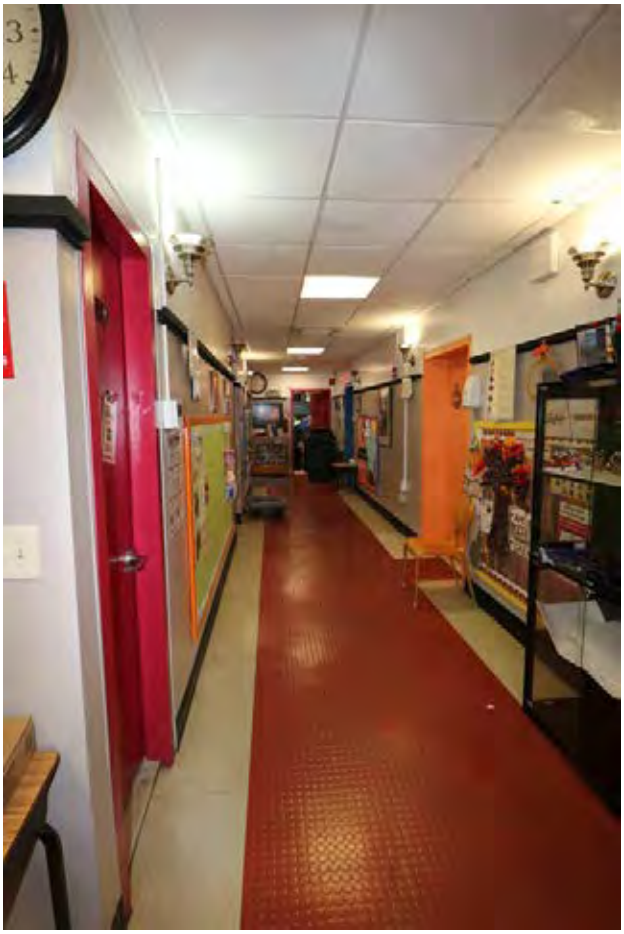

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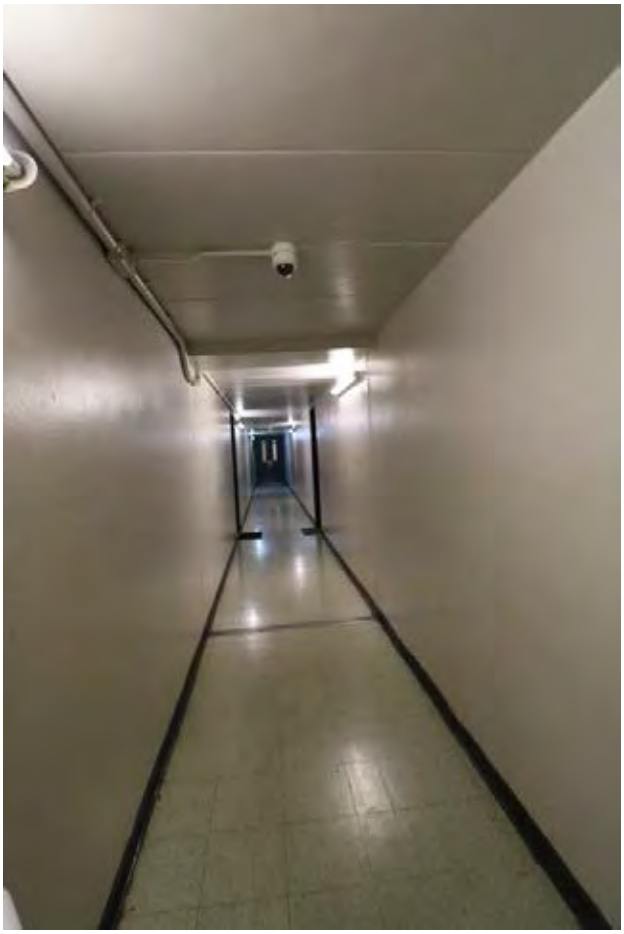

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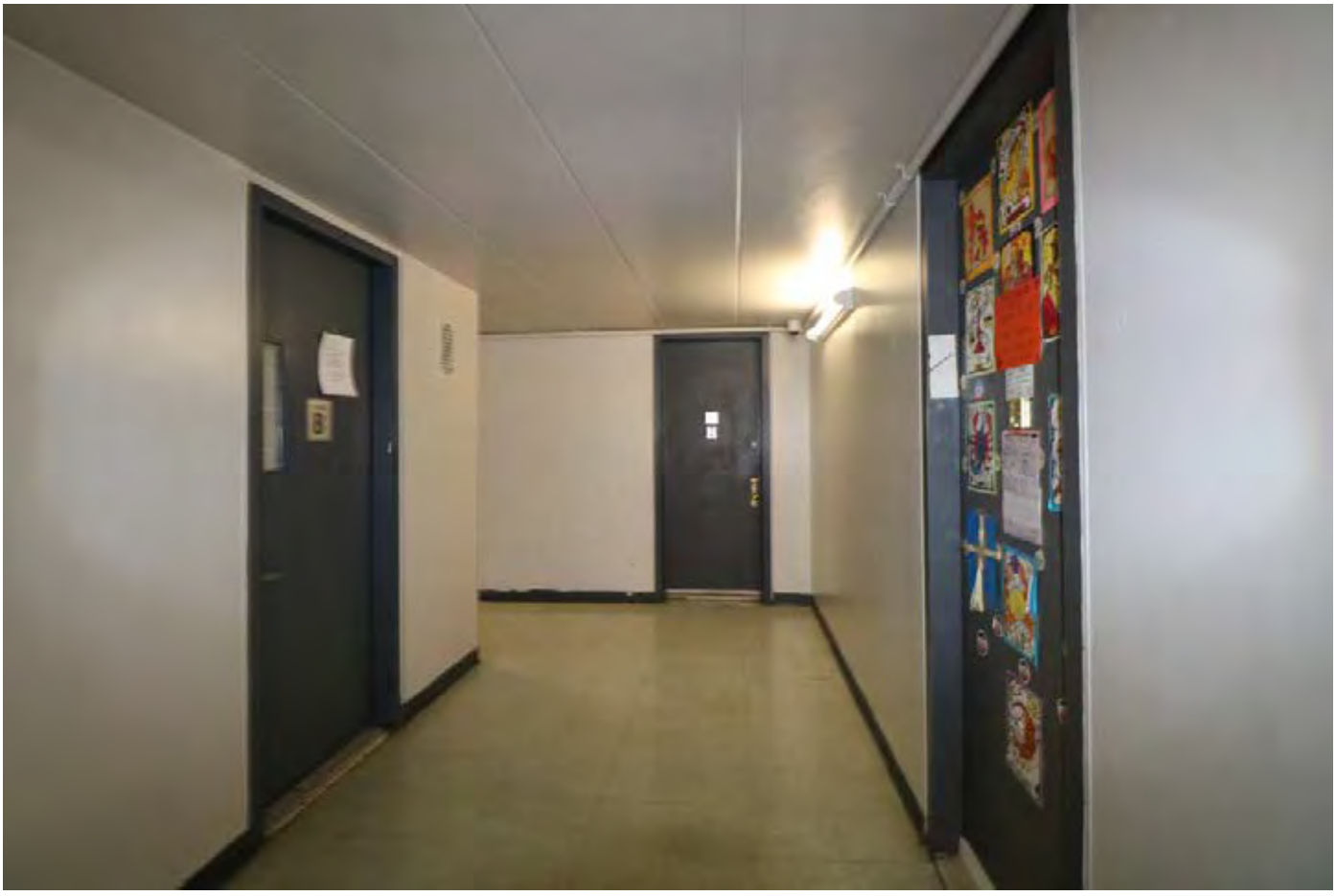
NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0026

NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0027

NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0028

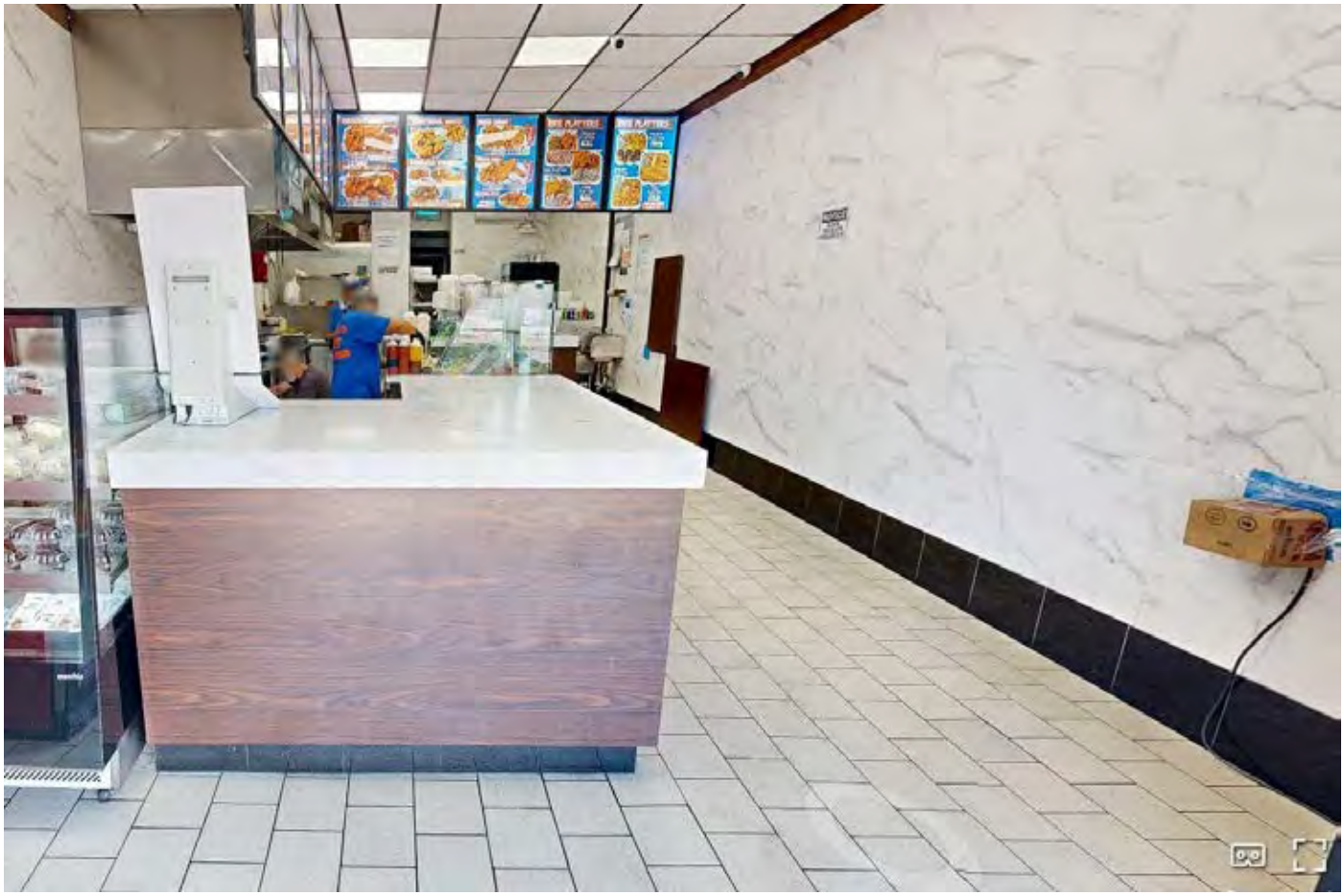
NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0029



NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0030

NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0031

NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0032



NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0033

NY_KingsCounty_FultonParkPlaza_0034