

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 Stuyvesant Gardens I
other names/site number _____
name of related multiple property listing _____

2. Location

street & number 835 Gates Avenue (see Building Inventory for full list of addresses)
city or town Brooklyn
state New York code _____ county Kings code _____ zip code 11221

	not for publication
	vicinity

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 _____

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | private |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | public - Local |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - State |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - Federal |

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | object |

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
27		buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
28	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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Brutalism

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: CONCRETE

roof: SYNTHETICS

other:

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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

Stuyvesant Gardens I is a housing complex comprising twenty seven buildings—twenty five four-story multi-family residential buildings with 331 apartments, one community center, and one daycare center—constructed by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) and designed by architect Emanuel Nicholas (E.N.) Turano. All twenty seven buildings contribute to the significance of the district. The district extends over a roughly 4.73-acre site in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York. The housing complex consists of five “clusters” of buildings that primarily situated along Gates Avenue between Malcom X Boulevard to the east and Lewis Avenue to the west. The clusters are oriented to the streets with internal courtyards designed to provide communal outdoor space for the residents. As shown on the original site plan below, each cluster consists of between five to fourteen buildings. Each building is identified with its own street address and was constructed with a dedicated entrance and vertical circulation. The buildings are similar in material and style, assuming irregular block shapes. Each apartment building is designed as a grouping of individual apartment buildings with separate street addresses and entrances. The building exteriors are clad in grooved concrete block with minimal ornamentation. The building interiors consist of a ground floor entrance vestibule and a stair that provides access between all floors and the cellar. Apartments are between two and five-bedroom units with varying floorplans. The overall interior plans have largely been retained. The building interiors feature a combination of original and replacement finishes. The 4.73-acre site features hardscaping, including asphalt and concrete walkways with planting beds, recreational areas, streetlamps, and seating areas. Based on aerial photos and site plans, the internal courtyard location and function is intact but the landscape features such as walkway paving, planting bed configuration, fencing, playground equipment, and furnishings have all been altered since the late 1980s.

Narrative Description

Setting

Stuyvesant Gardens I is located in a densely developed urban environment in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn. Bedford-Stuyvesant is generally considered a neighborhood within the northern section of Brooklyn and is bordered by Flushing Avenue to the north, Classon Avenue to the west, Broadway to the east, and Atlantic Avenue to the south. Stuyvesant Gardens I is located within the central-east section of the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, which is largely residential. The housing complex is located on a roughly 4.73-acre site developed along Gates Avenue between Lewis Avenue to the west and Malcom X Boulevard to the east, Quincy Street between Stuyvesant Avenue to the west and Malcom X Boulevard to the east, Stuyvesant Avenue between Monroe Street to the south and Quincy Street to the north, and Lewis Avenue between Monroe Avenue to the south and Gates Avenue to the north. The area surrounding Stuyvesant Gardens I is predominantly residential with mixed-use commercial, religious, and educational developments. The area has remained developed since the mid-to-late nineteenth century and the surrounding building heights range from roughly two- to five-stories in height, including brick low-rise row houses and masonry apartment buildings. Throughout the neighborhood, buildings directly abut one another, creating what is generally cohesive groupings of three- to four-story row houses. Prior to construction of the NYCHA complex, the area consisted of three- and four-story residential tenement buildings and row houses. Since then, minimal redevelopment of the surrounding area consists of new single- and multi-family residential buildings as well as ca. 1980 educational buildings Public School 308 and Middle School 143. These modern developments have not altered the surrounding setting, which remains largely low-rise.

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Site

Stuyvesant Gardens I is a roughly 4.73-acre site developed on five individual parcels, under shared use and ownership. The arrangement of buildings in long, linear shapes and different orientations allowed for the maximization of units on the site, as well as natural light and communal outdoor space behind and between buildings. Block 1 is located on Stuyvesant Avenue between Lewis Avenue and Stuyvesant Avenue (**see Photos 10-11, 13, and 15**). Block 2 is located on Stuyvesant Avenue between Monroe Street and Gates Avenue (**see Photos 9, 12, and 14**). Block 3 is located along Gates Avenue, Stuyvesant Avenue, and Quincy Street (**see Photos 1, 2, and 5**). Block 4 is located on Quincy Street between Stuyvesant Avenue and unrelated urban multi-family tenement buildings and church (**see Photos 5 and 6**). Block 5 is located on Gates Avenue between Stuyvesant Avenue and Malcom X Boulevard (**see Photo 4**).

As part of the perimeter block design, the depth of the apartment blocks was limited to a certain depth to allow for the rear sections to be used open courtyards for communal use by the residents (**see Photos 3, 7, 8, 13, 14, and 15**). The original drawings only provide a schematic design for a series of asphalt and concrete paved walkways lined with perimeter planting beds and general locations for playground equipment and seating areas. Access points to the shared courtyards are at open driveways between the apartment blocks and from the rear door from the first floor corridor of each apartment building. The current appearance of the shared courtyards dates to the late 1980s when the courtyards were fully developed after the acquisition of the parcel between 855 and 865 Gates Avenue. The building on this parcel was demolished to create the large central plaza and then continued behind and between the buildings. The site features include asphalt and concrete paved walkways and entrance drives, playgrounds with contemporary equipment, and contemporary furnishings such as picnic tables and benches. The walkways are bordered by raised concrete curbing with metal railings and linear planting beds with a mixture of trees and low shrubs. The beds have replacement shrubs or are devoid of plantings due to a lack of maintenance. Metal and chain link fencing borders the site and planting beds. There are also two surface parking lots associated with the complex. The first is accessed off Quincy Street behind the apartment building at 885 Gates Avenue. The second is accessed off Lewis Avenue to the south of the apartment building at 245 Lewis Avenue.

Stuyvesant Gardens II is not included in this nomination. It is located on a separate tax lot, at 150 Malcom X Boulevard, and was constructed in 1986.

Residential Building Exteriors

The residential buildings at Stuyvesant Gardens I are relatively uniform in their exterior character, including massing, materials, and replacement finishes. The buildings are clad in grooved concrete block with minimal ornamentation on concrete foundations. Fenestration throughout the complex is regular, consisting of non-historic ca. 1995 one-over-one aluminum single and paired double-hung windows in original openings. Windows within stair halls are replacement metal-frame two-lite awning windows. Most windows feature child safety guards and external AC units. The windows are set on simple concrete sills. Entrances to each apartment building consist of single-leaf replacement metal doors with glazing in the center panels, set underneath a shed-roofed metal hood. Apartment numbers are painted directly onto the concrete and located adjacent to the entrance door of each building. Exterior metal fire escapes are attached to the front and rear building elevations. The rooftops are flat, with each stair tower extending to a one-story stair penthouse clad in the same grooved concrete block. The rooftops are clad in a synthetic membrane covered by gravel. Ventilation and exhaust pipes are located in the central sections of the flat rooftops.

The residential apartment buildings within the complex are modular in form. The complex consists of twenty seven buildings separated into five separate clusters (**see Figure 1**). In total, there are twenty five separate

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residential apartment buildings (various addresses listed in the property list below), one community building (at 214 Stuyvesant Avenue and outlined in green **in Figure 1**) and one daycare facility (at 706 Quincy Avenue and outlined in orange **in Figure 1**). Each building has a separate street address and entrance. The community center entrance is slightly recessed from the face of the building and is accessed by a single step to a landing. The entrance is a painted flush metal door with a vision panel. The daycare facility entrance is recessed from the face of the building and secured with a set of metal gates. The entrance itself is a pair of painted flush metal doors. The NYCHA management office is located at 835 Gates Avenue but is not a stand-alone building. The office is integrated into the first floor of the apartment building at 185 Stuyvesant Avenue. The office is the only entrance in the complex that is ADA accessible, which is provided with a contemporary switchback ADA ramp.

Residential Building Interiors

The existing conditions at the interior of all twenty five residential apartment buildings at Stuyvesant Gardens I are generally consistent throughout the complex. All interiors feature a ground floor entrance vestibule, an internal stairwell, residential apartment units, and a cellar.

Each building features various stair halls that provide exterior access to the building and access to individual apartment units. There is no interior access between the apartment buildings as each functions independently from the adjacent apartment building. The ground floor entrance vestibule is accessible via the primary entrance, which is a replacement metal single-leaf door (**see Photos 16 and 27**). The entrance vestibule is a small space with tile floors, painted concrete masonry unit (CMU) walls, a mailbox station, and painted metal ceilings (**see Photos 17 and 28**). The entrance vestibule provides direct access to the internal stair halls. The stair halls feature original stairs with concrete treads, metal risers, and simple painted metal handrails (**see Photo 29**). The stair hall in each building provides access to each floor leading to a double-loaded corridor with apartment unit entrances on both sides (**see Photos 18 and 30**). Each residential building contains a mixture of two-, three-, four-, and five-bedroom apartments interspersed by floor. Units include a kitchen/dining room, living room, bathroom, and bedrooms. Finishes within the units are generally similar throughout all buildings (**see Photos 19-21 and 31-34**). Finishes include vinyl composition tile (VCT) and tile floors, painted gypsum board walls and ceilings, and single-leaf hollow wood interior doors. All mechanical equipment is concealed in walls and above ceilings. The cellars in each building are utilitarian in finishes, with CMU walls and beams, exposed ceilings and MEPs, and concrete floors. The interior finishes in the management office are consistent with the finishes in the apartment units but faux wood finished LVT flooring is used in the offices (**see Photo 26**). Based on available drawings from the New York City Housing Authority, the original finishes within units consisted of painted gypsum board walls and ceilings and VCT floors. Therefore, the interior of the building retains integrity.

Community Center

The Community Center is a two-story building that directly abuts the apartment buildings facing Stuyvesant Avenue. The exterior of the building is clad in a continuation of the grooved concrete block. The entrance to the Community Center is provided by a single-leaf door at 214 Stuyvesant Avenue. At the interior, the community center features various community rooms, classrooms, a kitchen, and restrooms (**see Photos 23-25**). The finishes are generally similar to those in the public circulation areas within the residential apartment buildings, including painted CMU walls, and a combination of VCT and tile floors. The ceilings are painted gypsum board with beams. A stair provides access between the first and second floors. The concrete stairs have painted risers and rubber treads with painted metal handrails.

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Daycare Center

The Daycare Center is a two-story building located at 706 Quincy Street (**see Photo 6**). The center abuts the apartment building to the west side at 700 Quincy Street and an unrelated church building to the east side. The building is clad in a continuation of the grooved concrete block located throughout the housing complex. The entrance to the Daycare Center is provided by double-leaf painted metal doors set behind metal security doors. At the interior, the facility has a waiting area, kitchen, playrooms, and offices. The finishes within the facility include VCT floors, painted CMU walls, and dropped ACT ceilings. Access between the first and second floors and cellar are via an internal staircase with painted metal treads, risers, and handrails.

Integrity Analysis

Stuyvesant Gardens I retains a high degree of integrity to convey its historic use as a public housing complex serving the community of Brooklyn, New York. National Register Bulletin 15 describes integrity as the capability of a resource to convey its significance, and evaluates integrity based on a set of seven aspects detailing a property's features and how they relate to significance. Specific to the seven aspects of integrity:

Location: The five apartment clusters at Stuyvesant Gardens I is in its original location and there have been no changes to the historic, individual parcels. As such, the district retains integrity of location.

Setting: When the complex was constructed, the surrounding urban neighborhood consisted of two-four story mixed-use residential and commercial buildings. The buildings at Stuyvesant Gardens I are between two and four stories in height, emphasizing the vest-pocket design intention. As residential buildings of similar massing to those in the surrounding area, the buildings have retained the urban, low-rise character of the neighborhood and thus retain integrity of setting.

Design: The original design elements of the Stuyvesant Gardens I complex are still highly evident today. The complex's perimeter block development remains intact, with entrances to the apartment buildings along the street-facing elevations and rear, semi-private courtyards located behind the buildings. Similarly, the vest-pocket development and design of the complex has been retained, with buildings terminating at four stories in height with fifth story penthouses. The overall massing of the buildings on the complex have been retained as originally designed to match the buildings in the surrounding low-rise urban Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood. The buildings were laid out on individual parcels and aligned with the street to maximize the amount of rear, courtyard space. This is still evident today as the buildings remain in their historic orientation along the streets and sidewalks with space dedicated to the rear to establish internal courtyards as part of the perimeter block design. The site features have been developed and modified over time as typical with landscaping, hardscaping, and furnishings but the internal courtyard location and function remains intact. Landscaping includes shrubs and trees located in fenced areas. Hardscaping includes fencing, concrete sidewalks and stairs along the street and asphalt and concrete paved walkways in the courtyards, contemporary benches and tables, and replacement playground equipment. Therefore, the original design of the property retains integrity.

The buildings' style, materials, and form are reflective of Modern Movement housing design, which often placed an emphasis on modular building shapes, minimal ornamentation, and the use of economic and durable materials. While windows and doors are replacements, the fenestration patterns on each building is intact. At the interior, the floor plans in the residential buildings are largely intact and finishes appear to be original or reflective of the original palette of materials. Despite minimal changes to the exterior and interior, the Stuyvesant Gardens I complex retains its original design, materials, footprint, and pattern.

Workmanship and Materials: Stuyvesant Gardens I retains a high degree of workmanship and materials. As noted in the design description, the building retains a high amount of interior and exterior materials. These

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materials include the exterior masonry, coping, and window fenestration. Despite replacement windows and doors, the replacements are metal and therefore maintain the historic physical appearance and materials of the building.

At the interiors of the building, a high number of materials have been retained, including CMU walls, gypsum board walls and ceilings, VCT and tile floors, and stair halls with metal stair risers and handrails. Through the retention of these materials, the workmanship has also been retained. Like the exterior, the interior of the building features minimal ornamentation. Therefore, Stuyvesant Gardens I retains its workmanship and materials.

Feeling and Association: Stuyvesant Gardens I complex's high degree of retention of original design elements and urban, low-rise setting directly relate to its retention of both feeling and association. While there have been alterations to finishes and replacement of certain exterior features, there have been relatively few alterations to the overall massing, form, and appearance of the buildings, as well as layout, site, and setting of the NYCHA complex since it was constructed. The primary design components, including the four-story grooved concrete block buildings with minimal ornamentation, the orientation of the buildings on individual parcels, and the hardscaping, remain consistent with the original design. Alterations, such as updates to interior finishes and replacements of windows and doors, have minimally impacted the feeling and association of the site as a public housing development.

Overall, Stuyvesant Gardens I retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic values.

Property List

The following is a list of Block numbers for each apartment block and associated building and addresses of all twenty seven (27) buildings included within the Stuyvesant Gardens I complex and the contributing site. The Block#, Site#, and Building# refers to the original Zoning Computations on the original Building Location Plans for the complex as researched at the NYCHA Archives. For each building, notable alterations have been identified. Please note that interior finish updates are not included in this list as all units are routinely updated with compatible finishes as tenant turnover occurs.

- **Block 1 (Block 1635, Lot No. 3, Site 42) - Nine (9) Contributing Buildings**

- 245 Lewis Avenue (Building 1)
- 714 Gates Avenue (Building 2)
- 720 Gates Avenue (Building 3)
- 730 Gates Avenue (Building 4)
- 734 Gates Avenue (Building 5)
- 740 Gates Avenue (Building 6)
- 744 Gates Avenue (Building 7)
- 750 Gates Avenue (Building 8)
- 760 Gates Avenue (Building 9)
- Rectilinear four-story apartment block
- Exterior alterations include: window replacements from two-over-two double-hung units to one metal over one windows, door replacements and metal door roofs. Interior alterations include potential updates to floor finishes. The interior layout remains intact.

- **Block 2 (Block 1635, Lot No. 41, Site 42) - Five (5) Contributing Buildings**

- 770 Gates Avenue (Building 10)
- 210 Stuyvesant Avenue (Building 11)

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- 214 Stuyvesant Avenue (Community Center)
 - 220 Stuyvesant Avenue (Building 12)
 - 585 Monroe Street (Building 13)
 - C-shaped four-story apartment block with two-story wing
 - Exterior alterations include: window replacements from two-over-two double-hung units to one metal over one windows, door replacements and metal door roofs. Interior alterations include potential updates to floor finishes. The interior layout remains intact.
 - Includes Community Center at 214 Stuyvesant Avenue
- **Block 3 (Block 1631, Lot No. 1, Site 47) – Six (6) Contributing Buildings**
 - 680 Quincy Street
 - 175 Stuyvesant Avenue (Building 27)
 - 185 Stuyvesant Avenue (Building 26 (835 Gates Avenue (Management Office) is part of 185))
 - 841 Gates Avenue (Building 25)
 - 845 Gates Avenue (Building 24)
 - 855 Gates Avenue (Building 23);
 - L-shaped four-story apartment block
 - Exterior alterations include: window replacements from two-over-two double-hung units to one metal over one windows, door replacements and metal door roofs. Interior alterations include potential updates to floor finishes. The interior layout remains intact.
- **Block 4 – (Block 1631, Lot No. 9, Site 47) – Three (3) Contributing Buildings**
 - 690 Quincy Street (Building 29)
 - 700 Quincy Street (Building 30)
 - 706 Quincy Street (Daycare Center)
 - Rectilinear four-story apartment block with two-story wing
 - Exterior alterations include: window replacements from two-over-two double-hung units to one metal over one windows, door replacements and metal door roofs. Interior alterations include potential updates to floor finishes. The interior layout remains intact.
 - Includes daycare facility
- **Block 5 (Block 1631, Lot No. 31, Site 47a & 48) - Four (4) Contributing Buildings**
 - 865 Gates Avenue (Building 22)
 - 875 Gates Avenue (Building 21)
 - 881 Gates Avenue (Building 20)
 - 885 Gates Avenue (Building 19)
 - Rectilinear four-story apartment block
 - Exterior alterations include: window replacements from two-over-two double-hung units to one metal over one windows, door replacements and metal door roofs. Interior alterations include potential updates to floor finishes. The interior layout remains intact.
- **Overall Landscape, 1 Contributing Site** – As part of the perimeter block design, the depth of the apartment blocks was limited to a certain depth to allow for the rear sections to be used open courtyards for shared use by the residents. Though there is not a formal site design, the overall common courtyard spaces are retained in the complex.
 - Pedestrian walkways and entrance driveways between apartment blocks are paved with asphalt or concrete. The perimeter of the walkways and entrances are occasionally lined with metal fencing.

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- There are linear planting beds lined with concrete curbing and metal fencing along the walkways. The plantings consist of trees and shrubs that have been replaced over time.
- There are recreation areas located throughout site with contemporary playground equipment.
- There are seating areas with contemporary benches and tables.
- There are concrete sidewalks and planting beds with low metal fences along the street elevations of apartment blocks.

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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.)

- ☒ 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1972

Significant Dates

1972

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Turano, E. N. (architect)

Malkin, Robert S. (landscape architect)

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for both Criteria A and C is in 1972 with the completion of the complex. The period of significance conveys the complex's construction and use as public housing, as well as its association with NYCHA and the Model Cities program.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Stuyvesant Gardens I is a public housing complex constructed in 1972 in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York. The low-rise housing complex consists of twenty seven buildings, including twenty five residential buildings, one community center, one daycare facility, and internal courtyards.

The complex is **locally significant** under **Criterion A** in the areas of *Politics/Government* and *Social History* as an example of a public housing complex in Bedford-Stuyvesant developed by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) under the Central Brooklyn Model Cities Community Development Plan. The Model Cities program was a joint federal and local government initiative under President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society Program to improve the physical condition of urban neighborhoods while maximizing community involvement in the planning process and minimizing displacement of existing residents. The program focused especially on creating "vest pocket" low- and moderate-income housing that would blend with existing neighborhoods, while also developing community facilities, industrial areas, commercial spaces, and open public areas. Stuyvesant Gardens I was the culmination of years of dialogue between the Bedford-Stuyvesant community and local government officials, and its low-rise design was intended to address the criticisms of the tower-in-the-park model that was ubiquitous for public housing developments in post-war New York City.

During the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, Bedford-Stuyvesant grew to be one of largest Black communities in New York City, rivaled only by Harlem in Manhattan. The majority of residents lived in former row houses constructed at the turn of the twentieth century—and in spite of racially motivated redlining practices, the neighborhood was characterized by a notably high rate of homeownership. Decades of disinvestment, however, led to the mounting perception of Bedford-Stuyvesant as an area in need of assistance. When the city proposed a return to the much-criticized "bulldozer" slum clearance techniques in the mid 1960s, the neighborhood's strong network of community organizations organized a coordinated response, ultimately leading to the much more nuanced efforts of the Model Cities program. When it came to urban renewal, Bedford-Stuyvesant's activists and organizers "maintained a pragmatic ambivalence." On one hand, they 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 all 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, where they were located, who would build them, and who would operate them once completed.

Stuyvesant Gardens I is also **locally significant** under **Criterion C** in the area of *Architecture* as a representative example of perimeter block housing applied to a public housing complex. Perimeter block housing is a design model in which buildings extend to the front lot lines, maintaining a consistent streetwall and creating space in the rear for shared common areas. Stuyvesant Gardens I was designed by E.N. Turano, a New York-based architect known for his public housing designs around the northeast. In his design, Turano focused on the location within a low-rise, urban neighborhood comprised mostly of single-family row houses and multi-family tenement buildings. This context influenced the size and placement of buildings within Stuyvesant Gardens I, while also maximizing light and air. Its materials are simple, yet correspond to the modular, geometric design of the complex. Each element combines to create a subtle design that both blends into the surrounding streetscape and has its own identity.

The period of significance is 1972, corresponding with the completion of the complex.

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Narrative Statement of Significance

Bedford-Stuyvesant Neighborhood

Bedford-Stuyvesant (also known as Bed-Stuy) is a neighborhood in central Brooklyn. The neighborhood is roughly defined by Broadway to the east, Atlantic Avenue to the south, Classon Avenue to the west, and Flushing Avenue to the north. Its name is derived from the combination of two nineteenth-century Central Brooklyn communities: Bedford and Stuyvesant Heights. The Bedford neighborhood was located at the western portion of the current neighborhood boundaries and the Stuyvesant Heights neighborhood was located at the central and eastern sides.¹ By the mid-twentieth century, the community was colloquially known as Bedford-Stuyvesant and will be referred to as such in the following narrative.

Historically, the land that now constitutes Bedford-Stuyvesant was settled by Dutch immigrants as a farming town during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.² Urbanization of the area began during the nineteenth century.³ Up through the mid- to late-nineteenth century, the predominant population in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Central Brooklyn was largely middle-class, with sections of upper-middle- and lower-middleclass, white immigrants of German and Irish descent.⁴ The popular building type was typical of urban neighborhoods in Brooklyn during this time, including three- and four-story row houses, religious buildings, schools, civic buildings, and commercial businesses (see **Figures 2-3**).⁵ Transportation in the area was primarily via trolleys and elevated rail lines running along major arterials. Generally, the neighborhood was a commuter town that served Manhattan and other portions of Brooklyn.

Even greater accessibility between Manhattan and the Brooklyn neighborhoods occurred following the completion of the Williamsburg Bridge in 1907. The increased commuter access to Manhattan and new job opportunities in Brooklyn, prompted steady the population growth during the first few decades of the twentieth century.⁶ At this time, Brooklyn boasted a great number of industrial jobs in factories producing women's wear, food products and tobacco, and leather goods (see **Figure 4**), and was known as a great location for working-class residents and their families.⁷ With the 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 employment and living conditions.⁸

Up until the early twentieth century, the predominant population within the Bedford and Stuyvesant Heights neighborhood had largely been white and middle-class.⁹ With factors like the Great Migration, better working-class job opportunities, and increased housing, the neighborhood population had become more ethnically and

¹ Brooklyn Library, "Bedford-Stuyvesant," accessed January 19, 2024. <https://www.bklynlibrary.org/sites/default/files/documents/brooklyn-collection/Bed%20Stuy%20Project%20Packet%20-%20Middle%20&%20High.pdf>.

² Brooklyn Library, "Bedford-Stuyvesant."

³ Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York City Library, "Map of the City of Brooklyn," 1849.

⁴ Kathy Howe, *NY PARKS DOE Form*, "Bedford Historic District," August 4, 2014.

⁵ "Bedford-Stuyvesant at Broadway Area," New York Cultural Resource Information System, last modified December 21, 2017.; "Street View of 1940s New York," 1940s NYC, accessed January 19, 2024. https://1940s.nyc/map/photo/nynyma_rec0040_1_01920_0047#17.5/40.815179/-73.941796.

⁶ Jack Newfield, *Robert Kennedy: A Memoir* (New York: New American Library, 1988), 88.

⁷ The Merchant Association of New York, "Industrial Map of New York City Showing Manufacturing Industries," 1922.

⁸ Michael Caratzas, et. al., *Bedford Historic District Designation Report* (New York: NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission, 2015), 29.

⁹ Newfield, *Robert Kennedy*, 88.

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economically diverse, including Black, Jewish and Central American working-class immigrants.¹⁰ This overall increase in the neighborhood's population directly contributed to a greater demand for housing and would continue for decades to come.

To accommodate this growth, previously single-family row houses were subdivided into multi-family units.¹¹ In response to the growth and changing demographic of the neighborhood, many remaining white residents cast out their new Black and immigrant neighbors, as a "threat to their neighborhood..." and in turn "...reacted with fear, anger, hostility and discrimination" towards them.¹² White homeowners in the area were discouraged from selling their homes to Black families.¹³

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.¹⁴ In fact, it was during the 1930s that the neighborhood's colloquial term "Bedford-Stuyvesant" came to be:

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.¹⁵

Unsurprisingly, this spurred large-scale real estate blockbusting campaigns against Black residents for the larger part of the 1930s and 1940s.¹⁶ Despite these racist practices, the neighborhood became a rare example of Black homeownership, much of which was assisted through Black real estate agents and communal efforts.¹⁷

By the onset of World War II, housing shortages within the neighborhood became even greater.¹⁸ 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.¹⁹ As factories within the city slowed production following the war, many working-class Black residents in neighborhoods like Bedford-Stuyvesant lost their jobs. These jobs were generally awarded to returning veterans and, in many instances, employers and trade unions refused to hire Black workers.²⁰

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

¹⁰ Caratzas, et. al., *Bedford Historic District*, 28-29.

¹¹ Brooklyn Library, "Bedford-Stuyvesant."

¹² Caratzas, et. al., *Bedford Historic District*, 31.

¹³ Caratzas, et. al., *Bedford Historic District*, 31.

¹⁴ Nancy Steinke, et. al. *Stuyvesant Heights Historic District Designation Report* (New York: NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission, 1971), 5.

¹⁵ Michael Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy: The Long War on Poverty in New York City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017), 13.

¹⁶ Steinke, et al., *Stuyvesant Heights Historic District*, 5.

¹⁷ Steinke, et al., *Stuyvesant Heights Historic District*, 5.

¹⁸ Steinke, et al., *Stuyvesant Heights Historic District*, 5.

¹⁹ Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 53.

²⁰ Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 53.

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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.²¹ This operation forced many working-class families from their neighborhoods in Manhattan and the Bronx into neighborhoods like Bedford-Stuyvesant and Harlem.²² With housing shortages already ubiquitous throughout the city, these neighborhoods became even more overcrowded than they already were. By this time, the effects of redlining in Bedford-Stuyvesant were so great, that it perpetuated a continuous cycle of government neglect and discrimination, which would last for the next two decades.²³

By the 1950s, new political strategies and city programs in New York, such as the Youth Board, were formed to combat the federal “war on poverty” in New York City neighborhoods. These programs aimed to encourage youth to participate in “gang framework” activities that promoted status and recognition among peers in socially acceptable, safe environments.²⁴ An example of an encouraged “gang-framework” activity was team sports, where individuals or groups 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 government assistance in neighborhoods like Bedford-Stuyvesant, the government remained largely absent in providing aid to problems like overcrowding, discriminatory business and real estate practices, or deteriorating building stock.

Following the death of a fifteen-year-old Black boy at the hands of a white police officer, the Harlem Riot of 1964 erupted in Harlem, then spread to the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood. The riot brought national attention to the poor living conditions and systemic government neglect of the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood.²⁵ State and city officials held emergency meetings to address the growing issues in the neighborhood, though unsurprisingly, many of their proposed solutions were never enacted and the agenda was pushed to the wayside.

A change in the neighborhood’s fortunes, however, did begin in 1966, when New York Senator Robert F. Kennedy was briefed on the issue. After touring the neighborhood and witnessing its social and physical blight, he felt compelled to get involved. Having noticed the growing race riots in other cities, and as an opponent to Lyndon B. Johnson’s Great Society program, Kennedy felt that private funding and intervention was necessary for the success of a community development program.²⁶ He got involved in what would become the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, a community development program focused on the economic, cultural, and social environments in Central Brooklyn.²⁷

Redevelopment programs, including the Restoration Corporation and Model Cities program (referenced in the following section) continued to work through the 1970s to rectify the neighborhood’s physical, cultural, and social landscape after decades of government and societal neglect. Although NYCHA had already constructed several developments in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood prior to the 1970s, they continued their work in the neighborhood and were involved in several developments. As one of the NYCHA developments from the

²¹ Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 35.

²² Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 35.

²³ Caratzas, et. al., *Bedford Historic District*, 35.

²⁴ Woodsworth, *Battle for Bed-Stuy*, 30.

²⁵ Alfred E. Clark, “Gang Wars Upset Area in Brooklyn,” *New York Times*, May 2, 1961.

²⁶ “New York Race Riots,” University of Georgia Civil Rights Digital Library, accessed January 19, 2024. https://crdl.usg.edu/events/ny_race_riots.

²⁷ “History,” Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation: Restoration Plaza, accessed January 19, 2024. <https://www.restorationplaza.org/about/history/>.

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1970s, Stuyvesant Gardens I was completed in 1972. During this time, the neighborhood demographics remained largely working-class Black and immigrant populations. By the end of the twentieth century, gentrification of the neighborhood had begun as a response to low crime rates, well-built housing stock, retained residents, and central location in Brooklyn.²⁸ Since then, the neighborhood has received more attention from the government and social agencies. There are currently sixteen other NYCHA developments in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood. Among them are single-family and multi-family row houses, tenement buildings, and apartment complexes.

*NYCHA Vest Pocket and Perimeter Block Housing*²⁹

An important aspect of the design and development of the Stuyvesant Gardens I complex is its vest-pocket design, which was both a transition from NYCHA tower developments and a beneficial by-product of the Model Cities program.

Immediately following World War II, New York City faced a severe housing shortage exacerbated by the influx of returning servicemembers and a halt to construction during the war years. In response, New York City, which had established its municipal public housing agency, NYCHA, in 1934, embarked on an ambitious postwar program of building new public housing. NYCHA's plans were but one component of a program for extensive urban renewal by the metropolitan area's powerful planner, Robert Moses, who occupied numerous agency positions and gained influence over NYCHA through the appointment of allies.³⁰

Under Moses, public housing in New York City was characterized by large developments of high-rise buildings surrounded by open landscaped areas in superblocks that interrupted large swaths of the street grid, a model known as "towers in the park." However, in the 1950s, NYCHA responded to increasing criticisms of isolated tower developments by making design standards "more flexible" and announcing plans for scattered-site developments (which later came to be known as "vest pocket" developments): smaller-scale development scattered across sites on empty lots within the existing urban fabric. While these early scattered-site housing projects were not much smaller than what NYCHA had been building, they had the advantage of not displacing anyone for new construction. Still, NYCHA vastly preferred large-scale developments for their economy of construction. However, under pressure from critics, in 1956, NYCHA committed to "disperse" future projects rather than "bulldozing vast areas."³¹ These changes were made more likely in 1958 when Moses resigned from the Mayor's Committee on Slum Clearance, and Mayor Robert F. Wagner Jr. removed NYCHA Chair Philip Cruise, a Moses ally, and named Ira Robbins, an advocate of changes to the tower-in-the-park model, to the authority leadership.³²

At the same time, a group of community activists in East Harlem in Manhattan were dismayed at the alienation and disruption of neighborhood social ties they saw as resulting from the tower-in-the-park development of NYCHA's George Washington Houses, completed in 1956. They formed the East Harlem Project to advocate for community input in planning decisions and to develop alternative principles for urban renewal and new

²⁸ Matias Echanove, "Bed-Stuy on the Move: Demographic Trends and Economic Development in the Heart of Brooklyn," (MA thesis, Columbia University, 2003), 1.

²⁹ Portions of this section have been adapted from Jonathan Taylor, "Fiorentino Plaza," *National Register Nomination Form*, ed. by Linda Mackey, December 2021.

³⁰ Nicholas Bloom, *Public Housing That Worked* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 109-116.

³¹ Bloom, *Public Housing*, 153.

³² Samuel Zipp, *Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 303.

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housing that drew on the scale and dynamics of neighborhood life. Representatives of the East Harlem Project and allies, including architectural journalist Jane Jacobs, met with new NYCHA Chair Reid to push for an alternative approach to a new development planned for that area, the DeWitt Clinton Houses.³³

The East Harlem project advocated for community input in planning decisions and the development of alternative principles for urban renewal and new housing that drew on the scale and dynamics of neighborhood life and commissioned architects Perkins & Will to design an alternative proposal for DeWitt Clinton. The design, which consciously departed from some existing federal design standards for public housing, limited many of the complex's buildings to four stories, walk-ups with no elevators. The plan retained the neighborhood street grid and related the buildings to it, moving the buildings to the sidewalk perimeter and marking street entries to the complex with "planted and paved sitting and play spaces" and "built-in niches and nooks" that complemented the rhythm of stoops on the sidewalks in the neighborhood.³⁴

Though NYCHA went through with its tower plans for DeWitt Clinton Houses, the East Harlem alternative echoed a wider emerging consensus in favor of contextual development of new housing integrated into existing street grids and street walls. In addition, fewer areas for large-scale clearance were available to NYCHA for new projects. In 1962, NYCHA characterized 32 percent of its current and planned projects as "vest pocket."³⁵ Under Mayor John V. Lindsay, who took office in 1966, a reorganization of housing agencies included the creation of new design departments, including an Office of Planning, Design and Research (PDR) within a newly formed Housing and Development Administration (HDA). Further, new emphasis was placed on low-rise housing.³⁶ However, efforts to implement these priorities on a large scale were hindered by federal limits on construction costs per-unit for federally aided projects, restrictions that would be eased as part of the Model Cities program—allowing NYCHA to commission a small number of designs that "represented a brief return to the older garden-style apartment buildings last seen in the 1930s."³⁷

Also, in the 1960s, NYCHA pursued a shift to more "useful" landscapes at public housing projects. It promoted active recreation areas instead of the "passive" grounds of the typical postwar tower-in-the-park developments, characterized by lawns (which tenants were barred from) lined by paths and benches. NYCHA engaged noted landscape architect Paul Friedberg to aid in redesigning its grounds to replace "sterile" and "off-limits" lawns with raised and sunken paved areas for play, seating, amphitheaters, and circulation that promoted social gathering."³⁸

The planning and design strategy of perimeter blocks is often linked to vest-pocked housing developments. Perimeter blocks utilize the outer edges of an urban site to maximize space for public interaction with the building.³⁹ In public housing developments, perimeter block design was especially useful when a central or rear courtyard space was included. Since vest-pocket housing developments were typically low-rise and therefore

³³ Zipp, *Manhattan Projects*, 302, 328.

³⁴ Zipp, *Manhattan Projects*, 329-220; Richard A. Miller, "Public Housing....for People," *Architectural Forum* 110 no. 4 (April 1959), 134-137.

³⁵ Richard Plunz, *A History of Housing in New York City: Dwelling Type and Social Change in the American Metropolis* (New York: Columbia Press, 1990), 291-292; Bloom, *Public Housing*, 152-153.

³⁶ Plunz, *History of Housing*, 292; "Urban Housing: A Comprehensive Approach to Quality," *Architectural Record* 145 no. 1 (January 1969), 98.

³⁷ Bloom, *Public Housing*, 157-158.

³⁸ Taylor, "Fiorentino Plaza"; Bloom, *Public Housing*, 164-166.

³⁹ Paul Eaton, "The Residential Perimeter Block: Principles, Problems, and Particularities," *Allies and Morrison*, accessed February 5, 2024. <https://www.alliesandmorrison.com/research/the-residential-perimeter-block-principles-problems-and-particularities>.

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occupied a greater amount of the lot's area, the use of perimeter block designs was crucial to incorporate outdoor communal spaces for residents. The perimeter block concept was not newly applied to public housing developments but used widely in NYCHA vest-pocket housing developments during the period of the Model Cities program. At an international scale, perimeter block designs for public housing complexes were implemented to make efficient use of land while not wholly disrupting the hierarchy of spaces in an urban setting. The perimeter block vest-pocket housing design for complexes was more discrete than tower designs, as each side of the block could easily blend with the urban scale of the neighborhood.⁴⁰

*Criterion A: Model Cities Program in New York City*⁴¹

Concurrent to Robert Kennedy's efforts in Bedford-Stuyvesant, the Model Cities program mobilized in New York City "ghettos" as a component of Johnson's Great Society program. A historic context on the evolution of the Model Cities program and its presence in New York City has been adapted from the Fiorentino Plaza National Register Nomination Form (2021) and included in this narrative.

The 1966 federal Model Cities program to address urban poverty was instituted under President Lyndon Johnson as a component of his administration's broad-ranging "Great Society" social welfare initiatives. Johnson announced his proposal for what was first dubbed the "Demonstration Cities" program in January 1966. He signed the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act, better known as Model Cities, in November 1966. Model Cities was intended as an alternative to the large-scale demolition and displacement associated with urban renewal projects since the United State Housing Act of 1949 and as a response to the racial inequality and civil turmoil that had gripped American cities since 1964. Model Cities aimed to integrate a wide range of social services with the physical provision of improved housing, under the guidance of a community-led planning process.

Some of the proposed social services implemented at the NYCHA-sponsored Bedford-Stuyvesant Model Cities program include grade school and university level educational advancement, early childhood development programs and facilities, summer academies, adult education through the distribution of books, senior citizen care, and the curation of cultural artefacts (particularly related to the Black and Puerto Rican communities).⁴² As this neighborhood was largely composed of Black and immigrant populations, who likely possessed limited access to higher education beyond public schools, educational supplement programs were likely one of the neighborhood committee's paramount concerns. Although it is unclear whether these education programs were cleared through the Model City's budget allotment, they are evidence of community involvement during construction of the NYCHA-sponsored Bedford-Stuyvesant Model Cities complexes.

Both public housing and government-aided private development at this time focused on small-scale infill and rehabilitations of existing buildings in target areas rather than slum clearance and new large-scale construction projects.⁴³

In 1966, before the enactment of the Model Cities program, the New York City government identified three areas – the South Bronx, Harlem, and Central Brooklyn – as the "worst ghettos" and the top priorities for a new

⁴⁰ Eaton, "Residential Perimeter Block."

⁴¹ Portions of this section have been adapted from Taylor, "Fiorentino Plaza."

⁴² "Budget and Personnel Documents," NYCHA Archives, accessed December 2023.

⁴³ Susanne Schindler, "Model Cities Redux," Urban Omnibus website, Oct. 16, 2016, <http://urbanomnibus.net/2016/10/model-cities-redux/>.

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focus on urban renewal efforts.⁴⁴ When the city applied for funds from the federal Model Cities program, it focused on these three regions. In the fall of 1966, anticipating New York's participation in Model Cities, the Lindsay administration began planning "vest pocket" housing developments in five neighborhoods. Four of the five neighborhoods later became Model Cities areas, including Bedford-Stuyvesant and East New York...two of the neighborhoods that constituted the Central Brooklyn area.⁴⁵

In early 1967, Mayor Lindsay proposed a city budget that provided \$25 million for the prospective Model Cities areas, intended to "spur" the federal government to appropriate money for the program, which had been authorized but not yet appropriated. In March 1967, New York City submitted its applications to the federal government for planning funds to be awarded under Model Cities.⁴⁶

Meanwhile, the city advanced plans for 8,000 new or rehabilitated low- and middle-income apartments throughout the proposed Model City areas to demonstrate to the federal government how it would effectively utilize the aid. The plan included 5,000 public housing units to be located in "small structures"—typically four stories or less—to "end the traditional pattern of huge, sterile public housing projects, isolated physically and socially from community life."⁴⁷ The city also dedicated money for subsidies that would reduce the cost of land to be acquired for public housing, to keep the project costs within federal limits, as prevailing construction costs in New York threatened to push the costs of housing projects above the federal ceilings.

In November 1967, the Johnson Administration named New York one of sixty-three cities selected to share \$11 million to finance planning for Model Cities areas. The city named the architectural firm Gruzen & Partners as coordinating architects of the program, overseeing sixteen firms assigned to design new housing across the three Model Cities areas⁴⁸...PDR established building prototypes that adopted an "overall design criteria" that "respected the existing character of the streets." Thus, the new projects were intended to have street-wall buildings with enclosed open space, parking solutions that would allow for more open space, and distinguishing individual projects with variation in the facades and fenestration.

In April 1968, *New York Times* architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable described the guiding principles behind the new developments being designed and slated to begin construction by the fall of that year: location on small, scattered sites, including "minisites" that occupied only portions of blocks, alongside existing buildings; low-rise height and conformity with the scale and architectural patterns of the surrounding neighborhood; and the formation of developments around enclosed space rather than buildings isolated by space around them. (Major postwar landscape architect M. Paul Friedberg was named the overall consultant on the open-space aspects of the design.) Other characteristics of the designs included "varied facades instead of flat brick walls," "partly underground parking" and "community facilities."⁴⁹

While support for the concept of Model Cities grew considerably in New York City, after the election of President Richard. M. Nixon in November of 1968, the fate of the federal program became unclear.

⁴⁴ New York City Planning Commission, "Plan for New York City 1969: A Proposal," 1969.

⁴⁵ New York City Planning Commission, "Plan for New York City"; Susanne Schindler, "'1966 Can Be the Year of Rebirth for American Cities,'" *San Rocco* 14 (Winter 2017), 101; Walter Thabit, *How East New York Became a Ghetto* (New York: NYU Press, 2003), 117.

⁴⁶ "Mayor to Include Model Cities Fund in Capital Budget," *New York Times*, January 31, 1967.

⁴⁷ "8,000 Apartments in Slums Planned," *New York Times*, July 16, 1967; "Charges of Bigotry Fly at Hearing on Housing for Poor," *New York Times*, August 3, 1967.

⁴⁸ "NYC Leads Model Cities Program," *Oculus* 41 no. 5 (January 1968), 1.

⁴⁹ "Model Cities Construction to Start Here by Fall," *New York Times*, April 19, 1968.

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Considerable uncertainty developed as to whether the new administration would retain the Model Cities program as envisioned. At that point, a total of \$925 million in federal funding had been dedicated to Model Cities but it had not yet been distributed to the municipalities.

In December 1968, a rehabilitation project in East New York, since demolished, was hailed by Mayor Lindsay as New York's first Model Cities housing project to get underway. It was reported at the time that among the Model Cities areas, planning was most advanced in Central Brooklyn, while "power struggles" had delayed the planning process in Harlem and the South Bronx.⁵⁰ Roger Glasgow, a noted Black architect of the time who worked on that first East New York rehabilitation project, as well as new privately sponsored construction under Model Cities, noted tensions between Model Cities ideals, community input, entrenched politics and economic realities. Where planners had initially prioritized rehabilitation, Glasgow said, "the community decided they wanted new units." While neighbors wanted the new construction to adhere to the three- and four-story heights of the immediate context, economic pressures dictated that his new construction be "six or seven stories." Glasgow also noted the program's onerous approval process and "minimal funding" made it difficult for, in the words of Progressive Architecture, "small ghetto architects and subcontractors whom it is supposed to benefit" to participate.⁵¹

The federal government in January 1969 reserved \$65 million for New York City in its first allocation of Model Cities money for capital projects, to be disbursed upon approval of city plans. New York City's Board of Estimate soon afterward approved the Central Brooklyn Model Cities Plan as part of the city's application for this money, and the federal government gave the approval for New York's plans, which included \$29 million for Central Brooklyn.⁵²

In July 1969, Mayor Lindsay broke ground on construction in two "clusters" of vest-pocket housing in East New York, calling them the first new construction projects under Model Cities in the U.S. The two sites were what would become Fiorentino Plaza and Unity Plaza... Together they would constitute about 800 of 4,999 housing units planned at the time for Central Brooklyn Model Cities⁵³...

However, also in 1969, the Nixon administration signaled a shift away from the Johnson administration's urban renewal programs. In September, it was reported that funding for the Neighborhood Development Program would be drastically reduced. The program, part of the 1968 Housing Act, was a component of many Model Cities projects and accelerated the provision of funds by reducing requirements for advance approval of plans. Shortly thereafter, federal officials suggested that Model Cities spending in the current fiscal year would be cut by \$215 million, from \$515 million.⁵⁴

Contracts already awarded to cities were not affected, and Model Cities projects continued in Central Brooklyn... In April 1970, Mayor Lindsay broke ground on a project for 371 low- and middle-income units in Bedford-Stuyvesant (likely the Louis Armstrong Houses, Clifton Place between Marcy and Nostrand Avenues,

⁵⁰ "Brooklyn Model Cities Plan Started," *New York Times*, December 20, 1968.

⁵¹ "Model Cities: From Hassle Into Concrete," *Progressive Architecture*, February 1969, 31

⁵² "65-Million Grant Allotted to City for Slum Project," *New York Times*, January 10, 1969; "Brooklyn Model Cities Plan Backed," *New York Times*, February 14, 1969; "Model Cities Here Granted 70-Million," *New York Times*, June 12, 1969. The \$70 million total was created by the addition of \$5 million from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare on top of the \$65 from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

⁵³ "Mayor Breaks Ground on Model Cities Project," *New York Times*, July 31, 1969.

⁵⁴ "A Slum Program Faces Sharp Cut," *New York Times*, September 26, 1969; "\$215-Million Cut in Model Cities Is Ordered by the Administration," *New York Times*, October 2, 1969.

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completed in 1973), reported to be the first new Model Cities groundbreaking in Central Brooklyn since the Fiorentino and Unity Plaza sites in July 1969. That month the city also approved the expansion of Fulton Park, a new Bedford-Stuyvesant housing project for which planning had begun before Model Cities but was later associated with the program, by 425 units, to 1,140.⁵⁵

In May 1970, the city submitted plans for a second year of funding to the federal government, seeking another \$65 million. At the same time, the Lindsay administration reorganized its Model Cities program, shifting power away from the citywide Model Cities Committee and neighborhood-level policy committees to a new Model Cities Administration headed by a mayoral appointee. In March 1971, the mayor ordered new elections to the neighborhood committees to curb the power of what critics called entrenched local anti-poverty organizations.⁵⁶

Slowed by the local conflicts over control of Model Cities planning, the South Bronx Model Cities area was approved by the Board of Estimate in May 1970, and ground was broken on the first South Bronx project, with 309 units, which would become part of Betances Houses, in July 1970.⁵⁷ Betances Houses, totaling more than 900 units, included both rehabilitated buildings and new construction of varying housing types, including duplex townhouses and five- and six-story apartment houses.

Also in 1970, the Nixon administration gave further signals that it might divert Model Cities funding to other purposes, particularly school desegregation efforts. It also reduced the federal role in the program by giving mayoral administrations more power over program decisions. In his January 1971 State of the Union address, Nixon announced a plan for a new program of federal aid grants to state and local governments that would replace Model Cities and other Great Society programs.⁵⁸

Nevertheless, ground continued to be broken on additional Model Cities projects in Central Brooklyn, including the privately sponsored Grace Towers, in East New York, in December 1970 (designed by Roger Glasgow, a noted Black architect of the time); and 969 St. Mark's Avenue, a pedestrianized block of Bedford-Stuyvesant designed by Pei, Cobb, Freed & Partners, in January 1971—the latter sponsored by Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corp...In April 1971, federal officials announced that New York would receive its second \$65 million allocation under the Model Cities program.⁵⁹

New York's Model Cities program in 1971 also received a boost from a federal move to ease some funding restrictions, including raising its cost limits for building housing and allowing the city to use Model Cities funds

⁵⁵ "Planning Unit Approves Brooklyn Industrial Site," *New York Times*, March 5, 1970; "Black Hecklers Force Lindsay to Discard Model Cities Speech," *New York Times*, April 8, 1970; "Estimate Board Expands Brooklyn Housing Plans," *New York Times*, April 17, 1970.

⁵⁶ "City Submits 3 Slum Programs to U.S.," *New York Times*, May 8, 1970; "Lindsay Revamps Model Cities Plan," *New York Times*, April 17, 1970; "City Orders New Elections of Model Cities' Ruling Panels to Curb Power of 'Povertyocrats,'" *New York Times*, March 29, 1971.

⁵⁷ "3,500 Housing Units Cleared for Renewal Projects in City," *New York Times*, May 25, 1970; "Project in South Bronx Begins Under U.S. Model Cities Plans," *New York Times*, July 14, 1970. Betances Houses included both new and rehabilitated buildings, totaling more than 900 units, and designed by six architectural firms: Castro-Blanco Piscioneri & Feder, H.I. Feldman, Ralph Leff, Fred Lieberman, John Pruyn, and Jonas Vizbaras.

⁵⁸ "Romney in Pledge on Model Cities," *New York Times*, May 7, 1970; "Mayors Endorse New Urban Plan," *New York Times*, October 1, 1970; "Nixon Urges \$16-Billion Go to States and Cities as Revenue-Sharing Aid," *New York Times*, January 23, 1971.

⁵⁹ "City Will Get \$65-Million Model Cities Grant; \$20-Million Still Unspent," *New York Times*, April 6, 1971.

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on subsidies to lower the costs of building public housing, rather than the city's own money, as it had been doing.⁶⁰

However, by 1973, the Nixon administration signaled an end to Model Cities as envisioned under President Johnson, among other federal programs aimed at aiding housing. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary George Romney in January announced a halt to the granting of new federal subsidies for low- and middle-income housing, and later, in January, Nixon made clear that HUD would not approve new projects under Model Cities or other urban renewal programs after the completion of the fiscal year, which ended June 30, 1973. Existing projects would continue to receive unspent Model Cities money for another year. In March the Nixon administration allocated \$45 million in Model Cities funding to New York City, to cover the period through June 1974. This was, in essence, a stop-gap measure until the transition to the Community Development block grant program, which replaced Model Cities and various other specific federal programs, could be completed.⁶¹

Following the end of the federal Model Cities program, New York City continued local activities under a Model Cities aegis using block grant funding. New York was the last U.S. city still operating a Model Cities program in 1978, when Mayor Ed Koch restructured the remaining local Model Cities administration into the city's general Community Development-funded activities.⁶²

However, even amid the decline of the Model Cities program in New York, Model Cities residential buildings won architecture awards, reflecting the program's role in shifting the contemporary emphasis to smaller-scale development that was physically integrated into existing neighborhoods.⁶³

The Developmental History of Stuyvesant Gardens I

As previously noted, the Central Brooklyn Model Cities program area concentrated on two areas for the development of vest-pocket housing. These areas included the East New York (or Brownsville) and Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhoods. Prior to the Model Cities program and other local or private assistance groups (such as the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation), the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood had virtually been neglected by government agencies and assistance programs. After decades of government neglect, blockbusting, and racial discrimination, the Bedford-Stuyvesant community was in dire need of assistance.⁶⁴

Increased access between Manhattan and the Brooklyn neighborhoods, combined with a great number of industrial jobs and the Great Migration, facilitated the growth of immigrant and Black residents in neighborhoods like Bedford-Stuyvesant during the 1920s and 1930s. The Great Depression saw a rise in this shifting demographic as well as the subdivision of low-rise row houses in the neighborhood. The conditions within these houses surpassed the quality of working-class housing options in Harlem. However, the availability and quality of this housing would not last for long. White business owners and residents began embracing governmental segregation and inequities. As stated in Richard Rothstein's book *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*, he asserts, "...scores of racially explicit laws, regulations, and government practices combined to create a nationwide system of urban ghettos...private

⁶⁰ "U.S. Eases Limits on City Housing, New York Times, April 30, 1971; "U.S. Limits Eased for Housing Here," *New York Times*, May 2, 1971; "Model Cities Funds Get New Use, Cutting City Antipoverty Load," *New York Times*, May 17, 1971.

⁶¹ "U.S. Commitment to Renew Cities Is in Doubt Under New Program," *New York Times*, January 30, 1973.

⁶² "Changes in Model Cities Program More a Phasing-Out Than Revision," *New York Times*, March 10, 1978.

⁶³ Portions of this section have been adapted from Taylor, "Fiorentino Plaza."

⁶⁴ Clark, "Gang Wars Erupt in Brooklyn"; Brooklyn Library, "Bedford-Stuyvesant."

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discrimination also played a role, but it would have been considerably less effective had it not been embraced and reinforced by government.”⁶⁵ The area soon became one of the largest Black populations in the country, leading to long term systemic societal and governmental neglect of the neighborhood.

After long neglect by all municipal bodies, the Great Society act, introducing Model Cities, by President Johnson allowed for an influx of funding that could be used to improve areas of New York City that needed assistance--one of these programs being the Central Brooklyn Model Cities program. In 1966, NYCHA prepared a resolution to federally aided public housing whereby 4,000 units would be constructed in five “substandard” neighborhoods throughout New York City (see **Figure 5**).⁶⁶ In the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, approximately 800-1,000 units were proposed. Some local, unidentified community organizations and residents were in favor of this new public housing initiative, in the hopes that it would improve the current living conditions in their neighborhood. However, some members of the community and the taxpayer’s association were opposed to the New York City Model Cities program. These opponents cited that public housing generally brought more blight to neighborhoods.⁶⁷ Despite these opposing views, the Bedford-Stuyvesant Model Cities program advanced, and preliminary planning for developments like Stuyvesant Gardens I were begun. In 1967, NYCHA awarded the architectural contract for Stuyvesant Gardens I to Emanuel Nicholas (E.N.) Turano.⁶⁸ Other members of the design team included Robert S. Malkin as the landscape architect, Feld Kaminetzky & Cohen as the structural engineers, and Bernard F. Greene as the mechanical engineer.

Originally, the contract included five individual parcel sites for development: 42, 47, 47a, 48, and 49, however, Site 49 was removed from Turano’s contract as the Board of Education requested that a new school building be constructed on this site.⁶⁹ This also reduced the projected number of housing units from 404 to 331. To commence with construction of the complex, the land needed to be cleared of the low-rise tenement buildings on the five individual parcels. According to NYCHA documentation, the definition for vest-pocket design development was, “The vest pocket housing program will be developed in small areas either on vacant land, land cleared by demolition of buildings which are so structurally unsound that they don’t warrant rehabilitation, or by removal of inappropriate non-conforming buildings.”⁷⁰ The existing tenement buildings within the proposed project site were assessed and deemed to be eligible for demolition for the redevelopment of the site. The current residents and business owners were relocated, and site demolition and preparation took several years.

⁶⁵ Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2017), preface.

⁶⁶ “Resolution Approving and Finally Adopting a “Plan” Relative to Federally-Aided Public Housing Projects for 4000 Units to be Located in Five Substandard Neighborhoods of the City,” NYCHA Archives, accessed December 2023.

⁶⁷ “Resolution Approving and Finally Adopting a “Plan,” NYCHA Archives.

⁶⁸ Letter from Joseph J. Christian to E.N. Turano, dated December 20, 1967, NYCHA Archives, accessed December 2023.

⁶⁹ Letter from Max B. Schreiber to Harry Stiefel, dated November 22, 1971, NYCHA Archives, accessed December 2023.

⁷⁰ City Planning Commission Document dated June 22, 1966, NYCHA Archives, accessed December 2023.

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Criterion C: Architecture

Perimeter Block Housing Design for Stuyvesant Gardens I

Stuyvesant Gardens I is significant as a representative example of perimeter block design applied to a public housing complex. The complex was designed by E.M. Turano, a New York-based architect who had garnered recognition for his work on other public housing projects in the surrounding area.

As an experienced architect in the public housing sector, Turano was well-versed in creating design solutions and adhering to limited budgets for these projects. The design of Stuyvesant Gardens I incorporates both the vest-pocket design and perimeter block planning concepts that were ubiquitous throughout many Model Cities projects in New York. Compared to tower designs, the vest pocket and perimeter block housing design sought to integrate the architecture into the community, rather than isolate. Stuyvesant Gardens I was designed to maximize light and ventilation to apartment units and stair halls at all floors. The complex was designed with simple materials that reflect the financial constraints of the project, while also incorporating small details in the design elements that both embellished and integrated the buildings within their urban, low-rise neighborhood. One of these elements include the vertical orientation of brick juxtaposed with horizontal concrete block located at window bays, adding a textured, visual interest to the otherwise commonplace materials. Another design element that added visual interest to the site was the modular massing of the facades, with stair towers extending several feet off of the building faces and several feet above the masonry parapets. At the interior, apartment units ranged from two to five-bedroom plans. The larger apartment units were designed to cater to the large number of families with young children or extended family members located in the neighborhood at this time.

To balance the perimeter streetscape frontage of the buildings and increase the opportunity for adequate daylight and outdoor space for residents, the perimeter block design results in the primary perimeter street frontage and an open space at its center and behind the clusters of buildings. The inclusion of an external space is a critical component of the traditional perimeter block plan as it provides a secondary central space for private gardens or, as at Stuyvesant Gardens I, communal functions for all residents. This is an efficient use of land within the dense urban setting that is intended to improve the overall quality of life for the residents. The perimeter of Stuyvesant Gardens I is defined by the street frontage but the interior plays host to a variety of communal functions such as walkways, linear planting beds, playgrounds, and seating areas for the benefit of the residents. Though the general materials and configuration of these communal spaces have been modified and upgraded on a routine basis since the original construction period, the original design intent and function of these communal spaces remains intact. The perimeter block design continues to be viewed as an urban planning form that encourages stability and social cohesion for neighborhood housing in a dense urban environment.⁷¹

In 1969, lot clearance of the five individual parcels at Stuyvesant Gardens I began. Hundreds of residents and commercial businesses were required to relocate.⁷² During this time, plans for the construction of the five Stuyvesant Gardens I apartment “clusters” were underway. The proposed plans included five separate apartment “clusters” with units offering one, two, three, four, and five-bedrooms.⁷³ In addition to these plans, NYCHA

⁷¹ Eaton, “Residential Perimeter Block.”

⁷² “Summary of Relocation Information for All Model Cities Site Through April 30, 1969,” NYCHA Archives, accessed December 2023.

⁷³ “Development Program (Accelerated Turnkey Project) for Project NY5-133 for 331 Units,” NYCHA Archives, accessed December 2023.

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and members of the community expressed a need for a new community center and daycare center to be constructed within the complex (see **Figure 1**). Both facilities, especially the daycare center, provided communal access to residents in the neighborhood and housing development, upholding one of the major pillars of the Model Cities program—community involvement and programs.

Likely attributed to community involvement during the housing development's planning process, the community center and daycare center were incorporated in the design of the complex in its early stages. The proposed plan for the community center included 5,000 square feet at Site 42, where Apartment Block 2 is currently located. The community center included a meeting room with a stage, kitchen, offices, lounge, and various club rooms.⁷⁴ Similarly, a daycare facility was planned for the complex at Apartment Block 4. The daycare facility was funded by the Department of Social Services and was one of three included in the Model Cities portfolio.⁷⁵ The other two Model Cities sites selected for daycare facilities included Mott Haven in the Bronx and Millbank-Frawley in Harlem. The two-story daycare center at Stuyvesant-Gardens I was constructed at Site 47, currently Apartment Block 4. Today, the community center and daycare centers at Stuyvesant-Gardens I are still actively used and are representative of both NYCHA involvement and the community-led groups organized under the Model Cities program.

Stuyvesant Gardens I was completed on August 31, 1972. Research yielded little information on the opening of the complex and its initial public reception. News reports and archival information contemporary to the complex's construction describe the complex by its sites (42, 47, 47a, 48) as the Model Cities: Bedford-Stuyvesant area site. The first known public documentation of the complex's current name, Stuyvesant Gardens I, was in a newspaper article from 1987.

Despite limited information about the complexes opening, other information such as historic census data provides a context for the complex's demographic population. Based on census data from the 1970s, the predominant population in this area of Bedford-Stuyvesant, especially this tract, was Black, with the largest concentration of the population of men and women between the ages of 25 and 34.⁷⁶ Many households had young children and/or extended families. With the completion of Stuyvesant Gardens I complex in 1972, the available information from the 1980 census allows for inferences into the original residential population of the complex. The 1980s census data indicates that the majority of people living in the associated census tract at Stuyvesant Gardens I were Black families, with a slightly greater number of single or separated parents.⁷⁷ The median age for women was 30.1 and men was 26.9. Approximately 7% of the population was of Spanish origin and less than 1% identified as white or Asian and Pacific Islander. The percentage of high school graduates among adults 25 or older was 56.7%, with approximately 3% of the population obtaining 4-year college degrees.

E.N. Turano and other NYCHA Developments

⁷⁴ Letter from Max B. Schreiber to E.N. Turano, dated January 11, 1968, NYCHA Archives, accessed December 2023.

⁷⁵ Letter from Harry Levy to Daniel E. Cohen, dated July 18, 1968, NYCHA Archives, accessed December 2023; "Minutes of Meeting on Construction of Public Group Day Care Centers on Public Housing Sites in Model Cities Areas Held on February 5, 1968," NYCHA Archives, accessed December 2023.

⁷⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, *1970 Census of Population and Housing: Census Tracts, New York, NY, Part 1*, https://usa.ipums.org/usa/resources/voliii/pubdocs/1970/Pop_Housing/Vol1/39204513p14ch01.pdf.

⁷⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, *1980 Census Population and Housing: Census Tracts, New York, NY-NJ*, <https://archive.org/details/1980censusofpo8022601unse/page/36/mode/2up?q=0293>.

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E.N. Turano obtained a certificate in architecture from Cooper Union in 1941 and a Bachelor's degree in architecture from Harvard University in 1947.⁷⁸ He also received an honorary Doctorate of Philosophy from Cooper Union in 1964 and a Master of Architecture from Harvard in 1963. From 1947 to 1950, he was a designer with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. He then began as a chief designer with Kelly & Gruzen from 1950 to 1952. From 1952-1960, Turano worked as a partner of the architectural firm Ives, Turano, and Gartner. While there, he and his partners worked on Quarry Knoll public housing complex and the Pan Am Passenger Terminal at JFK Airport, which has since been demolished. He was awarded with a design excellence award for his work on Quarry Knolls. Turano was also an architectural instructor simultaneously at two institutions. He taught at Pratt Institute from 1959 to 1962, and then at Columbia from 1959 to 1960.⁷⁹ In 1960, he created his own firm called Turano, Architects and Planners. Some of his later projects included elderly housing projects in East Orange, NJ, Morristown, NJ, and Huntington, NY. Therefore, his portfolio of work provided a strong foundation for his selection as architect for Stuyvesant Gardens I. E.N. Turano is associated with two other NYCHA developments: the LaGuardia Addition (1962-1965) and 344 East 28th Street (1966-1971).

LaGuardia Addition (1962-1965): The La Guardia Addition is a sixteen-story tower located within the campus of the La Guardia Houses complex in the Lower East Side of Manhattan (see **Figure 6**). The tower addition was designed by E.N. Turano and precedes his involvement with Stuyvesant Gardens I. The La Guardia Addition features 150 apartment units in addition to the 1,094 units present at the surrounding La Guardia Houses. The La Guardia Addition was a federal project developed for seniors and is not associated with the New York City Model Cities program. Despite these differences, the overall design aesthetic of the building is reflected in elements of the apartment buildings at Stuyvesant Gardens I. As a tower development, the building is drastically different to the vest-pocket, perimeter block design at Stuyvesant Gardens I. However, the building contextually fits among its surrounding campus, which features masonry NYCHA towers. The use of gray brick and angled wall surfaces possess similarities to the exterior modularity used at Stuyvesant Gardens I.

344 East 28th Street (1966-1971): The apartment tower at 344 East 28th Street is a twenty-six-story standalone tower located in the Kips Bay neighborhood of Manhattan (see **Figure 7**). The building was designed by Turano and constructed from 1966-1971 for NYCHA as low-income housing. The tower features 225 apartment units. This NYCHA development does not have any association with the New York City Model Cities program. The tower is located on a corner block and is held back from the street with mature trees planted along the perimeter of the site. There are few aesthetic similarities between this tower building and the vest-pocket, perimeter block housing at Stuyvesant Gardens I. While the tower is modular in its massing and its height is representative of other skyscrapers in the surrounding neighborhood, the building does not attempt to coexist with the surrounding environment in its exterior materials or design in the way that Stuyvesant Gardens I does. Completed around the same time as Stuyvesant Gardens I, the two public housing developments were clearly designed with different design intentions catered to the needs of the associated neighborhood.

Comparative Analysis: Other NYCHA Model Cities Developments and Perimeter Block Housing

Within Brooklyn, there are approximately ninety-nine other NYCHA developments. Of these, approximately twenty were constructed or established within Brooklyn during the 1970s. Nine of these complexes were constructed as campuses, seven of these are scattered sites, and four are standalone towers. Within Bedford-Stuyvesant, there are sixteen other NYCHA complexes. Of these, eleven were built or established prior to the 1970s, one other during the 1970s, and four after the 1970s. During the 1970s, both NYCHA buildings

⁷⁸ "Turano, Emanuel Nicholas," *AIA Historical Directory of American Architects* (AIA: 1970).

⁷⁹ "Emanuel Nicolas Turano," Prabook, accessed January 19, 2024, https://prabook.com/web/emanuel_nicolas.turano/607028.

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(Stuyvesant Gardens I and Louis Armstrong I) were scattered sites. Both of these complexes are known to be associated with the Model Cities program.

As previously noted, the Model Cities program initially identified five neighborhoods for redevelopment. These areas included Bedford-Stuyvesant, the South Bronx, Tremont in the Bronx, Harlem, and East New York.⁸⁰ The areas can be summarized into three larger areas: Harlem, South Bronx, and Central Brooklyn. Each Model Cities area broke ground at different points, the first of which being those in East New York, followed by Central Brooklyn, and then the Bronx (see Table 1).⁸¹ Stuyvesant Gardens I is not only significant for its relationship with the Model Cities program, but also for its perimeter block housing design, which orients the building façade along the perimeter of the parcel or block to reserve space toward the rear or center of the parcel for landscaped sites, courtyards, or other recreational spaces.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Date of Const.</i>	<i>Architect</i>	<i>Location/Area</i>	<i>NRHP Listed (Y/N)</i>	<i>Single or Multiple Bldgs</i>	<i>Vest Pocket (Y/N)</i>
Fiorentino Plaza	1971	Jerrald L. Karlan	East New York	Y	Multiple	Y
Stuyvesant Gardens I	1972	E.N. Turano	Bedford-Stuyvesant / Central Brooklyn	N	Multiple	Y
Betances I	1973	Castro-Blanco, Piscioneri, and Feder	Mott Haven / South Bronx	N	Multiple	Y
Unity Plaza	1973	Ames Associates	East New York	N	Multiple	Y
Louis Armstrong I	1974	Martyn & Don Weston	Bedford-Stuyvesant / Central Brooklyn	N	Multiple	Y

Table 1: List of NYCHA housing complexes with Model Cities funding

Fiorentino Plaza: Fiorentino Plaza was completed in 1971 and was the first Model Cities project completed in New York City (see **Figure 8**).⁸² The housing complex consists of eight, four-story residential, scattered sites buildings in East New York. The complex was designed by the architect Jerrald L. Karlan and landscape architect Joseph R. Gangemi. Fiorentino Plaza was considered a successful Model Cities development, as its completion happened before the national downfall of the program, which put many other buildings in the portfolio at risk of funding shortages. The vest-pocket, perimeter block housing complex consists of Brutalist-style apartment buildings arranged around interior courtyards. The complex is an intact example of the Model Cities program with 160 multi-family apartment units. The complex does not feature an intact Community Center or Daycare Facility like at Stuyvesant Gardens I, however both complexes feature outdoor playgrounds and amenity spaces for residents located within the center footprint of the parcel. In this way, the site plan is similar to Stuyvesant Gardens I, where the buildings are arranged on five individual parcels and designed in a perimeter block development (see **Figure 9**).

The exterior design of the buildings at Fiorentino Plaza differs slightly from Stuyvesant Gardens I, including its red brick cladding and white concrete banding. Entrances to the apartment buildings are located along the

⁸⁰ "Report: Various Boroughs," NYCHA Archives, accessed December 2023.

⁸¹ Taylor, "Fiorentino Plaza."

⁸² Taylor, "Fiorentino Plaza."

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interior courtyards of the site, while Stuyvesant Gardens I features primary entrances along the street-facing elevations. All fire escapes are recessed into the façade, which is an additional design element that differs from Stuyvesant Gardens I. Fiorentino Plaza was listed as a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places in 2022.

Betances I: Betances I was completed in 1973 in the Mott Haven neighborhood of the South Bronx. The complex contains twelve, four-story buildings and one twenty-story tower organized along a city block (see **Figures 10-12**). Unlike Stuyvesant Gardens I, the complex is located on one rectangular city block rather than five individual parcels. The site plan is similar, with buildings developed in the perimeter block model with facades directly placed along the street while rear, courtyard space is reserved for recreational areas and parking. Betances I was a project within the South Bronx Model Cities portfolio, which experienced greater community backlash and political divisiveness than the Central Brooklyn Model Cities program.⁸³

Building 1 is a twenty-story tower clad in a grooved concrete with brick along the vertical bays, which is similar to the exterior design of Stuyvesant Gardens I. The four-story residential apartment buildings are similar in exterior materials, with recessed entrances along the street-facing elevations. A senior center is located in one of the buildings. Betances I features residential buildings of similar massing and materials to Stuyvesant Gardens I. The larger, twenty-story standalone tower differs in massing to those at Stuyvesant Gardens I which terminate at four stories in height. The surrounding neighborhood largely comprises of low-rise buildings. The twenty-story tower does not coexist with the buildings in the surrounding neighborhood. The low-rise, four-story buildings are a good example of the perimeter block design like those at Stuyvesant Gardens I with parking lots and landscaped areas located within the center of the block. Betances I complex was determined not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places by the NY SHPO in 2018.

Unity Plaza: Unity Plaza consists of two NYCHA complexes: sites 4-27 and sites 17, 24, 25A. Both complexes were completed in 1973 and marked another Model Cities project in the East New York section of Central Brooklyn, although it is unclear which Unity Plaza complex was associated with the Model Cities program. The complex consists of eight, six-story residential scattered sites located on five blocks designed by Ames Associates architects (sites 4-27) and Sidney Goldhammer & Henri A. Le Gendre (sites 17, 24, 25A) (see **Figures 13-14**). The buildings are roughly L, C, or rectilinear in plan, which is similar in design to the buildings at Stuyvesant Gardens I. The complex contains 462 apartment units and features a vest-pocket development and perimeter block design.

Sports courts and outdoor recreational spaces are located behind Buildings 3 and 4, which is keeping with the perimeter block design of the complex. Similar to Stuyvesant Gardens I, the complex has a Community Center for residents. The buildings are clad in brick, with sites 4-27 in a brown brick and sites 17, 24, and 25A in a red brick. Like Stuyvesant Gardens I, the exteriors feature minimal ornamentation and are similar in massing in the low-rise and perimeter block design. The entrances are located along the street-facing elevations, however, they are recessed into the façade (see **Figures 15-16**). The buildings at Stuyvesant Gardens I are more successful in their vest pocket, perimeter block design than the buildings at both Unity Plaza sites. The buildings in the surrounding neighborhood were historically three- and four-story tenement buildings. The introduction of six story, block housing does not wholly retain the character of the surrounding neighborhood. Although modern buildings have replaced historic tenement buildings since the construction of both Unity Plaza complexes, these are not a great representation of vest-pocket housing in comparison to Stuyvesant Gardens I, which is more

⁸³ Martin Tolchin, "Future Looks Bleak for the South Bronx," *New York Times*, January 18, 1973.

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integrated into its low-rise, residential neighborhood. Unity Plaza Sites 4-27 has been “undetermined” for eligibility by the SHPO while Unity Plaza Sites 17, 24, and 25a have not been evaluated to date.

Armstrong I: Armstrong I Houses were completed in 1974 in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of the Central Brooklyn Model Cities program. The complex is the only other known NYCHA-sponsored Model Cities program complex in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood. The complex consists of eleven, four- and six- story residential buildings located on individual parcels like those at Stuyvesant Gardens I. The complex was designed by Martyn & Don Weston Architects with entrances (since replaced) designed by Bennett, Metzner, Sowinski Architects. The eleven buildings have a total of 371 apartment units.

Similar to the design of Stuyvesant Gardens I, the buildings at Armstrong I are of vest-pocket and perimeter block design (see **Figure 17**). The exteriors of the Armstrong I buildings appear to have been recently updated with new brick, concrete and replacement windows (see **Figure 18**). The exteriors feature fire escapes and banded brick bays reminiscent of early twentieth century apartment buildings. The complex has a “social club” for residents in Building 10. The site features rear outdoor and recreation space similar to that at Stuyvesant Gardens I; however, in general, the perimeter block design of Stuyvesant Gardens I is more successful in its use of rear and central outdoor recreational spaces on each parcel. A one-story church is located in Building 11 adjacent to an outdoor courtyard. The buildings at Armstrong I are similar to those at Stuyvesant Gardens I in size, massing, and minimal exterior ornamentation and fit well into the surrounding residential, low-rise neighborhood. Stuyvesant Gardens I has a more subtle design context than that of Armstrong I, however, the two projects are two good examples of vest-pocket, perimeter block design complexes in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Central Brooklyn. The complex has not been evaluated for eligibility to date.

Conclusion

Stuyvesant Gardens I is a public housing complex constructed in 1972 in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York and is significant under Criterion A in the areas of Politics/Government and Social History as an example of a public housing complex in Bedford-Stuyvesant developed by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) in collaboration with the New York City Model Cities program. The complex is also significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a representative example of perimeter block housing applied to a public housing complex designed by architect E.N. Turano. The low-rise housing complex consists of twenty seven buildings, including twenty five residential apartment buildings, one community center, one daycare facility, and internal courtyards.

During the 1950s, the neighborhood experienced housing shortages and increased social and physical neglect with a predominately Black and immigrant population. After continued efforts by local and federal agencies, the Model Cities program was created, and used by local agencies such as NYCHA, to create smaller, community-focused public housing communities in major cities. Although the program was terminated in the early 1970s, the Stuyvesant Gardens I complex continues to serve as a representative example of the New York City Model Cities program, especially for its associated vest-pocket design and context within the neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant. The complex is also significant for its architectural design, with four-story, adjacent clusters of buildings containing multi-bedroom apartment units, daycare center, and community center to accommodate the local community’s needs. Turano’s design of the complex concentrates on the utilization of light and air as integral components of perimeter block housing, where windows are located throughout apartment units and stair towers. Materials are simple yet correspond to the modular, geometric design of the complex. All these elements combined create a subtle design that both blends into the surrounding streetscape and has its own identity.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☒ 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:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.73

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 40.687793

Longitude: -73.934415

2. Latitude: 40.688702

Longitude: -73.931987

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

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale. It comprises Borough of Brooklyn Block 1365, Lots 3 and 41, and Block 1631, Lots 1, 9, and 31.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

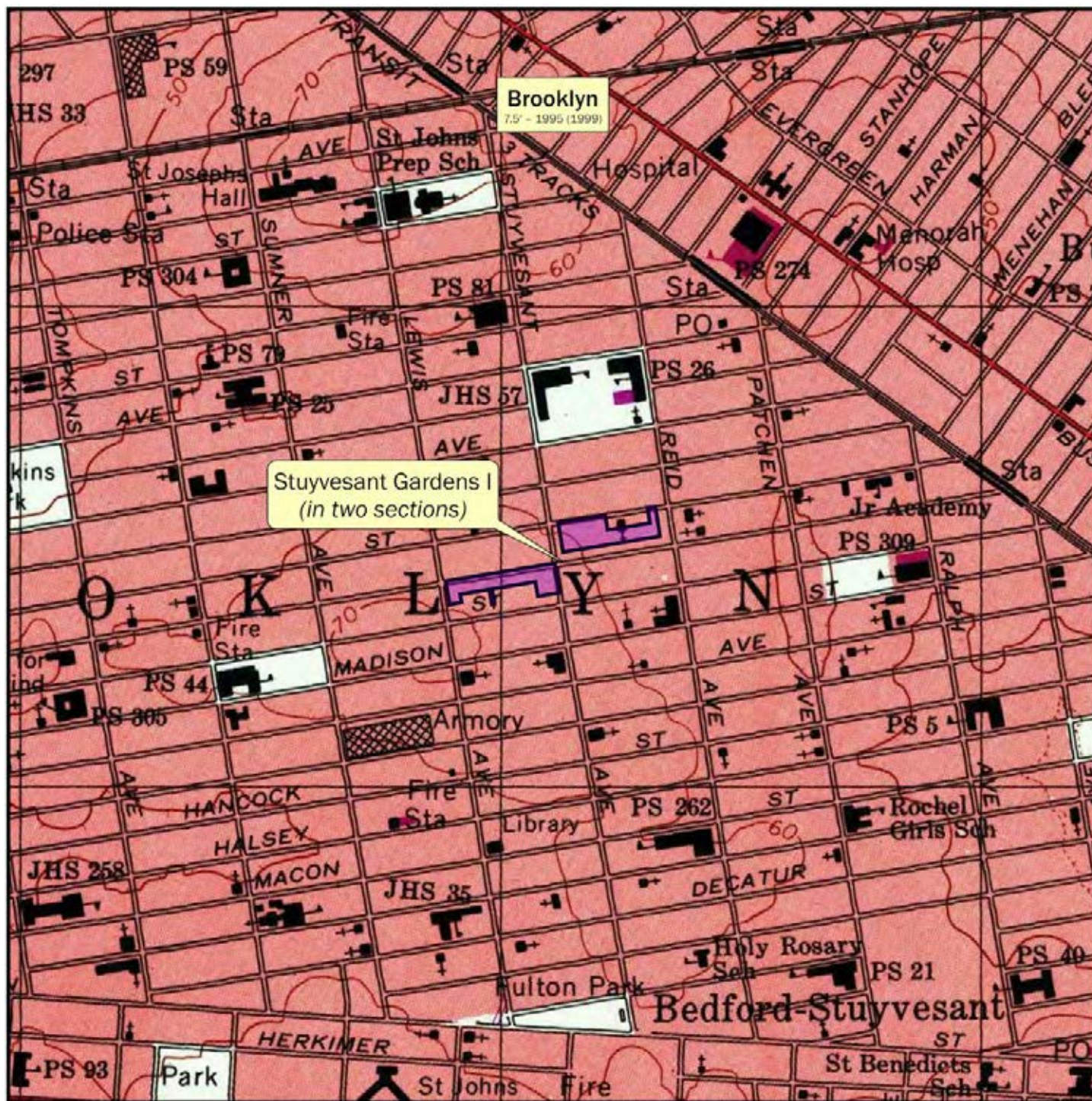
The boundary comprises the historic and current tax parcels associated with the Stuyvesant Gardens I development.

DRAFT Stuyvesant Gardens I

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1:12,000

0 500 1000 ft



Stuyvesant Gardens I



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N

Mapped 01/06/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

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Section A: 2.30 ac

Section B: 2.44 ac



Point	Latitude	Longitude	Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	40.687793	-73.934415	2	40.688702	-73.931987



1:2,400



Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N



Nomination Boundary (4.73 ac)

New York State Orthoimagery Year: 2021



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

Mapped 01/06/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

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Name of Property

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Section A: 2.30 ac

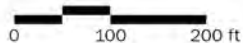
Section B: 2.44 ac



Point	Latitude	Longitude	Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	40.687793	-73.934415	2	40.688702	-73.931987



1:2,400



Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N



Nomination Boundary (4.73 ac)



Tax Parcels

New York City Parcel Year: 2024



**New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation**

Mapped 01/06/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

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Name of Property

Kings County, NY

County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cindy Hamilton/Erin Wiser

organization Heritage Consulting Group

date December 20, 2024

street & number 15 West Highland Avenue

telephone 215-248-1260

city or town Philadelphia

state PA

zip code 19118

e-mail chamilton@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.

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Figures

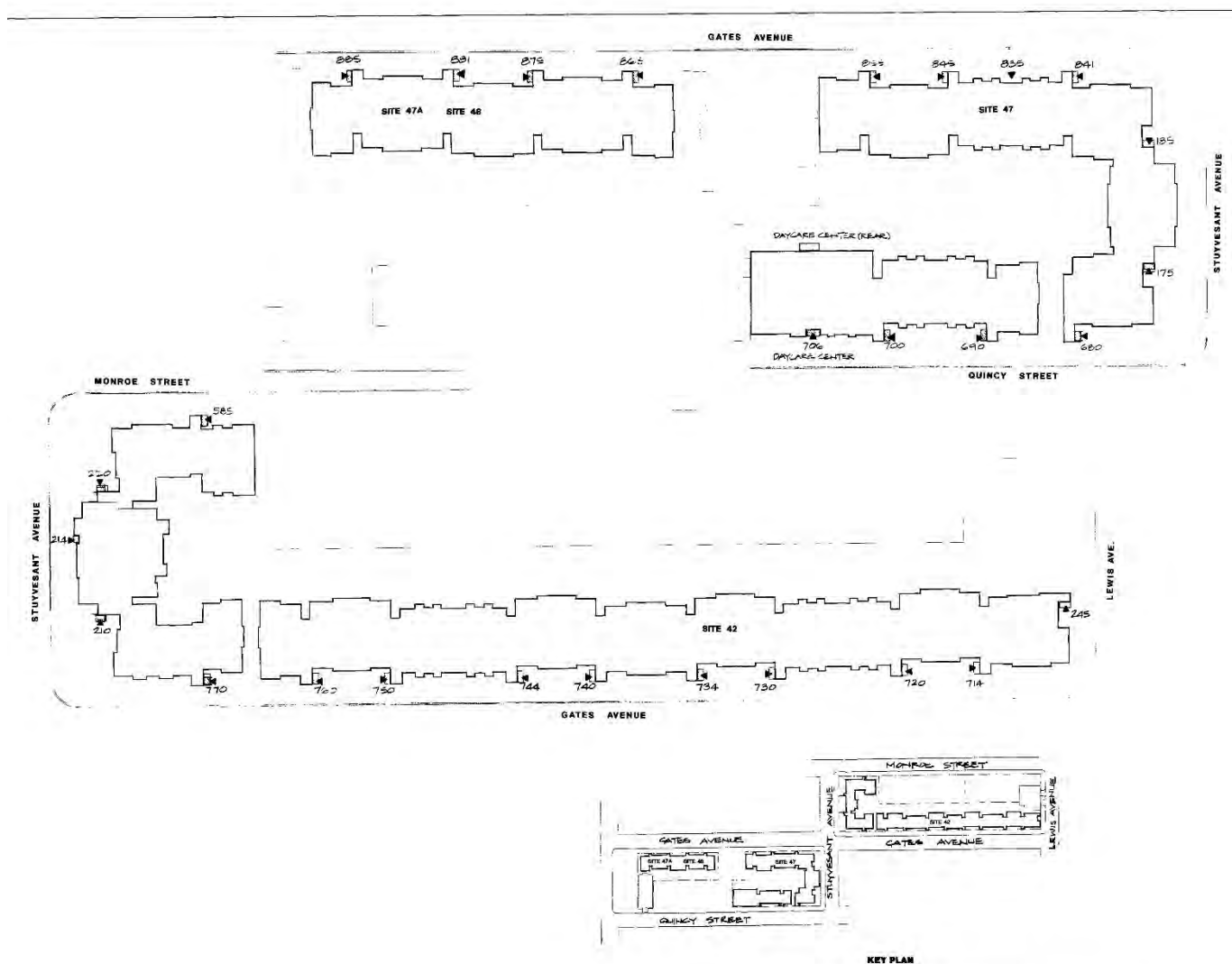


Figure 1 - Original site plan for the complex showing the five “clusters” of twenty five apartment buildings, community center (outlined in green), and daycare center (outlined in gold) oriented towards the streetscape and the locations of the internal courtyards. Each apartment building has a separate street address and entrance and a full party wall between the apartment buildings. (NYCHA Archives).

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These buildings were demolished to construct the complex.

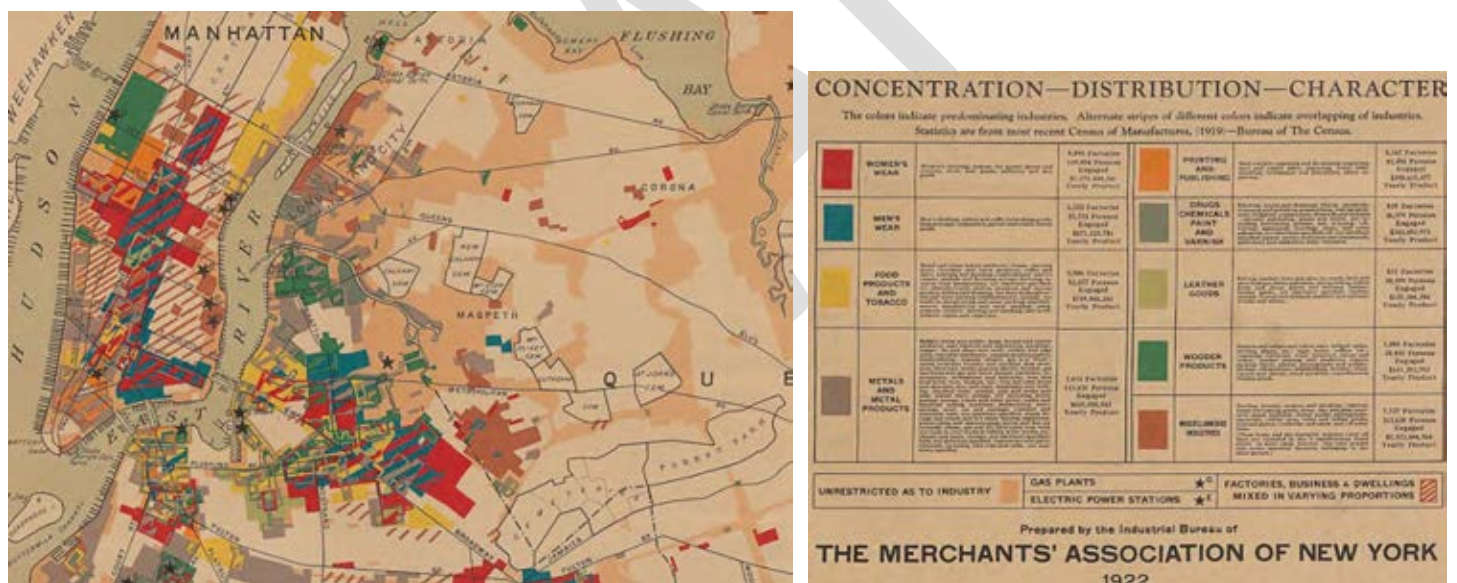


Figure 4: Merchant Association of New York 1922 map showing the concentration of industrial businesses in Brooklyn.

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Figure 5: Central Brooklyn Model Cities Map (New York Public Library)

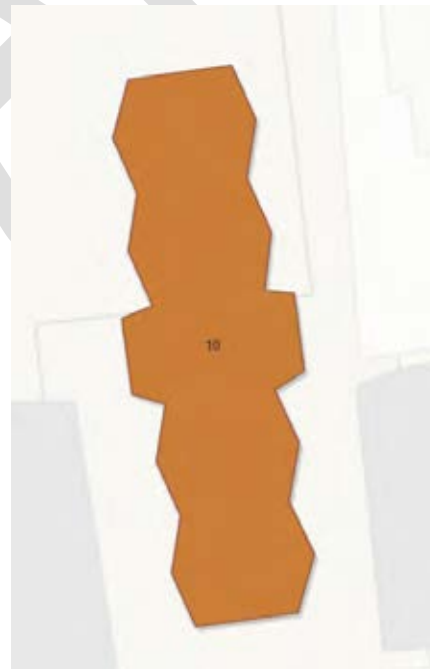


Figure 6: La Guardia Addition designed by Turano and constructed in 1962-1965 as an addition to the La Guardia Houses, located in the Lower East Side of Manhattan (Google Maps/NYCHA ArcGIS)

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Figure 7: 344 East 28th Street designed by Turano and constructed in 1966-1971 as a NYCHA standalone tower, located in the Kips Bay neighborhood of Manhattan (Google Maps/NYCHA ArcGIS)

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Figure 8: Fiorentino Plaza (Google Street View)



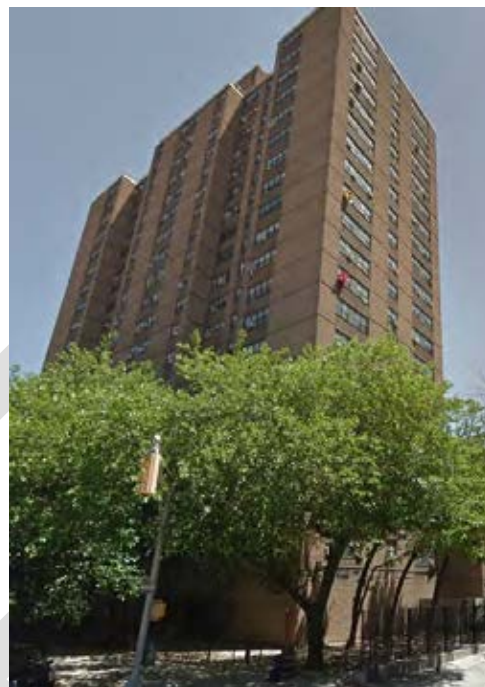
Figure 9: Fiorentino Plaza Site Plan (NYCHA Map GIS)

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Figures 10-11: Betances I (Google Street View)

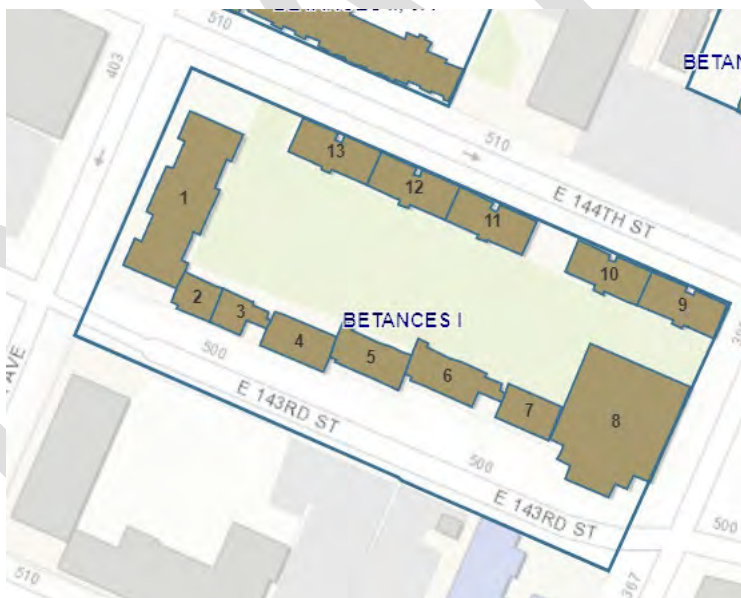


Figure 12: Betances I (NYCHA Map GIS)

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Figures 13-14: Unity Plaza Sites 4-27 (left) and Unity Plaza Sites 17, 24, and 25a (right) (Google Street View)



Figures 15-16: Unity Plaza Sites 4-27 (left) and Unity Plaza Sites 17, 24, and 25a (NYCHA Map GIS)

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Figure 17: Armstrong I Complex in Bedford-Stuyvesant (Google Street View)



Figure 18: Armstrong I Complex (NYCHA Map GIS)

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Figure 19: Site Photo Key Plan

Site

Photos 1-12

Yellow arrow indicates starting point

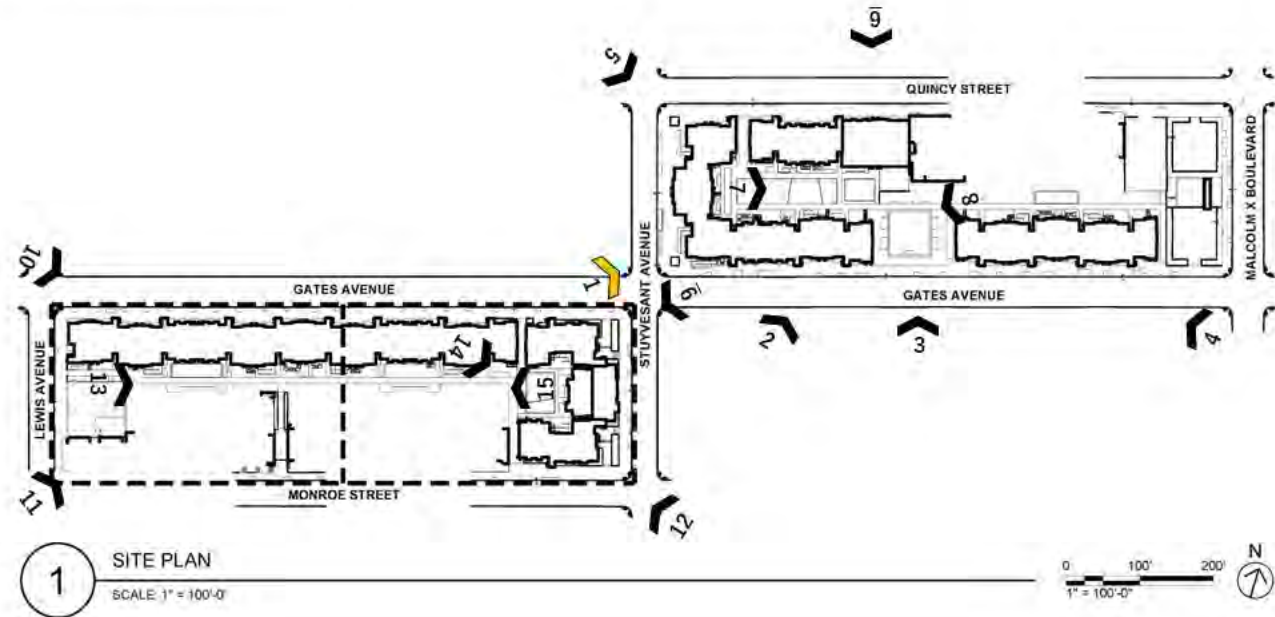


Figure 19: Site Photo Key Plan

Figure 20: Block 1 - 730 Gates Avenue Photo Key Plan, First Floor

Block 1 - 730 Gates Avenue

First Floor

Photos 16-22

Plan is not to scale

Yellow arrow indicates starting point

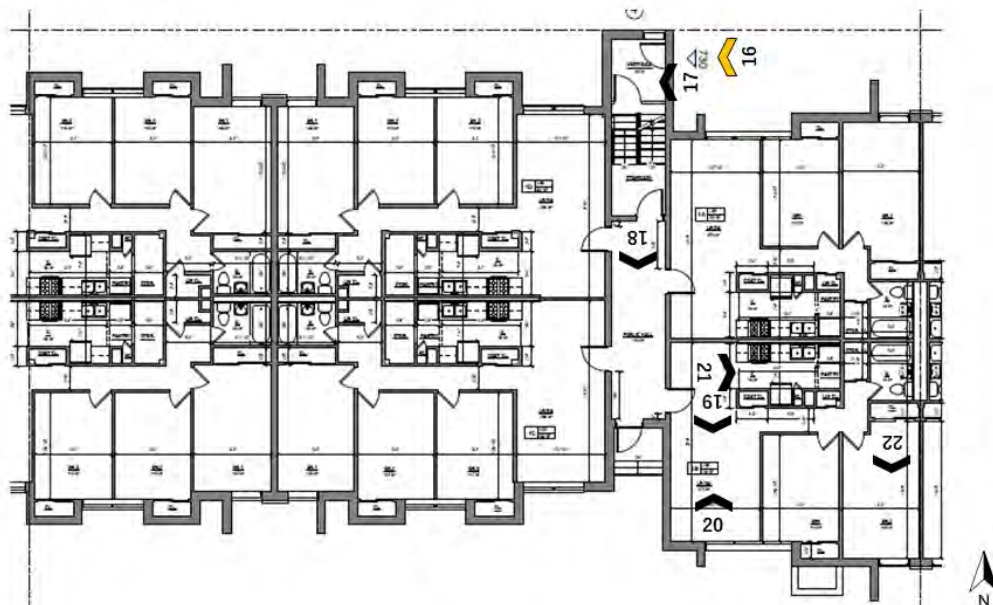


Figure 20: Block 1 - 730 Gates Avenue Photo Key Plan, First Floor

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Name of Property

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Figure 21: Block 2 - 212 Stuyvesant Avenue Photo Key Plan, First Floor

Block 2 - 212 Stuyvesant Avenue

First Floor

Photo 23

Plan is not to scale

Yellow arrow indicates starting point

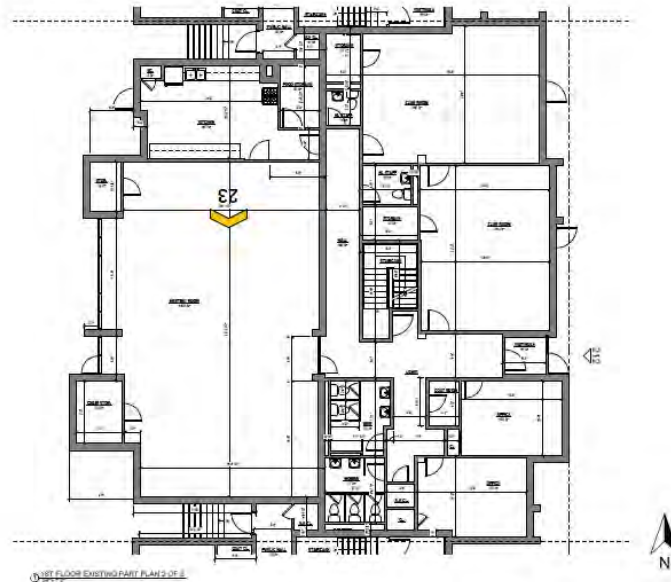


Figure 21: Block 2 - 212 Stuyvesant Avenue Photo Key Plan, First Floor

Figure 22: Block 2 - 212 Stuyvesant Avenue Photo Key Plan, First Floor

Block 2 - 212 Stuyvesant Avenue

Second Floor

Photos 24-25

Plan is not to scale

Yellow arrow indicates starting point

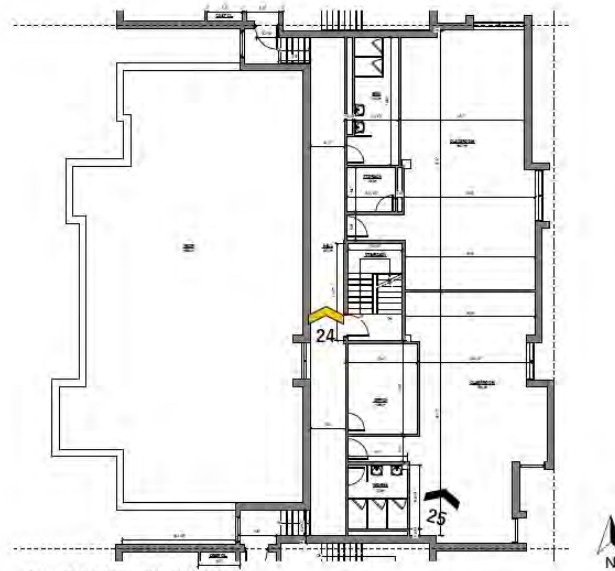


Figure 22: Block 2 - 212 Stuyvesant Avenue Photo Key Plan, Second Floor

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Figure 23: Block 3 - 835 Stuyvesant Avenue Photo Key Plan, First Floor
Block 3 - 835 Stuyvesant Avenue
First Floor
Photo 26
Plan is not to scale
Yellow arrow indicates starting point



Figure 23: Block 3 - 835 Stuyvesant Avenue Photo Key Plan, First Floor

Figure 24: Block 5 - 875 Stuyvesant Avenue Photo Key Plan, First Floor
Block 5 - 875 Stuyvesant Avenue
First Floor
Photos 27-29
Plan is not to scale
Yellow arrow indicates starting point

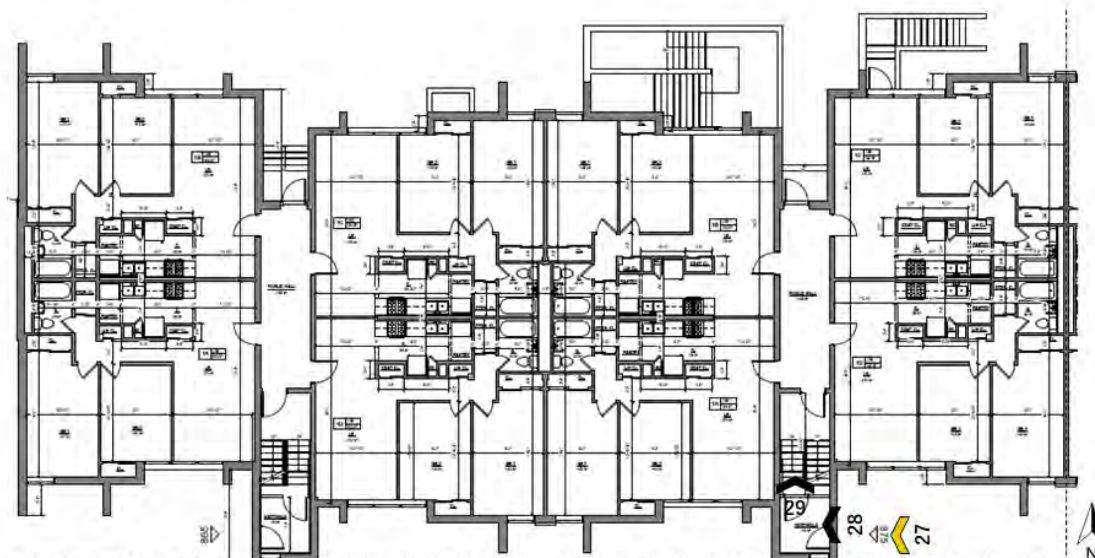


Figure 24: Block 5 - 875 Stuyvesant Avenue Photo Key Plan, First Floor

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Name of Property

Kings County, NY

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Figure 25: Block 5 - 875 Stuyvesant Avenue Photo Key Plan, First Floor
Block 5 - 875 Stuyvesant Avenue
Third Floor, Unit 3D
Photos 30-34
Plan is not to scale
Yellow arrow indicates starting point

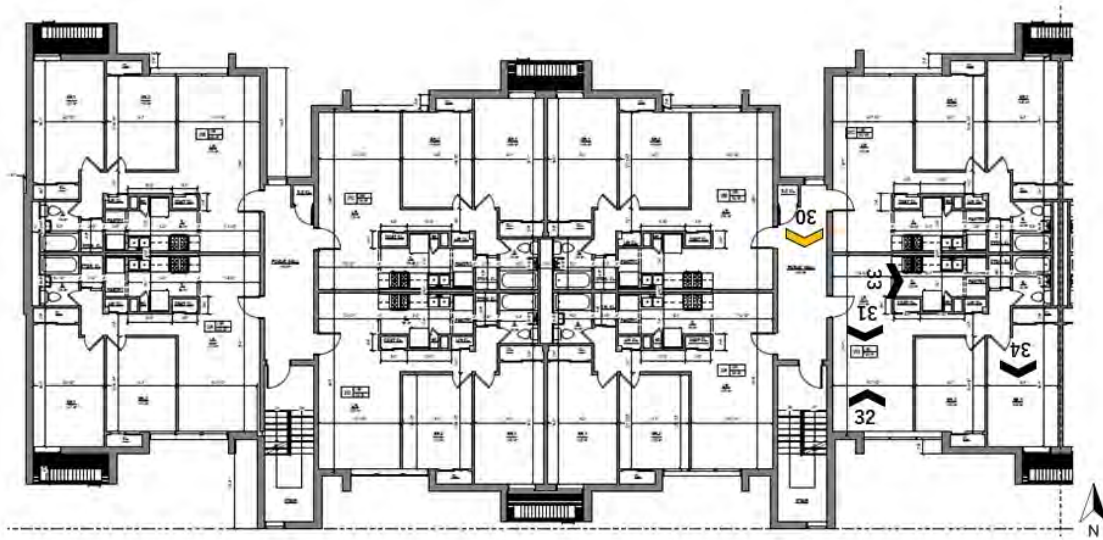


Figure 25: Block 5 - 875 Stuyvesant Avenue Photo Key Plan, Third Floor

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Name of Property

Kings County, NY

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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: Stuyvesant Gardens I
City or Vicinity: Brooklyn
County: Kings State: New York
Photographer: Erin Wiser, Heritage Consulting Group
Date Photographed: March 6, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

0001 Exterior, Block 3, view looking northeast.
0002 Exterior, Block 3, view looking northeast.
0003 Exterior, Site, courtyard between Blocks 3 and 5, view looking north.
0004 Exterior, Block 5, view looking northwest.
0005 Exterior, Blocks 3 and 4, view looking southeast.
0006 Exterior, Block 4, daycare center, view looking south.
0007 Exterior, Site, interior courtyard between Blocks 3 and 4, view looking east.
0008 Exterior, Aerial view of site, courtyard between Blocks 3 and 5, looking southwest.
0009 Exterior, Block 2, view looking southwest.
0010 Exterior, Block 1, view looking southeast.
0011 Exterior, Block 1, parking lot, view looking northeast.
0012 Exterior, Block 2, view looking northwest.
0013 Exterior, Site, interior courtyard behind Block 1, view looking northeast.
0014 Exterior, Aerial view of site, courtyard between Blocks 1 and 2, looking southeast.
0015 Exterior, Site, interior courtyard behind Block 1, view looking west.
0016 Block 1, 730 Gates, Entrance.
0017 Block 1, 730 Gates, Entrance Vestibule.
0018 Block 1, 730 Gates, First Floor, Corridor.
0019 Block 1, 730 Gates, Unit 1B, Living/Dining Room.
0020 Block 1, 730 Gates, Unit 1B, Living/Dining Room.
0021 Block 1, 730 Gates, Unit 1B, Kitchen.
0022 Block 1, 730 Gates, Unit 1B, Bedroom.
0023 Block 2, 212 Stuyvesant, First Floor, Community Meeting Room, Community Center.
0024 Block 2, 212 Stuyvesant, Second Floor, Corridor, Community Center.
0025 Block 2, 212 Stuyvesant, Children's Activity Room, Second Floor, Community Center.
0026 Block 3, 835 Gates, Management Office.
0027 Block 5, 873 Gates, Entrance.
0028 Block 5, 872 Gates, Vestibule.
0029 Block 5, 873 Gates, Stairwell.
0030 Block 5, 873 Gates, Third Floor, Corridor.
0031 Block 5, 873 Gates, Unit 3D, Living/Dining Room.
0032 Block 5, 873 Gates, Unit 3D, Living/Dining Room.
0033 Block 5, 873 Gates, Unit 3D, Kitchen.
0034 Block 5, 873 Gates, Unit 3D, Bedroom.

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Name of Property

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Appendix A

Building Inventory

Block No.	Addresses
<p>1</p> <p>(Block 1635, Lot No. 3, Site 42)</p> <p>Nine (9) Contributing Buildings</p>	<p>245 Lewis Avenue (Building 1)</p> <p>714 Gates Avenue (Building 2)</p> <p>720 Gates Avenue (Building 3)</p> <p>730 Gates Avenue (Building 4)</p> <p>734 Gates Avenue (Building 5)</p> <p>740 Gates Avenue (Building 6)</p> <p>744 Gates Avenue (Building 7)</p> <p>750 Gates Avenue (Building 8)</p> <p>760 Gates Avenue (Building 9)</p>
<p>2</p> <p>(Block 1635, Lot No. 41, Site 42)</p> <p>Five (5) Contributing Buildings</p>	<p>770 Gates Avenue (Building 10)</p> <p>210 Stuyvesant Avenue (Building 11)</p> <p>214 Stuyvesant Avenue (Community Center) (Building 12)</p> <p>220 Stuyvesant Avenue (Building 13)</p> <p>585 Monroe Street (Building 14)</p>
<p>3</p> <p>(Block 1631, Lot No. 1, Site 47)</p> <p>Six (6) Contributing Buildings</p>	<p>680 Quincy Street (Building 15)</p> <p>175 Stuyvesant Avenue (Building 16)</p> <p>185 Stuyvesant Avenue (Building 17)</p> <p>[835 Gates Avenue (Management Office) is part of 185 Stuyvesant]</p> <p>841 Gates Avenue (Building 18)</p> <p>845 Gates Avenue (Building 19)</p> <p>855 Gates Avenue (Building 20)</p>
<p>4</p> <p>(Block 1631, Lot No. 9, Site 47)</p> <p>Three (3) Contributing Buildings</p>	<p>690 Quincy Street (Building 21)</p> <p>700 Quincy Street (Building 22)</p> <p>706 Quincy Street (Daycare Center) (Building 23)</p>
<p>5</p> <p>(Block 1631, Lot No. 31, Site 47a & 48)</p> <p>Four (4) Contributing Buildings</p>	<p>685 Gates Avenue (Building 24)</p> <p>875 Gates Avenue (Building 25)</p> <p>881 Gates Avenue (Building 26)</p> <p>885 Gates Avenue (Building 27)</p>



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0001



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0002



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0003



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0004



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0005



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0006



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0007



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0008



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0009



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0010



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NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0014



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NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0020



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0021



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0022



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0023



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0024



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0025



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NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0027



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0028



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0029



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0030



NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0031



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NY_KingsCounty_StuyvesantGardensI_0034