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MARSHALL SEEKS LANDMARK DESIGNATION IN JAMAICA AND HISTORIC DISTRICT IN RIDGEWOOD

Queens Borough President Helen Marshall has asked that the venerable Jamaica Chamber of Commerce building become a city landmark and that the Landmarks Preservation Commission also approve a proposed Ridgewood South Historic District.

The Georgian-revival-style structure, located at 89-31 161st Street, was designed in the late 1920s by George Conable, an architect who also designed several church and hospital buildings in New York City, including the old Hospital for Contagious Diseases in Jamaica. The Jamaica Chamber, bolstered by commercial activity and mass transit improvements in the area, already had 500 members when plans were announced for a new building in 1928.

The building, which evokes both 18th Century English and American qualities, is already listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In a letter to Landmarks Preservation Commission Chairperson Robert Tierney, Marshall said, "As Jamaica once again is an important commercial hub in our county, let us ensure through a landmark designation, that it survives for future generations to appreciate and enjoy."

Marshall has also asked the commission to approve a new Ridgewood South Historic District. The proposed district includes more than 200, mostly three-story, structures built in 1911-12, and distinguished by their yellow and burnt-orange brick facades and metal cornices.

"Older residences in Queens are threatened everyday by owners who wish to maximize living space at the cost of architectural integrity," said Borough President Marshall. "Let us protect the future of these buildings while honoring our past."

The Landmarks Preservation Commission was scheduled to meet, Tuesday, September 15th.