

June 2, 2022

Maggie O'Neill
Senior Historic Preservation Specialist
Department of Housing, Economic Development and Commerce
Division of City Planning
Jersey City, NJ 07305

Via e-mail

Re: Sherman Place Residential Historic District, Landmark Designation Survey Inventory
Ward D, City of Jersey City, Hudson County, New Jersey

Dear Ms. O'Neill:

Please accept this transmittal letter for the Landmark Designation Survey Inventory for the proposed Sherman Place Residential Historic District.

Hunter Research, Inc. originally prepared this inventory on behalf of the Sherman Place Block Association and submitted an initial draft inventory in March 2021. This revised submittal reflects data that were collected during the Ward D Phase 1 Historic Architectural Survey, completed for the City of Jersey City, Division of Planning in March 2022. The Ward D Phase 1 survey was used to refine and appropriately contextualize the proposed Sherman Place Residential Historic District, providing justification for significance, historical integrity and boundaries.

As a result of the new data, the district boundary was expanded east of Summit Avenue on Manhattan Avenue and north of Sherman Place on Sanford Place and Summit Avenue to more logical and justifiable boundaries based on the significance and integrity of the historic architectural resources. The boundary was reduced at the east end of Sherman Place to remove commercial buildings more closely associated with the Central Avenue commercial district than the Sherman Place residential neighborhood. The attached historic district survey and boundary map represents the updated boundaries.

We also recommend that the district be referred to as the Sherman Place Residential Historic District rather than the Hudson City Historic District as was previously proposed. During the Ward D Phase 1 survey research and historic map analyses were conducted regarding former municipality and neighborhood names. Sherman Place forms the east/west spine of the proposed district and the other streets of Summit, Manhattan, Sanford Place and John F. Kennedy Boulevard form offshoots from Sherman Place. Two of the buildings on Summit Avenue have addresses on Hutton Street and are also included.

We are not in favor of referring to this area as Hudson City because it was a much larger municipality in existence for only for 15 years from 1855 to 1870 before being absorbed into Jersey City. Sherman Place did not exist as a street until *circa* 1860-70, about halfway through Hudson City's independent existence. Furthermore, the Hopkins Atlas map of 1873 shows the Sherman Place neighborhood as only partially subdivided and with fewer than a dozen residences, when it would have well over 100 residences a quarter century later by 1900. We believe calling this Hudson City creates a false historical characterization that this neighborhood was somehow central to Hudson City's development, when in fact it was but one of many neighborhoods, albeit one that had a somewhat more upscale residential architectural character.

It is our professional opinion that Sherman Place between Central Avenue to the east and John F. Kennedy Boulevard to the west is the east/west axis of a historic residential setting that has historic district potential per City ordinance definition Section 345-6. This district includes properties on nearby streets including Hutton Street, John F. Kennedy Boulevard, Manhattan Avenue, Sanford Place and Summit Avenue as shown on the attached map.

The Sherman Place neighborhood is noteworthy within Ward D for its concentration of Queen Anne-style dwellings of *circa* 1890 to 1910, some large and individually significant, although it also has its fair share of Italianate and a few select examples of less common Ward D styles including Second Empire, Gothic Revival, Mediterranean/Spanish Revival, Flemish Renaissance Revival, Colonial Revival, Classical Revival, Craftsman and Greek Revival. The proposed historic district is judged to be eligible under Criterion C for historic architecture.

The period of significance of the Sherman Place Residential Historic District is recommended as *circa* 1860 to 1944 based on original dates of construction and stylistic influences. This includes, per the Ward D Phase 1 Survey methodology, all buildings characterized as falling within the architectural categories described as Mid-19th Century Architectural Types, c. 1830-1870, Late Victorian Architectural Types, c.1870-1914, and Interwar Architectural Types, c.1915-1944. A listing by individual address and tax block/lot is attached.

Summary Tables of Proposed Sherman Place Residential Historic District

Property Status	Total
Contributing Properties	173
Non-Contributing Properties	20

Contributing Building Types	Total
Residential	167
Mixed-Use	4
Religious	2
Garage/Outbuilding	26

Buildings with an Assigned Historic Architectural Style	Total
Queen Anne	111

Italianate	25
Second Empire	5
Gothic Revival/Collegiate Gothic	5
Mediterranean/Spanish Revival	4
Flemish Renaissance Revival	3
Colonial Revival	2
Classical Revival	1
Craftsman	1
Greek Revival	1

The Sherman Place Residential Historic District has a low percentage of non-contributing buildings (33 of 232 buildings, 14%), which is the basis for assessing that it retains historical integrity of setting, location, design, feeling and association. Although most individual buildings exhibit some degree of alteration, particularly diminishment of integrity of wood materials and workmanship, it is the sum of the building assemblage that retains sufficient examples of intact materials and workmanship to convey the district's architectural significance.

Non-contributing buildings are defined as those that met one of two conditions: 1) they were built after 1944 and thus postdate the district's period of significance or 2) they were built prior to 1944 but have been so altered by additions and removals that they no longer retain sufficient original exterior architectural massing, fenestration patterns or stylistic elements to contribute historical character to the district as a whole.

Hunter Research recommends that the City historic preservation staff review the submittal and proceed with the next steps in consideration of establishing the Sherman Place Residential Historic District as an official City designation.

The following work products make up this submission:

- Historic district map
- Summary spreadsheet of contributing/non-contributing properties
- Detailed inventory forms for each of 193 properties (totaling 232 buildings due to some tax parcels having more than one building)
- Digital photographs of each property

The proposed Sherman Place Residential Historic District map shows the recommended boundaries of the proposed district and codes each tax block/lot as either contributing or non-contributing properties. The map corresponds with list of properties on the MS-Excel spreadsheet that summarizes the inventory data.

Hunter Research surveyed the entire district on foot, photographed each property and took notes on the architectural characteristics of all buildings. In total, we prepared 193 inventory forms, organized by street and address number.

Each inventory form consists of two pages. The first page identifies a property's address, tax block/lot, age, style and historic architectural character-defining features. Attached to the first page are a representative exterior photograph, a copy of the city tax map locating the property and a brief statement assessing the property's contributing or non-contributing evaluation.

The second page of the inventory form is a detailed architectural description. It described the historic architectural characteristics of each of a building's elevations, if those elevations are visible from a public street or sidewalk. There is also a description of any additional features associated with a property such as outbuildings, fences or other landscaping, if it was deemed by the surveyors to be of sufficient age. Photographs of secondary elevations or outbuildings are placed on continuation sheets.

A folder containing digital photographs is included with this submission. The photographs are indexed to the inventory forms by "roll and negative number." In some instances, they include interesting details or views that may not have made it onto the inventory forms.

The inventory is intended to document and assess current conditions in the Sherman Place Historic District. It may be used as a baseline for designation and information for future reviews of applications and certificates of appropriateness.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any comments or questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "P. Harshbarger".

Patrick Harshbarger
Vice President
Principal Historian/Architectural Historian

CC: Rachel Craft, Architectural Historian, Hunter Research, Inc.

Attachments:

Hudson City Historic District Map
Hudson City Historic District Inventory List
Hudson City Historic District Inventory Forms
Hudson City Historic District Digital Photographs