

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 Eastchester Houses
 other names/site number Eastchester Gardens
 name of related multiple property listing NA

Location

street & number Generally, Burke Avenue, Bouck Avenue, Adee Avenue, Yates Avenue not for publication
 city or town Bronx vicinity
 state NY code NY county Bronx code 005 zip code 10469

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.)

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

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
10		buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
11	0	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

NA

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic/Multiple Dwelling

Landscape/Park

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic/Multiple Dwelling

Landscape/Park

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

No Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick

roof: Synthetic

other: Metal, Stone

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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

Eastchester Houses is a housing complex located in the Bronx, New York. Eastchester Houses was developed by NYCHA and designed by New York-based architecture firm Harrison and Abramovitz in 1949. The complex is composed of ten contributing residential apartment buildings and one contributing site. A ca. 1999, one-story Community Center addition is attached to northeast elevation Building 10. The complex consists of five, eight-story cruciform-plan buildings and five, seven-story double-cruciform-plan buildings located on a roughly fifteen-acre rectangular site. The building exteriors are clad in brick and feature minimal ornamentation. The building interiors consist of a first-floor lobby, an elevator core, two internal stairwells, residential apartment units at each floor, and a cellar. The overall interior plans have largely been retained. The building interiors feature a combination of historic and replacement finishes. The fifteen-acre site features landscaping, including recreational areas, concrete walking paths, landscaped greenspace, streetlamps, metal fencing, and a playground. Minimal alterations to the site include the replacement of playground equipment and sections of fencing.

Narrative Description

Setting: Eastchester Houses is located in the Laconia neighborhood within the northern section of the Bronx and is bounded by Burke Avenue to the north, Bouck Avenue to the east, Adee Avenue to the south, and Yates Avenue to the west. The setting is defined by grid-patterned streets and low-rise residential and commercial development, consisting primarily of buildings one to three stories in height. Prior to construction of Eastchester Houses, the area was largely open, with scattered development of single-family residences and larger, vacant areas of greenspace. Redevelopment of certain buildings in the surrounding area has occurred, largely with new single- and multi-family residential buildings.

Site: The complex is roughly fifteen acres and extends over a single superblock. The ten apartment towers are generally arranged around the perimeter of the site, with the buildings generally offset from one another. This creates a central green space between the buildings (Photos 1-9). Building 1 is located at the northwestern corner of the site at the southeast point of the Burke Avenue and Yates Avenue intersection. The buildings were placed clockwise around the rectangular site, with Building 10 located in the southwest corner of the site at the northeast point of the Adee Avenue and Yates Avenue intersection.

A New York City Parks Department playground is located on site and was part of the original development. The portion of the lot containing the playground was ceded to the Parks Department by NYCHA for the construction of the playground. While designed by a separate entity (the New York City Parks Department), the on-site playground was historically part of the parcel and is used by residents of Eastchester Houses and is included within the proposed boundaries as it is part of the historic site.

The site is characterized by its planned, landscaped character, consisting of various recreational areas with playgrounds and sports courts, curved concrete walkways, landscaped greenspace, plantings, and mature trees. The curved pedestrian walkways meander through the site and provide access to each individual building (Photos 6, 8, 9). The rectangular site is contained by a metal fence. Concrete sidewalks within the public right-

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of-way provide access around the perimeter of the site. Updates to the site since its construction in 1949, including the removal of the wading pool and certain playground equipment, were likely as a result of safety concerns or disuse. While specific materials have been updated, the overall site layout and pedestrian paths remain in their original location.

Residential Building Exteriors

The residential buildings at the Eastchester Houses complex are relatively uniform in their exterior character, including massing, materials, and replacement finishes. The buildings feature brick cladding with minimal ornamentation and concrete foundations (Photo 1-5). The steel-frame buildings feature regular fenestration, with replacement windows and simple slate sills. The original, paired casement and hopper windows were replaced in 1982 with paired one-over-one metal windows. Most windows feature child safety guards and external AC units. The building entrances are located at the first floor in the recessed channels of the cruciform and double-cruciform-plans of the building (Photo 10). The entrances are recessed into the facades and feature single-leaf metal doors in a replacement metal storefront system with glazed vision panels. All storefront systems have security call boxes. Above the primary entrances to the buildings are signs affixed to the brick with the building address. The rooftops are all flat with brick-clad penthouses located in the center of each cruciform, set back from the roofline. The rooftops are clad in a liquid applied modified bitumen membrane. Metal balustrades border the perimeter of each rooftop.

There are two types of residential buildings within the district: single- and double-cruciform plan buildings. The five, single cruciform plan buildings are eight stories in height and concentrated to the east side of the district. The five, double-cruciform plan buildings are seven stories in height and generally concentrated to the west side of the district. For additional information and descriptions of each building interior and exterior within Eastchester Houses, please see the Building Inventory at the end of this section.

All buildings feature a first-floor lobby, elevator core, two internal stairwells, residential apartment units at each floor, and a cellar. The single-cruciform plans feature sixty-four apartment units. All units have a kitchen, bathroom, living room, and bedroom(s). Of the sixty-four units per building, one unit is a one bedroom, thirty-nine units are two-bedroom, and twenty-four units are three-bedroom.

The double-cruciform plans feature 112 apartment units. All units have a kitchen, bathroom, living room, and bedroom(s). Of these 112 units, fourteen units are one bedroom, forty-four units are two-bedroom, and fifty-four units are three-bedroom. The double-cruciform plans are not interconnected at the upper floor interiors and must be individually accessed via the main ground floor entrance for each address.

Building 1 contains the NYCHA management office at the first floor and Building 4 has a senior center at the first floor. These buildings contain fewer residential units to accommodate these additional facilities. Building 10 has a ca. 1999 Community Center addition located along the northeast perimeter of the first floor. The Community Center was constructed ca. 1999 along the northeast perimeter as an addition to Building 10. The addition is clad in brick with painted concrete along the roofline. It is connected to Building 10 at the basement level but not at the ground floor, from which it can only be accessed from the exterior. The arched roofline is clad in metal. The windows are a combination of multi-light glass block units with a fixed curtainwall located above the brick exterior walls at the northeast elevation. The entrance to the Community Center is located along the addition's northwest elevation. The entrance features double-leaf metal and glazed doors with sidelights and transom.

The interior of the Community Center features a double-height gym, double-loaded corridor, and multi-purpose rooms, including offices, meeting rooms, and storage spaces. The finishes include tile floors, painted CMU

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walls, and gypsum board ceilings with exposed structure. Within the gym, the floors are rubber, and the ceilings are exposed to the metal roofing.

Residential Building Interiors

The existing conditions of the interiors of all ten buildings are generally consistent throughout the complex. All interiors feature a first-floor lobby, an elevator, two internal stairwells, residential apartment units, and a cellar. The interior finishes are generally consistent throughout the complex.

The first-floor lobbies are located inside of the primary entrance of each building (Photos 11-12, 22-24). The finishes within the lobbies include terrazzo floors, painted plaster walls and ceilings, and simple trim. Metal mailboxes are located along the interior wall directly adjacent to the primary entrance. Within each lobby, there are four residential apartment units, accessible via two small sets of stairs located across the space from one another. An elevator lobby is located toward the rear perimeter of the lobby, with replacement elevator cabs and doors. To the rear of the first floor, there is a corridor accessible via a small set of stairs. The rear corridors feature four additional apartment units, accessible via painted metal doors. Finishes are generally similar with the addition of vinyl composition tile (VCT) floors. Access to one of the two stairwells is provided in the rear corridor space. The stairs are utilitarian in finishes, including painted concrete masonry unit (CMU) walls and concrete stairs with metal treads and risers with simple painted metal railings (Photos 13, 16).

The upper floors feature similar finishes to those on the first floor (Photos 15, 17). These include painted plaster walls and ceilings with simple trim and replacement VCT floors. The apartment units are located in each cruciform "leg" and are accessible via painted single-leaf metal doors. The apartment units are a combination of one-, two-, and three-bedroom plans and were designed with minimal ornamentation. Each apartment has a kitchen, living room, bathroom, and bedroom(s). The finishes are generally consistent throughout, including painted plaster walls and ceilings, VCT and tile floors, and hollow wood single-leaf doors with painted trim (Photos 19-21, 26-29). The cellars in each building feature utility and mechanical spaces.

Landscape – Contributing Site

The curvilinear walkways provide direct access to each building entrance and access throughout the site. Each entrance location features a rectangular brick court, defined as a transitional space. Metal fencing is located throughout the site and along the courtyards of the first-floor entrances, creating a separation between planting beds and hardscaping. Metal benches are located throughout the site along pathways and in front of building entrances. Additional site features consist of replacement playground equipment with asphalt surfaces and recreational sports courts including basketball and tennis courts. While designed by New York City Parks, the on-site playground was historically part of the parcel and is used by residents of Eastchester Houses.

Integrity

Eastchester Houses has continuously served the local community as affordable housing since construction in 1953 and retains a high degree of integrity in terms of the overall design of the complex, the individual buildings, and the site and landscape. The overall setting and location have been retained, with the surrounding neighborhood having undergone minimal redevelopment since the mid-century. Updates to the site have been minimal, with the overall landscape design left intact. Although interior and exterior alterations to the buildings have occurred over time, these updates generally related to the degradation of materials and upgrades to the complex's communal spaces. These alterations include the conversion of the Children's Center in Building 4 to a Senior Center in the 1960s, with finishes and demising walls receiving minor updates. Additional interior replacements include updates to corridor and apartment unit floors and doors, elevator cab replacement, and window replacements in 1982. A Community Center was added onto the northeast perimeter of Building 10 in

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c. 1999. In 2010, a portion of underground drainage at Building 1 required replacement piping, resulting in the replacement of CMU walls and concrete floor slab within the cellar Tank Room. Despite these changes, the buildings retain their massing, forms, and overall design. The large majority of workmanship and materials have been retained, as the buildings continue to communicate their association as a 1949 housing complex.

Specific to individual buildings within the district:

- **Building No. 1 - 1134 / 1140 Burke Avenue, 1 Contributing Building**
 - Double-cruciform plan, seven-story brick building featuring two first floor entrances along an inner brick court with updated metal fencing
 - Exterior alterations: window and entrance replacement.
 - Interior alterations: corridor and unit finishes have been updated; replacement elevator cab; overall floorplan remains intact
- **Building No. 2 – 1160 / 1166 Burke Avenue, 1 Contributing Building**
 - Double-cruciform plan, seven-story brick building featuring two first floor entrances along an inner brick court with updated metal fencing
 - Exterior alterations: window and entrance replacement.
 - Interior alterations: corridor and unit finishes have been updated; replacement elevator cab; overall floorplan remains intact
- **Building No. 3 – 1210 / 1216 Burke Avenue, 1 Contributing Building**
 - Double-cruciform plan, seven-story brick building featuring two first floor entrances along an inner brick court with updated metal fencing
 - Exterior alterations: window and entrance replacement.
 - Interior alterations: corridor and unit finishes have been updated; replacement elevator cab; overall floorplan remains intact
- **Building No. 4 – 1236 /1240 Burke Avenue, 1 Contributing Building**
 - Double-cruciform plan, seven-story brick building featuring two first floor entrances along an inner brick court with updated metal fencing
 - Exterior alterations: window and entrance replacement.
 - Interior alterations: corridor and unit finishes have been updated; replacement elevator cab; reconfiguration of the Senior Center and updated finishes; overall residential floorplan remains intact
- **Building No. 5 – 1260 Burke Avenue, 1 Contributing Building**
 - Single-cruciform plan, eight-story brick building featuring one first floor entrance along an inner brick court with updated metal fencing
 - Exterior alterations: window and entrance replacement.
 - Interior alterations: corridor and unit finishes have been updated; replacement elevator cab; overall residential floorplan remains intact
- **Building No. 6 – 3055 Bouck Avenue, 1 Contributing Building**
 - Single-cruciform plan, eight-story brick building featuring one first floor entrance along an inner brick court with updated metal fencing
 - Exterior alterations: window and entrance replacement.
 - Interior alterations: corridor and unit finishes have been updated; replacement elevator cab; overall residential floorplan remains intact
- **Building No. 7 – 1255 Adee Avenue, 1 Contributing Building**
 - Single-cruciform plan, eight-story brick building featuring one first floor entrance along an inner brick court with updated metal fencing

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- Exterior alterations: window and entrance replacement.
- Interior alterations: corridor and unit finishes have been updated; replacement elevator cab; overall residential floorplan remains intact
- **Building No. 8 – 1245 Adee Avenue, 1 Contributing Building**
 - Single-cruciform plan, eight-story brick building featuring one first floor entrance along an inner brick court with updated metal fencing
 - Exterior alterations: window and entrance replacement.
 - Interior alterations: corridor and unit finishes have been updated; replacement elevator cab; overall residential floorplan remains intact
- **Building No. 9 – 1219 Adee Avenue, 1 Contributing Building**
 - Single-cruciform plan, eight-story brick building featuring one first floor entrance along an inner brick court with updated metal fencing
 - Exterior alterations: window and entrance replacement.
 - Interior alterations: corridor and unit finishes have been updated; replacement elevator cab; overall residential floorplan remains intact
- **Building No. 10 – 3010 / 3020 Yates Avenue, 1 Contributing Building**
 - Double-cruciform plan, seven-story brick building featuring two first floor entrances along an inner brick court with updated metal fencing
 - Exterior alterations: window and entrance replacement; addition of a Community Center along the northeast elevation at the first floor; internal access from the basement
 - Interior alterations: corridor and unit finishes have been updated; replacement elevator cab; overall residential floorplan remains intact

Landscape:

- **Overall Landscape, 1 Contributing Site**
 - Curved pedestrian walkways set within greenspace. Many paths have received updated finishes.
 - Recreation area with updated playground equipment
 - Mature trees and planting are located throughout the site

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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

Period of Significance

1949-1950

Significant Dates

1949-1950

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Harrison and Abramovitz (Architects)

Gilmore Clarke, Michael Rapuano, and Leslie G.

Holleran (Landscape Architects)

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for Eastchester Houses is 1949-1950, the dates of construction.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

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

Eastchester Houses is significant under Criteria A in the area of POLITICS/GOVERNMENT as an intact, representative example of a mid-century public housing complex constructed by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) in the outer borough areas of New York City that reflects ideas about architecture and design in the post-World War II era. Located at 1130 Burke Avenue in the Bronx and constructed between 1949 and 1950, this is one of a group of public housing complexes built by NYCHA to combat the city's housing emergency, which was precipitated by thousands of veterans returning from war, most eager to marry and start families. While many vets were provided with government assistance and encouraged to move to the rapidly developing suburbs of Westchester and Long Island, others, particularly Blacks, immigrants, and ethnic minorities, were denied this option and relied on the city for housing opportunities. With federal housing funds were temporally unavailable due to the war effort, NYCHA developed a specialized program that combined city funds with limited subsidies to residents to construct and support at least twenty new complexes between 1946 and 1953. Planned in three phases, City I was initiated prior to the end of the war and City II and City III in its immediate aftermath. Eastchester Houses is one of five complexes built under the City II program, which was funded by temporary loans and the sale of bonds. City II's five complexes were distributed one per borough, with Eastchester serving the Bronx. They were intended for veterans with incomes slightly exceeding the low-income standard. Most were developed on sites that were either open or minimally developed and consisted of mid-rise buildings, clad in red brick, with cruciform plans. Each featured simple forms, planar surfaces, and minimal ornamentation, and most were designed within a landscaped parcel. Economy dictated that the buildings were constructed with low cost, sometimes inferior materials, and lacked finishing touches such as closet doors, showers, and wood floors. Interestingly, documentation reveals that NYCHA, after careful debate about appropriateness, reused designs from one complex to the next. As such, Eastchester Houses boasts a design by noted modern architects Harrison and Abramowitz that had been commissioned for Astoria Houses in Queens [1951], a state-funded project that was not a part of the limited subsidy program. Despite its high profile designers, Eastchester Houses was, like most of the others, designed as a mid-rise complex, with ten cruciform shaped brick buildings set within a fifteen-acre landscaped site. As the site was to house veterans and their families, it featured several play areas, a large playground established and designed by the New York City Parks Department, and a children's health center. The complex remains in use as public housing and retains a high degree of integrity as the buildings retain their original configuration, the floorplans remain largely intact, and the overall landscape and site design remain largely in their original form. The complex also includes a non-historic Community Center, added to Building 10 ca. 1995-1999, featuring a double-height gym, double-loaded corridor, and multi-purpose rooms including offices, meeting rooms, and storage spaces.

The complex is also significant under Criterion A in the area of SOCIAL HISTORY as it illustrates patterns in government-assisted housing programs that reflect attitudes towards race and class held by the majority (white) cultural elite that affected how other citizens live. In the period after World War II, when New York City was in the midst of a major housing crisis, government agencies at the federal, state and local levels stepped up to assist. While white middle-class citizens were encouraged to purchase single-family houses in outlying suburbs along newly paved roads, those whose incomes placed them right around the poverty line were either unable to buy homes or excluded from government programs set up to assist them based on race. With limited options for decent-sized rental apartments, many turned to public housing. Of this group, white veterans and their families were given priority by the city and NYCHA and were steered toward outer borough complexes in places like the Bronx, where there was more open/available land and public housing complexes with plentiful greenspace and amenities were possible, while minority families and returning veterans of other backgrounds were restricted to projects built in dense urban neighborhoods, high-rise tower developments with smaller sites and

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more limited amenities. Eastchester Houses, for example, was placed on a fifteen-acre site in the northern Bronx, almost to Westchester, and was developed with a large portion of the site reserved as landscaped grounds and playgrounds. Like many of the City-II projects, it was also restricted to white veterans and their families, who were not considered by NYCHA to be true “low-income” or “welfare” clients, and were given preference by the agency and the city during the post-war housing crisis. NYCHA took pains to perpetuate this discriminatory restriction in the overall population of these developments during the post-war years, pushing minority families into high-rise developments in the denser neighborhoods of Manhattan. During the 1950s, the majority of the Eastchester Houses population remained white families with young children, and NYCHA was very selective with tenants, ensuring that they had incomes that were above the normal requirements and rejecting “non-traditional” clients such as single parent households or unwed mothers. One source notes that “As of March 1957, African-Americans and Puerto Ricans were occupying only 22 percent of the 23,229 “no-cash subsidy” apartments, compared to nearly two-thirds of other federal, state and city-funded public housing. Thirty-five years later, when NYCHA settled a discrimination lawsuit charging that white tenants had been “steered” into certain developments, thirteen of the thirty-one developments slated to receive more minorities were originally built under the “no-cash subsidy” program.”¹ Yet, although these no-subsidy projects acquired a reputation as better and more exclusive housing for white people, they were still intended for a relatively poor population, and, thus, NYCHA compromised on their designs by using repetitious forms and inferior materials, especially on the interior, where they omitted basic niceties such as wood floors, showers and closet doors. Housing projects such as Eastchester Houses represent commendable government attempts to aid social welfare but also reveal underlying issues about equality and freedom of choice that tainted public housing.

Narrative Statement of Significance

New York City and Post-War Public Housing

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. During the war, a nationwide freeze on rents meant that landlords “subdivided apartments in already-crowded urban areas and then charged more.”² Postwar New York City experienced an economic and industrial boom, contrasting to the Depression-Era state it was in prior to the war. The city was experiencing a “general municipal building drive of 680 million” that included the construction of new schools, hospitals, police stations, and the expansion of other infrastructure, such as airports, sewers, etc., and this general push was tied into the creation of city-funded public housing. One source in 1945 found that “of 2,255,850 dwellings in New York City, only 2,000 vacancies could be found.”³ Another contemporary newspaper account noted that existing housing conditions were inadequate for larger families in New York City, with many families, sometimes with seven or more people, living in one-room apartments, some even sharing bathroom facilities with other tenants in cramped tenement buildings.⁴

For the short term, the city was urged to add temporary housing for the discharged servicemen. The federal government provided housing in the form of Quonset huts and other temporary structures at specific locations across the city, for which NYCHA was tasked with overseeing this housing.⁵ These temporary sites housed

¹ John T. Metzger, “Rebuilding Harlem: Public housing and Urban Renewal, 1920–1960,” *Planning Perspectives*, 9:3, 279

² Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law* (Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2017), 174

³ Nicholas Dagen Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 112

⁴ “Wanted: Homes of Their Own,” *Daily News*, June 21, 1949; “Plans Ready,” *Daily News*.

⁵ Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*, 113.

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8,000 individuals by one estimate in 1947, and the overall temporary program lasted until 1953, when the final residents moved into permanent housing.⁶

Exacerbating the housing problem was a pause in federal funding for low-income public housing during the war while resources were allocated to military housing.⁷ To make up for a lack of federal funding through the Public Housing Authority, a precursor to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, NYCHA turned to city and state programs that were available and provided increased funding for public housing in the 1940s.⁸ According to Nicholas Dagen Bloom, the city funding program was approved under the auspices of the state housing program and “arose from LaGuardia’s general frustration with the pace and scale of the federal public housing program.”⁹ From 1943, the last year NYCHA used federal funding, until the passage of the United States Housing Act (USHA) of 1949, NYCHA completed eleven complexes utilizing state and city funding only. But these complexes were not enough to solve the shortfall of needed housing units.

This economic reprieve within New York, combined with a need for veterans’ housing, led to the creation of the no-cash subsidy program by NYCHA and the city of New York. In 1946, NYCHA prepared a detailed plan for the mayor of New York, William O’Dwyer, to construct new apartment buildings without the use of a cash subsidy.¹⁰ O’Dwyer worked with the city construction coordinator, Robert Moses, and the chair of the New York City Housing Authority in 1946, Edmond B. Butler, to develop and refine the local program to combat the lack of federal funding for veteran housing. As more and more veterans were struggling to find decent housing, O’Dwyer spoke on the housing shortage issue at the United States Conference of Mayors in 1947, urging other politicians to put pressure on Congress to provide funding for veterans’ housing to municipalities throughout the country.¹¹ It is important to note that the city’s focus on veterans was grounded in a desire to assist white veterans and their families, rather than minorities. In addition, the emphasis was on the population that was at or just above the poverty line, rather than those beneath it.

By 1948, it was estimated that 150,000 to 265,000 additional units of housing in the city were required to make up the shortfall and that the more than twenty NYCHA developments already in the works would not meet the need. High construction costs at the time meant that the limited housing under construction was priced beyond the means of those in the low-income and middle-income brackets, which included many returning veterans and their families. Thomas Farrell, chair of the New York City Housing Authority in 1948, estimated that the new homes and apartments under construction at the time were too costly for as many as 90 percent of veterans.¹² When the US Housing Act of 1949 was passed and additional federal funding was available, New York’s cap of \$30 million within that program meant that with federal funding alone, the city was still unlikely to put a dent in the rising demand for decent low-income housing.¹³

As such, O’Dwyer continued with the development of his local program. The first iteration of his program, called the City I program, was city subsidized public housing wherein the funding was derived from an occupancy tax on all city renters. This program resulted in only five small developments in New York City.¹⁴

⁶ Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*, 113.

⁷ Paul R. Lusignan, Judith Robinson, Lauren Bobeczko, Jeffrey Shrimpton. *Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form* (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service), 53.

⁹ Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*, 41.

¹⁰ Jack Raymond, “City Construction of Housing by Sale of Bonds Proposed,” *New York Times*, September 9, 1946.

¹¹ Marie Sarro, “William O’Dwyer – An Irish Mayor for All New Yorkers.” *New York Irish History Roundtable*, 16, no. 5 (2002): 35.

¹² “Housing Outlook Grim for Low Income Group,” *New York Times*, Aug. 8, 1948.

¹³ Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*, 41.

¹⁴ Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*, 41.

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However, this City I program pushed the idea that states and cities should assist in providing public housing, rather than wait for federal aid.¹⁵ It was followed soon after by the City II and City III programs, both of which were launched after World War II and resulted in the development of twenty public housing sites by 1953.¹⁶ The City II program, or the limited subsidy program, was specifically designed for veterans and their families who slightly exceeded the threshold for low-income, not those members of the city population that were below the poverty-level or minority families that could not find dependable housing. The City II program was not heavily subsidized and as such the rent collected from tenants was needed to cover the cost of operations, which meant that the housing authority preferred tenants who could be relied on to pay their rents. For this reason, they excluded those in the more needy income brackets in New York City. As Rothstein puts it, “Public housing’s original purpose was to give shelter...to those who afford decent housing but couldn’t find it because none was available.”¹⁷

Throughout construction, NYCHA would issue temporary loan notes to supplement funding for the four housing projects. The “no-cash subsidy” title given to these city programs derived from the fact that the collected rents were designed to cover all costs, including debt service on NYCHA bonds that were sold to finance the project.¹⁸ The NYCHA bonds were printed and sold to fund specific projects and were popular with investors, both public and private. The four initial projects included Eastchester Houses in the Bronx, Sheepshead Bay Houses in Brooklyn, Woodside Houses in Queens, and South Beach Houses in Staten Island. A fifth project was added in Manhattan, Colonial Park Houses in Harlem, which was later renamed Rangel Houses. Woodside Houses was completed first on December 30, 1949; South Beach Houses was completed on March 20, 1950; Eastchester Houses was completed on June 1, 1950; Sheepshead Bay Houses was completed on August 8, 1950; and Rangel Houses was completed September 30, 1951.

By the end of this developmental push, over 4,600 units were available across these five city-aided developments, with an estimate of 17,879 individuals living in them.¹⁹ In general, the City II projects covered only between 15 and 18 percent of their sites, featured lower population densities and were characterized by buildings between six and eight stories tall.²⁰ According to one source, “NYCHA placed many of these city-backed developments on vacant land in the outer boroughs and they were known for a long time as higher-income, primarily white projects.”²¹ At Eastchester Houses, for example, white residents remained in the majority until the 1970s and 1980s, when the larger population of the Bronx began to shift. And in comparing the overall layouts of the City II projects (see comparative analysis below for further details), it is important to note that the outer borough sites allowed for greater landscaping and green space at the interior of the developments, providing open spaces and play areas for the families given preference under the program. The one development constructed in Manhattan, Colonial Park (later Rangel) Houses, features high-rise buildings and a much more limited site, which is in keeping with the NYCHA designs preferred for denser urban areas. It was no coincidence that this project was located in East Harlem, with its largely minority population..

In selecting tenants, NYCHA gave initial preference to any veteran and his or her family, as per the intent of the City II program; but the agency also maintained a strict list of twenty-one disqualifying factors for prospective

¹⁵ Joseph Martin, “Housing Facts: Too Few Built for Too Much,” *Daily News*, May 4, 1948.

¹⁶ Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*, 41.

¹⁷ Rothstein, *The Color of Law*, 17.

¹⁸ “First Tenants to Take Occupancy Today in Bay View Houses,” *Daily News*, October 10, 1955

¹⁹ NYCHA Project Statistics, September 1951, accessed February 27, 2024 <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/nycha/downloads/pdf/pdbsept1951.pdf>

²⁰ Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*, 131.

²¹ Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*, 114.

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tenants to ensure that “undesirables” were kept out of these complexes.²² These factors included items such as a history of irregular employment, a single-parent headed household, or even a child born out of wedlock. In addition, “the housing authority sent agents to inspect the condition in which they kept their previous homes,” to ensure that all prospective tenants fit their ideal requirements²³ The “ideal” family sought, however, was usually based on a white, upper-class definition of ideal that excluded those equally worthy tenants who did not precisely conform to this model. As a result, these City II developments were limited to returning white veterans and their families, which allowed NYCHA and the city to continue racial segregation under the admirable guise of providing housing for veterans.

Nevertheless, despite being touted as higher quality, these city-aided projects experienced many of the same issues as federal- or state-funded public housing. As they were designed by NYCHA during the tenure of Thomas Farrell, the emphasis was always placed on NYCHA’s “policies of minimal interior finishes.”²⁴ Farrell continued a policy of whittling down interior finishes and features, including closet doors, flooring materials, etc. He also repeated the hexagonal form over and over, sometimes reusing the same designs.

In 1958, an external review of the City II Program developments found that “the projects...inspected are neat, appear to be well-built, but are definitely not competitive with private housing.”²⁵ And Richard Rosenthal, a former Director of Design at NYCHA, noted that “with complete standardization of exterior detail...and little to no elaboration these buildings lost the warmth and character of the best early housing.”²⁶

Furthermore, the careful placement of these City II sites on vacant or easily acquired land meant that they were often located in areas where public transportation was not easily accessible, or areas without many amenities or commercial resources. Catherine Bauer observation of a decade later could easily be applied to this group: “the fact that they are usually designed as islands — “community units” turning their backs to the surrounding neighborhood which looks entirely different — only adds to this institutional quality. Any charity stigma that attaches to subsidized housing is thus reinforced. Each project proclaims, visually, that it serves the “lowest income group.”²⁷

As noted above, the passage of the US Housing Act did increase federal funding available for public housing, but New York City began to rely more and more on its city-funded program during the 1950s and 1960s. As the city program “permitted slightly higher income levels, and in the case of city-funded housing, more attractive developments,” the city could better control who was selected as a prospective tenant and how the site was developed.²⁸ But by having the main focus of the city government and NYCHA housing programs be largely lower middle class, white veterans, the city continued to take part in the “purposeful imposition of racial segregation” that was inherently part of the public housing system.²⁹

This inherent bias was perpetuated in the overall population and the tenants NYCHA selected throughout the 1950s. One source notes that “As of March 1957, African-Americans and Puerto Ricans were occupying only

²² Rothstein, *The Color of Law*, 18.

²³ Rothstein, *The Color of Law*, 18.

²⁴ Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*, 117.

²⁵ Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*, 131.

²⁶ Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*, 135.

²⁷ Catherin Bauer, “The Dreary Dreadlock of Public Housing,” *The Architectural Forum*, 1957, accessed <https://placesjournal.org/article/catherine-bauer-and-the-need-for-public-housing/>

²⁸ Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*, 7.

²⁹ Rothstein, *The Color of Law*, X.

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22 percent of the 23,229 "no-cash subsidy" apartments, compared to nearly two-thirds of other federal, state and city-funded public housing. Thirty-five years later, when NYCHA settled a discrimination lawsuit charging that white tenants had been "steered" into certain developments, thirteen of the thirty-one developments slated to receive more minorities were originally built under the "no-cash subsidy" program."³⁰

The City II program and its associated developments, including Eastchester Houses, represent the actions of city agencies as they attempted to address the pressing social issue of returning veterans and their families who lacked stable housing as the city also tackled overpopulation and a dearth of new housing developments. However, the City II developments also illustrate the inherent bias within a system that placed priority on housing white families that were above the poverty line, often at the expense of other groups.

Developmental History of Eastchester Houses

The Bronx was originally settled as a farming community and experienced rapid growth from the late nineteenth century, beginning with the expansion of Manhattan's Second Avenue elevated rail line to Third Avenue, followed by additional elevated lines and later the subway. Early in the twentieth century, the middle class and growing immigrant populations were pushed out of Manhattan by the housing shortage. Following the existing available public transportation line, many relocated to the Bronx, leading to a surge in the development of housing there.³¹ The earliest development was in the southern Bronx, nearest Manhattan, and later construction expanded north. According to census data, in 1950, prior to the construction of Eastchester Houses, the Bronx was largely populated by white residents, predominantly European and Eastern European immigrants, and had only 6.7 percent Black residents. By 1970, the demographic of the Bronx shifted to include 24 percent Black and 27 percent Hispanic or Latino residents.³²

With lower land values that could offset construction costs, the Bronx was an obvious location for public housing development.³³ By 1959, NYCHA had developed eighteen housing complexes in the Bronx, five of which were federally funded, seven were state funded, and six were municipally funded. In 1960, another six were under construction. Today, NYCHA operates sixty-three housing developments in the Bronx. Of the complexes constructed in the Bronx during the 1950s, "nine were clustered in the eastern area of the borough, giving the Bronx the largest concentration of public housing in the U.S."³⁴ NYCHA developments in the Bronx were either concentrated along existing subway lines in the southwest portion of the Bronx, with the developments requiring demolition of existing residential areas, or they were placed further out in the east and northeast regions of the Bronx, where there was available land that had been undeveloped. NYCHA housing in the Bronx was largely characterized by either smaller sites placed in more developed areas or larger sites placed further out in regions that were not yet developed until the 1940s and 1950s. The earlier developments typically featured low or mid-rise buildings, with brick buildings exhibiting some sort of cruciform shape, and a site with green space, recreational areas and walking paths. Some of the later ones are single high-rises of fourteen to twenty stories on much smaller sites. Many of the sites in the Bronx feature a uniform building shape and often building height. Those constructed as part of the City II program are uniform in size, form and materials.

³⁰ John T. Metzger, "Rebuilding Harlem: Public housing and Urban Renewal, 1920–1960," *Planning Perspectives*, 9:3, 279.

³¹ Richard Plunz, *A History of Housing in New York City*, Rev. edition (Columbia University Press, 2016), 148.

³² US Census Bureau, "Population Division Working Paper – Historical Census Statistics On Population Totals By Race, 1790 to 1990, and By Hispanic Origin, 1970 to 1990 – US Census Bureau," www.census.gov. Retrieved Oct. 17, 2022.

³³ Catherine Bauer, *A Citizen's Guide to Public Housing* (Vassar College, 1940), 66.

³⁴ Elena Martinez/City Lore, "Place Matters – Bronx River Housing." accessed March 10, 2023, <https://placematters.net/census/detail.php?id=106>.

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After the Housing Act of 1934, when the FHA requested that the federal Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) create “residential security maps” to guide the federal agency in underwriting mortgages, HOLC created a map of the Bronx in 1938. Eastchester was appraised as “yellow,” or “definitely declining,” but still described as a “desirable suburban neighborhood of modest homes. Its only negative factor was transportation, and the HOLC noted that the “area could easily develop into a better grade if transportation were improved.” It described the neighborhood as “infiltrated by Russians” but having no Negroes and only a “normal” number of relief families. An influx of Black residents, often coming up from the southern states, was often enough to provoke a negative appraisal. Considering that large portions of the south Bronx were already colored as red, or “hazardous,” Eastchester’s seemed to be a positive appraisal.

The future site of Eastchester Houses (known as Eastchester Gardens after 1969) was historically occupied by scattered single-family residential buildings, surrounded by undeveloped plots of land.³⁵ According to the survey done by NYCHA staff in 1947, the site contained roughly twenty existing structures (see Figure 1) which were a mix of single-story residential buildings, some utilitarian structures, and even a barn. The NYCHA records also noted that the population in this area was largely Italian and minimal relocation would be required for redevelopment.³⁶ The future site of Eastchester Houses was evaluated by NYCHA as one of the potential sites to be used in response to housing shortages for veterans and their families throughout the city under what became known as the City II Program, which included five projects, one in each borough.

In 1947, the Eastchester Houses site was acquired by New York City for a cost of \$327,168. The total project budget was estimated at \$9,514,000.³⁷ All existing residences located on the site were either fated for relocation on “nearby” sites if possible, or they would be demolished and their residents relocated per typical NYCHA guidelines.³⁸ Again, this site was deemed to be optimal by NYCHA as it would require minimal relocation of existing residents and it was in a largely residential area. However, NYCHA documents at the time did note that there was the potential for the future Eastchester site to be very “isolated,” as it did not have much existing infrastructure.³⁹

Design of Eastchester Houses

While determining the design context of the new City II Program, NYCHA reviewed existing mid-rise six-story developments, including Astoria Houses (located in Queens), Marcy Houses (located in Brooklyn), and Riis Houses (located in Manhattan), as informal design guides, all shown in Figure 2.⁴⁰ Astoria Houses was completed in 1951, slightly after Eastchester Houses, but its design is very similar with cruciform-shaped mid-rise buildings set largely at the perimeter of the parcel. The interior of Astoria featured tenant greenspace, with play areas, walkways, and other recreation spaces. Astoria Houses was constructed using state funding and required the demolition of existing residential and industrial buildings that were located on the Queens waterfront. Marcy Houses, completed in 1949, features double-cruciform shaped mid-rise buildings set in an almost radiating pattern across two superblocks. Marcy Houses was designed with greater building density across the site and less overall open greenspace. Marcy Houses was constructed using state funding and required the demolition and relocation of two city blocks of existing residences. Riis Houses, completed in

³⁵ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps “Eastchester, Volume 18”, Library of Congress, 1935.

³⁶ NYCHA Internal Correspondence, February 13, 1948, NYCHA Archives, accessed February 2024.

³⁷ 1948 Resolution from the Board of Estimate, NYCHA Archives, accessed February 2024.

³⁸ “NYCHA Internal Correspondence.

³⁹ Samuel Ratensky to T.F. Farrell, October 2, 1947, NYCHA Archives, accessed February 2024.

⁴⁰ Ratensky to Farrell.

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1949, also featured cruciform-shaped buildings; however, all buildings were high rise structures, as was typical for the borough of Manhattan, and the overall greenspace on the site was minimal.

Because the site of Eastchester Houses was “virtually virgin land located in an area of low buildings, scattered development, and very low density,” the NYCHA planning team argued that the design should feature low buildings and a low density in an attempt to preserve the character of the setting.⁴¹ Archival documents (see Figure 3) indicate that the planners dismissed the Marcy design as “too costly” and concluded that the Riis design would only work for large family units; they settled on the Astoria design as the most “practical.”⁴² The Astoria Houses had been designed by the firm Harrison and Abramowitz, and when NYCHA decided to copy the Astoria’s design, Harrison and Abramowitz became the de facto architects for Eastchester as well. Although almost no archival correspondence regarding the selection of architects was located, it is believed that NYCHA reused the design with the firm’s permission.

Eastchester Houses exemplifies how the NYCHA development team often replicated building designs across different sites as a way to offset expenses. In this period in particular, when the agency was not receiving federal funds, NYCHA planners repeated simple, unadorned brick-faced cross-shaped buildings in slightly different variations across multiple sites, as this shape and type proved the most economical.⁴³ In the post-war building interiors, NYCHA focused on removing any finishes and features that could increase expense, such as wood floors and closet doors, and replacing them with much cheaper materials, thus adding to the increasingly institutional feeling of NYCHA developments.

By 1948, final design plans for the Eastchester Houses complex were submitted to Robert Wagner, the chair of the City Planning Commission. The design plans included seven- and eight- story buildings, which ultimately reduced the gross residential area on the site to ensure the level of greenspace NYCHA preferred for its larger campus developments.⁴⁴ The site was designed with playgrounds and recreation areas in mind, as the closest parks, such as the Bronx Park and Pelham Bay Park, were not located near the Eastchester Houses site.⁴⁵

When applications for Eastchester Houses, as well as Pelham Parkway Houses—also in the Bronx, opened in June 1949, tens of thousands poured in. Pelham Parkway Houses was another NYCHA development constructed under a limited subsidy program (but not the City II program), and it was designed concurrently with Eastchester Houses. However, with over 39,500 applications submitted for 876 apartments at Eastchester (plus the 1,266 apartments at Pelham Parkway Houses), contemporary accounts noted that there was still a clear deficit in available housing for veterans and their families.⁴⁶ The monthly rents for Eastchester’s new units were proposed at \$12.50 per room, with a range of rents from approximately \$54 to \$88 per month, including gas and electricity costs. NYCHA determined that the maximum incomes for housing within city-aided projects for families with fewer than three dependents would be at a range of \$2,641-3,900 for between one and three bedrooms; and the maximum incomes for city-aided projects for families with three or more dependents would range between \$4,609-4,680 for three-bedroom apartments.⁴⁷ Photos of prospective tenants show that a large

⁴¹ Ratensky to Farrell.

⁴² Ratensky to Farrell.

⁴³ Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*,” 56.

⁴⁴ T.F. Farrell (NYCHA) to Robert Wagner (Chairman of the City Planning Commission), October 12, 1948, NYCHA Archives, accessed February 2024.

⁴⁵ NYCHA to Robert Wagner, November 13, 1948, NYCHA Archives, accessed February 2024.

⁴⁶ “2,140 Apartments Sought by 39,500,” *Daily News*, June 22, 1949.

⁴⁷ Resolution from the Board of Estimates, October 6, 1955, NYCHA Archives, accessed February 2024.

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majority of veterans had young families (see Figure 4). This demographic would play a large role in the creation of the landscaping and site features of Eastchester Houses.

On July 12, 1949, the official cornerstone for the Eastchester Houses complex was laid, marking the beginning phases of construction.⁴⁸ Tentative completion dates for the buildings were set, with Building 10 being the first scheduled completion on September 30, 1949, followed by Building 9 on January 3, 1950. The official completion of the complex was not anticipated until the summer of 1950.⁴⁹ By 1950, temporary certificates of occupancy were issued for each of the ten buildings.⁵⁰

Contemporary accounts indicate that at least some of the buildings at Eastchester Houses were opened by September 1949, but based on the date provided by NYCHA, it appears that the overall construction was not complete until June 1, 1950. Thomas F. Farrell, chair of the City Housing Authority, and Bronx Borough President James L. Lyons received and welcomed new tenants.⁵¹ A huge announcement was made several months later in December 1949. NYCHA announced that it would be cutting rents by \$1-\$11 for veterans living in four of the City II housing projects: Eastchester Houses, Sheepshead Bay Houses, South Beach Houses; and Woodside Houses.⁵² Although advertised as a “pre-Christmas present,” the rent reductions were a direct result of low interest rates on bonds sold the previous week.⁵³

Among the facilities that were provided for residents of Eastchester Houses was a children’s center at the southeast perimeter of the first floor of Building 4, as many new residents had young children. The facility included playrooms, a waiting room, offices, kitchen, and bathrooms connected via a central corridor. Similarly, Eastchester Houses had a children’s health center located at the south perimeter of Building 9. The health center had a waiting room, examination rooms, a carriage room, medical offices, and bathrooms. The management office for the complex was constructed along the north perimeter of Building 1 on the first floor. This space included offices and a lobby for residents. The management office remains in this location of the complex.

In 1950, the playground located at the south perimeter of Eastchester Houses at Adee and Tenbroeck Avenues was opened (see Figure 5) and operated by the New York City Parks.⁵⁴ The playground had been part of the original site design during earlier iterations, and NYCHA deeded this portion of the site to the NYC Parks Department. This section of the site continues to be owned, operated and maintained by NYC Parks. The playground’s location on the perimeter of the housing complex was intentional to emphasize use by both the residents of Eastchester Houses and families from the surrounding community. The playground complex had a wading pool, playground, courts for basketball, tennis, handball, and volleyball.⁵⁵ Like other City II program developments, the emphasis on greenspace and its park-like atmosphere was important.

As the development had been constructed purely through city funds and was outside of the federal or state public housing programs, the rents collected by NYCHA at Eastchester Houses were being used to cover operating costs, tax payments on the land, and debt service. NYCHA also attempted to reduce rents when

⁴⁸ “City Pushing 5 Housing Jobs,” *Daily News*, June 10, 1949.

⁴⁹ Internal NYCHA Memo Regarding Tentative Completion Dates, dated June 9, 1949, NYCHA Archives, accessed February 2024.

⁵⁰ Internal NYCHA Memo Regarding Tentative Completion Dates.

⁵¹ “Farrell, Lyons Greet Tenants,” *Daily News*, September 29, 1949.

⁵² “City Housing Body to Cut Vet Rents,” *Daily News*, December 19, 1949.

⁵³ “Veterans to Get Rent Reductions,” *New York Times*, December 19, 1949.

⁵⁴ “The Latest Addition to the City’s Playgrounds,” *New York Times*, July 18, 1950.

⁵⁵ “The Latest Addition to the City’s Playgrounds,” *New York Times*, July 18, 1950.

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possible, with any savings accrued from interest cost.⁵⁶ Unfortunately, despite NYCHA's careful selection process, some tenants were unable to pay rents and were required to set up a payment plan to compensate. If payments were not received or an agreement could not be reached, then the tenant was required to "dispossess" the unit.⁵⁷ Archival documents indicate that the residents of Eastchester Houses experienced numerous rent increases within the first decade of the development opening, as NYCHA struggled to collect rent and meet the required operating costs.

As completed, Eastchester Houses featured the simple interior finishes characteristic of NYCHA developments during the tenure of chair Thomas Farrell. Farrell continued the NYCHA tradition of stripping any potential expense from developments to ensure financial viability. To that end, the units at Eastchester were outfitted with asphalt tile floors and painted plaster walls and ceilings. Each unit had a kitchen and a bathroom, although no showers were provided. Tenants who wanted a shower were required to install the equipment on their own.⁵⁸ Shortly after tenants moved in, the tenant association, known as the Eastchester Tenant League, issued a letter to Farrell, describing the poor conditions of the floors, stating they were "uniformly dull, dark brown asphalt tile flooring...which picks up dirt and marks in no time at all."⁵⁹ The letters note that a contemporary NYCHA development, Pelham Parkway Houses, received a much higher level of interior finishes and had a cheaper monthly rent. Since the Pelham Parkway Houses had been constructed under a different city limited subsidy program, its development may have had different requirements and additional funding to work with. The letter also addressed tenant concerns over the lack of accessibility to local public transportation and shopping facilities, stating "it is necessary to take a bus to reach any subway station, and to reach a bus one must walk several blocks."⁶⁰

Further correspondence from the Eastchester Tenant League in 1959 expressed frustration on the blanket rent increases of 1955 and the disadvantages of City II developments compared to City III developments. According to the tenant association, the residents continued to deal with poor flooring conditions and lack of showers in units.⁶¹ Additional concerns the association expressed included non-recessed radiators, inadequate stoves, and the need for tiled bathrooms. According to a letter from Albert Morgan, the director of management at NYCHA, written on April 6, 1959, to William Reid, the new chair of the housing authority, inadequate appliances and lack of showers were common problems among City II projects.

During the 1950s, the majority of those who lived at Eastchester Houses were white families with young children. The complex had been specifically designed with white veterans and their families in mind, and NYCHA was very selective with tenants, ensuring that they had incomes that were above the normal requirements.⁶² Available data from the 1960 US Census indicates that 85 percent of the census tract including Eastchester Houses were "White," with 716 being "foreign-born" and 3,029 individuals identified as "foreign stock." The majority of the residents identified as either Italian, Polish, or as being from the USSR. The average age of residents was mid-thirties, with an average family size of four.⁶³

⁵⁶ "Veterans to Get Rent Reductions," *New York Times*, December 19, 1949.

⁵⁷ Rent Rolls, 1950, NYCHA Archives, accessed February 2024.

⁵⁸ Eastchester Tenants League to T.F. Farrell, June 15, 1950, NYCHA Archives, accessed February 2024.

⁵⁹ Eastchester Tenants League to William Reid, January 30, 1959, NYCHA Archives, accessed February 2024.

⁶⁰ Eastchester Tenants to Reid, January 30, 1959.

⁶¹ Eastchester Tenants to Reid, January 30, 1959.

⁶² Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*, 77.

⁶³ U.S. Census Bureau, *Census of Population and Housing, 1960, Final Report Series PHC (1)*, Census Tracts, Volume 7, <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1961/dec/population-and-housing-phc-1.html>.

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By the 1960s, reflecting changes in demographics, the children's center in Building 4 was converted to a senior center. The layout of the resident facility was generally retained. The demising wall between the two playrooms was removed to create a larger recreation room for seniors. New bathrooms were added to the westernmost playroom and a new senior citizens reading room occupied the remainder of the space. Additional updates to the amenity space include the replacement of interior doors. Site beautification was also implemented at this time.

In 1968, NYCHA expressed concerns over financing for the city-aided projects like Eastchester Houses. After years of funding shortages, the Housing Authority decided to apply to refinance the city-funded program with federal funds to maintain rent prices for tenants. They also needed money to perform necessary maintenance work, which was estimated at \$10 million.⁶⁴ Many of the incomes of tenants residing at the complex met the federal standard for subsidized housing, so NYCHA argued that minimal tenant displacement would occur if the development was turned into a federal housing site.

Available data from the 1970 US Census indicates that the census tract including Eastchester Houses was still largely white, with 80 percent of the population identified as white and 20 percent as African-American. However, there was an increase in "persons of Spanish language," who had not been present in the previous census. The nationalities identified still included Italian, Russian, and Polish, and 20 percent of the overall population was identified as "foreign born." Interestingly, approximately two-thirds of the population lived in the same house as in the 1960 US Census, which indicates that a majority of the original white residents of Eastchester Houses likely continued living there through the 1960s. In addition, the average income of families in this census tract was \$10,625, with 70 percent of the families living on incomes at least two times the poverty level. The census data notes that only 113 families were living below the poverty level, and only 81 families were on "public assistance."⁶⁵ This suggests that Eastchester Houses housed residents that were largely atypical in the overall NYCHA portfolio.

Over the years, the interior finishes at the complex continued to degrade, likely as a result of deferred maintenance or negligence. A memo from 1975 described conditions including the poor condition of the security office, the cellar areas filled with debris, plaster peeling in public hallways, inoperable equipment, and burned-out streetlamps across the site.⁶⁶ It is unclear if these conditions were directly addressed or deferred to the major renovation that occurred in 1982. This major renovation included both interior and exterior repairs and replacements.

At the exteriors, this work included the replacement of roofs, the replacement of casement windows with new aluminum-frame one-over-one windows, and general repointing and waterproofing of the brick facades. On the interior, the replastering and repainting of all public areas was undertaken. At some point, the floors within units were updated or replaced but it is unclear if this occurred during the same renovation.

By the 1980s, the population in this area of the Bronx had begun to shift. The 1980 US Census indicates that 47 percent of the population was white, and the rest of the population was either African American or "of Spanish origin." The majority of residents had been born in New York, and a large percentage of the white population

⁶⁴ NYCHA to Honorable Dan Elliott, Chairman of the City Planning Commission, April 25, 1968, NYCHA Archives, accessed February 2024.

⁶⁵ 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

⁶⁶ Memo to John Simon, General Manager of NYCHA, November 6, 1975, NYCHA Archives, accessed February 2024.

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still indicated they had Italian ancestry.⁶⁷ However, the demographics of the neighborhood was changing, with most of the older white residents moving out.

The Community Center located along the northeast perimeter of Building 10 was constructed between ca. 1995-1999. The center features a gym, art room, game room, library, and other multi-purpose rooms. The rooms are connected via a central, double-loaded corridor. The community center features a combination of painted CMU walls, gypsum board demising walls, exposed ceiling structure, finished gypsum board ceilings, and tile floors. The community center is accessible from the basement of Building 10 and from the exterior.

City II Program Developments – Comparative Analysis

A comparative analysis of the five City II program developments is provided below. These developments are the Sheepshead Bay Houses in Brooklyn, South Beach Houses in Staten Island, Woodside Houses in Queens, and Colonial Park Houses in Harlem (later named Rangel Houses). Although developed under the same City II Program, the complexes feature slight variations of building plans, landscape designs, and locations. Overall, the buildings share the same minimal red-brick exteriors and cruciform plans. The developments in the outer boroughs feature mid-rise buildings of six-to seven stories in height, while the Manhattan development featured fourteen-story high-rises, which was more typical of NYCHA developments in Manhattan. All of the developments were designed with some sort of landscape and greenspace, often with the buildings placed either along the perimeter of the site or in a pattern across the site to allow for interior green space.

Woodside Houses (see Figure 6-7)

<i>Date Of Const.</i>	<i>Architects</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Building Attributes</i>	<i>Landscape Attributes</i>	<i>NR Status</i>
December 1949	Voorhees, Walker, Foley & Smith (architects)	50-51 Broadway, Queens, NY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fifteen double-cruciform plan buildings • Five double-cruciform plan buildings • Six stories in height • Located parallel to streets; staggered in placement on site • Brick exterior; Metal roofline balustrades • 1,357 apartments • Replacement doors and windows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-family buildings demolished to construct site • Surrounded by single- and multi-family buildings • Located near transit routes • Rectilinear site • Curvilinear paths, recreational areas • Metal fencing 	NRE

⁶⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, *1970 Census of Population and Housing: Census Tracts, New York, NY-NJ*.
<https://archive.org/details/1980censusofpo8022601unse/page/352/mode/2up>

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South Beach Houses (see Figures 8-9)

<i>Date Of Const.</i>	<i>Architects</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Building Attributes</i>	<i>Landscape Attributes</i>	<i>NR Status</i>
March 1950	Henry V. Murphy (architect); Leo A. Novick (landscape architect)	84 Lamport Boulevard, Staten Island, NY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven double-cruciform plan buildings • One single-cruciform plan building • Six stories in height • Located close to one another off-set from streets • Brick exterior; Metal roofline balustrades • 422 apartments • Replacement doors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed on vacant land • Surrounded by single-family dwellings • Located near transit routes • Rectilinear site • Curvilinear paths, recreational areas; parking lots • Metal fencing 	U

Sheepshead Bay Houses (see Figures 10-11)

<i>Date Of Const.</i>	<i>Architects</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Building Attributes</i>	<i>Landscape Attributes</i>	<i>NR Status</i>
August 1950	James C. MacKenzie (architect); Charles D. Lay & Oliver I. Lay (landscape architect)	2955 Avenue W., Brooklyn NY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eighteen double-cruciform plan buildings • Seven stories in height • Located parallel to streets; staggered in placement on site • Brick exterior; Metal roofline balustrades • 1,056 apartments • Replacement doors and windows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-family buildings demolished to construct site • Surrounded by single- and multi-family buildings • Located near transit routes • Rectilinear site • Curvilinear paths, recreational areas • Metal fencing 	U

Rangel Houses (see Figures 12-13)

<i>Date Of Const.</i>	<i>Architects</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Building Attributes</i>	<i>Landscape Attributes</i>	<i>NR Status</i>
September 1951	Julian Whittlesy, Harry M. Prince, Robert J. Reiley (architect); Coffey & Recknagel (landscape architects)	159-16 Harlem River Drive, New York, NY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven cruciform plan buildings; • One double-cruciform plan building • Fourteen stories in height • Staggered placement along streets • Brick exterior; Metal roofline balustrades • 984 apartments • Replacement doors and windows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train yard demolished to construct site • Surrounded by major highways and the Harlem River • Located near transit routes • Triangular site • Curvilinear paths, recreational areas • Metal fencing 	NRE

Eastchester Houses

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NYCHA and Post-War Public Housing Design

The immediate post-war era saw a shift in the overall design and aesthetics of public housing, largely as a result of state and federal guidelines that prioritized cost-saving measures. While these were very loosely derived from the tenets of European Modernism calling for simplicity in massing, materials, and finishes, they are reduced here to repetitious forms, durable and cheap materials, and an absence of interior detail that lends them an almost unfinished character. They were far from the idealistic designs of modern masters, such as Breuer or LeCorbusier, architects who sought to dignify the working class dwelling unit. They do exemplify NYCHA's general direction in terms of siting and design in this period and its debt to the federal government's guidelines for public housing. In 1935 and 1943, the federal government issued design guidelines for the development of "low-rent" housing. Publishing by the Public Works Administration in 1935, *Unit Plans: Typical Room Arrangements, Site Plans and Details for Low-Rent Housing* stated the importance of site design: "without adequate open areas, the modern housing development would be a failure," because these open areas "provide the answer to three important problems – a) circulation and access, b) passive recreation, and c) active recreation."⁶⁸ Although NYCHA could not always meet these requirements in its urban projects, the agency sought to follow them in the outer boroughs, where land was available. Similarly, *The Minimum Physical Standards and Criteria for the Planning and Design of FPHA-Aided Urban Low-Rent Housing*, published by the Federal Public Housing Authority in 1945, identified a minimum fifty-foot distance between buildings.⁶⁹

The 1945 *Minimum Physical Standards* also emphasized economy, calling for simplified, uniform building appearances and use of low-cost materials.⁷⁰ At the exterior this meant the repeated use of a uniform brick façade with minimal to no ornamentation. At the interior, this led to the use of cost-effective and durable materials, such as asbestos tile, asphalt tile, vinyl tile, or similar flooring, CMU or plaster walls, and minimal decoration or features. Even the building form itself was influenced as massing tended to feature simple rectangular slabs, with the only variations being in overall shape, such as L-shaped, offset cruciform, or elongated cruciform plans, which were frequently combined on a single site.

The cost-cutting measures emphasized by federal public housing guidelines influenced NYCHA chair Alfred Rheinstein. NYCHA planners began to reuse designs across multiple sites, repeating simple, unadorned brick-faced cross-shaped buildings in slightly different variations as it proved the most economical.⁷¹ In this case, it appears that NYCHA planners reused a previous design for Eastchester Houses, recycling what the firm of Harrison & Abramowitz had done at the Astoria Houses site for a different development. At building interiors, NYCHA focused on removing any details, including those found in pre-war developments, such as wood floors and closet doors, and replacing them with much cheaper materials, thus adding to the increasingly institutional feeling of NYCHA developments.

Eastchester Houses illustrates these trends in postwar public housing design with its repeated cruciform and double-cruciform shapes; flat, planar brick surfaces; a lack of ornamentation; and the use of economic materials, all of which are characteristic of post-war public housing design. The designers chose a simple form,

⁶⁸ *Unit Plans: Typical Room Arrangements, Site Plans and Details for Low-rent Housing*, United States Public Works Administration, (1935), 1-2.

⁶⁹ Philip m. Klutznick, *The Minimum Physical Standards and Criteria for the Planning and Design of FPHA-Aided Urban Low-Rent Housing*, National Housing Agency, Federal Public Housing Authority, Nov. 1945, 3.

⁷⁰ Klutznick, *Minimum Physical Standards and Criteria*.

⁷¹ Bloom, *Public Housing that Worked*, 56.

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the cruciform shape, as the basic design component for the buildings, which was repeated to form the two building types. The brick exterior elevations are flat and lack applied decorative trim and the roofs are also flat with no decorative cornice, creating the impression of simple volumes. The solid form of the buildings remains the overarching design feature, which is again keeping with the modest architectural design guidelines of post war public housing.

At Eastchester Houses, each building was designed essentially the same, with red brick exterior cladding, central entrances, and windows with simple, flat frames and slate sills. While the design components are repeated throughout the complex, the cruciform shape of the buildings ensured that each unit had the maximum amount of sunlight at the interior, an important goal of public housing guidelines.⁷² At the interior, each building's lobby featured terrazzo flooring, a material often selected for its durability, and painted plaster at the walls and ceilings. The upper floor corridors and apartment units historically featured asphalt tile flooring, which has largely been replaced with modern vinyl tile flooring, and painted plaster walls and ceilings with simple trim. Despite updated finishes, the interior of the buildings retains the simple, durable materials that were part of mid-century public housing design.

Harrison and Abramowitz (Architects)

Eastchester Houses is attributed to the well-known firm of Harrison and Abramowitz, although the overall design was largely taken from their previous work with NYCHA and modified slightly. The firm was established by Wallace K. Harrison and Max Abramowitz, the firm of Harrison and Abramowitz developed into the major Modernist architectural firm in New York City between c. 1941-1976. Both architects came from highly-regarded architectural schools and varied experience.

Wallace K. Harrison was born in Worcester, MA, and educated at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, France, and the American Academy in Rome during the early 1920s and returned to the United States to work for the renowned architecture firm McKim, Mead & White and Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue from 1923-1925.⁷³ Other firms he worked for prior to the foundation of his partnership with Abramowitz was Helme, Corbett and Harrison (1927-1929) and Corbett, Harrison & MacMurray (1929-1935). He also worked for Columbia University, the New York City Board of Education, and Yale University. One his major, early projects was Rockefeller Center, which he worked on with noteworthy architects Reinhard and Hofmeister with Harvey Wiley Corbett and Raymond Hood.⁷⁴ During his time as principal and partner of Harrison and Abramowitz, he was credited with the Empire State Plaza in Albany, NY, and was a lead architect and director of planning on the headquarters for the United Nations in New York City.

Max Abramowitz was born in Chicago, IL, and studied architecture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Columbia University, and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, France. Prior to forming his firm with Harrison, he worked at Columbia University as an instructor in architecture and as a chief designer at W.K. Harrison & J.A. Fouilhoux from 1935-1941. This firm became Harrison and Abramowitz in 1941. Like his partner, Abramowitz was known to have his own projects that he worked on during his time at their architectural firm. These projects include three educational buildings at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the Phoenix Life Insurance Building in Hartford, CT. One of his most noteworthy designs was Temple Beth Zion in Buffalo, NY (NR listed), which features spectacular stained-glass windows by Ben Shahn.

⁷² Klutznick, *Minimum Physical Standards and Criteria*.

⁷³ "Harrison and Abramowitz," *AIA Questionnaire for Architects' Roster*, October 15, 1947.

⁷⁴ "Rockefeller Center," *Wikipedia*, Accessed December 13, 2023. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rockefeller_Center.

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As a firm, they are perhaps most well-known for their work on the United Nations Headquarters building in New York City and the Metropolitan Opera House and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts on the Upper West Side of New York City. Their range of projects included commercial, educational, recreational, and residential buildings. The firm dissolved in 1976 when Abramovitz left to partner with other architects.

Despite their high-profile projects around the country, the firm was also involved in several public housing projects for NYCHA. The firm was commissioned for the Astoria Houses (1951) in Queens and the Marlboro Houses (1958) in Brooklyn. While the Astoria Houses project was completed after Eastchester, NYCHA archival records (see figure XX) indicate that plans for that site were available prior to 1947 and were used as the basis for Eastchester Houses, which is likely why Harrison and Abramowitz were retained as the architect for both sites.

Thus, the Astoria Houses share many similarities Eastchester Houses (Figures 14-15). These include the buildings' cruciform plans, their seven-story heights, and their simple brick exteriors. Each building also features a metal balustrade located along the roofline, similar to those at Eastchester. The setting is slightly different, as the Astoria complex is located adjacent to the East River. The buildings are generally organized in a linear pattern across the site. However, the surrounding campus features highly landscaped walkways, sports courts, and playgrounds.

The Marlboro Houses in Brooklyn (Figures 16 and 17) have fewer similarities to Eastchester Houses. These include the typical heights of apartment buildings at seven stories, as well as the simple brick exteriors. Along the roofline, many of the buildings also feature metal balustrades. The major differences between the two housing complexes include Marlboro's rectilinear building plans and its campus greenspace. The greenspace is bisected by West 11th Street to include east and west sections of the complex. The buildings are generally positioned around one another to form internal courtyards as opposed to a curvilinear park-like landscape at Astoria and Eastchester.

Conclusion

Eastchester Houses is significant as an intact representative example of post-World War II public housing initiatives and a representative example of Mayor O'Dwyer's city-funded, no-cash, limited subsidy program for the creation of post-war housing in New York City. The City II program, or the limited subsidy program, was funded by temporary loan notes issues by NYCHA and the sale of bonds and was used to construct five housing developments (one in each of the New York City boroughs) specifically designed for veterans and their families with incomes slightly exceeding low-incomes. Its mid-rise, simplistic buildings combined with its landscaped site are two important design components of the program, which primarily provided housing for white, lower middle class veterans and their families.

Eastchester Houses is also noteworthy as an example of the larger systemic biases present in city planning for housing and settlement in the post-war era in New York City. The focus of the city government on providing housing for returning white veterans and their families placed priority on housing white families that were above the poverty line, often at the expense of other groups. As the city program allowed carefully selected white tenants with higher income levels into attractive developments in the more sparsely populated outer boroughs, housing projects such as Eastchester Houses represent commendable government attempts to aid social welfare but also reveal underlying issues involving equality that were inherently part of public housing design.

Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

Bronx, New York

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Eastchester Houses

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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): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 14.82 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

Eastchester Houses

Bronx, New York
County and State

Name of Property

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

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 40.871083 | Longitude: -73854393 |
| 2. Latitude: 40.871105 | Longitude: -73850084 |
| 3. Latitude: 40.869524 | Longitude: -73850136 |
| 4. Latitude: 40.869603 | Longitude: -73.854443 |

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

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

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary justification includes the full extent of the parcel associated with the Eastchester Houses complex during the period of significance.

11. Form Prepared By CONTACT: Kathleen LaFrank, NYSHPO

name/title Cindy Hamilton, President/Linda Santoro, Sr. Project Manager/Erin Wisner, Project Manager
organization Heritage Consulting Group date October 2024
street & number 15 W. 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.)

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.

Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

Bronx, New York

County and State

Name of Property: Eastchester Houses Historic District

City or Vicinity: New York City

County: Bronx

State: NY

Photographer: Linda Santoro and Erin Wiser, Heritage Consulting Group

Date Photographed: February 2024

See attached pre-rehabilitation photographs.

List of Photographs [only select photos included with draft]

NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0001 Site, looking north.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0002 Site, looking southeast.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0003 Building 2, Northwest Elevation, looking southeast.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0004 Building 4, Northeast Elevation, looking southwest.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0005 Building 8, Southwest Elevation, looking northeast.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0006 Site, looking east.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0007 Building 10, Community Center, looking southwest.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0008 Site, looking west.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0009 Site, looking north.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0010 Building 10, South Elevation, looking north.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0011 Building 10, First Floor, Lobby, looking north.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0012 Building 10, First Floor, Lobby, looking south.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0013 Building 10, First Floor, Stairwell, looking east.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0014 Building 1, Northeast Elevation, looking west.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0015 Building 1, Second Floor, Corridor, looking west.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0016 Building 1, Second Floor, Stairwell, looking south.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0017 Building 1, Second Floor, Corridor, looking east.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0018 Building 1, Second Floor, Apartment 2D, looking southeast.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0019 Building 1, Second Floor, Apartment 2D, looking northeast.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0020 Building 1, Second Floor, Apartment 2D, looking southwest.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0021 Building 1, Second Floor, Apartment 2D, looking northwest.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0022 Building 2, First Floor, Lobby, looking east.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0023 Building 2, First Floor, Lobby, looking west.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0024 Building 2, First Floor, Lobby, looking north.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0025 Building 2, Second Floor, Corridor, looking north.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0026 Building 2, Second Floor, Apartment 6C, looking southwest.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0027 Building 2, Second Floor, Apartment 6C, looking northeast.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0028 Building 2, Second Floor, Apartment 6C, looking northwest.
NY_BronxCounty_Eastchester_0029 Building 2, Second Floor, Apartment 6C, looking west.

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Eastchester Houses

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List of Appendices

Appendix A: Eastchester Houses – Building Inventory

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name N/A
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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.

Eastchester Houses

Brnx, New York
 County and State

Name of Property



Appendix A: Eastchester Houses – Building Inventory

BUILDING #	ADDRESS
1	1134/1140 Burke Avenue
2	1160/1166 Burke Avenue
3	1210/1216 Burke Avenue
4	1234/1240 Burke Avenue
5	1260 Burke Avenue
6	3055 Bouck Avenue
7	1255 Adee Avenue
8	1245 Adee Avenue
9	1219 Adee Avenue
10	3010/3020 Yates Avenue

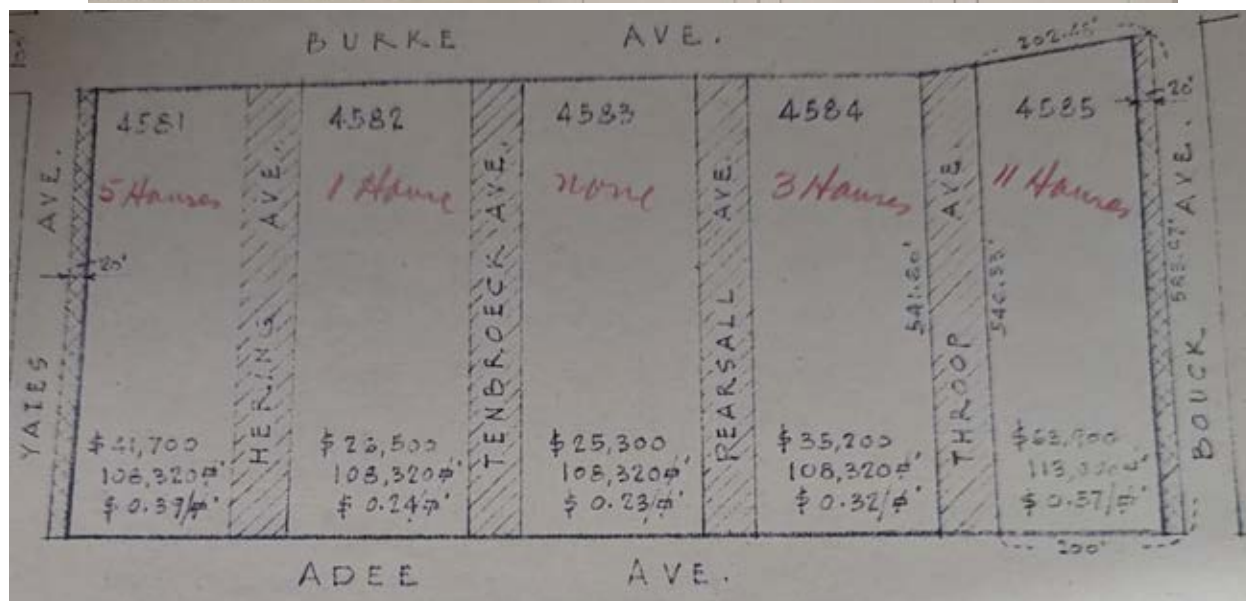
Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

Bronx, New York

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Figure 1: 1935 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map; 1947 Land Survey Sketch



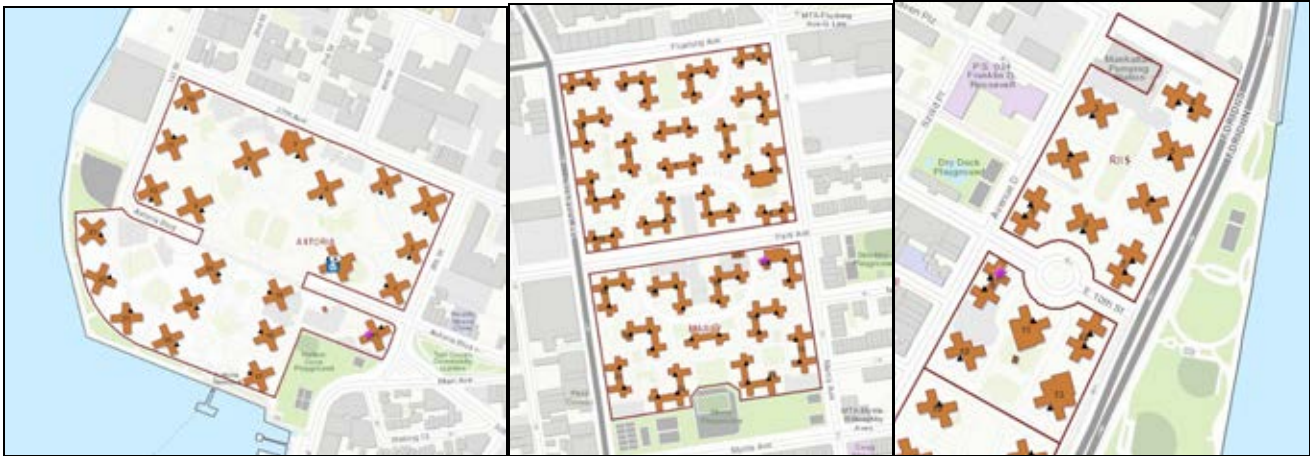
Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

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Figure 2: Aerial Map with Astoria Houses (left), Marcy Houses (center), and Riis Houses (right)



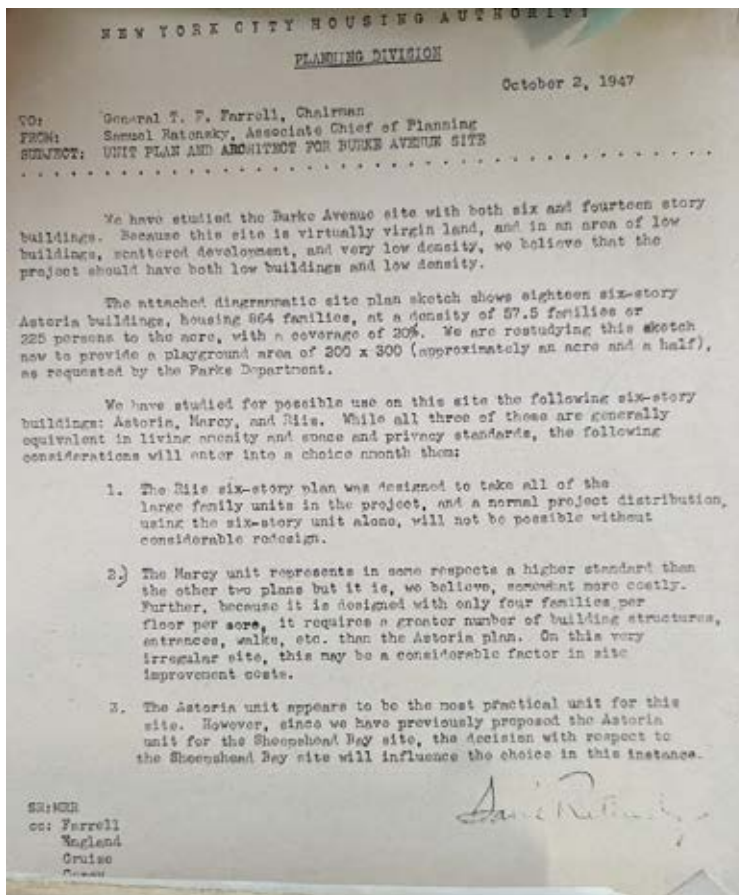
Eastchester Houses

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Figure 3: Internal NYCHA correspondence on Eastchester Houses



Eastchester Houses

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Figure 4: Daily News from June 21, 1949

V. JUNE 21, 1949

Wanted: Homes of Their Own

Piles of applications and an even greater number of applicants confront City Housing Authority's Mike Knoll at Bronx County Courthouse. The big crash started yesterday for 2,140 apartments in the new Pelham Parkway Houses and Eastchester Houses. Top income brackets for tenants are set between \$4,485 and \$4,900, and World War II veterans will get preference.

Mrs. Paul Monaghan, her husband, and their children, Thomas, 9 months old, and Paul Jr., 4, now live in two rooms of an old tenement at 436 E. 121st St. The family bathtub is in the kitchen. The toilet, in the hall, is shared by other tenants. She needs four rooms of her own.

Mrs. Rose Pietrangolare, her husband, Joseph, and their son, Frank, 2, live in a single room at 3094 Villa Ave., Bronx. They share the room with seven others. She needs three rooms for her little family.

Mrs. George Dustin, her son, Curtis, 16 months old, and her husband, a veteran, live in four rooms at 455 St. Ann's Ave., Bronx. They share apartment with her mother and six others. Expecting a baby in December, she needs four rooms for her expanding family.

Three veterans (l. to r.) Anthony Penzell, Anthony Yirraspe and John Greenfield make their positions clear. First to arrive, they sweated it out from 11 Sunday night.

we and four abreast line stretches down Wal- Ave. and around Bronx County Courthouse. re than 2,000 were in line at 8:30 A. M.

Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

Bronx, New York

County and State

Figure 5: 1950 photograph of Eastchester Houses



Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

Bronx, New York

County and State

Figure 6: Woodside Houses photograph (Google Street View)



Figure 7: Woodside Houses site plan (NYCHA Development Map)



Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

Bronx, New York

County and State

Figure 8: South Beach Houses photograph (Google Street View)



Figure 9: South Beach Houses site plan (NYCHA Development Map)



Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

Bronx, New York

County and State

Figure 10: Sheepshead Bay Houses photograph (Google Street View)



Figure 11: Sheepshead Bay Houses site plan (NYCHA Development Map)



Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

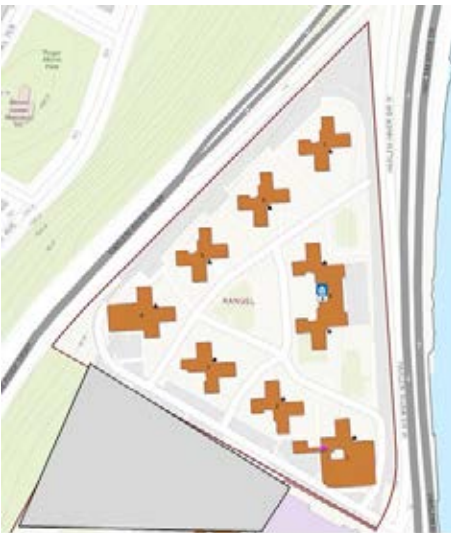
Bronx, New York

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Figure 12: Rangel Houses photograph (Google Street View)



Figure 13: Rangel Houses site plan (NYCHA Development Map)



Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

Bronx, New York

County and State

Figure 14: Astoria Houses photograph (Google Street View)



Figure 15: Astoria Houses site plan (NYCHA Development Map)



Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

Bronx, New York

County and State

Figure 16: Marlboro Houses photograph (Google Street View)



Figure 17: Marlboro Houses site plan (NYCHA Development Map)



Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

Bronx, New York

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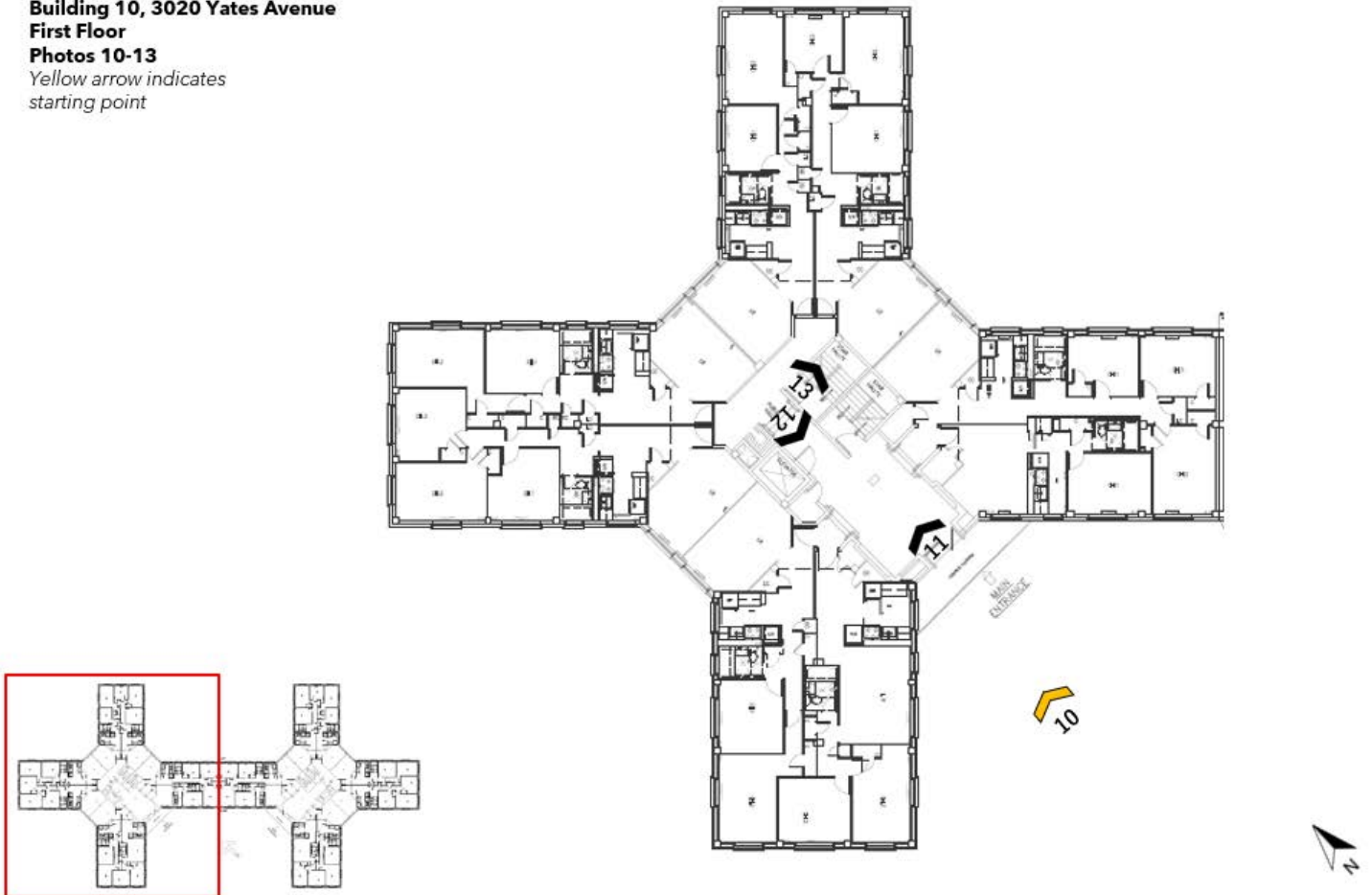
Figure 19: Building 10 Photo Key Plan, First Floor

Building 10, 3020 Yates Avenue

First Floor

Photos 10-13

Yellow arrow indicates starting point



Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

Bronx, New York

County and State

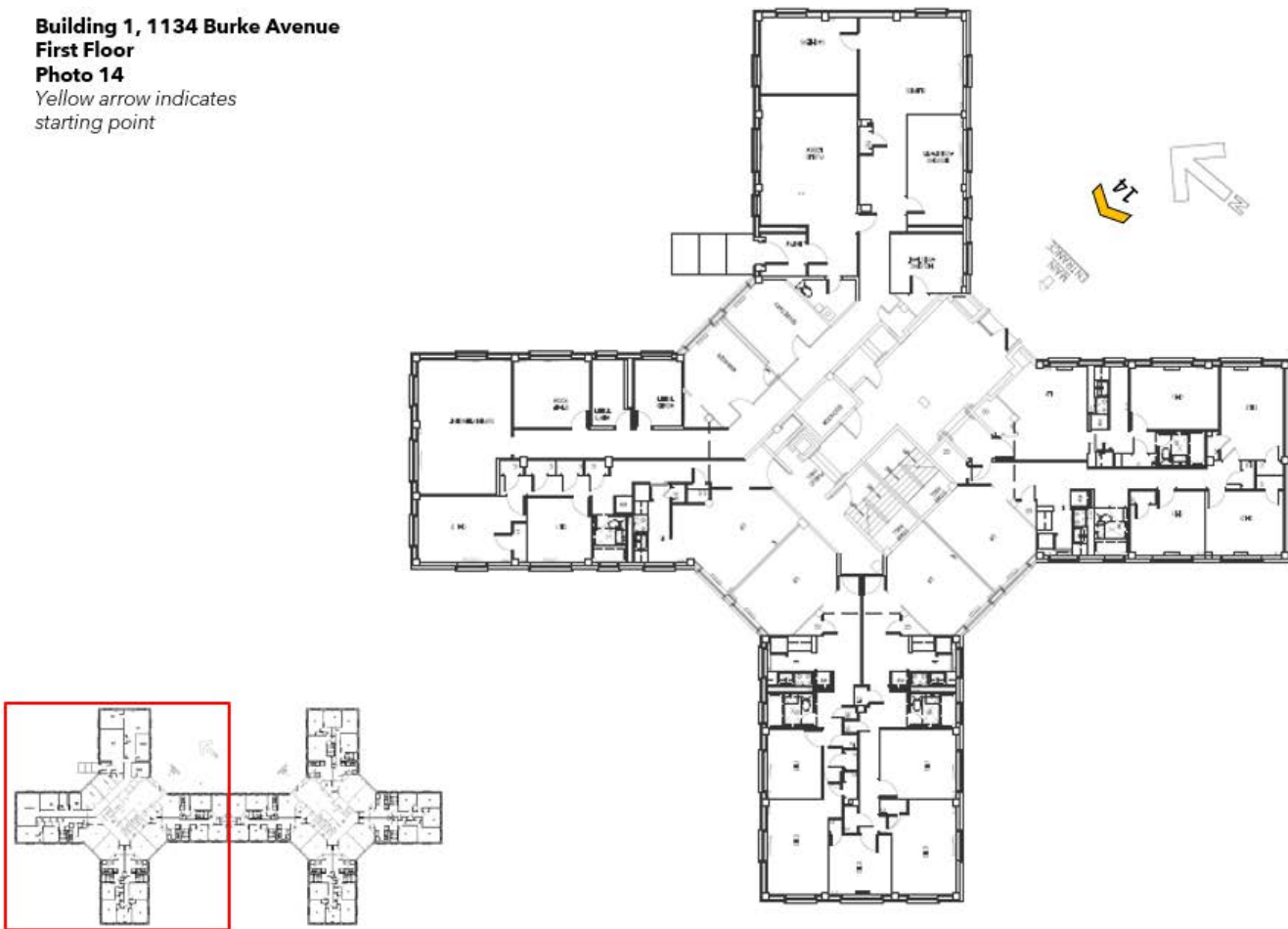
Figure 20: Building 1 Photo Key Plan, First Floor

Building 1, 1134 Burke Avenue

First Floor

Photo 14

Yellow arrow indicates starting point



Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

Bronx, New York

County and State

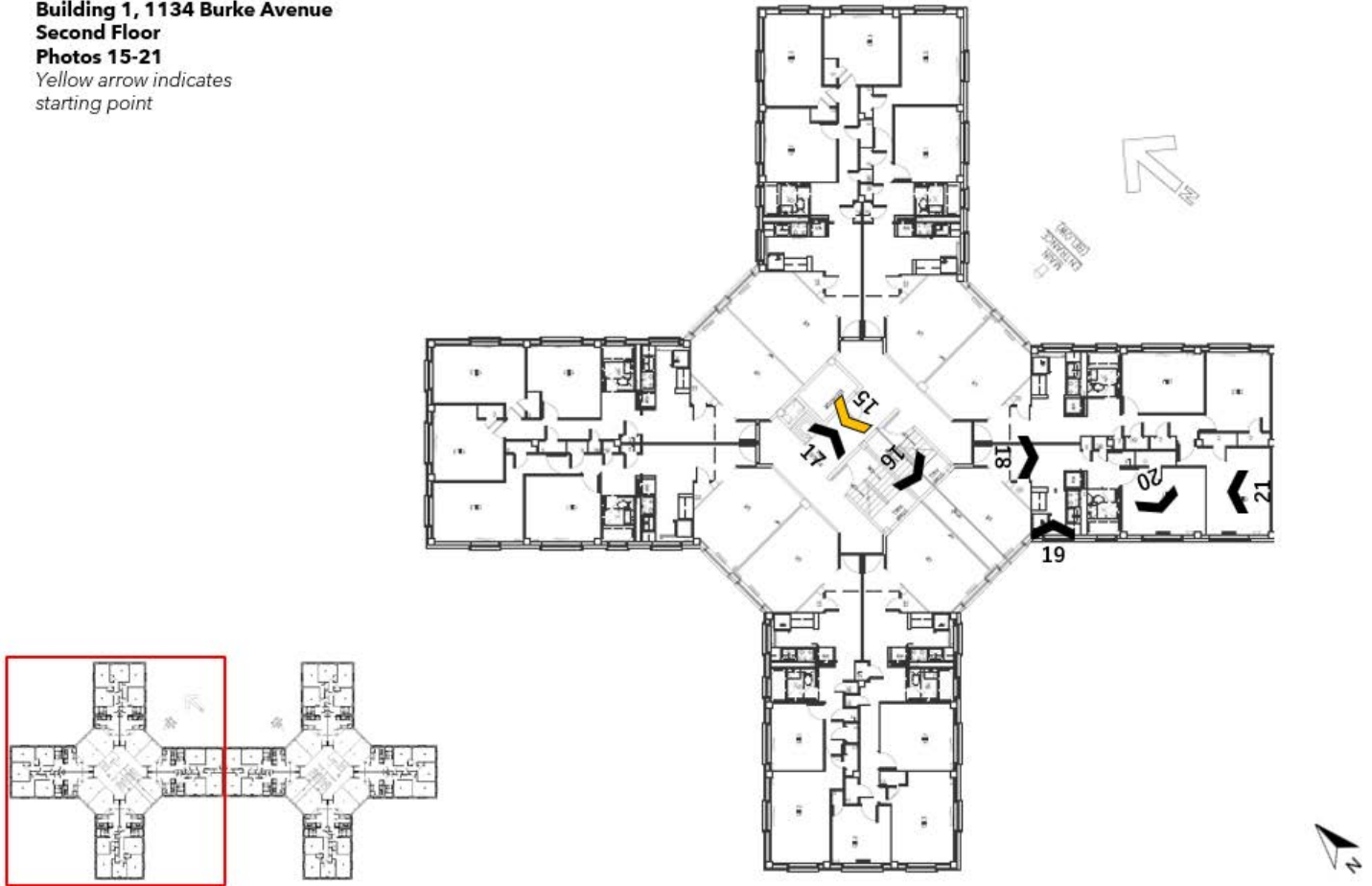
Figure 21: Building 1 Photo Key Plan, Second Floor

Building 1, 1134 Burke Avenue

Second Floor

Photos 15-21

*Yellow arrow indicates
starting point*



Eastchester Houses

Name of Property

Bronx, New York

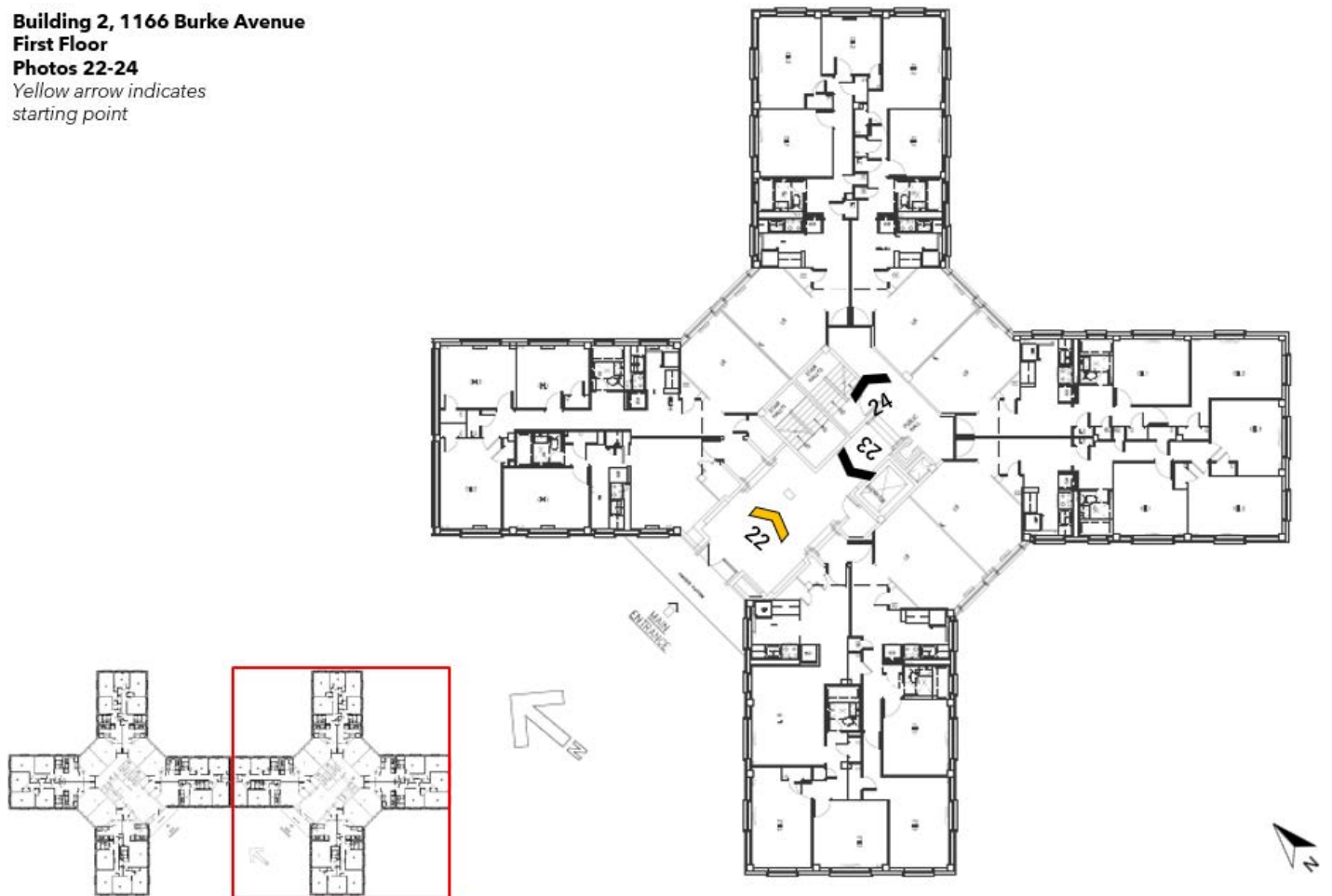
County and State

Figure 22: Building 2 Photo Key Plan, First Floor

**Building 2, 1166 Burke Avenue
First Floor**

Photos 22-24

*Yellow arrow indicates
starting point*



Eastchester Houses

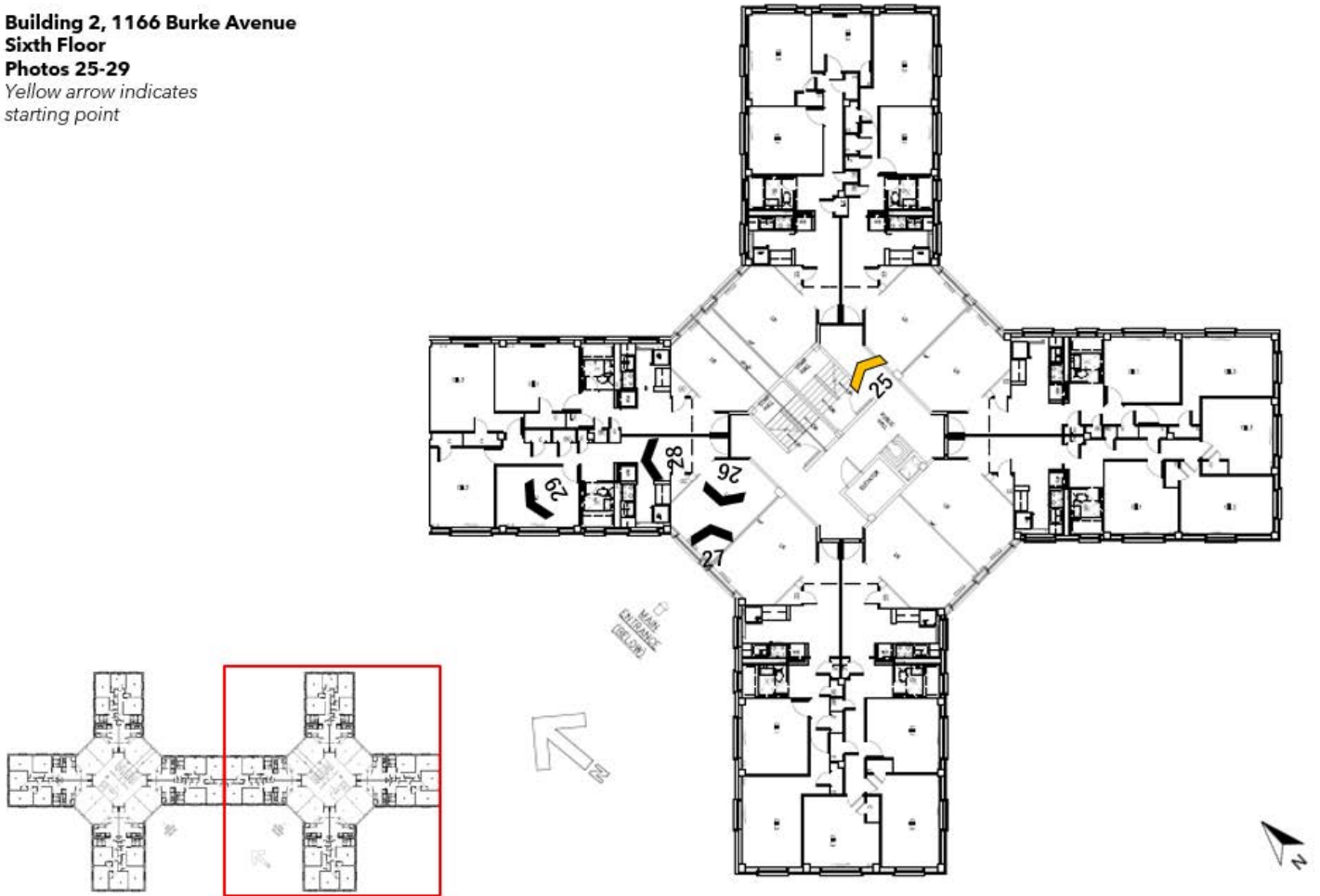
Name of Property

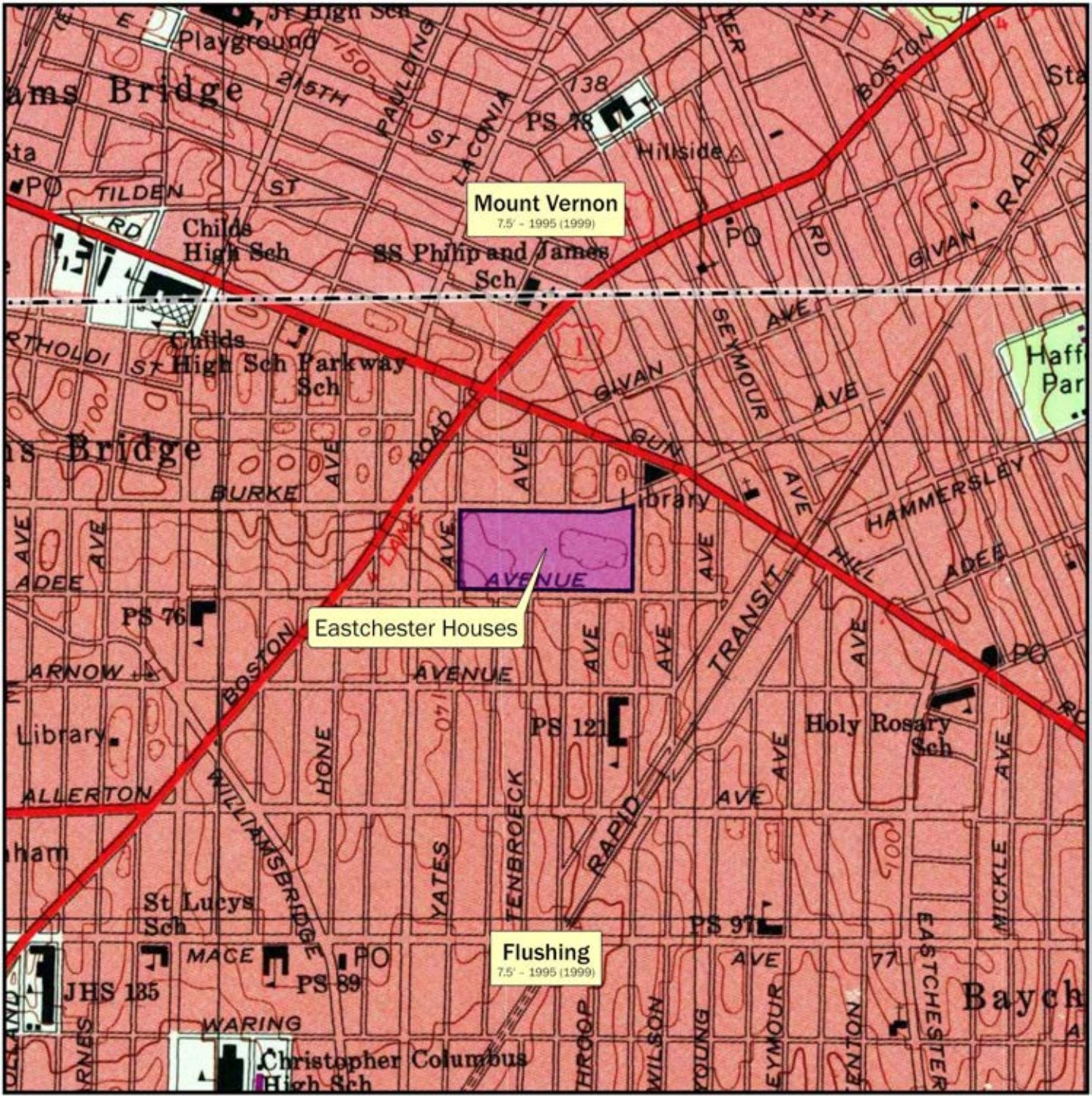
Bronx, New York

County and State

Figure 23: Building 2 Photo Key Plan, Sixth Floor

Building 2, 1166 Burke Avenue
Sixth Floor
Photos 25-29
Yellow arrow indicates
starting point





Mount Vernon

7.5' - 1995 (1999)

Eastchester Houses

Flushing

7.5' - 1995 (1999)



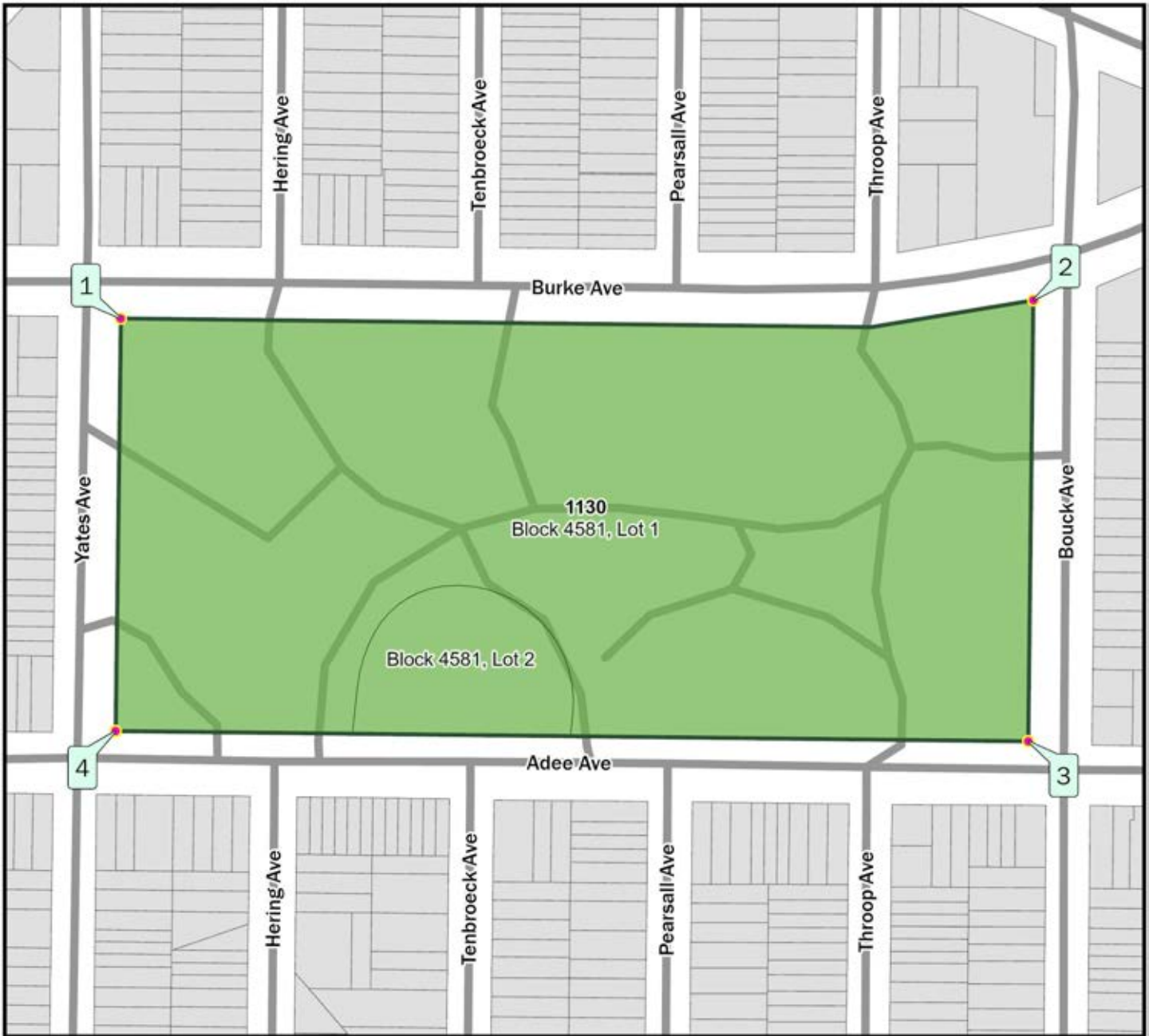
1:12,000



Eastchester Houses



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation



Point	Latitude	Longitude	Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	40.871083	-73.854393	3	40.869524	-73.850136
2	40.871105	-73.850084	4	40.869603	-73.854443



1:2,400



Nomination Boundary (14.82 ac)



Tax Parcels



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation



Point	Latitude	Longitude	Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	40.871083	-73.854393	3	40.869524	-73.850136
2	40.871105	-73.850084	4	40.869603	-73.854443



1:2,400



Nomination Boundary (14.82 ac)



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation





1245
1245
1245










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