

## Village of Thomaston

---

**From:** Donald Stern <donstern1@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 1, 2024 9:44 AM  
**To:** Julie Georgopoulos; floralpark4@gmail.com; Gary Noren; Ben Marzouk; Village of Thomaston  
**Subject:** Thomaston Landmarks Commission  
**Attachments:** JG\_email.docx; JG2.docx  
  
**Categories:** Landmark 2024

### Memorandum to Members of the Thomaston Landmarks Commission

From: Don Stern, Chair

Date: October 1, 2024

Re: Landmarking request for Korean Methodist Church property on Northern Boulevard.

I thought it would be useful to put in one place a brief summary of the facts we have so far concerning this site, beyond those raised in the landmarking request. Julie and Carol have toured the site, and Julie has done significant research involving various sources as to the historical and architectural significance of the site. I have reviewed the Village building files concerning the site, and undertaken internet searches concerning the history of the site.

In compliance with the Open Meetings Law, it is not intended that we discuss this memo, or any other matter relating to the potential landmarking, prior to our meeting on October 28, 2024. Accordingly, please do not "Reply All" to this memo, or discuss the issues with more than one other member of the commission (recall that discussions between 2 members of the Commission are ok, but discussions/emails among 3 or more members would likely constitute a prohibited private meeting under the Open Meetings Law).

This memo and attachments will be posted to the Village website so the public is equally aware of these facts.

1. Last February, we received a resident's landmarking request for the Korean Methodist Church property located at 715 Northern Boulevard. A copy of that request was previously forwarded to members of the Commission.
2. The property was apparently originally deeded in the 1870s by Joseph Spinney, then a prominent Great Neck businessman, to the Methodist Church for the construction of a church on the site. The first church building was completed around 1872. Roughly one hundred years later, in 1982, the New York Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church of New York deeded the property to the Trustees and Congregation of Korean United Methodist Church of New York, subject to a deed restriction that the property "be held, kept, maintained as a place of divine worship of the United Methodist ministry and members of the United Methodist Church...." This deed restriction would bind successor owners of the site, unless waived by the New York Conference of the Methodist Church of New York.
3. There are three structures now on the property, so our task would be to decide which of these, if any, deserves landmarking (or whether the entire site should be landmarked): (1) the original Church building, (2) the Parish House, and (3) the Parsonage.
  - The Church was originally built in 1872, significantly refurbished in 1945, burned in 1948, and replaced in the period 1951-56 by a new church. Based on photographs in the Village Hall and elsewhere, the new

church appears similar to, but somewhat different from, the original church. For example, significant portions of the new church spire are brick, while the original church was all wood.

- The Parish House was built in the late 1800s after the church was completed (based on newspaper accounts) and, after significant restoration on one or more occasions (as recently as 2012), appears substantially in its original Gothic style, although exterior materials (windows and cladding) appear to have been replaced over time.

- The Parsonage was constructed later than the church and parsonage, although the date is not known. It appears to be quite typical for a residential building, having been modified over time, including vinyl siding.

4. For reference, I have attached Julie’s more-detailed description of her research and of her tour of the property with Carol.

5. Recall that our job is to determine (i) First, whether one or more of the structures on the site (or the entire site) constitute “Landmarks” as defined in the Village Code, and (ii) Second, if we determine that one or more structures (or the entire site) satisfies the definition of “Landmark” in the Village Code, should the Commission actually “designate” that structure or structures (or the entire site) as a Landmark. As noted in previous reports of the Commission, the two questions are distinct, and reflect different considerations. Stated differently, if a structure satisfies the definition of "Landmark" in the Village Code, the Commission then has discretion whether or not to "designate" the structure as a Landmark for purposes of the Village Code. I have previously provided you with a link to the landmarking provisions of the Village Code (which contain the definition of “Landmark”), as well as a copy of the Commission's 2023 Harmony House report which indicates factors previously taken into account by the Commission in determining whether or not a structure should be “designated” as a Landmark under the Village Code.

I look forward to seeing you at our meeting on Monday, October 28, at 7:30pm at the Village Hall (Carol and Ben, I will call you before the meeting to get acquainted).

Don