

# A few things to remember before voting on 715 Northern Boulevard...

## *Thomaston's law is very clear on the analysis of a landmark*

The Thomaston Landmark Commission's sole duty is to determine if a structure meets the requirements without adding novel interpretation that does not appear originally. Possible financial hardship is not included in this analysis. Full stop. It is also the Thomaston Trustees' obligation to affirm or modify, not approve or deny a finding. The word deny isn't in the statute at all. These are manufactured subtexts that strain the integrity of the entire board.

## *There is no one size-fits-all in the preservation world*

In the preservation world, there are many ways to be deemed historic. Even when there is no original fabric left, ample precedent establishes the intangible value of recognizing association with something of significance as satisfying even very high rigor of proof. Colonial Williamsburg—long seen as global standard of interpretive history—is much a mere interpretation in its own right. The Capitol, for instance, was deliberately created in opposition to period record (and without the original pieces) as an approximation of how the architects believed it should have been. It is still seen as an invaluable site today for telling the story of that area. As one of the earliest churches for Great Neck and the sole link to Joseph Spinney, 715 Northern shines for the role it has played in Thomaston's story, even if nothing else where still intact.

## *Hundreds of other congregations in New York are landmarks already*

On Long Island, places like Roslyn, Oyster Bay, and East Hampton all contain numerous landmarked churches that comply with their regulations. In New York City alone, there are over 160 churches that are designated, ranging from those with swelling endowments to ones with just a few parishioners left. They are all still able to function under the oversight that designation brings, belying any argument of an impossible burden. Should an owner be subject to hardship after attempting in good faith to find feasible design solutions, there is a already clause within the Thomaston code in §120-8(C) to seek relief for demonstrated financial burden. § 120-8(A) allows for maintenance to occur like other properties do for regular upkeep.

## *Landmarking ensures a future, regardless of who the owner will be*

Through designation, this property can outlive all of us regardless of what the use will be or how many owners there are. If the United Methodist Church decides to sell and the deed is void, there will no longer be a restriction and demolition is almost certain otherwise.

## *There are ample grant opportunities to aid the worthy Korean Church*

Well-endowed nonprofits like the Gladys Brooks Foundation, Achelis & Bodman Foundation, and the Charina Endowment Fund regularly give awards to restoration projects. New York State has extensive grant monies to support both urgent and proactive need.