



New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
 Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
 Peebles Island, PO Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189

518-237-8643

RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: 01/04/07

STAFF: Kathy Howe

PROPERTY: Amsterdam Houses

MCD: Manhattan

ADDRESS: Amsterdam Ave. to West End Ave.
 Between West 61st & 64th Streets

COUNTY: New York Co.

USN: 06101.015790

- I. Property is individually listed on SR/NR:
 name of listing:
- Property is a contributing component of a SR/NR district:
 name of district:
- II. Property meets eligibility criteria.
- Property contributes to a district which appears to meet eligibility criteria.
- Pre SRB: Post SRB: SRB date

Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- D. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Amsterdam Houses is located on a terraced site between West 61st Street to West 64th Street, from Amsterdam and West End Avenues in Manhattan. The apartment complex consists of 10 six-story brick buildings having "T" and "H" shaped footprints and 3 thirteen-story cruciform brick towers on landscaped grounds. Planning for this New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) complex began in 1941 but the complex wasn't completed until 1948. The complex meets NR Criterion A in the areas of politics/government and social history and Criterion C in the area of community planning and development.

Amsterdam Houses represent the response by the state and local government to provide affordable housing for low-income families and returning World War II veterans. The complex was financed by a

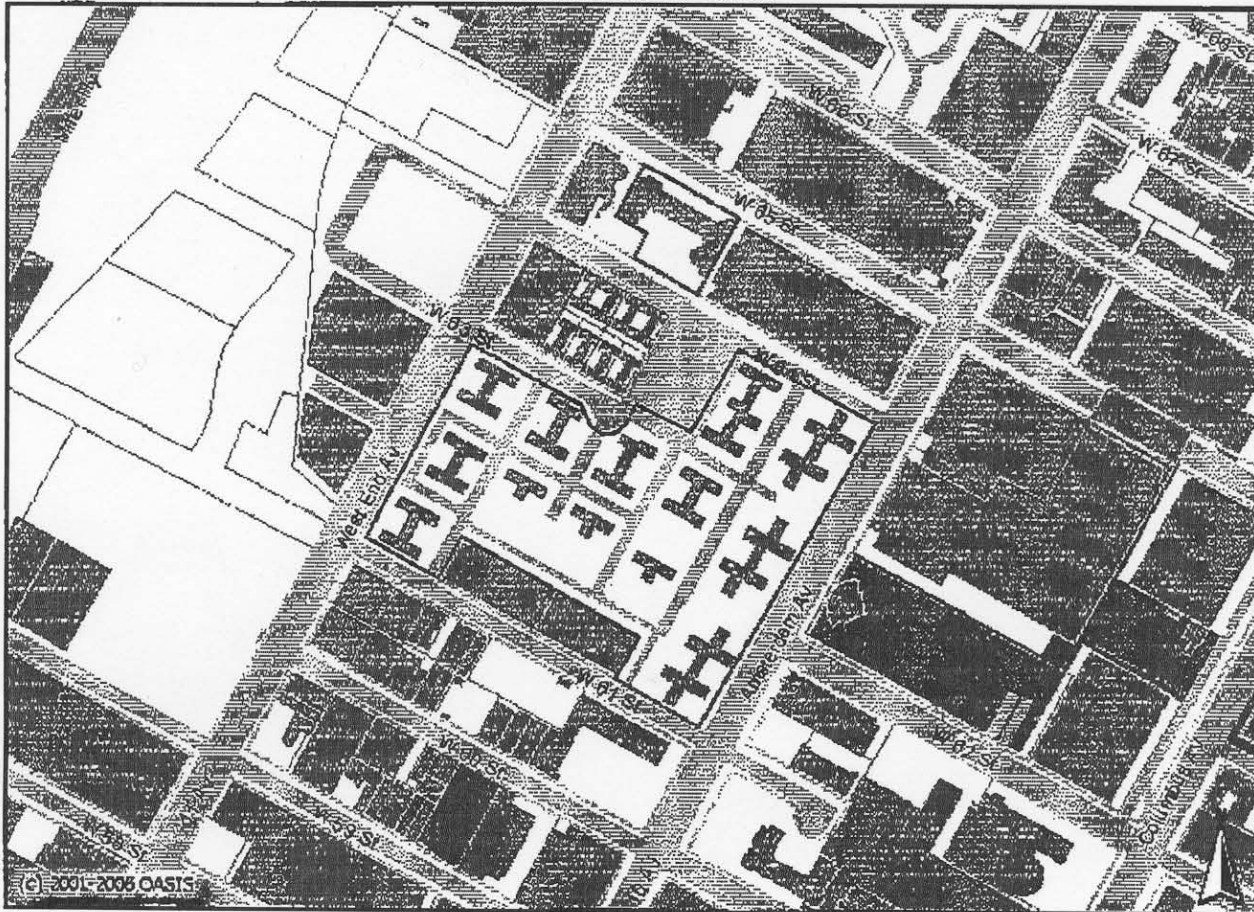
\$7.7 million loan from the New York State Division of Housing through a subsidy agreement with the city. New York State was progressive at the time in that it was one of the few states with its own public housing construction programs. While the New York State Housing Law passed in 1926 encouraging the formation of local housing authorities, it had little impact locally until 1934 when NYCHA was established.

The racial and ethnic diversity of the original residents of Amsterdam Houses reflects the thinking of key planners, architects, housing reformers, and laws of post- World War II New York. NYCHA's selection of original residents was a response to the state mandate that state-aided public housing projects bar discrimination based on race, color, creed or religion, as well as to both state and federal laws that were passed giving returning veterans preference in public housing.

The plan and design of Amsterdam Houses reflect the progressive thinking of its prominent design team: architects Grosvenor Atterbury, Arthur C. Holden, and Harvey Wiley Corbett, and landscape architects Gilmore D. Clarke and Michael Rapuano. Amsterdam Houses is notable for its open, classically-inspired plan with a central landscaped axis oriented toward the Hudson River and for the warmth and subtle articulation of its brickwork. The complex stands as one of the last publicly-funded housing developments of the post-World War II era to align with the city grid as opposed to the slightly later "tower in the park" schemes that relied on larger-scale super blocks.

The complex has undergone minor alterations including the slight widening of paths and the replacement of original windows. Despite these changes, the complex is remarkably intact to its 1948 completion date. Amsterdam Houses retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

OASIS Map Amsterdam Houses



width of map is 0.50 miles.

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|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Streets | Bridges/Overpasses | Block/Lot Boundaries |
| Buildings | NYCHA Properties | Community Gardens |
| New Jersey State Parks | NYC Parks | Playgrounds |
| Green Spaces Along Streets | Cemeteries | Piers |
| Living Memorials to 9-11-2001 | Streams, Lakes, Waterbodies | NJ Lakes |

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Map provided by the
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(www.OASISnyc.net)
of New York City

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