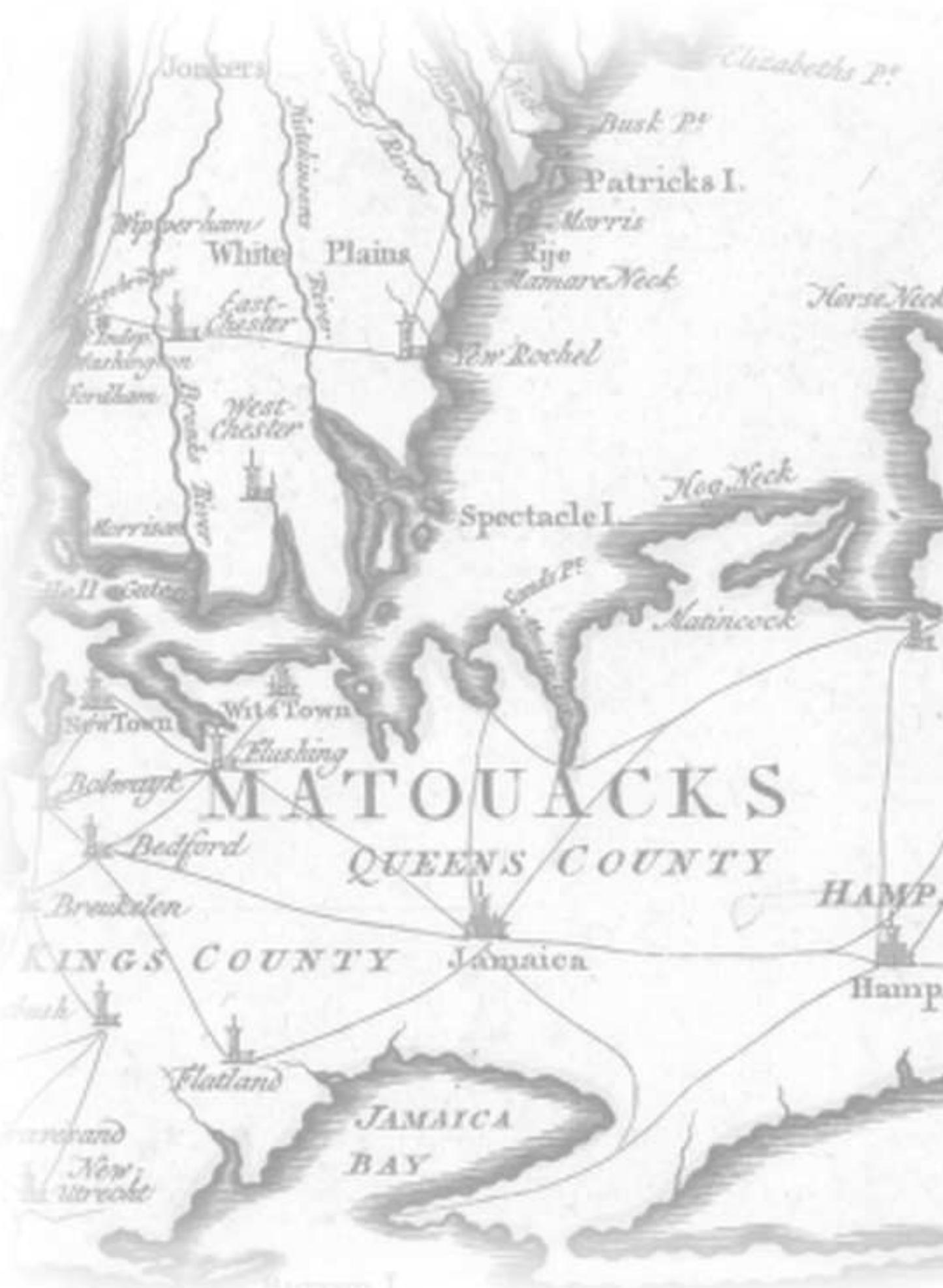


Long Island Traditions & Village of Great Neck Plaza

Great Neck Plaza

Historic Walking Tour





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QUEENS COUNTY

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*Long Island Traditions
and
Village of Great Neck Plaza*

Great Neck Plaza Historic Walking Tour

Introduction by
Mayor Jean Celender

Forward by
Nancy Solomon



Forward

BY NANCY SOLOMON
LONG ISLAND TRADITIONS

When we hear the words “suburbia” and “Long Island” we normally imagine rows of identical houses designed in the post-World War II move to the suburbs. Yet most communities have long histories on Long Island that reflect generations of settlement, growth and change. The Village of Great Neck Plaza is one such place. From a small town settled by Native Americans, farmers and tradespeople, the Village is now home to people of all backgrounds and nationalities. In this guide we will visit some of the places where people lived and worked. In looking at modest workers homes to ornate apartment buildings, we hope you will consider the history of the Village as a place of discovery and surprises. Imagine yourself as an explorer and join us on a tour that recalls these experiences.



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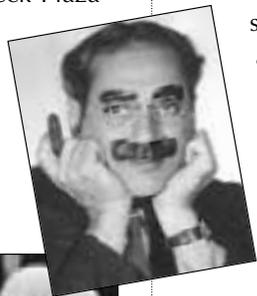
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Great Neck Plaza Historic Walking Tour

INTRODUCTION BY MAYOR JEAN CELENDER

The history of Great Neck Plaza is a distinctive one full of stories from luminaries to humble working people. Known as the Gold Coast in its heyday, personalities such as Oscar Hammerstein, Groucho Marx, Eugene O'Neill, W. C. Fields, Fanny Brice, P.G. Wodehouse, Sid Caesar, and F. Scott Fitzgerald once called Great Neck home.



Great Neck Plaza is one of nine incorporated villages which make up the Great Neck peninsula. Great Neck's zip codes include some of the most exclusive and desirable addresses in the United States. The Village's apartment buildings and single-family homes line Great Neck Plaza's immaculate streets. Middle Neck Road is a high-end shopping district with a vast array of

boutique shops, restaurants and services. Great Neck Plaza is also home to a historic 1925 Long Island Rail Road station.

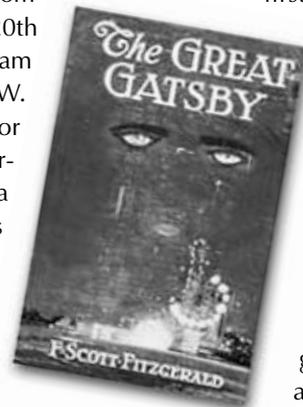
Our residential areas, in walking distance of the downtown, are steeped in history – from the modest workers, homes on Pearce and Walnut Streets, to the elaborate Wychwood Apartments. Famous business and community leaders in the 20th century, including William R. Grace and Walter W. Davis, were responsible for building these neighborhoods, graced with a multitude of famous artists, actors and writers.

There are also many other historic sites and buildings on the peninsula that are worth visiting, including the Tidal Grist Mill in Saddle Rock (circa 1700), the United States Merchant Marine Academy, the George M. Cohan Estate where

"Yankee Doodle Dandy" was written, Steppingstone and Kings Point Parks, St. Aloysius and All Saints Church and F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald's rented home at 5 Gateway Drive.

The Village has marvelous buildings with splendid architecture and character that we can all appreciate. The Village has a long history of caring and protecting its history, beginning in 1976 when the Village adopted its first landmark ordinance.

Since then we have established a Historic Preservation Commission that will be actively involved in preserving our history and culture. The Village is currently developing programs and archival projects so that future generations can learn about the history of our community. We invite you to explore Great Neck Plaza and to enjoy our efforts to preserve its character as one of Long Island's Gold Coast communities. ■





Bloodgood Cutter

Early Settlements 1600-1850

The Great Neck peninsula was first settled by Native Americans who supported themselves through hunting, farming and fishing. They lived along the shorelines and established trading relationships with Dutch and English explorers. When the European visitors colonized the peninsula they brought African slaves in order to clear and farm the land. In 1799 New York State abolished slavery, stipulating that all slaves had to be free by 1827.

One of the first European families to settle in Great Neck Plaza was the Allen family. They worked as farmers and merchants, passing their land down to their children. Another prominent landowner was Bloodgood Cutter (1817 - 1906). Cutter was best known as a potato farmer and poet. He was good friends with Mark Twain, taking a trip with him on the steamer Quaker City in 1867. Among Cutter's land holdings were several acres on Cutter Mill Road, so named after him.

Getting Connected: 1850-1900

Throughout its history Great Neck was valuable because of its proximity to New York City. Various transportation projects bridged the gap, beginning in 1866 when the Flushing Northside Railroad was extended from Flushing to Great Neck. In the 1870s and 1880s Queens Boulevard (Jericho Turnpike) and Northern Boulevard were widened and paved and extended to Nassau County. These changes spurred investors and speculators to buy land in the rural hamlet. While some built grand estates, others waited in the wings.



William R. Grace

these same families continue to reside in the modest homes.

At the same time William Russell Grace, industrialist and former Mayor of New York City, began buying property in Great Neck Plaza.

Grace would become one of the most influential persons in the Village. He brought real estate investors to the small town, envisioning a community of businessmen and celebrities from New York City, supported by working class shopkeepers and service workers.

Alex Robertson built "The Robertson Block" located at 29-35 North Station Plaza.

The Victorian building sported a large storefront space and upstairs apartments that housed a general store and a movie theatre. Its bay windows gave shoppers and residents a birds-eye view of the station and street life. In later years the building included Brooks Tavern and the Club Tavern. Grace hired the mechanics and engineers who worked on the railroad, renting them homes on nearby Park Place at \$10 - \$12 per month. The simple 1- and 2-story houses lined the downtown streets, providing inexpensive shelter to those in need. At the same time the train lines brought weekend visitors from the city, eager to enjoy the fresh

Robertson Block

29-35 N. Station Plaza , built c. 1870, Architect Unknown





Brookdale Hotel, built c. 1930, no longer standing, was an example of Colonial Revival architecture.

air and to see the celebrities who settled in Great Neck. Although the houses are gone, the Robertson building remains.

New Beginnings: 1900-1910

By the early 1900s railroads from coast to coast had been completed, the California gold rush and mining boom were underway, and new millionaires looked for opportunities to invest their wealth. William K. Vanderbilt Jr. constructed Motor Parkway, a toll road from Queens to his Ronkonkoma estate, giving new motorists a leisure activity and racers opportunities to prove themselves. At the same time others built grand estates and homes on the North Shore including Great Neck. Their comings and goings would later form the substance of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.

Farmers like Eddie Allen and immigrants found work driving hacks from the train station to people's homes, and as estate workers. Workers houses along Chelsea Place, Ash Place and Canterbury Road were built in styles similar to those near the station. The simple frame structures housed single families and couples including immigrants from Eastern

Europe. None of the original houses remain. The Robertson building became a popular gathering spot for local residents as well as the theatre crowd. The completion of the LIRR tunnel to Manhattan meant that more visitors could vacation on weekends or during the summer in the seaside town. Yachts anchored at Steppingstone Park near the Merchant Marine Academy, taking trips into town for dinner and a show. All this activity led to great interest in the Village.

Workers' Homes and Small Businesses: 1910-1920

By 1910, with the completion of the LIRR extension, the Village was poised for expansion. Great Neck Estates and Saddle Rock were completed, and in 1911 both villages were incorporated.



11 Middle Neck Rd
built c. 1913, James O'Connor, Architect

In 1913 William R. Grace completed 11 Middle Neck Road, also known as the Grace Building [**Tour Stop 19**] which housed offices and stores across from the train station. Designed by architect James O'Connor, the building reflects English style building traditions including a hip roof, red brick exterior, ground floor stores and upstairs offices. Through the years the "Grace Block" as it came to be called, would undergo various transformations, including upstairs residential apartments. The English style would dominate the Village, including its building and street names and public and private gardens. The large scale of the building also symbolized Grace's power in the community.



8 Bond Street
built c. 1926, James O'Connor, Architect

Architect James O'Connor was also responsible for the colonial style building at 8 Bond Street [**Tour Stop 12**], designated a village landmark in 1978 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This handsome brick building has classical colonial features such as a slate gable roof, period showroom windows and wood belt course with dentil molding above the first story. In its gable ends are classic round oculus windows. The building was constructed in 1926 and is an excellent example of Georgian Revival architecture.

By 1914 the peninsula's population was approximately 5,000. In 1916 the Great Neck Trust Company, now Citibank [**Tour Stop 18**], built its headquarters at the corner of Middle Neck Road and Grace Avenue. The Greek classical facade includes towering pilasters, a full cornice entablature,

ionic columns and an expansive lobby. Its size and visibility indicated that the bank was a major financial resource for the community.

Shortly thereafter the Nassau Building was erected at 45 Middle Neck Road where it remains. It is similar in design to Citibank with classical features and a limestone façade. It included street-level shops and offices upstairs, bringing workers to the growing downtown.



Citibank
51 Middle Neck Road
built c. 1919–1925, Architect Unknown

During 1916 – 1919, the economic growth of the Village quieted, as the country entered World War I. On July 5, 1919 Harry Krahn, owner of the Krahn hotel, sold a portion of his property for use as a restaurant. The Wychwood Garden Tea Room, the site of small parties and gatherings, was popular among elite residents. In a few years the site would be transformed as the Village itself was transformed.

An Oasis: Apartment Life 1920-1930

By the 1920s Great Neck was a destination for the wealthy, the theatrical crowd and sailors. Kings Point and Kensington were incorporated in 1920-22. The Kensington School enrolled children of different ethnic backgrounds, reflecting Great Neck's new cultural diversity. At the same time residents built two new churches. The construction of St. Paul's Church [Tour Stop 8] began in 1921 and was completed in 1924. The Community Church [Tour Stop 15], across the



Great Neck Train Station
S. Station Plaza, looking north on Middle Neck Road, built c. 1924. In 1935 the train tracks were lowered for safer crossings by pedestrians and motor vehicles alike.

street from the Kensington School was also built in the early 1920s. In 1925 a new train station [Tour Stop 1] was built that remains the center of Village life.

The Colony House Hotel, formerly on Grace Avenue and Bond Street, boasted 6-stories, a full-service restaurant and accommodations for several hundred people. It was popular among actors and theatre goers, along with local wheeler-dealers and speculators.

With the growth of downtown many developers started building elaborate apartment buildings designed for upper-class city dwellers. The residents included former estate owners, doctors and other professionals, along with wealthy businessmen. The first

of these apartments was the Kenwood Apartments soon joined by the Wychwood apartments at 8 Barstow Road [Tour Stop 2]. The Wychwood was developed by businessman Walter W. Davis who envisioned a



Community Church
2 Stoner Avenue
built c. 1924, Architect Unknown



St. Paul's Church
68 Grace Avenue, built c. 1924, Mann & MacNeille, Architects

grand residence reminiscent of French and English Renaissance architecture. Designed by Schwartz and Gross of Manhattan, it would rise to an impressive eight stories including luxury penthouse apartments with formal fireplaces and mantel pieces, hardwood floors, enclosed sun porches and landscaped gardens designed by Mann & MacNeille.



Wychwood Apartments
8 Barstow Road, built c. 1928
Schwartz and Gross Architects

Shortly after the Wychwood was completed, construction was finished on Westminster Hall Apartments at 4 Maple Avenue [Tour Stop 14]. The building was similar to the Wychwood, drawing upon English architecture and design for its expansive apartments. The 6-story building included Tudor-style exposed beams, brick and fieldstone ground floors, decorative half-timbering and stucco above. According to New York Times adver-



Westminster Apartments
4 Maple Drive, built c. 1929, Architect Unknown



New York Telephone Building
Barstow & Welwyn Road, built c. 1929, Architect Unknown

tisements the Westminster included “automatic elevators with attendants, a completely equipped gymnasium with showers, a fine roof garden, General Electric refrigerators, maid service, servant’s quarters, and sound-proof walls.” Benefits included convenience to shopping and recreation and “polite and efficient service.” During WWII the Westminster served as a mini-hospital for war emergencies.

Just six months later the New York Telephone Company [Tour Stop 3] broke ground for its new offices. The site reflected the latest architectural

styles with an ornamental brick façade and reinforced concrete. The building was completed in 10 months, and opened in March 1930. Other luxury buildings included 1 Hillside Avenue [Tour Stop 17] which had expansive lobbies, paneled walls and decorative interior woodwork. It also has English Tudor style details and woodwork including a courtyard and patio accessible only to residents.

In addition to a hectic building pace



1 Hillside Avenue
built c. 1931, Joseph Unger, Architect
below: interior lobby of 1 Hillside Avenue





7 Walnut place
built c. 1919, Architect Unknown

there were also major social changes in the Village. Immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe including Jews, Italians, Poles and Lithuanians worked in small businesses. They found homes along Walnut and Pearce Place, living side by side for many generations. 7 Walnut Place [Tour Stop 20] like others, is a modest frame house that is typical of many workers houses of that era. Local religious institutions welcomed them and provided them with meeting spaces for worship, employment services, housing and social activities. New businesses included a kosher butcher shop, several kosher delicatessens and Jewish tailor shops. The production of Purim and Hanukkah plays became part of community life. Pastimes included annual summer visits by Clyde Beatty's circus, movies at the Playhouse Theatre where 15¢ bought a Saturday double feature, or ice cream at Kriegal's Ice Cream Parlor.

With the arrival of the automobile, new car dealerships were established.

Belgrave Motors, today's Tower Ford, built an impressive showroom with European styling and architectural details. A Cadillac showroom [Tour Stop 16] was located on Middle Neck Road across from the Squire Theatre. With the new autos, the Village also began its attempts to coordinate traffic and parking, a struggle that continues today.



"Cadillac" Barron Building
82 Middle Neck Road
built c.1907, Architect Unknown

Depression Era: 1930 – 1940

With the stock market crash of October 1929, many proposed developments were either postponed or abandoned altogether. However other plans continued.

In April 1930 the Village of Great Neck Plaza was incorporated, with George Hollis Kennehan as its first mayor. In 1931 the Villages of Russell Gardens and Thomaston were also incorporated. At the same time a

WPA* (Works Progress Administration) and Home Relief Office opened, providing assistance to those in need. Some families had to sell their homes, moving into nearby apartment buildings. The playhouses stopped production, and many theatre professionals no longer came to the village. The Zenith Motors gas station installed a slot machine in order to make ends meet. Better off families donated clothes and food to local churches. Construction all but stopped until the mid-1930s.

In January 1935, the LIRR lowered its tracks, a change that prevented auto and pedestrian accidents at the train crossing. To get the nation's economy going the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) provided low-cost loans for apartments and houses. In January 1936 the Callan Brothers announced their plans to build "Wyngate" [Tour Stop 6] a residential development with house prices at \$12,000-\$18,000. The houses set a new standard in the Village. Advertisements proclaimed "The atmosphere of peace and charm is maintained at Wyngate by a group of congenial fellow-owners as the surest guarantee of life-long happiness to all home owners here." The homes featured "General Electric Oil furnaces, winter air conditioning, GE kitchen equipment, slate roofs, sewers and concrete roads and Old Shade Trees." Advertisements stressed their convenience to New York City and 2-car garages. The Callans, like other developers, did not sell to Jewish or African American families.

The Depression also brought changes in existing buildings. On March 4, 1937 the newspapers reported that the Udall building at 30-32 Middle Neck Road was to be torn down for a new 1-story brick building for a market. The longtime Chin Chin Inn and Great Neck Flower Shop were forced to move from the 100 year-old structure.

In order to raise business at local stores the Great Neck Record



A "Wyngate" Home
16 Welwyn Road, built c. 1937, Sterling M. Palm, Architect



US Post Office

1 Welwyn Road, built c. 1939, William Dewey Foster and Louis Simon, Architects

profiled local shops including Catherine Scheiner’s Knitting Shop and Albert Antor’s new jewelry store. Also receiving attention were the automobile showrooms. At the same time it was apparent that the Depression had hurt the Village. The Cadillac showroom in the Barron building [Tour Stop 16] closed its doors. Other stores including Kriegal’s and Uhlman’s bakery continued. When World War II began Uhlman’s put a notice in their window saying “We are not Nazis, we are Americans.” However several German storeowners were the subjects of harassment.

Like other Long Island communities, Great Neck received WPA funds for a new post office [Tour Stop 4] that was previously located in the Wychwood lobby. The new facility was one of the best examples of

classical architecture combined with modern simplicity. Louis Simon and William Dewey Foster designed the steel frame building that opened in 1939. The round entranceway and concrete driveway was designed for car parking, a novelty at the time. Sculptor Gaetano Cecere carved an impressive eagle above the main entranceway. Other decorative features included a terrazzo floor and walnut veneer wall panels above marble wainscoting.

In 1939 the Dunstone Garden Apartments opened at 19 Barstow Road [Tour Stop 7], designed by Wesley S. Bessell. These were the first of many garden apartments that would come to dominate the Village. The picturesque landscaped courtyard and modest 1 and 2-bedroom apartments included attached garages, recessed



Dunstone Garden Apartments

19 Barstow Road, built c. 1939, Wesley Sherwood Bessell, Architect

bookcases, fireplaces, cedar closets, modern gas stoves, oil heat and bedroom telephone outlets. Its Dutch Colonial style balanced the English style homes at Wyngate, both popular styles of the colonial era. The two developments remain essentially as they were originally built. Their modest size attracted young couples and individuals.

By the close of the 1930s Great Neck Plaza was ready to resume its residential and commercial growth. Although many projects had been delayed, investors had not abandoned the Village. With the Federal government actively supporting new investment, the Village would become a premier example of affordable housing.

A World Transformed: 1945 – 55

With the end of the Depression and the beginning of World War II, many investors were hesitant to build in the Village. The Village’s Japanese citizens including Mr. Takagi, a photographer, lost their homes and businesses. They were sent to internment camps but returned to the Village after the war ended.

The Merchant Marine Academy opened on the grounds of the former Chrysler Estate in 1943. The Academy employed local residents including African Americans and 1st generation Americans. To assist the new workers and returning veterans the FHA asked developers to build affordable apartments that also accommodated cars. The first major FHA sponsored buildings were the Village Gardens Apartments [Tour Stop 5]. The buildings boast classic Colonial features such as gable roof pediments, oculus windows, entrance porches and curbside parking. Brookwood Hall at 90 Knightsbridge Road [Tour Stop 22] is another example of this form. The



Village Gardens Apartments
8 Welwyn Road
built c. 1941, N.J. Sapienza, Architect



Brookwood Hall Apartment House
90 Knightsbridge, built c. 1948
Tooker and Marsh, Architects

first residents were professionals and young couples whose parents were immigrants in the early 1900s, new European immigrant and Holocaust survivors. The buildings were attractive for many women because they could do their grocery shopping in the Village without driving.

The largest apartment building developer was Sol Atlas, a Great Neck resident. Atlas initially targeted returning World War II veterans for his buildings. Shortly after Atlas submitted his plans, the United Nations requested the units for their workers in nearby Lake Success, its first head-

quarters. When the veterans groups learned of the deal they protested to Village authorities and local newspapers. On July 12, 1946 the Great Neck Record reported that the UN agreed to release 90 apartments to veterans. While many UN workers occupied these modest apartments, others lived above downtown stores.

Manoug Exerjian worked with Atlas while also building 5 Bond Street [Tour Stop 11], a streamlined modern style structure that included street level stores, upstairs offices and terraced balconies with a decorative iron balustrade. Exerjian was also responsible for 10 Grace Avenue [Tour Stop 13], a similar style storefront building that wraps around its corner, presenting the traveler with a panoramic experience.

In response to the Village's commercial development the Great Neck Chamber of Commerce was formed in November 1946. With the arrival of Sol Atlas' Miracle Mile along Northern Boulevard local merchants were concerned that they would be overlooked.

At the same time developers saw even more reason to build in Great Neck. In February 1947 the Callan Brothers started construction on the Town House Apartments [Tour Stop 21], off Cutter Mill Road. The brick buildings, also designed by Exerjian, featured winding walks, flower gardens, evergreens and flowering

shrubs, fireproof construction, balconies and sundecks. The units included dining alcoves, television antennas, oversized closets and washing and drying machines. As in the Wyngate development the Callans restricted the apartments to Christian families and couples.



5 Bond Street
built c. 1946, Manoug Exerjian, Architect

In August 1947 Sol Atlas submitted plans for the tallest apartment building in the Village: an 8-story apartment building on Welwyn Road. In addition to the large size of the structure, there were no parking provisions. As a result the Village trustees held public hearings to limit building heights to 4-stories and 60-feet. Although the building was never constructed, the ordinance passed. The Village also created five parking lots to help local merchants attract customers.

In June 1950, Wanamakers department store broke ground on its first suburban store at Sol Atlas' new shopping center. Atlas hoped that the center at Middle Neck & Cutter Mill Road would preserve the beautiful trees, yet offer shoppers a memorable experience. The 3-story structure included a 2-story show window, two elevators and parking for 500 cars. Wanamakers was replaced by Stern's Department store in 1955 and later by Gertz Department Store.



Grace Building
10 Grace Avenue, built c. 1947, Manoug Exerjian, Architect

By 1950 Great Neck was a totally different community. The numerous apartment buildings, distinctive in style and size, attracted people of modest means who wanted the bucolic surroundings offered by the garden apartments, yet the convenience of being near Manhattan.



Town House Apartments
built c. 1948, Manoug Exerjian, Architect

The architecture of the area also saw changes. The historic commercial buildings remained, but there were new ones that offered a different vision of the community – a modern façade with sparse ornamentation. The shopping center built by Sol Atlas marked a new beginning for the downtown, along with new stores on Bond Street. These priorities of modest affordable apartments and new stores with convenient parking would influence the Village’s surroundings for many decades.

The New Architecture of Long Island: 1955 – 70

In the early 1950’s Great Neck Road was paved, creating a new thoroughfare for traffic and stores. The fireman’s fairs ended as new office buildings occupied the open fields. New shops including Jahn’s ice-cream parlor opened. During the next 15 years more Jewish residents moved into the area, so that by 1963 almost half of the population was Jewish. At the same time there were growing concerns among local residents. The Cold War brought frequent public alerts and bomb shelters were within easy reach. Other issues included the growth of apartment buildings. In September 1955, the Great Neck Democratic



Wanamakers Department Store was part of the new suburban store explosion in the 1950’s.

Club held a forum on apartments, claiming they threatened the community. Club president Bertram Harnett said “unless this trend is checked, it is obviously going to lead to steadily increasing problems of traffic, school construction, water supply and policing...”

Great Neck Plaza continued to be a popular nightspot. A club on Cutter Mill Road hosted such celebrities as Della Reese, along with jazz players and Irish musicians. The Nightcap was known as a “black and white bar” because it attracted a racially mixed audience.

Many of the new buildings during the 1960s were marked departures from their earlier historical neighbors. The most famous was the Chase Manhattan Bank [Tour Stop 9], built in 1961. Architects Benjamin Thompson and Paul Dietrich of The Architect’s Collaborative (TAC), founded by Walter Gropius, designed the

landmark bank. Their concept was that banks should go back to “looking and acting like banks,” rather than “supermarkets or shoe salons.” The bank, the first suburban branch of a New York City-based bank, featured glass door entrances and walls, drive-in teller service and a community room. According to local residents, it was not well received. However it received awards from the American Institute of Architects and other professional architects.

Epilogue

Since the 1960s there has been a tremendous growth in office and commercial development, with spurts of residential apartment buildings throughout the Village. Yet Great Neck Plaza is fortunate to have preserved many historic sites throughout the Village. The Village has an active Historic Preservation Commission that will ensure the preservation of its historic sites and buildings for future generations. The Village is also utilizing innovative computer technology to help plan its future. Residents can help support these efforts by attending preservation commission meetings and by learning about the Village’s goals and objectives. Visitors can also participate by passing this guide on to friends and family. But everyone can take notice of the sites documented in this guide and marvel in their history. ■



Chase Manhattan Bank
*22 Grace Avenue, built c. 1961
 Benjamin Thompson & Paul Dietrich,
 The Architect’s Collaborative*



Tour Stop Directions

- 1 Great Neck Train Station.
- 2 Proceed out of station rear and cross S. Station Plaza to the Wychwood Apartments. The building entrance is on 8 Barstow Road.
- 3 Wychwood: Cross Barstow Road to the New York Telephone Building.
- 4 Telephone building: turn right onto Welwyn Road and walk 1 very long block to the US Post Office.
- 5 From the Post office cross Welwyn Road to the Village Gardens Apartments.
- 6 Walk up Welwyn Road to 16 Welwyn Road, "Wyngate" Home.
- 7 Go back down Welwyn Road and turn right onto Barstow Road. Cross N. Station Plaza. 19 Barstow is on your right, Dunstone Garden Apartments.
- 8 Turn right onto Grace Avenue. Walk up the hill. St. Paul's Church is on your right.
- 9 Walk back down Grace Avenue, past the park. Chase Manhattan Bank is on your left.
- 10 Walk down Park Place towards the train station. The Robertson Block is on your right.
- 11 Turn right on N. Station Plaza and turn right onto Bond Street. 5 Bond Street is on your right.
- 12 On your left is 8 Bond Street.
- 13 Continue up Bond to Grace Avenue. 10 Grace Avenue is on the left corner.
- 14 Walk up 1 block on Bond Street, crossing Grace Avenue. 4 Maple Drive is , on your left, Westminster Apartments.
- 15 Continue up Bond Street to Stoner, Community Church is on your right.
- 16 Go back down Bond Street. Turn right onto Maple. Cross Middle Neck Road, turning left. Walk 1 block south to the corner of Elm. 82 Middle Neck Road is on your right, Cadillac/Barron Building.
- 17 Turn right onto Elm. Walk past the gate. Turn left onto Hillside Avenue. 1 Hillside Avenue is on your left at the end of the street.
- 18 Walk back to Middle Neck Road. Turn right onto Middle Neck Road. Citibank is 1 block on your left.
- 19 Continue south. 11 Middle Neck Road is at the next corner on your left.
- 20 Cross Middle Neck Road and continue on Cutter Mill Road. Turn right onto Pearce Place. Go to the end. You will come to 7 Walnut Street.
- 21 Go back to Cutter Mill Road and turn right. Turn right onto Town House Place to the Town House Apartments.
- 22 Go back to Cutter Mill Road. Turn left. Turn right onto Middle Neck Road. Turn right onto Great Neck Road. Turn left onto Knightsbridge Road. 90 Knightsbridge is on your right.

Great Neck Architectural Design Styles

There are many different kinds of buildings and design styles in the Village. These typically reflect the fashions of the times as well as the builder's architectural preferences. For instance, William R. Grace was fond of English style buildings, as were many of his contemporaries and other builders. As a result we see English Tudor style apartment and commercial buildings, the names of such places as Wyngate, and the landscaping around the numerous garden apartments along Schenck Avenue and Welwyn Road. At the same time, many 20th-century builders favored Colonial Revival buildings which used architectural features from the late 18th and early 19th century, including multi-paned windows, small entry porches and gambrel roofs. By the late 1930s and into the 1950s new styles were adopted from art-deco motifs and streamlined curved shapes for commercial and apartment buildings. As a result of these fashion trends we can see the Village's history through its built environment.

English Tudor

English Tudor buildings have exposed exterior timbers in between plaster or stucco sheathing. This style was extremely popular for commercial buildings in the mid – late 1800s and for houses and apartment buildings in the early – mid 1900s. Examples of this style in Great Neck Plaza include 16 Welwyn Road (#6), 4 Maple Avenue (#14), 1 Hillside Avenue (#17), and two commercial buildings at 70-78 and 67-85 Middle Neck Road.

Colonial Revival

During the late 1800s and early to mid-1900s many designers harkened back to classic Federal and Greek Revival architecture, with such features as triangular gable pediments on the roof, small multi-paned double sash windows, simple gable or gambrel roofs, and corner pilasters with columns. Decorative touches also included square dentils along the roof lines, round porches and manicured gardens and lawns. Examples of the style include the Village Garden Apartments (#5), 8 Bond Street (#12), the Community Church (#15), Citibank (#18) and 90 Knightsbridge Road (#22).

Victorian

Victorian buildings are typically characterized by bay windows, small turrets or towers, decorative brackets and shingles on the surface or roof. This style was most popular in the late 1800s to early 1900s but later buildings had similar characteristics. Some examples include the Wychwood Apartments (#2), 19 Barstow Road (#7), St. Paul's Church (#8) the Robertson Block (#10) and 11 Middle Neck Road (#19),

Art Deco

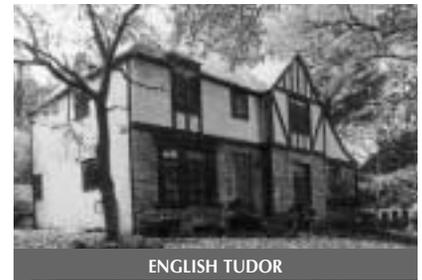
Art Deco and Art Moderne style buildings were most popular in the 1920s through 1940s. Their features include a smooth surface of varying colors with projecting windows surrounded by zigzags, glass blocks and occasionally stained glass. They can also have curved walls when situated on a corner. Examples include the New York Telephone Building (#3), 5 Bond Street (#11) and 10 Grace Avenue (#13).

Vernacular

Architectural historians call buildings that are designed by ordinary people vernacular architecture. They usually are based on patterns that are traditional in particular regions or built by a group of people. While vernacular buildings are common in rural areas, they are also part of workers houses. Examples in Great Neck Plaza include the houses along Walnut and Pearce place (#20), 22 Chapel and 4 Ash Place. They are wooden frame homes with a modified Georgian floor plan, 2 rooms wide and 2 rooms deep. All have gable roofs and double sash windows.

Modern

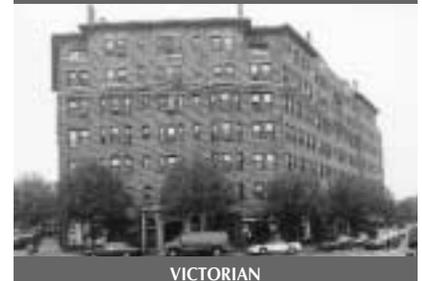
Beginning in the 1950s and 1960s many professional architects experimented with various styles, ranging from the square Bauhaus style to round buildings. In Great Neck Plaza we have the Chase Manhattan Bank (#9) as the premier example of this style. Its' square box-like cubes and glass entranceway was a pioneering example, along with the round-entrance NY Fitness Club which originally housed a Cadillac dealership at 15 Barstow Road.



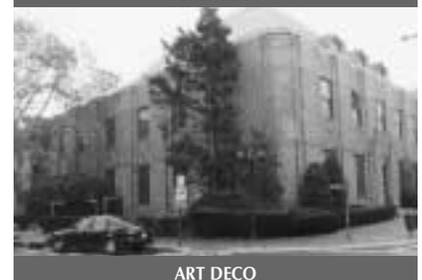
ENGLISH TUDOR



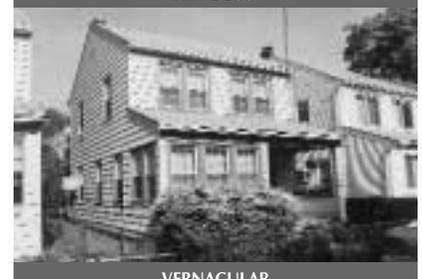
COLONIAL REVIVAL



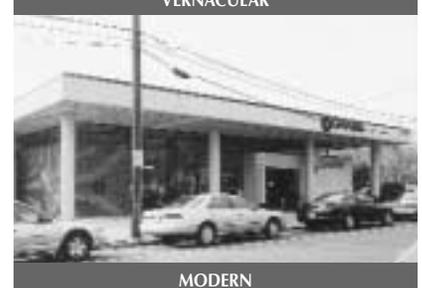
VICTORIAN



ART DECO

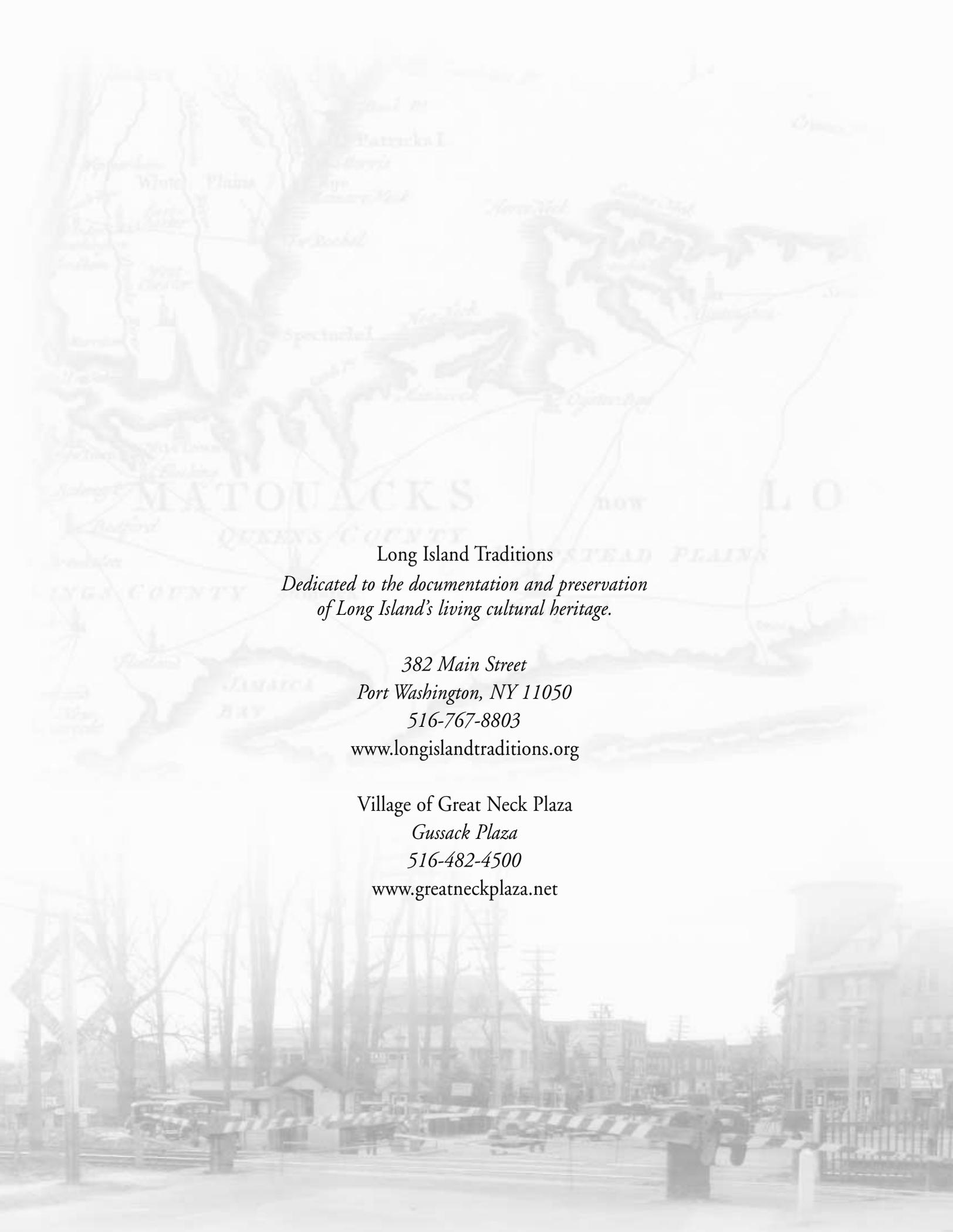


VERNACULAR



MODERN

For more information on architectural styles, read Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (Knopf, 1984).



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