

Designation Report

Independence Fire Company Firehouse



Location:
127 N. Broadway
Block 47, Lot 4

Landmark Type:
Individual Landmark

Significance:
127 N. Broadway is home to the first organized Fire Company in South Amboy, the Independence Engine & Hose Co. #1. Constructed in 1924, this building replaced the first wood-framed firehouse in South Amboy which was built c. 1901, and is the earliest surviving Firehouse in the city.

Application 1
127 N. Broadway

Independence Fire Company Firehouse

**Designation Report Issued by:
South Amboy Historical Preservation Commission**

Commissioners

Holly Hughes, Chair
Joseph Szaro
Jerry Pizzillo
James Clancy
Robert Paulukiewicz
Dedrah Parisen
Michael Reilly

Independence Fire Company Firehouse
127 N. Broadway

Application 1

Built: c. 1924
Architect: unknown

Landmark Site
Block 47, Lot 4

Public Hearing
February 2, 2021

On February 2, 2021, the South Amboy Historic Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Independence Fire Company Firehouse as an Individual Landmark. The hearing was advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. No one spoke in opposition to the proposed designation. In addition, the Commission received no written submissions in favor or opposition.

Summary

Independence Fire Company Firehouse

The two-story Firehouse, Independence Engine & Hose Co. #1, on Broadway in South Amboy, is home to the city's earliest Fire Company. It was constructed in 1924 to serve the growing population of the city, provide a home for newly acquired fire equipment, and to replace a deteriorating wood-frame building. In and before 1890, the Goodwill Company was formed and supported by a local man by the name of Joseph Capner, and utilized a small pump on wheels to fight local fires. In February of 1890, an entire block of Broadway burned to the ground. Realizing the desperate need for additional support, in May of 1890, Independence Engine & Hose Co. #1 was formed, and in June of 1890, Enterprise Hook and Ladder Company followed. In December of 1890, with two formal Firehouses now established, John Dykes was elected to become the first Fire Chief of the South Amboy Fire Department. The building has continuously operated as a Firehouse since its construction in 1924, and retains some of its original architectural features. One notable volunteer for the Independence Engine & Hose Co. #1 was Governor Harold Giles Hoffman, who was born in South Amboy, NJ in 1896, served in the State House of Assembly in 1923 and 1924, was Mayor of South Amboy in 1925 and 1926, and Governor of New Jersey from 1935 to 1938.

Building Description

Description

Two-story, brick building

Built

1924

Architect

Unknown

Style

Arts and Crafts

Building Type

Firehouse

Front (west) Facade

Historic:

Masonry facade, parapet design, and cartouche

Alterations:

Windows, doors, modification of fire truck bays size, roof material, shutters, and signage

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and the other features of this building, the South Amboy Historic Preservation Commission finds that the Independence Fire Company Firehouse has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of South Amboy.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Independence Fire Company Firehouse has served as a continuously operated Firehouse since 1924; that it is the city's earliest surviving Firehouse; that it is an early and important reminder of the development along Broadway in the early 20th century; that notable figures, including the Governor of New Jersey, Harold G Hoffman, volunteered for Independence Fire Company Firehouse; that the building was altered to accommodate modern, larger firefighting equipment; and that Independence Fire Company Firehouse remains mostly intact since 1924 with small modifications.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of the historic preservation ordinance in the City of South Amboy Municipal Code, Part II: General Legislation, Chapter 83, Articles 1 through 5, the Historic Preservation Commission designates as an Individual Landmark the Independence Fire Company Firehouse, 127 N. Broadway, South Amboy, Block 47, Lot 4, as its Landmark Site.