

RED HOOK VILLAGE HALL

...its careful proportions all proclaim its mid-nineteenth century Italian Renaissance Revival origins. ...The Red Hook Village Hall... Aside from stucco applied to the brick wall early in this century, and additions to the south and rear, it is nearly identical in form and substance to the firehouse. This building was built as a bank and hugs the street, very visible--almost imposing -- to pedestrian and motoring passersby. It is an integral part of the Village life and part of an important and functional link between the four corners commercial center and the churches and residential development to the south.

[Red Hook & Hughsonville, N.Y.: community visual environmental planning by Tresch, Philip S. and Kathleen S. Rogers, 1975.]

HISTORY OF RED HOOK BANK by William S. Massonneau

In 1864 when our country was engaged in Civil War, the residents of the Town of Red Hook and the nearby territory were greatly annoyed because they had no local banking facilities and were compelled to do all their business at Rhinebeck, Poughkeepsie, Hudson or New York.

They recognized that a local bank was necessary for the progress of the community and the subject was discussed privately until it resulted in a meeting when a committee of three was appointed to canvass the public sentiment. The committee, consisting of William Chamberlain, Jacob W. Elseffer and Robert L. Massonneau, succeeded in getting a large number [of] people interested in the matter and secured pledges for a Capital Stock of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The following were the original fifty-nine stockholders:

["History of Red Hook Bank One of Achievement," Red Hook Advertiser, December 6, 1928.]

FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF RED HOOK

An on January 19, 1865, the charter was granted and the bank given the number 752....Red Hook now had a bank. But the problems were only beginning. A home for the bank was needed.

That problem was solved when space was obtained in the second floor of the building owned by Robert C. Massonneau, over the store operated at that time by the Massonneau brothers, Charles W. and Edward F. The building today houses the Notion Shop, and has office space where the early bank headquarters were...On February 14, 1865 the bank opened for business. The bank finally was organized and operating. How successfully it was operating, how well-founded were the hopes of those early planners was demonstrated only three months later.

The bank directors, in the early weeks, were becoming increasingly aware that the bank simply was outgrowing its quarters. And so on May 22, 1865, a committee on permanent location recommended the purchase of a lot 50 x 110, on the corner of South Broadway and Prince Street--the site where the old bank building stands today. The price for the land was \$360.

On September 25, 1865, the erection of a permanent building was authorized and William Chamberlain, Thomas Elmendorf and Robert L. Massonneau were appointed a building committee.

For 94 years the bank occupied that site...But it did not stop growing. On May 30, 1870, an extension of 15 feet on the rear of the bank building was authorized for the accommodations of the family of the cashier.

In 1928 the bank once more outgrew its quarters. And on December 10 to that year the bank opened for business in an enlarged and completely renovated building, still located at the original site on Prince Street and South Broadway.

Gone was the red brick exterior that had become so familiar to village residents. In its place was the broken marble and cement siding that is now familiar to today's villagers. The entire interior was redesigned and enlarged, giving Red Hook the most modern banking facilities available at the time...

["First National Bank Started With A Hope - And The Work Of Three Men." Red Hook Advertiser, March 31, 1960.]