



Updating the Madison Avenue Guidelines

INTRODUCTION BY MARGOT WELLINGTON, *FRIENDS Board Member*

The Madison Avenue Guidelines were developed as an element of the Upper East Side Historic District designation in 1981. They recognized Madison Avenue as an integral element of the historic district, but one that needed careful attention.

IN 1981 AND TODAY, MADISON AVENUE IS THE COMMERCIAL spine of the district, and its vibrancy, in part, depends upon it being at the forefront of international retail trends. In order to maintain the commercial vitality, it was decided the street must be treated differently than the rest of the district. The solution was guidelines that would ensure historic fabric was maintained, but allow retail establishments freedom to create contemporary storefronts.

The guidelines were developed by the City Planning Department in cooperation with the Landmarks Preservation Commission. The guidelines have operated successfully for

eighteen years on one of the most vital and recognized streets in the world. Madison Avenue is more of an attraction today than when the district was designated. It is a magnet for visitors, an anchor for residents and an economic engine for the whole city. Now, after eighteen years of experience, the Landmarks Preservation Commission has proposed alterations to the original guidelines, and FRIENDS is in the process of actively reviewing their proposal.

FRIENDS would like to thank JENNIFER RAAB, Chair of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, for answering the following questions.

C O N T E N T S / W I N T E R 2 0 0 0

- I Updating the Madison Avenue Guidelines / 4 FRIENDS News / 5 In Review / 6 Fall Benefit / 7 Young Friends
II FRIENDS History / 12 Upper East Side News / 14 Preservation Committee News

GUIDELINES

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Do guidelines currently exist for Madison Avenue? Do these existing guidelines address Madison Avenue's complicated preservation issue, which derives its significance not from the original historic fabric, but from changes over time?

In 1981, the Commission developed written and graphic guidelines that allowed the staff to issue permits for the installation of certain types of new storefronts and storefront components along Madison Avenue. The 1981 guidelines were designed to take into account Madison Avenue's unique history.

Madison Avenue is lined with rows of low-scale 19th century brownstones interspersed with larger 20th century apartment buildings, hotels and commercial structures. Most of the 19th century rowhouses were transformed in the early 20th century when stoops were removed and two-story projecting commercial additions were constructed. These commercial additions expressed a rhythm and scale that related to the architecture of the streetscape, but they never related to the upper floors of the rowhouses in design, scale or materials. The 1981 guidelines were designed to preserve the architecturally and historically significant features of the 1920s and 1930s storefronts, while recognizing that the storefronts lining Madison Avenue undergo frequent changes to keep pace with contemporary design trends and retail fashion.

What brought about the Commission's desire to make them public at this time?

The staff used the 1981 guidelines to issue hundreds of permits over the years. The guidelines have preserved the streetscape while allowing Madison Avenue to continue to evolve. The Commission believes the guidelines can be improved, both substantively and procedurally, by applying the lessons learned over the last eighteen years. To that end,



833 MADISON AVENUE, A
TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF A
STOREFRONT CONVERSION.

the proposed master plan improves upon the existing guidelines in the following ways: (1) updated criteria reflect what the Commission has learned over the past eighteen years and its current policies for storefront features, such as awnings and security gates; (2) the expanded scope of the guidelines includes the entire side street facades of corner buildings (the 1981 guidelines only applied to 25 feet down the side streets); (3) all categories for coding the storefronts were reviewed and documented and the presence of historic materials noted; and (4) more accurate drawings and photographs of the storefronts were made.

Could you provide a brief outline of what the guidelines will encompass?

The objective of the revised guidelines, which will become a "District Master Plan for Storefronts on Madison Avenue," (the "master plan"), is to provide owners, architects and store tenants with clear design criteria for new storefront infill that will allow for a quick review process at the Commission while preserving the architecturally and historically significant features of the storefronts dating from the 1920s and 1930s, as well as the unique character of the street.

FRIENDS believes that current trends in retail design, including a spare use of material, a lack of detail, a scale that does not conform to the traditional divisions of buildings, particularly the horizontal divisions of a five-story building, are inappropriate for Madison Avenue. Will the guidelines address FRIENDS' concerns?

The master plan will allow contemporary infill for storefronts that have no significant remaining architectural features. However, this new infill will be required to maintain a sense of proportion, scale and row house modularity in keeping with the surrounding streetscape to ensure that new

GUIDELINES

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storefronts are friendly, appropriate neighbors.

Is there concern the guidelines will limit architectural creativity?

One of the main goals behind the proposed master plan is to continue Madison Avenue's tradition of creative storefront design while at the same time preserving the surviving historic storefronts and fabric. The master plan sets general design parameters to ensure that new, modern storefronts fit into the surrounding streetscape. At the same time, it allows architects significant leeway to design modern storefront infill with no historic fabric. Storefront design is more tightly regulated for storefronts located in buildings with multiple storefronts where uniformity of design is important.

Will the guidelines offer more or less protection to the historic storefronts on Madison Avenue?

The proposed master plan offers the same level of protection as exists under the 1981 guidelines; that is, existing historic storefront features must be retained and restored.

Will these guidelines work in other parts of the city, or are they unique to Madison Avenue?

The LPC is committed to developing rules that allow the efficient and expeditious processing and review of applications. Some rules are drafted to deal with specific parts of a building and apply generally to all buildings under the LPC's jurisdiction. Well-known ex-



789 MADISON AVENUE, NOTE HOW THE LACK OF A SECOND STORY DIVISION DIMINISHES THE HUMAN SCALE AND PEDESTRIAN CHARACTER OF THE STREET.



795 MADISON AVENUE, NOTE THE HUMAN SCALE OF THIS STOREFRONT.

amples include the agency's window, air-conditioning and awning rules. Where there are similar preservation and policy issues within a specific area, a district master plan is the appropriate vehicle for regulatory change. For example, the LPC has a master plan for certain types of additions, alterations to buildings and landscape improvements in the Riverdale Historic District in the Bronx and a storefront master plan for the Jackson Heights Historic District. A storefront master plan for the Stone Street Historic District is pending.

When will the guidelines be implemented?

At this time the Commission is applying the 1981 guidelines. We will hold a public hearing in late 1999 to discuss the details of the proposed master plan and to solicit comments from preservationists, building owners and the public. We urge your constituents to come and testify or submit comments on the proposed master plan. It is anticipated there will be a review process before the Commission votes to adopt the master plan, at which time it will become effective.

Can our members receive copies of the guidelines?

The draft of the master plan will be distributed to the public prior to the scheduled public hearing date. Once adopted, the final master plan and accompanying drawings will be available to the public.

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

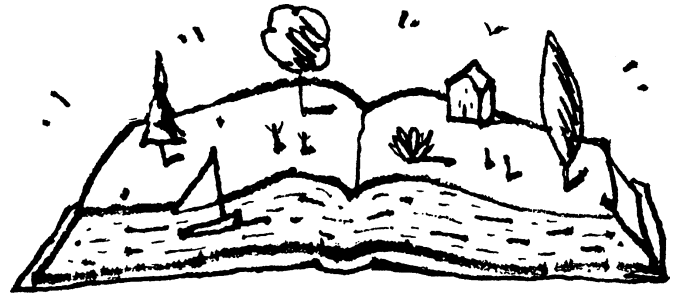
As President of Friends, I have had the wonderful assistance of very good Executive Directors. Britt Densmore was with us for five years. He ably led us and is now Director of Development for the Trust for Public Land. From Albany came Fred Cawley, who helped us go forward in fundraising and membership. Jane Cowan followed. She graduated from Columbia University's Historic Preservation Program and brought with her the fervor and love of historic preservation, conservation and urbanism. She was with us for three years and is now on her own as a freelance built environment



ANNE AND PETER MILLARD

educator and architectural researcher. Jane, the creator of our education program, will serve as our educational consultant and continue to write and draw *Young Friends*, the children's pullout section of the newsletter. Lisa Kersavage, also a graduate of Columbia's preservation program, is presently our Executive Director. She previously worked for the Polshek Partnership as a publications specialist, for the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office as an architectural researcher and as a preservation policy researcher for the Planning Department in Albuquerque, NM. She is so very able and leads FRIENDS forward. It is the Executive Directors who wear our personal persona and we are proud of the position FRIENDS holds. We are highly regarded in the preservation world, and I wish to thank all of you for your dedicated years to FRIENDS. Also, to say with love and affection what a good time we've had and how special our friendships are.

ANNE L. MILLARD, PRESIDENT



Friends Bookshelf



Our map and guide of the Upper East Side, entitled *Walk with Friends*, has detailed maps of each of the Upper East Side's historic districts, descriptions of all 126 individual landmarks and bits of fascinating neighborhood history. The map is intended to both reacquaint long-time residents and introduce tourists to the cultural and architectural gems of the Upper East Side. It is available for free.

The *Preservation Manual* is the only comprehensive guide to New York City's Landmarks Law, Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), and performing work in historic districts and on designated landmarks. It contains succinct and easy-to-understand facts for property owners,

architects, tenants, contractors and community groups. Individual copies of the *Preservation Manual* are available through FRIENDS. The cost is \$5.00 plus \$1.00 shipping.

Building Fun: Exploring Architecture on the Upper East Side, was developed as a part of FRIENDS' elementary education program. It provides children with a variety of fun and educational activities, including puzzles, craft projects, and an architectural treasure hunt using Upper East Side buildings. The activity booklet is available for free.

If you would like a copy of the *Walk with Friends*, *Preservation Manual*, or *Building Fun*, please call the FRIENDS' office at (212) 535-2526.

CONVERSATION *with* FRIENDS

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., former aide to President John F. Kennedy, a historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning author, graciously agreed to speak at our spring lecture and luncheon. After President **Anne Millard** greeted the guests and updated all on FRIENDS' projects, **O. Kelley Anderson, Jr.**, FRIENDS treasurer, introduced his former professor at Harvard. The lecture, *"A Personal Commentary on Current Affairs,"* concentrated on the Kosovo conflict, with Schlesinger eloquently providing a background and forecasting the future of the conflict. We thank those who helped FRIENDS raise more than \$7,000 in support of our mission to protect the architecture and special character of the Upper East Side.

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ANNUAL MEETING

The sixteenth Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony took place on January 14, 1999, at The Asia Society. After the election of new officers, those who work to preserve the character of the Upper East Side were honored. **Jennifer Raab**, chair of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, attended and read a Mayoral message. Two buildings were honored with a Restoration

Award. **Rebecca Robertson**, Vice President of Real Estate and Special Projects for the Shubert Organization, presented the first to **the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre** in Central Park. Work on the theater included reconstructing porches, installing a new cedar-shingle roof, recreating wood trim, brackets, and eaves at doors and windows, and the restoration of an exterior balcony. **Susan Lek**, President of the East Sixties Property Owners Association, presented the second Restoration Award to **207 East 62nd Street**, an 1860s brownstone that had been stripped of all of its original detail, and was completely restored to its historic appearance. **Norval White**, architect and author, presented the Rehabilitation Award to the **Whitney Museum** for its extensive rehabilitation on the granite panels that form the exterior. **Christopher Gray**, writer for The New York Times, presented the Maintenance Award to the tenement complex names the **"Blacks and Whites,"** at 521-547 East 72nd Street.

Susan Ball, Chairman, New York Landmarks Preservation Foundation, presented a certificate for Unseen Excellence to the penthouse of **1016 Fifth Avenue**, in which wood double-hung multi-pane windows, not visible from the street, were installed.

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SAVE *the* DATE!

The Seventeenth Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony—FRIENDS invites the public to attend this free event held at The New York School of Interior Design, 170 East 70th Street. Recipients include Margot Gayle, The Manhattan—244 East 86th Street, The Yorkville Clock, Church of Saint Thomas More—65 East 89th Street, 36 East 64th Street and 161 East 73rd Street. **Thursday, January 20, 2000 6:00 pm.**

A Children's Walking Tour—Inspired by Eloise, this tour will focus on the location of her adventures, The Plaza Hotel. In addition to sharing the book, Jane Cowan will describe the history of the Plaza using photographs and other tools, and conclude with an art project based on the famous hotel and its inhabitants. Designed for children in 1st - 3rd grades. **Saturday, April 29, 2000 10am-12 pm.**

The Grand Acquisitors of the Upper East Side—Join architectural historian Matt Postal as we explore the historic districts, focusing on the art collectors, galleries, and museums that have made New York the envy of the world. Highlights include sites associated with Louis Comfort Tiffany, Paul Mellon, Leo Castelli, and even (perhaps) Michelangelo. **Saturday, May 13, 2000 11am-1pm.**

Jazz with FRIENDS

More than one hundred "friends" from across the city gathered at the Colony Club's ballroom for a gala benefit on September 30, 1999.

Our annual benefit was not only a successful fundraiser but also a delightful and jazz-filled social event. After cocktails, FRIENDS' loyal supporters gathered in the Colony Club's sumptuous ballroom for dinner. FRIENDS' President ANNE L. MILLARD introduced Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair, JENNIFER RAAB, who read a Mayoral message, and spoke of FRIENDS' significant role in the preservation community.

Then the jazzy tunes radiated throughout the ballroom. The audience was enthralled by Lizzy West,



LIZZY WEST
AND LEO LOGONOV

once described as the "perfect chanteuse," who was accompanied by the superb jazz pianist Leo Logonov. The two talented and creative musicians played jazz classics, American folksongs and original pieces in a cabaret style.

Special thanks to the Benefit Committee Chairs O. KELLEY ANDERSON, JR., ROBERT K. LINDGREN and ANNE L. MILLARD for making the evening so successful. With the \$15,000 raised, FRIENDS can continue to be the curator of the Upper East Side's built environment.



BRITT DENSMORE,
MR. AND MRS. ROBERT M. ARIAS, AND
HELEN TUCKER.



BOARD MEMBERS
ALEXANDRA E. SCHLESINGER, FREDERIC
S. PAPERT, AND KENT L. BARWICK
JOINED BY CLIFTON MALONEY.



BOARD MEMBER MARGOT WELLINGTON
AND LANDMARKS PRESERVATION
COMMISSION CHAIR JENNIFER RAAB.

PHOTOS BY STEVEN TUCKER

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Please return this form with your check to: FRIENDS, 20 East 69th St., 4B, New York, NY 10021, or call (212) 535-2526.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Student/Senior | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Supporting | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Best Friend |
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Contributions are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

YOUNG Friends

Welcome to Young FRIENDS. If you like buildings, you are sure to enjoy this magazine. In it, you will find articles, craft ideas and all sorts of interesting information about the terrific buildings you see every day, right on your own block.

This issue is dedicated to Madison Avenue.

BY JANE COWAN

MADISON AVENUE,
LOOKING NORTH
FROM EAST 67TH
STREET, IN 1916.
HAVE ANY HOUSES
BEEN CONVERTED
TO STORES?



COLLECTION OF THE MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK



THE SAME VIEW
TODAY. EACH
HOUSE HAS BEEN
CONVERTED TO
COMMERCIAL USE.

March Along Madison

On the isle of Manhattan, in the heart of New York,
lies a street where you'll find goods galore, from pillows to forks.
It's a great shopping Mecca, its fame is worldwide;
each shop seems to beckon you to come on inside.

It's on the Upper East Side, near the park that is central,
listing all you'd find there might make you go mental.
Whether you're after something old, new, borrowed, or blue,
you're certain to find it on Madison Avenue!

For strolling and shopping, it sure can't be beat;
you'll even find plenty of goodies to eat!
What makes it so great? Why is its fame so widespread?
Rather than looking at its present, let's study its past instead.

In 1811, the Commissioners developed a street grid.
Of zig zags and wide open spaces, the plan surely got rid.
It mapped all of Manhattan like a big giant graph;
the plan was an important one, at which no one dared laugh.

Streets went from the east to the west,
avenues from the north to the south.
The plan seemed pretty straightforward.
(Well, that was the word of mouth.)

But as buildings were built along the new streets,
some people complained about sores on their feet.
It seemed that some of the streets were too long to walk;
more avenues and corners were wanted, or so went the squawk.

Two avenues were cut through to break up the distance.
Their success was assured in a matter of instants.
The new thoroughfares were Madison and Lex;
a spate of development hit these streets next.

All this occurred in the mid 1830s;
the buildings that were built were solid and sturdy.
Stately rows of brownstones began to spring up.
They were houses for living—to sleep and to sup.

At first, these brownstones were built more downtown.
(This poem is soon ending—no need to frown.)
As the decades wore on, people kept moving north,
and they kept building houses, so on and so forth.

Upper Madison was built upon by the 1870s and 80s;
lined with those familiar brownstones for the gentlemen and their ladies.
In those days, Madison Avenue was a fashionable address.
Anyone who lived there had achieved much success.

Before too long, though, a change began to take root;
some stores moved in, and the people—well, they got the boot!
One after the other, the stores continued to come,
and the houses' first two floors were remodeled—completely redone!

By the 1920s Madison was known for its shopping.
Looks like this trend shows no sign of stopping.
From all over the world, people flock there to shop
For us on the east side, it's reached by a hop.

Walking on Madison is an experience that's special.
Old houses and new stores—do you think that they mesh well?
It's great that the buildings tell much of their history.
Young FRIENDS hopes this poem makes it less of a mystery.

So if you want a place where the old meets the new,
one piece of advice, check out Madison Avenue!

WANTED: ARCHITECT TO DESIGN A STOREFRONT

Stores have been on

Madison Avenue for nearly

a century. The architects

who designed these stores

used many different

elements and styles to

express their individuality

and also to identify the

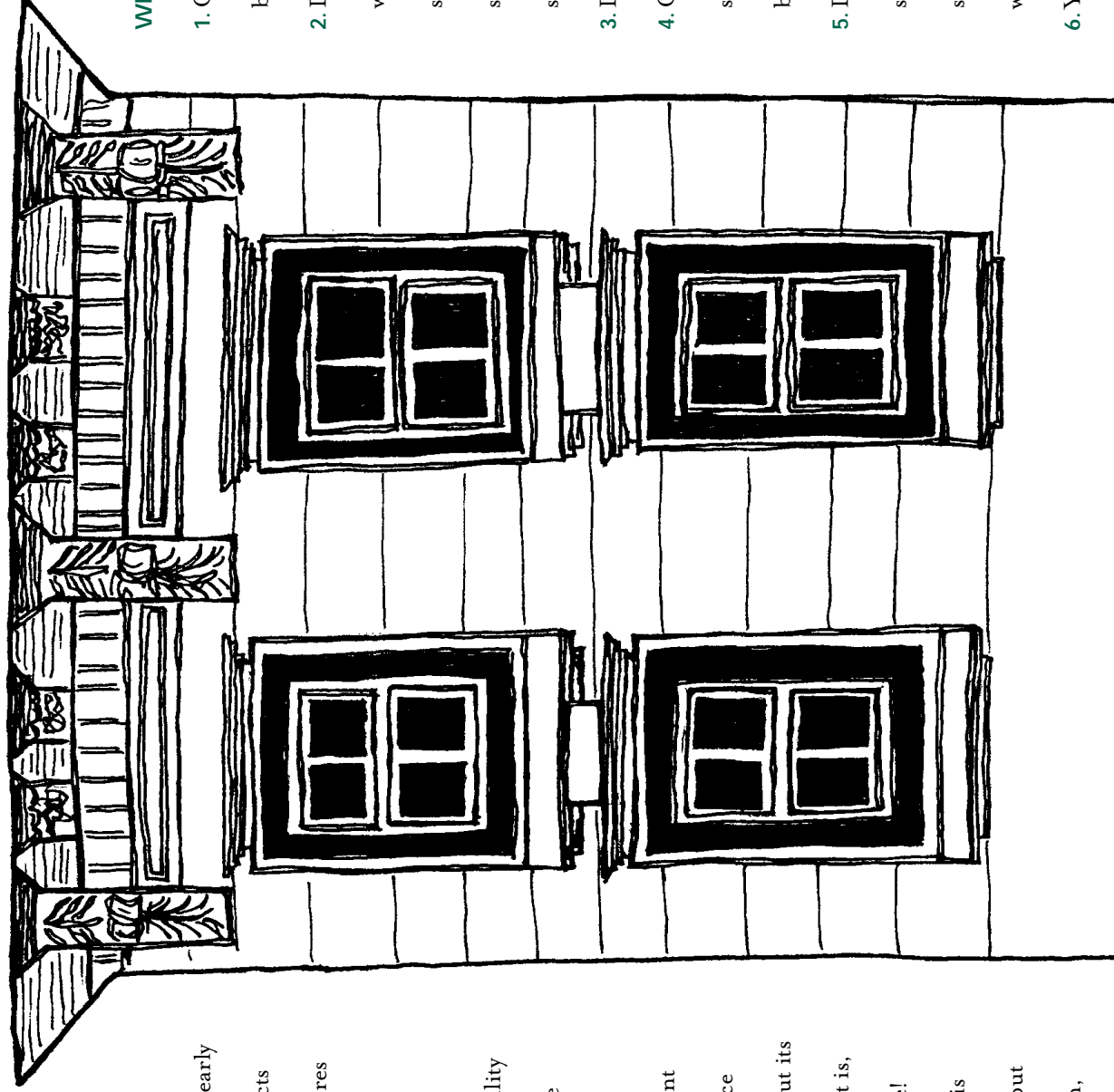
stores.

This building is vacant (empty). You will notice something strange about its two bottom floors, that is, nothing is shown there!

That's because a store is

planning to move in, but

before that can happen,



What to do:

1. Cut out the brownstone building.
2. Decide which elements will be part of your storefront. Examples of storefront elements are shown below.
3. Draw your storefront.
4. Color both your storefront and the brownstone building.
5. Don't forget to give your store a name and draw some merchandise in the window.
6. You're ready for business!

someone has to design the storefront. Young FRIENDS has decided to hire you to be the architect for this storefront. Your assignment is to make an attractive, interesting, and creative storefront so that everyone who passes by will want to enter and shop.

IDEA: If you would like to design a whole block, you might photocopy this page several times (before you add your storefront). Then design as many stores as you'd like and you can transform a whole street!

STOREFRONT ELEMENTS

DOOR

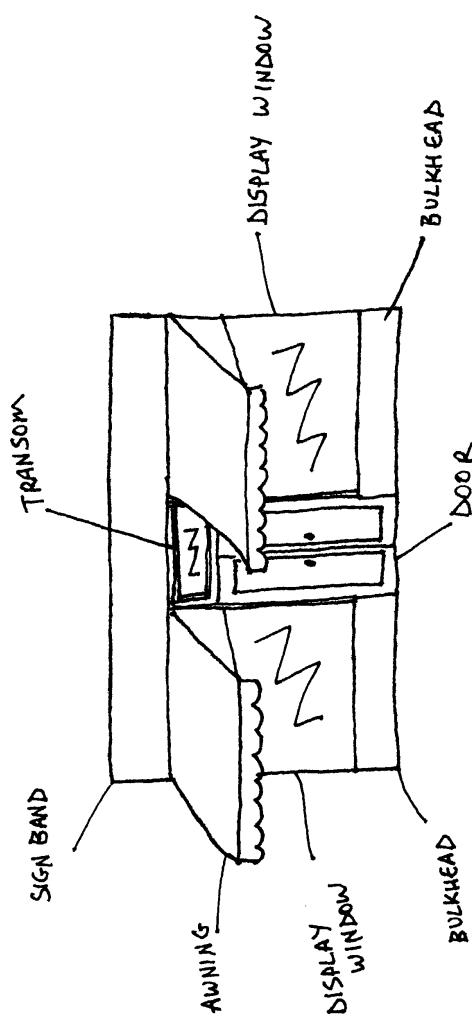
DISPLAY WINDOW (Your display window can be huge, or maybe you want to use two or three smaller display windows. It's up to you—you're the architect.)

SIGN BAND (This band, above the display window, bares the store's name.)

TRANSOM (This is a small window above the doorway.)

AWNING (You can use as many awnings as you like—over the door, over the display windows, or even over windows on the upper floors. Awnings can have colorful designs.)

BULKHEAD (This horizontal band at the bottom of the store usually runs the entire width of the storefront.)

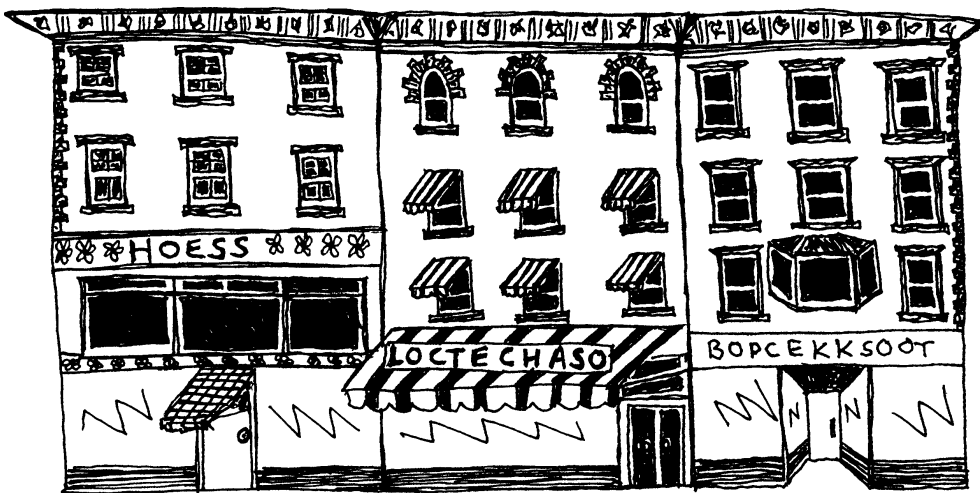


JC '99

YOUNG Friends

Shopping Time

Something is definitely wrong with this picture! It's hard to tell just what these stores are selling. Help us by unscrambling the words on the stores' awnings and signs. A few letters have already been filled in to get you started. After you solve the jumble, take a walk on Madison Avenue and see if you can actually find shops like these.



--- O --- H --- T --- K --- B ---



--- R --- L --- G --- N ---

CORRECTION

Oops! Young

FRIENDS goofed! In the last issue (about Gracie Mansion), one of the questions about the Gracie Mansion family tree had the wrong date. The question said, "Who lived at Gracie Mansion year-round in the 1880s?" It should have said, "Who lived at Gracie Mansion year-round in the 1840s?" since the answer was the Foulke family.

Church of the Resurrection

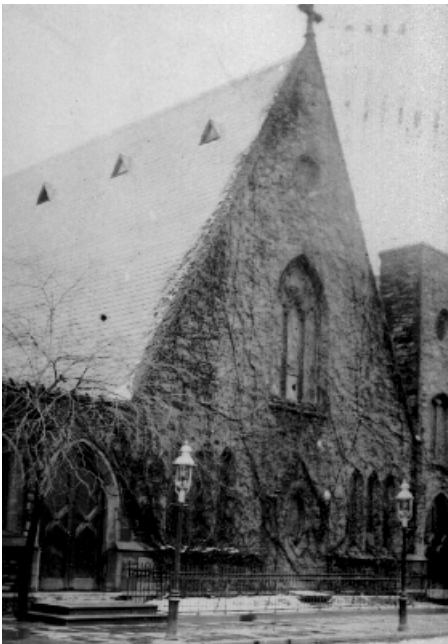
BY BANNON MCHENRY, *FRIENDS Board Member*

(119 EAST 74TH STREET) Among the earliest Upper East Side buildings in continuous use is the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Resurrection on the north side of 74th Street between Park and Lexington Avenues. Originally named the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the parish was formed in 1862 and the building erected in 1867-68 in the style of an English parish church. Designed by prominent New York City architects Renwick and Sands, its deep exterior gable, side entrances and deep-raised chancel follow the design formula established by the New York Ecclesiological Soci-

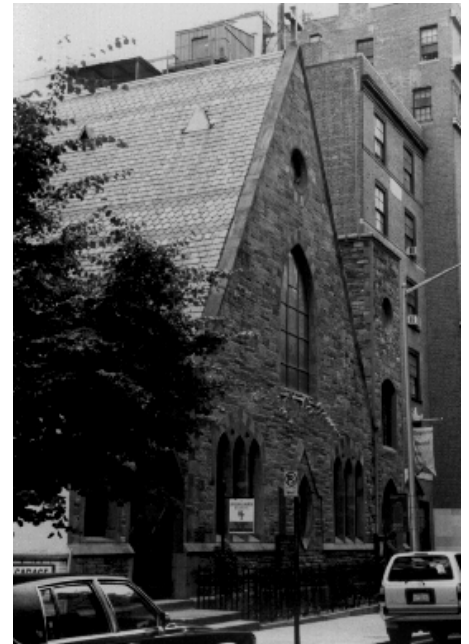
ety whose tenants enjoyed wide popularity for their 19th century church plans. The scheme was similar to a Renwick design for St. James Church, which stood briefly in the 1870s east of Lexington Avenue on 72nd Street, and was quite unlike the well-known Renwick designs for Grace Church on Broadway and St. Patrick's Cathedral.

The early parish ministered to the working population living in recently built tenements appearing along avenues and side streets toward the East River. Unlike many Episcopal Churches, Resurrection charged no pew rentals and financial support remained a difficult priority of the vestry. In 1902 the church's present name was changed and its commitment to the Anglo-Catholic tradition of a marked concern for the poor and disenfranchised was maintained. Often dependent on the generosity of its rectors, Resurrection was enlarged in 1905 when the present east tower and a new east entrance were added. In 1927 the Boston firm of Cram and Ferguson presented three elaborate color renderings now in the church archive proposing an addition of flanking Lady and Blessed Sacrament Chapels and an elegant openwork spire. The scheme, which would have doubled the size of the church, was not carried out.

Today its random ashlar bluestone exterior, animated by a Ruskinian light and dark bandings in the window surrounds and richly colored stained glass windows, honors the scale of its uptown side street. In the 1960s, Resurrection acquired an adjoining former doctor's clinic, now houses an apartment for the rector and an active Montessori kindergarten. The small but vigorous parish was once considered "on the wrong side of the tracks," because open trains ran up Park Avenue. Currently, the Church of the Resurrection thrives in the heart of the Upper East Side.



1910



1999

B IS FOR BETTER!

On December 9, 1999, the City Council voted to change the zoning on East 76th Street to R8B, denying the developer's application for R8 zoning on the midblock. R8B zoning allows for the construction of two eight-story buildings instead of the 31-story tower the developer wanted. This has been a long, hard and expensive struggle, but the outcome protects the character and sense of place of the Upper East Side. With this vote, the City Council recognizes the importance of good planning and zoning, which to FRIENDS is R8B, contextual zoning. As FRIENDS' first president Halina Rosenthal wrote in 1985, "the B stands for Better, much Better!"

In early 1998, FRIENDS joined the Community Coalition, led by COMMUNITY BOARD 8 (and joined by CIVITAS, EAST SIDE REZONING ALLIANCE, EAST 79TH STREET NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION and others) to file an application for R8B zoning on the mid-block of East 76th Street (between the river and York Avenue). At the same time, the Denihan/Albanese Group filed an application to rezone the area R8, which would have allowed for a 31-story residential tower next to an important low-rise historic enclave. The R8B application

was never certified, so the Community Coalition worked to stop the developer's mid-block tower and uphold good zoning principles.

First, Community Board 8 voted to

tative CAROLYN B. MALONEY, and State Assemblymen ALEXANDER "PETE" GRANNIS and JOHN RAVITZ, civic groups from across the city and hundreds of community members. City Council Mem-

ber GIFFORD MILLER was a particularly strong and helpful supporter of the Community Coalition.

The Council's good decision upholds the basic Upper East Side zoning pattern of hills and valleys, low on the mid-blocks with higher buildings on the avenues. The decision also provides hope for the appropriate redevelopment of the city's manufacturing districts, many of which are being converted to other uses. If these districts, located on or



LEFT, VIEW OF THE REZONING SITE.



RIGHT, VIEW FROM JOHN JAY PARK TO THE LANDMARKED CHEROKEE APARTMENTS (ORIGINALLY SHIVELY SANITARY TENEMENTS).

reject the developer's application, and after extensive lobbying efforts, so did Borough President C. VIRGINIA FIELDS. The City Planning Commission also rejected R8, but recommended R8A (which requires a lower building, but allows for a high density) for the site. As R8A is too high of a density, and does not exist anywhere on the Upper East Side, the coalition found this alternative unacceptable. In agreement with the Coalition at the City Planning Commission and the subsequent Land Use Sub-Committee of the City Council hearings were U.S. Represen-

close to the waterfront, are rezoned for high-density development, the entire island would be ringed with towers, blocking air, light and vistas. In this case, the Council determined low-rise contextual zoning was appropriate. The Council's decision prevented what the Coalition believed to be spot zoning, in which zoning is changed for only one owner in one location.

With the Council's decision, the integrity of an important low-rise historic enclave with several landmarked and potentially eligible buildings, including John Jay Park, is preserved.

Yorkville

Clock Restoration

By FRANNY EBERHART, *FRIENDS* Board Member

This enclave, east of York Avenue between 75th and 79th Streets, was a planned working class community, with low-rise residential structures and services like a park, bathhouse, school and a library. The enclave is largely made up of low-rise residential buildings, primarily 6-story model tenements. The landmarked City and Suburban Homes (1901-1913, Harde and Short, Percy Griffin, Philip Ohm) and Shively Sanitary Tenements (1909-1911, Henry Atterbury Smith), make up the bulk of the district.

Zoning has been an important issue to FRIENDS. In 1982, FRIENDS and other community groups surveyed the entire Upper East Side to determine the character of the neighborhood. In 1985, based on those surveys, the City Planning Commission rezoned most of the midblocks R8B, or contextual zoning, which has been a significant tool in preserving the character of the Upper East Side. *The New York Times* described the rezoning as “the most sweeping zoning change in the area since 1961.”

FRIENDS thanks those in the community who sent postcards, letters and gave testimonials. Although this struggle is resolved, our fundraising is not. Please contribute to this community endeavor by calling (212) 535-2526.

On September 14, with the threat of hurricane Floyd looming just hours away, an anxious audience watched as the Yorkville clock was reinstalled to its historic site on Third Avenue between 84th and 85th streets.

Two large crates containing the pedestal and the clock face had traveled from Utah where Robert Baird and his team from Historical Arts and Castings had restored the landmarked clock. First the crane lowered the pedestal into place, and then it carefully raised the clock face from its crate and swung it into position. With the wind picking up and a light rain falling, spectators were relieved to watch the work crew tighten the bolts to secure the clock.

This happy occasion was the result of the hard work and generous contributions of many people, led by veteran preservationist MARGOT GAYLE,

who formed a group called Neighbors Restoring the Historic Yorkville Clock. The FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts was proud to assist the effort by receiving almost 150 donations to the cause, giving the clock a core of committed supporters who will continue to look after it for its next 100 years.



(L TO R) ERIN GRAY, TERI SLATER,
ROBERT BAIRD, MARGOT GAYLE, GALYNA
VAINTONYAK, ANN DAVENPORT.

THE MANSION'S NEW STOREFRONT

Sitting between 68th and 69th Streets, 817-819 MADISON AVENUE is a five-story Beaux Arts mansion designed by the famous architects Carrère and Hastings in 1892, with the storefront added around 1933. The application, first brought before the LPC in June, was for the replacement of the existing two-story retail instillation, cleaning and restoration of the remaining original façade and the relocation of exterior walls in the rear. Because of FRIENDS' concerns about the diminishing sense of place on Madison Avenue, we took an active advocacy role in this application.

In 1989, this storefront received a staff-level permit for a restoration. To FRIENDS' deep concern, the storefront, considered historic in 1989, was now deemed "not-historic," because, with hindsight, the argument was made that the previous

"restoration" was inadequate. Secondly, the new storefront approved by the Commission (11/23/99), with its large expanses of glass on two stories is spare and lacking any human-scale. With FRIENDS' urging, some of the historic fabric on the rear of the building will be maintained. Although FRIENDS is appreciative of the applicant's willingness to work with the LPC to mediate the design, FRIENDS nonetheless finds the new design antithetical to the character of Madison Avenue.

MODERN BUILDING EXPANDS

THE ASIA SOCIETY was built in 1979 and designed by Edward Larabee Barnes. The application, which was first heard in October 1998, was to construct a glass-enclosed atrium and to construct an addition at the rear of the building. This application was difficult to review because The Asia Society is located in a substantial modern structure on East 70th Street, one of the most historic and loveliest residential blocks on the Upper East Side. FRIENDS was generally supportive of the applicant's atrium design, finding it to be in the architectural idiom of the existing building. More troubling was the addition of banners and movement of the main entry to the residential East 70th Street. The LPC asked the Asia Society to revise the application, to meet neighbor-

hood, as well as their own, concerns. The second proposal retained the entrance on Park, and substantially reduced the height of the atrium but made it much curvilinear and organic, which FRIENDS testified, "is a jarring juxtaposition with the rectilinear building." Once again the LPC asked the applicants to revise the application, and on April 13, 1999 they returned with an application the commission approved.



ASIA SOCIETY, 725 PARK AVENUE
APPROVED ALTERATION, VOORSANGER &
ASSOCIATES, PC.

STRIPPED OF MEANING

838 FIFTH AVENUE is a Modern-style office building with stylized Romanesque details built in 1950 designed by Harry M. Prince and enlarged in 1958. The application, for the office building's conversion to apartments, was to alter the facades and construct rooftop and rear additions. A neighbor to



THE SOON-TO-BE-REMOVED CAST IRON
STOREFRONT REMINISCENT OF THE ORIGINAL
1933 ALTERATION.



838 FIFTH AVENUE, INSCRIPTION TO BE REMOVED IS ABOVE SECOND STORY WINDOWS.

Temple Emanu-El, this office building, which had housed the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, was marked for its religious references, including its carved inscriptions, stating "LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF," on the Fifth Avenue façade and "DO JUSTLY LOVE MERCY WALK HUMBLY WITH THY GOD," on 65th Street. Among other work, the application was to remove the inscriptions, and with the construction of the rooftop addition, the scroll-like cornice. Opposed to the application, FRIENDS testified on January 26, 1999, "a principal tenet—if not the principal tenet—of historic preservation is the idea that a building has a story to tell. Strip

this building of its axioms, scroll-like cornice, and Star of David and you have obliterated its history." With the Landmarks Preservation Commission's request to revise the application, the applicants new proposal included keeping the Fifth Avenue inscription, the Star of David (to be covered), and revising the rooftop addition to keep the scroll-like cornice. Although FRIENDS is troubled by the loss of the 65th Street inscription, we are pleased with the applicant's effort to meet the neighborhood and Commission's request.

92ND STREET Y EXPANSION

As first reported in our newsletter in our Summer 1998 newsletter, the 92nd Street Y proposed to develop a vacant lot at 125 East 92nd Street, in the Carnegie Hill Historic District. The expansion became the subject of heated debate on the Upper East Side primarily because of the bulk of this building on the low-scale street, and the institutional use in a quiet



VIEW OF 92ND STREET, NOTE ROWHOUSE SCALE OF STREET.



SITE OF FUTURE 92ND STREET Y BUILDING AT 125 E. 92ND STREET.

residential area. After much redesign, the application came back to the commission on March 16, 1999. The new design was reduced in height, increased in depth of the rear yard, and altered on the front to be more in keeping with the residential character of the neighborhood. Unfortunately, the applicants still felt they needed more space than the zoning allowed (as a Community Facility they are eligible for a higher density than residential buildings). FRIENDS testified at the Board of Standards and Appeals on December 7, 1999 against the issuing of a variance, testifying that they had not met the guidelines allowing them to have a higher density than their neighbors. Nonetheless, the Board of Standards and Appeals did issue the variance to the "Y."

FRIENDS of the Upper East Side
Historic Districts, founded in 1982,
is an independent, not-for-profit
membership organization dedicated
to preserving the architectural
legacy, livability, and sense of place
of the Upper East Side.

In addition to safeguarding the
future of the Upper East Side's six
historic districts and 125 individual
landmarks, and being an advocate
for sound preservation policies for
the city, FRIENDS seeks to maintain
and improve zoning laws governing
the area's avenues and residential
side streets.

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