

# FRIENDS

of the UPPER EAST SIDE  
HISTORIC DISTRICTS

*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.*

FALL 2021

## NEWS FROM FRIENDS

### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

In a most unusual year when so much became remote or virtual, we have treasured more than ever the very real character of our Upper East Side community. The leafy, low-rise scale of our side streets, the small apartments and shops in century old buildings, the stately residential buildings on the avenues, and the magnificent cultural and religious institutions all combine to define this distinctive neighborhood. Since 1982 FRIENDS has served as the essential curator and steward of the architecture, livability, and sense of place of the Upper East Side, celebrating its special history and character, promoting human scaled zoning to protect it, and vigorously opposing inappropriate proposals. We have been unwavering in the pursuit of that mission throughout the last many months.

**FRIENDS is enormously grateful for the faithful contributions of our many donors, which have also been unwavering. As you will see in the pie charts inside, the combination of membership and annual giving, benefit income, and special appeals for particular campaigns has been essential to FRIENDS' continued effectiveness and financial health. We couldn't do it without you.**

**A PRESERVATION VICTORY:** The year 2020 began with plans to observe the successful end of our effort to protect the landmark City and Suburban First Avenue Estates. These model tenements were threatened by an owner who wanted to demolish them, claiming economic hardship, and build luxury housing

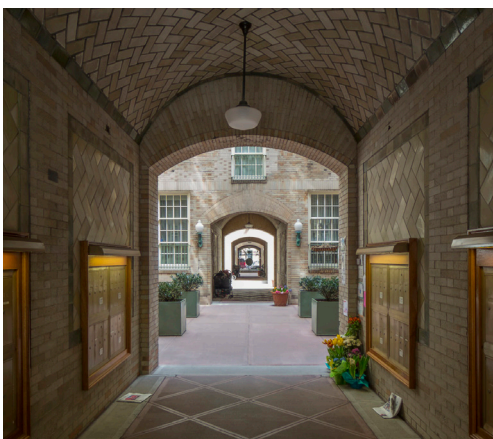
in their place. After 20 years of effort, and two trips to the United States Supreme Court, the lower court decisions protecting the buildings stood, and the New York City's Landmarks Law and its regulatory process was affirmed. It's a victory that stands with the Penn Central and St. Bartholomew's decisions in importance for preservation on a national level.

Our plans to observe that victory with a panel discussion and champagne reception became the first of the year's Zoom gatherings (BYO champagne).

**ZOOM!** With that inaugural series, FRIENDS' usual programming was transformed from

*continued on page 2.*

### East Side Extra



In April 2020 FRIENDS began publishing a series of in-depth pieces focused on local history and preservation. We have received positive feedback and community support for these "deeper dives," and decided to start offering them regularly as part of a series called "East Side Extra!" Each piece in the series offers a closer look at a lesser-known area of local history or activism and is housed as a dedicated collection on our website, where you can access it at your convenience. In this edition you can

find an excerpt of the first installment. Head over to FRIENDS' website to read the full piece.

*Home, Health and History in Yorkville  
April 22, 2020*

*Written by Lucie Levine, FRIENDS Public Programs Consultant, and founder of Archive on Parade.*

Today, New Yorkers are staying home to help stop the spread of coronavirus. The fact that

*continued on page 9.*

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

*continued from page 1.*

the familiar walking tour and lecture formats into virtual Zoom sessions. This new format broadened our audience way beyond what is possible live, attracting 200 registrants for one session, with the long distance prize going to attendees from Scotland, England, and a speaker coming from Sydney, Australia!

FRIENDS produced 29 Zooms over 14 months, from the end of April 2020 to the end of June 2021. A full list of topics and speakers is listed on page 10. We also introduced East Side Extra, short essays on various topics, one of which is reprinted here starting on page 1. This rich library is all available on our new website so you can see any you missed, or revisit your favorites.

**FRIENDS' public-facing activities, including programming for both children and adults, are essential to our mission. They represent a core value, and approximately 30% of our annual budget. Whether the format is live or virtual, or traditional print, we celebrate our neighborhood and its physical and human legacy.**

**CHILDREN'S EDUCATION:** In normal years, FRIENDS educators teach over 2,000 children in classrooms on the Upper East Side and in East Harlem. Many of these classes are taught at no charge to the school. During the pandemic, with the schools closed, Heidi Carey, Director of Education, developed a remarkable new set of teaching strategies with varied media, maintaining ties with many of our regular schools and reaching new ones. Please read her report on page 4. FRIENDS' programming for both adults and children has been generously supported by the New York City of Cultural Affairs and Council Members Ben Kallos and Keith Powers.

**YORKVILLE INITIATIVE:** Since the publication of *Shaped by Immigrants*, our history of Yorkville, we have expanded our research into the neighborhood by looking at its demographics. The social history that underlies the architectural history of our city is of increasing interest as we try to tell its full and varied story. In Yorkville, the combination of tenements, early apartment

buildings, and small houses suggests an economically varied community, in addition to the ethnic variety that is already well known. Again, we are very grateful to the Department of Cultural Affairs and Council Member Ben Kallos, a son of Yorkville of Hungarian heritage, for his support of this initiative.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:** FRIENDS has always participated in public hearings held by our community board and by public agencies whose decisions impact the Upper East Side, particularly the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC). In April 2020 the LPC along with other agencies introduced the ability for staff, Commissioners, and the public to participate virtually in Public Meetings and Hearings. While there was a steep learning curve as the whole world, including NYC civic affairs, adapted to life on Zoom, we were pleased to see that this change has allowed for more significant public participation in the decision-making process. Public input concerning proposed changes in neighborhoods across the City is an essential part of the preservation and planning process.

Three of the many projects we reviewed at the LPC this year are described on page 6, and all of them are shown on our website, by address. We invite you to be our "eyes on the street" as you see changes underway to buildings you pass by.

**CHALLENGING OVERDEVELOPMENT: Since the appearance of the first "supertalls" on Billionaire's Row/57th Street, FRIENDS' major goal has been zoning reform that will eliminate developers' "loopholes." We examine every new proposal on the UES for compliance with existing regulations, and counter those seeking inappropriate special permits, rezonings, or amendments. Although FRIENDS has always promoted the values of common sense, human-scaled zoning, our advocacy has taken on considerable urgency as new engineering combined with developer overreach outpace the Zoning Resolution.**

We had notable success in 2019 with the passage by the City Council of limits on the misuse of so-called "mechanical voids," giant spaces that serve only to raise the height of a building. In another success, in 2020, FRIENDS'

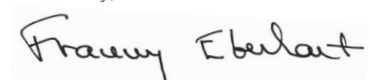
challenge to a building under construction at 1059 Third Avenue was accepted by the Department of Buildings. The remedy was to shrink the building along its sides, converting rooms into exterior balconies, and redesigning the exterior walls. While just as tall, the resulting building is thousands of interior square feet smaller. Also in 2020, the proposal for the so-called "Jetsons building" was withdrawn and replaced with a design that complies with zoning. That building, 249 East 62nd Street at Second Avenue, was initially to have been 510 feet high, with a 150-foot void in the middle. Our challenges and the results should serve as a lesson for future projects that try to game the system.

**CURRENT CHALLENGES:** Despite the pandemic, new challenges to our neighborhood continue, most notably two that are literally "blockbusters," the proposed expansion of Lenox Hill/Northwell Hospital and the midblock tower proposed by the New York Blood Center between 66th and 67th Streets. These are described on pages 5 and 8 below, along with latest on the tower near J.G. Melon.

Contributions to these special initiatives support the expertise of the zoning and legal consultants that are essential to our team. We are particularly grateful to planning firm George M. Janes & Associates, who takes the most complicated zoning situations and translates them into words and images that all of us can understand.

**FRIENDS STAFF: Our remarkable staff of three has carried out this multifaceted agenda with dedication, energy, and clarity throughout this difficult time. Executive Director Rachel Levy heads the team, alongside our Manger of Preservation and Outreach Lara Secchin, and Director of Education Heidi Carey. Special thanks also go to Felicia Mayro who served as Interim Executive Director while Rachel Levy was on maternity leave, right at the beginning of the pandemic. ♦**

Sincerely,



Franny Eberhart  
President

# Financial Report: 2019, 2020, 2021

Despite the challenges of the last year, FRIENDS' activities and financial position have remained strong, though the overall budget contracted somewhat in 2020 and 2021 as compared to 2019. As shown below, the bulk of our revenues over the last three years came from individual donors to support our mission through both annual giving, fundraising from our annual gala, and special project appeals. With the absence of the annual gala in 2020,

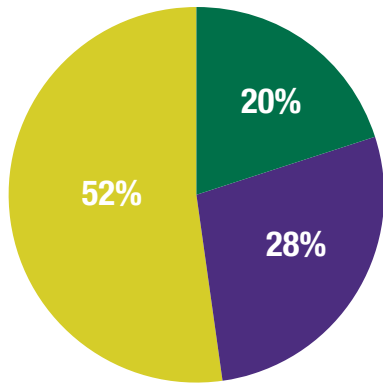
revenues and associated expenses were down significantly. In 2021, a reimagined gala and special appeal to support the Blood Center effort (see page 5) are projected to return us closer to our normal revenue spread. FRIENDS was also fortunate in 2020 and 2021 to receive federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funding.

Expenses have largely maintained pre-pandemic distribution with a few exceptions. Roughly

a third of FRIENDS' budget is dedicated to public-facing activities, including programming for children and adults, as well as special initiatives to defend and celebrate the character of our neighborhood. Alone, this special work to maintain a livable neighborhood through smart zoning and preservation accounts for about one-fifth of FRIENDS' yearly budget. Once again, we thank our donors and friends of FRIENDS for your continued support. ♦

## 2019 Revenue

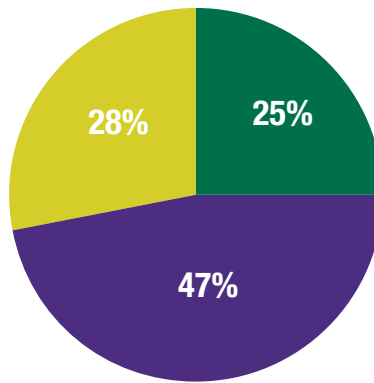
Total \$591,704



Membership/Annual Giving

## 2020 Revenue

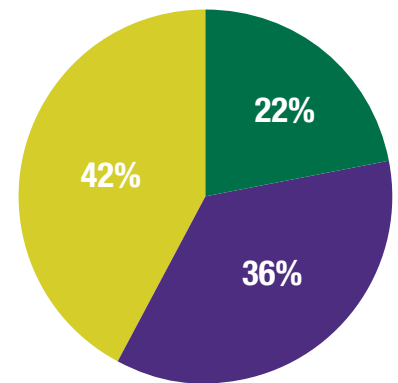
Total \$337,109



Special Appeals and Benefit

## 2021 Projected Revenue

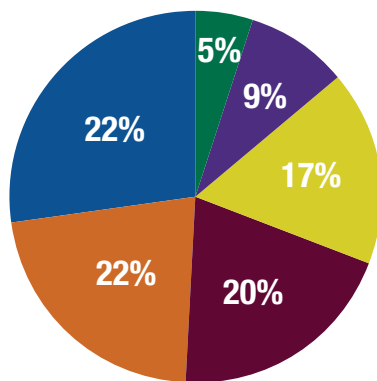
Total \$492,748



Government Grants

## 2019 Expenses

Total \$481,103

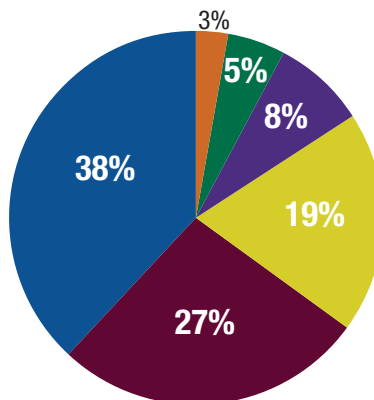


Personnel

Public Programming

## 2020 Expenses

Total \$396,679

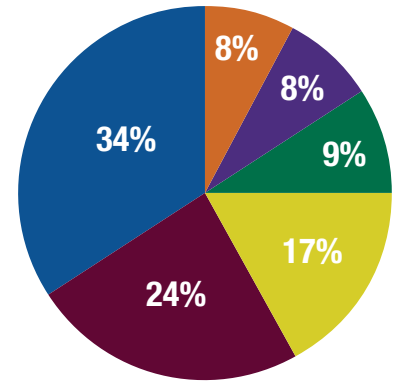


Administrative

Young FRIENDS Education Program

## 2021 Projected Expenses

Total \$425,810

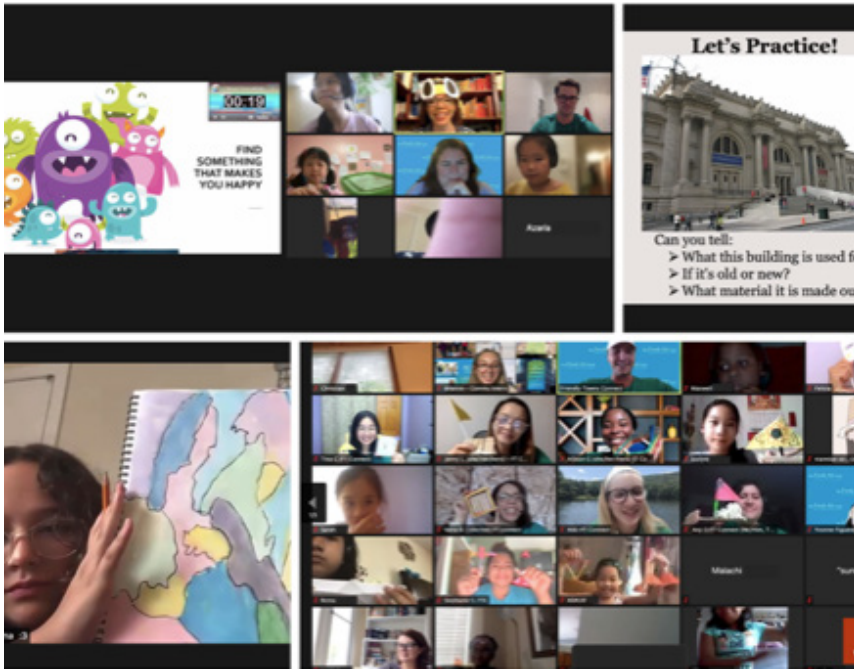


Fundraising

Special Initiatives



# YOUNG FRIENDS HAPPENINGS



*Screenshot of some online sessions with the Fresh Air Fund's Friendly Towns Connect program during the Summer of 2021.*

Young FRIENDS programming has gone online, gotten creative, and even happens in-person whenever possible, since the onset of COVID-19. We have adapted and grown in ways we had never previously considered.

In the spring of 2020, we quickly converted Building Fun, Building Fun Basics, Yorkville Immigration, and Landmarks & Preservation to online formats. We miss the energy of walking into a school building and meeting with children in person, but have found different ways to connect – virtual walking tours, online games and surveys, and family involvement.

In addition to our four regular programs, we have met the needs of schools for other types of architectural education. We now partner with Union Settlement, one of the city's oldest reform institutions, on longer-term afterschool, summer school and childcare lessons. We take advantage of additional classroom sessions to create 3 dimensional building models, and learn about architectural features in more detail.

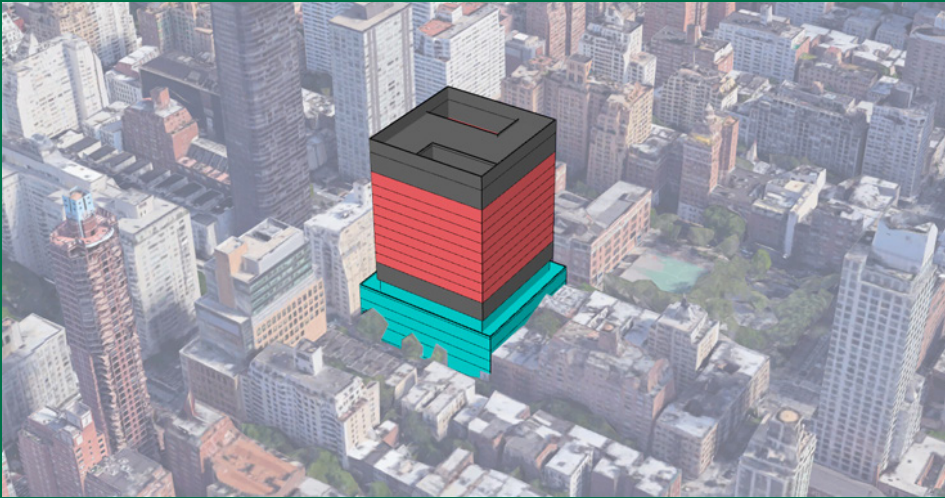
In the summer of 2021, we were also proud to collaborate with the Fresh Air Fund, a 144-year-old organization providing summer vacations to New York City children with host families across the eastern seaboard. During four online, interactive architecture enrichment programs, we met with over 220 children and explored the wonders of the city's built environment and our landmarks, in particular. We have also been able to give in person walking tours and even in classroom lessons, following CDC's recommended safety protocols. We can also switch to virtual learning whenever required.

As we begin another school year under COVID-19 restrictions, Young FRIENDS remains committed to providing stimulating, informative programming that meets the needs of New York City children. Now, more than ever, our lessons develop important visual literacy, critical thinking skills, historical insight, and the social emotional learning that comes with a participatory, collaborative, arts-based program. ♦



*A student at Union Settlement with his 3D architectural model.*

# BLOOD CENTER COMMERCIAL TOWER THREATENS “R8B” ZONING



*The proposed Blood Center commercial tower will result in new shadows on up to 70% of nearby St. Catherine's Park, during the times when it's most used by neighboring residents and families. St. Catherine's Park is the only dedicated park space within a half mile radius.*

For the past year, FRIENDS has been deeply engaged in a battle to preserve midblock contextual zoning on East 67th and 66th Streets, the site of the New York Blood Center. When this low-rise zoning was established by the City in 1985, it was one of FRIENDS' earliest successes. It codified the intrinsic urban character of the Upper East Side which valued narrow side streets for their human scale residential character, and directed taller, denser buildings to wide streets and avenues. For 35 years, that zoning has quietly preserved the vast midblocks in nearly every corner of our neighborhood, by limiting new construction to 75 feet, roughly the scale of historic tenement buildings and row houses.

That zoning is under attack for the first time in the aggressive proposal by the New York Blood Center, which proposed, in October 2020, to demolish its modest 1930s building on East 67th Street, rezone the site for intense commercial development, and construct a bulky through-block 334-foot midblock tower.

The Blood Center itself would own and occupy only the lower-third of the building, while over 60% would be owned by the Boston-based developer Longfellow, which plans to lease space to commercial life science tenants.

In terms of height, bulk, use, and location, the proposal is unprecedented in nearly every way. The size of its footprint rivals the tower floors of the Empire State Building, and it will loom over low-rise neighbors including a branch of the New York Public Library, the Julia Richman Educational Complex containing six schools and serving a citywide population, and St. Catherine's Park, one of the only open green spaces in the neighborhood. Most importantly, dismantling the R8B contextual zoning which has governed midblocks for decades set a dangerous precedent for every low-rise side street citywide. Though the applicant and Mayor de Blasio have framed the project as an essential piece of the city's expanding life science ecosystem, there is no reason to destroy decades of planning policy to serve

the city's economic goals. There are viable alternatives, both on-site and elsewhere, that would provide the Blood Center the ability to expand and modernize without this damaging spot zoning.

Since the fall of 2020 when plans first became public, FRIENDS has led the effort to raise concerns about the proposal with fellow neighborhood and civic groups and concerned local residents, as part of the Coalition to Stop the Blood Center Tower. In recognition of the threat posed by this project, FRIENDS has also retained law firm Carter Ledyard & Milburn as a strategic partner. Thanks to this group's work, every local elected official representing this area has denounced the plan – from Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, state representatives Senator Liz Krueger and Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright, and Borough President Gale Brewer, to City Council Members Ben Kallos and Keith Powers, whose key votes will be part of the culmination of the public review process later this fall.

As part of that public review, the proposal has so far been opposed by both Community Board 8 and Borough President Brewer. The City Planning Commission recently approved the project with two dissenting votes, and the project will next be debated by the City Council as the final step in the review process. We have only been able sustain the fight against this misguided and inappropriate tower with your support. Please visit the Blood Center page on our website at [friends-ues.org/bloodcenter](https://friends-ues.org/bloodcenter) for the latest information and more on how to get involved. ♦



# Highlights from the Landmarks Preservation Commission

FRIENDS' Preservation Committee reviews every item in our neighborhood that goes to a public hearing, and we strive to encourage appropriate changes to designated buildings on the Upper East Side. Past Certificate of Appropriateness applications, including FRIENDS' testimonies, are available on our website. Of the many applications reviewed recently, the on-going restoration work at 3 East 89th Street deserves a special highlight.

One of three structures that comprised the former National Academy of Design is now occupied by the flagship location of Salon 94, a contemporary art gallery founded by Jeanne Greenberg Rohatyn. While working with architect Rafael Viñoly to adapt the building, the extensive facade restoration has been completed. This project reintroduced features that had been removed, such as the detailed porte cochère wooden doors, redesigned based on architect Ogden Codman's original designs for the building. We strongly recommend a visit to the gallery, where both the Beaux Arts building and the exhibitions are a treat for the eyes.

The initial proposal comprised a very large rooftop plan that would have added 11 feet in height and 3,820 square feet on the two-story rooftop. FRIENDS and neighbors testified in favor of the facade restoration and against the excessive increase in height and bulk. We



*Rendering of the façade of 3 East 89th Street.*

were very pleased when the Commissioners agreed with us, and the rooftop proposal was significantly scaled back.

Another recent proposal underway is the replacement of the southern-facing glass curtain wall at the Rockefeller Wing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Driven by a need for a better controlled interior environment to protect the artwork, Beyer Blinder Belle Architects devised a plan to guarantee adequate humidity levels and temperature, while using state-of-the-art glazing technology to control light. We are

looking forward to the completion of this project in order to enjoy once again the Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas galleries. Despite the visual changes on the proposed alterations, FRIENDS supported this application, and was pleased to see the constructive discussion the Commissioners had about this modern museum addition. The proposal was further refined, and construction is expected to start next year.

While FRIENDS' testimony doesn't always successfully persuade the LPC to take a stronger stand for sensitive changes to our landmark buildings, many times it changes the tone of the discussion and helps yield a better outcome. One delightful example is the windows alterations proposed at 19 East 74th Street, one of the many 19th-century Italianate townhouses that were altered in the beginning of the 20th century into a simplified neo-Federal style. The applicant proposed to replace the 1930s steel casement windows with substantially different ones. Small, multi-pane sashes are a key element of the Colonial Revival design, and the proposed changes would have significantly altered the look of the townhouse and diminish its historic character. FRIENDS took issue with this proposal, and the Commissioners agreed with our position and have asked the applicant to rethink the proposal and come back with one that is more respectful towards the building's style and character. ♦

## Introducing Lara Secchin!

We'd also like to introduce Lara Secchin, Manager of Preservation and Outreach. Many of you may already know her since she has been with FRIENDS since November 2019. But that feels like yesterday right!? Before joining FRIENDS, Lara was the Placzek Fellow at the Landmarks Preservation Commission, having worked at its Historic Preservation Grant Program and helped develop a new edition of the Permit Guidebook. Lara has over five years of experience in preservation, and previously worked in over thirty historic towns in Brazil. Lara holds an M.S. degree in Historic Preservation from Pratt Institute. She currently lives in the Cobble Hill Historic District in Brooklyn with her husband and two beautiful kittens.



# ANOTHER LOW-RISE BLOCK UNDER SIEGE

In April 2021 FRIENDS filed a zoning challenge to the Department of Buildings concerning the long-stalled development site at 1299 Third Avenue between 74th and 75th Streets based on new building plans. This is a T-shaped zoning lot on the block containing the iconic J.G. Melon restaurant, with narrow wings facing both side streets.

FRIENDS has been monitoring this site since conceptual renderings were released in 2016 showing a design that fully absorbed the southern corner of the block. Lack of transparency around the plans and process for this site have remained a constant. Plans first emerged in a 2017 Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) application showing a tall,

narrow tower on Third Avenue with significant cantilevers to the north and south but leaving the neighboring tenements including the J.G. Melon corner building intact. Subsequent plans approved by the Department of Buildings (DOB) showed something else entirely – an 80 foot, 6-story building to replace the 5-story tenements. This filing appeared to be a placeholder for the developers' (Thor Equities and Premier) true plans, and FRIENDS took issue with the fact that the developer had presented two completely different versions of the same site to two city agencies. Since that time, demolition of 1297-1299 has been completed and the site has sat vacant for over two years.

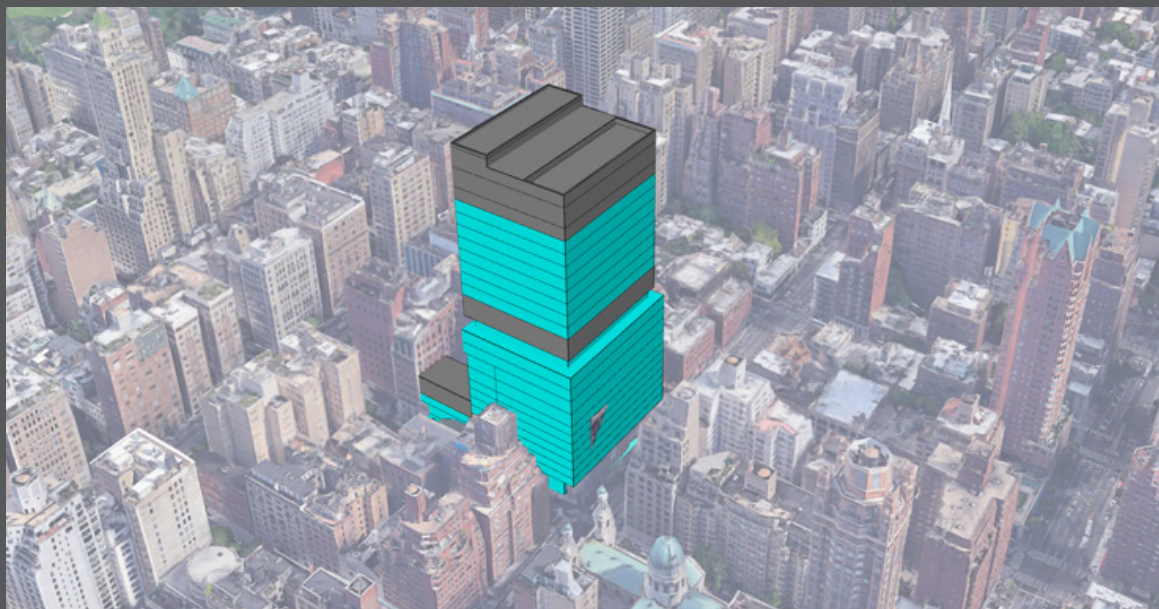
Recent plans filed in 2021 for a 33-story 421-foot cantilever building are rife with technical issues that were the basis of FRIENDS' April challenge by George M. Janes & Associates. The plans filed contain numerous internal inconsistencies and improper deductions of square footage leading to non-compliance with zoning regulations. But perhaps most egregiously, approval for portions of the building were sought as alterations to existing buildings on the same zoning lots, rather than as part of one application for the entire building. This attempt to segment the building into separate approvals is a ruse to facilitate approval for a building that would not otherwise comply. FRIENDS awaits a response from the DOB. ♦



*Current zoning approvals indicate a narrow, 33-story residential tower with significant cantilevers over neighboring buildings. Cantilevers of 12 feet to the north and 19 feet to the south allow the tower to be 78% wider than it would be otherwise.*



# The Threats Continue: Lenox Hill Hospital Redevelopment



*The updated proposal, while scrapping the residential aspect of the project, displays a even bulkier tower on Lexington Avenue, completely overwhelming the narrow Lexington Avenue streetscape where building height is currently limited to 170 feet.*

Another project is threatening the midblock contextual zoning from 1985, and that is the Northwell Health proposal to redevelop the Lenox Hill Hospital site. First introduced in March 2019, the plan proposes the demolition of the entire block between Park and Lexington Avenues and East 76th and 77th Streets, including the historic 19th-century brownstones and early 20th-century hospital buildings. Initially, the proposal included a bulky 516-foot hospital building plus a 490-foot luxury residential tower on Park Avenue. The large upzoning required on the block threatened to introduce midtown-level density to the Upper East Side, and set a dangerous precedent for dismantling a series of zoning and land use mechanisms established to foster growth and preserve neighborhood character in careful equilibrium.

Strong response to the proposal from FRIENDS, Community Board 8, and

concerned residents led to the creation of a task force convened by Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and Council Member Keith Powers, who represents this portion of the district. The group met several times with Northwell leadership between December 2019 and October 2020. The latest proposal presented to the Task Force eliminated the misguided residential tower on Park Avenue – a welcome change. However, the project still entails a massive upzoning of the entire block to R10, the highest density residential district, and would result in a gross floor area ratio (FAR) of 16.7, far beyond anything built on the Upper East Side. The elimination of the residential tower also obscures the fact the hospital's square footage grew by 70,000 square feet in the revised proposal. Though marginally shorter, its footprint is larger, impacting light, air, and the pedestrian realm on narrow Lexington Avenue.

FRIENDS and the Committee to Protect Our Lenox Hill Neighborhood continued to push back on the out-of-scale nature of the Northwell plan. Although FRIENDS understands the need to update and improve Lenox Hill Hospital's facilities, especially after such a challenging year, we cannot support a project that disregards decades of community planning and would set a dangerous precedent for projects of this scale. A more sensitive approach should work largely within the existing building envelope at the midblock, remain within the 170 foot height limit on Lexington Avenue, and if necessary move some of the program to an alternate location, as many institutions have done. At the conclusion of the Task Force last fall, FRIENDS urged Northwell to return with a proposal that is responsive to the built context and acknowledges Lenox Hill's long institutional history in Yorkville. ♦



## EAST SIDE EXTRA

*continued from page 1.*

our homes have become a first-line defense in the fight against infection adds this moment in New York City to a timeline, spanning well over 100 years, when the relationship between apartment living and public health has been heightened.

In 19th Century New York, public health officials noted that scourges like cholera and tuberculosis disproportionately affected the city's densest neighborhoods, where working-class immigrant families lived in crowded tenements with little access to clean water, light or ventilation. By 1863, the Board of Health reported that mortality rates in the city's tenement districts were triple those of the city overall.

Reformers like Lillian Wald, of the Henry Street Settlement, believed that illnesses like tuberculosis were “pre-eminently a disease of poverty,” which could “never be successfully combatted without dealing with



*The Kaiser & The Rhine, 1716-1720 2nd Avenue. Trix Rosen for Friends of the Upper East Side.*

three successive Tenement Reform Acts in 1867, 1879 and 1901, which required health and safety precautions like fire-escapes, exterior-facing windows, indoor plumbing and courtyards.

These improvements were not the only concessions to the health of the city. Architectural style and ornamentation, too, were part of how architects and reformers sought to improve the life and health of the populace. Since tenement reform coincided with the “City Beautiful Movement,” which held that architecture, design and civic planning could uplift the city, many of Yorkville’s tenements were built in the prevailing architectural styles of the day, like Neo Grec, Romanesque and Renaissance Revival, featuring lovely design and ornamentation that enrich the streetscape.

The Upper East Side’s Yorkville neighborhood, which has an exceptionally rich and diverse history of immigration, became a veritable case study in public-health oriented housing reform. Not only were Yorkville’s early tenements built to reform specifications but also, private developers and philanthropists chose the neighborhood for a myriad of private “Model Tenement” projects that

emphasized light, air and public health, seeking to redefine what low-cost urban workers housing could offer.

**The Manhattan** (244 East 86th Street)  
1880. Designed by Charles W. Clinton

**The Kaiser and the Rhine**  
(1716-1720 Second Avenue)  
1887. Designed by Lamb and Rich

**The Cherokee Apartments**  
(517 East 77th Street)  
1912. Designed by Henry Atterbury Smith  
NYC Individual Landmark

**City & Suburban York Avenue Estates**  
(York Avenue, between East 78th and 79th Streets)  
1913. Designed by Harde & Short, Percy Griffin, and Philip H. Ohm  
NYC Individual Landmark

**City & Suburban First Avenue Estates**  
(between First and York Avenues, and East 64th and 65th Streets)  
1915. Designed by James E. Ware, Jame E. Ware & Son(s), and Philip H. Ohm  
NYC Individual Landmark ♦



*Courtyard of First Avenue Estate, 1936, New York Public Library*

its underlying economic causes: bad housing, bad workshops, undernourishment and so on.” Accordingly, reformers pressed the State to build health into the architectural fabric of New York and won the passage of

# ZOOMING AROUND TOWN, FROM YOUR COUCH



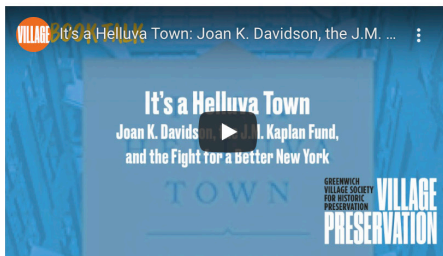
Andrew Alpern and Simon Fieldhouse:  
*Door to Door: A Virtual Look at New York's Posh Portals*



Matt Postal:  
*From Park Avenue to Pennsylvania Avenue: A Presidential View of the Upper East Side*



Gary Lawrence:  
*New Year, Old World: Gilded Grandeur on the Upper East Side*



Roberta Brandes Gratz and Anthony C. Wood:  
*It's a Helluva Town: Joan K. Davidson, the J.M. Kaplan Fund, and the Fight for a Better New York*

It's a Helluva Town: Joan K. Davidson, the J.M. Kaplan Fund, and the Fight for a Better New York\*

*Roberta Brandes Gratz & Anthony C. Wood, January 14, 2021*

New Year, Old World: Gilded Grandeur on the Upper East Side

*Gary Lawrence, January 27, 2021*

From Park Avenue to Pennsylvania Avenue: A Presidential View of the Upper East Side

*Matt Postal, February 11, 2021*

Door to Door: A Virtual Look at New York's Posh Portals

*Andrew Alpern and Simon Fieldhouse, February 25, 2021*

A Perilous Path to Protection: Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of a Landmark

*Franny Eberhart, April 29, 2020*

Upper East Side Live Virtual Trivia

*Lucie Levine, May 13, 2020*

The Rowhouse Reborn

*Andrew Dolkart, May 19, 2020*

Family Walking Tour: Historic Yorkville

*Heidi Carey, June 5, 2020*

First Avenue Estate: The Architectural, Social, and Cultural Context

*Andrew Dolkart & Lisa Ackerman, June 23, 2020*

First Avenue Estate: The Legal Context and Significance

*Will Cook & Lisa Ackerman, June 24, 2020*

First Avenue Estate: The Community Advocacy

*Tony Wood & Lisa Ackerman, June 25, 2020*

First Avenue Estate: Looking Forward

*Lisa Ackerman, Andrew Dolkart, Will Cook, Anthony C. Wood & Guests, June 26, 2020*

The Decorated Tenement

*Zachary Violette, July 16, 2020*

Monumental Women

*Lisa Ackerman & Meredith Bergmann, August 13, 2020*

Architecture and Changing Lifestyles in Yorkville

*Francis Morrone, August 27, 2020*

Bricks and Brownstone

*Patrick Ciccone, September 24, 2020*

A Feminist Walk Through Harlem

*Leigh Hallingby, October 26, 2020*

Terra Cotta: Don't Take it for Granite!

*Susan Tunick, November 12, 2020*

Building History Detectives

*Susan De Vries, November 23, 2020*

Upper East Side Hotels

*Lucie Levine, December 9, 2020*

Historic Building Materials

*Dan Allen, December 15, 2020*

The Lost Voice of Mary L Booth\*

*Tricia Foley, March 10, 2021*

Ada Louise Huxtable's New York\*

*Lucie Levine, March 17, 2021*

38th Annual Meeting & Awards

*April 7, 2021*

Walking Manhattan Sideways

*Betsy Bober Polivy, April 21, 2021*

The Barbizon: The Hotel That Set Women Free

*Paulina Bren, May 5, 2021*

Can You Imagine: A Look at Never-Built projects on the Upper East Side

*Sam Lubell and Greg Goldin, May 26, 2021*

Saving Stuyvesant Town

*Daniel Garodnick, June 16, 2021*

Putting People in the Buildings: Yorkville

*Lucie Levine, June 30, 2021*

*\* These events were held in partnership with preservation colleague groups.*



# Annual Awards 2020 and 2021

Just as important as keeping public and private actions in check to promote common sense development on the Upper East Side, FRIENDS relishes the opportunity to celebrate and recognize fine examples of restoration, renovation, and outstanding achievement in preservation, architecture, and advocacy. Our Annual Meeting and Awards is usually a joyful spring night, where members and leading voices in architecture and restoration join together to celebrate the awardees.

In 2020, like everyone else, we were caught by surprise by the COVID-19 restrictions and made the difficult decision to postpone our 37th Annual Awards Ceremony scheduled for April 1st. While we hoped to be able to be together again in the fall, we instead created a series of in-depth blog posts, including personal comments from the intended presenters, for each award recipient.

In 2021, we went fully virtual for our 38th Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony. The

video format provided new opportunities to capture the award locations on film and share them in new ways. Our esteemed presenters took the role of moderators, directing lively conversations with award recipients on-site. Around 150 people joined us for the 2021 Annual Awards livestream in April, and if you'd like to learn about the six inspiring projects and sites that have contributed to the vibrancy of our neighborhood, you can watch the video presentation on our website. ♦



Left to right: Park Avenue Synagogue, MBB Architects; Central Presbyterian Church, Walter B. Melvin; Roberta Brandes Gratz, Anthony C. Wood, and Joan K. Davidson.

## 2020

### Renaissance Award

Park Avenue Synagogue

*Presented by: Ann-Isabel Friedman*

### Restoration Award

Belvedere Castle

*Presented by: Amy Freitag*

### Publication Award

The Central Park: Original Designs for New York's Greatest Treasure

*Presented by: Arete Warren*

### Streetscape Award

New York City Department of Parks and Recreation

*Presented by: Elizabeth Goldstein*

### Expression of Thanks Award

New York City Council

*Presented by: Kent Barwick*

### Good Neighbor Award

Neil's Coffee Shop

*Presented by: Hon. Nicholas Platt*

## 2021

### Exterior Restoration Award

The Lotos Club

*Presented by: Andrew Dolkart*

### Good Stewardship Award

Central Presbyterian Church

*Presented by: Ronda Wist*

### Visionary Award

515 East 86th Street

*Presented by: Yatsu Frank*

### Contextual Contemporary Award

333 East 61st Street

*Presented by: Rita Chu*

### Halina Rosenthal Advocacy Award

Roberta Brandes Gratz & J.M. Kaplan Fund

It's a Helluva Town: Joan K. Davidson, the J.M. Kaplan Fund, and the

Fight for a Better New York

*Presented by: Anthony C. Wood*

### Streetscape Innovation Award

NYC Department of Transportation - Open Restaurants Program

*Presented by: Council Member Ben Kallos*

# FRIENDS

## of the UPPER EAST SIDE HISTORIC DISTRICTS

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### OUR MISSION

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 monitoring the Upper East Side's seven historic districts and 131 individual landmarks, FRIENDS has also been a leader in successful efforts to improve the zoning laws governing the area's avenues and residential side streets. Through effective advocacy and successful educational programs, FRIENDS acts as a steward safeguarding the future of all Upper East Side historic districts and the designated and contributing buildings that make those districts special.

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### IN GRATITUDE

FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts wishes to acknowledge the generous support of: Joan K. Davidson (The J.M. Kaplan Fund), the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, City Council Member Keith Powers, and City Council Member Benjamin Kallos.

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