

# 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 2024

## NEWS FROM FRIENDS

### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The authors of our landmarks law had a very clear idea of what preservation could do for New York City. In the preface to the law, passed by the City Council in 1965, the authors decried the destruction of countless significant buildings and open spaces. The Council declared that

[The] protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of improvements and landscape features of special character or special historical or aesthetic interest or value is a **public necessity** and is required in the interest of the health, prosperity, safety and welfare of the people. (emphasis added!)

This was a bold statement in a city driven so significantly by real estate development, at a time when landmarks laws across the country had not yet been tested in the courts. With these words preservation joined planning and zoning as a crucial part of the city's land use process that had been chiefly governed since 1916 by its zoning resolution (amended in 1961).

Friends' leadership knew from the beginning that preservation alone would not be enough to protect the special character and human scale of the neighborhood as a whole. They therefore petitioned the City Planning Commission to downzone all of the midblocks on the Upper East Side, which at the time permitted towers up to 21 stories. In what the New York Times lauded as "the most sweeping zoning change in the area since 1961", the new zoning, officially known as R8b, was approved in September of 1985, after a three-year campaign led by Friends indomitable President, Halina Rosenthal.

Fast forward to June of 2022 and the announcement of a set of three zoning text amendments called the City of Yes. Unlike the 1961 zoning amendments, which were produced after a five-year period of study and public participation, this new document was delivered without any shared research or citizen input. Friends' Zooms and emails have simplified the material as much as possible highlighting the most impactful and troubling proposals, and we have spoken at every

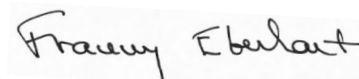
public hearing along with colleagues from neighborhoods across the city, making our positions clear to our councilmembers.

Friends' role, and **your** role, in this process are summed up by our 2024 Ambassador of the Upper East Side, Philip Howard:

Good government is impossible without an active citizenry. Citizen groups like Friends can tame the worst urges of political decision-makers while helping to introduce new priorities of social concern. I learned early on that citizens who band together in a just cause can move the political earth.

See the following pages for more on The City of Yes, and Friends Gala honoring Phillip Howard on October 23. ♦

Sincerely,



Franny Eberhart  
President

# 2024 Friends Awards



FRIENDS AWARDS  
March 28TH, 2024



Images by Sarah Greig Photograph; postcard by Betsy Blazar featuring painting of Lascoff Pharmacy by Jill Gill.

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

### Andrea Forbes

Andrea Forbes is a seasoned arts and culture leader with a degree in English Literature and Art History from Wellesley College. She has held key roles at The Cosmopolitan Club, including Chair of the Arts & Interest Committee and Ex-Officio member of the Board of Governors. Andrea has also contributed to the Wellesley College Friends of Art, including chairing the NYC Membership Program. Professionally, she was Assistant Director of Special Events at The Museum of Modern Art. Additionally, Andrea has volunteered as an ESL instructor and homework helper, demonstrating her commitment to education and community service. She joined the FRIENDS Board in 2023.

### Michelle Pizzimenti

Michelle Pizzimenti is a Senior Manager, HBO Production Planning Incentives at Warner Bros Discovery. Michelle joined HBO in 2014 and brings 18+ years of experience to the television industry. Michelle served three years supporting workforce initiatives and training efforts on the Board of Directors for NOVAC Video, a non-profit organization empowering storytellers and communities in Louisiana. Michelle completed a certificate program in Historic Preservation at New York University in 2021 & joined the Board of Directors for Cherokee Owners Corp--a New York City landmark in 2022. Michelle joined the Board of Directors for Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts in 2024.

### Kimberly Selway

Kimberly Selway is a 12 year resident of the Upper East Side. Originally from the Hudson Valley, she is a graduate of Villanova University in Pennsylvania. With a 16-year career as a User Experience leader at Fortune 100 companies, she currently leads Client & User Research for the Bank of New York Mellon. Kimberly joined Community Board 8 in 2016, and currently serves as public member of the board's Landmarks Committee. She's an enthusiastic supporter of Upper East Side cultural institutions and public parks. Kimberly joined the Board of Directors for Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts in 2024.

# AMBASSADOR OF THE UPPER EAST SIDE

We are thrilled to present this year's Ambassador of the Upper East Side Award to Philip K. Howard for his exemplary civic leadership and longstanding commitment to New York City. A lawyer and best-selling author, Philip K. Howard served as an officer and Chair of the Municipal Art Society for more than 20 years, helping lead many of the civic battles which shaped our city. He has gone on to become one of America's leading thinkers on good government and his seven books, from *The Death of Common Sense* (1995) to his latest work, *Everyday Freedom* (2024), are national beacons for a humanistic governing vision. The reform coalition he formed in 2002, Common Good, advises leaders of both political parties on simplifying bureaucratic frameworks to make governing structures to work more effectively.

Philip has an appointment as Senior Adviser to the Richman Center at the Business and Law Schools of Columbia University. His 2015 report, "Two Years, Not Ten Years," exposed the economic and environmental costs of delayed infrastructure approvals, and some of its proposals have been incorporated into law. Philip writes frequently for leading media outlets and



FRIENDS of the UPPER EAST SIDE HISTORIC DISTRICTS  
AMBASSADOR OF THE UPPER EAST SIDE AWARD DINNER  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2024

*Phot by Jayne Riew*

academic journals, and appears periodically on television, radio, and podcasts.

The son of a minister in eastern Kentucky, Philip got his start working summers for Nobel laureate Eugene Wigner at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. Active in public affairs his entire adult life, he is Senior Counsel at the law firm of Covington & Burling. A graduate of Yale College and the University of Virginia

Law School, Philip lives in Manhattan with his wife Alexandra, a board member of Friends. They have four children, all of whom reside in New York City. ♦

Purchase tickets at [www.friends-ues.org/ambassador](http://www.friends-ues.org/ambassador) or at the QR code.



## Introducing Zeynep Turan!

Friends' new Manager of Preservation and Outreach, Zeynep Turan, is an architect and scholar who has taught architecture and urban studies, and worked on research projects dealing with urbanism, the built environment, sustainability, and climate resiliency in New York City. Zeynep has a Master of Arts in Architectural History from the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London and a Ph.D. in Environmental Psychology from the CUNY Graduate Center. She has taught studio, architectural history, and urban studies classes at colleges and universities in New York City, Istanbul, and Philadelphia. Zeynep is a proud resident of the Park Slope Historic District.



# A MODERN LEGACY: PRESERVING 20TH CENTURY ARCHITECTURE ON THE UPPER EAST SIDE



*Manhattan House, built 1947-51, Mayer & Whittlesey and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, is one of a small number of modernist landmarked buildings on the UES.*



*Beekman Theater and Block, 1242-1258 Second Avenue. Completed 1952, demolished 2005. Image c Library of Congress.*

Modernist architecture on the Upper East Side represents a critical chapter in New York City's architectural history, one that is still at risk of being overlooked and undervalued, despite much of it being about a half-century old at this point. In 2002, Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts held an exhibition and published a catalog to spotlight the area's postwar mid-century modern and postmodern architecture. This exhibition sought to elevate the status of these architectural gems, which were often overshadowed by the more celebrated Beaux-Arts and Colonial Revival styles that dominate the neighborhood. Almost all the buildings in the Upper East Side's historic districts were built before 1930. Yet, dotted among these traditional landmarks are

significant examples of modernist design, created by some of the most influential architects of the 20th century.

From the residential buildings of pioneering modernist William Lescaze, Philip Johnson, Edward Durell Stone, Gordon Bunshaft, and Paul Rudolph to the important institutional works of Marcel Breuer and Frank Lloyd Wright, the Upper East Side contains a remarkable collection of Modernist architecture. Breuer's iconic Whitney and Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim are well known, but there are many other significant structures scattered throughout the area. On York Avenue, for instance, the Rockefeller University campus features five modernist buildings by Harrison and Abramovitz, built just a few years after their work on the

United Nations Headquarters.

These buildings are not merely aesthetic statements; they reflect the significant postwar changes that reshaped the Upper East Side. After a period of very little development on the Upper East Side during the Depression and the Second World War, the removal of the Second and Third Avenue elevated train lines in the 1940s and 1950s marked the beginning of a new era of development. In the late 1950s, as the city began to prepare a new zoning resolution, developers scrambled to build new high-density, residential buildings since they feared the new zoning regulations would put up greater limitations on new construction.

Between 1953 and 1963, at least 60 new buildings were erected in the area, many



*The Whitney Museum of American Art building by Marcel Breuer. Completed 1966.*

characterized by the ubiquitous white brick facades that became synonymous with mid-century modernism. This building boom transformed the neighborhood, turning it into a densely populated enclave for young, upwardly mobile professionals. Despite their significance, the architectural significance of these buildings has often been overlooked.

In the last couple of decades, the Upper East Side has seen the demolition of some of the important modernist structures that were featured in FRIENDS' 2002 exhibition. Buildings like the Beekman Theater, and Horace Ginsbern's Brutalist residence at 217 East 87th Street have already been torn down, erasing key examples of the neighborhood's architectural diversity. Likewise, Hans Hollein's 1960s Richard Feigen Gallery on

East 79th Street, with its white stucco façade and entrance defined by a tall, double-curved, chrome column, was demolished in 2004.

The loss of these buildings highlights the vulnerability of modernist architecture, which, despite being over 30 years old and eligible for landmark status, remains underrepresented in the Upper East Side's official roster of landmarks. Currently, only a small fraction of the Upper East Side's 131 Individual Landmarks are examples of mid-century modernism or later. These include significant structures like the Manhattan House, designed by SOM in 1950, and the additions to the Metropolitan Museum of Art by Kevin Roche and John Dinkeloo. However, many more buildings warrant recognition and protection.

The Landmarks Preservation Commission recently approved the designation of Paul Rudolph's Modulightor Building, on the southern boundary of the Upper East Side, as an Individual Landmark. This is a positive step, but it is not enough. Marcel Breuer's 1966 Whitney Museum on Madison Avenue illustrates the precarious position of these architectural treasures. While the building's exterior is protected due to its location within the Upper East Side Historic District, its interior spaces, intended by the architect as integral to the architectural whole, remain vulnerable. The recent sale of the building to Sotheby's raises concerns about its future use and about continuing public accessibility to what was after all conceived as a public space.

Protecting modernist architecture on the Upper East Side is not just about preserving buildings; it is about safeguarding the creative legacy that these structures represent as well as the full span of the Upper East Side's architectural history. As we have seen with the demolition of Roche and Dinkeloo's postmodernist lobby at 60 Wall Street, without proper protections there is no guarantee that the private sector will do the right thing. The architectural heritage of the Upper East Side is not confined to its past; it continues to evolve, and it is our responsibility to ensure that this evolution is preserved for the future. ♦



# YOUNG FRIENDS LOOKS BACK ON THE 2023-'24 SCHOOL YEAR AND AHEAD TO 2024-'25

Fall is a busy time for Young FRIENDS. Our partnership with Union Settlement begins again with after-school programming for elementary students at their PS 30-138 site on East 128th, the Gaylord White Community Center on East 104th, and PS 38 on East 103rd Street. Every fall, we also work with Nightingale-Bamford, Convent of the Sacred Heart, Dalton and PS 125, The Ralph Bunche School in Morningside Heights as well as other schools.

During the 2023-2024 school year, we taught at all of these schools and also PS 267, East Side Elementary School, PS 290, Manhattan New School, Ramaz School, Addie Mae Collins Early Childhood Centers and others. This year, during school breaks, Young

FRIENDS also took Union Settlement students on exciting field trips to the Guggenheim Museum and One World Observatory at One World Trade Center.

Our youth programs truly open children's eyes to the architecture in their community, develop visual literacy, encourage an understanding of history, and foster civic engagement. Since 1995, Young FRIENDS has been teaching architecture enrichment classes to students on the Upper East Side, East Harlem, and Morningside Heights. With generous funding secured by our City Council members, we are able to bring our programs free of charge to public schools in our area. We look forward to another new school year ripe with possibility and learning! ♦



*Young FRIENDS' Summer camp 2024 at Union Settlement's PS 007 site*



*Landmarks & Preservation walking tour in Morningside Park with PS 125, Fall 2023*

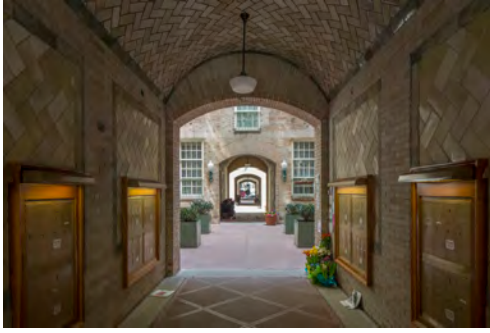


*Skyline Project, Fall 2023, Young FRIENDS' Union Settlement after school program at Gaylord White Community Center*



*Young FRIENDS' field trip with Union Settlement to One World Observatory, One World Trade Center, Spring 2024*

# CHEROKEE APARTMENTS PLAQUE MAY 21, 2024



*Trix Rosen Photographer Ltd.*

*In May this year, the Cherokee Apartments received their bronze plaque from the New York Landmarks Preservation Foundation. FRIENDS Board Member **Ronda Wist** was invited to speak on the occasion. Here are her remarks.*

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times. It was the turn of the 20th century. Income inequality was rampant; housing was scarce; health problems were rising. It sounds a bit like now, doesn't it?

But at the turn of the century, at this spot, there was an extraordinary mix of architecture, planning, philanthropy and science. With tuberculosis running through the city's slums, the only answer seemed to be to send patients out of the city for fresh air, fresh food and general cleanliness. In fact, my great aunt was one of those people. At age 21 she was sent to the Catskill Mountains to a sanitarium where she stayed for 2 years until her death. After she left the city, her mother never saw her alive again.

Much luckier were the tuberculosis patients of Dr. Shively. He was the head of the Vanderbilt



*Neal Blangiardo*

Clinic which provided health care to the poor. He believed that tuberculosis could only be dealt with holistically: socially, architecturally, morally and of course medically. He convinced Anna Harriman Vanderbilt to help fund this project—the Vanderbilts purchased the building lots and donated an additional \$1M towards the construction. The architect was Henry Atterbury Smith—a Columbia graduate—who had developed his “open stair” concept for multiple dwellings that were healthful and economic.

This project was his first opportunity to convert his concepts to reality. The buildings were all about providing lots of sunlight and fresh air, along with easily cleaned surfaces. And—for the first time—not for rich folks. The rooftops offered seating, greenery, even bathrooms (removed in the 1930s and 40s). Triple-paned windows offered increased air flow; cast-iron balconies allowed seating or even sleeping accommodations.



*Neal Blangiardo*

When the building opened in 1912, most of the apartments were rented to families with a member who had “a touch of tuberculosis” or were susceptible to it. In addition to that, 48 apartments were taken by families with a member with a full-blown case of the disease. A “home hospital.” In all cases, these buildings demonstrated that these living arrangements worked to treat the disease and stop its spread. In 1924, the buildings were sold to City and Suburban Homes to be used as regular rental apartments. The Landmarks Commission designated the buildings in 1985.

What is still so amazing about this is that we have the Cherokee Apartments, John Jay Park, PS 158, City and Suburban and of course the Webster library branch. This is one of the very few places in the city where it's actually easy to imagine what life was like 100 years ago. As Friends of the Upper East Side always says, the Upper East Side has a variety of different neighborhoods—and here we are—celebrating one of the most beautiful.

And this proves again that Old New York is always fabulous! ♦



## YORKVILLE HISTORY

Yorkville, on the eastern side of the Upper East Side, has a rich history as a vibrant immigrant community. It began as a small village around the intersection of 86th Street and the Boston Post Road (now Third Avenue), a vital postal route between Boston and New York City.

Throughout the 19th century, Yorkville welcomed waves of immigrants, starting with the Irish and Germans and later joined by Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, and others. This diverse community shaped the neighborhood's character, evident in its religious, cultural, and commercial buildings.

The heart of Yorkville's immigrant story lies in its affordable housing: hundreds of low-rise tenements that lined its quiet streets. The U.S. Census records offer a glimpse into tenement life, revealing a rich tapestry of families from different ethnic backgrounds often sharing the same roof. For example, the 1900 census reported that a typical tenement building at 414 East 73rd Street housed 18 families with a total of 80 residents.

## YORKVILLE TODAY: HIGH-RISES VS. HISTORY & AFFORDABILITY

Today is home to a diverse range of housing, including a significant amount of rent-stabilized and regulated apartments, much of it in its historic, low-rise tenements on both its avenues and its sidestreets. **However, this neighborhood is particularly vulnerable to the loss of affordable housing, partly due to its lack of historic district designation. Without this added protection, Yorkville faces rampant demolition and redevelopment, leading to a net loss of affordable units.**

A 2015 report by FRIENDS highlighted this issue, revealing that Manhattan Community Board 8 (which includes Yorkville) experienced

a 26% net loss of affordable units between 2007 and 2014. This is compared to a citywide loss of just 6%. During this period, 1,578 buildings in the area lost rent-stabilized units, with 70% of these losses concentrated east of Third Avenue in neighborhoods like Lenox Hill and Yorkville.

A 2022 report by FRIENDS found that large swaths of relatively affordable, low-scale tenement buildings were being replaced by tall luxury buildings at an alarming rate. But the loss goes beyond historic fabric. These new buildings are often 210+ feet tall with fewer than 15 apartments each. The same building envelopes could have accommodated many more reasonably-sized units, representing a significant loss in potential housing density. Beyond certain loopholes that skirt the intent of zoning regulations and are used to artificially inflate building height, unit sizes themselves are also growing, even on Madison Avenue despite the existing height limit.

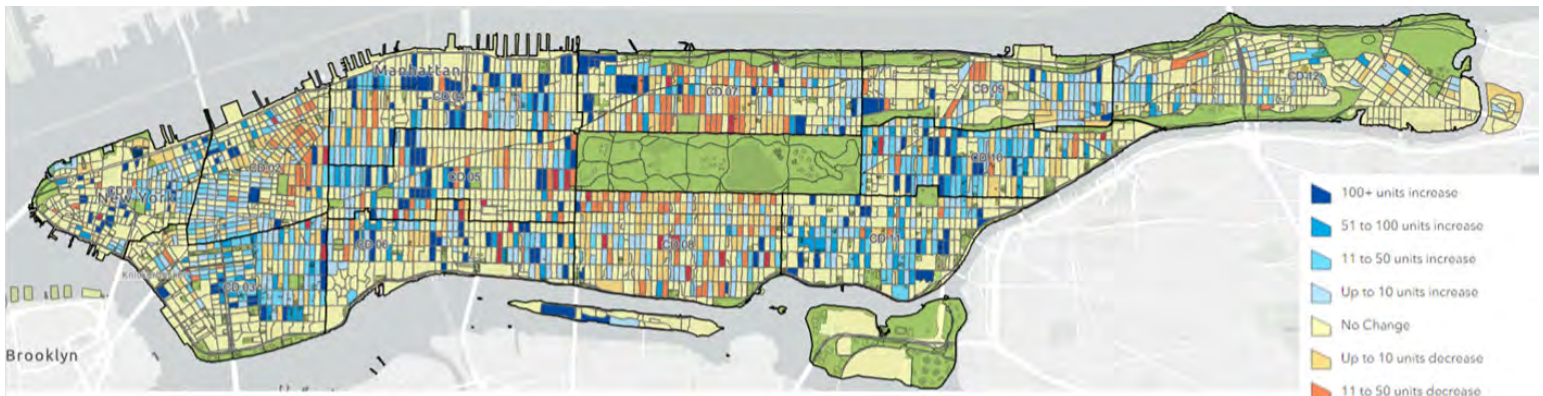
More recently, Upper East Side lost a shocking number of **14,438 units** between 2007 and 2020, as illustrated by zoning expert George Janes in his May 29th presentation on City of Yes for Housing Opportunity (available to watch on the FRIENDS website). See graph below.

There are many reasons behind this. Small tenement buildings are being torn down throughout the Manhattan core, including the Upper East Side. They are then replaced with tall, luxury tall buildings, which developers are able to build ever taller by finding numerous novel workarounds to circumvent the limitations put in place by zoning regulations. The loss of these buildings further strains affordability. In addition, the conversion of row houses from multiple apartments back to single-family homes are resulting in even more unit losses. The result, as you can see on the map overleaf, is that neighborhoods like ours have been hemorrhaging housing units (both affordable and market-rate), even though there is considerable construction activity.

Manhattan Community Distric	Rent Stabilized Units		
	Increase 2007-2020	Decrease 2007-2020	Net Gain/Loss
8 (UES)	1,831	(16,269)	(14,438)
7(UWS)	5,082	(16,209)	(11,127)
3	3,816	(9,818)	(6,002)
12	2,576	(7,966)	(5,390)
2	1,975	(6,407)	(4,432)
6	6,029	(9,264)	(3,235)
9	1,975	(4,724)	(2,749)
5	2,912	(5,154)	(2,242)
10	4,185	(3,740)	445
11	6,214	(4,289)	1,925
1	4,980	(1,912)	3,068
4	14,499	(7,788)	6,711
<b>Totals</b>	<b>56,074</b>	<b>(93,540)</b>	<b>(37,466)</b>

George M. Janes & Associates, Changes in Rent Stabilized Housing in Manhattan & Community District 8, draft report, 6/29/2020





This map shows the changes in housing unit loss on the Upper East Side, Upper West Side, and West Village.

Today, the loss of affordable housing due to luxury development is more acute. Here is a more recent case study of affordable housing unit loss from Yorkville: Two new tall buildings are under construction on the south corners of 83rd Street and Second Avenue. On the southwest corner, three historic tenement buildings were demolished to make way for a 22-story condominium building with 70 units. On the southwest corner, six buildings were demolished to build a 31-story luxury rental building with 128 units. A total of 51 affordable housing units along with ground-floor small businesses were lost just at this intersection.

Developers could take advantage of the MIH (Mandatory Inclusionary Housing) incentive to build even taller but they do not have to build these affordable units on site. Instead while they build taller luxury towers in Yorkville, they build affordable units in Roosevelt Island or the Bronx.

Today, Yorkville stands as a stark reminder of the challenges facing our cities. The neighborhood's affordability crisis threatens to unravel its rich fabric. As housing costs rise and development pressures intensify, communities like Yorkville are at risk of losing their unique character and cultural heritage. To preserve this invaluable cultural heritage, we must prioritize affordable housing initiatives.

**While FRIENDS firmly believes that the city is in desperate need of more affordable housing, these new luxury towers are not it, and in most cases they are displacing relatively affordable units as well as the small businesses which thrive in the bases of these century-old structures.**

### YORKVILLE RFES

Yorkville boasts a wealth of architecturally distinctive buildings reflecting our cultural heritage and worthy of landmark designation.

FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts has been actively advocating for the protection of these significant structures. Over the past years, we have submitted 38 Requests for Evaluation proposing individual landmark status for key buildings in Yorkville and Lenox Hill.

Many of these buildings are integral to Yorkville's history as a welcoming enclave for European immigrants, particularly from Germany, Hungary, Czech Republic, and Ireland. For example, the distinctive Italianate-style Kaiser and The Rhine apartments at 1716 Second Avenue stand as a testament to the German-American community's growth during the late 19th century. The Doelger Building with

its arresting Art Deco façade with terracotta ornamentation housed offices and storefronts, and a music hall that was once used by the Irish community. In addition, there are numerous distinctive and architecturally significant churches that served the many different congregations and communities in the area. Much of this unique heritage remains without the protections of landmark designation.

These buildings symbolize the diverse histories of this corner of New York City. Their varied original uses and architectural styles represent the unique character of Yorkville. Beyond their cultural significance, other buildings in Yorkville have served vital community functions, such as education and healthcare. P.S. 158 (1458 York Avenue), designed by renowned architect C.B.J. Snyder, embodies the progressive educational ideals of its era. The New York Psychoanalytic Society & Institute (247 East 82nd Street) stands as a reminder of the neighborhood's pioneering role in mental health treatment.

This diverse collection of structures, with their varied architectural styles and historical significance, represents the unique character of Yorkville. They are a testament to the neighborhood's rich history and cultural

*continued on page 11*

# The Frick Collection Reopens: A New Chapter for a Beaux-Arts Landmark



After over three years of construction, The Frick Collection is scheduled to reopen later this year. This iconic Upper East Side institution, originally designed by Carrère and Hastings in 1914 as the private residence of Henry Clay Frick, has undergone a major renovation and expansion.

The project, led by Selldorf Architects with Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners as Executive Architect, marks the first comprehensive upgrade to the Frick's facilities since it opened to the public in 1935. The renovation not only addresses the museum's institutional and spatial needs but is designed to improve accessibility and visitor experience.

The Frick Collection's renovation includes several key architectural additions. A new two-story addition, located in the center of the museum

adjacent to the Garden Court, will house special exhibition galleries, offices, and a conservation studio. The Reception Hall's roof has been raised, creating a second floor that provides direct access to the collection galleries. Additionally, a repurposed space below the 70th Street Garden will accommodate a new 220-seat auditorium. The Frick Art Reference Library has been rebuilt and expanded south into the former rear yard, with a new internal connection between The Frick Collection and the Frick Art Reference Library further enabling an integration of the institution's important research and scholarly activities. A new ramp at the main entrance on East 70th Street now provides ADA access, and an enlarged Reception Hall offers direct access to both the main and second floors of the museum. The second floor also features a museum shop and a café overlooking the restored 70th Street

Garden. In addition, a new education center on the ground floor will host public programs.

The renovations enable the public a view of some of the private rooms in the mansion for the first time. In a new second-floor gallery visitors will be able to explore the Breakfast Room, restored to its original family decor, and the Boucher Room, featuring Mrs. Frick's boudoir, where newly acquired decorative arts pieces will complement the exquisite collection of paintings. The renovation also includes galleries highlighting the family's art collecting interests, from Renaissance to Impressionist paintings.

Xavier F. Salomon, the Frick's Deputy Director and Peter Jay Sharp Chief Curator, said "While in the grand galleries of the first floor, we will continue to present larger works, such as our remarkable panel by Bellini, full-length portraits by Gainsborough and Van Dyck, and monumental canvases by Fragonard, Veronese, and Whistler, we will now have the ability to spotlight artworks and objects of a more intimate scale in focused presentations in new second-floor rooms."

Stay tuned for the reopening date and for special FRIENDS Frick events. ♦



## YORKVILLE SPECIAL

*continued from page 9.*

tapestry. Here are three of the exceptional buildings highlighted in this article:



The Church of St. Elizabeth of Hungary (213-215 East 83rd Street), designed in the Gothic Revival style by Henry F. Erhardt and built in 1893, has a fascinating history. Originally built for a German Lutheran congregation, it later served as the home of the city's oldest Slovak parish. It ministered to a diverse Catholic community and was known for its outreach to the deaf. This remarkable building, with its architectural beauty and historical significance, deserves landmark status yet the future of the beloved Church of St. Elizabeth of Hungary is in jeopardy. Faced with potential de-consecration and redevelopment, this beloved Yorkville landmark risks erasure from the neighborhood's rich urban fabric. Yet, its imposing architecture and prime location offer a unique opportunity for adaptive reuse.

By preserving its distinctive character while embracing new functions, this iconic building can remain a cornerstone of the community, honoring its role in shaping Yorkville's immigrant heritage. FRIENDS urgently appealed to the Landmarks Commission at the end of July to protect Yorkville's architectural and cultural heritage by proposing individual landmark designation for the Church through a Request for Evaluation.



The Doelger Building (1491 Third Avenue), also known as the Mayo Ballroom, is another architectural gem. The building was built in 1930 and owned by Peter Doelger Inc., a brewery-turned-real estate investment company founded by German immigrant brothers. The Doelger Building has served the Yorkville community as a ballroom and event space and was likely a popular gathering spot for residents of "Little Germany." In addition, the building has served as retail and office space for numerous businesses over the years, while still retaining its original exterior appearance. The Doelger Building's history of varied tenants and uses, coupled with its unique Art Deco façade, should be preserved and protected through individual landmark status.



Last one is the Manhattan building (244 East 86th Street). The building was constructed in 1879 for the Rhinelander Real Estate Company, one of the early prominent developer families in the Yorkville area and designed by Charles W. Clinton. The Manhattan is significant for its association with the Rhinelander family, as an early example of an apartment building which aimed to provide homes that were a step up from crowded, stuffy tenement dwellings, and for its role in the development of the Yorkville area. The design and program for the building are indicative of a moment in the housing history of New York City. For these reasons, the Manhattan is eligible for designation as an individual landmark.

Preserving these architectural treasures is essential to safeguarding Yorkville's unique identity and cultural heritage. We urge you to join us in advocating for the landmark designation of these remarkable buildings. ♦

# 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 and celebrating 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 streets. Through effective advocacy and successful education programs, FRIENDS acts as a steward safeguarding the future of the Upper East Side.

FRIENDS counts on your contributions to fuel our efforts to protect the history, character and livability of the Upper East Side. Donate today at the QR code or on our website.



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East Side Tenement, photo by Rachel Levy

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