



*gvshp*



Greenwich Village  
SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

2016–2017 ANNUAL REPORT



# PRESERVING OUR PAST, ENGAGING OUR FUTURE.

## GREENWICH VILLAGE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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# A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

SANDY HECHTMAN



Art Levin

***“It was the best of times,  
it was the worst of times...”***

The opening lines of Charles Dickens’ “A Tale of Two Cities” could well describe the past year. On the one hand, GVSHP continues to grow by every conceivable measure. Our membership is at the highest level ever. We staged our most successful benefit house tour. An ever-growing number of diverse public programs attracted thousands of attendees. Our Continuing Education program prospers, and we saw the completion of new teaching materials for our Children’s Education program. Our visibility has increased with a more robust presence on the internet and in social media.

At the same time, we face enormous challenges as we pursue our preservation mission. Those who want development at any cost have been emboldened by voices at City Hall that often appear not to care about the future of our communities, and see landmarking as the enemy of economic growth and affordability, despite strong

evidence to the contrary.

The unrelenting pace of new development is obvious to anyone walking through our neighborhoods, as are its consequences. Our historic streetscapes and the unique social, cultural and commercial blend that long drew people and small business to make their home and living here is endangered. And a new threat posed by a wave of tech-fueled development, which with the Mayor’s support could overwhelm the corridor from Union Square to Astor Place, looms large.

But we must also remember the continued success that we can point to with pride. These include:

- Completing the third and final phase of our 15-year effort to achieve landmark designation for the entire South Village;
- Our continued close scrutiny of all relevant applications for changes to already-landmarked properties, ranging from doorway and window alterations to new buildings;
- Leading the campaign to protect the Greenwich Village waterfront from a potential tsunami of oversized development, culminating in the City agreeing to adopt critical restrictions on air rights transfers;
- Building an online Civil Rights and Social Justice Map of our neighborhood, as well as enhancing and enlarging our online historic image archive.

None of this would be possible without your involvement, whether by increasing your membership support, making time to attend and speak at important public hearings, or asking your legislators to do the right thing.

The willingness of our members, our dedicated and talented staff, and our board of directors to roll up their sleeves and do the necessary hard work is the core reason for our success. Thank you.

ART LEVIN

Art Levin  
President, Board of Trustees



GVSHP's home in the Neighborhood Preservation Center, located in the Ernest Flagg Rectory of St. Mark's Church, 232 East 11th Street, in the St. Mark's Historic District.

# PRESERVATION & ADVOCACY

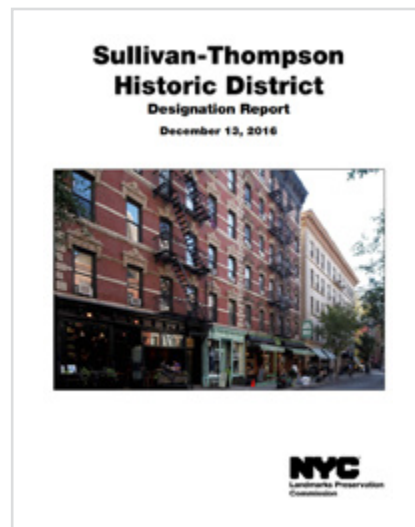


GVSHP was joined by Councilmember Rosie Mendez and hundreds of neighbors to call upon the Mayor to grant zoning protections to our neighborhood.

GVSHP capped a fifteen-year effort to secure landmark protections for the entire South Village in December when we got the third and final phase of our proposed South Village Historic District landmarked as the new “Sullivan-Thompson Historic District” in December, 2016. This ten block, one hundred sixty-building district protects a rich but vulnerable collection of rowhouses, tenements, and institutions connected to our city’s immigrant history, some of which had recently been purchased by developers including Jared Kushner, and might not have been much longer for this world. The designation came after years of resistance by the City, and was approved over the opposition of the Real Estate Board of New York and the New York Archdiocese. This designation brings to over 1,250 the number of buildings GVSHP has helped get landmarked in our neighborhoods, including eleven new historic districts or historic district extensions, and more than forty individual landmarks.

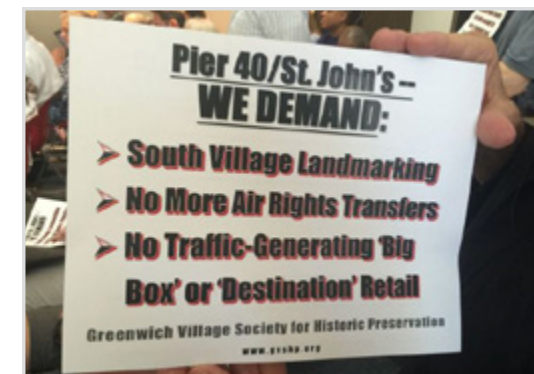
GVSHP also secured protections for the entire Greenwich Village waterfront from “air rights transfers” from the Hudson River Park, which the New York State legislature authorized in 2013. In a related victory, we also got traffic-generating “big-box” and destination retail stores eliminated from a large planned development at the St. John’s Terminal site (Houston and West Street), thus protecting the surrounding West and South Village from potentially devastating impacts.

We also prevented landmarks approval of a plan for totally out-of-scale 80 and 90 foot tall glass and concrete towers being added to a pair of low-rise buildings at 85-93 Jane Street as part of their conversion to a large, single-family mansion.



GVSHP helped block the granting of two zoning variances on 14th Street – one on 8th Avenue, and one between 1st Avenue and Avenue A – which would have allowed planned developments there to significantly exceed zoning limits on the size and height of new development.

The Society also spearheaded the campaign for landmark protections for three 1866 cast-iron and masonry buildings at 827-31 Broadway and 47 East 12th Street threatened with demolition for a 300 ft. tall office tower. GVSHP research revealed the buildings had served as home to Willem and Elaine de Kooning, as well as other prominent artists, and had roots in some of the most important names and families in early American industry. The City is considering our proposal; the developer has been forced to withdraw his demolition application in the interim.



GVSHP also led the effort to seek zoning and landmark protections for the University Place, Broadway, and 3rd and 4th Avenue corridors. Uniquely for the Village and East Village, this area is lacking in both landmark and adequate zoning protections, and is experiencing a wave of teardowns being replaced by condo, office, and hotel high-rises. The expansion of the tech industry in this area is in large part responsible for the building boom, and GVSHP is seeking to force the Mayor to support zoning protections for the area (which he currently opposes) by getting the City Council to refuse to approve his nearby planned ‘Tech Hub’ on 14th Street unless it is accompanied by a rezoning of the surrounding residential community.

GVSHP reviewed approximately one hundred applications for changes to landmarked buildings that require public approval in our neighborhood over the past year. We continued to monitor on a daily basis all 6,500 building lots in our neighborhood for demolition, alteration, and new construction permit applications, as well as 3,500 landmarked building sites for applications for approval for changes.



827-831 Broadway/47 East 12th Street

## BENEFIT HOUSE TOUR

On May 7, 2017, GVSHP staged its 19th Annual Spring House Tour Benefit. A major source of income for the Society, this year's house tour was our highest grossing ever, raising over \$200,000 for the Society.

The tour was made possible by the hard work of more than one hundred thirty volunteers, more than a dozen hard-working Benefit Committee members, and of course the incredibly generous families who opened the doors to their homes for the tour and reception that followed.

Homes in the Greenwich Village Historic District, Charlton-King-Vandam Historic District, and the newly-designated Sullivan-Thompson Historic District were all featured on this year's tour. Many included hidden gardens and unmatched art collections, and ranged from impeccable restorations to innovative and imaginative renovations.



The post-tour reception was held in a dazzling private loft home in the South Village, giving many of our most generous supporters a further opportunity to celebrate the day and GVSHP's work. Thank you to all who contributed and participated.

*Please see the index in back for a full list of donors to the event.*

## MEMBERSHIP

Contributions from individuals continue to be the single largest source of funding for GVSHP and its work, constituting more than two-thirds of our annual support.

Membership support for GVSHP grew steadily over our last fiscal year, with a record 1,573 paying members, up 10% from the prior year, totaling \$723,000 in giving from individuals. From 2001 to 2016, total membership support grew by over 1,100%, while the number of GVSHP members increased by nearly 500%, greatly increasing GVSHP's capacity for education, research, and advocacy.

GVSHP's 'Members Only' programming serves as a thank you for existing members for their support and to encourage new membership support for the organization. Members Only events over the past year included a private tour of the exhibition "Inventing Downtown: Artist-Run Galleries in New York City, 1952-1965" at the Grey Art Gallery, a behind-the-scenes pie-making history lesson and demonstration at Sullivan Street's Once Upon A Tart, and an exclusive tour of Village Halloween Parade founder Ralph Lee's home and studio.

By far the majority of GVSHP's membership support comes from local residents. But we also receive support from across the city, country, and world, from those who believe in preserving the special character and legacy of the Village, East Village, and NoHo, and in historic preservation. New members came to GVSHP from a variety of sources over the past year, including programs, continuing education, advocacy, our Annual Awards and House Tour, interaction with our website and online resources, social media, and electronic and printed newsletters.



Hundreds of GVSHP members turned out for our Annual Meeting to elect new trustees and hear about the organization's work.

# VILLAGE AWARDS



Each year, GVSHP honors just some of the people, places, and institutions which contribute to the special quality of life of our neighborhoods.

A near capacity crowd filled the 500-seat historic main auditorium at The New School in June for GVSHP's Annual Village Awards, hosted by noted poet Bob Holman.

This year's awardees, chosen by our Awards Committee from scores of nominations from the public, were:

- Frank Collierius, branch manager of the Jefferson Market Library since 1999, caretaker of a cherished West Village landmark which provides a rich array of educational programming and resources to the surrounding community.

- B & H Dairy, 127 2nd Avenue, an independently-owned East Village mainstay since 1938, which rebounded from the tragic 2015 gas explosion nearby to carry on its beloved tradition of multi-cultural, multi-ethnic cuisine, culture, and community.

- Good Old Lower East Side (GOLES), a grassroots organization of social justice warriors founded in 1977, which has fought for decent housing, jobs, social services, and quality of life for residents of the East Village and Lower East Side for forty years.

- Patisserie Claude, 187 West 4th Street, whose owner immigrated from the Dominican Republic, and over two decades worked his way up from longtime assistant to the prior owner, to provide a café which remains an authentic slice of Paris in the West Village.

- Dinosaur Hill, 306 East 9th Street, a treasured East Village small business that for over thirty years has provided thoughtfully curated unique and handcrafted items and gifts for children.

- The Public Theater, one of our nation's greatest cultural institutions, which began by rescuing and reusing an empty and abandoned building at 425 Lafayette Street, where it still thrives fifty years later.

- The NYC AIDS Memorial, St. Vincent's Triangle Park, and Lenox Health Greenwich Village, recipients of our Regina Kellerman Award, which provided thoughtful and much-needed new lives and purposes to these spaces after the tragic demise of St. Vincent's Hospital.



# PROGRAMS



**Inventing Downtown: Artist Run Galleries in New York City, 1952-1965**

One of our Members-only programs included a behind-the-scenes private tour of this exhibit.



GVSHP had a very busy programming year, with sixty public programs attended by over 3,200 people. Almost all of our programs were free and, with the exception of our members-only events, open to the public. These ranged from lectures on political murals in the East Village to walking tours of holiday storefronts in the West Village; panel discussions about zoning, and the role of women in preservation; and lectures on building types as diverse but as typical of our neighborhoods as townhouses and squats.



One of our popular "Walk and Draw" programs.

We also added two new historic plaques in the neighborhood in conjunction with the Two Boots Foundation. One marked the former home and studio of sculptor Chaim Gross, now the Renee and Chaim Gross Foundation at 526 LaGuardia Place. The other, at 27 Cooper Square, in the 1960s was a laboratory for artistic, literary and political movements, including growing activism among African-American artists and the Black Arts Movement.

GVSHP's programming educates the public about historic preservation, and provides new insights and perspectives on the unique architectural and cultural heritage of Greenwich Village, the East Village, and NoHo.

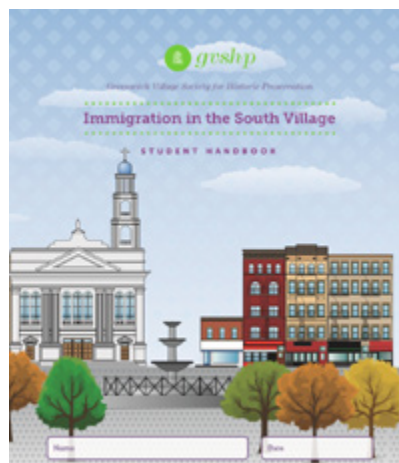


Our panel discussion on zoning included experts from across the city and drew hundreds of participants.

# PUBLIC EDUCATION

GVSHP continued to expand and improve our two main educational programs – Children’s Education, offered to first through fifth graders in schools throughout New York City, and Continuing Education, a New York State accredited program serving real estate professionals. Participation and interest in our new Business of the Month program, begun in late 2014, also grew.

GVSHP secured several grants which, along with membership support, allowed us to continue to offer our Children’s Education program to any school in New York City regardless of need or ability to pay. Throughout the 2016-2017 school year, our program served over one thousand students in forty-nine classes in schools throughout Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx. About 94% of the students received need-based scholarships allowing them to participate in the three-session program for free, while the remainder of the classes paid a small administrative fee.



Continuing Education walking tour on Minetta Street.

Our Continuing Education program, conducted in conjunction with our Broker’s Partnership, reached scores of area real estate professionals over the past year, teaching members of this important industry the value and importance of preservation and history. Classes covered topics including the history of rowhouses, the evolution of the New York City apartment building, and *The New Village: Immigrants, Factories and Bohemians*.

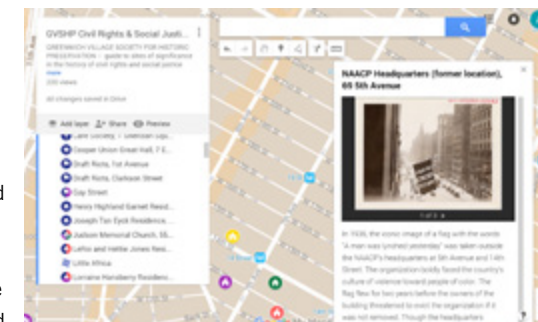
In late 2014, GVSHP launched our Business of the Month program. Each month, a local, independent business is featured on GVSHP’s website and blog, and shared via our electronic newsletter, showcasing one of the Village, East Village, or NoHo’s retail or commercial treasures. GVSHP is committed to highlighting and celebrating those businesses that help keep our neighborhoods unique and special, and provide a service, atmosphere, or specialty that can’t be found anywhere else. We invite the public to nominate their favorite businesses for consideration for our Business of the Month, and hope to increase support for and patronage of independent stores. Hundreds of individuals have submitted nominations, and our Business of the Month selections have been seen by thousands of viewers.

# ONLINE RESOURCES AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

GVSHP provides a number of resources on our website for those seeking to perform research, get involved, or learn more about the culture, architecture, or history of Greenwich Village, the East Village, and NoHo.

In the past year GVSHP greatly expanded our historic image archive, containing photographs, etchings, and colored postcards of our neighborhoods and surrounding areas. The collection extends from the late 18th to the early 21st century, with most images dating to the 20th century. Additions over the past year have focused on the Meatpacking District and Greenwich Village waterfront, lost landmarks in the East and South Village such as Third Avenue’s Variety Photoplays Theater, East 12th Street’s St. Ann’s Church, the Tunnel Garage on Broome Street, and a recently-donated collection of photographic streetscapes and scenes from the 1960s to 1990s by artist Carole Teller. The archive received tens of thousands of views in the past year.

Another popular recent addition is our Civil Rights and Social Justice Map, containing over one hundred locations connected to African-American, LGBT, women’s, immigrant, Latino, labor, Jewish, and Asian-American history. The map, released at the beginning of the year, has had nearly seventy thousand views so far.



Our daily blog, Off the Grid, continued to attract a wide audience with entries about the backstories on beloved and obscure sites, buildings, people and events connected to our neighborhoods. The blog drew hundreds of thousands of page views over the last year, with our most popular posts receiving nearly 40,000 views.

GVSHP also added about a dozen new oral histories to our online collection over the past year, whose stories covered topics ranging from life as a Village artist, to spending time with Jane Jacobs and Norman Mailer, to the Beats and the Village’s mid-century music scene.

Online videos of GVSHP’s programs continued to grow in popularity with our YouTube page garnering nearly ten thousand views over the past year.

Our Landmarks Application Webpage continued to provide an invaluable resource to thousands of New Yorkers, tracking every single application for a change to a landmarked building in our neighborhoods that requires a public hearing. The site provides the history of the building, the proposed changes, when and where the application will be heard by the Community Board and the Landmarks Preservation Commission, and how you can give in-person, e-mailed, or written testimony before a decision is made.



Images of the Meatpacking District from GVSHP’s Historic Image Archive

# GVSHIP FISCAL YEAR 2016

## Income

Membership & Individual Support	\$ 722,472
Benefit & Events	\$ 190,770
Grants and Contributions	\$ 121,970
In-Kind & Scholarship Donations	\$ 11,150
Earned Revenue	\$ 66,580
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,112,942</b>

## Expenses

Children's Education	\$ 36,730
Broker Education	\$ 25,643
Lectures, Tours, and Meetings	\$ 144,718
Archive & Oral History	\$ 45,252
Membership Services & Newsletter	\$ 210,701
Preservation & Advocacy	\$ 314,403
<i>Program Services Subtotal</i>	<i>\$ 777,447</i>
General & Administrative	\$ 130,656
Fundraising	\$ 119,471
<i>Supporting Services Subtotal</i>	<i>\$ 250,127</i>
Fund Balance	\$ 85,368
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,112,942</b>

# APPENDIX

## Committees 2016–2017

### AUDIT COMMITTEE:

Chair: Marilyn Sobel  
Trustees: Arthur Levin, Trevor Stewart, F. Anthony Zunino

### ARCHIVE COMMITTEE:

Trustees: Mary Ann Arisman, Arthur Levin, Judith Stonehill  
Non-Trustees: Martica Sawin Fitch, Jay Shockley, Cas Stachelberg, George Vellonakis, Tony Wood

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Trustees: Justine Leguizamo  
Non-trustees: Caroline Benveniste, Jessica Davis, Michael Gerbino, Bob Holman, Jack Intrator, John Lamb, Adrienne Plotch, Nancy Bass Wyden, Pamela Tillis

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Co-Chairs: Cassie Glover, Kyung Choi Bordes  
Trustees: Mary Ann Arisman, Tom Cooper, Anita Isola, Justine Leguizamo, Arthur Levin, Leslie Mason, Ruth McCoy, Judith Stonehill, Naomi Usher  
Non-trustees: Elizabeth Dal Piaz, Jane Forman, Christina Kepple, Susan Kolker, Kelley Pillow, Leslie Rylee

### COMPENSATION COMMITTEE:

Chair: Arthur Levin  
Trustees: Allan Sperling, Mary Ann Arisman, Trevor Stewart

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### FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Chair: Allan Sperling  
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Trustees: Marilyn Sobel, Arthur Levin, Trevor Stewart

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Non-trustees: Penelope Bareau, Jonathan Geballe, Brendan Sexton

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