



GREENWICH VILLAGE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

City Still Stalls On South Village Landmarking

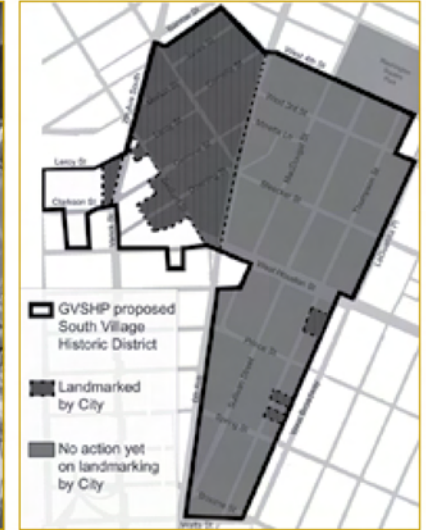
*Children's Aid Society Buildings
Sold But No Action Yet By City*

The City's Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) continues to fail to act on promised consideration of the remainder of GVSHP's proposed South Village Historic District. In early 2009 GVSHP and other community leaders met with the LPC and were told that the consideration of the first third of our proposed South Village Historic District, which was designated in 2010, would be followed soon after by consideration of the remainder of the area. As we go to press, however, there has been no action by the LPC, and no signs that any such action is imminent.

The LPC's inaction comes in spite of the fact that more historic buildings in the South Village are threatened with demolition, and more totally inappropriate development threatens to replace it. In April, GVSHP was joined by dozens of local community groups and City Councilmember Margaret Chin for a demonstration in front of the Children's Aid Society (CAS) to call upon the LPC to keep its word and move ahead with landmark



GVSHP Executive Director Andrew Berman (c.) and City Councilmember Margaret Chin (l.) at GVSHP's South Village rally this spring in front of the Children's Aid Society.



designation of the area before historic buildings such as CAS' are demolished and replaced. GVSHP also met with the LPC Chair to urge him to keep his word and move ahead with South Village designation.

But in May, CAS announced they sold their buildings at 209-221 Sullivan Street for development. This includes their 1891 main building designed by Calvert Vaux, the renowned architect of Central Park and the Jefferson Market library. Following the uproar over the potential loss of these buildings,

developer Broad Street pledged to preserve the Vaux building and to make a "sensitive" development on the rest of the site, but without landmark designation and under the current zoning, there is nothing obligating Broad Street to stick to this pledge.

As part of GVSHP's campaign, the LPC has received literally thousands of letters, e-mails, and petition signatures in support of South Village landmark designation. If you'd like to help, see gvshp.org/svhelp, and for more information see gvshp.org/sv.

Massive NYU Expansion Plan Starts Environmental Review

New Regulatory Hurdles Arise, But Decision-Makers' Positions Unknown

As we go to press, NYU has begun the initial environmental review phase of its application for massive zoning changes to build an additional 2.5 million sq. ft. of space south and east of Washington Square, the equivalent of the Empire State Building. At the same time, new regulatory hurdles have arisen which may affect what the university can ultimately build, even as GVSHP continues to push NYU and the City to consider other locations such as the Financial District as an alternative for the university's expansion.

Before NYU can begin the actual public hearing and approval process, it must study the various potential environmental impacts of its plan. To do that, it must submit the draft scope of its study to the City for public hearings, review and approval. GVSHP saw major flaws in the scope of the study, and called for major changes to include several important potential impacts it ignored and several potential alternatives to NYU's plans it failed to consider. This summer the City will make its final decision on the scope of NYU's study, and NYU is expected to take much of the rest of the year to complete the study, with hearings and votes on the plan itself expected to begin in early 2012.

Meanwhile, NYU faces a few new regulatory hurdles. This spring the State's Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) ruled that Washington Square Village (both its buildings and its open space) and the blocks east of Washington Square Park were eligible for the State and National Register of Historic Places. This is where much of NYU seeks to put its massive proposed expansion, but with this ruling, NYU cannot use state or federal funds as it planned without going

through a historic preservation review process to see if the planned changes would negatively impact historic resources. Given the scale and nature of NYU's plans and the SHPO's ruling, it seems quite likely that a negative impact will be found. If this is the case, NYU may be forced to change or drop their plans, or to forgo using public funds for their developments.

Through our advocacy we have already gotten NYU to make changes to their plans, but we still have a long way to go. After a campaign led by GVSHP, NYU dropped plans for a 400 ft. tall tower in the Silver Towers complex, for which NYU was able to secure landmark status in 2008. GVSHP and several other community groups have also led the opposition to NYU's plans to take over several pieces of public land for their development; following this, NYU dropped some, but not all, of the public land takeovers from their plan. NYU cannot get any of the public land without the City Council's approval, and City Councilmember Margaret Chin has stated her opposition to the request.

NYU's plans would drastically curtail the amount of open space in the area, add several huge new

buildings (including a 1,400 bed dorm and a commercial hotel), and eliminate long-standing neighborhood zoning protections. GVSHP continues to push its long-held position that if NYU is to expand, it should consider alternative locations for the massive new developments like the Financial District, where such development would be contextual and welcome, especially in light of high downtown office vacancy rates. NYU has thus far refused to consider this alternative, and likely will not unless they are denied the approvals they need for building in the Village.

NYU's plans require the approval of the City Planning Commission and the City Council, and would receive advisory votes from the Community Board and the Borough President. None have yet taken positions on the overall NYU plan. Key players in this process will be City Councilmembers Chin and Quinn, who will largely determine if the plans are approved by the City Council, and Borough President Stringer and Public Advocate DeBlasio, who appoint members of the City Planning Commission. GVSHP members have sent them hundreds of letters expressing opposition to the plan. For more info, see gvshp.org/nyu.



(l.) After an enormous public outcry and protests led by GVSHP, NYU dropped a proposal to build the Village's tallest building on Bleeker Street (in white, on left in model); (r.) an aerial view of the massive development NYU now proposes to shoehorn in south of Washington Square Park.

East Village Preservation Progress and Setbacks

Expanded Landmark Plan Advances, But Critical Sites Still Being Lost

GVSHP has made a top priority of pushing for extending landmark protections in the East Village, which is woefully underrepresented in recognition of its historic resources. While the City has refused to protect several important sites in the neighborhood, some of which have been lost as a result, some important advances have taken place as well.

This spring the city's Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) released a draft proposal for two historic districts in the East Village – one on Tompkins Square North, and one along lower Second Avenue and East 6th and 7th Streets. Working with a coalition of community and preservation groups and Councilmember Rosie Mendez, we pushed the LPC to expand the proposed district to include some critical but excluded nearby sites. The LPC also pledged to return to the East Village in the future to consider additional potential landmark designations in other parts of the neighborhood (though they have thus far failed to follow through on similar pledges in the South Village).

We are happy to report that the LPC agreed to our requests to add several adjacent buildings to the proposed East Village Historic District along 6th and 2nd Streets, and 2nd Avenue and Avenue A. This includes 101 Avenue A, an 1876 tenement housing the Pyramid Club, and the 1891 Russian Orthodox Cathedral at 59 E. 2nd Street. Both buildings are architecturally striking and reflect generations of immigrant struggle and success. Both are also buildings that GVSHP had previously proposed for landmark designation. Additionally, the expanded area includes a 1918 former Magistrate's Court which



101 Avenue A (l.) is one of several buildings GVSHP and allied groups were able to convince the City to add to the proposed East Village Historic District (photo: Barry Munger); 35 Cooper Square (r.), however, fell victim to the wrecking ball after the City refused to landmark it (photo: Sally Young).

now houses the Anthology Film Archives, and several wonderfully intact early 19th century rowhouses and late 19th century tenements. The LPC is expected to calendar, or begin to formally consider landmark status for, the districts in June, putting some preliminary protections in place.

While these actions by the City are clearly good news, unfortunately there has been bad news as well. For the past several years the LPC refused to landmark 35 Cooper Square, an 1825 Federal style house on the Bowery that we knew would one day be threatened with demolition. This spring, after promising to consider options for preserving the structure, that is exactly what developer Arun Bhatia did, bulldozing the house in a matter of days.

We also lost 326 & 328 East 4th Street, two incredibly intact late 1830's Greek Revival houses with remarkable histories connected to the neighborhood's shipbuilding, immigrant, Jewish, and artistic history. After the LPC refused to landmark the structures, a developer,

who promised that a planned redevelopment would be "respectful" of the buildings' features, proceeded to tear a giant hole in them.

Finally, on Astor Place, the city's Department of Transportation (DOT) proposed a plan to pedestrianize the eastern end of the street and in the process remove most traces of its more than 450 year history as one of New York's earliest thoroughfares. GVSHP did not oppose the pedestrianization plan, but wanted to ensure that the street's history, which traces back to an important pre-colonial Native American trail, was not erased. While DOT did not budge much on their plans, the city's Design Review Commission, which must approve the plan, was very receptive to our comments that any new designs should make clear where the streetbed was, and reflect and preserve its history. A final decision on the plan is expected this summer.

Special thanks go to Councilmember Rosie Mendez for her incredible help and advocacy on all of these and so many other East Village preservation efforts. For more info, see gvshp.org/ev.

Spotlight on: The Meatpacking District

Chelsea Market: The Chelsea Market complex, between 15th and 16th Streets, 9th and 10th Avenues, was built in stages by the National Biscuit Company (Nabisco) between 1890 and 1934. Nabisco used to be a major presence on the Lower West Side of Manhattan, having also built in 1919 what became the last working factory along the Greenwich Village waterfront between Bethune and West 12th Streets (before it was demolished in 2006, it was known as the Superior Inks factory; a new residential development on the site now bears that name).

Given its important history and impressive architecture, GVSHP included the Chelsea Market complex in our proposed Gansevoort Market Historic District submitted to the City in 2001. Though the City initially encouraged



The proposed massive addition to the western end of Chelsea Market

its inclusion, when they designated the district in 2003 Chelsea Market was carved out. However, in 2007 GVSHP was able to get the entire proposed district approved for the State and National Register of Historic Places, including Chelsea Market. The complex of course is now notable not only for its history and architecture, but its shining example of successful adaptive reuse and the economic anchor it provides at the conjunction of the Meatpacking District and Chelsea.

However, a new owner, Jamestown Properties (a mall developer based in Atlanta) is not satisfied with the current success. Jamestown has announced their intention to seek a zoning change to allow them to add hundreds of thousands of square feet to the complex, in the form of a large commercial tower on the 10th Avenue end and a hotel on the 9th Avenue end. No additional construction can take place at the complex without the zoning change, which must be approved by the City Council and City Planning Commission. GVSHP has joined with a coalition of local groups to oppose the zoning change, which would forever mar the integrity of the complex's distinctive industrial design. The formal zoning change application has not yet been filed, but is expected in the coming months. See gvshp.org/chmkt.

Gansevoort Plaza Street

Furniture: In 2008, the Department of Transportation (DOT) installed what were supposed to be temporary installations to calm traffic, pedestrianize, and provide seating in parts of the wide street intersections along 9th Avenue and Hudson Street between Gansevoort and 15th Street.

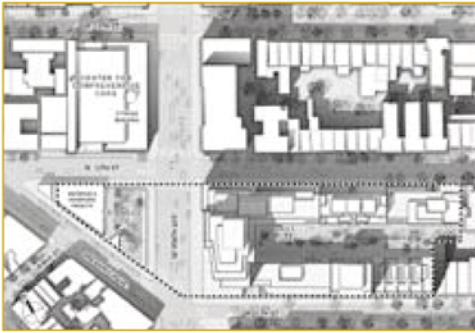
The arrangement has gotten mixed reviews at best, and has been in place for over three years, in spite of its supposed temporary nature.

GVSHP has urged changes be made to the designs, most importantly to simplify them so that they follow and respect the geometries of the area's unique street pattern, and that the furniture itself be simpler and more uniform, rather than the strange and jarring amalgam of rocky slabs and playground-like sculptures currently in place.

DOT is making another round of "temporary" changes to the design, because the entire area will need to be dug up and its water and sewer pipes replaced by the Department of Environmental Protection. The "temporary" changes are not subject to full public review, but do at least incorporate some of GVSHP's suggestions for simplification and improvement. Permanent changes, after the water and sewer work is done, will require public hearings and approval of the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), and GVSHP will participate in and notify the public about that process. We will also work hard to ensure that the distinctive cobblestone streets of the area are preserved.

837 Washington Street: GVSHP considers the low-rise scale of the Meatpacking District an essential feature of its character, and has consistently opposed plans for oversized additions to the neighborhood. A developer continues to seek approval from the LPC for a large addition to this 1-½ story moderne former meatpacking plant at West 13th Street. GVSHP has consistently pushed for a reduction in scale of the proposed addition, which started at more than 6-½ stories and has since been reduced to 4-½ stories. Consistent with GVSHP's input, the LPC has called for further reductions in the height, and no final design has yet been approved. See gvshp.org/837.

Spotlight on: The West Village



An aerial view of the proposed redevelopment of the St. Vincent's campus.

Former St. Vincent's Site: As we go to press, the Rudin Company and Long Island College Jewish Hospital have just filed plans to redevelop the former St. Vincent's Hospital. The sites east of 7th Avenue would become condominiums, an emergency care facility would go into the O'Toole Building on the west side of 7th Avenue, and publicly accessible open space would go on the triangle site bounded by 7th and Greenwich Avenues and West 12th Street. All of this would require a major rezoning, which must be approved by the City Council and the City Planning Commission.

Rudin's condo proposal remains unchanged from a prior version connected to St. Vincent's plan for a new hospital, before the hospital's mismanagement and bankruptcy put an end to that plan. Rudin's proposal, previously approved by the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), would preserve and re-use the four oldest of the eight former St. Vincent's buildings east of 7th Avenue, while demolishing and replacing the four newest with new housing. While



City's plan for the Jane Street Triangle.

the LPC approval from the prior plan carries over, new zoning approvals are still required. GVSHP had raised several objections to the prior version of this plan, including the size and height of Rudin's proposed new condo building on 7th Avenue, the demolition of the Reiss building on 12th Street, and the fact that the prior rezoning request would have allowed for additional condo development in the future.

Rather than an \$800 million, 300 ft. tall new hospital on the site of the O'Toole Building, the new plan re-uses the building, placing an emergency care facility within. The debate about whether or not the proposed replacement medical facility is adequate is ongoing. Because this very important question lies outside of GVSHP's historic preservation mission, the Society is only examining, and will only be weighing in upon, issues of scale and aesthetic appropriateness of the proposed developments. GVSHP will be disseminating information about the public hearing and approval process for the plan, as well as more particulars about the proposal, as they become available. See gvshp.org/stv.

Jane Street Triangle Redesign: The Department of Transportation has put forward a plan for a permanent redesign of the Jane Street Triangle, at 8th Avenue and West 4th Street. The plan would pedestrianize one small block of West 4th Street and add street furniture for seating. Many neighbors objected to the seating plan, fearing noise from late-night crowds. As at Astor Place and Gansevoort Plaza, GVSHP called for changes to ensure

that the distinctive West Village street pattern is recognized and preserved, even if closed to traffic. The plan must be approved by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. See gvshp.org/jst.

MTA Mulry Square Vent Plant: This Spring the MTA began to move forward again with controversial plans for an emergency ventilation plant at Mulry Square, in what is currently a parking lot they own at 7th Avenue South and Greenwich Avenue, in the heart of the Greenwich Village Historic District. From the beginning, GVSHP has been critical of the plan, questioning its necessity at this location, calling for the

MTA to consider placing the plant underground as it has at other locations, and criticizing the design, which has been lacking at best, an eyesore at worst. Historically the MTA has been able to design handsome versions of similar structures, such as the art deco MTA

substation at Greenwich Avenue and 13th Street. But in this case, the MTA produced a series of awkward designs, from a concrete bunker to a faux-historicist townhouse with an triangular glass addition meant to approximate the diner in Edward Hopper's 'Nighthawks' to house the "Tiles for America" 9-11 Memorial currently on the site (the MTA premised this design on the theory that the Hopper painting was based upon a structure which once stood on the site; GVSHP research has since shown this to be untrue).

GVSHP has called for a rethinking of the entire design, and for the MTA to hire an outside design firm for the project. As we go to press, the MTA has released a slightly modified design, which will go to the LPC for a public hearing and advisory report, but as a city/state agency, will not require approval. See gvshp.org/mtamul.





Hudson Square Rezoning

Early this year, Trinity Realty announced their intention to seek a rezoning for Hudson Square, much of the area between Houston and Canal Streets, 6th Avenue and Greenwich Street. Because the plan has not yet been formally filed, not all details are yet clear. But Trinity intends to ask for changes that would allow as-of-right residential development and conversion in the area, which is currently prohibited. The plan would allow maximum heights of either 320, 185, or 125 feet, depending upon the streets, and allow an extra-large 429 ft. tall building on a superblock bounded by Canal and Watts Streets, 6th Avenue and Varick Street, which would contain a public school in the base. The plan would have some mechanisms for preserving larger commercial buildings and discouraging, but not prohibiting, hotel development. The plan must be approved by the City Council and City Planning Commission. Read more at gvshp.org/hudsq.

In Memoriam *Earlier this year, GVSHP and the Village lost two great women & wonderful friends.*



Lucy Cecere, 1923–2011. Lucy was born and raised in the South Village, on Thompson Street. One of five daughters, Lucy credited her mother with instilling in her the importance of service to one's community. Lucy co-founded the Caring Community, an organization that provides services to 2,000 seniors in and around Greenwich Village. Lucy helped save the Village Nursing Home in 1975 when it was threatened, and stayed active for many years with each organization. More recently, she became a member of GVSHP's South Village Advisory Board, helping to steer our efforts to honor and preserve that neighborhood through landmark designation. She and her husband Lenny owned and operated the business "Something Special" on MacDougal Street, a neighborhood fixture. Last year, at GVSHP's 20th annual Village Awards, we presented a special award to Lucy for her years of service to her community.

Lucy was a great friend to GVSHP. She spoke at our rallies, and was a tireless crusader for South Village landmark designation and for fixing up 43 MacDougal Street, the dilapidated landmarked house on her block that GVSHP and neighbors have been fighting to see restored. She will be missed, but we also know she will be very fondly remembered by many, including everyone at GVSHP. Read more about Lucy at gvshp.org/lucy.



Suze Rotolo, 1943–2011. Suze Rotolo was an artist, author, teacher, and activist; she died this past February of lung cancer. Suze grew up in Queens but at an early age made the Village her home and the focus of much of her life. The author of "A Freewheelin' Time: A Memoir of Greenwich Village in the 1960's" (2008), Rotolo was known to millions as the girl walking arm-in-arm with Bob Dylan down Jones Street on the cover of his album, "The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan."

In 2008 Suze did a very popular program and bookreading for GVSHP. She was a great supporter of GVSHP's work, and a passionate advocate for preserving the Village. This was especially so for the South Village, which GVSHP has proposed for historic district designation, and which includes the block of Jones Street she and Dylan made famous, as well as many of the other locations they both frequented in the 1960's. Suze spoke at our rally in 2009 calling upon the City to move ahead with landmark designation of the South Village, and frequently lent her voice to preservation efforts. Throughout her life, Suze was a crusader against racial injustice and a frequent critic of economic inequality in our society. She taught at the Parson School of Design. Read more about Suze at gvshp.org/suze.

From the Director

Spring is a wonderful time for GVSHP for many reasons, not least of which is our Annual Meeting and Awards. This year we honor Annisa Restaurant, Fourth Arts Block, Bob Holman, Judson Memorial Church, Le Poisson Rouge, McNulty's Tea & Coffee Co., P.E. Guerin, and the Restoration of the Nave of the Church of the Ascension, a particularly impressive assortment of neighborhood institutions and luminaries.



As we do at every Annual Meeting, we will also be reflecting upon the accomplishments of the past year, and looking toward the year ahead. The Society certainly has been busy—launching a new widely-read blog, successfully pushing for expanded landmark protections in the East Village, cutting developments down to size in the Meatpacking District, calling for more appropriate project designs from by Department of Transportation and the MTA, and leading the charge against NYU's massive Village expansion plans. We've also seen attendance at our largely free programs go through the roof.

But believe it or not, we expect the coming months to be even busier. Four large and very consequential rezoning and development plans—by NYU, for the former St. Vincent's site, for Hudson Square, and for the northern edge of the Meatpacking District—are just beginning the analysis, review, and approval process. While each is quite different and raise different issues, all necessitate close scrutiny and a vigorous response to ensure that neighborhood preservation concerns are addressed. And as the City embarks for the first time upon considering new, larger scale landmark protections for the East Village, we must ensure that important sites are not overlooked, and that this neighborhood's rich history is finally given its due.

I hope you'll enjoy the spring and summer—we've got a lot of work ahead of us!

Acknowledgements

GVSHP gratefully acknowledges the following for grants supporting our work: The Kaplen Foundation; Windie Knowe Fund at the New York Community Trust; the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; the New York State Council on the Arts, and the Norcross Wildlife Foundation.

We also wish to acknowledge the generous support of City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, Councilmember Rosie Mendez, the Manhattan Delegation through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and the Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer through the Department of Education.

Get Involved

There are many ways you can get more involved with the Society's work:

Volunteer—Help out at rallies and programs, with mailings or research, or with special skill such as photography or graphic design. See gvshp.org/volunteer.

Host a 'friendraiser' for GVSHP! Invite friends and neighbors to a casual event in your home to hear from the Society about the work we do, and to answer questions and listen to concerns. See gvshp.org/fr or contact gvshp@gvshp.org

Find out about past or current landmarks applications in your neighborhood, and weigh in if you like – visit gvshp.org/lpc.

Read GVSHP's blog. Off the Grid, for news, commentary, and historic information about our neighborhoods.

Follow us on twitter, friend us on Facebook, watch us on Flickr and YouTube, or join our e-mail list – get the links at gvshp.org.

Planned Giving: Make a Legacy Gift to GVSHP. Contact 212/475-9585 x39.

Board of Trustees

President

Arbie Thalacker

Vice Presidents

Arthur Levin
Linda Yowell
Leslie Mason

Secretary/Treasurer

Katherine Schoonover

Mary Ann Arisman
John Bacon
Penelope Bareau
Kate Bostock
Shefferman
Elizabeth Ely

Cassie Glover
Ruth McCoy
Florent Morellet
Vals Osborne
Andrew Paul
Cynthia Penney

Robert Rogers
Jonathan Russo
Judith Stonehill
Fred Wistow
F. Anthony Zunino, III

Staff

Executive Director
Andrew Berman

Director of Preservation and Research
Elizabeth Finkelstein

Director of Administration
Drew Durniak

Senior Director of Operations
Sheryl Woodruff

Director of East Village and Special Projects
Andito Lloyd

Program and Administrative Associate
Dana Schulz

Support Preservation: Join GVSHP

Your support makes GVSHP a more effective preservation leader. Contribute \$500 or more, and receive an invitation to a special thank you event at a unique Village location.

Yes! I support the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation and its preservation work.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> \$5,000 Founder | <input type="radio"/> Other \$ <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> \$2,500 Benefactor | <input type="radio"/> \$25 Gift Membership:
Special offer for members!
Please put recipient's name at right. |
| <input type="radio"/> \$1,000 Patron | <input type="radio"/> I am already a member
and want to contribute \$ <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> \$500 Sponsor | <input type="radio"/> Please send information about
how I may include GVSHP in my will
or estate planning. |
| <input type="radio"/> \$250 Sustainer | |
| <input type="radio"/> \$100 Contributor | |
| <input type="radio"/> \$75 Family/Dual | |
| <input type="radio"/> \$50 Individual | |

For credit cards go to: www.gvshp.org/membership

Name

Street

City

State

ZIP

Phone

Email

Member Name

(FOR GIFT MEMBERSHIPS ONLY.)

GVSHP is a 501(c)(3) non profit. All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Return this form with your check to: Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, 232 East 11th Street, New York, NY 10003.

GREENWICH VILLAGE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

232 East 11th Street, New York, NY 10003

(212) 475-9585

www.gvshp.org

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

NEW YORK, NY
PERMIT NO. 3509