



December 18, 2012

Hon. Robert Tierney, Chair  
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission  
One Centre Street, 9th Floor  
New York, NY 10007

**Re: Request for Evaluation of 143 East 13th Street, Manhattan**

Dear Chair Tierney:

We request that the Landmarks Preservation Commission consider for landmark designation the remarkably intact early tenement building located at 143 East 13th Street in the East Village. We are writing at the behest of longtime building owner, Bill Curry, who wishes to pursue landmark designation.

This handsome building was constructed in 1863 at the height of the Civil War, making it one of the earliest extant tenement buildings in the area. Though the neighborhood has changed in character since the 1860s, the 150-year-old Italianate style building has retained its extraordinarily high level of architectural integrity, which includes rare surviving cast iron storefronts with Corinthian pilasters, two-over-two wood sash windows and a bracketed pressed metal cornice. The façade is constructed of load-bearing, rubbed red brick laid in common bond. Central paneled wood doors with etched glass lead to apartments on the upper floors.

Built in the earliest years of tenement construction in New York City, 143 East 13th Street's survival and high degree of architectural integrity is particularly noteworthy. Whereas later tenement designs have come to define many Manhattan neighborhoods, including the East Village where this building is located, pre-law tenements such as 143 East 13th Street are rare tangible reminders of the dawn of the apartment building in New York City. Further still, it is unusual to find a pre-law tenement that is, essentially, unaltered. The building provides the public with an incredibly authentic piece of history; where other tenement storefronts have been lost or altered, no. 143 retains them. It is a remarkable educational tool.

The block itself has dramatically changed in character from low-rise brick row houses to modern high-rise buildings; the small scale store-and-residential building at 143 East 13th Street perfectly captures 1860s New York. Constructed at the rear of the lot shared with 106 Third Avenue, the building is unusually wide for a pre-law tenement at 40 feet; these early tenements were typically built on the standard 25-foot wide lots that had been allotted for single-family homes during the creation of the 1811 Commissioner's Plan. The orientation of the building on the lot also affects the depth of the building, which is a shallow 25 feet.

At the time of 143 East 13th Street's construction, New York was a city of low-rise, single-family homes occupied by middle and upper class families. Indeed, apartment living would not become acceptable to the middle class until the late 19th century and to the upper class until the early 20th century. Multi-family dwellings were built specifically to house the growing number of poor immigrant families arriving in New York in the latter half of the 19th century. No. 143 was built for David Glass, an Irish immigrant born in 1804 and who worked as a porter in a

house. The 1860 census lists him and his large family as living in the 9th district of Manhattan's 17th ward. According to deeds research, the Glass family purchased the lot in 1846 and owned the building until 1898. The building was then sold to William and George Schade (of German heritage) who owned it until 1927. The fact that the building was owned by Irish and German families for 80 years is reflective of the neighborhood's ethnic history.

Current owner Bill Curry has lived in the building since 1967. He has maintained the building impeccably and hopes that it may be preserved intact long into the future. In addition, he believes that the Herter Brothers furniture company might have had a workroom in the building based on some furnishings in the basement. The firm, founded by Gustave and Christian Herter in 1864 and based in New York City, was one of the premiere American furniture makers and interior decorators in the late 19th century. It had a number of workshops in the city; given 143 East 13th Street's location near the *Kleindeutschland* area, it is plausible that one could have been located at this address.

Bill's life partner, Cornell Edwards, operated a flower shop at the easternmost storefront called "The Flower Stall" from 1967 until his death in 2011. Edwards was actively involved in the community for almost 45 years; his profound impact in the East Village is evident in the approved re-naming of this section of East 13th Street to "Cornell Edwards Way", a proposal supported by hundreds of people in the community.

To assist in the Commission's consideration of this request, we have included a copy of the original tax assessment record from 1863 for 143 East 13th Street. Until about 1920, the building was also referred to as the rear house of 106 Third Avenue. We have also included photographs, deeds research, and historic maps of the block.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of any assistance in its consideration. We look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,



Andrew Berman  
Executive Director  
Greenwich Village Society  
for Historic Preservation



Simeon Bankoff  
Executive Director  
Historic Districts Council



Richard Moses  
Steering Committee  
Lower East Side Preservation Initiative



Sara Romanoski  
Managing Director  
East Village Community Coalition

Cc: Bill Curry, Property Owner of 143 East 13<sup>th</sup> Street  
State Senator Tom Duane  
City Councilmember Rosie Mendez  
State Assemblymember Deborah Glick  
Community Board #3, Manhattan



c. 2010, with building owner Bill Curry and his life partner Cornell Edwards (1932-2011) standing at the entrance of The Flower Stall storefront









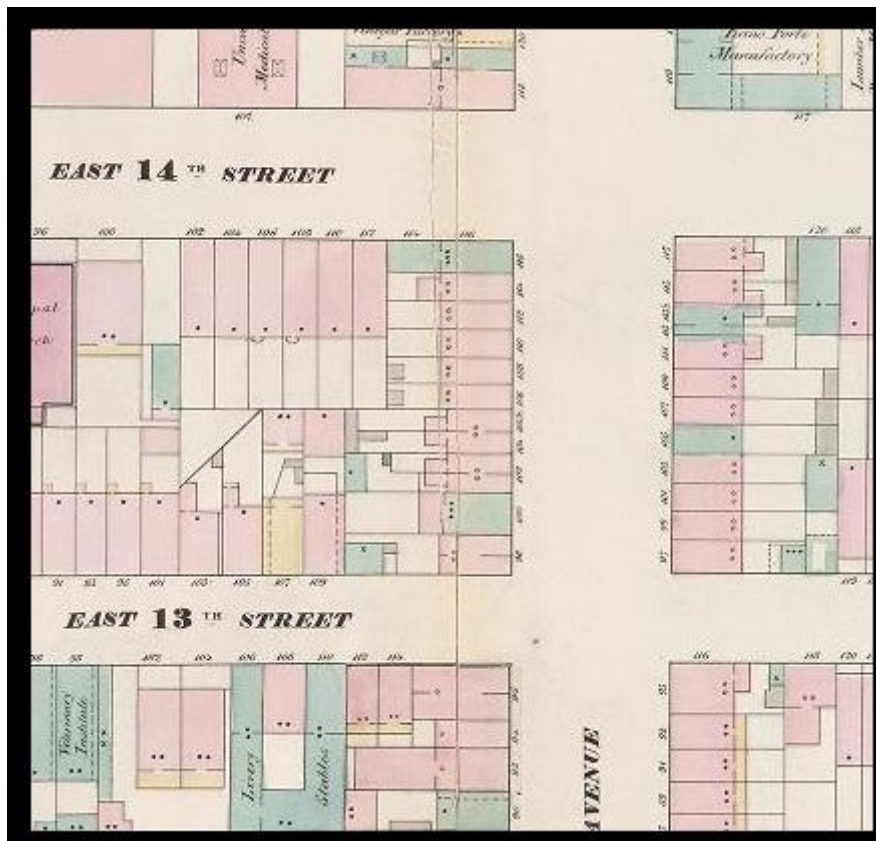




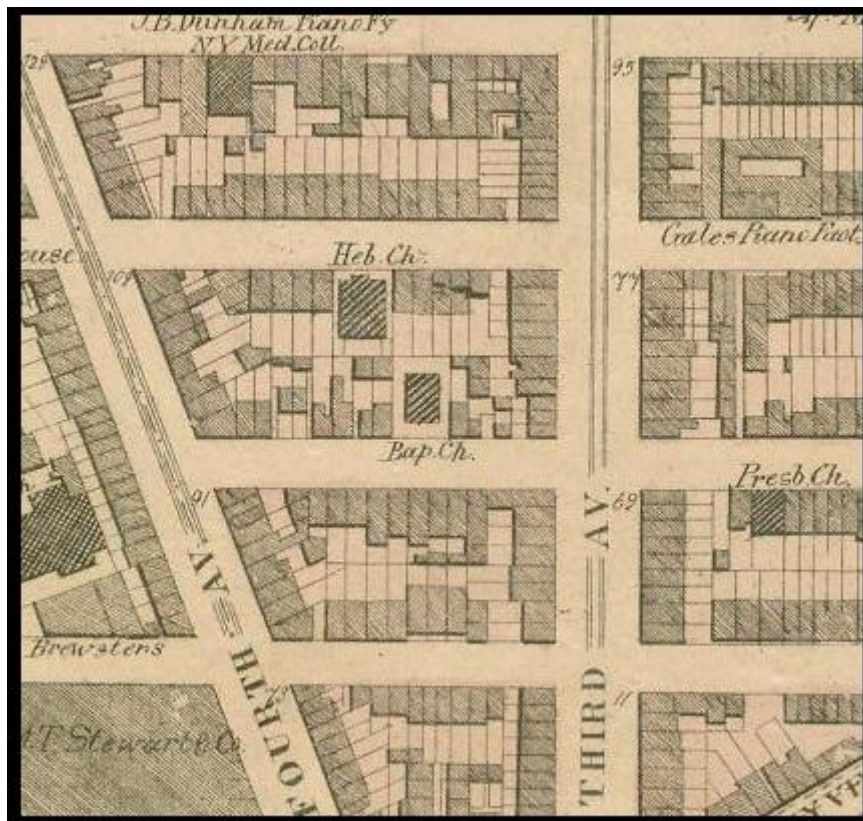






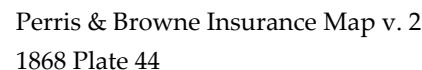


Perris Map 1857-62 Plate 44



Dripps Map 1867 Sheet 7





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March 6, 1920

to Aaron & Nathan Hellmann, firm Hellmann Bros, 1332 3 av; Feb28; Mar1'20.

**143 E 13<sup>th</sup> Street/106 3rd Avenue: Block 559 lot 141/ Block 559 lot 41**

Parcel four, within the Petersfield Farm, Passed to Peter Gerard Stuyvesant

<b><u>Grantor-----→</u></b>	<b><u>Grantee-----→</u></b>	<b><u>Date/ Year</u></b>
Stuyvesant, Peter Gerard Helena Sarah	Hebberd, Southrick	Apr. 8, 1818
Hebberd, Southwick Catharine	Wiseman, Samuel W.	Feb. 5, 1839
Wiseman, Samuel W. Maria	Glass, David	Apr. 7, 1846
Glass, David	Glass, Mary Ann Elizabeth Sarah Jane	June 8, 1864
Glass, David Anna	Glass, Mary Ann Elizabeth Sarah Jane	Feb. 3, 1864
Glass, Mary Ann Elizabeth Sarah Jane	Glass, Emma- -Cecilia	Feb. 4, 1865 <sup>1</sup>
Glass, David Anna	Glass, Mary Ann Elizabeth Sarah Jane Emma Cecilia Kingsley	Nov. 29, 1865
Glass, David Drucker, Henry	Glass, Elizabeth	Nov. 14, 1881
Glass, Elizabeth	Glass, David	Nov. 8, 1886 <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> (1/4 Interest)



Glass, David	Schade, William George	Apr. 21, 1893
Schade, George William	Schade, Johanna Caroline	May 25, 1893
Ross, Anna M Glass (formerly) Widow of Ross, Peter B.	Schade, George William Johanna W. Caroline	Apr. 8 1898 <sup>3</sup>
Ross, Anna M Glass (formerly) Widow of Ross, Peter B.	Schade, George William Johanna W. Caroline	Apr. 8 1898 <sup>4</sup>
Schade, William George Johanna W. Caroline	Wirtz, Gustav	Feb. 1, 1907 <sup>5</sup>
Wirtz, Gustav	Consumers Brewing Co. Of New York (LTD)	Feb. 1, 1907 <sup>6</sup>
Schade, William George Johanna W. Caroline	Schwarzer, Alex, Max Morris Schwarzer, (illegible) of Brothers	Feb. 27. 1920

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<sup>2</sup> “Surrogates Court of New York County, In the matter of probate of Heirship to the estate of Glass, Elizabeth.”  
“Decree in Proceedings for Probate of Heirship Heir Glass, David.”

<sup>3</sup> “Quite Claim”

<sup>4</sup> “Rel of Dower

<sup>5</sup> “Lease”

<sup>6</sup> “Asst of Lease” – last from first book.

Schwarzer, Alex Max Morris	Seigel, Louis Hoch, Rubin	Feb.8, 1927 <sup>7</sup>
Seigel, Louis Hoch, Rubin	106 Third Avenue Corp	Feb.8, 1927 <sup>8</sup>
Seigel, Louis Hoch, Rubin	Parrot Lunch Inc.	Mar. 25, 1927 <sup>9</sup>
Parrot Lunch, Inc.	Weitz, Benjamin	July 28, 1927
Schade, William George Johanna W. Caroline	Schinasi Commercial Corp. 2 E 57	Nov. 16, 1927
Schinasi Commerical Corp.	Schansi, Leon (Excro of) Schanasi, Ruby 346 West 69 <sup>th</sup> St Smith, Harold 160 Riverside Dr Bankers Trust Company 16 Wall Street (exectrix' & exrs)	June 16, 1932 <sup>10</sup>
Schinasi, Leon	Schanasi, Ruby 346 West 69 <sup>th</sup> St Bankers Trust Company 16 Wall Street As Trustees of trust provided in paragraph ELEVENTH of LWT of Schansi, Leon	Dec. 10, 1938 <sup>11</sup>
Schinasi, Leon	Cole Leasing Corp.	July 27, 1962

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<sup>7</sup> "A.L."

<sup>8</sup> "R.L. 3/30/?"

<sup>9</sup> "L."

<sup>10</sup> "2.C" "Quite Claim"

<sup>11</sup> "GMD"