



**GVSHHP**  
GREENWICH VILLAGE  
SOCIETY FOR  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

May 21, 2004

Hon. Robert Tierney  
Chair, Landmarks Preservation Commission  
One Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chair Tierney,

*Bob*

We write because another historic building in the Far West Village has, unfortunately, been announced for demolition. While we request and continue to urge that the Commission move expeditiously to designate all unprotected and worthy historic buildings in the Far West Village, we ask that the house at 163 Charles Street be immediately calendared and considered for designation, in order to prevent its imminent, and publicly announced, demise.

163 Charles Street was built in 1830, and, in spite of minor and typical alterations to its façade in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, it retains the characteristic historic features of the earliest phase of urban development in this part of New York. The house was built for a cartman and carpenter, typical of the modest but successful business people who were staking their claim on the Greenwich Village waterfront at this time and beginning the transformation of this area to a thriving port and industrial center for New York and the world. The house is part of a row of three remaining houses built in the 1830's on Charles Street, and like its neighbors has a 2-story rear structure facing historic Charles Lane, one of the narrowest, oldest streets in New York, paved with cobblestones believed to be the oldest surviving paving stones in New York. The loss of the Charles Lane structure would be a devastating blow to the unique historic integrity and value of the Lane, one of the most unique, evocative, and venerable spaces in all of New York.

For all of these reasons, the house merits protection by the Landmark Preservation Commission and guarantee of its continued survival. The loss would be especially tragic not only for the historic value it embodies, but because of the loss of historic fabric to Charles Street and Charles Lane its destruction would bring. These streets are at the core of what we strongly believe should be new or extended historic district or districts in the Far West Village, and to allow their further compromise would be a tremendous blow to the remaining historic integrity of an important neighborhood we believe must be preserved.

We urge you to act as quickly as possible on this matter.

Sincerely,

*Thomas K. Duane*

Thomas K. Duane  
State Senator

*Christine Quinn*

Christine Quinn  
Councilmember

*Deborah Glick*

Deborah Glick  
Assembly Member

*Andrew Berman*

Andrew Berman  
Executive Director, Greenwich Village  
Society for Historic Preservation

*Stuart Waldman*

Stuart Waldman  
Federation to Preserve the  
Greenwich Village Waterfront & Great Port

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