

## Proposed NoHo Historic District Extension

Abutted by the NoHo and NoHo East Historic Districts on the west and south, the proposed NoHo Historic District Extension consists of approximately sixty buildings located between Lafayette Street and the Bowery from Bond Street to East 4<sup>th</sup> Street plus the northeast corner of Bleecker and Lafayette Streets. The majority of the buildings in the proposed historic district are store-and-loft buildings dating from the 1860s to the early 1900s when this area prospered as one of the city's major publishing, retail and wholesale dry goods centers. Interspersed among the commercial buildings are residences and tenements from the earliest period of the neighborhood's development. Arrayed along broad east-west streets and the Bowery, the diverse collection of commercial, residential and institutional buildings reflects the changing history of the area and gives it a distinct sense of place.

Residential development of these blocks began in the early nineteenth century as middle-class New Yorkers, pushed out of lower Manhattan by the expansion of the business district, relocated to the area north of Houston Street. By the 1820s and 30s many houses in the Federal and Greek Revival styles lined the streets between Broadway and the Bowery. Bond Street was at the early part of the nineteenth century "one of the best known streets in the city, and none stood higher in favor as a place of residence." It was home to some of the city's finest residences and still retains much of its historic street paving. A remnant from this period and the likely the oldest building within the proposed historic district is 26 Bond Street, a 3½-story Federal rowhouse that was built ca. 1829-32. This three-bay house of brick laid in Flemish bond has pedimented dormers and an arched entrance with an elaborate Gibbs surround. No. 52 Bond Street, erected ca. 1836-38, retains its Greek Revival window lintels and stone sills. The frieze is pierced by three attic windows and the façade is topped by a denticulated cornice.

As population density increased in mid-century, older homes were enlarged into multi-family dwellings and tenements and commercial storefronts began to appear. No. 28 Bond Street (ca.1860) is a three-bay, four-story tenement with store in the Italianate style. Built in brick with simple brownstone lintels and sills, it retains its cornice and storefront designed with a molded cornice and paneled columns topped by Corinthian capitals.

Commercial development in the proposed historic district began to proliferate in the mid-nineteenth century as hotels, stores and entertainment venues moved into the area. Among the earliest of the purpose-built commercial structures is 27 Great Jones Street, designed by Louis Burger (ca. 1868-70) for Frederick A. Vilmar. Described as a first-class store and storehouse, the five-story building has a marble façade, galvanized-iron cornice and iron storefront in the Italianate style.

Although some small structures such as the 1871 Italianate stable buildings at 31 and 33 Great Jones Street were erected at the end of the nineteenth century, this period was largely dominated by larger-scale commercial loft construction. No. 21 Bond Street (Buchman & Deisler, 1892-93) is a six-story Renaissance Revival store-and-loft building in Roman brick with brownstone and terra cotta elements and a prominent three-story arch incorporating the windows of the third-through-fifth floors. At around the same time, Ralph S. Townsend designed the six-story, brick-and-stone store and lofts at 35 and 39 Bond Street with a three-story, four-bay arcade. The two seven-story, four-bay lofts at 20 Bond Street and 47 Great Jones Street were designed by Cleverdon & Putzel between 1894 and 1896. These Renaissance Revival structures are elaborately decorated with columns, classically-inspired cornices, spandrels and storefronts. The last vestiges of nineteenth-century residential construction can be seen in the brick tenements with stores at 34-36 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street (Alex J. Finkle), which were constructed in 1888-89 and still retain their pedimented cornices and abundant terra cotta decoration.

In the twentieth century, the proposed NoHo Historic District Extension was almost exclusively a commercial and manufacturing neighborhood until the years following World War II when many of the local industries began to leave for cheaper rent outside of Manhattan. Drawn

to the large interior spaces of the vacant lofts with their ample natural light and high ceilings, artists began to move into some of the buildings and use them as live/work spaces. During the late 1960s, 70s and 80s, the proposed NoHo Historic District Extension was home to such notable artists as Chuck Close, Robert Mapplethorpe, and Jean-Michel Basquiat. Restoring a sense of vitality to the neighborhood, this era marked the beginning of NoHo's renewed existence as a residential center and highlighted the remarkable versatility of nearly 150 years of building stock.

Today, remaining Federal and Greek Revival-style buildings sit shoulder to shoulder with richly decorated store-and-loft buildings in an area that is seeing yet another wave of residential and commercial development. The powerful streetscapes of marble, cast iron, brick, terra cotta and, in places, Belgian-block street paving tell the story of NoHo from its earliest period of development up through its latest chapter in the twenty-first century.