

130 West 57th Street Studio Building, 130 West 57th Street, (aka 126-132 West 57th Street), Manhattan. Built, 1907-08, Pollard & Steinam, architects.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1009, Lot 46.

On July 13, 1999, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the 130 West 57th Street Studio Building and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 2). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. There were six speakers in support of designation, including the owner of the building, representatives of the Landmarks Conservancy, the Society for the Architecture of the City, and the Historic Districts Council. There were no speakers in opposition to designation. In addition, the Commission has received letters from Assemblyman Richard N. Gottfried and from Community Board 5 in support of designation.

Summary

Built in 1907-08 to provide living and working facilities for artists, the studio building at 130 West 57th Street is a rare surviving example of this unusual building type, and a reminder of the early twentieth century period when West 57th Street was a center of artistic activities. Designed by architects Pollard & Steinam, who had previously created several artists' studio cooperatives on West 67th Street, this building profited from the experience of the developers and builders who had worked on the earlier structures. The artists' studio building type was developed early in the twentieth century, and was an important step toward the acceptance of apartment living for wealthy New Yorkers. The 130 West 57th Street Studio Building, along with its almost identical neighbor at 140 West 57th Street, was built in a prime location, on a wide cross-town street, with other artists' studios, the Art Students' League, Carnegie Hall, and many other nearby sites devoted to art and music. The duplex plan of the building allowed for seven double-height stories facing the street, with twelve stories in the rear, and was popular with artists and non-artists alike for the abundant amount of space it provided. Located on the south side of 57th Street, the tall, projecting bay windows set in geometrically-ornamented cast iron frames bring in the north light so prized by artists, and suggest the unique spatial arrangement in this building. This building has been the residence of a number of well-known artists, and its distinctive windows have appeared in several of their works.



DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

57th Street¹

Fifty-Seventh Street, extending from the East River to the Hudson is a wide, cross-town thoroughfare that has a distinguished history of elegant housing, artistic activities, and luxury retailing, from the period of its earliest development through today. As with most cross-town streets in New York, the economic level of the population and the types of occupations changed depending on their location on the street. While the noise and odors associated with industrial development and trains were usually found close to the two rivers, the area near Fifth Avenue maintained a panache which led to a comparison with the well-known Parisian street, the Rue de la Paix, because of the elegant homes and shops located there.

The earliest development of 57th Street occurred on the block between Fifth and Madison Avenues. The 1869 construction of Mary Mason Jones' "Marble Row," on Fifth Avenue between 57th and 58th Streets, inspired other fashionable New Yorkers to build near. While some neighboring luxury dwellings began to appear in the early 1870s, it was Cornelius Vanderbilt II's chateau on the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and 57th Street built in 1879, that established the character of the street. Homes of such prominent families as the Whitneys, the Harrimans, Rothschilds, Auchinclosses and Schieffelins soon filled the block between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. By 1885, the neighborhood became known as "the very best in the city,"²

Farther to the west, the street was quickly built up with only slightly more modest townhouses, since the area was still considered the "choicest" in the city.³ At the same time, larger structures that helped cultivate the neighborhood's budding artistic environment also began to appear. These included the Rembrandt, at Number 152 (demolished), organized in 1880 by Jared Flagg, a painter and minister, and built by Hubert, Pirsson & Co., as well as the Sherwood Studios (1880, demolished), at Number 58 West 57th. Both buildings provided large working spaces for artists, taking advantage of the abundance of light available because of the exceptionally wide street. The Osborne Apartments (1883-85, James E. Ware, 1889, 1906, a designated New York City Landmark), on the corner of Seventh Avenue, was the largest and grandest apartment house of its time, with extra thick walls that have enabled numerous musicians to live here and practice without disturbing their neighbors. Carnegie Hall (1889-95, William B. Tuthill, a designated New York City Landmark), at the southeast corner of the same intersection, provided elegant and popular

performance space, with living studios added in 1896-97 (Henry J. Hardenbergh). Contemporary with this, Hardenbergh's American Fine Arts Society Building (1891-92, 215 West 57th Street, a designated New York City Landmark) was home to several art associations (including the Architectural League, the Art Students' League, and the Society of American Artists), providing exhibition and classroom facilities for many well-known and would-be artists. For many years, this facility was the setting of "virtually every important exhibition of art and architecture held in the city."⁴ Other facilities for artists followed, including the studios at 130 and 140 West 57th Street, and the Rodin Studios (1916-17, 200 West 57th Street, a designated New York City Landmark) designed by Cass Gilbert with luxurious Gothic detailing. The Lotos Club, a literary club founded in 1870, made its home at 110 West 57th in a 1907-08 building by Donn Barber. By the time the famous Chalif Normal School of Dancing (163 West 57th Street, G. A. & H. Boehm, a designated New York City Landmark) was built in 1916, it was reported that the neighborhood "abounds in structures devoted to the cultivation of the arts."⁵ Musical interests were advanced with the 1920s construction of the Steinway and Chickering buildings. At the Steinway Building, in addition to selling pianos, there were also concerts by well-known musicians.

Business invaded the street in the early years of the twentieth century as retailers purchased luxury townhouses, converting them to shops or tearing them down. By 1912, Henri Bendel moved into 10 West 57th Street, followed shortly after by Bergdorf Goodman (1928, Goodman & Kahn, site of C. Vanderbilt II house), FAO Schwartz (1931, E. J. Kahn, 745 Fifth Avenue), Bonwitt Teller (1930 remodeling by E. J. Kahn, of previous Stewart & Co. store, 1929), and Tiffany (1940, Cross & Cross). In 1929-30, the Victorian Gothic Calvary Baptist Church (123 West 57th Street) was replaced by a skyscraper which included space for the church as well as for offices. At Eighth Avenue, Joseph Urban's theatrical, Art Deco, Hearst Magazine Building (1927-28, a designated New York City Landmark) was designed as a headquarters for the publishing empire.

East 57th Street was developed with residential buildings, but also included structures associated with artistic activities. Elegant homes were built to the east of Fifth Avenue simultaneously with those to the west and they generally remained in residential use until after the turn of the twentieth century. At that time, many were adapted or rebuilt by dealers in art and

antiques.⁶ Interior decorators soon followed the galleries onto the street, creating their own modifications in existing buildings or their own new construction such as the Todhunter Building (1927, 119 East 57th Street), designed by Arthur Todhunter and Lewis Patton to resemble medieval buildings in England. In the 1920s several skyscraper buildings were erected, such as the Heckscher Building on the southwestern corner of Fifth Avenue and 57th Street (1924, Warren & Wetmore) and the Fuller Building (1929, Walker & Gillette, a designated New York City Landmark) which included several stories devoted to art galleries and decorator showrooms. At the same time, numerous innovative and luxurious apartment buildings were constructed farther to the east, and 57th Street once again became an elegant residential area, culminating in the exclusive Sutton Place overlooking the East River.

The 1980s and 90s have brought more drastic transformations to this street, including theme restaurants and mixed-use towers. In spite of the changes, Fifty-seventh Street has maintained its distinction and its reputation as one of New York's most elegant addresses, and as a center for the arts.

Development of Cooperative Apartments⁷

Throughout the nineteenth century, the architectural and popular press thoroughly examined the question of "the best way" to house New York's growing population. While the ideal American housing type, in New York as elsewhere, was the detached single family house, the growing population and limited land mass available for building created a conflict between these popular ideas and the physical reality. It took many innovative attempts at multi-family housing before it became the accepted mode of living for New York.

By the early 1800s many New Yorkers could not afford the luxury of a spacious home at some distance from their work, and multiple dwellings such as boarding houses, hotels, and subdivided rowhouses began to exist. Tenements for the poor, and "French Flats" for the working class were next to appear, as developers looked for ways to get a higher return on their investment. The Stuyvesant Apartments, built 1869-70 and designed by Richard Morris Hunt marked a turning point in the acceptance of apartment house living for upper class New Yorkers. Throughout the 1870s and 80s, architects and developers elaborated the apartment house idea so that true luxury apartment buildings for the upper classes became acceptable.⁸

Among the sociological impediments to apartment house living in the early years were certain widely held

and highly valued concepts of propriety. These included the idea of a "home" as a safe haven from the rest of the world, the importance of privacy for the family unit, as well as the sense that an individual's life was to be lived among one's social and economic peers, and should not include a mixing of social classes. One way of making this new type of living arrangement more attractive to wealthy clientele was through co-operative apartments. The idea of being able to choose one's neighbors and thus achieve a certain degree of exclusivity was appealing.⁹ In addition, co-operative ownership inspired better architecture than had generally been seen in New York apartments, since the owners would be living in the buildings and not just investing in them in hopes of making a large profit. Co-operative owners turned to well-qualified architects and required that they create larger spaces with more luxurious details.¹⁰

The first true co-operative apartment house in New York was built in 1881 at 80 Madison Avenue (demolished), followed by the Knickerbocker (1882, demolished) on Fifth Avenue at 28th Street, and then the Gramercy Park Apartments in 1883 at 34 Gramercy Park (located within the Gramercy Park Historic District Extension). The Gramercy Park, developed and promoted by Mr. Charles A. Gerlach, was quite successful, returning a large profit for its original investors.¹¹

Many of the early co-operative apartments were constructed by Hubert, Pirssen & Company, architects and builders, and carried the appellation Hubert Home Clubs. Home Clubs differed from other co-operative apartments in that there was one central kitchen and dining room which offered food service. Early examples of this type were the Rembrandt, (demolished),¹² No. 121 Madison Avenue, and the Chelsea apartments at 222 West 23rd Street (now Chelsea Hotel, a designated New York City Landmark), the later two built in 1883.

These home clubs or apartment hotels, which sometimes offered hotel services, also served another purpose. In the 1880s, as luxury apartment buildings were starting to be built with greater height, the New York state legislature passed the Daly Law, limiting apartment buildings to five or six stories.¹³ Until this law was repealed by the New Tenement House Law of 1901, anyone wishing to build a larger apartment building was obliged to call it an "apartment hotel," since this designation did not carry such severe height restrictions. After 1901, taller apartment buildings were allowed on wider streets.¹⁴

The next co-operative venture, the Central Park Apartments (1883, 1885, also called the Navarro Flats after its developer, demolished) located between 58th

and 59th Streets, on Seventh Avenue, was a financial disaster. Unlike the previous co-operative arrangements, the owners did not have sole control of the building, thus creating a difficult and ultimately unworkable arrangement.¹⁵ Despite the organizational differences, the failure of the Central Park Apartments effectively put a stop to the further development of co-operative apartments until the artists' studio buildings on West 67th Street, constructed after the beginning of the twentieth century.¹⁶

Artists' Housing and Studios

"People have no conception of how difficult it is for one to find a suitable studio in New York," stated artist V.V. Sewell in 1903.¹⁷ Artists wanted studios with adequate space for creating and displaying their works, and with north light to provide the even illumination for their painting and sculpting. Studios with these qualities, plus living areas, were quite unusual. In 1857 Richard Morris Hunt designed the first New York building specifically for artists, the Tenth Street Studios, located at 15 West 10th Street, which was privately owned by art collector James B. Johnson. It contained twenty-five studios, some with bedrooms attached. Later in the century, some artists found working space in a few studios: the Bryant Park Studios (80 West 40th Street, a designated New York City Landmark), the Sherwood Studios, the Rembrandt, or the Carnegie Studios (a designated New York City Landmark). These studios were always fully occupied and did not begin to meet the demand for such spaces.

These two factors – the growing need for artists' working and living spaces, and the financial advantages of co-operative apartment ownership -- first came together in the 67th Street Cooperative Studio Building at 23-27 West 67th Street, built in 1901-03, to the designs of architects Sturgis & Simonson. It was designed to meet the specific needs of artists, with double-height studios illuminated by northern light, and attached living quarters. By arranging the bedrooms, dining, and service rooms so that they were half as high as the studios, an efficient use of space could be achieved. The building also included smaller studios, some with and some without living quarters. The concept of the duplex living and working studios originated with the landscape painter Henry W. Ranger who, when no speculative builder could be found for the project, organized a group of artists to make subscriptions to finance the new building.¹⁸ The artists' initial investment provided construction money and entitled each investor to a permanent lease on an apartment, and shares in the corporation which controlled the building. Some of

the apartments were retained as rental units, and the income thus produced provided the capitol for the building's maintenance.

This building was so successful that it was immediately followed by several other studio residences in the same area. These included The Central Park Studios (11-15 West 67th Street, 1904-05, Simonson, Pollard & Steinam), The Atelier Building (29-33 West 67th Street, 1904-05, Simonson, Pollard & Steinam), and the Hotel des Artistes (1 West 67th Street, 1915-18, George M. Pollard), all located within the Upper West Side/ Central Park West Historic District. Soon non-artists became aware of the advantages of these large, open rooms for entertaining and the sense of spaciousness they provided, and moved into many of them. The studios on West 57th Street were not only modeled after these earlier studios, but had the same architects and several of the same builders and developers.

130 West 57th Street Studio Building

In 1907, four lots on 57th Street were purchased by Robert Vonnoh, a painter who was living at 27 West 67th Street.¹⁹ They were then transferred to the 130 West 57th Street Corporation, which listed Walter S. Merritt as president and Payson McL. Merrill as secretary. The four and five story masonry buildings on the site were torn down. A new building application was filed at the Department of Buildings in September, 1907, for a "high-class elevator apartment house."²⁰ Construction, by the William J. Taylor Co-Operative Building Company, was completed in October, 1908.

Plans for the building called for seven double-height stories facing 57th Street, and twelve stories in the rear. Original plans called for thirty-six units in the building.²¹ The double-height studios were placed on the end bays indicated by tall windows and on the center bay. To bring in even more light, the bays extended beyond the plane of the building in a trapezoidal shape.

No.130 and No. 140 (called "The Beaufort,") West 57th Street were identical buildings, designed and constructed by the same architects and contractors as the studios on 67th Street, who used this previous experience to their advantage. In contrast to the 67th Street studios, these buildings were located on the southern side of the street so that the studios, located in the front of the building could receive north light. By locating the building on a wide street, sunlight into the studios would be assured and not blocked by some future tall building. The wide street frontage allowed for broad proportions, which were highlighted by fine details. An advertising brochure listed the numerous

amenities available in the building, including: passenger and service elevators, vacuum cleaning plant, telephones, mail chute, dumb waiters, and laundry fitted with steam and gas dryers. The largest apartments were on each side of the 57th Street facade and included a studio with a 20-foot high ceiling, numerous living and service rooms, four bedrooms with baths, and one servant's room. Smaller apartments in the rear of the building lacked the high ceilings, had two bedrooms, a pantry-kitchenette (rather than a full kitchen), and no servants quarters. Single studio rooms, located in the front of the building between the large studio apartments were also available, either with or without a separate apartment.

While this building was designed for artists, they were not the only residents. Census records from 1915 and 1925 show that professionals such as lawyers, stock brokers, and teachers also lived in the building. The most well-known residents were writer William Dean Howells who was called the "Dean of American Letters," and his son John Mead Howells, architect of such important buildings as the Chicago Tribune Tower (with Raymond Hood, 1922), the Panhellenic Tower (now Beekman Tower Hotel, 3 Mitchell Place, 1927-28, a designated New York City Landmark), and the Daily News Building (220 East 42nd Street, 1929-30, a designated New York City Landmark). Childe Hassam, the famous American Impressionist painter who had lived previously at 26 West 67th Street included the building's distinctive windows in several of his paintings. Numerous portrait artists also resided in the building which, for a time, housed The Portrait Institute, a center for the study and exhibition of portrait paintings, in the studio of James Carroll Beckwith.

A year after the building was finished, an alteration designed by the firm of Howells & Stokes, created a store in the basement level, with window and door openings and a new stairway for access from the sidewalk.²² A later alteration (Alt.124-1922) by Howells removed the store at basement level in favor of a janitor's apartment and created a storefront on the first story. The areaways were enclosed and the entrance steps moved back into the building. At this time 57th street was being widened as part of a borough-wide attempt to alleviate the growing volume of traffic. Apart from a recent installation of a storefront at the ground story level, the rest of the building has remained remarkably intact.

The building remained a co-operative until 1937, when it became a rental property.

Pollard & Steinam

George Mort Pollard (b. 1865)

Joseph L. Steinam (dates undetermined)

George Mort Pollard was born in Brooklyn and studied at the College of the City of New York, now City College. He established an architectural practice in New York around 1894 and formed a partnership in 1897 with Joseph L. Steinam, a member of the Architectural League who lived in New York. Pollard & Steinam specialized in the design of large studio buildings developed to accommodate living and working spaces for artists, typically in duplex units. In 1904-05, Pollard and Steinam worked with B. Hustace Simonson (dates undetermined) on the design of two neo-Renaissance style artists studio buildings on West 67th Street (No. 11-15 and No. 29-33, both within the Upper West Side/ Central Park West Historic District). They also worked with Charles A. Platt on the design of a distinguished, neo-Renaissance style apartment building at 135 East 66th Street (1905-07, a designated New York City Landmark). Independently, Pollard also designed another studio building, the neo-Gothic style, Hotel des Artistes, also on West 67th Street (1915-18, located within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District).

Continuing the development of an artist's enclave on 67th Street, in 1906-07 Pollard & Steinam were hired by Robert W. Vonnah to design another neo-Renaissance style studio building at No. 39-41 (also located within the Upper West Side/ Central Park West Historic District). Vonnah was an artist who had his own studio in the first artists' residence to be constructed there, at No. 23-27 West 67th Street (1902-03, Simonson & Sturgis, within the Upper West Side/ Central Park West Historic District). This building clearly served as a precedent for the two others on 57th Street which Vonnah hired these same architects to create in 1907.

Description

The building at 130 West 57th Street fills its mid-block site so that only the front elevation is visible. It rises fourteen stories (seven double stories) to a wide, overhanging iron cornice supported by paired, curved, metal brackets. The structure is five bays wide, symmetrically arranged, with metal-framed windows, and continuous brick piers between each bay. The two-story base is separated from the upper floors by a broad, terra-cotta cornice.

The central entrance remains at the base, set within a slightly projecting two-story pavilion which is faced with rusticated, vermiculated limestone. The double glass and wood door is reached by several steps and set within a deep reveal, ornamented by terra

cotta rosettes. Around the arched opening are voussoirs and a large central volute over the arch. Centered above the doorway is a rectangular window opening subdivided by narrow piers into three sections. Two narrow, wood-framed, double-hung windows flank a pair of similar larger windows in the center section. The rest of the base has been reconfigured to accommodate the current commercial activity. In the bay to the west of the entrance is a non-historic door on the ground story with paired windows above. These are original window openings with double/hung wood sash windows. A large modern opening has been cut in the westernmost bay. To the east, on the ground story, is an iron and glass storefront which was installed during a 1922 remodeling. A narrow iron cornice topped by a row of small anthemions is located above the window and beneath a small, non-historic fabric awning. On the eastern side at the second story level are two bays. The bay next to the entrance has paired window openings with 3/3 wood-framed windows, while the outer bay has a tripartite window with a fixed, single-pane center section flanked by narrower, 3-over-3 windows.

The terra-cotta cornice which lies above the base has a broad frieze ornamented by triglyphs and disks. Above this, the cornice is embellished with lozenges and rosettes, alternating with mutules.

The twelve stories (six double stories) above the cornice are all similar. Each bay is marked by multi-pane windows with metal spandrels ornamented with geometric designs. The windows in bays one, three, and five project from the facade in a trapezoidal plan; those in the end bays are mostly double-height. The top four stories of the center bay do not project. The window openings on bays two and four are smaller, flush with the plane of the building, and contain paired windows with the same geometrically-ornamented spandrels. There are a variety of window types in the building: double hung, casement and awning. Many of the triple light, double-hung and casement windows are original to the building.

A broad, overhanging cornice projects at the top of the building, supported on modillions, as well as larger, concave-curving, paired iron brackets at the top of each pier.

Report by
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Research Department

NOTES

1. Much of the information in this section is taken from Christopher Gray's series "Neighborhood," in *Avenue* vol. 9 (Mar., 1985), 79-91, (Apr., 1985), 94-105, (May, 1985), 94-103, and (June/July/Aug., 1985), 72-83, and Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and Thomas Mellins, *New York 1930: Architecture and Urbanism Between the Two World Wars* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), 357-367.
2. "How the Great Apartment Houses Have Paid," *Real Estate Record & Guide* 35 (Feb. 7, 1885), 127-128.
3. "A Group of Well-Located Residences," *RER & G*, (Dec. 22, 1888), 1028.
4. Robert A. M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and John Massengale, *New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism, 1890-1915* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983), 104.
5. "Chalif School of Dancing in West Fifty-Seventh Street," *RER & G* (Apr. 15, 1916), 595.
6. So many art dealers filled the block between Fifth and Madison Avenue by the mid-1920s that it became known as New York's Rue de la Boetie, comparing it to a similar street in Paris. Prominent dealers such as Joseph Duveen and M. Knoedler & Company had their galleries on Fifth Avenue, joining other establishments on 57th Street such as the Durand-Ruel gallery, that of the American Art Association, and the Parke-Bernet Galleries.

7. The information in this section has been compiled from the following sources: Landmarks Preservation Commission, Osborne Apartments Designation Report LP-1770 (New York: City of New York, 1991), report prepared by Virginia Kurshan; M.. Christine Boyer, *Manhattan Manners, Architecture and Style, 1850-1900* (New York: Rizzoli, 1985); Elizabeth Collins Cromley, *Alone Together, A History of New York's Early Apartments*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 1990); Thomas E. Norton, *Living It Up, A Guide to the Named Apartment Houses of New York* (New York: Atheneum, 1984); David P. Handlin, *The American Home, Architecture and Society, 1815-1915* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1979); and Elizabeth Hawes, *New York, New York* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993).
8. Two prominent early examples were the Haight House, built in 1871 on Fifth Avenue at 15th Street, and the Dakota at 72nd Street and Cental Park West, built in 1883-84 by Edward Clark (a designated New York City Landmark),
9. Elisha Harris Janes, "The Development of Duplex Apartments, III, Residential Type," *The Brickbuilder* 21 (Aug., 1912), 203.
10. "Apartment Houses," *The American Architect* 100 (Nov.29, 1911), 229-30.
11. "Co-Operative Houses," *RER & G* (Sept. 28, 1907), 474.
12. "Principles of Co-Operative Building," *RER & G* (Sept. 24, 1910), 483.
13. Hawes, 108.
14. In the early co-operative buildings, economic success was achieved when the buildings were about as high as a twelve-story building, something lawfully possible only on wide streets or avenues. The 67th Street studios were therefore "apartment hotels," in name at least.
15. Allan L. Benson, "The Spread of the 'Own-Your-Own-Apartment' Idea," *NYT* (July 25, 1909), 9.
16. The artists' co-operatives on 67th Street were the first constructed after 1900 to show how this type of financing could work, but their success led to a resurgence of this type of arrangement. In a *New York Times* article of 1907, numerous new and newly planned co-operative apartment houses are identified (some with, and some without double-height studios). The author of this article also pointed out that the co-operative plan was so successful in expensive buildings that it was also being applied to lower cost housing. Owners of co-operative shares seemed to be able to sell them at a significant profit if they desired. Another advantage was that the entire financing of the building was carried on in cash, thus eliminating the cost of borrowing money, and enabling the builder to make a fair, quick profit.
17. "The New Artists' Studio Building," *Harper's Weekly* 47 (April 11, 1903), 597.
18. These included artists V. V. Sewell, Robert W. Vonnoh, Jules Turcas, Louis Paul Dessar, Allan Talcott, Childe Hassam, Sidney Smith, Edward Naegele, and Frank V. Dumond.
19. It is not known what role Vonnoh had in the corporations involved but his name appears on the transfers of title. Vonnoh also purchased the four lots that became the site of No. 140 West 57th Street. Vonnoh was an American painter who had studied in Paris and Munich for many years, returning to this country in 1891. Well-known as a portraitist, he was elected to membership in the Society of American Artists.
20. New York City Department of Buildings, New Building Application 649-1907. The 1907 *New York Times* article identifies William J. Taylor's Co-Operative Building Company as having constructed many of the co-operatives of this period. It also mentions Payson McL. Merrill "who has been actively identified with the houses put up by this company."
21. The original application included 14 duplex apartments, 24 bachelor apartments, and 3 single studios.
22. New York City Department of Buildings, Alteration permit # 1612-1909.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the 130 West 57th Street Studio Building has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the 130 West 57th Street Studio Building, constructed in 1907-08, is a rare surviving example of an artists' studio building incorporating both living and working space in large, double-height rooms; that it was designed by the New York architectural firm of Pollard & Steinam which had pioneered this type of building on West 67th Street in Manhattan; that it was constructed on West 57th Street at a time when that area was rich with buildings and organizations which supported and promoted artistic endeavors; that, while studio buildings were developed as a response to an acknowledged need for accommodations for working artists, they were also popular among middle and upper-class non-artist residents because of the luxurious amount of living space they provided; that co-operative buildings were developed in the late nineteenth century and gained popularity in the early years of the twentieth century for their financial advantages and also for the exclusivity they allowed among their owners; that the cooperative financial organization, as well as design elements on this studio building followed the example set on the West 67th Street artists buildings, since several of the same people had been involved in the earlier buildings; that the double-height rooms with projecting windows provided spacious areas for visual artists to work, with large amounts of north light; that this building has been home to numerous well-known artists, including painter Childe Hassam, writer William Dean Howells, and architect John Mead Howells; that its geometrically-ornamented, projecting window bays and broad overhanging cornice give it a distinctive presence on the wide and busy thoroughfare of 57th Street.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the 130 West 57th Street Studio Building, 130 West 57th Street (aka 126-132 West 57th Street), Borough of Manhattan, and designates Manhattan Tax Map Block 1009, Lot 46, as its Landmark Site.



Nos. 130 and 140 West 57th Street Buildings
Borough of Manhattan
Photo: c. 1909
Courtesy of Museum of the City of New York



No. 130 West 57th Street Studio Building
130 West 57th Street, Manhattan
Photo: Carl Forster



No. 130 West 57th Street Studio Building
Storefront detail



No. 130 West 57th Street Studio Building
Ground Story Detail



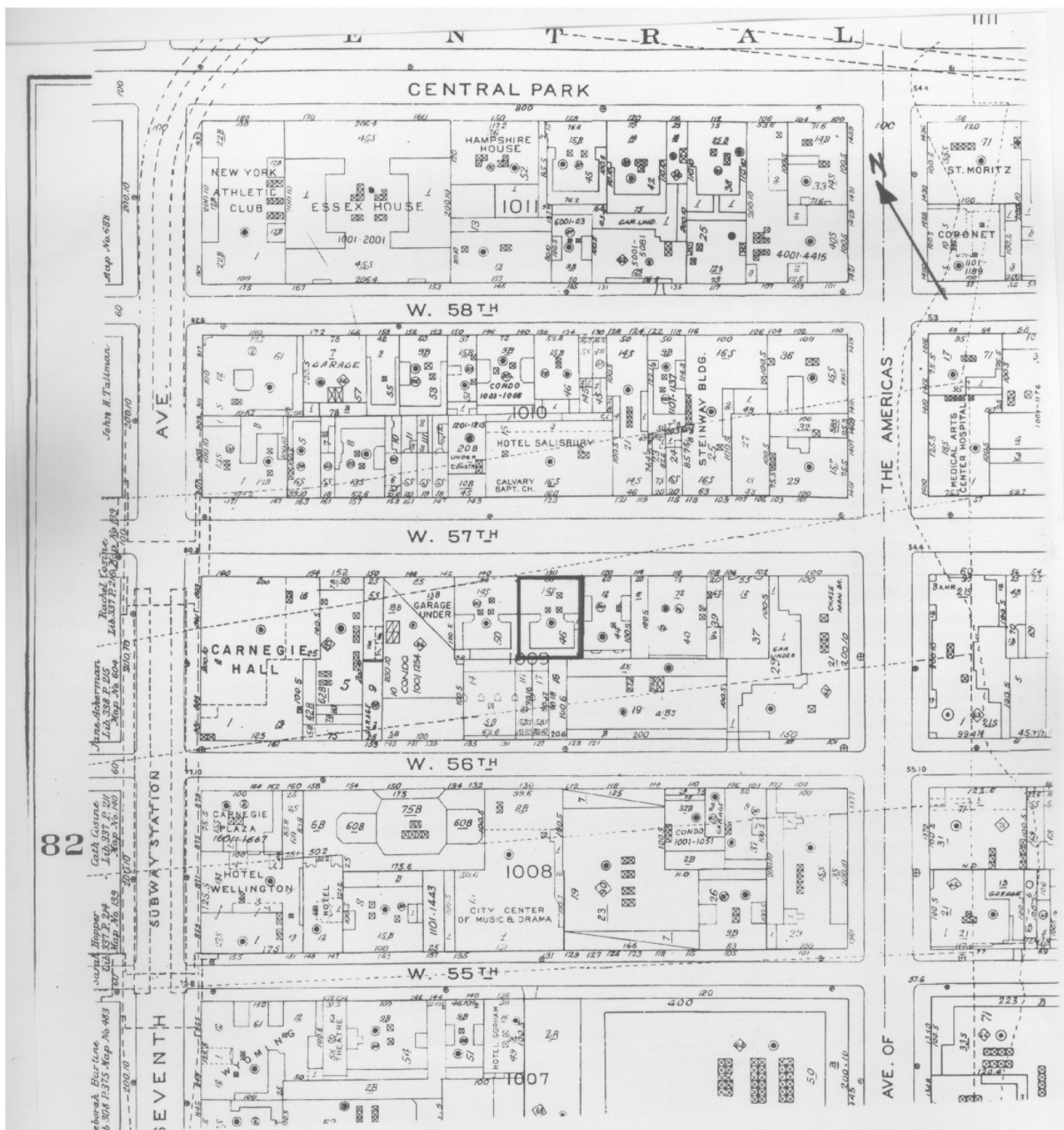
No. 130 West 57th Street
Ground story entrance and storefront
Photos: Carl Forster



No. 130 West 57th Street Studio Building
Windows and cornice detail

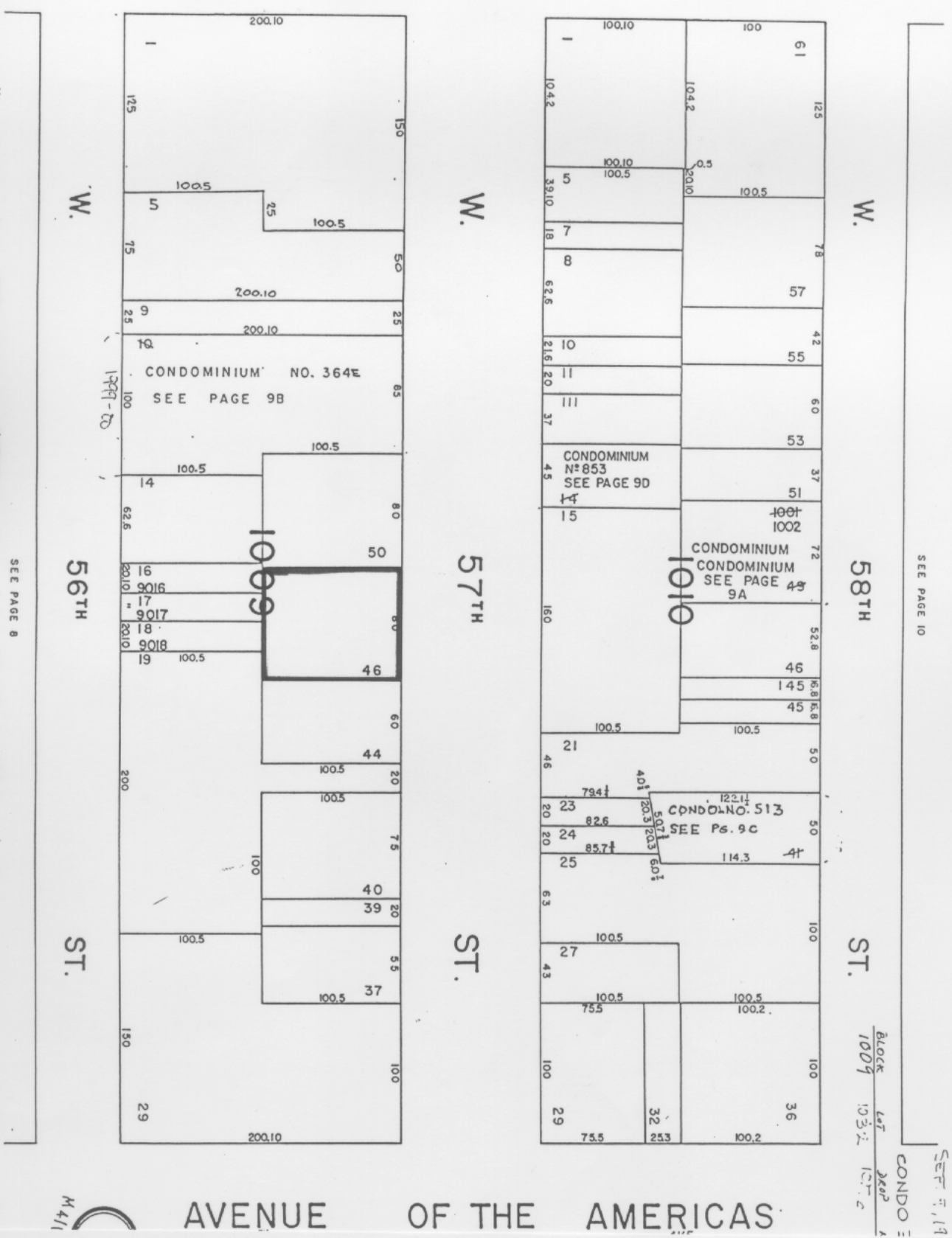


No. 130 West 57th Street Studio Building
Cornice detail

130 West 57th Street Studio Building

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1009, Lot 46

AVE.



130 West 57th Street Studio Building
130 West 57th Street
Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1009, Lot 46
Source: New York City Department of Finance, City Surveyor, Tax Map