

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF MURRAY HILL

IN THE 1750S, the wealthy Quaker merchant Robert Murray leased land and built a 25-acre farm near the top of the hill at what is now Park Avenue between 36th and 37th Streets. The area, once known as Inclenberg, was forever after called Murray Hill; the Murray family called their home Belmont. (DAR plaque at Park Avenue and 37th Street.)

On September 15, 1776, the Battle of Manhattan began at Kips Bay, as five British warships surprised the untrained colonial troops under the command of General Putnam and Aaron Burr and sent them all scattering northwest in a disorderly retreat. According to legend, Mary Murray invited the British commander General Sir William Howe and his men to rest at Belmont and enjoy a pot of tea, allowing time for the American troops to escape.

Belmont remained in the Murray family for generations. Their descendants, alarmed when commercial enterprises began to move uptown, drew up the celebrated “Murray Hill Restrictive Agreement” in 1847. This agreement, written into property deeds as the family farm was divided into separate lots, barred business and commerce from encroaching upon their lands.

From then on, Murray Hill was restricted for all but residential dwellings and attracted the city’s leading families—the Belmonts, Rhinelanders, Morgans, Havermeyers, and Tiffanys. Opulent mansions were built between Fifth and Park Avenues, and carriage houses to serve them between Lexington and Third Avenues.

When the Restrictive Agreement began to break down in the early 1900s, commerce invaded Fifth Avenue, and Park Avenue became the center of gracious living with the appearance of high-rise apartments.

The foresight of the Murray family has served the community well by preventing the wholesale development of commercial lots, and to this day the area remains a vibrant residential enclave within midtown Manhattan.

## THE MURRAY HILL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association (MHNA) was organized in 1960 to oppose a city proposal that would have had an enormous impact on our community by widening 36th street—removing the stoops of the historic homes—for greater access to the Midtown Tunnel. Residents and Merchants came together, the plan was defeated, and the Murray Hill Committee was born.

The Committee, now named the Murray Hill Neighborhood Association, brings volunteers together to continue working to preserve, protect and maintain Murray Hill as a unique residential and historic enclave in mid-town Manhattan. Funding for our projects comes from membership dues, annual street Festival, contributions and grants.

## THE PRESERVATION AND DESIGN COMMITTEE

The Preservation and Design Committee promotes public awareness of Murray Hill’s rich architectural heritage and helps to preserve our residential community. The Committee works with the New York City Landmarks Commission to recommend buildings for landmark designation, listings on the National Register of Historic Places and areas for historic district designation. The Murray Hill Architectural Preservation Awards recognize property owners who have faithfully restored the facades of their buildings or created new designs to meet standards of excellence.



The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association  
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212-886-5867 [www.murrayhillnyc.org](http://www.murrayhillnyc.org)

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## PRESERVING HISTORIC MURRAY HILL HISTORIC DISTRICTS NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INDIVIDUAL LANDMARKS

Nestled between two of the world’s most iconic streets and buildings—Grand Central Terminal on 42nd Street and the Empire State Building on 34th Street—the Murray Hill community was named for the Murray family who settled here in the 1750s.

**The Murray Hill Historic District** was officially designated in 2002. The district and a few contiguous buildings were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2003. Boundaries for the National Register were expanded in 2013, for a total of 250 listed buildings, culminating in over 50 years of advocacy to preserve the historic, residential character of Murray Hill. A proposal to extend the current historic district to the National Register boundaries was filed with the Landmarks Preservation Commission in 2013.

The streets of Murray Hill are graced by many architectural styles such as Beaux Arts, French Renaissance, Empire, Formal Palatial, Gothic, Georgian and Romanesque Revival, Regency and Anglo-Italianate. World-famous architects such as McKim, Mead and White, C.P.H. Gilbert, Hoppin & Koen, Emlen T. Littell, William Adams Delano and Horace Trumbauer reflect Murray Hill’s rich, historic architectural heritage.

**A HISTORIC DISTRICT** is an area designated by the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission due to its "special character of unique historical, architectural and esthetic interest that gives it a distinct sense of place." Buildings in a Historic District *are protected from demolition.*

**THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES** is the official federal listing of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects significant to the history of the community, state or the nation. It is a prestigious honor to be placed on this National Register, but buildings *are not protected from demolition.*



# MURRAY HILL, NEW YORK CITY

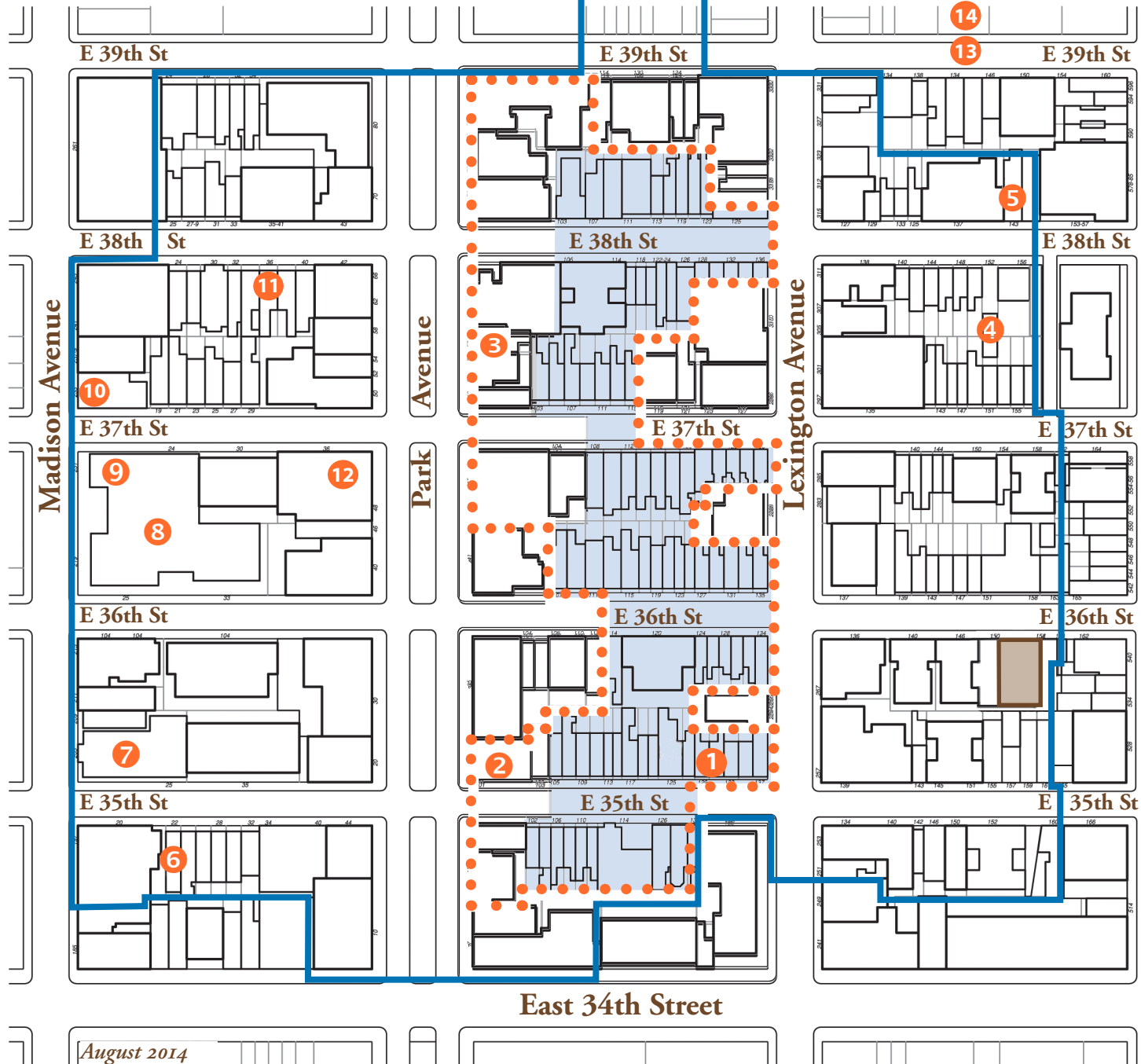
## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND LANDMARKS

Expanded National Register  
Boundary, 2013

Murray Hill Historic District  
and National Register, 2003

Murray Hill Historic  
District,  
Local (NYC), 2002

Sniffen Court National  
and Local Historic  
Districts, 1966



Madison Avenue  
Park Avenue  
Lexington Avenue  
Third Avenue

### INDIVIDUAL LANDMARKED BUILDINGS

Bold numbers following the descriptions refer to the MHNA Walking Tour Map. To purchase a copy of the Tour Map, call **212-886-5867**.

- 1** James and Harriet Lanier House (1901)  
123 East 35th Street  
Architects: Hoppin & Koen. #16
- 2** James Hampden Robb and Cornelia Van Rensselaer Robb House (1888)  
23 Park Avenue at 35th Street  
Architect: Stanford White. #14
- 3** Adelaide Douglas House (1909), former U.S. Olympic House, now the Guatemalan Permanent Mission to the UN  
57 Park Avenue  
Architect: Horace Trumbauer. #45
- 4** Federal Style home (1857) once part of Martin Van Buren family member estate, converted to Regency Style House in 1934  
152 East 38th Street #29
- 5** George S. Bowdoin Stable (1902)  
149 East 38th Street  
Architect: Ralph S. Townsend. #30
- 6** Thomas Clarke House (1901), now the Collectors Club  
22 East 35th Street  
Architect: Stanford White. #11
- 7** Church of the Incarnation & Rectory (1864)  
205, 209 Madison Avenue  
Architect: Emlen T. Littell. #10
- 8** Morgan Library & Museum (1902, 2006)  
225 Madison Avenue, btwn. 36 & 37 Streets  
Architects: McKim, Mead & White, Benjamin W. Morris and Renzo Piano. #7
- 9** J. P. Morgan, Jr. House (1852)  
231 Madison Avenue  
Architect: R.H. Robertson #6
- 10** Joseph De Lamar House (1902), now the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland  
233 Madison Avenue  
Architect: C.P.H. Gilbert. #5
- 11** Italianate Brownstone (1847)  
36 East 38th Street  
New front and rear extension (1902) for Middleton S. Burrill  
Architect: Hoppin & Koen. #41
- 12** Union League Club, (1931) Georgian Renaissance Style with symmetrical red brick facade.  
38 East 37th Street  
Architect: Benjamin Wyster Morris. #2
- 13** Allerton 39th Street House (1916)  
Hotel. New front 2012 for POD Hotel  
145 East 39th Street  
Architect: Arthur Loomis Hanna
- 14** 148 East 40th St., 1871  
Classic Carriage House of salmon brick and white granite with Second Empire ornamental roof and dormers. Builder: Charles E. Hadden. #31