

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUN 20 1983

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

226-246 East 49th Street; 227-245 East 48th Street
CITY, TOWN

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

New York
STATE

VICINITY OF
CODE

COUNTY

CODE

New York

036

New York

061

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☒ DISTRICT
☐ BUILDING(S)
☐ STRUCTURE
☐ SITE
☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC
☒ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED
N/A

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED
☐ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
☐ YES: RESTRICTED
☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE ☐ MUSEUM
☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ PARK
☐ EDUCATIONAL ☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ ENTERTAINMENT ☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ GOVERNMENT ☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ MILITARY ☐ OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

See Continuation Sheet
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

New York County Hall of Records

STREET & NUMBER

31 Chambers Street

CITY, TOWN

New York

STATE

New York 10007

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

Landmarks Preservation Commission LP-0279

DATE

June 21, 1966

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☒ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission,

20 Vesey St.

CITY, TOWN

New York

STATE

New York

10007

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT
☒ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE N/A

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District is situated on a rise of land on the east side of midtown Manhattan. Located on East 48th and East 49th Streets between Second and Third Avenues, it is a tranquil enclave which consists of twenty 1860s brownstone buildings which were substantially altered in the 1920s. Six feet of each house's original rear lot line was ceded over to create a common pathway and garden complex which the townhouses share. The buildings are held together stylistically by their uniformity of height, stucco facades, neo-classical details and regular fenestration. The "sense of place" cannot only be attributed to the human scale of the complex, but to the fact that the enclave is further buffered from the bordering avenues by high-rise apartment complexes on the Second Avenue side and multi-story office buildings on the Third Avenue boundary.

The original twenty buildings which form Turtle Bay Gardens were erected by a speculative builder in the 1860s. The four-story, Italianate brownstones were purchased between 1919 and 1920 by Mrs. Walton Martin who instructed her architect, Clarence Dean, to remove the stoops, create rusticated English basements, provide uniform casement windows, and relieve the monotony of spalling brownstone facades with tinted stucco coatings. The floor plans of the buildings were improved: Dean placed the kitchens on the street facades, while the living rooms were oriented towards the rear garden enclave. Applied ornaments include: cast-iron balconies, pedimented parapets, quoins, pilasters, roundels, cartouches and stucco treatment. The use of applied ornament is playful: on the East 49th Street facade, a false parapet in the Flemish gable mode appears and is topped by a classical urn and flanked by cast-stone, turned balusters. Zodiac figures appear within plaster roundels on the East 48th Street facade--in addition to a lion and a ram, a turtle is used. The play on words continues in the use of the turtle motif within the finial of the cast-iron street railings.

The major cohesive design element occurs in the handling of the central garden facades and landscaping. The rear facades of the buildings are elegantly simple with the severe cornices, plain lintels and sills, uniform fenestration and weathered brick. Many of the buildings have top floor roof terraces with Spanish-tiled roof parapets, arcuated terrace openings, and wooden pergolas. Individually planted private gardens are separated from the shared central space by low masonry walls. The central axis is marked by a flagstone paved walkway and a fountain based on a Roman prototype found at the Villa Medici. Encircled by cast-iron benches, Italian garden sculptures of putti, and terra-cotta urns, the fountain is also shaded by a very old willow tree which figures in the 1949 book Here is New York by E.B. White. The rear garden, with its mature trees and ancient willow, re-creates the tranquility which must have characterized the original Turtle Bay Farm.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
Continuation sheet New York County, N.Y.

Item number 4

Page 2

East 48th Street

#227-229

Blair Clark
c/o Detmold Real Estate
230 East 49th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

#231

Margaret McEvoy Doty
Detmold Real Estate
230 East 49th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

#233

Robert D. Brewster
233 East 48th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

#235

Dr. Rabin M. Sarda
337 East 50th Street
New York, N.Y. 10022

#237

Robert Gottlieb & ano
237 East 48th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

#239

Dr. Arsenio B. Vivera
239 East 48th Street
New York, NY 10017

#241

Halle S. Bach
241 East 48th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

#243

Margo Wintersteen
c/o Jeremy R. Wintersteen
243 East 48th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

#245

Delvalle S. Goldsmith
245 East 48th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

#247

American Friends Service Committee, Inc.
15 Rutherford Place
New York, N.Y. 10003

(See Continuation Sheet)

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Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service****National Register of Historic Places
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Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
Continuation sheet New York County, N.Y.

Item number

4

Page 3

East 49th Street

#226-228

Dr. Dallas Pratt
228 East 49th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

#230-232

230-232 East 49th Street Assocs.
(H. Hollis Hunnewell-Partner)
62 Pond Road
Wellesley, Mass. 02181

#234

William Platt A.I.A.
234 East 49th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

#236

Dolly Reade Borgia
205 East 69th Street
New York, NY 10021

#238

Anthony Romano
238 East 49th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

#240

Gardiner Botsford
240 East 49th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

#242

Garson Kanin & ano
242 East 49th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

#244

Katharine Hepburn
244 East 49th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

#246

Stephen Sondheim
246 East 49th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	☒ community planning	☒ landscape architecture	religion
___ 1400-1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	science
___ 1500-1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	sculpture
___ 1600-1699	☒ architecture	___ education	___ military	social/
___ 1700-1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	humanitarian
☒ 1800-1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	theater
☒ 1900-	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics government	transportation
		___ invention		other (specify)

Specific dates 1860s/1921-23 Builder Architect /Clarence Dean

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District is architecturally and historically significant as an unaltered example of a 1920s planned community within the confines of a large urban area. Composed of twenty 1860s brownstone buildings that were substantially redesigned by architect Clarence Dean in the 1920s, the district is distinguished by its uniformity of scale, facade material and fenestration as well as its landscaped interior courtyard. The design of the complex is an outgrowth of the English terrace house schemes and the ideal of planning exemplified by the English garden suburb of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The district is noteworthy for its early recognition of protective covenants -- the restrictions on height, extensions, fence placement and material and building use agreed to by the residents in the 1920s. The area is also significant for the theatrical and literary residents who have sought the privacy afforded by the enclave including Ruth Gordon, Garson Kanin, Katherine Hepburn, Leopold Stokowski, E.B. White, Tyroë Power and Dorothy Thompson.

The name "Turtle Bay" was derived from the cove off the East River extending from 45-48th Street. A small stream originating at Second Avenue and 48th Street ran into the cove. Historical records mention a profusion of turtles in this area with the "turtle feast" a noted occasion for local residents. By 1712, the name "Turtle Bay" was commonly used in wills and deeds. By the mid-eighteenth century, the "Turtle Bay Farm" extended roughly from 40-49th Street and from Third Avenue to the East River. Filled in for development purposes, the cove is now covered by gardens on the northern half of the United Nations grounds.

In 1919, Mrs. Walton Martin bought the twenty brownstone buildings and had them redesigned around an interior garden court created by the donation of six feet of each house's rear lot. The architect Clarence Dean renovated the facades and redesigned the interiors to afford a better view of the courtyard. The common garden is reminiscent of an intimate Italian courtyard with its flagstone walkway and fountain based on a Roman prototype found at the Villa Medici. The fountain is shaded by an old willow tree which figured prominently in E.B. White's book Here is New York (1949). In the 1920s, the residents took an unusual step and agreed to a series of protective covenants concerning height, additions, materials and building use.

The Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District is significant as a 1920s planned community which has retained the picturesque and intimate qualities of an English garden suburb in the heart of mid-town Manhattan.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1½

Quadrangle name Central Park, N.Y. - N.J.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	8	5	86	9	2	0	4	5	1	1	7	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Western property line of 227-229 East 48th Street, the western property line of 226 East 49th Street, the eastern property line of 246 East 49th Street, and eastern property line of 247 East 48th Street. See attached map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	NA	code	county	code
-------	----	------	--------	------

state	NA	code	county	code
-------	----	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

Contact:

name/title Larry E. Gobrecht, National Register Program Coordinator

organization Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau date 8/82

street & number Agency Building 1, Empire State Plaza telephone (518) 474-0479

city or town Albany state New York 12238

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Albert E. Cassese

title Deputy Commissioner and Counsel

date

5/24/83

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Beth Grosz
for Keeper of the National Register

date

7/21/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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date entered

Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
Continuation sheet New York County, N.Y.

Item number 9

Page 2

Anon. "A Chronicle of Turtle Bay." New York: Funded by the Marine Midland Trust Company, New York, N.Y., c. 1965.

Delaney, Edmund T. "Turtle Bay, Old & New." Unpublished manuscript in the file of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, New York, N.Y., c. 1966.

Goldstone, Harmon. A Guide to New York City Landmarks and Historic Districts. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974.

Landmarks Preservation Commission. Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District Designation Report. New York: City of New York, 1966.

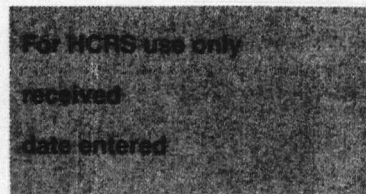
Lockwood, Charles. Bricks and Brownstone. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972.

White, Norval and Willensky, Elliot. AIA Guide to New York. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1978.

Wolfe, Gerard R. New York: A Guide to the Metropolis. New York: New York University Press, 1975.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
Continuation sheet New York County, NY Item number

11

Page 2

Form Prepared By:

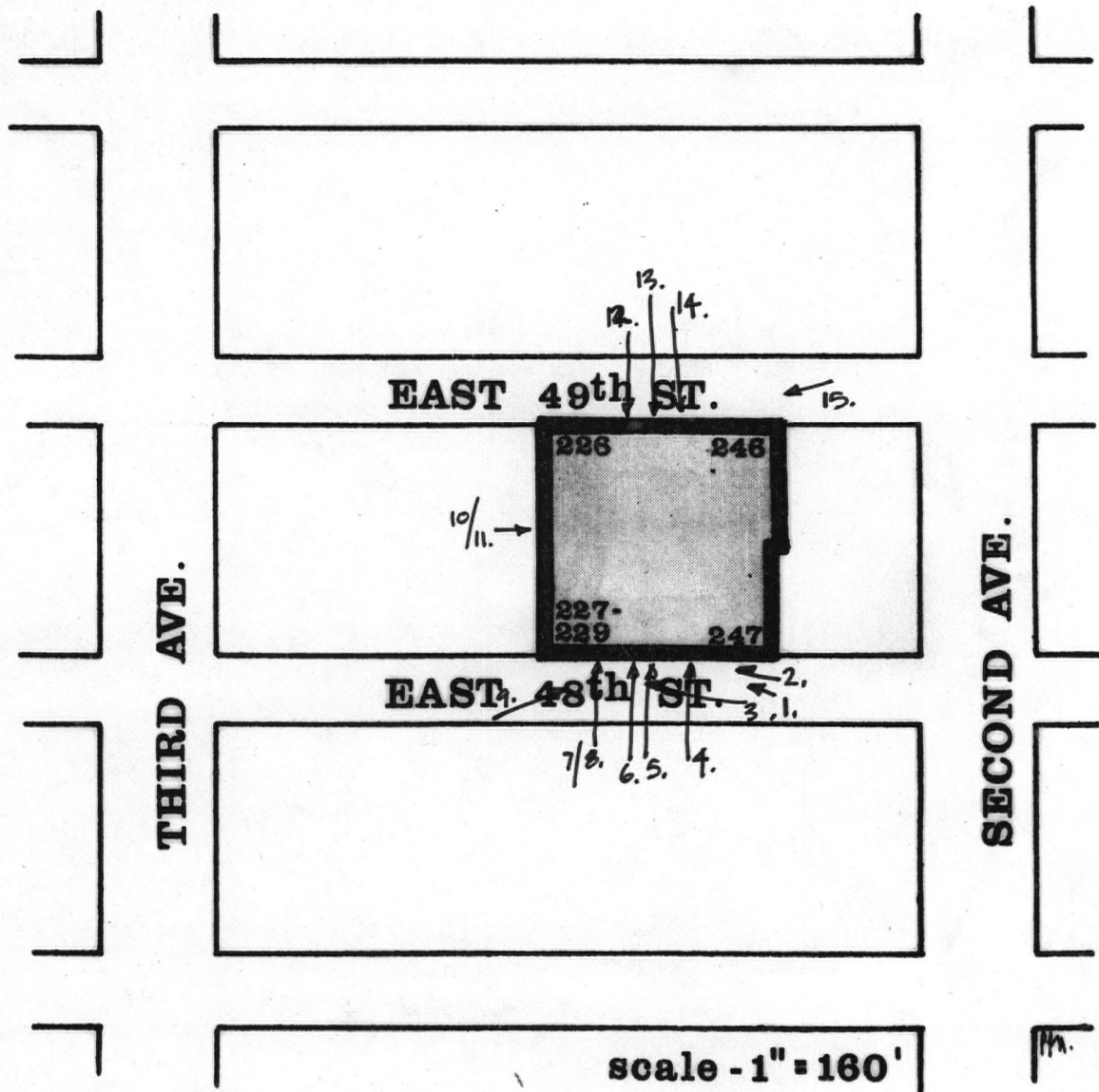
Sarah Latham, Landmarks Preservation Specialist
Landmarks Preservation Commission
20 Vesey St.
New York, NY 10007
212-566-7577

TURTLE BAY GARDENS HISTORIC DISTRICT

MANHATTAN

New York County, N.Y.

Photo Key



DESIGNATED JUNE 21, 1966

Numbers show buildings inside boundary of district

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York County
NEW YORK

Substantive Review

Working No. JUN 20 1983
Fed. Reg. Date: 7-7-84
Date Due: 7/21/83 8/4/83
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 7/21/83
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Substantive Review: ☒ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Summary paragraph appears to be claiming significance under B as well as A+C, but the new fact that famous people lived here is not enough to qualify the buildings as significant in representing their historic contributions to theater, etc. Primarily, their residency pays tribute to the success and attractiveness of the redesigned "community."

Recom./Criteria Accept - A, C
Reviewer G. G. G. G.
Discipline Historian
Date 7/21/83
____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below Some photos are mislabeled.

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition

- ☐ excellent ☐ deteriorated
☐ good ☐ ruins
☐ fair ☐ unexposed

Check one

- ☐ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

- ☐ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____

Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

☐ summary paragraph

☐ completeness

☐ clarity

☒ applicable criteria : *C OK; A valid but weakly justified; B is not supported*

☐ justification of areas checked

☐ relating significance to the resource

☐ context

☐ relationship of integrity to significance

☐ justification of exception

☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date

13. Other

☐ Maps

☒ Photographs - # 12, 13, & 14 are all mislabeled - they are on 49th St.

☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



1. Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. Co.

Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.

Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission

View of district from southeast
(above).



2. Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. Co.

Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.

Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission.
48th Street facades from southeast.

(b)



3. 7

Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. Co.

Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.

Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission.
48th Street facades from southeast.



4. Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. Co.

Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.

Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission.

Central portion of 48th Street facades.



5, Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. Co.

Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.

Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission

Detail - 48th Street.



6. Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. CD.

• Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.
Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission
Detail - 48th Street.



7. Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. Co.

Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.

Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission
48th Street facades.



8. Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. Co.

Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.

Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission.
48th Street facades.





9-Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. Co.

Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.

Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission.

48th Street facades from southwest.

5



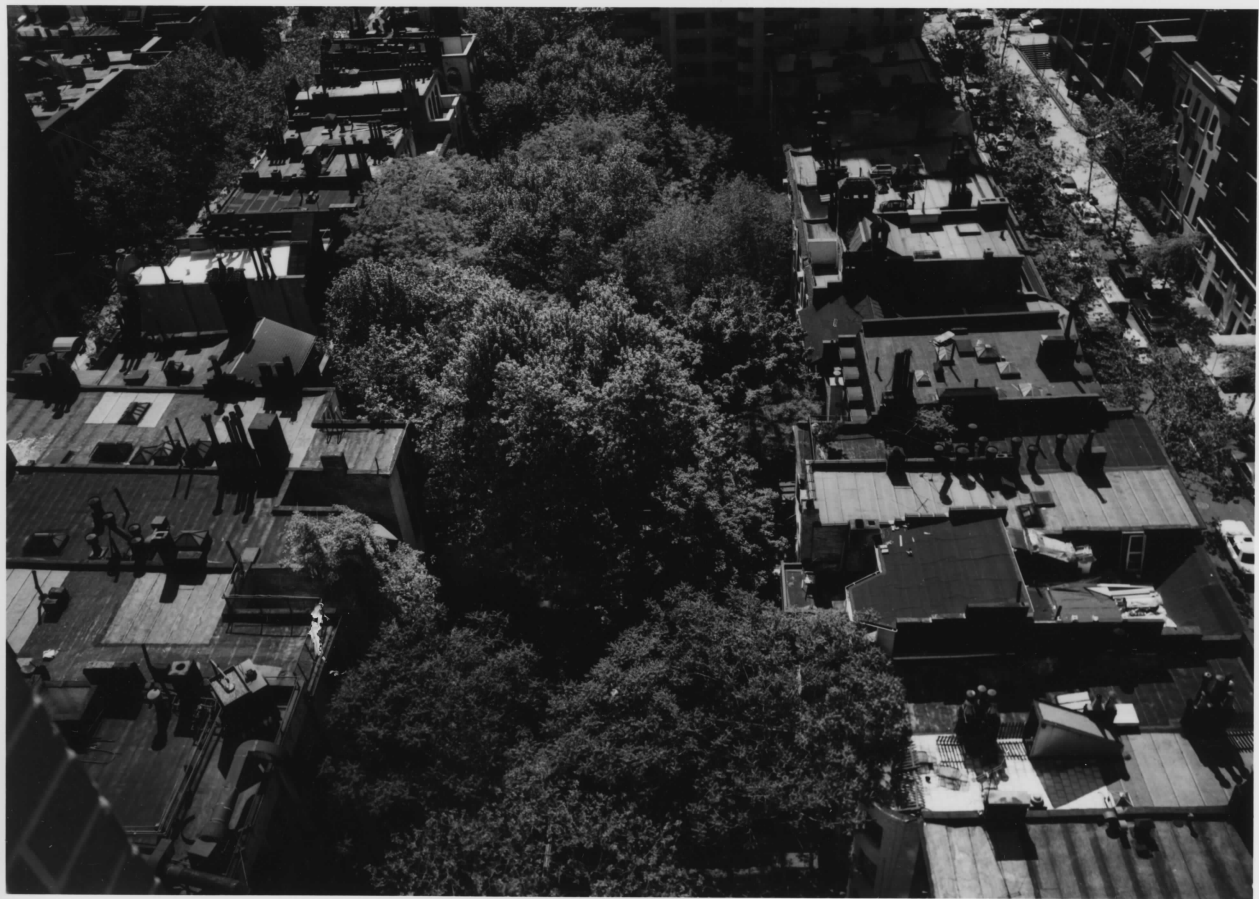
10.

Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. Co.

Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.

Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission.

View of district from west (above).



11.

Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. Co.

Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.

Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission.

View of Garden.



12.

Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. Co.

Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.

Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission

Detail - 48th Street railing.

(51)



13.

Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. Co.

Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.

Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission

Detail - 48th Street facades.

14



~~13.~~ Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. Co

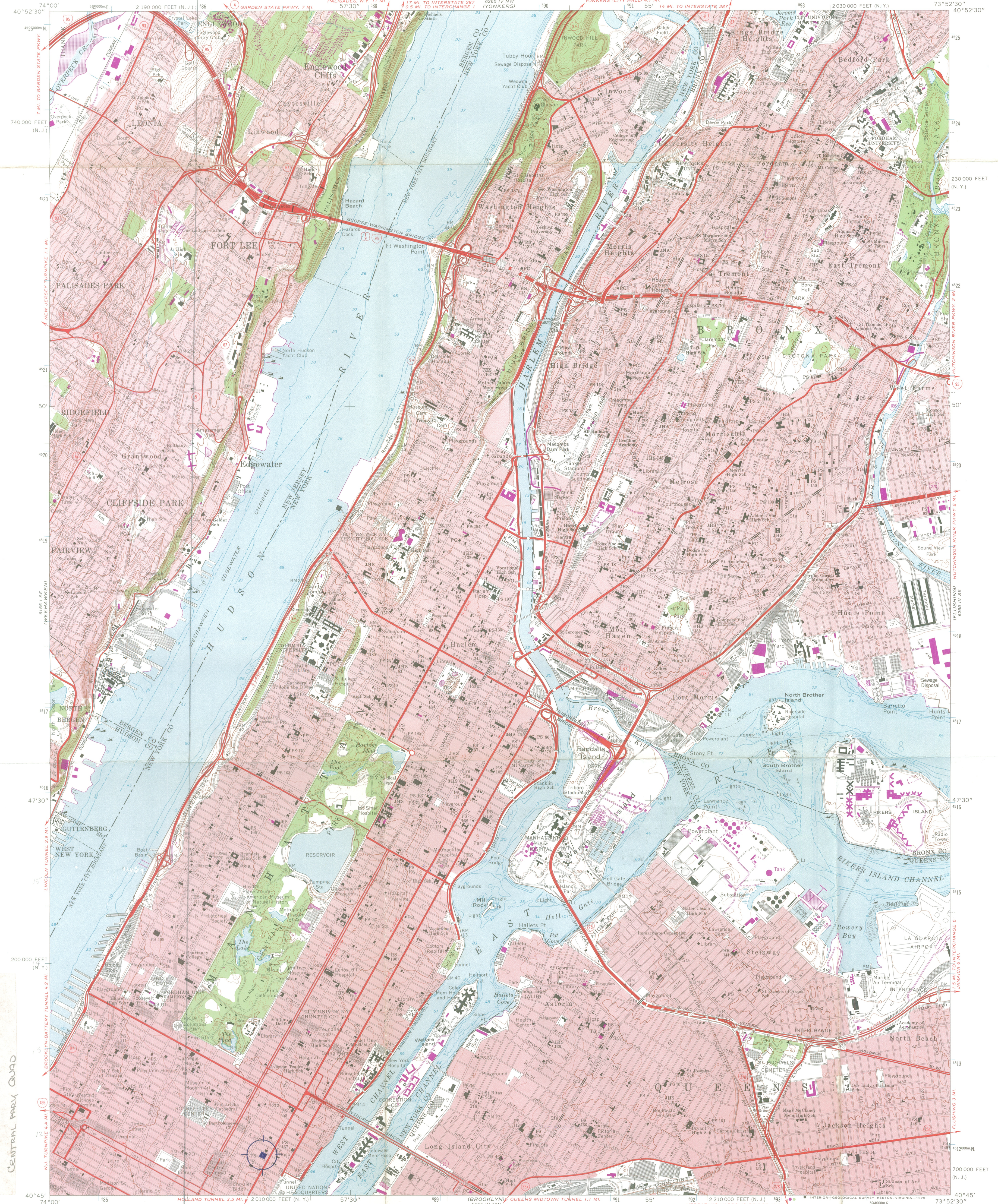
14

Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.

Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission
48th Street facade.



12. Turtle Bay Gardens Historic District
New York, N. Y. Co.
Photo by: Stephen L. Senigo, 1980.
Neg. at: New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission
49th Street from northeast.



TURTLE BAY GARDENS HISTORIC DISTRICT
New York County, New York
UTM Reference: 18/586920/ 4511780

CENTRAL PARK QUAD

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Revised in cooperation with New York

Department of Transportation

Control by USGS, USC&GS, and New Jersey Geodetic Survey

Planimetry by photogrammetric methods and from USC&GS Charts T-4567,

T-5089, T-5264, T-5278, T-5448, T-5449, T-5451, T-5452, T-5453, T-5458,

and T-5778. Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs

taken 1954 and planimetric surveys 1956

Revised from aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1966

Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 226, 274, 745,

746, and 747 (1966). This information is not intended for navigational purposes

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum

10,000-foot grids based on New York coordinate system, Long Island zone,

and New Jersey coordinate system

1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 18, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET-DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE AVERAGE RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 2 FEET
4 FEET IN THE HUDSON RIVER AND 5.7 FEET IN THE EAST RIVER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092

A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
Interstate Route ——— U.S. Route ——— State Route ———

CENTRAL PARK, N.Y. - N.J.
SW/4 HARLEM 15' QUADRANGLE
N4045-W7352.5/7.5

1966
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 6265 IV SW-SERIES V821

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1977 and other source data. This information
not field checked. Map edited 1979
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map