



PROPOSED EAST 10TH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

The proposed East 10th Street Historic District comprises 26 buildings on the north side of East 10th Street extending along the northern edge of Tompkins Square Park between Avenues A and B.

The opening of Tompkins Square in 1834 led many to speculate that the surrounding blocks would soon be filled with elegant dwellings similar to those that already lined portions of nearby St. Mark's Place. By the 1840s several of the parcels on the western half of the block had been improved with stately row houses standing four full stories above raised basements.

The design of at least five of these can be attributed to Joseph Trench, the noted architect also responsible for the A.T. Stewart Department Store and the Odd Fellows Hall (both designated New York City Landmarks). Trench is credited with helping to introduce the Italianate style of architecture to the United States and the remaining original ornament on these houses is perhaps amongst the earliest surviving application of that style to residential buildings in the city.

The fashionable heyday of the Tompkins Square area was short lived. By the 1850s immigrants from Germany and Ireland began to settle in the neighborhood as wealthier residents moved farther uptown. The formerly single-family residences were soon converted into multiple dwellings or boardinghouses and the remaining vacant lots on the block were developed with purpose-built tenements designed to house several families.

In addition to early row houses and tenements, the proposed district also includes the Tompkins Square Branch of the New York Public Library, a designated New York City Landmark. Erected in 1904, it was one of the first Carnegie libraries in the city.

The entire 19th- and 20th-century history of the East Village is reflected in the buildings of the proposed East 10th Street Historic District, from its early development as a fashionable residential community comprised of elegant dwellings to its subsequent transformation into an immigrant neighborhood filled with purpose-built tenements and converted row houses. The attribution of several of the earliest residences to noted architect Joseph Trench further enhances the significance of these buildings.