

Lithuanian Alliance Building

307 West 30th Street, Manhattan
Tax Map Block 754 Lot 34

Built: 1876-1877

Architect: Attr. Edward E. Ashley

Style: Neo-Grec

Proposed Action: Propose for Calendaring December 2, 2025



Lithuanian Alliance Building 2025, LPC

The Lithuanian Alliance building is an elegant Neo-Grec building dating to 1876-77. Located in Midtown West, in the northernmost limits of Chelsea, the building is both an example of the neighborhood's handsome residential fabric and of key cultural importance due to the Lithuanian Alliance's purchase of the property in 1910. The Lithuanian Alliance has occupied the building for more than one hundred years supporting the Lithuanian community in numerous ways ranging from providing insurance policies to keeping the Lithuanian-language press alive.

The Neo-Grec facade of 307 West 30th Street is a testament to the neighborhood's rapid residential growth from the 1830s through to the 1870s. The developer brothers Samuel J. and Edward E. Ashley bought the lot in 1867 and in 1876 filed plans for a four-family dwelling with James C. Springstead as their builder. The four-story plus basement dwelling held one apartment on each floor and was referred to as a French flat in documentation recording its construction, intended for middle-class residents. Early tenants included a dealer in fancy papers, a bookseller, and a saloon keeper.

The Lithuanian Alliance was established in 1886 and bought the building in 1910. They chose the site for its relative proximity to Ellis Island after considering sites in Brooklyn and as far afield as Boston. Lithuanians have a long history in the United States. A famine in 1867-8 brought an early wave of Lithuanian immigrants to the United States, and most of these new arrivals were poor agricultural workers. Though many arrived in New York, and some settled in farms around the city, they often did not stay, with many finding jobs in railroad construction and coal mining in Pennsylvania. Lithuanians continued to emigrate throughout the 19th century and by the early 20th century there was a substantial Lithuanian community in New York. In 1904 there were roughly 15,000 Lithuanians in New York and New Jersey, with many settling in Brooklyn and Long Island City.

Fraternal alliances such as the Lithuanian Alliance were set up to help fellow immigrants weather the difficulties of life in the United States. It offered help in the form of material aid like insurance policies, health benefits, and loans, as well as seeking to preserve and propagate Lithuanian cultural heritage. *Tevyne* (Fatherland) a weekly newspaper published by the Lithuanian Alliance starting in 1896 covered Lithuanian news for immigrants and it was printed at 307 West 30th Street starting around 1910.

Although alterations to the building's facade were made in the 1970s, the Lithuanian Alliance restored the historical features of the building in 2018, preserving its appearance as it was first constructed in the 19th century. The Lithuanian Alliance building has high integrity and is architecturally and culturally significant as a Neo-Grec building that has served as the headquarters of the Lithuanian Alliance and hub of Lithuanian culture for over a century since 1910.

