

TAMMANY HALL, 100 East 17th Street, (aka 100-102 East 17th Street, 44-48 Union Square, 44-48 Union Square East), Borough of Manhattan. Built 1928-29; architects Thompson, Holmes & Converse and Charles B. Meyers

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 872, Lot 78

On June 25, 2013, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of Tammany Hall and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 1). The hearing was advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. There were 17 speakers in favor of designation including representatives of Councilmember Rosie Mendez, State Assemblymember Richard Gottfried, State Senator Liz Kreuger, Manhattan Community Board Five Landmarks Committee Chair Howard Mendez, former City Councilmember Carol Greitzer, representatives of the Union Square Community Coalition, the Gramercy Neighborhood Association, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Historic Districts Council, and the National Democratic Club. A representative of the owner indicated that the owner was “not opposing the designation and looked forward to continuing the relationship with the LPC.” There was no testimony in opposition to the designation. The Commission has received a statement in support of the designation from Assemblymember Deborah Glick. It has also received two letters in support of the designation, including one from the Samuel J. Tilden Democratic Club.

Summary

Built in 1928-29 to the designs of Thompson, Holmes & Converse and Charles B. Meyers, this handsome neo-Georgian building is the only surviving headquarters building of Tammany Hall, the Democratic Party machine that dominated New York City politics in 19th and early-20th centuries. The building replaced Tammany’s old headquarters on 14th Street and was both a reminder of the Society’s origins in the Federalist period and a symbol of the reform-minded “New Tammany” organization that emerged in the late 1910s and 1920s. When the building was commissioned, the Tammany Society was at the height of its political fortunes and popularity – Robert F. Wagner was beginning his distinguished career in the U.S. Senate, Alfred E. Smith was a popular and widely respected governor and the leading contender for the Democratic candidacy for president, and Jimmy Walker was an extraordinarily popular Mayor. Within a few years of the building’s completion, revelations of municipal corruption led to Walker’s resignation and a split in the Democratic Party with Franklin Delano Roosevelt and other reformers distancing themselves from Tammany and ensuring the election of Fiorello LaGuardia as mayor. Starved for patronage during the LaGuardia administration, in 1943 the Tammany organization sold the building to Local 91 of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union and the main meeting hall became one of the most important centers for union activities in New York City. Since the mid-1980s the building’s large auditorium has been home to Off-Broadway theater, housing the Roundabout Company until 1991 and a number of distinguished independent productions since then. The remainder of the building has been occupied by the New York Film Institute since 1994.



Praised by the *Real Estate Record* for its “dignified architectural treatment, one of the chief motifs of which are the severe Colonial columns in the centers of the Union Square and Seventeenth-street facades which recall the days of early American architecture,” the building’s design draws inspiration from the original Federal Hall, where George Washington took the oath

of office as the first president and employs specially molded bricks modeled after the bricks used by Democratic Party founder Thomas Jefferson at Monticello. It features a rusticated stone base, pedimented portico, and double-height pilasters, sculptural reliefs in limestone and terra cotta, and neo-Georgian details. It is in the words of *New Yorker* architectural critic George S. Chappell (T-Square) “an exceptionally charming design” and “a real adornment to the neighborhood” and it remains a significant reminder of New York City’s political, theatrical, and labor history.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

Union Square in the 1920s

During the second part of the 19th century the neighborhood around Union Square was New York City’s most important shopping, entertainment, and hotel district.¹ In the early 1900s, the character of the neighborhood began to change as shops, theaters, and hotels moved to Midtown to be closer to the newly completed Pennsylvania and Grand Central railroad terminals and the growing uptown residential districts. Many of the older buildings in the neighborhood were replaced by large-scale loft buildings, which served as warehouses and factories primarily for the rapidly growing ready-to-wear clothing industry. A number of large office buildings also went up on Fifth Avenue and Park Avenue South, including the Everett Building (1908, Starrett & Van Vleck) and the Germania Life Insurance Company Building (1910-11, D’Oench & Yost) on the north side of East 17th Street at Park Avenue South (both are designated New York City Landmarks.) The Consolidated Gas Company, which had been located at 4 Irving Place since 1854, replaced its old building with a new 12-story office building (1910-12, Henry Hardenbergh), then enlarged the new structure, raising it to eighteen stories in 1912-14.

As the neighborhood filled with office and factory workers, the remaining theaters on 14th Street and Irving Place began catering to the workers from these businesses and the residents of the nearby Lower East Side. Tony Pastor’s former theater in the Tammany Hall building at 145 East Fourteenth Street (1867-68, Thomas R. Jackson, demolished) became the Olympic burlesque house, the Union Square Theater on the southeast corner of Union Square East and East 14th Street was taken over by the Keith & Albee vaudeville chain, and the Academy of Music at 123-135 East 14th Street became a movie theater.² In 1921 Samuel Klein, purchased three vacant old commercial buildings on the east side of Union Square where he offered a vast selection of clothing at low prices. Klein’s business expanded rapidly until it occupied most of the buildings on the east side of the square between East 14th Street and East 16th Street.³ It was soon joined by the discount department store Ohrbach’s at 48 East 14th Street, leading to a resurgence of retailing in the Union Square area in the late 1920s. Union Square’s excellent transportation facilities and proximity to the downtown and midtown business districts also led to a new demand for office space in the area. The Consolidated Gas Company, which shared offices with the New York Edison Company also needed to expand, due to the growing demand for electricity. In 1926, the company announced plans to erect a new addition to its offices on the site of the Academy of Music. Designed by Warren & Wetmore, the new addition incorporated a corner tower, known as the “Tower of Light,” that added a striking element to the

skyline. (The Consolidated Edison Building is a designated New York City Landmark.) Reporting on other developments around Union Square, the *New York Times* noted that “several smaller operations are planned or are under way in the neighborhood, and there is every indication of a revival of building and speculative activity.”⁴

The Tammany Society⁵

During the 18th century, social clubs, known as Tammany Societies in honor of the mythical Delaware chief, Tamamend (also known as St. Tammany), were formed in Philadelphia and a number of other cities. In the years leading up to the Revolution, a number of the clubs became gathering places for Americans who sympathized with the Revolution. In New York City, which remained in British hands throughout most of the war, the Tammany Society became moribund but revived in 1786 and adopted its first written constitution and elected its first officers in 1789. Tammany membership was open to any male citizen who could pay the modest initiation fees and dues. The majority of members were craftsmen and mechanics with some merchants and lawyers. Members dressed in Indian garb and were known as “braves.” Organized into thirteen “tribes,” they elected a board of directors known as “sachems” who in turn selected a “grand sachem.”

From its inception, the society was dedicated to the democratic and republican principles that had inspired the American Revolution. Initially its membership included Federalists as well as anti-Federalists, and members of the infant Democratic-Republican Party, but by spring 1795, Tammany had allied itself with Democratic Party, which began using Tammany’s meeting room in Martling’s Tavern on Chatham Street as its campaign headquarters on election day. In 1812, the society moved to its own four-story building, Tammany Hall, at the corner of Nassau and Frankfort Streets and the name of the building became synonymous with the organization.

At the beginning of the 19th century, Tammany Hall leaders included Aaron Burr and Martin Van Buren. The society promoted universal suffrage for white males, supported legislation that protected small contractors, was instrumental in the abolishing debtors’ prisons, and promoted public education, including the establishment of free night schools for adults and a Free Academy (founded 1847, later City College). Seeking to expand its base, Tammany cultivated recent immigrants, establishing a “naturalization bureau” to help new immigrants gain citizenship. It held special meetings for Irish, French, and German immigrants and began running candidates who would appeal to specific ethnic groups. It also helped immigrants find homes and jobs and became a social service organization for the city’s poor. As the city’s immigrant population expanded, Tammany gained control of most of the lesser elected positions in the New York City government, so that while the Whigs and later the Republicans might succeed in electing the mayor, the Common Council, consisting of boards of alderman and assistant alderman, were almost invariably composed of Tammany stalwarts. The councilmen’s ability to control nominations for government jobs, award licenses and contracts, and, most importantly, franchises for the street railways, created numerous opportunities for graft. Many politicians saw their opportunities and took them.⁶

The most famous of the Tammany leaders, “Boss” William M. Tweed, became grand sachem in 1863. Tweed used his position with the Tammany Society to secure a number of government posts, notably appointment as the Commissioner of the Department of Public

Works. Under his leadership, the Tammany government of New York City began building the Brooklyn Bridge (1867-83, a designated New York City Landmark) and constructed hundreds of miles of new macadamized roads and sewer, water, and gas pipelines. The government also fostered development by leasing or donating land for new orphanages, hospitals, schools, and museums. Tweed appointed first-rate professionals to oversee the new civic improvements. Initially, these policies won broad support both from the working classes who benefitted from the new construction jobs and improved facilities and the business leaders who benefitted from the resulting real estate boom and made money investing in bonds to finance the new infrastructure.

With the city prospering, the Tammany organization decided to construct a new headquarters designed by Thomas R. Jackson, on East 14th Street, adjacent to the Academy of Music. In addition to the Society's offices and meeting rooms, this building contained a large theater and a basement café and performance space to provide rental income. The building was completed in the summer of 1868 in time for the main theater to serve as the site of the National Democratic Convention. By 1871, the city's debt had tripled and there were rumors that Tweed and a group of cronies had grown enormously rich skimming profits from the city's bond issues and taking kickbacks from contractors. That year, the *New York Times* began a series of investigative articles revealing huge cost overruns in the construction of the new New York County Courthouse (aka Tweed Courthouse) at 52 Chambers Street (1861-72, John Kellum and Thomas Little, enlarged 1877-81, Leopold Eidlitz, a designated New York City Landmark). This led to a crisis of confidence in the city's credit and Tweed's indictment.

After Tweed's downfall, Tammany was reorganized under the leadership of "Honest" John Kelly, who created a hierarchical system in which precinct captains were responsible for keeping tabs on what was happening in the city's neighborhoods, helping families in time of need, and making sure that they voted for Tammany candidates. Kelly's successor Boss Richard Croker, who controlled Tammany from 1886-1902 strengthened Kelly's organization by introducing a system of neighborhood Democratic clubs, which were both political clubs and neighborhood social centers providing family-oriented activities. Croker supplemented the Tammany treasury and provided a steady income for its leaders by establishing an "informal 'vice tax' with the machine offering police protection to gamblers and prostitutes in exchange for cash."⁷ The Tammany organization also solicited money from businessmen seeking contracts and franchises with the city. Everything was filtered through Croker, who made a fortune through insider investments in companies doing business with the city.

In 1894 a State Senate committee headed by Republican Clarence Lexow began investigating allegations of police corruption and found ample evidence of a Tammany-controlled protection racket and the misuse of public funds. The resulting scandal swept a reform government into office under the leadership of Mayor William L. Strong. Tammany regained the mayoralty in 1897 but fresh scandals in 1900 led to Seth Low's election as mayor on a Fusion ticket in 1901.

With Tammany's reputation and power at a low ebb, Croker retired and Charles Francis Murphy assumed control of the organization. Murphy was "widely regarded as the most effective machine politician in the city's history."⁸ Under Murphy's leadership Tammany withdrew its opposition to women's suffrage enabling the passage of the law in New York State and in the wake of the Triangle Fire enacted progressive labor laws and improvements to the building and

fire codes championed by State Senators Robert F. Wagner and Alfred E. (Al) Smith, both Tammany politicians from the Lower East Side and Murphy protégées.⁹ Murphy was one of the chief architects of Al Smith's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1924, but he died suddenly a few weeks before the national convention.

Smith was largely responsible for the selection of Judge George W. Olvany as Murphy's successor. The first college graduate to head Tammany Hall with a reputation for honesty, Olvany began touting the virtues of the "New Tammany" appealing not only to the Democratic Party's traditional working class immigrant base but to progressively-minded middle-class voters concerned with good government.¹⁰ In an interview with the *New York Times* Olvany argued that the scandals of the last century were part of the Democratic Party's remote past as opposed to the much more recent scandals involving the Republican Party –

Today we as Democrats are proud of the fact that the Teapot Dome and alien property scandal find no counterpart in contemporary annals of our party, directly or indirectly, in nation, State or city.

Olvany also emphasized Tammany's championship of the disenfranchised –

Tammany has been looked upon as a haven for the oppressed. It has never closed its doors on the immigrant who has announced his intention of becoming a citizen. It has accepted the Constitution literally and has drawn no lines by reason of race, creed or color.

And he extolled its record in providing city services –

Today New York is the cleanest and best-run city in the world. Under its [Tammany's] rule New York is the only large city in the world in whose streets there are no prostitutes; because there is no place safer, day or night, than the sidewalks of New York; because its school system is the best in the world; because its Fire and Police Departments are second to none.¹¹

For many observers the sale of Tammany's old headquarters with its associations with Boss Tweed and the construction of a new headquarters was a potent symbol of the "New Tammany" and of the club's presidential aspirations for Al Smith.¹²

The New Tammany Hall Building

In early December 1927, the Tammany organization sold its building and a week later purchased the site of this building at Union Square East and East 17th Street.¹³ The architects for the new building Thompson, Holmes & Converse and Charles B. Meyers were selected in mid-January 1928 and plans were filed with the Department of Buildings in April.¹⁴ Tammany remained on 14th Street until the summer so that it could hold its July 4 celebrations in its old meeting hall.¹⁵ By January 2, 1929 the New York County Democratic Committee had moved into its offices in the new building and on January 8 the exterior was completed with the ceremonial laying of the building's cornerstone by 99-year-old Grand Sachem John R. Voorhis with Tammany Sachems Mayor James J. Walker, Judge George W. Olvany, and former Governor Alfred E. Smith.¹⁶ Work on the interior continued until summer when the building was formally dedicated at Tammany's July 4, 1929 celebration with Governor Franklin Delano Roosevelt and former Governor Alfred E. Smith as the chief speakers.¹⁷

Built at a cost of \$350,000, Tammany Hall is 3 1/2-stories-tall and has a frontage of 79 feet on Union Square and 150 feet on East 17th Street. Its neo-Georgian design evokes associations with “the American Colonial and Federal buildings of the early days of the Society.”¹⁸ The first story of the building is faced with limestone while the upper walls are faced with over-sized red bricks made in England “to conform with the type used by the revered founder of the Democratic party, Thomas Jefferson, at Monticello.”¹⁹ An advertisement by the Old Virginia Brick Company, manufacturers of the brick promised that:

When looking at this Tammany Hall building, you will at once see what we mean by the time-toned effect our brick give. Likewise, the pleasing texture, the slight off-shapeness and variableness the old mould-making-way gives them. A little softening and toning down of the limestone, which New York’s swift hand will so soon accomplish, and to the unknowing, this building will be credited as a part of the city’s historic yester-years.²⁰

According to a Tammany publication, the basic composition of the Union Square façade, with its high basement, central pedimented portico with giant Doric columns, end bays set off by pilasters, Doric frieze, and hipped roof, was inspired by Federal Hall (constructed in 1700 as New York City Hall, remodeled in 1788 to the designs of Pierre Charles L’Enfant, demolished 1812), the site where George Washington took the Oath of Office as the first President of the United States.²¹ The authors of *New York 1930* have also noted affinities with Sir William Chamber’s river front of Somerset House in London (1776-80) with its rusticated ground story, arched ground story entrances, and upper-story giant orders articulating projecting pavilions.²² One feature of the Tammany Hall design, the ground-story rustication with its oversize voussoirs above the flat-arched windows, is especially reminiscent of Somerset House while the sculptural panels depicting arrows and olive branches at the eastern end of the 17th Street façade are likely modeled on similar sculptural panels on Federal Hall.²³ Other elements of the Tammany design are also typical of the neo-Georgian style, including the Flemish bond pattern of the brickwork, the flat-arched window openings with stone keystones, the blind arches enframing principal windows, multi-light sash windows, fanlight transoms, delicate wrought iron balconies, semi-circular attic window with a molded surround with a bracket keystone, and brick and stone balustrades extending along the roofline. In addition to the arrow-and-olive-branch panels, the 17th Street façade features a carved stone relief depicting the seal of the Tammany Society flanked by medallion heads of Chief Tammany and Columbus. On Union Square the pediment is ornamented by handsome carved garlands and a terra-cotta medallion depicting a Liberty Cap that supposedly dated from the Revolutionary War period and had become a treasured relict of the Tammany Society and a symbol of the organization. The one non-Georgian element of the design, the round-arched gable flanked by console brackets at the center of the 17th Street façade is likely an allusion to Tammany’s former headquarters on 14th Street that featured an arched sculptural niche flanked by brackets at the center of its roofline.

One of the interesting aspects of the design is the treatment of the facades to create the illusion of the Georgian balance and symmetry while accommodating a complex plan incorporating a large auditorium occupying the eastern two-thirds of the building.²⁴ On East 17th Street the triple arches, which originally served as exits from the auditorium lobby, were placed at the center of the façade; the main building entrance, which provided access to the elevator lobby and theater, was located in a subsidiary bay to the west; and the window bay to the east of

the triple arches was given an arched surround to balance the composition.²⁵ On Union Square, the original entrance to the first floor commercial space, initially leased to a branch of Manufacturers' Trust, was at the center of the façade. Directly above the ground story entrance was the focal point of the design, an arched doorway and balcony where Tammany politicians would stand to address their supporters gathered in Union Square.

Tammany Hall was one of a number of public and semi-public buildings erected from the late 1910s to the early 1930s that were designed in neo-Georgian style “to recall the days of early American architecture.”²⁶ These included Town Hall, 113-123 West 43rd Street (1919-21, McKim, Mead & White, a designated New York City Landmark), erected for the League for Political Education as a meeting hall for the people of New York, where the style's associations with the early years of American democracy also seemed particularly appropriate. Two notable museum projects were the Staten Island Museum at 75 Stuyvesant Place (1918, Robert W. Gardner) and the Museum of the City of New York at 1220-1227 Fifth Avenue (1928-30, Joseph J. Freedlander, a designated New York City Landmark).²⁷ Tammany Hall was regarded as a fine example of the neo-Georgian building type and won praise from architectural critics. *Architecture & Building* described it as “well proportioned” and well fitted to its site, the *Real Estate Record* remarked on its “dignified architectural treatment, one of the chief motifs of which are the severe Colonial columns in the centers of the Union Square and the Seventeenth-street facades,” and *New Yorker* critic T-Square (George S. Chappell) called it “an exceptionally charming design” and “a real adornment to the neighborhood.”²⁸

Thompson, Holmes & Converse and Charles B. Meyers

John Ambrose Thompson (1876-1968) was born in New York City. He graduated from George Washington University and subsequently studied at the Atelier Lambert in Paris and with Henry Hornbostel in New York City.²⁹ He was employed in the offices of McKim, Mead & White from 1901 to 1918, starting as a draftsman and later becoming a designer and job captain. In 1920 he became a partner in the firm of Rockrise & Thompson, working with the Japanese architect Iwahiko Tsumanuma (d. 1936), who practiced in the United States under the name of Thomas S. Rockrise.³⁰ While working with Rockrise, Thompson was involved in the design of the Kawasaki Hospital in Kobe, Japan (1922), as well as a number of buildings in the United States. In 1922, Rockrise became ill with tuberculosis and was forced to retire. Thompson established Thompson, Holmes & Converse in 1923 with Gerald A. Holmes (1887-1948) and Rob Roy Converse (1894-1972).³¹ Holmes was a Philadelphian with a degree in architecture from the University of Pennsylvania who had worked for Klauder & Day in Philadelphia before moving to New York City in 1910 to take a job with McKim, Mead & White, where he worked for thirteen years.³² Rob Roy Converse was the son of a prominent Rochester clergyman, a Yale graduate, and a former World War I flying ace who had also worked for McKim, Mead & White.³³ He ran the Rochester branch of Thompson, Holmes & Converse from 1923 to 1927, then moved to New York City and seems to have been a design partner on the Tammany Hall project.

One of the Thompson, Holmes & Converse's first projects was a powerhouse for the Rochester Gas & Electric Corporation (c. 1924).³⁴ In the mid-1920s the firm also prepared studies for a Civic Center and Municipal Building over the Genesee River between Main and Broad Streets in Rochester. It was also responsible for at least two hotels for the Dinkler Hotel

Co. – the Carling Hotel in Jacksonville, Florida (1925-26) and Hotel Andrew Jackson in Nashville, Tennessee. In 1927, it received the commission for a new School of Commerce Building for City College (now Baruch College) on East 23rd Street. Tammany Hall was the first of a series of projects executed in association with Charles B. Meyers, which included the Psychiatric wing at Bellevue Hospital (1927-35) and several buildings on the campus of Hunter College in the Bronx (now Lehman College, 1929-35).³⁵

At the end of 1929 Converse discovered that he had been the victim of a stock swindle and had financial difficulties. He appears to have left New York City soon after 1930. Holmes remained with the firm until 1938, when he left to take a job with the New York City Board of Education, although the firm continued to use his name. He was appointed the Assistant Superintendent of School Buildings in charge of design in 1942. Thompson practiced as John Ambrose Thompson of Thompson, Holmes & Converse until Holmes's death in 1948, then under his own name.³⁶ Working in association with Frederick Mathesius, he won the competition to design the Post Office and Court House Building in Montpelier, Vermont, in 1939. During World War II he served as a Principal Materials Engineer for the War Production Board and as an advisor for the design competitions for the Mid-River Ventilation Building of the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel and for Battery Park. In 1943 Thompson collaborated with Frederick G. Frost on the design of the Brownsville Houses (completed 1948). In 1949 he won a Mayor's Award for Architectural Distinction for his Row, Peterson & Co. industrial building in White Plains. In the early 1950s he designed another housing project, Marble Hill Houses in the Bronx (1952), and Public School 27 in Brooklyn (1953).

Charles Bradford Meyers (1875-1958) was a graduate of City College and Pratt Institute who began practicing architecture in 1899 following additional training in the office of Arthur Napier.³⁷ He initially concentrated on multiple dwellings, working primarily in Greenwich Village and Harlem. By the 1910s, he had begun to specialize in the design of hospitals, schools, and other public buildings.³⁸ He also designed the New York City Department of Health Building on Worth Street. In addition to his work with Thompson, Holmes & Converse for the Bronx campus of Hunter College, he designed the main building of Yeshiva University. Other commissions ranged from the Family Court Building on Lexington Avenue to the Central Park Boat and Skate House, and the 104th Field Artillery Armory in Jamaica. His designs for penal institutions include the Criminal Court and Prison on Foley Square. Meyers' designs for synagogues include Ohab Zedek on West 95th Street and Rodolph Sholem on Central Park West, where he also served as a member of the Board of Trustees. Meyers' extensive participation in related civic and professional endeavors included membership in the New York City Building Code Revision Commission in 1907-08 and 1913, receipt of a gold medal in 1915 for his design of the New York State Building at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, and the Chairmanship of the Joint Committee on City Departments from 1925 to 1929.

Tammany Hall in the 1930s and 1940s

When this building was commissioned in 1927, Tammany Hall was at the zenith of its power, with Tammany Sachem Al Smith serving as governor and soon-to-be Democratic candidate for president, Tammany Sachem Robert Wagner a first term senator, Tammany Sachem Jimmy Walker an enormously popular mayor, and Tammany stalwarts holding most of the jobs at every level of city government.³⁹ By the time the building was completed in 1929,

Governor Smith had lost his presidential bid and the new governor, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, though a Democrat, was “distinctly unfriendly to Tammany.”⁴⁰ Mayor Walker’s fondness for nightlife and frequent junkets at the expense of wealthy contributors were becoming an open scandal, and allegations regarding police graft and irregularities in the court system were rife. In August 1930, Governor Roosevelt authorized an investigation of the magistrates’ courts headed by Samuel Seabury who uncovered evidence of a vast network of corruption, eventually implicating Judge Olvany and Mayor Walker, who was forced to resign. (The visibly robust Olvany had already resigned for reasons of “ill-health” in 1929.) The new leaders who took control of Tammany then made a series of political blunders alienating FDR, who won the presidency in 1932, and Herbert Lehman, his successor as governor. In 1933, Tammany chose a lackluster politician as its candidate for mayor, paving the way for the election of Fusion candidate Fiorello LaGuardia. Once elected, LaGuardia set about dismantling the Tammany machine, making his appointments on the basis of merit rather than political affiliation and cracking down on police corruption. Roosevelt and LaGuardia became political allies. As money flowed into the city under the New Deal, Tammany was largely shut out of the new public works programs. Federal welfare programs, unemployment insurance, and Social Security meant that the poor no longer had to rely on Tammany in times of need and restrictive immigration policies cut down on its traditional voter base. Membership fell. Tammany district clubhouses began paying their way by allowing racketeers to operate gambling dens on their premises, so that the mobsters Charles Luciana (Lucky Luciano) and Arthur (Dutch Schultz) Flegenheimer, and Frank Costello held increasing sway over the weakened organization. By 1943 Tammany had lost a series of key elections and had gone through a series of leaders. Having grown increasingly poor, the organization found itself unable to meet its mortgage payments on its building.

Following its 157th July 4th celebration, the Tammany Society sold its headquarters building to Local 91 of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.⁴¹ Tammany moved to leased offices in the National Democratic Club at Madison Avenue and 37th Street and the New York County Democratic Club relocated to separate offices in midtown.

Tammany enjoyed a resurgence in the late 1940s and 1950s under the leadership of Carmine DeSapio, who made a concerted effort to rid the organization of mob influence and sought out abler candidates than the usual party stalwarts. He orchestrated the elections of Robert Wagner, Jr. as mayor in 1953 and of Averell Harriman as governor in 1954. However, DeSapio angered Eleanor Roosevelt by failing to support Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., in his run for state Attorney General. Eleanor Roosevelt organized the New York Committee for Democratic Voters with Herbert Lehman and Thomas Finletter and in 1961 they succeeded in removing DeSapio from power. Without his leadership the last vestiges of the Tammany organization faded away.

The Home of Local 91⁴²

In 1913 the labor unrest in the garment industry that had begun with the shirtwaist makers strike of 1909 spread to the “smaller trades” – the children’s dress, house dress, kimono, and bathrobe manufacturers. As thousands of striking workers joined the International Ladies Garment Workers Union [ILGWU], two new locals were established – Local 50, representing the children’s dress workers, and Local 41, representing the wrapper and kimono workers. As

Local 50's first contract was "violated right and left," its membership began to melt away, so that by 1915 it was left with only 26 active members. At that point the ILGWU appointed one of its most promising young business agents, Harry Greenberg (1891-1965), to take over the management of the local. Greenberg was able to rehabilitate and organize the union to the point that it had 4,000 to 6,000 members participating in the March 1916 general strike that involved 65,000 needle trade workers in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx. The strike resulted in full representation for the ILGWU, binding two-year contracts, and standard bargaining rights. In 1921 Local 50 and Local 41 merged forming Local 91 with Harry Greenberg at its helm. Like other unions, Local 91 suffered greatly during the early years of the Depression, but with the enactment of pro-labor Section 7A of the National Recovery Act in 1933 and the passage of the Wagner Act in 1935 the union prospered. Because it represented workers who often held jobs on a seasonal basis and frequently changed employers, Local 91 was at the forefront in bargaining for union-administered benefits. In 1938, it was the first local in the country to win paid vacations for its members.⁴³ During World War II, when workers were in short supply and government imposed anti-inflationary wage-caps limited salaries, benefit packages became an important tool in recruiting and retaining employees. With dues increasing because of full employment and money flowing into the union's benefit fund, the leaders of Local 91 found themselves with considerable cash on hand and decided to invest it in improved quarters.

Local 91 made an offer on Tammany Hall in April 1943 and took possession of the building in August.⁴⁴ Work began to construct new offices and increase the size of the platform in the auditorium.⁴⁵ The official opening took place at a concert and dedication ceremony on December 18, 1943 that brought together union leaders, former Mayor Jimmy Walker, who had become the impartial arbitrator for the cloak and suit industry, and Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia.⁴⁶ LaGuardia noted that it was his first time in the building, adding:

I couldn't help thinking, while Jimmy was speaking, how fitting and proper it is that the two of us should meet here.This building was built under the Walker Administration and put out of business—or on the bum—by the LaGuardia Administration.

You know, I wouldn't change the name of the building, ... I would keep it as a permanent monument to the change that came for the City of New York when a mighty, ruthless organization lost the building to an organization of the people.⁴⁷

Local 91 made full use of its new building, which housed the union's administrative offices, meeting rooms, classrooms, and art studios. It also made its facilities, especially its large auditorium, which was dedicated to Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1947, and thereafter known as Roosevelt Auditorium, available to other unions and cultural organizations.⁴⁸ During the 1950s the city's fire fighters met there as well as the school cafeteria workers, sanitation workers, city laborers, assistant gardeners, and sewage workers.⁴⁹ The United Federation of Teachers held crucial meetings in 1960 ending a citywide walkout and in October 1968 authorizing a strike in response to the Ocean Hill-Brownsville crisis.⁵⁰ Private sector unions that regularly met in Roosevelt Auditorium included the newspaper guilds and deliverers' union (the citywide newspaper strikes of 1953 and 1966 were called there), hospital workers, fleet cab drivers, and the several Teamsters locals.⁵¹ The Central Labor Council also met in the building and in 1969

the auditorium was the scene of a showdown between CLC president Harry Van Arsdale and District Council 37 Executive Secretary Victor Gotbaum over the mayoral election with Van Arsdale supporting Mario Procaccino and Gotbaum supporting John Lindsay.⁵² (Van Arsdale prevailed at the CLC, but Lindsay won the election.) Through the years Local 91 also continued to play an active role in local and national politics (ILGWU president David Dubinsky and Local 91 head Harry Greenberg were founders of the Liberal Party) and the auditorium housed many political speeches and debates.⁵³ It also was the setting for numerous memorial services for labor leaders and leaders of the progressive movement.⁵⁴

Harry Greenberg died in 1965 and was succeeded as manager-secretary of Local 91 by Edward Schneider who began his career with the union as “an idealistic education director” following World War II.⁵⁵ In 1977, Schneider moved up to become chief of the Sportswear Joint Council of the ILGWU. The ILGWU, which had long been criticized for having too few women in leadership positions, then appointed Belle Horenson, a union organizer and business agent, manager of Local 91, making her the first woman to head an ILGWU local in the city. Iris Iaccorino (Rino), a business agent with the local who had joined the union 20 years earlier in Puerto Rico, became the assistant manager and they remained in charge of the local until the early 1980s.⁵⁶

By that point, clothing manufacturers were moving out of New York and increasingly relocating offshore. With its membership dwindling, the union no longer needed such a large building. At an opening night party for Harold Pinter’s “Old Times” ILGWU executive vice president Wilbur Daniels ran into Roundabout Theater founder Gene Feist, who complained that the Roundabout was about to be evicted from its theater on 23rd Street. Negotiations began and in June 1984 the Roundabout entered into a lease with the Local 91 Realty Company.

Off Broadway Theater and Film School

During the years Local 91 occupied the Tammany Hall Building the union left the exterior largely unchanged except for subdividing of the ground story banking space facing Union Square into five small shops in the early 1950s. When the Roundabout took possession in 1984 it spent about \$850,000 on renovations to the auditorium, reducing the seating to 499 by dividing the theater horizontally. The stage was also deepened and widened, wings were built, and the orchestra and balcony were re-raked.⁵⁷ The ribbon cutting ceremony took place on February 1, 1985 and was attended by Roundabout stars Kate Burton, Jim Dale, Marsha Mason, Tovah Feldshuh and E.G. Marshall. Ms. Burton and Ken Marshall appeared in *Playboy of the Western World*, the Roundabout’s first production in the new house, which opened on February 13, 1985. Other notable productions followed including *Room Service* with Mark Hamill, directed by Alan Arkin (1986); a revival of Lorraine Hansberry’s *Raisin in the Sun*, which went on tour and was taped by PBS (1986); *A Man for All Seasons* with Philip Bosco and Charles Keating (1987); *Privates on Parade* with Jim Dale (1989); *Enrico IV* with Peter Francis James (1989); and *The Matchmaker* with Dorothy Loudon (1991). In June 1991 the Roundabout announced it would be moving to the Criterion Center/Stage Right at 45th Street and Broadway so that future Roundabout productions would be eligible for the Tony Awards.

When the Roundabout moved to Midtown, Local 91 leased its auditorium to producer Raymond L. Gaspard who renamed it the “Union Square Theater.”⁵⁸ He produced eight shows there including musical retrospectives by singers Carole King and Holly Near. Producers Alan

Schuster and Mitchell Maxwell, owners of the Minetta Lane Theater, began leasing the Union Square Theater in spring 1994 and after refurbishing the interior reopened in November with the American premiere of *Vita and Virginia*, Eileen Atkins's play about Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf, directed by Zoe Caldwell, starring Atkins and Vanessa Redgrave. It was followed by Neil Simon's *London Suite* with Carole Shelley, Paxton Whitehead, and Kate Burton (1995), and then by Tom Courtney in *Moscow Stations* (1995). Subsequent productions included *Tap Dogs* (1996-97); *Wit* with Katherine Chalfant (1999-2000); Moises Kaufman's *The Laramie Project* (2000); and August Wilson's *Jitney* (2000). *Bat Boy: the Musical* appeared at the theater in 2001 and won the 2000-2001 Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Off-Broadway Musical and the 2001 Theater World Award for actor Devan May. Other prize winning productions included the Signature Theatre Company's revival of Lanford Wilson's *Burn This* (2002), for which Edward Norton won an Obie Award in 2003, and Russian mime Slava Polunin's *Slava's Snowshow* (2004-07), which won the 2005 Drama Desk Award for "Unique Theatrical Experience."

In 1994, the New York Film Academy, a film and acting school established by Jerry Sherlock, a former film, television, and theater producer, began leasing the portions of this building not occupied by the main theater. In 2001 Local 91 sold the building in its entirety to Liberty Theatres, Inc., now Liberty Theatres, LLC, which also owns the Orpheum and Minetta Lane Theaters, and the Royal George theater complex in Chicago. Liberty Theaters is a subsidiary, of Reading International, Inc. (RDI) a business owning and operating cinemas and live theaters and developing, owning, and operating real estate in the United States, Australia, and New Zealand. In 2005 the air rights and development rights for the site were conveyed to US Development LLC, a Nevada limited liability company, which is also a subsidiary of RDI.

Description

Tammany Hall is a 3 1/2-story building located on a rectangular lot at the southeastern corner of Union Square East and East 17th Street. It extends for 79 feet along Union Square East and 150 feet along East 17th Street. Designed in Neo-Georgian-style, it is faced with limestone at the first story and is clad with specially-molded over-sized clinker brick laid in Flemish bond and stone trim on the upper stories. The slate-covered hipped attic roof is largely screened from view by a brick and stone balustrade. On the East 17th Street façade, the doors have been replaced. The building retains some of its original first story 8-over-8 wood sash windows on East 17th Street and all of its upper story 12-over-12 wood windows on both facades.

Union Square East facade:

Historic: Rusticated limestone cladding at ground story; keystone on lintel above former entrance at center of façade; stone console brackets support second story balcony; upper stories clad with clinker brick trimmed with stone; Doric limestone columns, pilasters, and entablature, which extends across façade; corner quoins; molded arched surround at center entrance to balcony; entry retains original paired multi-light wood-and-glass doors and Gothic arched wood-and-glass transom; flat-arch window openings with stone keystones; sill course extends across façade beneath second story windows; third-story windows have stone sills; wrought-iron railings on balconies; stone frieze decorated with a laurel wreath and ribbons above center doorway at second floor; pediment decorated with garlands and a central roundel with

polychrome terracotta plaque depicting a Liberty cap; brick and limestone balustrade along attic; slates on hipped roof coped with metal; flagpole in location of historic flagpole, but may be replacement.

Alterations: Piers removed and storefronts created at ground story; lower half of stone piers painted; awnings, roll down security gates with metal housing at all store fronts, electrical and non-electrical signs, banners supported by horizontal flag poles, which are braced to the entablature frieze; banners tied to balcony and extending across three center bays between second and third stories; spotlights projecting from second story balcony and near base of the outer bay third story windows.

East 17th Street façade:

Historic: Five central bays project; set off by round-arched openings at ground story, pilasters, quoining, and an arched gable with a fanlight window on upper stories; at ground story three center doors retain historic wood fanlights, flat-arched windows at eastern end of façade retain original eight-over-eight blind wood sash windows; all but westernmost window retain top eight-light wood sashes; historic transom bar and 10-light transom over stage door at east end of façade; inscription over center bays reads “1786 The Society of Tammany or Columbian Order 1928;” at second story flat-arched windows inscribed within blind arches middle five bays and center of end bays; 12-over-12 wood sash; decorative stone console brackets beneath stone balconies with wrought-iron railings; at third story sculptural relief tablets in the three eastern bays; original second story blind (bricked) bottom window in fourth bay (reading east to west); center framed sculptural tablet flanked by rondels with profile heads of Columbus and Chief Tammany; 12-over 12 wood sash; brick and stone parapet; center gable flanked by scrolled stone volutes; semi-circular window opening with bracketed molded frame; original fanlight window.

Alterations: Lower portion ground story stone facings painted; westernmost ground story window sash replaced or covered with corrugated metal; lower sashes of windows in bays nine and 10 (reading east to west) replaced with corrugated metal; corrugated metal covers sloping sill of window in bays nine and 10; awning from Union Square storefront wraps around corner over westernmost bay; all doors replaced; louvered exhausts in top corners of third and ninth window bays (reading east to west); canopy at center exit door; metal-and-glass frames for advertising posters; plastic signs affixed to masonry flanking west entry; illuminated sign above center three bays; horizontal flag poles to support banners at base of fourth second-story window and above sixth and eighth second-story window bays (reading east to west); HVAC mechanical equipment resting on second-story balcony eighth bay; bracketed light fixtures attached to wall just above sills of windows in eighth, 10th, and 11th bays; balusters missing from parapet first, fourth, 10th bays of parapet.

East Wall

Only the upper portion of Tammany Hall’s east wall is visible from street; historic brick facing with stone coping; non-historic triple pipe vents attached by metal brackets at the north end and center of the wall.

South Wall

Visible from the street above the 1st story; front (western) portion of the wall faced with red brick and coped with stone to match the primary; rear portion of wall painted; one window at the 3rd story at east end of the wall.

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NOTES

1. This section on the development of the Union Square is based on Landmarks Preservation Commission [LPC] *Ladies Mile Historic Designation Report* (LP-1609) (New York: City of New York, 1989); *LPC East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District Designation Report*, prepared by Gale Harris and Jay Shockley, (LP-1976) (New York: City of New York, 1998);

2. For the Union Square theaters see Mary C. Henderson, *The City & the Theatre* (Clifton, NJ: James T. White & Company, 1973), 139-143.

3. For Union Square in the 1920s see Federal Writers Project, WPA, *New York City Guide* (1939, rpt New York: Octagon Books, 1970), 198-203; Rian James, *All About New York: An Intimate Guide* (New York: John Day Co., 1931), 142, 222.

4. "Bulk of Trading on the East Side," *New York Times*, June 8, 1928. See also "Mandel Leases 21-23 Union Sq. W.," *RER&G* May 5, 1928, 13; "Predicts Banner Season Ahead in Realty Market," *RER&G*, Sept. 8, 1928, 7.

5. This section on the history of the Tammany Hall political organization is based on Edwin G. Burroughs and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 315-320, 1027-28, 1103-1110; Frank Vos, "Murphy, Charles F(rancis)," and "Tammany Hall," *Encyclopedia of New York City*, ed. Kenneth T. Jackson (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1995), 783, 1149-1151; Herbert Mitgang, *Once Upon A Time in New York* (New York: The Free Press, 2000); *Society of Tammany or Columbian Order, A Patriotic History, 1786-1928* (New York: New York County Democratic Committee, 1928); "Tammany Hall," *Wikipedia* @ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tammany-Hall>.

⁶Mitgang, 40.

⁷Burroughs and Wallace, 1109.

⁸Murphy is credited with putting into office Mayors George B. McClellan, Jr., William J. Gaynor, and John F. Hylan and Governors John A. Dix, William Sulzer, and Alfred E. Smith. He also launched the careers of Senator Robert F. Wagner and Judge James A. Foley (Murphy's son-in-law), who for many years served as Chief Surrogate. Vos, "Murphy," 783.

⁹The new labor and health and safety laws were the most advanced and comprehensive in the country and served as models for other state and local ordinances.

¹⁰On the "New Tammany" see Joseph McGoldrick, "The New Tammany," *The American Mercury*, 15, no. 57 (Sept. 1928), 1-12; Henry F. Pringle, "What's Happened to Tammany," *Outlook and Independent*, May 15, 1929, 83-86, 117-118.

¹¹"Tammany Hall as Judge Olvany Sees It," *New York Times*, May 20, 1928, 73.

¹² See “Why Tammany is Leaving the Old Wigwam,” *Literary Digest* 95 (Dec. 31, 1927) 34-38.

¹³ The site was purchased by D. & D. Company, owned by realtors Joseph P. Day and J. Clarence Davis. Day also acted as the broker for Tammany in its purchase of the Union Square site. In early January 1928 Day and Davis announced that they had sold the former Tammany site to Consolidated Gas for \$770,000, realizing a \$70,000 profit over the price they had paid Tammany. When the *New York World* announced the deal, questions were raised as to whether any of Tammany’s leaders had profited from the deal. Tammany officials quickly denied any wrong-doing and Day and Davis explained that Consolidated Gas had decided to acquire the lot only after it had been sold and the partners had announced their intention to construct a tall building that would have boxed in the gas company building. However, Day, who had been a member of the Tammany Society for many years and was very friendly with its leadership, ultimately agreed to turn over the \$70,000 profit to Tammany, taking responsibility for the entire payment since Davis insisted that the firm had done nothing wrong and was entitled to its profit. See “Tammany Moves Its Hall,” *New York Times*, Oct. 7, 1927, 28; “Historic ‘Wigwam’ Sold By Tammany,” *New York Times*, Dec. 6, 1927, 1; “Tammany Acquires Site in Union Square For Its New Home,” *New York Times*, Dec. 14, 1927, 1; “Tammany to Build on Union Square,” *New York Times*, Dec. 18, 1927, W12; “Wigwam Sold Again at \$100,000 Profit,” *New York Times*, Jan 2, 1928, 2; “Olvany Denies Profit in Tammany Sale,” *New York Times*, Jan. 3, 1928, 3; “Seeks Fee in Sale of Tammany Hall,” *New York Times*, May 23, 1929, 27; “Day Explains Deal on Tammany Hall,” *New York Times*, May 24, 1929, 25; “Tammany Hall Sale Again Up in Court,” *New York Times*, Sept. 13, 1929, 12.

¹⁴ “Architects Picked for Tammany Hall,” *New York Times*, Jan. 18, 1928, 52; “Tammany Hall Plans,” *New York Times*, Apr. 14, 1928, 35.

¹⁵ “Tammany Hall Will Move Temporarily to 2 Park Av.” *New York Times*, Mar. 14, 1928, 1; “Tammany Quits Historic Hall for Park Av.” *New York Times*, July 6, 1928, 1.

¹⁶ “Push New Tammany Home,” *New York Times*, Dec. 12, 1928, “Tammany in New Wigwam in East 17th St.; County Committee First to Occupy Offices,” *New York Times*, Jan 2, 1929, 23; “Moves into New Wigwam,” *New York Times*, Jan. 3, 1929, 10; “Voorhis Lays Stone at New Tammany,” *New York Times*, Jan. 9, 1929, 2; “Meet in Tammany Hall,” *New York Times*, Jan. 17, 1929, 13.

¹⁷ “Tammany to Celebrate,” *New York Times*, June 25, 1929, 18; “Tammany Opens Its Doors,” *New York Times*, July 3, 1929, 24; “Governor Scores Mergers at Tammany Dedication; Hailed as ‘Next President,’” *New York Times*, July 5, 1929, 1, 5.

¹⁸ *150th Anniversary Celebration, 1786, July 4 1936* (New York: The Society of Tammany, 1936), 104.

¹⁹ T-Square, “The Sky Line: A Glory Regained,” *New Yorker* 4 (Feb. 16, 1929), 70.

²⁰ “Tammany Hall, New York, Thompson, Holmes and Co.,” New York Public Library Digital Gallery, ID 809908.

²¹ *150th Anniversary Celebration*, 104.

²² Robert A.M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, Thomas Mellins, *New York 1930* (New York: Rizzoli International, 1987), 102.

²³ On the iconography of the sculpture of at Federal Hall see Sally Webster, *Pierre-Charles L’Enfant and the Iconography of Independence* @ <http://19thc-artworldwide.org/index.php/spring08/109--pierre-charles-lenfant-and-the-iconography-of-independence> (2/18/2011).

²⁴ Plans of the building were published in “The Society of Tammany or Columbian Order, New York City,” *The Architect* 7 (July 1929), 392.

²⁵ By the same token the sculptural reliefs on the eastern end and center of third story of the 17th Street façade balanced the windows lighting the offices on the western end of the building.

²⁶ “New Tammany Hall Will be Colonial in Design,” *Real Estate Record & Guide*, January, 22, 1928, 7.

²⁷ The Bank of New York and Trust Company Building at 48 Wall Street (1927-29, Benjamin Wistar Morris, a designated New York City Landmark), used the neo-Georgian style to evoke the bank's history as the city's oldest banking institution and its associations with founder Alexander Hamilton. John Russell Pope's New York Junior League Clubhouse at 122 East 71st Street (1927-29, within the Upper East Side Historic District) featured both a handsome neo-Colonial exterior and a Great Hall modeled after a ballroom from an 18th-century house then newly installed in the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

²⁸ "Tammany Hall, New York City," *Architecture & Building* 61 (Aug. 1929), 248-249; T-Square, "The Sky Line: A Pat for the Tiger," *New Yorker* 3 (Feb. 11, 1928), 63; T-Square, "The Sky Line: A Glory Regained," 70. See also H.I. Brock, "The Broad Sweep of American Architecture," *New York Times*, Apr. 21, 1929, 139.

²⁹ For John A. Thompson see "John Thompson, Architect, Dies; Designed College Buildings Here," *New York Times*, Jan. 28, 1968, 76; American Institute of Architects, *American Architects Directory* (New York: R.R. Bowker, Co., 1956), 557; American Institute of Architects, *American Architects Directory* (New York: R.R. Bowker, Co., 1962), 702; U.S. Census, 1920, New York City, ED 580, AD7, Sheet 10A.

³⁰ Thomas S. Rockrise (Iwahiko Tsumanuma) had previously worked in partnership with Takeo Shiota, a landscape designer best known for his design of the Japanese Garden at the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens. See "Iwahiko Tsumanuma," *New York Times*, Feb. 8, 1936, 15; Henry F. Withey and Elsie Rathburn Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)* (Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1970), 519, James Ward, *Architects in Practice, New York City, 1900-1940* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1989), 65.

³¹ "New Incorporations," *New York Times* Aug. 24, 1923, 20.

³² "Gerald A. Holmes, Architect, 61, Dies," *New York Times*, Apr. 20, 1948, 27.

³³ For Rob Roy Converse see Frederick and Ann Schmidt, *Architecture and Architects of Rochester N. Y.* (Rochester: Rochester Society of Architects, 1959); "Architect Charges a \$40,000 Swindle," *New York Times* Dec. 25, 1929, 26; Rochester New York Directories, 1920-23; New York City Directories, 1925-32; U.S. Census, 1930, New York City, ED 31-276, AD 10, Block L, Sheet 3A.; "Mrs. Preston Gibson Weds Rob R. Converse," *New York Times*, Oct. 15, 1929, 43; "Maj. Rob Roy Converse," *Find A Grave*, (2/10/2011) <http://www.findagrave.com>.

³⁴ This section on the work of Thompson, Holmes & Converse is based on the Thompson and Holmes obituaries; *Office of Metropolitan History: Manhattan NB Database 1900-1986* (1/12/2011), <http://www.MetroHistory.com>; "Rochester Civic Plan," *New York Times*, Dec. 14, 1924, W22; "Rochester (New York Gas & Electric Corporation) Power House: Thompson, Holmes & Converse Architects," *Architect* 3 (Mar. 1925), 524; "New Building for C.C. N.Y." *New York Times*, Jan. 27, 1927, 4; "To Erect Building for College," *New York Times*, Jan. 11, 1928, 51; "Bellevue to Build a \$3,500,000 Unit," *New York Times*, Sept. 9, 1929, 1; "Hunter College Building Architects," *New York Times*, June 5, 1929, 38; "New Hunter Unit Planned," *New York Times*, Jan. 3, 1931, 46; "Hunter Building Speeded," *New York Times*, Feb. 18, 1931, 32; Eunice Barnard, "Hunter Head Faces Complicated Task," *New York Times*, Apr. 30, 1933, E8; "West Side House Sold to Syndicate," *New York Times*, Jan. 17, 1935, 38; "Building Plans Filed," *New York Times*, May 18, 1934, 42; "Building Plans Filed," *New York Times*, Aug. 21, 1936, 32; "Exhibit Winning Plans," *New York Times*, Dec. 11, 1938, 226; Norval White & Elliot Willensky, *AIA Guide to New York City*, 4th ed. (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2000), 217, 444, 598, 643-644.

³⁵ Other projects by the firm include the Brentwood Hall, the Rogers Caldwell Estate House in Nashville, Tennessee (1927); the Brooklyn Law School, now Brooklyn Friends School, 375 Pearl Street (c. 1930); the Hellenic Eastern Orthodox Church of New York (now the Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity) on East 74th Street with Kerr Rainsford (1929-31); and the New York State Vocational Institution, now Cossackie Correctional Facility, with Thomas & Baker (1934).

³⁶ For Thompson's later works see "Winners in Montpelier Vt. and Burlington Conn. Post Office Competition," *Architectural Record* 87 (Feb. 1940), 10; "Remodeled Barn Westport Connecticut: J.A. Thompson, Architect," *Architectural Forum* 75 (Aug. 1941), 122-23; "Ten-Story House for East 66th St." *New York Times*, May 29, 1946, 37; "To Take Housing Land," *New York Times*, July 7, 1943, 33p; "Post-War Housing for Low-Income Families in Brooklyn," *New York Times*, July 8, 1943, 33; "Building Plans Filed," *New York Times*, Jan 19, 1945, 34.

³⁷ This biography of Charles B. Meyers is adapted from Marianne Percival, "Architects' Appendix," in Landmarks Preservation Commission [LPC], *Greenwich Village Historic District Extension II Designation Report* (New York: City of New York, 2010). See also Dennis Steadman Francis, *Architects in Practice, New York City, 1840-1900* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1979), 55; LPC, *New York City Farm Colony-Seaview Hospital Historic District Designation Report* (LP-1408), (New York: City of New York, 1985), prepared by Shirley Zavin, 28; LPC, *East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District Designation Report*, 46; *Office for Metropolitan History: Manhattan NB Database*; Ward, 54.

³⁸ A large part of his practice became the design of health-related facilities. In addition to his work at the New York City Farm Colony-Seaview Hospital in Staten Island (a designated New York City Historic District), Meyers designed, either the principal structures or additions to existing complexes at Sydenham Hospital, Randall's Island, Children's Hospital, Morrisania Hospital, Metropolitan Hospital, and the City Home for the Aged on Welfare Island, Greenpoint Hospital, Bellevue Hospital, Cumberland Hospital, the Hospital for Joint Diseases, Beth Israel Hospital, and the Daughters of Jacob Hospital in the Bronx.

³⁹ This information on the later years of Tammany is based on Mitgang; "Tammany Hall," *Wikipedia*; Oliver Allen, *The Tiger: The Fall of Tammany Hall* (Reading Mass: Addison Wesley, 1993); George Witte, "Scandals of Walker Era Started Tiger's Fadeout Into Darkness of Defeat," *World Telegram*, Dec. 1, 1943; George Witte, "Scandals It Can Live Down But Loss of Patronage Has Tiger Sick to Death," *World Telegram*, Dec. 2, 1943; "Loughlin Elected Tammany Leader as Kennedy Quits," *New York Times*, Jan. 30, 1944, 1, 32; John F. Davenport "Skinning the Tiger: Carmine DeSapio and the End of the Tammany Era," *New York Affairs* 3, no. 1 (Fall 1975), 72-83.

⁴⁰ Allen, 238.

⁴¹ "Tammany Hall Is Purchased by I.L.G.W.U.," *Herald Tribune*, Aug. 27, 1943, 1.

⁴² This section on ILGWU Local 91 is based primarily on materials found in New York University, Bobst Library, Tamiment Library & Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) Printed Ephemera Collection, Box 5, especially "The Home of 91: Official Opening Program;" Harry Greenberg, "The First Twenty-Five Years, Local 91, ILGWU, 35th Anniversary Commemorative Booklet, 1948;" "Golden Jubilee," Local 91, ILGWU, 50th Anniversary Commemorative Booklet, 1963. See also Max D. Danish, *The World of David Dubinsky* (New York: World Publishing Co., 1957), 154-155; A. H. Raskin, *David Dubinsky: A Life in Labor* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1977), 198-199; "35,000 More Women Will Strike To-Day," *New York Times*, Jan. 15, 1913, 5; "Expect Peace Soon in Garment Strike," *New York Times*, Jan. 23, 1913, 7; "\$30,000,000 Loss in Men's Suit Strike," *New York Times*, Feb. 5, 1913, 3; "Protocol Adopted in Garment Strike," *New York Times*, Feb. 12, 1913, 8; "Strike on Tenement Shops," *New York Times*, Mar. 10, 1913, 6; "65,000 Idle Today in Needle Trades," *New York Times*, Feb 9, 1916, 5; "Hylan Names Board for Clothing Peace," *New York Times*, Mar. 11, 1921, 2; "1,000 Girls Walk Out in Garment Section," *New York Times*, Aug. 9, 1928, 21; "Embroiderers Win in 22 More Plants," *New York Times*, Sept 6, 1929, 14; "12,000 Dressmakers Go Back to Work," *New York Times*, Feb. 14, 1930, 21; "To Order Strike of 7,000," *New York Times*, July 8, 1930, 12; "Say Employers Ask Strike Settlement," *New York Times*, Aug. 29, 1930, 8; "10,000 to Go on Strike," *New York Times*, Aug. 25, 1933, 8; "13,000 Dress Workers Win Pay Increases," *New York Times*, Jan 24, 1938, 5; "Strike Opens War of Apparel Unions," *New York Times*, July 20, 1939, 4; "Friendliness Ends Needle-Trade Bias," *New York Times*, Apr. 3, 1949; "Garment Week 35 Hours," *New York Times*, Dec. 11, 1953; "Harry Greenberg, I.L.G.W.U. Officer, 74," *New York Times*, June 27, 1965, 64.

⁴³ The local also had a union-administered sick leave fund, ran a union health clinic, which provided medical care, x-rays, electro-cardiograms, lab tests, medicines, and eyeglasses, had a summer retreat in the Poconos, and provided its members with a variety of "educational activities in the arts and theater."

⁴⁴ "Makes Tammany Offer," *New York Times*, Apr. 15, 1943; "ILGWU Buys Tammany Hall: Party to Move to Two Rooms," *New York Times*, Aug. 27, 1943, 1, 13.

⁴⁵ Building Notice 1740-1943.

⁴⁶ "Union Takes Over Tammany Wigwam," *New York Times*, Dec. 19, 1943, 3.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ “ILGWU Dedicates New Auditorium,” *New York Times*, Aug. 8, 1947, 18. Among the first organizations to meet in Roosevelt Auditorium were the Uniformed Fireman’s Association, the Central Trades and Labor Council of the American Federation of Labor (now the Central Labor Council), the Labor Zionist and Progressive Bloc, the Rossini Opera Workshop, and the New York State A.A.U. which held its weightlifting championships in Roosevelt Auditorium in 1949. See “Firemen are Advised Not to Sign Waiver,” *New York Times*, Apr. 2, 1944, 40;

“Reward Up in Fire Death,” *New York Times*, Dec. 19, 1945, 19; “Events Today,” *New York Times*, Mar. 9, 1946, 10; “AFL Labor Council for Medical Center,” *New York Times*, Feb. 20, 1948, 4; “Events Today,” *New York Times*, Apr. 28, 1948, 25; “Sports Today,” *New York Times*, Apr. 23, 1949, 16; “O’Dwyer Lampooned at an ILGWU Party,” *New York Times*, Sept. 30, 1949, 20; “A.F.L.-C.I.O. Joint Session,” *New York Times*, Oct. 30, 1949, 55.

⁴⁹ “Trials Begin Today in Garbage-Tie-Ups,” *New York Times*, Oct. 9, 1951, 23; “Monaghan Shifts 45 to Fire Fighting in Third Shake-up,” *New York Times*, Jan. 26, 1951, 1; “4,000-Picket Line Flanks City Hall,” *New York Times*, May 27, 1955, 24.

⁵⁰ “Teachers Union Threatens Strike of Schools Today,” *New York Times*, Oct. 14, 1968, 1. The Ocean Hill-Brownsville crisis arose when the newly appointed local school board in the predominantly African-American Ocean Hill and Brownsville neighborhoods in Brooklyn ordered the involuntary transfer of 19 employees, 18 of whom were white. When 10 of the teachers resisted, it set the stage for a struggle over union members’ contractual due process rights versus community control of the schools. Amid charges of racial insensitivity and anti-Semitism (the members of the teachers’ union were mostly Jewish) tempers flared. The dispute led to three strikes, polarized the city, and realigned political alliances. See Jerald Podair, *The Strike that Changed New York: Blacks, Whites and the Ocean-Hill Brownsville Crisis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); Irwin Yellowitz, “Teachers Unions,” *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 1284.

⁵¹ “Deliverers Union Elects,” *New York Times*, Dec. 9, 1952, 67; Russell Porter, “Strike Ends on 6 Papers on 11th Day,” *New York Times*, Dec. 9, 1953, 1; “Teamster Group Ends Strike Here,” *New York Times*, Feb. 15, 1958, 37; “Fleet Cabdrivers Authorize a Strike,” *New York Times*, Mar. 17, 1983, 1; “City A.F.L Unions Approve Merger,” *New York Times*, Dec. 5, 1958, 12; Damon Stetson, “Times Labor Suit Weighed by Court,” *New York Times*, Sept. 22, 1973, 62.

⁵² Damon Stetson, “Mayoral Choice Splits Labor Unit,” *New York Times*, Aug. 20, 1969, 31; Damon Stetson, “Procaccino Wins Endorsement of Central Labor Council,” *New York Times*, Aug. 22, 1969, 1.

⁵³ A. H. Raskin, “Re-Elect Truman Wagner Suggests,” *New York Times*, June 27, 1947; Thomas P. Ronan, “O’Dwyer Outlines Progressive Aims,” *New York Times*, Nov. 4, 1949, 1; “Labor Endorses Harriman Ticket,” *New York Times*, Oct. 8, 1954, 17.

⁵⁴ “1,400 Hear Mayor at Shore Funeral,” *New York Times*, Dec. 9, 1946, 25; “Notables Attend Rites for Umhey,” *New York Times*, Jan. 30, 1955, 84; “Rites for Nagler Attended by 2,000,” *New York Times*, Sept. 24, 1959, 37.

⁵⁵ “Deaths,” *New York Times*, Oct. 4, 1985, D19; “Edward Schneider,” *New York Times*, Oct. 7, 1985, B10.

⁵⁶ “Garment Workers Name First Woman to Manage A Local in New York City,” *New York Times*, June 26, 1977, 39. See also A. H. Raskin “Women are Still Absent from Labor’s Top Ranks,” *New York Times*, June 5, 1977, 64.

⁵⁷ Nan Robertson, “Roundabout Prospers in New Home,” *New York Times*, Aug. 19, 1986, C16.

⁵⁸ This production history is taken from the Lortel Archives Internet Off-Broadway Database @ http://www.lortel.org/LLA_archive/index.cfm?search_by+theater&id+53, searched Aug. 7, 2012.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture, and other features of the building and site, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that Tammany Hall has a special character, 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, Tammany Hall, a handsome neo-Georgian building, erected in 1928-29 to the designs of Thompson, Holmes & Converse and Charles B. Meyers, is the only surviving headquarters building of Tammany Hall, the Democratic Party machine that dominated New York City politics in 19th and early-20th centuries; that the building replaced Tammany's old headquarters on 14th Street and was both a reminder of the Society's origins in the Federalist period and a symbol of the reform-minded "New Tammany" organization that emerged in the late 1910s and 1920s; that when the building was commissioned, the Tammany Society was at the height of its political fortunes and popularity, with Robert F. Wagner just beginning his distinguished career in the U.S. Senate, Alfred E. Smith a popular and widely respected governor and the leading contender for the Democratic candidacy for president, and Jimmy Walker an extraordinarily popular Mayor; that subsequent revelations of municipal corruption and a split in the Democratic Party weakened the Tammany organization, which in 1943 was forced to sell this building to Local 91 of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union; that the building housed the offices and meeting rooms of Local 91 for almost four decades and that its main hall, Roosevelt Auditorium, became one of the most important meeting places for union activities in New York City; that since the mid-1980s the building's large auditorium has been home to Off-Broadway theater, housing the Roundabout Company until 1991 and later a number of distinguished independent productions while the remainder of the building has been occupied by the New York Film Institute since 1994; that when it was under construction the building was praised by the *Real Estate Record* for its "dignified architectural treatment, one of the chief motifs of which are the severe Colonial columns in the centers of the Union Square and Seventeenth-street facades which recall the days of early American architecture;" that the building's design draws inspiration from the original Federal Hall, where George Washington took the oath of office as the first president and employs specially-molded bricks modeled after the bricks used by Democratic Party founder Thomas Jefferson at Monticello; that it features a rusticated stone base, pedimented portico, and double-height pilasters, sculptural reliefs in limestone and terra cotta, and neo-Georgian details; that it is in the words of *New Yorker* architectural critic George S. Chappell (T-Square) "an exceptionally charming design" and "a real adornment to the neighborhood" and remains a significant reminder of New York City's political, theatrical, and labor history.

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, Tammany Hall, 100 East 17th Street (aka 100-102 East 17th Street, 44-48 Union Square, 44-48 Union Square East), Manhattan and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 872, Lot 78 as its Landmark Site.

Robert B. Tierney, Chair
Frederick Bland, Diana Chapin, Michael Devonshire,
Michael Goodwin, Elizabeth Ryan, Commissioners



Tammany Hall
100 East 17th Street, (aka 100-102 East 17th Street, 44-48 Union Square, 44-48 Union Square East)
Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 872, Lot 78
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013



Tammany Hall
Union Square Facade
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013



Tammany Hall, 1928
Source: New York Public Library



Tammany Hall
Upper Stories Union Square Facade
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013



Tammany Hall
East 17th Street Facade
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013



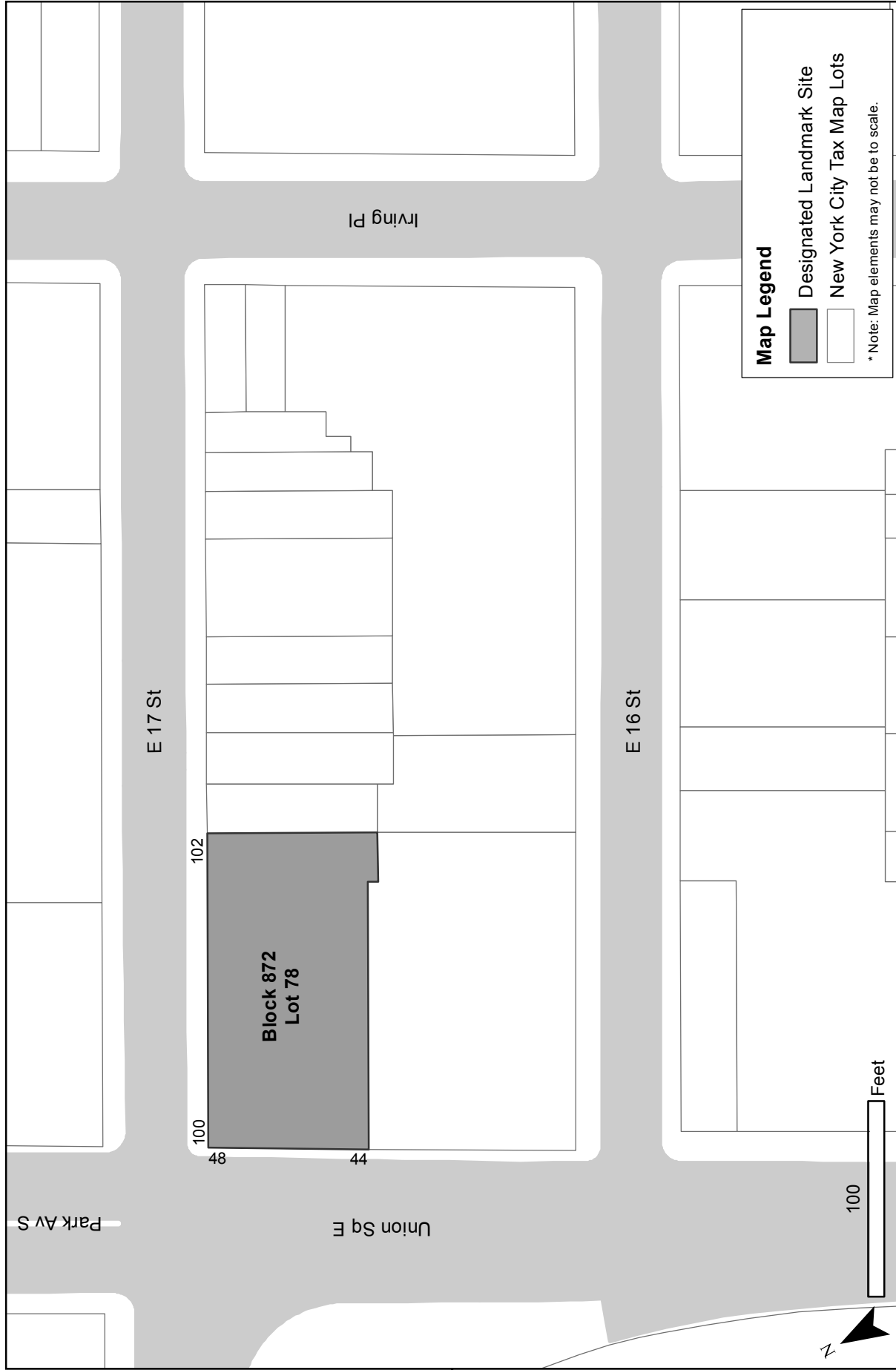
Tammany Hall
East 17th Street Facade
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013



Tammany Hall
East 17th Street Facade
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013



Tammany Hall
Sculpture East 17th Street Facade
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2013



Designated: October 29, 2013