INTERPRETING THE VIEWS FROM the HIGH LINE

A SERIES OF PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR USE BY VISITORS TO THE HIGH LINE PARK

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY | GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING AND PRESERVATION
INTERPRETING THE VIEWS FROM THE HIGH LINE

HISTORIC PRESERVATION STUDIO II / SPRING 2010

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http://arch.columbia.edu/programs/historic-preservation

thehighline.org
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introduction

The task for our studio this semester has been to interpret the views from the High Line utilizing as many methods as necessary to reach the broadest audience. The methods needed to ensure that the wealth of knowledge we collected would be disseminated to the public clearly, concisely, and in an exciting manner that would encourage and facilitate the public’s desire to be further educated about preservation.

We first needed to establish the significance of interpretation as it relates to preservation and then apply our ideals to the task at hand. We next assessed what would be interpreted in terms of views from the High Line, and discovered that our interpretation would need a more holistic approach as the views from the High Line include: buildings seen off the High Line, the history, current design, and features seen on the High Line itself, and otherwise abstract preservation strategies that can be seen in physical form around the High Line, such as transfers of air rights, zoning, and historic district designations.

Using the extensive body of knowledge we collected, we then considered the methods of interpretation that would best suit our task. Ultimately, we chose three interpretive methods: brochures, a text message delivered scavenger hunt, and an iPhone application; and developed them to the furthest extent possible within the constraints of the semester.
preservation and interpretation

The preservationist’s role includes functions as planner, conservator, and historian. In their role as historians, preservationists have a central interest in educating the public regarding the history of society through interpretation of its physical remnants. Preservationists have variously defined historical interpretation as: “an attempt to create understanding,” “a communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource,” and an “educational translation of the human condition in the past into a meaningful present.” All of these definitions describe the common intention of “brining history to life,” that is, making it accessible, through experiencing the sites and objects connected with it. Developing interpretive schemes for the High Line, therefore, involves a far broader purpose than description of the structure and history of the site alone; rather, it is necessary to include exposition of the High Line’s relationship to the social, political, economic and technological aspects of its original and evolving environment.

The role of the interpreter is generally accepted as having several important components. First, the interpreter is the person who translates the visitor’s visual experience of a historic site into an intellectual understanding of its historic meanings. To the extent that the interpreter succeeds in creating a meaningful, interesting or even provocative translation, he increases the visitor’s understanding not only of the site itself but of the equally important culture of which it is representative.

Interpreters not only seek to generate intellectual understanding of history through historic sites, but also often seek to promote emotive responses to the site and its described meaning. The interpreter ideally wants to involve the audience both intellectually and emotionally, thus generating a sense of association with the site and its place in history. Most theorists maintain that it is this joint intellectual and affective response to a historic site that generates preservationist advocacy in the people who experience it. Interpretation, therefore, should be designed to generate not only increased knowledge of history but also to inspire awe, amusement, surprise, a sense of affiliation and even, when appropriate, dismay.

It is imperative, then, that interpreters not only describe but also explain. They use a variety of interpretive tools, choosing those methods that seem to best fit the audiences with which they are presented and the effects they are trying to create; these techniques include verbal interaction, print media, hands-on demonstrations, participative visitor experiences and, more recently, the incorporation of computer technologies as educational tools. The interpretive scheme for the High Line was developed against a general background of agreement regarding what the interpretation of the site should attempt to accomplish and the range of possible interpretive methods that were appropriate for us to consider in this specific situation.

The objectives for the interpretation of the High Line were, first, to foster understanding of the High Line’s genesis as a result of surrounding development of the Meatpacking and Chelsea neighborhoods and, conversely, to explicate the reciprocal role of the High Line in the subsequent development of the surrounding area. A second objective was to explain the relationship between the High Line and the history of the transportation system of which it was a part. The third and final objective was to connect the architecture that surrounds the High Line to the Line itself through explanation of their sometimes direct and often indirect relationship to each other. The ultimate goal to be attained through achievement of these objectives would potentially be increased general interest in the built fabric of the city, enhanced understanding of the relationship between New York’s architecture and its history and, perhaps ultimately, increased commitment to the preservation of historic sites like the High Line.
The High Line began as a street-grade train line called The West Side Line, built in 1849 and operated by the Hudson River Railroad, which merged with the New York Central Railroad in 1869. As the city grew, so did congestion on the west side. Trains shared the street with trucks, horse carriages and pedestrians. Accidents were so common that Tenth Avenue became known as Death Avenue, and cowboys were employed to ride ahead of the train to ward off pedestrians and make way for the trains to pass without incident.

In 1929, the City of New York and the New York Central Railroad agreed on a plan called the West Side Improvement Project, which included elevating the line to what is now the High Line. Construction began in 1929 and was completed in 1934. The High Line was used to transport goods such as fresh meats and produce, cigarettes, and supplies to factories through the mid-blocks, and through some buildings, from Spring Street north to the Railyards at 34th Street. Truck and highway transportation rendered the High Line inefficient in the 1950s and the section from Spring Street to Gansevoort Street was demolished in the 1960s. The last train ran in the 1980s, after which the High Line was abandoned and local property owners began to lobby for its total demolition.

At this point, preservationists stepped in to advocate for its re-use and in 1999, Friends of the High Line was formed. This group helped successfully lobby for the reclamation and re-use of the High Line which was transformed into a park designed by the architectural firm Diller, Scofidio + Renfro and landscape architectural firm James Corner Field Operations, opening to the public in June 2009. The High Line now offers the public static views from 30 feet in the air, making it an ideal spot for interpretation and education. The High Line can be used as an observation deck for not only the surrounding built environment, but also the effects of preservation, zoning, and building regulation.
The City of New York authorizes the use of street-level railroad tracks along Manhattan's West Side.

1850 - 1929
Immigrants flock to New York and settle on the west side, working at the docks, factories, and warehouses in the area. Traffic grows amongst trucks, horse carriages, pedestrians and trains, causing frequent accidents along Tenth Avenue, which becomes known as Death Avenue. Hudson River Railroad merges with New York Central Railroad in 1869.

1847

1929 - 1934
The City of New York and the New York Central Railroad agree to the West Side Development Project, which elevates the track off Tenth Avenue and runs through mid-blocks and buildings. Construction of the new High Line is completed in 1934.

1950s - 1960s
Interstate highways lead to increased transportation of goods via trucks and a decline in rail transportation. The southern end of the High Line from Spring Street to Gansevoort Street is demolished.

1980s
The last train runs on the High Line carrying frozen turkeys then enters a period of abandonment. Vegetation and wildlife take over the High Line, creating a hidden urban greenscape. Peter Olaf Pedersen purchases the High Line for $100 to save it from demolition, sponsoring the formation of other community groups dedicated to saving the High Line and lobbying for its reuse.

1999 - 2002
Friends of the High Line is formed in 1999. They successfully lobby to save the High Line and the city agrees to an adaptive reuse plan in 2002. Friends of the High Line solicits designs via a competition and chooses the design of Diller, Scofidio and Renfro, which transforms the High Line into a public park.

2006 - 2009
Construction of Section 1 of the High Line begins in 2006, spanning from Gansevoort Street north to West 20th Street. Seeds harvested from between the rails before construction began are brought back onto the High Line and incorporated into the landscape design. Events are held to commemorate the opening of Section 1 of the High Line to the public in 2009. The new park is highly acclaimed.

2010
Construction begins on Section 2 of the High Line. Columbia students in the Historic Preservation department of the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation are asked to interpret views of the High Line and completely develop three methods of interpretation and present them to the Friends of the High Line for implementation.
Once we knew our task, one of our first steps was to meet with the staff from the Friends of the High Line, the non-profit group founded in 1999 to preserve and reuse the High Line as a public park, in partnership with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation. Staff from Friends of the High Line were able to give us a more in-depth background about the High Line’s history, preservation, design, and eventual reuse as a public park.

We recognized that the park’s form of adaptive reuse is both highly unique and innovative, blending the built environment with the natural environment in its design. We wanted to utilize new forms of interpretive media that would reflect this inspired design, with the hope that these may become a new standard for museums and historic sites.

While we entered into the project hopeful that the interpretive media we created would eventually be used by the Friends of the High Line and visitors to the park, we also knew that our methods developed may not be used. The ultimate goal of the studio, then, was to conduct research on buildings surrounding the High Line and challenge ourselves to come up with creative forms of interpretive media, regardless of the potential for eventual execution.

To create these various interpretive methods, we first needed to do a significant amount of research on the surrounding buildings and neighborhoods, and this constituted the bulk of our initial efforts.

Our study area was the park itself and views of buildings that can be seen from the High Line. Nearly 1.5 miles long, the rail is divided into 3 sections. Section I, which opened in June 2009, stretches from Gansevoort Street to 20th Street. Section II, on schedule to open in 2011, runs from 20th Street to 30th street. Section III, which runs from West 30th to 34th Street, has not been acquired by the city, though its acquisition is currently passing through the city's ULURP process. Due to this, we focused our building research on those structures that are visible from Sections I and II of the High Line.

Once we did an initial walk-through of Section I, we created a map of the study area and divided the area by blocks, each member of the studio researching a smaller portion of the larger area. We were given the opportunity to go on two hard-hat tours of Section II, which is currently under construction. From these tours, we were able to identify significant buildings in Section II, again dividing up the study area and conducting similar research on buildings north of 20th street. The High Line runs near three historic districts, Gansevoort Market Historic District to the south, Chelsea Historic District, and the West Chelsea Historic District to the North. Because many buildings have been researched and documented in Landmark Preservation Commission Historic District Designation reports, our task was not to research all the buildings in our study area, but instead to focus on buildings of interest, visible from the High Line, and to synthesize all of our information into condensed write-ups similar to those in a walking tour brochure or guide book.

These write-ups make up the bulk of our research and are the basis for our three interpretive methods presented in this final report. The media developed are presented in varying levels of technology and together, work to appeal to the largest possible audience. Building on research methods we developed throughout the year, we’ve compiled a library of information which serves as the basis for our three creative forms of interpretive media.

While our research of Sections I and II focused largely on buildings, we also researched additional topics, developing write-ups for features like Belgian block and water towers, both urban details that are visible from the High Line. Information for our interpretation was also developed for preservation issues, including the preservation, stabilization and eventual reuse of the High Line itself.

Our final product presented here is three different forms of interpretation:

- a series of seven brochures
- a text message-based scavenger hunt
- an iPhone Application

All of our products are packaged such that they can be handed over to Friends of the High Line for easy implementation.
the brochures

We have developed a series of informative brochures called “A Guide to the Views From the Line” which discuss the development, change, and present condition of the architecture and neighborhoods visible from the High Line.

While it is a traditional interpretive tool, it is still widely used as a means to communicate and relate information. It can reach the largest audience in the sense that there are no technological requirements to access this information. Ultimately, they may also be produced in a variety of languages. In addition to being highly accessible, producing a tangible brochure of quality for people to use can elevate the value and desirability of the information by providing the user with a relic or souvenir to bring home from their visit to the High Line.

We have created seven individual brochures. Some discuss the architecture, while others focus on histories illustrated through architecture. The architecture brochures include residential and commercial typologies, and our history brochures include discussions on transportation, neighborhood histories, preservation, and urban details. We also created a Top 12 brochure for new visitors, or visitors who are looking for a general, overall impression of the buildings seen from Sections I and II of the High Line.

The six themes:
- COMMERCIAL
- NEIGHBORHOOD
- PRESERVATION
- RESIDENTIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- URBAN DETAILS

Theme by theme, we deliberated what information needed to be included, which buildings best represented these issues, and at times, which buildings were necessary to include simply because they had such a dynamic relationship with the High Line and its viewshed. We ultimately chose the best buildings to form a comprehensive walking tour in each brochure, one that walks the visitor along the entire course of the High Line, while keeping the visitor actively engaged the entire length of the park.

The next step in developing the brochure was to create a “brand” which would ultimately be reflected in all of our interpretive tools and products. The pantone colors, fonts, map, and logo all align with the Friends of the High Line “brand” that they have already implemented in their website and print materials. Also, the green curve on the cover represents the westward curve of the actual High Line. The driving concept behind this branding is was that if the Friends of the High Line chose to implement any of our tools, the visual branding would already be in place, making the adoption as easy as possible.

In addition to the content, the folding of the brochure was carefully considered. While working with a more traditional form, we wanted to create something dynamic and surprising. What we are presenting can easily fit into a back pocket or a small bag without being folded and compromising the integrity of the images and text. The brochure folds out to accommodate the maximum amount of text and images, while still providing a readable, usable map.

We have also created a folder to hold all of the brochures. The idea behind this is to provide both an incentive for the visitor to purchase all of the brochures in an easily portable and organized vessel, turning the series into a commodity. This item is geared toward tourists who are looking to take a product home with them. Also, by providing a purchasable quality product, we hope that through an economic expenditure, the consumer will find increased value in our information.

The pages that follow include front and back views of each brochure. The brochures are arranged alphabetically, with the general architecture brochure first followed by the six themed brochures.
The process of unfolding the brochure is laid out below. The idea was to begin with general information and then flow to the more specific text. The front panel gives the purpose of the brochure series. When lifted up, a brief statement appears on the High Line’s history as a rail line. Below is a description of the theme, identifying the general history of the topics that are included. Turning open to the next panel begins the individual topic write-ups. When the brochure is fully unfolded, the remaining write-ups appear along with a large map of the park, indicating the topics’ locations.

Step 1:

**What is the HIGH LINE?**

Welcome to the High Line! The park is built along a historic, elevated railroad track that once carried freight trains up and down the inner west side of Manhattan. Freight trains running along Tenth Avenue at street level created dangerous conditions that were alleviated by moving the rails overhead. In 1980, its use was discontinued and the High Line was abandoned. The platform was saved from demolition and utilized into a park in 2009 by the Friends of the High Line, architecture firm Diller Scofidio + Renfro, and landscape architect James Corner Field Operations.

Step 2:

**Residential Architecture**

A Guide to the Views From: the Highland Line

The areas abutting the High Line have gone through several periods of residential development. In the early nineteenth century, as the city expanded north from its original settlement in the southern end of the island, these areas were the location for the standard urban middle class housing of the time: the rowhouse. These were narrow, low-rise buildings that were usually four to six stories in height. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these districts became primarily industrial and the rowhouses were renovated as working-class, multiple-family tenement housing constructed by speculative builders to house the districts’ workers. New tenement housing was also built during this period. Early twentieth-century additions to the residential architecture in this area included high-rise apartment houses built as homes for middle and working-class urban dwellers, many of which are now occupied by the middle class New Yorkers of today. Most recently, gentrification has again transformed and revitalized the area, rebranding it as a center for the arts, adding twenty-first-century residences with stunningly modern designs to the neighborhood, and transforming old industrial buildings into loft apartments, art galleries, modern offices, and trendy eateries.
Step 3:

837-825 WASHINGTON STREET

James W. Cole
1886

This 19-story red brick building is located at the corner of Mortimer and Washington streets at the southern terminus of the High Line. Erected in 1886, the building was owned as an income-producing property by Manhattan Hotel Company, who stood over the site of the 1125 feet-tall buildings in the Gansevoort Market district. “French Rolls,” as mentioned in the 1930s, were intended for the upper floors and stores on the ground floor. “French Rolls” were apartments and storefronts that were designed to provide a buffer between the tenements and the surrounding streets.

CHELSEA MODERN

805-809 Tenth Avenue

A.
1926

This low-rise building was designed by a prominent architect, particularly notable because it was the last building of its kind. The building was a contribution to the city’s architectural heritage, notable for its use of modern materials and techniques.

ROTHENHOLLER

100 W. 16th Street

Unknown, 1905

These rowhouses, typical of the late-19th century, are characterized by their symmetrical facades. They have distinctive cornices, decorative trim, and tall windows. The building was constructed in the Beaux-Arts style, a popular architectural movement of the time.

H. 73

100 W. 16th Street

Unidentified, 2008

The unique design of this rowhouse reflects residential architecture of the period, featuring a simple yet elegant facade with symmetrical windows and a cornice. It is notable for its classic detailing and craftsmanship.

LONDON TERRACE

105/107 W. 15th Street

Francesca Pellicano
1943

The design of the London Terrace reflects the use of large, expansive windows and minimal ornamentation. It is a prime example of mid-century modern architecture.

METAL SHUTTER HOUSES

55 W. 12th Street

Sinclair Oil
1948

Almost identical to this block of row houses, noted between Anabel Selig’s fivestory apartment building and for sale to Sarah Kelleher, the building features a modern residential design with large windows and a focus on functionality.

Step 4:

105/107 W. 15th Street

Francesca Pellicano
1943

The design of the London Terrace reflects the use of large, expansive windows and minimal ornamentation. It is a prime example of mid-century modern architecture.

RIVER PLACE

105/107 W. 15th Street

Sinclair Oil
1948

Almost identical to this block of row houses, noted between Anabel Selig’s fivestory apartment building and for sale to Sarah Kelleher, the building features a modern residential design with large windows and a focus on functionality.

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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING AND PRESERVATION
GENERAL ARCHITECTURE highlights the 12 most prominent structures in Sections I and II. Effort was made to include structures of every size and type, and attention was paid to their spacing throughout the park.

Front:

Here we see the High Line in New York City. It is a green, urban park that runs along an elevated railway spur. The structures highlighted are a mix of industrial and residential buildings, including the Nabisco Complex and the Cunard White Star Pier.

The Nabisco Complex is a historic building that once housed the Nabisco Biscuit Company. The Cunard White Star Pier is an iconic structure that was once used by the Cunard Line for its transatlantic voyages.

These structures serve as examples of how industrial architecture has been repurposed into vibrant public spaces, blending the old with the new to create a unique urban landscape.

Thank you for engaging in a Guide to the Views From the High Line.

For more information about the High Line, visit www.highteen.com.

The Standard Hotel is located on the High Line. It is a modern, hotel that features a rooftop pool and a garden. The hotel is a popular destination for visitors to the High Line.

CUNARD WHITE STAR PIER 54
Weust 54th Street at the Hudson River

The arched steel frame is the only visible remnant of the former Cunard White Star Pier 54. Designed by the architects of the Central Station, Pier 54 was once a grand Neo-Classical warehouse building with dramatic arched entranceways that serviced the Cunard White Star Line's liners. Pier 54 welcomed affluent world travelers, soldiers leaving for World War II, and immigrants on their way to Ellis Island, and was the site of the Titanic arriving on the RMS Carpathia. Pier 54 is also associated with the 1935 tragedy of the H.M.S. Canfield, which left the pier before it was overloaded by a German U-boat, an incident that led to the US entry into World War II. Use of the pier decreased when the shipping industry replaced the ship with the more expedient airplane. The pier was demolished in 1935, with exception of the steel arch that still bears the name “Cunard Line” engirdled on the front. It is now open to the public as part of the Hudson River Park.

THE STANDARD HOTEL
546 West 15th Street, New York City

Designed by the architectural partnership Tabanowsky Architects, the Standard Hotel is located on the High Line. It is a modern, hotel that features a rooftop pool and a garden. The hotel is a popular destination for visitors to the High Line.
The theme of COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE includes structures of industrial, office, and retail character. New and historic structures are included from throughout Sections I and II.
Back:

Baker & Williams Warehouses

Spears Building

R.C. Williams Warehouse

Otis Elevator

MAP OF HIGH LINE / NEIGHBORHOOD

Legend

SAVANNAH (33rd St., W.W., 6th Ave., R.R. 32nd St.)

High Line

Starrett-Lehigh

Morgan Processing & Distribution Center

Westyard Distribution Center

Hill Building

Baker & Williams Warehouses

Spears Building

R.C. Williams Warehouse

Otis Elevator

Back:
NEIGHBORHOOD ARCHITECTURE is a theme of great variety. We categorized neighborhood structures as those with social importance or symbolize major change within the area.
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Back:

Hoffman Hall
155 Ninth Avenue
Charles Haight, 1895

The General Theological Seminary, America’s first Episcopal Church-affiliated seminary, was established in 1812. The original seminary building was erected in 1864, and today the campus takes up the entire block, historically known as Chelsea Square. The majority of the buildings today date from the early 1960s, when Dean Eugene Augustus Hafflin, together with architect Charles Haight, established a master plan for the seminary calling for buildings of an English Collegiate Gothic style. Hoffman Hall features asymmetrical roof lines, slimness and towers akin to the medieval picturesque. Inside, the hall is home to GTS’s famed vaulted refectory as well as the recently established Architectural Design and Arts Center for Education, Peace and Reconciliation.

Church of the Guardian Angel
155-159 Tenth Avenue
Kahn & Van Pelt, 1900

The Catholic Church of the Guardian Angel was founded in 1888 and was part of the Sacrament Institute, which catered to longshoremen. The original church was located at 55 West 23rd Street; however, the original structure stood in the path of the newly planned High Line and was thus slated for demolition. Guardian Angel sold the property to the New York Central Railroad in 1900, using the proceeds to erect the church and adjacent secondary building on Tenth Avenue. The building features a slate roof and rounded arch windows in an Italian Romanesque style. The design has a playful architectural note: the randomly placed vernacular bricks appear to be original, whereas they are original, designed to mimic a structure altered over a period of time, and the church has been standing on this site for centuries.

Empire Diner / Arthur’s Diner
220 Tenth Avenue
Folies Diner Car Company, 1927

The Empire Diner is located in a stainless steel dining car in place on this location since 1927. A lunch wagon had been located here since the property was manufactured by the New Jersey-based Folies Diner Car Company which made stainless steel, Art Deco-styled, streamline car-shaped diners. This car was once part of a train, but its look was inspired by the appeal and elegance of train car dining. The idea of a diner or metal lunch wagon carried a stigma of being only for lower-class workers. As the property went out of this spot, were largely industrial factories and warehouses, its location at the heart of this block was practical. This diner, first known as “Arturo’s Diner” in 1946, became the Empire Diner in 1956 with an effort to reflect the diner into a more fashionable today. It has been a neighborhood fixture and closing its doors May 15, 2010.

Chelsea Park
200 Ninth Street, North to Tenth Avenues

Chelsea Park was acquired by the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation over ten years ago, when it served as an open space for the residents of a crowded tenement district. It remains one of the most widely used parks in lower Manhattan. In 1991, the Chelsea Memorial Committee honored the Wedekind’s memorial known as the Chelsea Daubigny Statue, which still stands in the park. The monument consists of a 4-foot tall granite pedestal, upon which stands a bronzo seated holding a rifle, with a flag draped over his shoulders and depicted as if in the middle of battle. Designed by architect Charles DeBose of New York, the monument’s statue was made by the prominent sculptor H.P. Martin.”
PRESERVATION has had a recurring impact on the neighborhood that cannot be ignored. Visual records of change or maintenance are apparent. This brochure includes not only structures repurposed or changed for some reason, but also descriptions of the tools by which buildings or spaces are able to be maintained. Discussions include the power of advocacy, air rights, and zoning, among others.
Some observers have dubbed this story building with a multi- 
faceted glass dome atop it “The Diamond in the Sky.” This “Dia-
mond” housed the renowned fashion designer Diane Von Fur-
stenberg’s Greenwich apartment. This glass dome connects to a 
stationary cube that reflects and dissects light from the roof to 
the highest part of the interior. Draw the stairs in such a way 
that the viewer is a part of the space. Look at the roofline, the 
structure, the building, its relationship to the city. The building 
becomes a part of the Greenpoint Market Historic District. Careful to retain 
the character of the neighborhood’s history, the architects reno-

vated the building which is situated between two historic, eight-

vicinity buildings. The building was built by the New York City 
Landmarks Preservation Commission as the new model for adap-
tive reuse in the city.

Many former industrial buildings along the High Line have been 
skillfully adapted for new use, while preserving their original 
character. One of the most prominent examples is the complex 
of buildings which now houses the Market Hall, its restaurants, and 
the offices of various media and technology companies. This was 
originally the home of the National Distillery Company (National), 
which operated the Ginhouse here in 1702. National’s remains 
are clear in the building and the area around it, as can be seen on the map. 
However, it is one of the most iconic buildings along the High Line.

The story of this structure highlights the numerous transitions and 
conversions a historic building may go through in order to achieve 
its current reuse. Today known as The Spiegels Building, this struc-
ture was a long-time factory and warehouse for Kinyan Tobacco 
Company, a constituent of a firm of the nineteenth century, the 
American Tobacco Company. Records show that Rich family 
was involved in the company from the early 1860s and continued 
in the early 1900s. In 1927, the building was converted to a 
warehouse structure and converted to a warehouse. The building was 
sold to the developer in the late 1990s and converted to 
loft-style apartments. The building is now a prominent 
feature on the High Line.

The Spiegels Building is located on West 24th Street. 
Since 2010, the building has housed the Spiegels 
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sold to the developer in the late 1990s and converted to 
loft-style apartments. The building is now a prominent 
feature on the High Line.

The Spiegels Building is located on West 24th Street. 
Since 2010, the building has housed the Spiegels 
Building. In recent years, the building has been converted to 
loft-style apartments. The building is now a prominent 
feature on the High Line.
The architecture visible from the High Line includes **Residential** structures of nearly every type seen in New York City. Rowhouses, tenements, public houses, apartment co-ops, and new condominiums are visible from the High Line. This brochure discusses the histories of these housing types, as well as the development of housing in New York City.
INTERPRETING THE VIEWS FROM THE HIGH LINE

ROWHOUSES

West and West 23rd Street

These rowhouses typify early-19th-century New York City housing. Those facing West 23rd Street exhibit the earlier Greek Revival style, while those facing West 22nd Street were constructed later in the Neoclassical style. The term "rowhouses" derives from the construction: they were built in a row in the same style, and with a shared party wall between.

HL 23

West 23rd - West 25th Street

Red Corrugate, 1905

"The unique design of this ten-story residential semi-detached house tapers the 8-inspired 81 proportions resulting from its proximity to the High Line. At the ground floor, the lot is only 40 feet wide. To accommodate this small building, the structure partially bends and folds. This allows the building to extend beyond the lot line, and then conforming to the city line, without being restricted by it. The result is a building that lightly touches, and appears, to the rear, with the widened rear, continuing west, and the buildingención three distinctive facades that seem to defy gravity as the building "floats" from the street view.

LONDON TERRACE

West 21st - West 23rd Streets

Parker & Wilding, 1922

The massive London Terrace was the largest apartment building in the world at the time it was completed in 1922, containing over 1,500 apartments. Residents had the benefit of such amenities as a swimming pool, a racquetball court, and a rooftop garden furnished with the end of an ocean view from which residents could look down on the ships that docked after massive storms. London Terrace was designed in a refined and highly ornamental "Louis Seize" style. It was named for its picture-like "canopy enclosures," also called London Terrace, and marketed its English charm with a double deck of London terraces, known as "orchards," and with a rarity: "changing of the guard" ceremony for waitresses, doormen, and bell boys.

MAP OF HIGH LINE / NEIGHBORHOOD

245 TENTH AVENUE

Jared Della Valle and Robert Swedroe, 1999

Viewed from street level at 23rd Street and 21st Avenue, this six-story residential condominium is an asymmetrical stainless steel panel paralleled with an irregular diamond pattern which encloses the residents' view of the corner gas station, which the building almost seems. Viewed from the High Line, the metal panels combine with expansive windows creating a seamless façade, reflecting the ever changing play of light against the building located in a neighborhood that has become an epicenter for galleries, the building's level design and use of modern materials create a sense of architecture that also serves to function as an artwork.

ELLIOT CHELSEA HOUSES

1999

Architects: Victor, Haas & Associates

The first high-rise public housing project built in New York City, the Elliot-Chelsea Houses, part of a few similar public buildings, designed to maximize the apartment's light and airy, the buildings were set off the grid at a low cost west side in a parame plan. The housing projects named after John Leonard Elliott, a president of the Chelsea Association for Planning and Action, Elliot has accumulated for the construction of a public housing project in the neighborhood. Though planned in the 1970s to solve Chelsea's housing problems, most residents living in the project after World War II and their families, the Elliott-Chelsea Houses continue to house lowincome families in the community.

PENN SOUTH

2909 to 30th Streets, housing Authority, 1950-60

Herman & Jaxer, 1950-60

In the 1950s, due to an urgent need for middle-income housing in New York City, the Housing Authority began working with unions and government to build more cooperative complexes. Known as the 1950s' era, the Penn South and West 10th Street apartments are one of the most famous of this era, the construction of the Penn South apartments that became River South. In the 1990s, in order to deal with rising energy costs, the Penn South Energy Conservation Plan was implemented, modernizing the building's heating system. Since then, the Penn South has been preserved as an affordable community with the addition of lowincome families and the development of new amenities.

RIVER PLACE AND SILVER TOWERS

2000


The use of glass towers that emerge out of the wall of the Decker area at the Silver Towers and are part of a larger housing complex which includes River Place, 1,200 residential buildings to the east. River Place was the ''southernmost'' tower in the Silver Towers, designed by the architects of the associated firms, and has a corner location. The 8-story high Silver Towers are representative of the development of the post-silver Midtown area, which has a long history of industry, not luxury living.

LEGEND

ENTRANCES (Garment Wii, RUb, Wh, 36th)

HIGH LINE

20
The history of TRANSPORTATION in this area partially defines the neighborhood’s built environment. Many buildings and spaces visible from the High Line were built, or altered, in response to the presence of the High Line and activities at the waterfront. This brochure discusses the history of transportation, including a lengthy description of the history of the High Line itself and its impact on the surrounding built environment.
511 WEST 21ST STREET  
David M. Brown, 1986

This non-descript and contemporary-looking parking garage is an example of how building alterations over time can create false impressions. Its current appearance belies the structure’s original construction date as well as its original, two-story stature. Major alterations to the building began as far back as the 1930s and continued through the late 1980s. The building’s use over time has remained unchanged, however; it was designed as a public parking garage and is still used as such today. It stood through the majority of automobile history in America, including the age of Model T Fords, the first mass-produced automobile using an assembly-line process. Model T’s debuted in 1908, but experienced its heyday in the late 1920s and 1930s, when this garage was built.

NEW YORK TERMINAL WAREHOUSE

George B. Mallery, Otto M. Beek-Lewis, 1892-1912

The expansive brick building was built on infill, land reclaimed from the Hudson River, for the New York Terminal Warehouse Company. The building is actually several buildings with unified brick façades called stores that were used for both cold and regular storage of goods ranging from theatrical sets to groceries and antique furniture to pastries. Trains loading freight directly inside the warehouse through large arched entrances on Eleventh Avenue and deliveries of inexpensive retail goods to industrial buildings in the area, this building’s used has changed from large warehouse stores to a concession for art galleries and seasonal tenants.

JACOB S. JAVITS CONVENTION CENTER

The Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, seen just beyond the West Side Railyards, occupies five city blocks and eighteen acres, making it one of the largest horizontally-spanning buildings in Manhattan. It is sheathed in semi-reflective glass, so that the glass reflects sunlight and the surrounding buildings in the day, and appears translucent at night, revealing the center’s space frame, which is defined by its geometric pattern formed by the interlocking of thousands of tubular steel trusses. Once one of the largest convention centers in the country, it needs have outgrown its capacity. It will soon receive a green roof and an expansion that will increase its size by ten percent to the west as part of the Hudson Yards Redevelopment Project. Built on the site of a train yard, the Javits Center will soon be host to large auto shows, demonstrating the newest trends in transportation.

B & O RAILROAD TERMINAL

Maurice Alvin Long, 1912-1913

Originally built as a freight terminal for the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, this eight-story building was once the largest reinforced concrete building in Manhattan, with a 7.75 million cubic feet of space and over four acres of floor area; its massive space was capable of storing the freight from more than 600 boxcars. It was also the first concrete building to be erected in the city using flat slab construction with no interior beams. In the decade following the terminal’s construction, B & O’s freight revenue grew by more than three hundred percent due to the terminal’s ability to store freight rather than requiring immediate pick-up. The terminal also gave them a major competitive advantage; it was the only railroad that did not require freight pick-up at the city’s piers.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING AND PRESERVATION

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Various features of the neighborhood and city life in general appear commonly throughout the views from the High Line and are not tied to one singular location. We have termed these elements **URBAN DETAILS** and have collected them into a single brochure.
INTERPRETING THE VIEWS FROM the HIGH LINE

HISTORIC PRESERVATION STUDIO II / SPRING 2010
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING AND PRESERVATION

Back:

WATER TOWERS
- 247 West 23rd Street
- Chelsea Arts Tower, 145 West 25th Street

Ancient relics of the Manhattan water system, the water towers are a ubiquitous feature of the skyline. Water to the city is provided through a system of aqueducts fed by reservoirs and valley gravel. When a post-World War II housing boom led to high-rise buildings, New York City began to require that all buildings higher than six stories have a rooftop water tower to supply adequate water pressure to every floor. All water towers in New York are built by two companies, both of which are family businesses in operation since the 19th century. These towers are built of wood and rot-resistant materials to hold the water. The wooden walls are held together with nails and as the water seeps through the wood, it swells and the gaps close, becoming impermeable. Water towers generally store between 2,500 and 5,000 gallons of water. Water is disinfected off the top for everyday use, while the water at the bottom of the tower is reserved for fighting fires. When the water drops below a certain level, a pump is triggered and the tank is refilled. Water towers have been incorporated into building designs in various ways, either hidden behind an extension of the façade of the building, embedded in rooftop boxes (sometimes similarly decorated), or left in plain view. They have also become symbols of history, the Tribeca neighborhood requires water towers on all buildings, whether or not they are actually being used.

BACKYARDS AND ROOF GARDENS
- Backyards are used as play areas and green spaces.
- Roof gardens are an extension of the green space in the city, providing a oasis for residents.

The shape of the built environment in New York City was and is determined largely by laws and regulations. The tenement law, enacted in 1867, the first law of its kind, required that every room in a tenement house be a certain size and that it contain a certain number of windows. The law was intended to improve living conditions inside the tenement buildings. The tenement law was met with resistance from the tenement owners, who argued that it was too expensive to comply with. The law was eventually amended to allow for a certain amount of flexibility in the size and shape of the tenement buildings. The law was a significant step in the improvement of living conditions in New York City.
The High Line Hunt is a text message-based scavenger hunt that can be used as an entertaining and engaging tool to inform visitors about the buildings surrounding the High Line. We decided on text messaging as our form of media in order to provide a technological alternative to the brochure that would be accessible to anyone with the most basic mobile phone. However, rather than creating an equivalent format to the application or brochure by simply providing facts to a text message prompt, we decided that a scavenger hunt would be an effective way to get viewers to more actively look at and interact with buildings surrounding the High Line. By creating this challenge and by using rhymes for each clue, we hope to pique viewers’ interest and encourage them to learn more, as well as create an educational experience that is appropriate for all ages. Twenty buildings were selected for the scavenger hunt. These are fairly equally spread out along the High Line between Sections I and II, and stand out visually from adjacent buildings. Posters will be placed at each entrance of the High Line which will invite visitors to join the High Line Hunt and explain how the game works. Visitors can enter and begin the game at any point. SCVNGR, a geo-gamming platform that enables anyone to build location-based mobile games, was selected as the best option to work with our format. The scavenger hunt can be further customized and updated through SCVNGR if the hunt is made public.

HOW IT WORKS: Participants text a code to a given phone number and are automatically sent a clue. The first clue is a location-based clue that guides them to the building, so that the first challenge is simply finding the building. We included street numbers to avoid confusion and ensure participants are in the right place, and as the guard-rails on the High Line include street locators, these are particularly useful. The clue is also very descriptive so that participants can very easily spot the building when they have reached the location. Once they have found the building, they will text “found.”

The next challenge is a trivia question relating to the building’s history or architecture that will compel participants to look more closely or give more thought to the building they are viewing. If they answer incorrectly, they are given a second chance before ultimately receiving an interesting fact about the building, and if they answer correctly they automatically receive this same fact. There is a 160-character limit to each text message, so the final building fact had to be quite brief. However, we hope that by providing a highlight of the building’s story, participants will want to learn more. Thus, our final message for the hunt will let participants know about the brochures if they are looking for more information.
INTERPRETING THE VIEWS FROM the HIGH LINE

CLUE AND CHALLENGE LAYOUT

CLUE 1 -- Manhattan Refrigeration Co.
Clue: Look south from the exit to Gansevoort Street, this large beige-brick warehouse once stored lots of meat.
Answer: found, Found, FOUND
Challenge 1: The company here didn’t use ice to chill. What brand new technology fit their bill?
Answer for Challenge 1: Refrigeration, refrigeration, refrigeration, refrigeration, refrigerator, re-frigeration, fridge, fridge
Custom Correct Message: Refrigeration using a mix of ammonia and other coolants that were brought to this Manhattan Refrigeration Co. building via underground pipes.
Custom Incorrect Message: Refrigeration using a mix of ammonia and other coolants that were brought to this Manhattan Refrigeration Co. building via underground pipes.
Location: Longitude: -74.008305 Latitude: 40.739332

CLUE 2 -- Meat market
Clue: This white low-rise building at Washington and 12th, has an art deco design unique to itself.
Answer: found, Found, FOUND
Challenge 1: Where nightclubs, meat markets and dive bars once stood, this building is part of which neighborhood?
Answer for Challenge 1: meatpacking district, meatpacking, meat-packing, meat-packing district, meat packing, meat packing district, meatpaking, meatpacking neighborhood
Custom Correct Message: The building has been host to a wide variety of businesses and its revolving ownership and tenants represent shifting industry in the meatpacking district.
Custom Incorrect Message: The building has been host to a wide variety of businesses and its revolving ownership and tenants represent shifting industry in the meatpacking district.
Location: Longitude: -74.0079001 Latitude: 40.7403308

CLUE 3 -- Standard Hotel
Clue: I arch over the High Line on legs of concrete, find my modern facade just north of 12th Street.
Answer: FOUND, found, Found
Challenge 1: At this hotel you can climb into bed; it provides a haven to rest your head. The windows frame NY and the Hudson too; how many rooms give tourists a view?
Answer for Challenge 1: 337, three thirty-seven, three hundred and thirty seven, three hundred and thirty-seven, three hundred thirty seven, three hundred thirty-seven
Custom Correct Message: The 337 room Standard Hotel was built in 2009 and designed by Polshek. The NY Municipal Arts Society awarded it “Best new building” that year.
Custom Incorrect Message: The 337 room Standard Hotel was built in 2009 and designed by Polshek. The NY Municipal Arts Society awarded it “Best new building” that year.
Location: Longitude: -74.007828 Latitude: 40.740667

CLUE 4 -- Pier 54
Clue: A steel frame at the river on 13th street is a remnant of where a Pier once had its seat.
Answer: FOUND, found, Found
Challenge 1: On one fateful night survivors came here. From which infamous shipwreck did they come to this pier?
Answer for Challenge 1: Titanic, titanic, the titanic, the Titanic
Custom Correct Message: The former Cunard White Star Pier 54 once welcomed survivors of the Titanic arriving on the RMS Carpathia, as well as soldiers from World Wars I and II. Custom Incorrect Message: The former Cunard White Star Pier 54 once welcomed survivors of the Titanic arriving on the RMS Carpathia, as well as soldiers from World Wars I and II.
Location: Longitude: -74.0087299 Latitude: 40.7414626

CLUE 5 -- The Highline Building
Clue: On 14th street, as you stroll down the rails, walk straight through this building and notice its scale.
Answer: found, Found, FOUND
Challenge 1: Its first floors are made of brick and concrete. How many new floors will make it complete?
Answer for Challenge 1: ten, 10
Custom Correct Message: Architect Morris Adjmi is adding 10 new floors to the original three-story building, which was once a meatpacking plant that the High Line ran through.
Custom Incorrect Message: Architect Morris Adjmi is adding 10 new floors to the original three-story building, which was once a meatpacking plant that the High Line ran through.
Location: Longitude: -74.0087399 Latitude: 40.7414626

CLUE 6 -- Nabisco
Clue: Skybridges connect us at 35th street. We once housed ovens that baked world-famous treats.
Answer: found, Found, FOUND
Challenge 1: In 1912 in these buildings you see, we invented the Oreo, who are we?
**CLUE # 7 -- Tenements at West 17th St.**
Clue: I’m two similar buildings, one red and one gray, that flank each side of 17th Street today. Answer: Found, found, FOUND
Challenge 1: Now apts. above and store fronts below, we were built for a similar use long ago. A window in each room on every floor, what kind of housing were we built for?
Answer for Challenge 1: Tenements, tenements, tenement, Tenement, tenament, Tenament

**Custom Incorrect Message:** Tenements, tenements, tenement, Tenement, tenament, Tenament

**Custom Correct Message:** Both were built as tenements in the 1890s. This was after a NYC law was passed that required a window in each room of the typically dark, unhealthy buildings.

**Custom Incorrect Message:** Both were built as tenements in the 1890s. This was after a NYC law was passed that required a window in each room of the typically dark, unhealthy buildings.

**Location:** Longitude: -74.006811 Latitude: 40.744061

**CLUE # 8 -- Gehry Building**
Clue: Just north of 18th Street, my curved walls of glass, mimic a frosty polar icecap.
Answer: Found, found, Found
Challenge 1: Each pane of glass is unique in shape and had to be bent into place that way. During this process no heat was used to aid with the challenge, false or true?
Answer for Challenge 1: True, true, tru

**Custom Correct Message:** True. The rippling glass panes of Frank Gehry’s 2004 IAC building were brought to the construction site flat and then carefully bent into place, cold.

**Custom Incorrect Message:** True. The rippling glass panes of Frank Gehry’s 2004 IAC building were brought to the construction site flat and then carefully bent into place, cold.

**Location:** Longitude: -74.007338 Latitude: 40.7450403

**CLUE # 9 -- La Lunchonette**
Clue: I’m a group of small buildings on 18th Street, “Lunchonette” is painted on one of me.
Answer: Found, found, Found
Challenge 1: The little sloped roof that one of me has is rare in NY’s flat-topped building cache. Made on a triangular frame, do you know this type of roof’s special name?

**Custom Correct Message:** Made on a triangular frame, do you know this type of roof’s special name?

**Custom Incorrect Message:** Made on a triangular frame, do you know this type of roof’s special name?

**Location:** Longitude: -74.007705 Latitude: 40.742834

**CLUE # 10 -- General Theological Seminary**
Clue: With castle-like turrets and details in green, I take up the whole block above 20th Street.
Answer: FOUND, found, Found
Challenge 1: I’m part of a place where people pray and have stood many years before today. Guess, I think that you can get it, in which decade do you suppose I was erected?

**Custom Correct Message:** Hoffman Hall of the General Theological Seminary was built in 1899. It is part of a complex, established in 1825 as the USA’s first Episcopal Seminary.

**Custom Incorrect Message:** Hoffman Hall of the General Theological Seminary was built in 1899. It is part of a complex, established in 1825 as the USA’s first Episcopal Seminary.

**Location:** Longitude: -74.006032 Latitude: 40.74463

**CLUE # 11 -- Church of the Guardian Angel**
Clue: North of 21st street, right next to the rails, my roof is protected by rows of curved tiles.
Answer: found, Found, FOUND
Challenge 1: Within mostly brick walls, a church makes its home, but can you identify my light colored stone?

**Custom Correct Message:** The Church of the Guardian Angel features limestone. Originally built on 23rd in 1888, it was torn down and rebuilt here in 1930 to make way for the High Line. It is part of a complex, established in 1825 as the USA’s first Episcopal Seminary.

**Custom Incorrect Message:** Hoffman Hall of the General Theological Seminary was built in 1889. It is part of a complex, established in 1825 as the USA’s first Episcopal Seminary.

**Location:** Longitude: -74.003889 Latitude: 40.745515

**CLUE # 12 -- Empire Diner**
Clue: I look like a train car on 21st street. I offer no rides, but you can stop in to eat.
Answer: FOUND, found, FOUND
Challenge 1: Have some coffee or ice cream to go with your meal as you sit inside walls made of 

**Custom Correct Message:** Once the largest baking center in the world, these buildings were the home of Nabisco. Railroad tracks ran through the buildings delivering baking supplies.

**Custom Incorrect Message:** Once the largest baking center in the world, these buildings were the home of Nabisco. Railroad tracks ran through the buildings delivering baking supplies.

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**Custom Correct Message:** Made on a triangular frame, do you know this type of roof’s special name?

**Custom Incorrect Message:** Made on a triangular frame, do you know this type of roof’s special name?

**Location:** Longitude: -74.007705 Latitude: 40.742834
what type of steel?
Answer for Challenge 1: stainless, Stainless, stainless steel, stainles, stainless steel, Stainless steel

Custom Correct Message: The 1946 Empire Diner building was designed by Fodero Dining Car Company and features stainless steel detailing to evoke the elegance of train car dining.

Custom Incorrect Message: The 1946 Empire Diner building was designed by Fodero Dining Car Company and features stainless steel detailing to evoke the elegance of train car dining.

Location: Longitude: -74.004436 Latitude: 40.747127

CLUE # 13 -- HL23
Clue: On 23rd Street, I’m made of metal and glass and so near to the High Line, we could touch as you pass.
Answer: found, Found, FOUND

Challenge 1: The shape of the building bends and folds, getting taller. As it rises do the floors grow larger or smaller?
Answer for Challenge 1: larger, Larger, large, Large

Custom Correct Message: Built in 2009 by Neil Danari, the HL23 is a prime example of modern luxury condominium developments taking shape along the High Line.

Custom Incorrect Message: Built in 2009 by Neil Danari, the HL23 is a prime example of modern luxury condominium developments taking shape along the High Line.

Location: Longitude: -74.0048734 Latitude: 40.7479996

CLUE # 14 -- 245 Tenth Avenue
Clue: North of 23rd Street, with walls like tin foil, this building wraps ‘round the gas station, LukOIL.
Answer: found, Found, FOUND

Challenge 1: Now that you've found this, look close and zoom in. Its panels have a pattern, what shape are they in?
Answer for Challenge 1: Diamonds, diamond, Diamond, diamonds, diamond shape, diamond-shaped

Custom Correct Message: Architects Della Valle and Burnheimer stamped the diamond pattern on the stainless steel panels in hopes of “animating” the building by reflecting the sun.

Custom Incorrect Message: Architects Della Valle and Burnheimer stamped the diamond pattern on the stainless steel panels in hopes of “animating” the building by reflecting the sun.

Location: Longitude: -74.0038469 Latitude: 40.748831

CLUE # 15 -- Cass Gilbert Warehouse

Clue: At 25th street, a vast beige warehouse rises, its ten floors dwarf structures of much smaller sizes.
Answer: found, Found, FOUND

Challenge 1: With original windows of steel frames and glass, what material makes up the bulk of its mass?
Answer for Challenge 1: concrete, Concrete, concreet, concret

Custom Correct Message: Architect Cass Gilbert built this concrete building for R.C. Williams, a wholesaler, and owner of the first carload of freight to use the Line in 1933.

Custom Incorrect Message: Architect Cass Gilbert built this concrete building for R.C. Williams, a wholesaler, and owner of the first carload of freight to use the Line in 1933.

Location: Longitude: -74.0032504 Latitude: 40.748751

CLUE # 16 -- Starrett-Lehigh
Clue: West of 26th Street I’m characterized by many row windows, sure to catch your eye. The horizontal ribbons of glass certainly put me in my own class.
Answer: found, Found, FOUND

Challenge 1: Though once I was modern now I am old. In what year was I built when my style was bold?
Answer for Challenge 1: 1931, nineteen thirty-one, nineteen thirty one

Custom Correct Message: Built in 1931, the landmarked Starrett-Lehigh was at the forefront of modern architecture with an elevator large enough to bring trucks to the upper floors.

Custom Incorrect Message: Built in 1931, the landmarked Starrett-Lehigh was at the forefront of modern architecture with an elevator large enough to bring trucks to the upper floors.

Location: Longitude: -74.0079223 Latitude: 40.7517496

CLUE # 17 -- Chelsea Park
Clue: On 27th street my green lawn you see. Enjoy a stroll here or shade under a tree.
Answer: found, Found, FOUND

Challenge 1: Named after the neighborhood which I have long served. What is my title? Can you guess the words?
Answer for Challenge 1: Chelsea Park, chelsea park, Chelsea park

Custom Correct Message: Chelsea Park, one of the most widely used parks in lower Manhattan, served as an open space for the residents of a crowded tenement district over 100 years ago.

Custom Incorrect Message: Chelsea Park, one of the most widely used parks in lower Manhattan, served as an open space for the residents of a crowded tenement district over 100 years ago.

Location: Longitude: -74.0023411 Latitude: 40.7502149
CLUE # 18 -- Post Office
Clue: At 29th Street a skybridge connects two rectangular buildings that’ll stick in your view.
Answer: found, Found, FOUND
Challenge 1: One was built in the 30s, the other much later. What government org. where they built to cater?
Answer for Challenge 1: usps, postal service, US postal service, post, postal
Custom Correct Message: The Morgan Processing and Distribution Center was built as the US Government Parcel Post Building. The High Line once ran through the original structure.
Custom Incorrect Message: The Morgan Processing and Distribution Center was built as the US Government Parcel Post Building. The High Line once ran through the original structure.
Location: Longitude: -73.998658 Latitude: 40.753496

CLUE # 19 -- Westyard Dist. Center
Clue: On 33rd street you'll see my sloped sides. At 16 stories I'm not easy to hide.
Answer: found, Found, FOUND
Challenge 1: Constructed in 1970, what was the material used to build me?
Answer for Challenge 1: concrete, Concrete, concreet, concret
Custom Correct Message: Built of concrete, the Westyard Distribution Center is an example of Brutalism, an architectural style defined by textured concrete and geometrical shapes.
Custom Incorrect Message: Built of concrete, the Westyard Distribution Center is an example of Brutalism, an architectural style defined by textured concrete and geometrical shapes.
Location: Longitude: -73.998658 Latitude: 40.753496

CLUE # 20 -- Javits Center
Clue: Looming north of the High Line sheathed in dark glass, I'm an eye-catching building with sizeable mass.
Answer: found, Found, FOUND
Challenge 1: Designed by architect I.M. Pei. Can you guess what its use was, which continues today?
Answer for Challenge 1: convention center, convention, Convention center, conventon center, convention centre
Custom Correct Message: The Jacob K. Javits Center is a large convention center built in 1986. It is the largest use of a space frame in the country.
Custom Incorrect Message: The Jacob K. Javits Center is a large convention center built in 1986. It is the largest use of a space frame in the country.
Location: Longitude: -74.002962 Latitude: 40.757644
As the newest and most adaptable medium for information on-the-go, we have created an iPhone application to display our research. All of our information is represented here in a user-friendly intuitive interface meant to complement any visit to the High Line.

While our design has not been fully coded as a functional application during the course of our studio, it is hoped that it eventually become a publicly available tool. Our text information has been bundled into spreadsheets and images resized and arranged hierarchically for easy integration into a workable system.

The first screen below shows the iPhone Home screen with our High Line Application icon.

Once touched, the Loading screen appears as the Application’s content loads.

The Main Menu screen appears once the Application is loaded. Access into all the Application’s features begin on this page. Each section of the screen with a different image represents a functional button that forwards the user into other screens with content related to the topic listed: Explore NOW | The Current High Line and Views, Explore BEFORE | The Historic Viaduct and Neighborhood, Select Viewpoint (a location based tool), General Information, and Comments.
The Explore NOW menu allows users to explore areas on, off, and around the High Line as it exists today. ON the High Line informs users of features of the High Line such as the 30th Street Cut-Out and public artwork.
OFF the High Line shows users what can be seen from the High Line, such as the IAC Building at West 18th Street and Eleventh Avenue.
AROUND the High Line gives users a broader contextual base of information such as Historic District and building use maps.
The Explore BEFORE menu takes users through the story of the High Line. The History and Construction menu highlights the early days of the rail when it was still running on street level.
Old Rail, New Park shows how preservation has impacted the High Line indirectly through its abandonment and more directly in its rehabilitation into a public park.
Historic Maps offers the user a large index of historic maps from the early 19th century to the mid-20th century.
Users in Select Viewpoint can select from a number of highlighted viewpoints from selected cross streets while on or off the High Line. Users on the High Line can choose to show their location which selects the closest viewpoint to the user. Once a node is selected, the user will be given information relating to buildings and building features which can be seen from the selected viewpoint.
The General Information menu gives users pertinent information regarding hours, points of access, suggested routes for users to traverse the High Line, park rules and regulations, and offerings from Friends of the High Line, which contains web links to the FOTHL website; information such as educational programs and park events, ways to get involved with park activities, shopping for High Line gear, contact information, and more can be found there and accessed via the Application. The Comments screen can be accessed directly from the Main Menu and is included on screens from the Explore NOW, Explore BEFORE, and Select VIEWPOINT menus. Users can submit comments about anything they have seen or read on the High Line Application. The comments can be stored on an independent website or added to existing websites such as thehighline.org. The content of the comments can be filtered and the site managed and maintained with minimal effort.
### Building Reports

Listed by address with east-west streets first, avenues and other streets after, moving from south to north along the High Line; Urban detail reports follow alphabetically.

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Highlighted buildings indicate those which were given a write-up after our research efforts.

Section I:
Section 2:

Building maps
Section 2: north of West 29th Street
The building at 53-61 Gansevoort Street is an example of late nineteenth century commercial construction in the Gansevoort district. The five-story brick store and loft building was developed by noted area property investors Ogden and Robert Goelet in 1887. This simple yet elegant structure was designed with a full-length canopy, the building is sited on a triangular lot and its subtly rounded shape mimics the site’s proportions. When it was completed in 1887, the building housed commercial establishments on the first floor; the upper stories were used as storage and factory space. Later, the building housed the New England Biscuit Company, whose name is still visible painted on the brick above the canopy.
Originally constructed as a set of row houses, these are among the oldest extant structures in the area surrounding the High Line. Built in 1849 (No.12) and 1852 (Nos. 8 and 10), this property was originally owned by John Wendel, the brother-in-law and business partner of one of New York’s wealthiest citizens, John Jacob Astor. Wendel, who initiated the Astor family policy of investing in New York real estate, leased the land to James Conkwright who built three residences on the site.

With their red brick facades, regularly spaced windows, stone window lintels and sills, and regularly-spaced first floor pilasters each of these structures typifies Greek Revival design. Although the original purpose of the buildings was primarily residential, they were erected in what was already becoming an industrial area with large manufacturing concerns located close by and the houses were themselves designed to accommodate first floor commercial spaces. By 1895 the first floors of these row houses were combined and given a unified cast-iron storefront.

803-807 Washington Street are located just south of the southern terminus of the High Line. These three red brick buildings are among the earliest row houses extant in the Gansevoort Market area. The buildings were owned by two local businessmen, William M. Johnson, a sugar refiner, and Lewis B. Griffen, a lumber dealer and are representative of the growing interest in nineteenth century New York in building investment properties intended for use as rental housing. The structures were built in the Greek Revival style with symmetrically placed windows on the upper floors, each with protruding stone lintels and shallower sill protrusions. The buildings received their fourth stories, stepped parapet and first floor storefronts in 1922, when they were adapted for market use.
These four two-story brick market buildings are located directly across Washington Street from the High Line. Completed in 1880 for E. L. Donnelly, these buildings were the first ever erected in the Gansevoort Market district for the sole purpose of housing markets. These simple, neoclassical buildings served as prototypes for the later two-story, purpose-built market buildings constructed in the area. Purpose-built markets of the later 1880s, similar to those at 823-829 Washington Street, were typically two-story brick buildings, with large loading bays on the first floor and windowed offices on the second. Metal canopies spanning from the front of the buildings to the curb line protected perishable food products from sun and precipitation.

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This two story red and tan brick building is one of the newer low-rise market buildings, built specifically in response to the construction of the High Line and burgeoning meatpacking industry. Its first tenant was the Center Veal and Beef Co., followed by a number of similar businesses, including Monarch Beef Corp., Cut Well Beef Co., Lang Beef Co., and Long Island Beef Co. As a later addition to the neighborhood, the design by architect David M. Oltarsh, former captain of engineers in World War I and most famous for his theater designs, was reflective of the older neighboring two-story brick commercial buildings with metal canopies.

In 2008, the property was purchased by infamous New York City event planner Robert Isabell for an astounding $45 million, who planned to build three stories of office space and retail above the existing building, which would be equipped with green technology, including wind turbines and a green roof. However, the Landmarks Preservation Commission rejected the design, citing that it would have dwarfed the surrounding buildings on Washington Street and compromise the historic integrity of the neighborhood. Isabell passed away in September 2009, leaving the fate of this building uncertain.
A block from the High Line is this six-story building with a multi-faceted glass dome atop it, which some observers have dubbed “the diamond in the sky”. This “diamond” houses the renowned fashion designer, Diane Von Furstenberg’s, private penthouse apartment. This glass dome connects to a stairway that collects and distributes light from the roof, to the deepest parts of the interior.

Since the stairway is such a vital source of natural light, heliostat mirrors were installed within the diamond dome that are able to track the sunlight throughout the day and beam light down the stairs at a constant angle. Located in the heart of the meatpacking neighborhood, the building is now part of the Gansevoort Market Historic District. Careful to retain viable features of the neighborhood’s history, architects renovated the building that actually sits behind two historic 19th century facades. The finished building was hailed by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission as the new model for adaptive reuse in the city.
The three story brick block-through P.F. Collier & Son building demonstrates a complex but typical conveyance of property ownership in this area. Home to the popular magazine Collier’s Weekly, the land was originally owned by the Astors, a prominent New York family, who leased the property to P.F. Collier & Son in 1900. The structure housed both the printing plant and offices of Collier, which produced 30 million books and magazines during its residency. École des Beaux Arts-trained New York architects Trowbridge & Livingston designed the building in a Neo-Classical vocabulary, with three-story brick Doric pilasters, segmental arched windows with limestone keystones, a broken scrolled pediment over the main entrance, and a symmetrical tripartite composition. Collier operated in the building until 1929, when General Electric Co. took over the lease. The building was converted into a warehouse and an annex was built next door to 414 West 13th street in 1930 as GE’s service shop. It was one of the earliest examples of modern architecture in New York. General Electric was active in this space until 1970. It now is home to a number of shops and restaurants at ground level, with office and studio space above. The 1930 annex was incorporated into the 2009 block-through black brick building. Architecture firm Suben Dougherty Partnership’s design for this new building was directly influenced by the annex and its neighboring structures, using architectural cues such as the mullioned factory windows and black ironspot brick, as well as steel and glass overhangs to achieve congruency with the streetscape. The project was approved by the Landmarks Preservation Commission as appropriate new design in the Gansevoort Historic District. The façade of the original GE annex remained unchanged.
Prior to its renovation, this former meatpacking warehouse was not much to look at in 2000, when a developer purchased the five-story building for $10.2 million. Despite the state it was in, the building is prime real estate, prized for its block-long frontage on Washington Street and for its location in an emerging area, one both industrial, yet sophisticated. Because the building lies within the Gansevoort Market Historic District, more than $1 million dollars was invested to rehabilitate the structure, much of that going towards brick repairs in keeping with the original nineteenth century façade.

The arched steel frame is the only visible remnant of the former Cunard White Star Pier 54. Designed in 1910 by Warren & Wetmore, architects of Grand Central Terminal, Pier 54 was once a grand Neo-Classical pink granite head house with dramatic arched entranceways that serviced Cunard White Star Cruise Liners. Pier 54 welcomed affluent world travelers, soldiers and officers leaving for and coming back from World Wars I and II, immigrants on their way to Ellis Island, and on one fateful night, survivors of the Titanic arriving on the RMS Carpathia. Pier 54 is also associated with the 1915 tragedy of the Lusitania, which left the pier before it was torpedoed by a German U-boat, an incident that led the US into World War I. Use of the pier decreased when the shipping industry replaced the ship with the more expedient airplane. Before it was demolished, it was used as a parking garage for employees working in the meatpacking district. The pier faced functional and physical decline, and was demolished in 1992, with exception of the steel arch that still bears the name “Cunard Line” engraved on the front. It is now open to the public as part of the Hudson River Park, and is a venue for concerts and other events.
The complex of buildings which now houses Chelsea Market, elite restaurants, and the offices of various media and technology companies was originally the home of the National Biscuit Company (Nabisco), which invented the Oreo cookie here in 1912. Nabisco built and acquired the series of buildings in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It was the largest baking center in the world at the time and had a visitors’ gallery from which the entire baking operation could be seen.

The main complex, which stretches from 9th to 11th avenues along 15th and 16th streets, is connected by pedestrian bridges. Railroad tracks ran from the Hudson River docks through the buildings, permitting efficient delivery of baking supplies and the shipment of the company’s cookies and crackers. In the 1930s, straight-line ovens began replacing the old vertical ovens, requiring an unbroken area on a single level which surpassed the available space in the Chelsea bakeries. By 1959 Nabisco had relocated to New Jersey and sold the complex.

In the 1990s, a syndicate of investors bought and revived the principal buildings. The development of Chelsea Market, a collection of restaurants, cafes, gourmet grocers, wholesale markets, and other epicurean delights, helped turn the neighborhood into a fashionable part of the city. Architect Jeff J. Vandeberg’s unique design displays the building’s lost industrial character, with bare brick walls, century-old windows, cast-iron pipes and columns, old signage, rough-hewn sculptures, and an artificial waterfall.
**BUILDING** pier 57  
**ADDRESS** w 15th street / hudson  
**ARCHITECT** emil h. praeger  
**DATE** 1952  
**BLOCK/LOT** 662/3

Pier 57 was an engineering marvel when it was constructed in 1952. It is a three-level structure supported by floating concrete caissons, inspired by the use of floating concrete breakwaters for the invasion of Normandy during World War II. Built as a passenger ship terminal, the design of Pier 57 would allow passenger traffic to drive down into the basement, unload and be taken by elevator to a grand waiting hall on the second level, while trucks with freight would travel by large ramps directly to the second level, avoiding the passengers. The caissons, which were to be used for freight storage, were constructed in a man-made lake near Haverstraw, New York, about 32 miles north of the city and floated down the river to the pier site. In 2009, the Hudson River Park Trust designated Youngwoo & Associates as the firm that will transform Pier 57 into a hub of cultural, recreational and public market activities.

**BUILDING** maritime hotel  
**ADDRESS** 363 west 16th street  
**ARCHITECT** alfred c. ledner  
**DATE** 1968  
**BLOCK/LOT** 740/1, 55

The white ceramic tiled façade with porthole windows visible when looking down 16th Street is a startling sight when viewed against the darker-hued brick and stone buildings lining the street. A 1968 design by modernist architect Albert C. Ledner, the building was built as a wing to the 1966 Joseph Curran Annex commissioned by the National Maritime Union (NMU), a sailors’ labor union, which was also designed by Ledner. Both buildings provided housing, medical, and recreational services to seamen on duty in New York, including a swimming pool on the first floor of the Annex. The use of circular, aluminum windows with a six-foot diameter evokes the image of portholes on a cruise ship, as do the smooth, glossy white tiles cladding the façade. By the 1980s, port activity had decreased significantly in New York, and the NMU sold both building to Covenant House, a private social welfare organization, who converted the space into a homeless shelter. In 2001 the wing was purchased by an hotelier, and the building was converted into the nautical-themed Maritime Hotel. The 1966 Joseph Curran Annex was treated to the same conversion in 2007. The property was purchased by the Covenant House and transformed into the Dream Downtown Hotel, which can now be identified by its new iridescent metal façade punched with seemingly random bubble-like windows. Underneath its new face, an innovative answer to a 1961 zoning law in New York requiring a 20-foot setback above 85 feet is found. Ledner’s response was to create an 8.5 degree slope instead of a setback. Although the slope has been retained in the new design, the regular pattern of the porthole windows akin to those of the Maritime Hotel has been updated to an irregular scheme, producing a whimsical, dream-like aesthetic, fitting of the hotel’s name.
These were built as a public housing project and were named after Robert Fulton, famous engineer and inventor of the first useful submarine, torpedo, and steam-powered warship. In the 1950s, the city of New York was short 400,000 residences for its ever-growing population, which was crowded into run-down tenements, creating unhealthy and unsafe neighborhoods considered slums. To alleviate this problem, the city of New York in conjunction with Federal aid programs and funds authorized the demolition or conversion of these slums into public housing projects such as the Fulton Houses. Construction of the Fulton Houses required the clearing of tenements and other derelict buildings along 9th Avenue from West 16th to West 19th Streets, where the Houses are located. The Houses are increasingly surrounded by luxury shops and apartment buildings as the area grows in popularity attributed to the development of the High Line.

The Caledonia has a 24-story condominium tower in the center of its site, with two 8-story rental units flanking the tower’s east and west ends. The design of the brick and glass tower mimics the height and scale of the neighboring Fulton House towers to the east, while the shorter units transition downward to the scale and height of the neighboring tenement houses and the High Line; the Caledonia literally and figuratively reflects its surroundings. It is the first residence to open onto the High Line via an entryway on the second floor for residents and a public stair and elevator at the corner of 10th Avenue and 16th Street. The transformation of the High Line from an abandoned railway to a city park, along with the opportunity to acquire its air rights has spurred development of high-rise buildings such as the Caledonia.
This small utilitarian structure, now used by Verizon Wireless, was built for the Manhattan Gas Light Company. Gas, alongside candles, was a major source of light in early New York buildings until the invention of the light bulb by Thomas Edison in 1879. Manhattan Gas Light was one of six New York City gas companies that combined in 1884 into the Consolidated Gas Company of New York. In 1936, Consolidated Gas Company was renamed the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, today known as Con Edison which is still a natural gas provider for much of the city. During the last quarter of the 19th and the first quarter of the 20th century, Manhattan Gas Light owned a considerable amount of property in this industrial neighborhood, most occupied by gas tanks in brick buildings much like this one. While most of their property has been sold off and torn down, this small building remains as a marker of this neighborhood’s industrial and relevant past.

The two houses that flank West 17th are two of the remaining tenements that once lined 10th Avenue. These two exemplify the typical tenements that sprung up in the mid-19th century to house the masses of immigrants that had flocked to New York City. They were designed to house as many people as possible and were typically small, dirty, had little lighting and were not healthy places to live. The inhabitants of these two tenements worked in the warehouses, factories and shipyards that lined the Hudson River. The Tenement House Act of 1879 required that new tenements be built with a window in every room and air shafts between buildings. Both buildings were built in the early 1890s after the law was passed; however, the red tenement house on the north side of W. 17th Street has no air shaft between its neighbor to the north because the entrances and enough windows for each apartment are on West 17th Street, satisfying the requirements of the new law. The white tenement has an air shaft between it and its neighbor; the windows from that air shaft can still be seen from the High Line south of the amphitheater.
The 11-story 520 West Chelsea residence is faced with floor-to-ceiling glass above and dark blue terra-cotta panels below. The glossy glazing of the panels reflects light and highlights the sculptural detail of the undulating panels and the range of the glaze itself. Terra-cotta as a building material has been popular in New York City buildings, especially between about 1880 - 1930 and it can be seen on many buildings along the High Line. It recently has reappeared as a modern construction material as Selldorf’s much admired building attests.

This low-rise skyscraper was designed to both blend and contrast with its neighbors. Its scale, only 12-stories high, works within the block, but its powerful arrangement of modern angular shapes marks a departure from the more traditional forms in the neighborhood. Local architect Audrey Matlock was recognized for this design. She won a 2005 Excellence in Architecture Award from the American Institute of Architects (AIA). Its undulating facade of white and blue glass panes mimic sky and water in form and color, but variant glass types add to the “greenness” of the building, regulating light and heat transfer into the structure. The panes of the facade even appear to shift in coloration in the changing light over the course of the day. This unique building is home to 47 high end residences.
Almost hidden in this block of new buildings from important architects are Shigeru Ban’s Metal Shutter Houses. This famous Japanese architect is best known for his designs for temporary emergency housing and reusable buildings, such as his “Nomadic Museums”, a museum structure made of cargo containers, formerly occupied nearby Pier 54. The permeability of his design here on West 19th Street is what makes it different from any other New York structure; each apartment, or “house”, features metal shutters that function much like garage doors and pivoting glass fronts behind the doors that can open the wall entirely, creating a completely open air home with adequate levels of privacy. The duplex units feature full two-story living rooms and his often used “universal floor” plan.
This non-descript and contemporary-looking parking garage is a prime example of how building alterations over time can create false impressions. Its current appearance belies the structure’s 1918 construction date as well as its original, two-story stature. Major alterations to the building began as far back as the 1930s and continued through the late 80s.

Morgan & Brother, a moving and storage firm established in 1851, built this warehouse in 1927. The company is the oldest, continually operating storage company in America and began in a solitary brick warehouse building on Broadway and 47th Street. The building was purposefully made of reinforced concrete for marketing purposes; Morgan & Brother broadcast the “fireproof” nature of their new facility. This new warehouse was also a strategic business move, placing the firm closer to major train routes and piers where goods arrived from abroad. The company stored foreign items awaiting customs inspection as well as trunks and baggage for arriving travelers, unsure of future plans.

Morgan & Brother’s reputation grew over the years and many famous items have been stored within this warehouse’s walls, including set pieces for Fox Film Corporation (today 20th-Century Fox), priceless Parisian tapestries, and the furnishings of the famous luxury ocean liner, the Normandie. Morgan & Brother Storage Company is still in operation, but sold this warehouse in 1994.

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The building’s use over time has remained unchanged, however; it was designed as a public parking garage and is still used as such today. Hence, this easily disregarded building has stood through the majority of automobile history in America, including the age of Model T Fords, the first mass-produced automobile using an assembly-line process. Model T’s debuted in 1908, but experienced their heyday in the late 19-teens through 20s, when this garage was built. New York architect, David M. Ach, who designed the brick garage, also worked on other public-use spaces in New York. He’s cited as the designer of commercial buildings, educational structures and other large-scale projects during the early 20th century.
The rowhouses on this block of north 22nd street and south 23rd street typify construction of New York City housing in the 1830s to the 1850s. These structures were built exclusively between 1835 and 1857 and are the first buildings to occupy this property. Most rowhouses on the north side of the block, facing West 23rd street, exhibit the Greek Revival style. The later constructed houses, mostly on the southern side of the block facing West 22nd Street, are in an Italianate style, having been constructed in the 1850s.

Rowhouses were the built over most of southern Manhattan at one time or another. They were the preferred single-family residence constructed by speculative builders, often immigrants for the families of the city. They are called “rowhouses” as they were often built a series at a time in the same style and detail, as can be seen here. A rowhouse is typically a 2.5- or 3-story masonry structure over a raised basement. A raised first floor off the street necessitated the stoop stairway, which usually had elaborate wrought-iron railings. Entryways were emphasized and a cornice rimmed the top of the structure. The internal floorplan included a stairway pushed to one side wall and were typically only one room wide.

The construction of rowhouses in this neighborhood declines as it became an increasingly industrial area. As workers were often immigrant families, rowhouses were converted to house multiple families and tenement buildings became the form of new residential construction.
Today known as The Spears Building, this structure was a long-time factory and warehouse for Kinney Tobacco Company, a constituent of a turn-of-the-century monopoly, the American Tobacco Company. Records show the Kinney brothers leasing this structure as early as 1880, and purchasing it in 1884. Kinney was one of the five tobacco companies that merged in 1890 to create the American Tobacco Company, which sold 95% of all domestically produced cigarettes in the United States. In 1926, the building was altered to include a second factory structure to the west; a small divide between the original structure and the extension can be seen above the current awning. In 1931, the eastern portion of the factory and warehouse was demolished to make way for the New York Central railroad viaduct, the structure of today’s High Line, and loading docks were added at that time that directly connected to the rail. These docks were incorporated into the High Line’s design and are used as a support structure for the 22nd Street Seating Steps.

One of the earliest contemporary residential condominiums constructed so near the High Line, this 11-story structure offers full-floor residences and provides ample space to tenants, despite its narrow lot size. Each apartment provides unobstructed southern views, with floor-to-ceiling windows that open to rear balconies. Amorphous shapes of stainless steel perforated screens overlap floors in the center of the building’s glass façade, so the windows appear as a wall of glass, while the steel screens act as a focal point. The glass and steel reflect light at different levels and are the main sources of light into the space within. Completed in 2007, windows were included on the east façade, but the building’s developers opted not to purchase the adjacent lot, and consequently, two years later, another residential condominium snagged the space and built a taller tower next door.
The massive London Terrace apartment complex was built on land that once belonged to Clement Clark Moore - best known for writing “T’was the night before Christmas.” London Terrace was the largest apartment building in the world when it was completed in 1931. Real estate mogul Henry Mandel had acquired the land by 1929 and hired the firm of Farrar & Watmaugh to design the complex, which contained over 1,650 apartments. Residents had the benefit of such state-of-the-art amenities as a swimming pool, an acre of gardens, a page-boy service, on-site shops, and a roof garden furnished like the deck of an ocean liner from which residents could look down on the real ships that docked a few blocks away. The Great Depression struck just as London Terrace was being completed, forcing Mandel into foreclosure in 1934. London Terrace was designed in a round-arched and highly ornamental Tuscan style. It was named for a previous complex, also called London Terrace, which had stood on the land, and it marketed its English charm with doormen dressed as London policemen, known as “bobbies,” and with a daily “changing of the guard” ceremony for watchmen, doormen, and page-boys.
INTERPRETING THE VIEWS FROM the HIGH LINE

**penn south**

**ADDRESS**
w 24th-28th streets / ninth ave

**ARCHITECT**
herman j. jessor

**DATE**
1960-2

**BLOCK/LOT**
747/1; 748/1, 5; 749/1; 751/1, 76; 752/1

In the 1950s, due to an urgent need for moderate-income housing in New York City, the United Housing Foundation began working with unions and government officials to build new cooperative complexes. Drawn to the idea, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, the union of workers manufacturing women’s apparel, sponsored the construction of 2,820 apartment units that would become Penn South. Its dedication ceremony in May 1962 was attended by President John F. Kennedy, Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller, Mayor Robert F. Wagner, and former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. In the 1970s, in order to deal with rising energy costs, the Penn South Energy Conservation Plan was developed, becoming a model for other housing developments around the country. Penn South has been preserved as an affordable cooperative as a result of such innovative solutions to economic crises. Sixty-five percent of the development is open space, including the award-winning Jeff Dullea Intergenerational Garden, established in 1985 for children and seniors to work together.

**original building**

**ADDRESS**
511 west 25th street

**ARCHITECT**
francisco & jacobus

**DATE**
1915-7

**BLOCK/LOT**
697/23

Originally built as a factory, this nine story, brick and concrete building has a symmetrical façade with five bays of windows separated by concrete piers; the two outer bays have triangular pediments added in 1927. Commissioned by the Marginal Realty Company for use as a commercial rental property, it was occupied by a variety of businesses including Lehamaier Schwartz & Co., a leading tin foil manufacturer. It was one of the first buildings in New York City to use a concrete skeleton under brick curtain walls. In 1947, the building was connected to the High Line freight tracks by means of an extension track and freight door cut in east wall of the building. Although utilized as a manufacturing facility for most of its life, the building is currently occupied by art galleries.
The initial owner of this building was the Cornell Iron Works, one of the New York City’s principal producers of ornamental brass and iron in the nineteenth century, responsible for dozens of the city’s cast-iron building façades of that period. At the time of this building’s construction, Cornell was also one of the major businesses located in the growing West Chelsea industrial district and owned several properties in the area. The six story building was designed by George Birdsell Cornell, a Columbia-trained mining engineer, to house the metal works established by his grandfather. Constructed of red brick with an iron and steel frame, it has three double-height rounded archway entries on the ground floor and, originally, arched windows in the three bays of the floors above. Although occupied during the twentieth century by a variety of companies including Standard Oil and the H. Wolff Manufacturing Company, the building now houses art-related businesses, including galleries.
The Elliott-Chelsea Houses consist of four 11- and 12-story buildings and was the first high-rise public housing project built in New York City. Designed to maximize the apartments’ light and air, the buildings were set off the grid at a true east-west axis in a pinwheel plan. The housing project was named after John Lovejoy Elliott, president of the Chelsea Association for Planning and Action in the early 20th century, who advocated for the construction of a public housing project in the neighborhood. Though planned in the 1930s to solve Chelsea’s housing problems, most residents at the project after World War II were returning veterans and their families. The Elliott-Chelsea Houses continue to house low-income families in the Chelsea community.
The Wolff Building, a ten story, brick and reinforced concrete factory, was designed by William Higginson who was a pioneer in the design of concrete commercial buildings. This building, completed early in his career, used more traditional methods of concrete construction, including poured-in-place concrete and a beam and column skeleton. Erected to house the book bindery of the H. Wolff Book Manufacturing Company, the building used brick and concrete in combination in its exterior façade. The establishment of the Wolff book bindery in the district exemplified the development of the area as a center for the printing industry in the early twentieth century.

The Wolff Bindery Annex is a twelve story, reinforced concrete factory was constructed for the H. Wolff Book Manufacturing Co as an annex to their adjacent book bindery. The architects, Parker & Shaffer, specialized in reinforced concrete construction and utilized innovative construction methods not used in the construction of the original bindery, allowing more windows and usable interior space in the annex and exemplifying the advances in concrete construction that had been made between 1910 and 1926. Multiple-paned, triple-width steel sash windows, an early twentieth century innovations, provided energy conserving light to the workplace while creating a sense of openness in the building. Finished books were shipped via the elevated High Line railway which ran adjacent to the Bindery Annex, using the sidings of the R.C. Williams Company at 259 10th Avenue.
This nineteen story building, known as the Starrett-Lehigh Building, is a New York City landmark. Occupying an entire trapezoidal block, the brick and reinforced-concrete structure was built as a warehouse and freight terminal for the Lehigh Railroad. Considered to be in the forefront of modern architecture when it was built, the structure displayed both innovative design and state-of-the-art engineering. The building’s ground floor allowed entry of trains and trucks into the building; it included curving railroad spur lines and freight station platforms as well as an elevator large enough to transport trucks to the upper floors. Its exterior design is notable for its use of horizontal ribbon windows alternating with brick and concrete spandrels, an early American example of the horizontal aesthetic of European modernism.
### Chelsea Park

**Address:** w 27th street / tenth ave  
**Block/Lot:** 724/100  

Chelsea Park was acquired by the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation over 100 years ago, when it served as an open space for the residents of a crowded tenement district. It remains one of the most widely used parks in lower Manhattan. In 1921, the Chelsea Memorial Committee donated the World War I memorial known as the Chelsea Doughboy Statue, which still stands in the park. The monument consists of a 14-foot-tall granite pedestal, upon which stands a bronze soldier holding a rifle, with a flag draped over his shoulders, and depicted as if in the midst of battle. Designed by architect Charles Rollinson Lamb, the monument’s statue was made by the prominent sculptor Philip Martiny.

### Building

**Address:** 508 w 29th street  
**Date:** 1894  
**Architect:** James W. Cole with Builder W.S. Shaw  
**Block/Lot:** 700/40

This dilapidated structure, which is actually two apartment buildings, was originally mixed-use with retail shops on the street level and apartments above. The vestiges of a small apartment building originally built into the structure on its east façade can still be seen in the misshapen brick wall; the small building was one of the many demolished in the 1930s along 10th Avenue to make way for the High Line.
The large arched white tent structure has been home to the New York Trapeze School since 2007. Large openings in the tent allow passerby to watch classes perform a variety of acrobatics, including trapeze, silks and rope, and trampoline. The school is a great example of the shift in West Chelsea in the late 20th century from an industrial neighborhood to one of arts and culture.
The 16-story concrete truncated pyramid at the end of the High Line is a significant example of Brutalism, an architectural style defined by expressive textured poured-in-place concrete and strong, and often imposing, geometrical shapes. The building was a speculative project and was designed to function as a distribution center with 38 loading docks, as well as to provide office space. The plan also included Chelsea Walk, a middle-income apartment building designed by Phillip Johnson, which was never realized. The building, which sits on a steel platform that straddles the busy Pennsylvania railroad tracks, was supposed to connect with the Lincoln Tunnel. When the building opened, it included the only indoor year-round ice rink in New York at the time, which has since been located to Chelsea Piers. It is currently occupied by a number of media corporations, including NY Daily News, Associated Press, and WNET.
The Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, named after the late New York Senator, was built on the site of a train yard, and occupies five city blocks and eighteen acres, making it one of the largest horizontally-spanning building in New York. It is the major venue for conventions and trade shows in the city and can accommodate up to 85,000 people with interior large enough to house the Statue of Liberty. Likened to the aesthetics of Joseph Paxton’s revolutionary 1851 Crystal Palace in London, the Convention Center is revolutionary in its own right: Pei chose the "space frame" for the structure of the building. It was the largest use of a space frame in the country, which is defined by its geometric pattern formed by the interlocking of thousands of tubular steel trusses. It is sheathed in semi-reflective glass, so that the glass reflects sunlight as well as the surrounding buildings in the day, and appears translucent at night, revealing the complex space frame. The Convention Center is currently undergoing renovation and slight expansion by New York architectural firm FXFOWLE, and will receive a new green roof.

This twelve-story dark red brick building dominates the skyline against the surrounding glass and white terra-cotta buildings. It was originally built for the Heywood Brothers and Wakefield Company for factory, warehouse, and office space. The Heywood-Wakefield Company is a furniture company which was founded in 1826 and is most famous for its modern furniture made of light-colored woods. Their original factory was located downtown; however, it was heavily damaged in a fire and the company decided to build a new, larger factory uptown at this location. The first ten floors of this building were occupied by the furniture warehouse and showrooms, as well as shipping and office facilities. The furniture was manufactured in the factory, located on the top two floors. The building is currently the headquarters of Coach Leatherware, Inc.
The Hoboken Terminal was built as the eastern terminus for the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad. When completed the building was considered a state-of-the-art transportation facility with innovatively engineered facilities. In 1908 the Hudson & Manhattan Railroad finished the construction of the first tunnel beneath the Hudson River with the Hoboken Terminal as its New Jersey entry point, thus assuring the terminal a place in American transportation history.

The terminal’s architecture exemplifies the industrial Beaux Arts style, which married neoclassical sensibilities with modern materials and technologies. The exterior was clad almost entirely in ornamental copper, and stained glass by Tiffany adorned the ceiling of the elaborate second floor ferry concourse, one of the largest unobstructed spaces in the world. The terminal also has the distinction of being the first centrally air conditioned public space in America. Its prominent clock tower, which was razed in the 1950s, was recently reconstructed in 2007, in time for the terminal’s centennial.

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The buildings on this corner are some of the oldest structures in the area. Their exact ages are unknown, but all predate the 1850s. Historically, all five buildings have been occupied by businesses on street level, with housing above. In the 1920s, for example, the northern-most, four-story building on Tenth Avenue was occupied by a blacksmith and offices. By the late 30’s, all three buildings fronting Tenth were combined into an automobile repair and tire shop owned by Congo Tire and Rubber Company, which remained in the buildings until the 70’s. La Luncheonette moved into the building in 1988 from its original location on Essex Street. The French bistro currently occupies the first floor of the four-story building on the corner, and extends east through its shorter neighbors. These 18th Street buildings were once home to a bar/restaurant and junk shop. Their brickwork, arches, peaked roof and upper-level “eyebrow windows” are delightfully quirky and unique features in the streetscape.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUILDING</th>
<th>ADDRESS</th>
<th>DATE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>manhattan refrigerating company building</td>
<td>130-4 tenth avenue</td>
<td>pre-1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la luncheonette</td>
<td>130-4 tenth avenue</td>
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The old Manhattan Refrigerating Company Warehouse is distinctive not only for its great bulk, but it conspicuously lacks fenestration on half of each of its façades; ribbons of windows puncture only the four middle floors. The building, which now houses vehicles impounded by the DEA and a storage company, was once the largest cold storage building in the world owned by the most successful cold storage concern, the Manhattan Refrigerating Company, in business from 1894 to 1978. It is the largest of the many cold storage buildings built in the early 20th century on the lower west side of Manhattan as advances in refrigeration technology made possible the storage of foods to be sold during the time of year when fresh foods were not available. Advances in construction technology, such as the use of steel reinforced concrete, were also incorporated into the design. This site had the additional advantage of its proximity to the west side railroad tracks. When the High Line was built, the Manhattan Refrigeration Company opened a section of the east façade to allow the rail to terminate inside the building; the tracks which lead in to the building can still be seen today, though the opening has been sealed.
The Catholic Church of the Guardian Angel was founded in 1888 and was part of the Seaman’s Institute, which catered specifically to longshoremen and other maritime workers. The original church was constructed in 1888 at 513 W. 23rd Street, a couple blocks north of its present-day location. By 1930, the original structure stood in the path of the newly planned High Line Elevated Rail track (on which you stand today) and was thus slated for demolition. Guardian Angel sold the property to New York Central Railroad and used the proceeds to erect the church and adjacent school/rectory building on Tenth Avenue. The building features a tiled roof and rounded-arch windows in a Southern Sicilian Romanesque style.

The design has a playful architectural ruse that can be seen best from the front, but is hinted at along the southern wall. The randomly placed blocks of light-colored limestone appear to be afterthoughts, accidents or repairs. However, they were actually original element designed by Van Pelt. The idea was to mimic a structure altered over a great deal of time, in a piecemeal fashion, as if the church had been standing on this site for centuries.

The three buildings on the corner of Tenth Avenue and 19th Street were constructed together in 1883 as tenements with two families on each floor for a total of 24 apartments. Stores occupied the ground level. Throughout history the buildings have been used in a similar manner with storefronts below and housing above. Visually, they appear to be one building, unified by their evenly-spaced windows and continuous paint job. Moran’s Restaurant furthers the illusion by occupying the uninterrupted first floor of all three. A careful look, however, at the divided cornice along the top parapet and the required set of three fire escapes, confirms that the floors above are indeed still divided into separate structures. While most of the main façade’s windows are modern, white, aluminum replacements, six of their black predecessors remain. A good eye can spot their divided top panes from the High Line.
Vesta 24 is a 14-story building with 22 condominium units, each of which is equipped with oversized glass windows, Brazilian wood flooring, luxurious bathrooms, and deluxe appliances. In addition to the common patio off the second floor which overlooks the High Line, many of the apartments have private terraces with views of the High Line. The lower half of the building is partially wrapped in large sheets of dark stained wood, while the rest is covered in light-colored masonry, giving the building an asymmetrical appearance. When the sales office for this development opened in the fall of 2004, all 22 units were sold in a record 36 hours.

The Empire Diner is located in a stainless steel dining car in place on this location since 1946. Since 1929 a lunch wagon had been located here; the present car was manufactured by the New Jersey-based Fodero Dining Car Company which made stainless steel, Art Deco-inspired, railroad car-shaped diners beginning in 1933. This car was never part of a train, but its look was only inspired by the appeal and elegance of train car dining. The idea of a diner or metal lunch wagon carried a stigma of being only for lower class workers. As the properties west of this spot were largely industrial factories and warehouses, its location at the end of this block was intentional. This diner, first “Arthur’s Diner” in 1946, became the Empire Diner in 1976 with an effort to reform the diner into a more fashionable eatery. While it has been a neighborhood fixture, the Empire Diner’s doors were closed on May 15, 2010.
Viewed from street level at 23rd Street and 10th Avenue, this 11-story residential condominium is almost entirely stainless steel panels pressed with an irregular diamond pattern which screens the view of the corner gas station that the building hooks around. Viewed from the High Line park, the metal panels then combine with expansive windows to create a seamless façade, reflecting the ever changing play of light against the building. Located in West Chelsea, the surrounding neighborhood has become an epicenter for art retailers and collectors, and the building’s sleek design and use of modern materials create a piece of architecture that also strives to function as an artwork.

The R.C. Williams Building was initially built for R.C. Williams & Company, one of the world’s largest grocery wholesalers. The ten story, reinforced concrete warehouse was designed by Cass Gilbert, who had already designed the Woolworth Building at the time of this commission. The selection of the well-known Gilbert to design a warehouse is indicative of the prominence then enjoyed by R.C. Williams. A contemporary review of the building noted, “Simplicity is the keynote of the building, and yet its solidity and symmetry of line bear witness to the skill of the architect, Mr. Cass Gilbert.” The building site was selected because of its proximity to the proposed elevated freight line; the building was designed with third story rail sidings connecting it to the High Line and R.C. Williams was the owner of the first carload of freight to use the Line in 1933.
In order to start construction on this building, a number of tenements were demolished to clear a site large enough for the Master Printers Building, built to house smaller New York City printers. At the time of its completion, it was one of the tallest reinforced concrete buildings in the United States at twenty-one stories. Along with the Starrett-Lehigh Building at 601 West 26th Street, the Master Printers Building was one of the earliest examples of modernism in American industrial design, expressed by both its modern construction technique and its streamlined façade and gridlike pattern of fenestration. Although the Master Printers Building lobby commemorates its history of printing with a mosaic of a printing press, increasing rents have priced old printing companies out of the building and the space had been reallocated to more affluent publishing corporations.

Built as the U.S. Government Parcel Post Building, the Morgan Processing and Distribution Center comprises a pair of full-block buildings connected by a skybridge. The original building with Art Deco detailing was constructed with funds and labor from the New Deal’s Works Progress Administration (WPA)’s public building program. The annex was built over thirty later, and though designed to complement the aesthetics of the original limestone and brick building; the increased glazing, bulky geometric façade, and different use of materials indicate its later date. The New York City and Hudson River Rail Company Freight Yard, which received both passengers and goods, was located on this site prior to the construction of the Distribution Center. The first passenger to arrive at the station was Abraham Lincoln who was passing through New York on the way to his inauguration; four years later, his funeral train also left from the station. The High Line once ran through the original building into the second floor, as is evident by the now sealed-up opening. Approximately 8,000 mail trains annually ran into the building, where they were unloaded and loaded. Currently, nearly twelve pieces of mail are processed and delivered in New York City daily, making it one of the US Post Office’s largest distribution centers in the country. It also boasts the largest green roof in New York City.
The creamy white terra-cotta Classical Revival Hill Building was a loft commissioned by John Alexander Hill of Hill Publishing to house his expanding company’s offices and factories. After Hill’s death, the company merged with McGraw Publishing to form what is today’s McGraw-Hill Companies. The building was revolutionary at its time: it included a very early air conditioning system, as well as specially treated plate glass to temper the effects of heat waves on the interior temperature. Three-quarters of the building’s windows do not open because, at the time, it was thought that the act of opening windows was unsanitary, permitting pollution, dust, and noise to permeate the inside of the building. Also, the ceilings were designed to be 16 feet tall, to provide maximum lighting and ventilation. Regard for the employee’s health and comfort were of great importance to both Hill and the architects. At the time of the building’s completion, it was the heaviest steel structure of its size in New York, designed to reduce the effects of the vibration caused by the printing presses. An additional story was added for more space for the growing company in 1929. However, despite the addition, the company quickly outgrew the building, and McGraw commissioned Raymond Hood to design his iconic Art Deco 33 story green terracotta building at 330 West 42nd Street.

The IAC building, with its snowy white glass walls, sits centrally in a core of new construction off the High Line. It is the first project in New York City from Gehry, a prominent international architect based out of California. This is Gehry’s first all-glass structure, who is known internationally for designing sinewy, curved structures in metal, such as the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain. The curved appearance to the glass here is no trick of the eye; each of the glass panels was individually “cold-molded” on-site to fit into its frame. Three of the four corners of each glass pane were situated and sealed into place with the fourth forced in manually, curving up to four inches out-of-plane. The white coloring of the glass is actually a ceramic dot application meant for visual effect, meant to recall masted ships once dotting the Hudson, but also is practical, helping to insulate and shield the building from light and heat. IAC/InterActiveCorp is an internet-based media company founded by media mogul, Barry Diller.
The ornate Gothic Revival manufacturing tower known as the Zinn Building is representative of the wave of development in West Chelsea that followed improvements to waterfront and rail facilities in the area. It was built for the Zinn Company, a manufacturer of metal goods, as its manufacturing facility but also as a rental property to be occupied by other firms. Eleven stories high, the building is constructed of brick, stone and terra cotta with a steel frame. It employs a series of pneumatic caissons buried 75 feet below street level to sustain its heavy manufacturing loads; the building was one of the first to employ this system for its foundation. The engineering of the foundation and the fireproofing methods used in the building were considered state-of-the-art at the time and caused the Zinn Building to be touted in the contemporary press as “the best factory building in the city.”
The Otis Elevator Building is a seven story, Italian Renaissance Revival building that was originally erected to be the headquarters of the Otis Elevator Company. Established by Elisha Otis, the inventor of the elevator, the Otis Elevator Company provided elevators and escalators for most of the nation's skyscrapers and commercial buildings. Records indicate that the escalator was first designed and perfected in this building. Constructed of brick with a steel frame, the building was designed by Clinton & Russell, a firm which was responsible for scores of early twentieth century commercial buildings in New York City.
The expansive brick building was built on infill, land reclaimed from the Hudson River, for the New York Terminal Warehouse Company. The building is actually several buildings called stores, used for both cold and regular storage of goods ranging from theatrical sets to groceries and antique furniture and paintings. Trains could bring freight in and out of the warehouse through the large arched entrance on 11th Ave. Like other industrial buildings in the area, this building's used has changed from warehouse to a concourse for art galleries and commercial tenants.

The pair of glass towers that emerge out of the far western area of Midtown are known as the Silver Towers and are part of a larger residential complex, which includes River Place I, the two red buildings to the west. Architects Costas Kondylis & Associates are one of the most prolific large-scale residential architectural firms in New York, having completed nearly 50 projects for prominent developers, such as Trump. River Place I is the country's largest rent-stabilized, no-fee apartment building. As an 80-20 project, meaning that 80 percent of the apartments are rented at market rate and 20 percent are rented as subsidized housing, the project was partially the sale of bonds and is eligible for tax breaks. River Place I and Silver Towers are symbolic of the development of this part of lower Midtown, which has had a long history of industry, not luxury living.
Though accustomed to city crowds, New Yorkers value any open space they can find—hence the uniquely urban appreciation for backyards and roof gardens. Walking along the High Line, visitors are given a rare view into these usually private spaces. Whether used for gardening, barbecues, inflatable swimming pools, or simply enjoyed for their tranquility, and whether they have a lawn or are concrete, backyards are a treasured feature of the cityscape, prized by those urban dwellers fortunate enough to have their own, and envied by neighbors. Similarly, rooftop gardens are a great way to enjoy open space in the city. Some are filled with potted plants; others are fitted with deck chairs and patio furniture. The recent trend is rooftop farming. With ever-increasing...
In the mid-19th century, New York City’s cobblestone streets were replaced with Belgian Block. Fulton Street became the city’s first to be paved with Belgian Block in 1852. However, because of the difficulty of maintaining a smooth surface with these irregular-shaped blocks, the rectangular block pavement was adopted later in the century. Many of the Belgian Block streets were thus paved over, but some can still be found throughout the city. Belgian Blocks were initially granite blocks cut to fit between the frames of sailing vessels, where they served as ballast. When vessels were loaded with heavy cargo, requiring the removal of ballast, blocks piled up along the shore. It was discovered that these blocks would be easier to walk on than cobblestones, so they came to be used as pavers. Often mistaken for cobblestone, which is naturally-occurring and uneven in shape and size, Belgian Block is a rectangular quarried stone cut to a regular size and shape.

Graffiti is an ancient form of self-expression and an omnipresent condition of urban living. Modern graffiti is said to have been born in New York City. It was here, in the 1970s, that an epidemic of graffiti erupted as vandals plastered the streets and subway cars with their ‘tags’ – a pseudonym, usually combined with a number which represented the writer’s street address. It was also during this time that graffiti artists, motivated out of competition with one another, elaborated their tagging into forms resembling calligraphy, culminating in what is known as ‘wild style’. Wild style graffiti, inscrutable to the untrained eye, has spread from New York to streets and art galleries around the world. The graffiti along the High Line used to be a conspicuous urban feature but now, due to the Parks Department’s zero tolerance policy, almost all nearby graffiti has been removed.
North of 14th Street, Manhattan is laid out in a gridiron of straight streets and rectangular blocks. Today this urban feature is something New Yorkers may take for granted, however, in the city’s early development, New York’s streets were not laid out in such a planned, rational manner. In 1807 the mayor of New York proposed creating a new street system to support the city’s growth. In response the state of New York chartered a commission to implement a plan that would guide the future development of Manhattan. The Commissioners’ plan, orchestrated by head surveyor, John Randel Jr., was completed in 1811 giving most of Manhattan its current well-known grid pattern of 12 north to south avenues and 220 east to west cross streets. Some sections south of 14th Street, and all areas south of Houston Street were allowed to keep the original pre 1811 street plan, which they still have today. The High Line stretches through both non-grid and gridded sections of the city.

Brick smokestacks were a common sight of the Industrial Revolution, which took place in the 18th and 19th centuries. During this time major changes in agriculture, manufacturing and transportation had a profound impact on the socioeconomic and cultural fabric of the country. The West Chelsea neighborhood surrounding the High Line was once home to numerous factories, which used these smokestacks to disperse pollutants from the industrial processes. From the High Line, at least three smokestacks are visible, because of their sheer height. These smokestacks tower above other buildings because their increased height allows for a less concentrated dispersion, reducing excess fumes released into the city’s air supply. Aside from their height, smokestacks are built to precise specifications to ensure proper air draft. Although most are no longer function, these urban relics serve as reminders of the neighborhoods heavily industrialized past.
The shape of the built environment in New York City was and is determined by laws and regulations. Before the shapes of tenements were first regulated in the 19th century, the residences of the working class and poor were squalid and overcrowded. Typically four families were forced to share a single floor in cramped windowless rooms devoid of light and air. In response the city passed the Tenement House Act of 1879, which required that every room in a newly built a tenement be serviced by a window. This new requirement also altered the shape of tenements from rectangles to dumbbells by mandating air shafts for interior rooms. The law, however, was abused by speculative builders and failed to substantially improve the living conditions inside most tenements. The failures of the 1879 law were mended by the 'new law' of 1901 which expanded air shafts to more generously-sized courts. Again the form of tenements changed, becoming U, I and O shaped in accordance with the new law. Many of these building shapes can be seen among the properties abutting the High Line.

An icon of life in New York City, the water tower is a ubiquitous feature of the skyline. Water to the city is provided through a system of aqueducts fed by reservoirs and relying on gravity. In the 1800s, New York City required that all buildings higher than six stories have a rooftop water tower to ensure adequate water pressure on every floor. All water towers in New York are built by two companies, both of which are family businesses in operation since the 19th century. The towers are built of wood and no sealant is used to hold the water in. The wooden walls are held together with cables and as the water saturates the wood, it swells and the gaps close, becoming impermeable. Water towers store between 5,000 and 10,000 gallons of water. The upper portion of water is skimmed off the top for everyday use, while the water at the bottom of the tower is reserved for fighting fire. When the water drops below a certain level, a pump is triggered and the tank is refilled. Water towers have been incorporated into building design in various ways: either hidden behind an extension of the façade of the buildings, enclosed in rooftop boxes (sometimes ornately decorated), or left in plain view. They have also become emblems of fashion. The Tribeca neighborhood requires water towers on all buildings, whether or not they are actually being used.
When the High Line was constructed in 1930 to provide rail access to the city’s industrial west side, it was built over private property. When the rail was abandoned, these private owners pushed for demolition, however, a plan was created to preserve and transform the High Line through redevelopment, create new housing, and maintain and protect the art gallery district. In 2005, a zoning district was created, which maps residential, commercial and manufacturing districts according to their use and size, among other factors. This new zoning district allows landowners to sell their property rights to “receiving sites” on adjacent streets where new residential development will take place. Though views may change, the regulation will continue to ensure that new development will preserve light and air onto and along the High Line Park.
the end of the line