

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Van Tassell & Kearney Horse Auction Mart

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 126-128 East 13th Street [] not for publication

city or town New York [] vicinity

state New York code NY county New York code 061 zip code 10003

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [] statewide locally. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Ruth A Purpont DSHPO
Signature of certifying official/Title

April 23, 2007
Date

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register
[] see continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

date of action

Van Tassell & Kearney Horse Auction Mart
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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	TOTAL

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: specialty store (horse auction mart)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals/Beaux Arts

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Granite.

walls Brick.

Limestone (trim)

roof

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

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Narrative Description

The Van Tassell & Kearny Horse Auction Mart is located at 126-128 East 13th Street, on the south side of East 13th Street between Third and Fourth Avenues in the East Village section of New York City, New York County, New York. The building is located in an area with a mix of industrial and commercial buildings (most of which have been converted for residential use) and residential buildings, including several university dormitories. Buildings in the area range from low-scale structures of two to four stories, to high-rise loft and residential structures. Immediately to the east is a five-story (plus recent additions), Queen Anne style loft building (now residential), that is entered from East 12th Street. Farther east are two heavily altered former row houses, as well as two largely intact Greek Revival row houses. Immediately to the west is a five-story commercial building that has been altered on its lower floors. Farther west is a mix of structures, notably the American Felt Company's twelve-story loft building at no. 114 and the two-story firehouse, erected in 1929, at no. 108. The north side of East 13th Street consists primarily of three modern buildings – two New York University dormitories and a social housing project. Towards the east end of the block are several tenements. Farther east, on Third Avenue, are a mix of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century tenements with commercial storefronts, post-World War II apartment buildings, and, on the northwest corner of Third Avenue and East 13th Street, a new condominium tower. Farther west, on Fourth Avenue, are loft buildings. To the south, at 123 East 12th Street are former loft buildings and a New School dormitory. Behind the horse auction mart building is a non-historic, one- and three-story extension that fronts East 12th Street and is not part of this nomination. The extension is attached at the roof level only of the horse auction building and is not historically related to it. With the exception of the window sash, the building retains its integrity on the exterior to a very high degree and retains much of its interior integrity as well.

The Van Tassell & Kearny Horse Auction Mart occupies its entire lot measuring 49'-8½" on the front, 49'-4" at the rear, and 103'-3" in depth. The building, rising to a height of forty-eight feet, was originally a single-story structure with an interior mezzanine balcony. However, from the exterior, the facade reads as if it were a three-story structure. The Beaux-Arts style structure has a street facade of red brick rising from a granite base, and it

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is trimmed with limestone. With its arched roofline, the building takes the distinct form associated with late nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century buildings erected for the display of horses. The building is massed in a symmetrical manner with a central entrance crowned by a tall round-arch window. Rectangular, oval, and round windows flank this central motif in a symmetrical manner.

The East 13th Street facade of the Van Tassell & Kearney building rests on a granite base that is approximately four feet high and is beautifully cut into several sections. At the bottom of the base is a flat band set at the lot line. This is capped by an ovolo molding supporting a wider flat band. A recessed cavetto molding separates this band from another flat band that caps the base. Flanking the central entrance to the building, the outer corner of the middle and top bands are carved into a concave shape that tapers to a point. The entire facade above is clad in a rich red brick extensively highlighted with white Indiana limestone. The ends of the facade are keyed in a manner that resembles quoins. The central, rectangular entrance to the building has wood paneled, double doors that slide into the walls (the present doors not original). The entrance is set within a keyed limestone enframingent ("Gibbs surround"), embellished with a simple molding. An entablature with a shallow cornice caps the ensemble. The entrance is flanked by a pair of oval windows, a pair of rectangular windows, and a second pair of oval windows. Each deeply recessed oval window (with a non-historic metal window guard) is set within a sunburst pattern of brickwork, with each brick tapered in shape. The rectangular windows are set within keyed enframingents. A limestone beltcourse, extending from the frieze of the entrance entablature and running above the lintels of the rectangular windows, separates the lower level of the facade from the second level.

The upper portion of the facade is dominated by a wide, centrally-placed, deeply-recessed, round-arch window that extends from the second level into the third level of the street front. This window, and a pair of rectangular flanking windows, rest on a narrow limestone beltcourse that also serves as a sill. The arched window is set within a concave limestone enframingent. The enframingent is keyed to the facade at the second level and, in the arched portion on the third level, is outlined by a modest projecting molding. The focus of the arch is the ornately carved central cartouche, decorated with beltwork and ribbon swags, that supports a keystone. At present, the large central window is divided into ten wire-glass sections in three rows – four lights on the bottom

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and three on the two above. The bottom row, with its two central casements opening inward may be original; they appears on a 1939 photograph of the building. The remainder of the window sash has been replaced. The flanking rectangular openings are crowned by flat lintels capped by a narrow projecting molding, both of which continue across the facade as a beltcourse, separating the second and third levels of the facade.

The third level of the facade is articulated by a pair of round windows set above the rectangular openings on the lower levels. Each ocular opening has a limestone enframement with four keystones – to the sides and at the bottom and top. These windows retain their original sash, divided into five sections with a central diamond and four surrounding lights. The dramatic segmental-arch roofline, outlined by a modest limestone cornice molding, rises above. At either end of the facade is a horizontal molding, about two feet long, from which the arch springs. The center of the arch is marked by a raised flat-topped pediment that supports a projecting acanthus bouquet.

The interior of the auction mart retains many original features, although the original space – a single story with balconies suspended from the roof trusses, has been altered into a two-story space. The main entrance to the building is through the central vehicular entry. One immediately enters into a vestibule that is slightly wider than the entrance. The vestibule has a floor laid in small, chamfered, yellow bricks set in a herringbone pattern with a central brick square. The floor slopes slightly upward. The east and west walls of the vestibule are clad in red brick with black mortar. A single rectangular entrance with granite lintel is cut into each side wall. The entrance to the left leads to what must have been an office, while that to the right leads to a stairway. The spaces to either side of the vestibule have brick walls. In the space to the west is a stairway with a square, chamfered, cast-iron newel post; cast-iron risers, incised, cast-iron treads, twisted and straight iron balusters, and a wood handrail. A non-contributing steel grate separates the vestibule from the main space. In the floor of the office space is a hatch leading to the small cellar which predates the construction of this building. The cellar has a stone south wall and brick-arch construction.

The main floor is a long rectangular room. The extent of the space is original, as is the brick south wall, but the concrete floor and the steel and wood beams and rafters supported by slender steel columns are later. The

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ceiling appears to have been added in 1953 when the space was divided into two floors. At the south end of the room are three original segmental-arch window openings with wood, 3x3, wire-glass windows. These windows look out onto a small courtyard that is part of the adjoining lot on East 12th Street. To the east of these windows is a later vehicular entrance leading to the addition on East 12th Street (not part of this nomination).

A great deal of original fabric is evident on the second floor, notably in the roof structure. Like the first floor, the second is a large open space. The structure of the peak roof is composed of six steel trusses running east-west. The strength of the trusses is gained from the use of diagonal braces. The trusses are connected by x-shaped metal braces. The trusses support a wood roof with four iron skylights, each composed of ten wire-glass windows. The woodwork on the ceiling is in various patterns, with horizontally-laid, wide boards set flush with one another; vertical boards with horizontal supports; and narrow boards near the peak. The building permit specifies that this wood will be Georgia pine. On the west side each truss is anchored to the floor by a steel post (not original).

On the brick north wall, opening out onto East 13th Street, are the inner portions of the windows described on the exterior. The rectangular windows that flank the central arched opening have steel-beam lintels. The brick south wall is pierced by five segmental-arch windows, each with 3x3, wire-glass windows. In the center of the pediment above these windows is a five-panel round window. The second floor has a non-contributing concrete floor, part of which is raised up several feet.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location
- C** a birthplace or grave
- D** a cemetery
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance:

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Commerce

Period of Significance:

1903-1916

Significant Dates:

1903

Significant Person:

n/a

Cultural Affiliation:

n/a

Architect/Builder:

Jardine, Kent & Jardine

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by historic American Building Survey

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other repository: _____

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Narrative Statement of Significance

The Van Tassell & Kearney Horse Auction Mart meets National Register Criterion C as a significant example of a rare late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century building type: the horse and carriage auction mart. Indeed, this appears to be the only surviving example of this building type in New York City. The building is a notable work of Beaux-Arts architecture, designed in 1903 by the prominent architectural firm of Jardine, Kent & Jardine. In addition, Van Tassell & Kearney was a prominent business that auctioned thoroughbred horses and frequently attracted members of New York City's social elite to its weekly auctions. The building is also significant under Criterion A in the area of commerce for its association with New York City's horse and carriage trade. As the interest in recreational riding and carriage driving declined in the early twentieth century, with the advent of the automobile and the social custom of pleasure driving, Van Tassell & Kearney transferred its business to auctioning high quality automobiles. The company went out of business in the 1930s and the building was transformed into the annex of the prominent Delehanty Institute. Here, men were trained to take civil service exams for promotion in and admission to the police and fire departments, and where, during World War II, women were trained in machine technology and blueprint reading so that they could work in defense industries. From 1978 until 2005, this building housed the studio of Frank Stella, one of America's preeminent artists.

The Van Tassell & Kearney business can trace its roots back to c. 1868 when William Van Tassell established an auction business at 112 East 13th Street and 39 Nassau Street.¹ The New York-born Van Tassell would have been twenty-eight at this time.² Although the 1868 *New York City Directory* does not elaborate on the goods that Van Tassell auctioned, the directory of the following years lists carriages. In the 1873 directory, Van

¹ New York City Directory, 1868. Van Tassell does not appear in the 1867 directory or in earlier directories. Thus, the business was established in either 1867 or early 1868.

² The United States Census (1870) lists William Van Tassel [sic] as a twenty-nine year old auctioneer owning real estate worth \$10,000. He was born in New York City, as were his wife Amelia and seven-year old daughter Myra.

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Tassell's listing included an advertisement stating that his business was "general auctioneers and commission merchants" and "horse auction mart and carriage repository."³ 1873 is also the year when Edward Kearney first appears in a city directory. He is listed as being in the provisions business with establishments on East 9th Street and at South Catherine Market. However, he was in business earlier, since in the 1870 United States Census he is listed as a New York-born provisions dealer, living with his wife, two sons, three daughters, and two servants.⁴ Van Tassell and Kearney lived close to one another – Van Tassell at 67 Lexington Avenue and Kearney at 97 Lexington Avenue. By the following year, 1874, the firm of Van Tassell & Kearney had been established. Although it is not totally clear, Van Tassell may initially have formed a partnership with Edward Kearney's son Edward W. Kearney.⁵ Later, both Kearneys are listed as part of the horse auction business and in 1916, when Edward Kearney, Jr., the third generation of Kearney's involved in the business, died, his obituary notes that he was "the son of Edward W. Kearney and grandson of Edward Kearney, founder of the firm."⁶ Van Tassell died in the late 1880s, but the Kearneys maintained the firm's original name. In 1900, Edward W. Kearney is described in a biographical directory as a "carriage builder and horse and carriage auctioneer." He was also involved in a number of horse and carriage related organizations, serving as the governor of the New York Athletic Club, and as a member of the Suburban Riding and Driving Club, the Manhattan Club, and the Parkway Driving Club.⁷

The Van Tassell & Kearny company was located on East 13th Street throughout its entire history. The firm erected several buildings on the south side of East 13th Street, often extending through the block to East 12th

³ New York City Directory (1873).

⁴ United States Census (1870).

⁵ The 1874 directory lists Edward Kearney as a merchant on East 9th Street and meat dealer at Catherine Market, and Edward W. Kearney in the auction business at 112 East 13th Street; both lived at 97 Lexington Avenue.

⁶ "Edward Kearney, Jr., Dies Suddenly," *New York Times* 5 April 1916, 13.

⁷ *Biographical Directory of the State of New York 1900* (New York: Biographical Directory Company, 1900) 237.

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Street, for auctions of horses, carriages, and other equine-related objects, and for the storage of carriages. An advertisement published in the city directory for 1890 elaborates on their business:

Auctioneers & Commission Merchants

Horse & Carriage Auction Mart

Regular Sales every Tuesday and Friday at 10 o'clock

at

130 & 132 East 13th Street

125, 127 & 129 East 12th Street

Between 3d and 4th Aves., New York

Horses, Carriages and Harnesses, etc. at Private Sale

Carriages received on Storage

Van Tassell & Kearney was one of a small number of auction marts that specialized in selling high-end horses and carriages. In the second half of the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth century, as wealth and leisure time increased in New York, many of the city's wealthiest social leaders became involved in pleasure riding. They purchased thoroughbred horses for riding and racing independently or as harness and carriage horses. By the late nineteenth century, several speedways for horse or carriage driving and racing had been developed in New York, including along the Hudson River, along the Harlem River (the Harlem River Driveway), and along what would become the Grand Concourse and Boulevard in the Bronx (NR listed in part). In addition, as wealthy New Yorkers acquired large country estates, hunting and polo also became popular. The social aspect of these activities was codified in the creation of several private men's clubs where the focus was on riding. The most notable of these was the Riding Club of New York (later the Riding and Driving Club), said to be "the largest as well as the most exclusive in the country."⁸ Auction marts specializing in the sale of horses and carriages developed as a result of the rise of recreational riding. Several auction marts opened

⁸ *Appletons' Dictionary of Greater New York and Its Neighborhood*, 25th edition (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1903), 250.

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facilities in New York, including New York branches of the London firms of Tattersalls and the Horse Exchange, and local firms such as Fiss, Doerr & Carroll and Van Tassell & Kearney.⁹ The 1903 *Appletons' Dictionary of New York*, specifically notes that "horses are sold at auction on E. 24th st. [Fiss, Doerr & Carroll], between 3d and Lexington avs., on 13th st. [Van Tassell & Kearney], between 3d and 4th avs., and at the Horse Exchange, 50th st. and Broadway.¹⁰ Other horse auctions were held seasonally in rented spaces, such as Madison Square Garden; the Fasig-Tipton Company held auctions at this fashionable venue.¹¹

The Van Tassell & Kearney auction company expanded its premises in 1903 with the construction of the building at 126-128 East 13th Street. This building became the site of many prominent auctions that attracted leading members of the riding and racing community. In May 1906, for example, the *New York Times* reporting on the sale of Richard F. Carman's horses "at Van Tassell & Kearney's sales ring, 126 East Thirteenth Street," noted that it had "attracted a big crowd which included many leaders of society," and in a 1908 article describing the Paul J. Rainey sale, a reporter described how the sale "attracted a number of well-known clubmen from the New York hunting and polo clubs."¹² Throughout its years of operation, Van Tassell & Kearney held twice-weekly auctions on Tuesday and Friday, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Although Van Tassell & Kearney already occupied several sites on East 13th Street, including a large structure at 130 East 13th Street, it did not have an adequate auction ring. Thus, in 1903, the firm acquired the two lots at 126 and 128 East 13th Street and commissioned the well-known New York City architectural firm of Jardine, Kent & Jardine to design an auction mart specifically for horses and carriages. The Jardine, Kent & Jardine firm traces its roots back to the establishment of the firm of D. & J. Jardine in 1865 by two Scottish-immigrant

⁹ Fiss, Doerr & Carroll's buildings at 139-151 East 24th Street were demolished in the 1990s. A c. 1903 catalogue for this company is extant in the rare books collection of Columbia University's Avery Library.

¹⁰ *Appletons'*, 129.

¹¹ Several Fasig-Tipton auction catalogues are extant in the collection of the New York Public Library.

¹² "R. F. Carman's Horses Sold for \$7,720," *New York Times* 23 May 1906, 6; "Rainey's Hunters Sold," *New York Times*, 1 October 1908, 10.

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brothers, David and John Jardine. In about 1887, another brother, George Jardine became active in the firm. As the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission has noted, D. & J. Jardine was "one of the more prominent, prolific, and versatile architectural firms" active in New York City.¹³ After David Jardine's death in 1892, the two remaining Jardine brothers joined with architect William W. Kent, forming the firm of Jardine, Kent & Jardine. The Jardine's firms designed a wide variety of buildings, including residential, commercial, and religious structures, using many different styles, including Italianate, Victorian Gothic, Neo-Grec, Queen Anne, and Beaux Arts, and applying a variety of materials, including brick, stone, and cast iron. Among its most prominent buildings are the "Thomas Twins," Broadway and Thomas Street (1869-70; one extant); the former B. Altman & Co. store (1876-80) on Sixth Avenue; the Baumann Brothers Furniture and Carpet Store (1880-81) on East 14th Street; the Wilbraham bachelor flats (1888-90) on the corner of Fifth Avenue and West 30th Street; and the enlargement of the Church of the Incarnation (1882; NR listed) on the corner of Madison Avenue and East 35th Street.¹⁴

For Van Tassell & Kearney, Jardine, Kent & Jardine created a fashionable Beaux Arts style structure designed to meet the specific needs of a horse and carriage auction establishment. In the final decade of the nineteenth century and first decade of the twentieth century, the Beaux Arts style was among the most popular in New York, especially for buildings built by or used by the city's social elite. The style, with its three-dimensional facades ornamented with sculptural detail, particularly the use of ornamental cartouches, derives from contemporary French architecture. American architects studying at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris became familiar with this design vocabulary and began using it for townhouses, public buildings, and commercial structures in about 1890. It is evident in the work of such French-trained architects as Carrere & Hastings, Warren & Wetmore, Ernest Flagg, and C. P. H. Gilbert. As the style grew in fashion, other architects, never

¹³ New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, "The Wilbraham Designation Report," report prepared by Jay Shockley (New York: Landmarks Preservation Commission, 2004), 3.

¹⁴ Also see, Dennis S. Francis, *Architects in Practice, New York City 1840-1900* (New York: Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1879), 44; [David Jardine's obituary], *American Architect and Building News*, 18 June 1892, 173; "John Jardine a Suicide, *New York Times* 24 June 1920, 26; and *A History of Real Estate, Building and Architecture in New York City* (New York: Record and Guide, 1898), 685-689.

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trained in Paris, adopted it, as is evident on the 13th Street auction mart. Here, Jardine, Kent & Jardine employed the contrasting red brick and white limestone found on such prominent Beaux Arts townhouses as the William and Maria Schieffelin House (Richard Howland Hunt, 1898-1900) at 5 East 66th Street and the Alfred Corning Clark House (Ernest Flagg, 1898-900; demolished) on Riverside Drive and West 89th Street. In addition, the monumental round-arch window with concave enframement is akin to a similar window form used by Warren & Wetmore on several of its houses, including the Marshall Orme and Caroline Astor Wilson House (1900-03) at 3 East 64th Street, and the James A. and Florence Sloane Burden House (1902-05; NR listed) at 7 East 91st Street. The round and oval windows and the cartouche in the arch are also typical Beaux-Arts motifs.

The horse auction mart was a specialized building type that required a large high space in which horses and carriages could be displayed in a ring lit by large windows and rooftop skylights, and where auction patrons could view the "product" from balconies. Thus, the arched roofline became a distinctive feature of such buildings also evident at the pair of auction structures erected by Fiss, Doerr & Carroll in 1906-07 at 147-51 East 24th Street and in 1913-14 at 129-41 East 24th Street (both demolished). Since the interior needed to be a large open space, support columns were avoided. The roofs of these buildings were supported by steel truss systems. The steel trusses with wood roofing pierced by skylights are extant at the Van Tassell & Kearney building. The Van Tassell & Kearney building is believed to be the only extant horse auction mart building in New York City.

As the automobile became increasingly popular in the early twentieth century, and as pleasure driving and auto racing replaced pleasure riding, carriage driving, and horse racing as a popular activities for many wealthy people, stables were increasingly converted into garages. In 1907, for example, Van Tassell & Kearny disposed of the entire contents of the C. K. G. Billings stable. Billings had been one of the most prominent horse racers in New York; indeed, only a few years earlier, he had assembled a large estate in what is now Fort Tryon Park, and had erected an enormous stable for his trotting horses. However, as the *New York Times* reported, "since taking up automobiling Mr. Billings had gradually reduced his big stable of horses and ponies."¹⁵ In 1916, Van

¹⁵ "Billing's Pony Establishment Sold," *New York Times* 27 March 1907, 10.

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Tassell & Kearney were the auctioneers for the prestigious Knickerbocker Stables at 238-240 West 54th Street, a sale held "consequent to the fact that the building is about to be converted into a fireproof Garage."¹⁶

Van Tassell & Kearney could not avoid the fate of these other horse-related establishments. In c. 1916, the firm switched from auctioning horses and carriages to auctioning automobiles. In November 1916, the firm advertised "Sell your car at auction: Quick decisions; Satisfactory results."¹⁷ The following year, the firm advertised "first-class cars" and also noted that, as it had with horses and carriages, it held its auctions on Tuesday and Friday, although now they began at noon.¹⁸ It is not known how long the automobile auctions lasted, but by 1938, when the building was converted into the annex of the Delehanty Institute, it was being used for automobile storage.

In 1938, the Delehanty Realty Corporation, a subsidiary of the Delehanty Institute, leased the former Van Tassell & Kearney building in order to convert it into a school to teach prospective police officers and firefighters what they would need to pass the civil service exams. The Delehanty Institute, "one of the city's leading civil service schools," was founded by Michael J. Delehanty.¹⁹ The school was established in the early twentieth century as an alternative to the city's only civil service school which, at that time, only provided physical training. Delehanty provided mental stimulation in his classes so that students could pass the civil service exams. At the time that the institute opened its East 13th Street annex it was "the largest institution of its kind in the world, with an aggregate enrollment of 250,000 persons in twenty-five years. . . . At present [1939], seventy percent of the fire fighters and perhaps more of the policemen of New York have taken the Delehanty

¹⁶ Advertisement, *New York Times* 2 August 1916, 10.

¹⁷ Advertisement, *New York Times* 28 November 1916, 22.

¹⁸ Advertisement, *New York Times* 6 November 1917, 20.

¹⁹ M. J. Delehanty, "Headed Institute," *New York Times* 13 April 1964, 29.

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Section 8 Page 8

Van Tassel & Kearney Horse Auction Mart
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courses.”²⁰ The institutes’s main building was at 115 East 15th Street, with a business and secretarial school on West 42nd Street and a vocational school on East 16th Street. According to a letter written by Michael Delehanty in January 1939, the use to which the East 13th Street building was to be put “is to impart instruction to male adults, that is, men now in the Police and Fire Departments who seek promotion to higher ranks, and young men seeking entrance to these departments.”²¹ During the Second World War, the building was also used to teach women machine technology. As the *New York Times* noted, “women will be taught assembly and inspection work, the reading of blueprints, and various mechanical aspects needed in defense industries.”²²

The 1938-39 transformation of the East 13th Street building from automobile use into a school included some minor alterations to the balconies and the construction of a new iron stair (probably the stair now located to the west of the entrance). Hugh Taussig was the architect for these changes. Although surviving records are not entirely clear, it appears that a full second story was created by the Delehanty Institute in 1954 (William H. Fuhrer, architect). In 1978, the building was purchased by Frank Stella, one of the preeminent American artists of the later half of the twentieth century. Stella used the building as his studio until 2005. Since the occupancy by Stella is not within the fifty-year significance criteria and the artist is still living and actively working, it is

²⁰ Federal Writers’ Project of the Works Progress Administration, *New York Learns: A Guide to the Educational Facilities of the Metropolis* (New York: M. Barrows & Co., 1939) 208.

²¹ Delehanty to Bernard J. Gillroy, Superintendent of Buildings, 23 January 1939 (New York City Department of Buildings Collection, Municipal Archives, block 558 lot 20 & 43).

²² “Delehanty to Teach Women.”

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not being included in the significance of the building. However, at a later date, the significance of this building in the history of art, specifically to the creation of major works by Joseph Stella, may need to be reevaluated.

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Van Tassell & Kearney Horse Auction Mart

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9. Major Bibliographic References

A History of Real Estate, Building and Architecture in New York City (New York: Record and Guide, 1898).

Appletons' Dictionary of Greater New York and Its Neighborhood, 25th edition (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1903).

Biographical Directory of the State of New York 1900 (New York: Biographical Directory Company, 1900).

"Edward Kearney, Jr., Dies Suddenly," *New York Times* 5 April 1916, 13.

"M. J. Delehanty, Headed Institute," *New York Times* 13 April 1964, 29.

Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration, *New York Learns: A Guide to the Educational Facilities of the Metropolis* (New York: M. Barrows & Co., 1939).

Van Tassel & Kearney Horse Auction Mart
Name of Property

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 585350 4509381
Zone Easting Northing

3 18
Zone Easting Northing

2 18

4 18

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By (*See continuation sheet for author)

name/title Kathy Howe, Historic Preservation Specialist

organization NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation date December 22, 2006
Field Services Bureau

street & number Peebles Island, P.O. Box 189 telephone 518-237-8643, ext. 3266

city or town Waterford state NY zip code 12188

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Ultimate Realty NY, LLC

street & number 141 West 36th Street telephone

city or town New York state NY zip code 10018

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20503

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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Van Tassell & Kearney Horse Auction Mart
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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of this nomination is outlined on the accompanying Sanborn map.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of this nomination includes the entire lot on which the Van Tassell & Kearney Horse Auction Mart is located.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 11 Page 1

Van Tassell & Kearney Horse Auction Mart

Name of Property

New York County, New York

County and State

11. Form Prepared by

Andrew S. Dolkart
116 Pinehurst Avenue
New York, NY 10033
212-568-2480

Form prepared for

Ultimate Realty NY, LLC
141 West 36th Street
New York, NY 10018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 2

Van Tassell & Kearney Horse Auction Mart

Name of Property

New York County, New York

County and State

Additional Documentation

Photographs

Van Tassell & Kearney Horse Auction Mart

126-128 East 13th Street

New York County, NY

Photographer: Andrew Dolkart

Date: November 2006 (unless otherwise noted)

.TIF files on CD-R media on file at NPS.

Photo 1: North elevation, view looking southeast

Photo 2: Second-story arched window, north elevation, view looking south

Photo 3: Cornice detail, north elevation, view looking south

Photo 4: First-story oval window, north elevation, view looking south

Photo 5: Base detail to east of entrance, north elevation, view looking southeast

Photo 6: Entrance vestibule floor, view looking north

Photo 7: First-story interior, view looking south

Photo 8: Second-story interior, view looking north

Photo 9: Second-story interior, view looking south

Photo 10: Ceiling truss, view looking north

Photo 11: **Historic view of north elevation, looking southeast, c. 1939** (tax photo, NYC Municipal Archives)

Photo 12: **Van Tassell & Kearney advertisement, February 25, 1905** (*Wall Street Journal*)



Van Tassell &
Kearney Horse
Auction Mart

126-128 East 13th St
New York County
NY.

Zone 18
Easting 585350
Northing 4509381

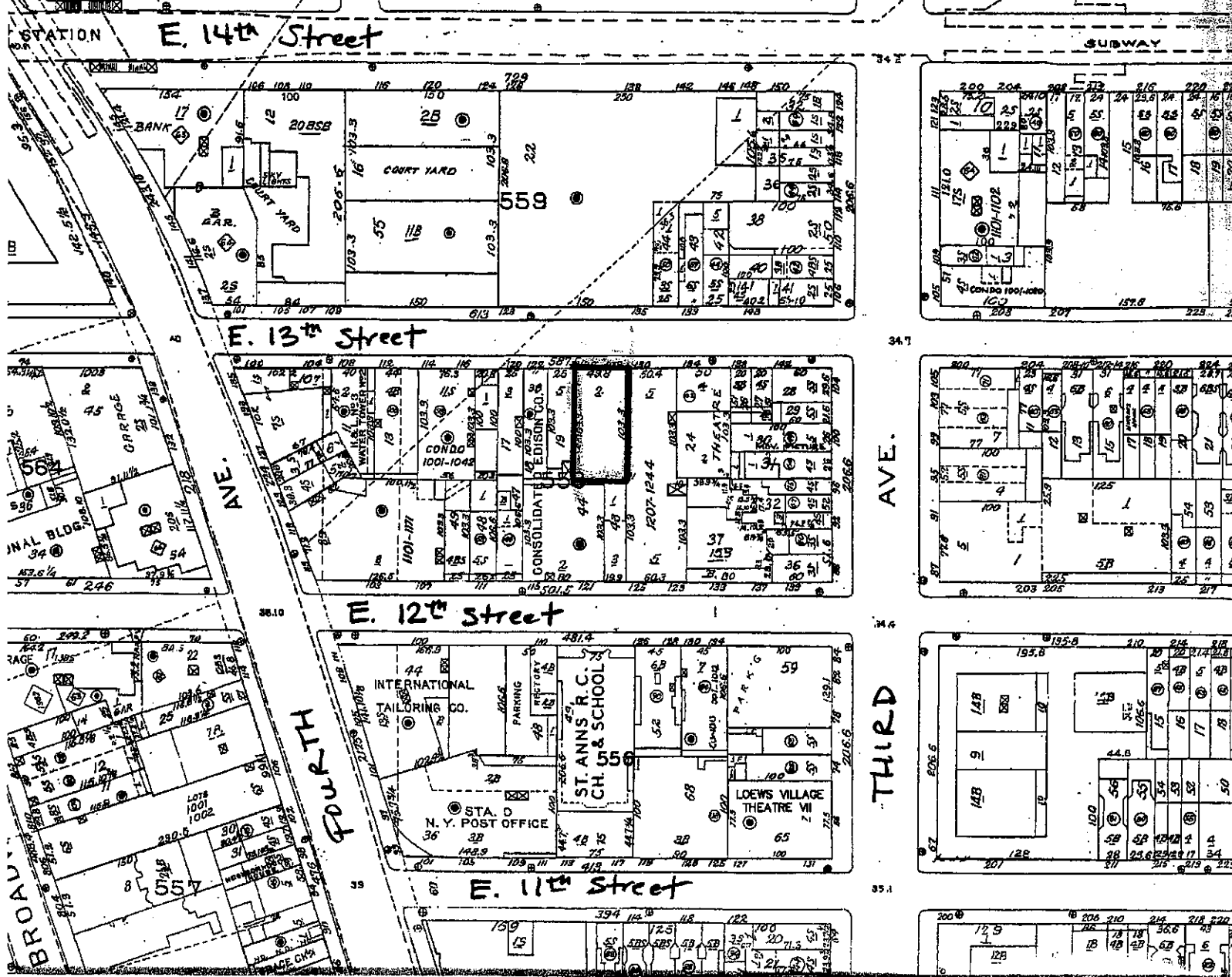
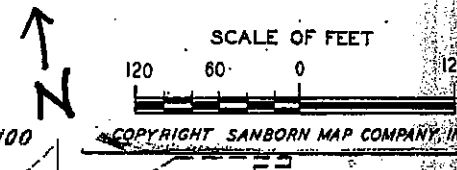
Van Tassell & Kearney Horse Auction Mart
 126-128 East 13th Street
 New York County, NY

Boundary indicated by dark line
 Sanborn Map Company, 2000

PART OF SECTION 2

44

David Mann to Dan'l Tompkins Lib. 69 P. 507





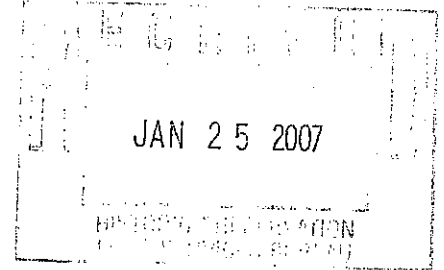
The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North, New York NY 10007 TEL: 212-669-7922 FAX: 212-669-7797
<http://nyc.gov/landmarks/>



RONDA WIST
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
rwist@pc.nyc.gov

January 19, 2007



Ms. Ruth Pierpont, Director
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 189
Peebles Island
Waterford, New York 12188-0189

Re: Van Tassel & Kearney Horse Auction Mart, New York,
New York

Dear Ms. Pierpont:

I write on behalf of Chair Robert B. Tierney in response to your request for comment on the eligibility of the Van Tassel & Kearney Horse Auction Mart at 126-28 East 13th Street in Manhattan for the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

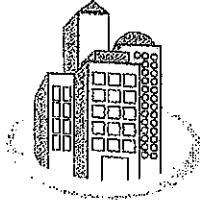
The Commission strongly supports the nomination of the Van Tassel & Kearney Horse Auction Mart. On September 7, 2006, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing and the Van Tassel & Kearney Horse Auction Mart is under consideration for designation as an individual New York City landmark.

Therefore, based on the Commission's review of the property and the materials submitted by the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau, the Commission has determined that the Van Tassel & Kearney Horse Auction Mart appears to meet the criteria for inclusion on the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

Sincerely yours,

Ronda Wist

cc: Robert B. Tierney, Chair
Mary Beth Betts



Ultimate Realty NY, LLC

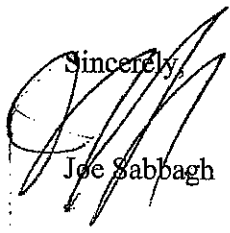
December 27, 2006

Dear Ms. Howe:

I am the owner of the Van Tassell & Kearney Horse Auction Mart, located at 126-128 East 13th Street, New York, N.Y. I am fully in support of the listing of this building in the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places. I look forward to the meeting of the New York State Review Board.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Joe Sabbagh