



## Landmarks Preservation Commission

### 138 Second Avenue House

138 Second Avenue, Manhattan  
Manhattan Block: 00450; Lot: 0005

## Backlog Initiative: Addressing 95 Properties Manhattan A Group 1 Items

Manhattan Community Board 3  
Public Hearing Date(s): 6/23/2009



Photos: (left) 2014 (right) undated research image

### Special Public Hearings

The Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a public hearing on the backlog of buildings in the Borough of Manhattan on **November 5, 2015** and encourages interested parties to submit written testimony in advance of that hearing. Each speaker will be given three minutes total to speak, and in that time may address all of the items within Manhattan A Group 1, just particular items, or add comments to support written testimony. In order to conduct efficient hearings, we ask speakers to register in advance, and submit their written statements and materials that will be read at the hearing by **October 29, 2015** to [backlog95@lpc.nyc.gov](mailto:backlog95@lpc.nyc.gov). If you are unable to attend the hearing, your written submissions will be entered into the record and distributed to the Commissioners.

If you have questions about this property or the hearing process please contact [backlog95@lpc.nyc.gov](mailto:backlog95@lpc.nyc.gov) or call (212) 669-7817. If you would like more information about this property, please see the research file summary (over) and go to our website (<http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/html/backlog95>) and click on the link for this building's research file.





## Landmarks Preservation Commission

### 138 Second Avenue House Description

Built: 1832-33

Architect: Not determined

Style: Federal

## Backlog Initiative: Addressing 95 Properties Manhattan A Group 1 Items

Landmark Type: Individual

### Research Staff Hearing Statement (2009)

#### 138 Second Avenue

Located on a busy commercial section of Second Avenue, 138 is a rare surviving example of a Federal-style rowhouse, distinguished by an elaborate Gibbs door surround, a high stoop, molded pediment window lintels and Flemish-bond brickwork. Constructed speculatively in 1832-33 on land that was originally part of Peter Stuyvesant's farm that had been sub-divided among his heirs, it retains similar details to other Federal-style houses developed by English-born Thomas E. Davis. Although Davis developed the both sides of St. Mark's Place (East 8<sup>th</sup> Street) between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues, as well as other areas nearby, few of these early-19<sup>th</sup>-century buildings remain. The rowhouse appears to have been altered in the late nineteenth century with the enlargement of the fourth story and the installation of an Italianate-style cornice and stoop railing, which remain today. A projecting bay at the basement and parlor floor levels, likely added around the same time, was later expanded in 1916. The brick piers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century storefront remain, despite the installation of replacement windows.

In the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as Manhattan's wealthier families began to move north, away from the bustling downtown metropolis, the construction of townhouses and rowhouses changed the rural nature of this area, and further west around Washington Square. Lower Second Avenue and the adjacent side streets became very fashionable from about the time of the house's construction to the 1850s, when an influx of immigrants, commercial interests and institutions changed the upscale residential character of the neighborhood. Correspondingly, many buildings were converted to multiple dwellings, often with commercial tenants at the basement and parlor floors, especially on the avenues. The site is reflective of almost 400 years of the history of this part of Manhattan: with ownership by heirs and descendants of Peter Stuyvesant until the 1950s recalling the early rural history of the land, the building's elaborate door surround, high stoop, window lintels and brickwork reflecting the area's early 19<sup>th</sup> century high-end-residential character, and the two-story projecting storefront and enlarged fourth story reflecting the later mixed commercial and residential use of the area that is still evident today.

