The New York Landmarks Conservancy Lucy G. Moses Preservation Awards Submittal



Jefferson Market Library 425 Avenue of the Americas New York New York

Exterior Renovation



32 Avenue of the Americas New York, NY 10013 Tel 212 505 1133 www.superstructures.com



Jefferson Market Courthouse in the early 1900s (from the National Park Service Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation's Historic American Buildings Survey of 1968

Renewing "the Best Loved of all Village Landmarks" 1

The Jefferson Market Branch of the New York Public Library is one of the most recognizable and beloved buildings in Greenwich Village. It is widely thought to be one of the finest Victorian Gothic buildings in the United States. In 1885 a panel of American architects sponsored by *American Architect and Building News* voted it the fifth best building in America.

Today the building is prized not only as an outstanding example of civic design, but also as the site of one of the earliest adaptive re-use projects in the United States -- a transformative event in the preservation movement. Given this context, the current exterior restoration project sought to preserve both these stages of the building's evolution as being historically important.

Built originally as the Third Judicial District Courthouse from 1874 to 1877, the structure was designed by architect Frederick Clarke Withers of the firm of Vaux and Withers. At one time it was part of a larger complex of buildings which filled the block, but now only the former Courthouse remains.

The Courthouse's High Victorian Gothic design made use of polychrome materials – red and black brick, granite, buff sandstone trim and variegated roof slates. Its remarkable and varied stone ornamentation includes gargoyles, the seal of New York City, a tympanum depicting a scene from *The Merchant of Venice*, and panels of delicate floral patterns among many other details. The building also features stained glass windows and a fountain decorated with birds and animals.

The courthouse was a busy one, so much so that the country's first night court began there. Among those arraigned there was Harry K. Thaw, the murderer of celebrity architect Stanford White. Mae West also came before the court on obscenity charges arising from her Broadway play *Sex*.

The building ceased to function as a courthouse in 1945 and was slated for demolition in 1958. A group of community preservationists campaigned to have the building converted into a library, and eventually the New York Public Library agreed to the plan. In 1961, architect Giorgio Cavaglieri was selected to restore the exterior and redesign the building's interior for its new use. Cavaglieri prided himself on combining new and old design. The restoration is estimated to have cost \$1.4 million, or \$10.8 million in today's dollars. The library opened in 1967 but, facing budget cutbacks in 1974, the Library's Board of Trustees voted to close the branch. Once again there was a public outcry and the decision was rescinded one month later. The Jefferson Market Branch Library continues to serve the community. It is known for such resources as its special collection of books on the history of New York City and Greenwich Village in particular.

The building is within the Greenwich Village Historic District, created by the New York City Landmarks Conservancy in 1969. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972 and was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1977, both under the name "Third Judicial District Courthouse." The building received further exterior restoration in 1994 by architect Joseph Pell Lombardi.





425 Avenue of the Americas prior to restoration

The recent exterior restoration, completed in 2013, was overseen by the New York City Department of Design and Construction. Funding was provided through the New York City Capital Budget and appropriations by the New York City Council and The Office of the Mayor. The scope of work had to be adjusted several times over the course of the project owing to the recessionary state of the economy, but the end result was an integral step in revitalizing and protecting an architectural treasure. A wide range of building elements was addressed as part of this restoration including:

- pressed brick masonry
- Ohio sandstone ornamentation
- · copper and slate roofing
- copper gutters and leaders
- the iconic tower's balcony railings and clock faces
- structural issues

The project is further detailed in the pages which follow. As a result of the DDC's informed stewardship, and the efforts of a team of capable professionals, the architectural and community heritage embodied in the Jefferson Market Branch has been preserved and enhanced for the benefit of library patrons, the Greenwich Village community, and the many visitors to this world-renowned historic district.

Sources: New York Public Library website; Wikipedia; New York Times, "The Jefferson Market Courthouse; A Stopped Clock Sired the Preservation Movement; National Park Service, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation's Historic American Buildings Survey of 1968; SUPERSTRUCTURES' Exterior Investigation Report dated December 1, 2008; The Municipal Engineers Journal, Volume II/III, 1995, "Jefferson Market Library Restoration."

(1) Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, 1995

RESTORATION ITEM LEGEND

RAD CODE	RESTORATION ITEM	LEGEND
COA 02	WATER REPELLENT COATING: SANDSTONE	N.A.
CLN 01	GENERAL CLEANING: SANDSTONE	N.A.
CLN 01A	GENERAL CLEANING: BRICK MASONRY	N.A.
CLN 02	REMOVAL OF EFFLORESCENCE	
CLN 03	REMOVAL OF BIOGROWTH	
CLN 04	REMOVAL OF STAINING	
CLN 05	REMOVAL OF PREVIOUS COATING	
CLK 01	TOWER CLOCK DIAL ANCHORAGE REPLACEMENT	N.A.
FIN 01 TO 0	3 IRON FINIAL RESTORATION: AT GABLES	N.A.
FIN 04	IRON FINIAL RESTORATION: AT COPPER ROOF CAPS	N.A.
FIN 05	SANDSTONE/CAST STONE FINIAL RESTORATION	N.A.

RAD CODE	RESTORATION ITEM	LEGEND
JNT 01	JOINT SEALANT REPLACEMENT	N.A.
JNT 02	SKYJOINT SEALANT INSTALLATION	N.A.
JNT 04	LEAD WEATHER CAP INSTALLATION	N.A.
LTL 01	STEEL PLATE REPLACEMENT: TOWER	
LTL 02	LINTEL RESTORATION: BELOW CLOCK TOWER	
LUV 01	STORM-RESISTANT LOUVER INSTALLATION: SPIRE	N.A.
MAS 01	BRICK MASONRY REPLACEMENT	{ OR
PNT 01	BRICK MASONRY POINTING	
PNT 02	SANDSTONE MASONRY POINTING	N.A.
STN 01&01A	SANDSTONE CRACK RESTORATION	{
0711 000 000		B3388

RAD CODE	RESTORATION ITEM	LEGEND
STN 03	SANDSTONE SURFACING HONING: ENTRANCE PORTAL	62
STN 03A	SANDSTONE FLAKING REMOVAL	
STN 04	SANDSTONE PLUG RESTORATION	•
STN 05A TO 05C	SANDSTONE DUTCHMAN RESTORATION	
STN 06	SANDSTONE DUTCHMAN RESTORATION: BAND COURSE	
STN 07A	SANDSTONE RECARVING	N.A.
STN 08&08A	SANDSTONE UNIT REPLACEMENT	
STN 09	SANDSTONE PEDIMENT RESTORATION: ENTRANCE PORTAL	N.A.
STN 10	SANDSTONE CORNICE DUTCHMEN RESTORATION	
STN 11	SANDSTONE RESTORATION: VANCET ARCHED WINDOW SILL	[]]
STN 12	SANDSTONE COPING RESTORATION: MAIN	N.A.

Ser.



Top left: Deteriorated stone before restoration. Bottom left: Stone ornament after recarving. Top right: Re-carving stone in place. Bottom center: Deteriorated stone before. Bottom right: Newly carved stone ornament replaces highly eroded original carving.



Stone Ornamentation

One of the glories of the Library's façade is the extensive Ohio sandstone ornamentation. The sandstone was found to be crumbling in many places due to age, weathering, and pollution. Though the condition of the stone varied widely, with some in perfect condition after 140 years, even some of the sandstone that did not appear deteriorated crumbled away when tapped. The goal was to keep the original material wherever possible, so extensive re-carving was done in place by skilled artisans to match the original as much as possible and preserve the sense of definition. Where stone replacement was deemed necessary, for instance the City seal, replacement pieces were carved out of the same Ohio sandstone used originally.









Stone Ornamentation (continued)

Retooling and honing addressed the prevalent flaking of ashlar stone. Dutchmen were used where spalling was more substantial. Dozens of cleaning techniques were tested for removing the existing staining on the building's stonework. On analysis the staining was determined to be a combination of ferrous oxide leaching (rusting) from the interior of the stone, staining from pollutants and possibly previous conservation treatments. Much of the staining was removed but it was not possible to remove all of it.



Top left: Worn sandstone gable ornament before. Top right: Replacement sandstone gable ornament. Bottom left: Matching tooled sandstone. Bottom center: Sandstone ornament before. Bottom left: Sandstone ornament after.









Brick Masonry

One of the signature design elements on the façade of the Library is the deep-red Philadelphia brick which provides appealing contrast with the light-colored sandstone ornamentation. Brick masonry restoration included spot repointing and cleaning of the brick. Badly deteriorated bricks were replaced in kind.















Structural Engineering

The project addressed several structural issues. Among them was the main tower's finial which, due to structural deterioration, was not properly supported to resist wind loads. In order to secure it, copper cladding at the top of the slate roof had to be opened up so that the finial could be tied back to the tower substructure. Accessing the work was its own design challenge: an elaborate pipe scaffolding was erected around the top of the tower, supported by the tower itself.



Top left: Tower cap during restoration. Top right: Scaffolding allowing work to be done on tower cap and finial. Bottom left and center: Newly fabricated copper finial on tower cap during restoration. Bottom left: Interior of tower cap.









Structural Engineering (continued)

The main gable at the east elevation had displaced over time. Stone anchors and tension rods were installed to ensure the gable's and roof diaphragm's structural stability. The entryway gable had also displaced over time due to lack of proper ties to the building substructure. The scope included rebuilding the displaced stonework and installing structural ties.



Top left: Main gable being strapped to substructure. Top right: Main gable after stabilization. Bottom left and bottom center: Entry gable during reconstruction.







Roofs and Finials

Spot repairs to the slate roof were performed, including replacing missing and broken slates throughout. The existing flat sheet metal roof was replaced with a new flat-seam copper roof.

The finial bases were spalling and breaking up because of the corrosion of the finial ironwork. New stone blocks were installed and the finials were reset. Finials were restored as necessary off site. The drawing on the following page details additional repairs to sandstone and iron elements of various of the many finials on the building.















Tower Railing and Clock Faces

The wrought iron balcony railing on the tower was removed and repaired offsite by an ironworker and then remounted.

Restoration and repair of the clock faces was carried out by a specialist in clock restoration. In the 1960s it was a campaign to get the clock running again which initiated the eventually successful movement to save the building itself.



Top left: Detail of clock face interior before restoration: Top right: Clock face after restoration. Bottom left: Deteriorated wrought iron railing. Bottom center: New supports in restored railing. Bottom right: Railing after.









Gutters and Leaders

The existing gutters and leaders (downspouts) were highly deteriorated. They were replaced in kind with new copper. In some cases the interior leaders were experiencing ongoing leaking and were deteriorating the building's interior stonework, so leaking leaders were removed to the outside of the building.



Top left and bottom left: Gutters and leaders before. Bottom center and right: New copper gutters during installation. Top right: Gutter and leader after.











Windows

The building's aluminum frame windows represent significant alterations that were made to the building in the 1960s by architect Giorgio Cavaglieri when he converted the building from a derelict courthouse building to a branch of the NYC Public Library. The intent of the current restoration was to preserve the windows rather than replace them. Some maintenance was required on several of these very large, substantial, solidly built windows to restore operability, as they had not been rehabilitated in quite some time. At the basement level aluminum windows were replaced to match the existing. Stained glass windows affected by the stone mullion repairs were removed, restored off site and reinstalled at completion of stone restoration work.



Top left: Stained glass windows after restorations. Top right, bottom left and center: Aluminum windows dating from the 1960s were repaired as necessary.







Credits

New York City's Department of Design and Construction, which managed the restoration project, wishes to acknowledge the following individuals:

New York City Department of Design and Construction

- DDC Commissioner: David J. Burney, FAIA
- DDC Assistant Commissioner for Structures: Sergio Silveira
- DDC Program Director, Libraries Unit: Frank Conner
- DDC Deputy Director, Libraries Unit: Michael Minuto
- DDC Senior Project Manager, Libraries Unit: Joseph Deluca
- DDC Senior Project Manager, Libraries Unit: Anthony Mayer
- DDC Project Director, Libraries Program Unit, Structures Division: Flora Tashibi
- DDC Design Liaison, Design Quality: Faith Rose
- DDC A&E Team Leader: Joseph Le Pique
- DCC Structural Engineer: Sye Yi Liou
- DDC Electrical Engineer: William Riker
- DDC Director of Estimating: Romeo Zamudio
- DDC Project Manager, Hazmat Unit: John De Lacruz
- DDC Program Director, Constructability: Nick Peluso

New York Public Library:

- NYPL Vice President, Plant Management and Construction: Joanna Pestka
- NYPL Senior Project Manager, Plant Management and Construction: Pat Konecky
- NYPL Project Manager, Capital Planning and Construction: Steven Torrenti
- NYPL Project Director, Capital Planning and Construction: Gennaro Oliva
- Librarian, Jefferson Market Library: Frank Collerius
- Building Superintendent, Jefferson Market Library: Mariusz Mrzyk

The SUPERSTRUCTURES team members providing preservation architecture, structural engineering and conservation services for this project were:

- Paul Millman, PE, RA, LEED AP
- John Galetta, RA, LEED AP
- Richard Moses, RA
- Seok Jung, RA
- John Grande, PE
- Niraj Rawal
- Joan Berkowitz
- Amel Chabbi
- Charu Chaudhry
- Laurentin Ciufecu
- Stephen Gottlieb
- Shamil Lallani



Jefferson Market Library, January 3, 2014

