

Victorian Society Testimony for September 1, 2026: 63-65 Charles Street - Greenwich Village Historic District (LPC-27-01049)

Approximate time: 9:30; join Zoom by: 9:30

LPC-27-01049 - 63-65 Charles Street - Greenwich Village Historic District, Manhattan

Good morning commissioners, _____ speaking for the Victorian Society New York. Founded in New York City in 1966, the Victorian Society in America is dedicated to fostering the appreciation and preservation of our 19th and early 20th century heritage. The NY chapter promotes preservation of our historic districts, individual and scenic landmarks, interiors and civic art.

The Victorian Society has no objections to the proposed alterations to the street-facing facades of 63-65 Charles Street. As these changes weren't advertised, we assume this work will be permitted at staff level. However, we wish to note that the decision to replicate the existing stoop railings, areaway fencing and parlor floor entrance in place at 63 at 65 will help to unify these houses. It will also return 65 Charles Street closer to its original appearance. We were pleased to see that the sash on the front facades will be historically appropriate, double-hung, painted wood.

However, we are concerned about the design of the rooftop addition, including its large overhanging roof and its ceiling height. The rooftop addition has entire walls of glass on its north, south and west facades. The proposed overhanging roof, to shield these large expanses of glass, is the only portion of the addition which will be visible from the street. The deepest overhang, on the west side of the glass box, appears to extend 5'-3" beyond the facade. The ceiling height of the addition is approximately 10 feet. We urge the Commission to require the applicant to reduce the visibility of the addition by lowering the ceiling height or reducing the depth of the overhang or both.

We also feel that the proposed rear façade should be modified to clearly indicate that these were two buildings. The single downspout attached to the façade at floors 2 and 3, and the delicate break between the corbeled cornices at the roof level, seen on Board 15, are an inadequate acknowledgement of the history of these buildings. There should be a greater visual cue that these were constructed as two separate houses.

Thank you, commissioners.

Approved 9-0; work with staff to differentiate buildings at rear façade.