

NEW YORK CURB EXCHANGE (INCORPORATING THE NEW YORK CURB MARKET BUILDING), LATER KNOWN AS THE AMERICAN STOCK EXCHANGE,
86 Trinity Place (aka 78-86 Trinity Place, 113-23 Greenwich Street), Manhattan.
Built: 1920-21, 1930-31; architect(s): Starrett & Van Vleck

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 51, Lot 13

On June 12, 2012, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a hearing on the proposed designation of the New York Curb Exchange and the proposed designation of the Landmark site (Item No. 2). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with provisions of law. Four people testified in favor of designation, including representatives of the owner, the Historic Districts Council, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, and Citizens for Downtown. There were no speakers in opposition to designation.

Summary

The New York Curb Exchange, later called the American Stock Exchange, was constructed in two phases, the western portion in 1920-21 and the eastern portion in 1930-31. Located on an L-shaped mid-block parcel bordered by Trinity Place and Greenwich Street in lower Manhattan, these interlocking structures were designed by Starrett & Van Vleck, New York City architects who specialized in office buildings and retail work. Known earlier as the Curb and the New York Curb Market because early members traded stocks and securities outdoors, most memorably on Broad Street, this informal organization served as a proving ground for both young brokers and new riskier securities. The Greenwich Street building, completed in June 1921, marked an important turning point for the exchange. Not only was there a spacious trading hall, but the move indoors strengthened trust among investors and improved the organization's status. Designed in a simplified neo-Renaissance style, the Greenwich Street



facade features a row of tall arched windows that illuminate the main interior, as well as classical details. In response to increased trading volume during the late 1920s, the building was expanded to the east in 1930-31, providing a more monumental identity on Trinity Place while reconfiguring the trading floor and providing new space for offices and meeting rooms. Compared to other buildings with a similar or related function, the expanded Curb stood out for its height and modernity. A handsome example of the Art Deco style, the 14-story-tall structure faces Trinity Church graveyard and is clearly visible from Broadway. It features a prominent central entrance, multi-story windows, metal decorative reliefs that illustrate the types of stocks traded, and uninterrupted piers that accentuate the building's height. Renamed the American Stock Exchange in 1953, for many decades it was a close rival to the New York Stock Exchange. A year after merging with a group headed by the NYSE in 2008, the AMEX ceased trading in February 2009.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

History of the New York Curb Exchange

Until 1953, the American Stock Exchange (AMEX) was variously known as the Curb, the New York Curb Market, and the New York Curb Exchange.¹ The names made reference to where so-called “curbstone brokers” traded stocks and securities before moving indoors in 1921. These men tended to represent new companies that were not handled by the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE), established as the New York Stock & Exchange Board in 1817. Membership in such organizations was expensive and unaffiliated brokers tended to buy and sell stocks in public restaurants and coffee houses, as well as in the streets of lower Manhattan. Early hubs of activity included the intersection of Wall and Hanover Streets, and later William and Beaver Streets. Curb traders were generally divided into three groups: “commission brokers” representing members of the NYSE; “two-dollar brokers” trading “whatever . . . might come along;” and specialists who focused on stock in companies that were viewed as “market makers.”² Many had Irish or Jewish backgrounds and had been excluded from joining other more prestigious exchanges.

The Curb, consequently, became known as a “proving ground” for young brokers and new riskier securities. Toward the close of the 19th century, activity began to concentrate on the west side of Broad Street, a block south of the NYSE. In order to be easily recognized, many members dressed with eye-catching clothes and used flamboyant hand signals to conduct trades. In 1920, with the move indoors pending, a writer for the *New York Evening Post* urged “Anyone who has never seen the Curb Market in full cry should do so while yet an opportunity remains . . . They present a motley, agitated mass of struggling, yelling, finger-wriggling humanity.”³

Predecessors to the New York Curb Exchange developed a somewhat mixed standing in financial markets. To counter this view, broker Emanuel S. Mendels, Jr., sometimes called the “Father of the Curb,” published the first annual directory reliable brokers in 1904.⁴ Four years later, in 1908, this group became known as the New York Curb Market Agency. To further reform trading, in 1911 a constitution was drafted “to eliminate the irresponsible brokers and valueless stocks from the outside market.”⁵ This association became known as the New York Curb Market, with offices in the Broad Exchange Building (1900-02, a New York City Landmark).

A Permanent Home

Volume on the Curb grew sharply after 1910, reaching a record of 167 million shares in 1918. The organization’s president, E(dward) R. McCormick, believed that moving indoors would strengthen trust among investors. Mendels had suggested this idea two decades earlier and McCormick resurrected it around 1915. A permanent home would not only shelter brokers from the elements but would protect clients from “unethical bucketeers” and enhance the status of the growing exchange.⁶

Members approved the proposal in June 1919. To finance the project, the organization sold stock in the New York Curb Market Realty Associates, as well as 50 to 60 vacant memberships.⁷ For the first time, the larger NYSE anticipated real competition from the smaller exchange and proposed a merger. In November 1919, however, this proposal was withdrawn. The Curb, which was considering the purchase of a lot on Broad Street, between Beaver and Wall Streets, was said to have been “gratified . . . as they wish to retain their individuality as a market organization.”⁸ A month later, a different site was acquired, facing Trinity Place and Greenwich Street. On the western edge of the financial district and sandwiched between the

elevated tracks of the Sixth and Ninth Avenue railways, this vacant parcel had significant and permanent advantages.⁹ Subway stations had recently opened on Rector Street; not only would the new exchange be close to public transit but because these subway lines were new the days of the noisy elevated tracks were clearly numbered. The site also faced the north part of Trinity Church graveyard. There was, consequently, little concern that the exchange would be obscured or overshadowed by future construction.¹⁰ Additionally, it would be visible from Broadway – lower Manhattan’s busiest traffic corridor.¹¹

The New York Curb Market Realty Associates took ownership of the L-shaped site in January 1920. Construction was reportedly delayed because “the cost of funds is quite out of proportion and that there is little disposition on the part of bankers to look with favor upon building loans.” By October 1920, however, the situation had improved and the New York Title & Mortgage Company agreed to \$800,000 in financing.¹²

Construction, 1920-21

The New York Curb Exchange was constructed in two distinct phases, in 1920-21 and 1930-31. The two conjoined structures were designed by the New York architects Starrett & Van Vleck. The first phase (NB 1920-43) is located on the wider, west part of the site, extending almost 180 feet along Greenwich Street. Filings described the New York Curb Market building as a 178 by 44 foot fireproof concrete structure, costing an estimated \$1.1 million.¹³ Almost one hundred feet tall, the tripartite elevations are faced with grey brick, trimmed with limestone and cast stone or terra cotta. The application was approved by the Department of Buildings in January 1921. According to historian Robert Sobel, one member “considered it more important than the building of his own home, a second awaited the opening as a child counting the days till Christmas, a third compared it to waiting out the birth of a new child.”¹⁴

Thompson-Starrett Company acted as builder and work was completed in late June 1921. Founded by Theodore Starrett (1865-1917) and Henry S. Thompson in 1899, this prominent New York City construction firm erected such designated landmarks as the Woolworth Building (1910-13), the Municipal Building (1907-14), the Equitable Building (1913-15), and the Waldorf Astoria Hotel (1929-32).¹⁵ Goldwin Starrett, later of Starrett & Van Vleck, along with his brothers Ralph (1868-1930) and William (1877-1932), joined the firm briefly around 1901. Thompson sold his interest in 1903. Louis J. Horowitz served as company president from 1910 to 1934.¹⁶

Rider’s New York City, a 1923 guidebook, described the new exchange as a “three-story structure of simple classic design.”¹⁷ Members and visitors originally entered from Trinity Place, where a one-story pavilion with two sets of revolving doors provided access to the ground story, containing a restaurant, cloakroom and stairs to the first-floor exchange. The heart of the building was a 95 by 54 foot trading hall, accommodating 700 clerks and brokers. Five arched windows, flanked by smaller rectangular windows on either end, dominated the east and west walls. The southernmost window, as well as part of one of the arched openings, was obscured by the neighboring building on Trinity Place. The wall that faced east was removed as part of the 1930-31 expansion.

The Greenwich Street (west) facade dates to 1920-21. It is quite similar to the facade that originally faced Trinity Place, with identical materials, window openings and details. Because Greenwich Street is slightly lower, the west facade was slightly taller and the ground story had higher ceilings. Members and visitors entered from the basement. Directly above this level is a row of widely-spaced, ground-story windows. Other differences include the northernmost bay

which contains two windows on each floor, as well as the row of paired windows on the sixth floor, directly above the trading floor.

On Trinity Place, the parcel had been left deliberately undeveloped. For less than ten years, this open space functioned as a front yard or forecourt, with simple landscaping and an iron fence along the sidewalk. The *New York Times* reported in 1921 that it “will be parked for the present and probably improved at a later date with a tall building.”¹⁸ The *Wall Street Journal* characterized it somewhat differently, claiming “it may be offered for sale, and the proceeds of which will substantially reduce, if not entirely clear, the outstanding mortgage.”¹⁹ Moving indoors seems to have been viewed as costly and posing some risk. The vacant lot was, consequently, held as an asset – one that could be used to meet necessary financial obligations or, as the case would be, to expand the Curb.

Construction, 1930-31

During the 1920s, the American economy grew at a strong pace. When the New York Curb Market celebrated its fifth year indoors, the *New York Times* commented:

Since it became an indoor trading institution, the Curb has experienced a great change. In the days when it was truly “on the curb,” the business was transacted chiefly in mining issues, generally termed “penny stocks.” Today, the Curb Exchange lists many high-class industrial, public utilities, oils and domestic and foreign bonds.²⁰

On May 6, 1929 the Curb’s Building Committee submitted plans to the Board of Governors to expand the “Board Room, with eight floors of offices above.” Two months later, on July 1, they voted to “proceed immediately with the erection of a building in front of the present exchange facing Trinity Church yard.”²¹

The New York Curb Market was renamed the New York Curb Exchange in June 1929. The latter half of the year proved especially volatile for the stock market and the day Wall Street crashed more than seven million shares – a record for the Curb – changed hands. Despite a rocky business environment, it continued “listing more foreign issues than all other U.S. securities markets combined,”²² and remained committed to erecting a sizable addition. Estimated to cost \$1.25 million, this Art Deco style structure (ALT 155-30) reconfigured the floor of the exchange and created substantial office space. In February or March 1930, the Thompson-Starrett Company began construction, with the laying of the cornerstone, containing various documents and directories, on July 15, 1930.²³ By this date, the steel work was about 50% complete. Thompson-Starrett currently had \$40 million in contracts and was erecting Starrett & Van Vleck’s design for the Downtown Athletic Club (a New York City Landmark).²⁴ As the expanded New York Curb Exchange neared completion, 18 workers were recognized by the New York Building Congress for their “outstanding work.”²⁵

At 14 stories, the 210-foot tall limestone building was more than twice the height of the 1920-21 building. Trinity Place became the primary facade and the exchange was now much more conspicuous from Broadway. On the windowless surface between the trading floor and the offices, where the ventilating system was installed, large stone capital letters spelled the name of the expanded exchange. The addition was formally dedicated at the close of trading on September 14, 1931. The *Wall Street Journal* reported the building had been “erected under the urgent necessity of providing additional quarters” and was “entirely occupied by the Exchange itself.”²⁶

On the first story were three widely-spaced entrances. The member's entrance, at center, was the largest and most prominent. It has a broad, vaguely Egyptian, rounded enframement and four glazed doors. Above the doors was originally a substantial glazed transom, containing a grid of small vertical panels. This opening was trimmed on either side by a vertical strip of small recessed openings that may have been intended to resemble punched holes in ticker tape – a key element in the daily routine of the exchange. The north entrance was somewhat smaller and had three glass doors that opened into a lobby, where three elevators served offices. The nearly identical south entrance also had three doors providing access to the day branch and night clearing house department (and later, a visitors gallery). Above the expanded exchange floor, which now could hold one thousand people, the 7th to 14th floors contained offices and committee rooms, as well as the Board of Governors' room.²⁷

According to the *New York Times*, the structure had been planned “to take care of future growth. The plant includes devices to insure speed and accuracy, and the trading machinery has been geared to take care of markets of much larger size than have yet been witnessed.”²⁸ And the *Brooklyn Eagle* reported that “in many respects the building is more modern and up to date than that of the older [New York] stock exchange.”²⁹

Starrett & Van Vleck, Architects

Both structures were designed by Starrett & Van Vleck. Goldwin Starrett (1874-1918) and Ernest Alan Van Vleck (1875-1956) were trained in the 1890s, an era when classicism dominated architectural aesthetics in the United States. Starrett, who studied engineering at the University of Michigan, spent several years (1894-98) with his brothers Theodore and Paul Starrett in the office of Daniel H. Burnham, planner of Chicago's World's Columbian Exposition. He joined the George A. Fuller Company in 1898, and later worked with the Thompson-Starrett Construction Company, which erected both phases of the New York Curb Exchange. Van Vleck earned a degree in architecture from Cornell University in 1897. Following graduation, he was awarded a travelling fellowship.

Starrett & Van Vleck formed a partnership in 1907 and enjoyed a flourishing practice in New York City, designing offices, lofts, schools and department stores. Perhaps because of the Starrett family's steady involvement in construction, most of the firm's designs were functional and fireproof. Early examples of their work included: 67-69 Wall Street (1908-9), the Everett Building (1908, a designated Landmark) on Union Square, and the Lord & Taylor store (1913-14, a designated Landmark) on Fifth Avenue.

The Greenwich Street building dates to the period when the style of most of firm's output was neo-classical. Following Starrett's death in 1918, however, it began to expand its repertoire, adapting sources with classical, medieval and contemporary European origins. Critic John Taylor Boyd Jr. praised the firm's skyscraper designs, writing: “If we study tall building architecture in this spirit, we shall, I think, discover the recent buildings of Starrett & Van Vleck are most significant.”³⁰ Architectural aesthetics evolved quickly during the 1920s – first, with the gradual decline of classicism, followed by interest in medieval and byzantine motifs, and eventually, with the rise of non-historic forms, often referred to as modernistic.

The Trinity Place addition was commissioned in 1929, when the style later known as Art Deco was at its height. Some of the firm's finest work falls into this category and may reflect contributions by the younger staff, such as Frank Gaertner (1891-1962),³¹ who became a partner in 1924 and filed the DOB paperwork for the 1930-31 addition. He attended the Beaux Arts Institute and Columbia University in New York City and according to the *New York Times*

“helped design” the Downtown Athletic Club. Major commissions in this style by Starrett & Van Vleck include: the Lexington Avenue front of Bloomingdales (1929-30), a large addition to the Abraham & Straus Store (1930, now Macys) on Fulton Street in downtown Brooklyn, and 21 West Street (1929-31, a designated Landmark). Located several blocks south, the Downtown Athletic Club and 21 West Street share similar setback massing and colorful tapestry brickwork.

The Curb’s Trinity Place elevation is faced with Vaurion Roche Jaune limestone and Indiana limestone, with a base of polished gray New England granite.³² Limestone may have been selected so the expanded exchange would stand out beside its taller neo-Gothic style neighbor at 70-76 Trinity Place (Henry I. Oser, 1927) and to show that the building was occupied by a significant organization, comparable to other civic and financial structures in the area.

Designing the New York Curb Exchange

The Trinity Place addition transformed the Curb Market from a low, box-like neo-Renaissance structure to a prominent tower of what was termed “modernistic design” but is now called Art Deco.³³ Historian Robert Sobel, who authored two books on the Curb Exchange, described it as “a tall, graceful structure done in the style of uptown buildings.”³⁴ In a neighborhood crowded with banks and exchanges, the new front served as a highly-visible statement of the organization’s steady growth in the first decades of the 20th century. In 1934, a writer for the financial magazine *St. John’s Analyst* commented: “Beginning humbly, progressing soundly, the New York Curb Exchange has justified its existence, as an integral part of the economic and financial life of the United States.”³⁵

Compared to other lower Manhattan buildings of similar or related function, the expanded Curb stood out for its height and modernity. Earlier financial institutions, like the 1920-21 building, were predictable classical designs that were intended to convey a sense of integrity. In New York City, the earliest surviving exchange buildings are the Greek Revival style Merchant’s Exchange (1841, a designated Landmark) at 55 Wall Street and the Queen Anne style Mercantile Exchange (1883-86, part of the Tribeca West Historic District) at 2-6 Harrison Street. When the New York Stock Exchange commissioned its first home on Broad Street in 1856, a Tuscan palazzo was built, later remodeled by James Renwick with Renaissance inspired details in 1882. The current white marble building (1901-03, a designated Landmark) by George B. Post, constructed in 1901 on the same site, features a monumental pediment sculpture and resembles an imperial Roman temple. Post also designed the chateausque Cotton Exchange (1885-83, demolished) and the Romanesque Revival style New York Produce Exchange (1884, demolished).

Following the First World War, the American economy rebounded. Not only did the Curb Market build and begin to trade indoors, but the New York Stock Exchange erected a 22-story annex (Trowbridge & Livingston, 1922) at the corner of Wall Street and the New York Cotton Exchange moved to a new 24-story tower on Hanover Square. While the Cotton Exchange incorporated a larger trading floor than their earlier location, the NYSE annex was mostly leased to financial firms. In contrast, some exchanges outside New York were built without traditional ornamentation, such as the 44-story Chicago Board of Trade (Holabird & Root, 1927-30) and the Los Angeles Stock Exchange (Samuel E. Lunden, 1931). These impressive structures were decorated with statues and reliefs executed in the Art Deco style. In terms of the Curb, the closest model was probably the San Francisco Stock Exchange (Miller & Pflueger, 1929), which remodeled an earlier neo-classical United States Treasury Building, adding a 12-story Art Deco tower at the rear.

The New York Curb Exchange is a monumental example of the Art Deco style. While the symmetry and keystones tie the tripartite design to standard classicism, relatively little ornament was used to enliven the facade. With Wall Street's recent crash fresh in memory, decorative restraint must have seemed entirely appropriate. There are, however, a few modest embellishments. The large trading floor windows are flanked by perforated rectangular metal panels incorporating images of the types of financial activity represented by the exchange. They are similar in subject and style to the nickel silver doors and grilles that British sculptor David Evans created for the City Bank-Farmers Trust Company Building at 20 Exchange Place (1930-31, a designated Landmark). At the 13th story are small metal grilles that resemble frozen fountains, a common symbol of prosperity at this time. C. E. Halback & Co. of Brooklyn fabricated all of the architectural metalwork.³⁶

Above the tall windows that brought light into the trading hall are four wide uninterrupted fluted piers. Each limestone pier alternates with a pair of windows and recalls the manner in which Louis Sullivan arranged skyscraper elevations in the 1890s, as well as the lower elevation of the Los Angeles Stock Exchange. While the piers are relatively flush with the surface of the facade, at the level of the setback these elements become somewhat more sculptural and angular, suggesting tower-like pyramidal forms. Furthermore, near the top of the facade, where capitals are typically found, the architects inserted unusual Y-shaped, recessed channels.

History of the Building

Volume on the Curb diminished sharply during the Depression years, from 476 million shares traded in 1929 to 43 million in 1940. Four of the upper floors were leased to "organizations engaged in defense work" starting in 1941, as well as on a single floor of the Hamilton Building, which the Curb purchased in 1930 with an eye toward subsequent expansion.³⁷

The Curb was renamed the American Stock Exchange on January 5, 1953. According to publicity, the change was made to reflect the organization's stature and the financial role it played "in the economy of this continent."³⁸ The text on Trinity Place was modified with metal letters, using a similar sans-serif typeface. The AMEX was currently the second largest exchange in the nation, with approximately 500 members operating in 1,700 offices in 400 cities.³⁹

In the 1950s, the AMEX prospered, with the annual value of shares traded almost doubling to \$23 billion. It became known as an exchange where "small and more venturesome stocks" were traded.⁴⁰ Volume continued to grow, occasionally surpassing the NYSE. To meet the needs of a growing membership, the trading floor was extensively remodeled in 1967.⁴¹ Four years later, in 1971, the AMEX was incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation. At this time, it began to share automation and service facilities with the NYSE. The AMEX embarked on a five-year expansion program in the mid-1970s. Though there was some discussion of relocating to New Jersey or a site in Battery Park City, the Board of Governors voted to remain on Trinity Place and the building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in June 1978. The report described it as "sleek, business-like" and as the "best extant symbol of the outdoor securities trading in the Nation's financial capital during the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries."⁴² A new trading mezzanine was built in 1982. These interior changes had limited effect on the exteriors and increased the capacity of the trading floor by 35 to 40 per cent.⁴³

AMEX merged with the National Association of Securities Dealers (NASD) in 1998. The link between the exchanges was brief and ended in 2004.⁴⁴ It became part of NYSE-Euronext, an

international exchange, in 2008, thus ending a centuries-old rivalry between these Manhattan financial institutions.⁴⁵ The following year, 2009, the AMEX closed and the building has been vacant since that date.

Description

The former New York Curb Exchange is located on a sloping, through-block site facing Trinity Place and Greenwich Street. The mostly brick Greenwich Street facade is wider and dates to 1920-21, while the taller Trinity Place façade is mostly faced with limestone and dates to 1930-31. Both retain most of the original materials and details.

Historic:

Greenwich Street (West) Elevation: Nine bays, gray brick, simple limestone details, relief above north entrance, first story window openings, “New York Curb Market” sign, arched trading floor windows, arched doorway at south end.

Trinity Place (East) Elevation: Seven bays, granite base, limestone facing, lettering for “American Stock Exchange,” flagpole centered above lettering, flagpole center of roof, three entrance openings at first floor, as well as a smaller south service entrance, vertical bars over eight first-floor windows, metal reliefs beside trading floor windows; north end of first story, name of architect and date of Trinity Place building carved into granite base, plaque celebrating 50th anniversary; 13th story, metal grilles.

Alterations:

Greenwich Street (West) Elevation: Metal doors, louvers in some doors and windows, lighting fixtures at top of first story, second floor security camera, cornice between sixth and seventh floors, roof additions and ventilation equipment.

Trinity Place (East) Elevation: First-floor glass doors and transoms (probably 1980s), lighting and security cameras.

For detailed documentation, see LPC Research Department files, as well as the archive of the American Stock Exchange, now part of the New York Stock Exchange.

Researched and written by
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NOTES

¹ Robert Sobel, *The Curbstone Brokers: The Origins of the American Stock Exchange* (New York: MacMillan, 1970); Robert Sobel, *AMEX: A History of the American Stock Exchange, 1921-1971* (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1972). The American Stock Exchange was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. See text for National Register of Historic Places, Nomination Form, American Stock Exchange, New York, New York, #78001867, prepared by George R. Adams, 1977/1978.

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- ² Stuart Weems Bruchey, *Modernization of the American Stock Exchange, 1971-1989* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1991), 15.
- ³ “Downtown Trader Now Gives Little Thought to Relics of Bygone Age,” *New York Evening Post*, December 24, 1920, viewed at Fulton Postcards.
- ⁴ “Father of the Curb Dead,” *New York Times*, October 18, 1911, 11.
- ⁵ “Curb Ready For War on Swindling Stocks,” *New York Times*, February 9, 1911, 9.
- ⁶ Sobel, *The Curbstone Brokers*, 178.
- ⁷ “Curb Market Buys Site; To Build Home,” *New York Times*, December 19, 1919, 21.
- ⁸ “No Home For Curb With Big Exchange,” *New York Times*, November 20, 1919, viewed at Proquest.
- ⁹ This site had been occupied by the American Bank Note Company, which moved to 70 Broad Street in 1908, and Hunt’s Point in the Bronx in 1911(both are designated Landmarks). The three structures on the site, the largest was briefly used as a factory, were demolished in 1915. See Bureau of Buildings, Demolition permit 52-1915.
- ¹⁰ The Sixth Avenue railway ended service in 1939-40. The Ninth Avenue railway, originally called the Greenwich Street railway, ended service in 1940. Both were demolished in the early 1940s.
- ¹¹ “Curb Market Pays for Site,” *New York Times*, January 13, 1920, 25.
- ¹² “Curb Market to Build,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 23, 1930, 12.
- ¹³ Julius Schmidt signed the DOB papers for Starrett & Van Vleck.
- ¹⁴ Sobel, *The Curbstone Brokers*, 198.
- ¹⁵ See *Manhattan Company Building Designation Report*, 40 Wall Street (LP-1936) (City of New York, 1995), prepared by Jay Shockley, 2-3.
- ¹⁶ William Starrett was hired by rival builder George A. Fuller in 1913. He and brother Paul Starrett (1866-1957), as well as Fuller colleague Andrew J. Eken, founded Starrett Brothers in 1922. Known as Starrett Brothers & Eken after 1930, this construction company built such New York City Landmarks as the headquarters of the New York Life Insurance Company, the Empire State Building, and the Starrett-Lehigh Building.
- ¹⁷ *Rider’s New York City: A Guide-book for Travelers* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1923), 176.
- ¹⁸ “New Curb Market Building At Greenwich Street And Trinity Place To Cost About \$1,300,00,” *New York Times*, December 5, 1920, 122.
- ¹⁹ “N.Y. Curb Market to Build,” *Wall Street Journal*, February 2, 1921, 5.
- ²⁰ “Curb to Celebrate Fifth Year Indoors,” *New York Times*, June 28, 1926, 26.
- ²¹ “Curb Substitutes ‘Exchange’ for ‘Market’ in Its Name,” *New York Times*, June 27, 1929, 44; “Another Building Planned By Curb,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 29, 1929, 20; Board of Governors Minutes, July 1, 1929, 228, Archives of New York Stock Exchange.
- ²² “American Stock Exchange: Historical Timeline,” NYSE Euronext, LPC files.
- ²³ “Curb Addition Plans Filed,” *New York Times*, January 24, 1930, 46: “New Curb Building In New York Will Be Started Feb. 1,” *Hartford Courant*, January 11, 1930. During construction, Curb members were asked to use the Greenwich Street entrances. “Curb Exchange to Start Building,” *New York Times*, February 18, 1930, 40.
- ²⁴ “Thompson-Starrett Co.,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 5, 1930, 9.
- ²⁵ “Award for Mechanics,” *New York Times*, January 7, 1931, 55.
- ²⁶ “Curb Exchange Opens Building,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 14, 1931, 5.

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- ²⁷ The trading room covered approximately 13,500 square feet. It extended 152 feet east-west and 162 feet north-south. The interior decorators were W.A. Hathaway Company. See “Curb Exchange Opens Building,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 14, 1931, 5.
- ²⁸ “Curb Will Dedicate Addition to Building,” *New York Times*, September 14, 1931, 30.
- ²⁹ “Real Roar of the Crowd Found at Curb,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 7, 1934, clipping viewed at NYSE Archives.
- ³⁰ John Taylor Boyd, “A New Emphasis in Skyscraper Design,” *Architectural Record* (Vol. 52, December 1922), 497.
- ³¹ “Frank Gaertner, 71, A Retired Architect,” *New York Times*, August 27, 1962, 21. Gaertner also wrote “Modernization of Stores,” *Architectural Record* (May 1932), 361-64. This essay addressed the expansion of retail stores, particularly how to keep stores open during construction, necessary structural changes, and making provisions for future additions. Similar concerns must have shaped the 1930-31 expansion of the Curb Exchange.
- ³² New York Curb Specifications Binder, NYSE Archive, 28.
- ³³ “Curb Addition Nearly Ready,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 16, 1931, 18.
- ³⁴ Sobel, *Curbstone Brokers*, X1.
- ³⁵ *St. John’s Analyst*, (November 1934), 6.
- ³⁶ Halback advertised that it had “undivided responsibility” for the architectural metalwork, including the spandrels, sills, entrances, doors, grilles, stair rails and directory boards. See *American Architect* (July 1931), 94. It also worked as an “installer” on the Empire State and RCA Buildings. Halback moved from East 26th Street to Banker Street in Greenpoint about 1920; it later merged with the General Bronze Corporation in 1953.
- ³⁷ “Hamilton Building Sale,” *New York Times*, January 5, 1930, N24.
- ³⁸ “By Another Name,” *New Yorker* (June 20, 1953), 18; “New York Curb Plans to Change Name to American Stock Exchange,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 16, 1952.
- ³⁹ “By Another Name;” National Register of Historic Places, Nomination Form, American Stock Exchange, 9.
- ⁴⁰ “A Fast Pace at the Amex,” *New York Times*, January 26, 1983, D10.
- ⁴¹ “Amex to Remodel Trading Floor,” *New York Times*, May 2, 1967, 63; “Amex Moves Ahead With Plan to Modernize Its Trading Floor,” *New York Times*, July 22, 1967, F33.
- ⁴² National Register of Historic Places, Nomination Form, American Stock Exchange, 2.
- ⁴³ “Amex Opens Mezzanine,” *New York Times*, November 30, 1982, D12.
- ⁴⁴ “Nasdaq Completes Its Merger With Amex,” *New York Times*, November 3, 1998, C10.
- ⁴⁵ “NYSE to Acquire American Stock Exchange,” *New York Times*, January 17, 2008, viewed online.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, architecture, and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the New York Curb Exchange (incorporating the New York Curb Market), later known as the American Stock Exchange, has a special character and a special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, history, and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that New York Curb Exchange (incorporating the New York Curb Market), later known as the American Stock Exchange, was constructed in two phases in 1920-21 and 1930-31; that this important financial institution was known earlier as the Curb Market because members once gathered on the streets of lower Manhattan to trade stocks and securities; that it was later called the New York Curb Market and the New York Curb Exchange; that both building campaigns were designed by Starrett & Van Vleck, a New York City architectural firm that was well-known for its office buildings and retail work; that while the New York Curb Market Building, visible from Greenwich Street, was designed in the neo-Renaissance style, the taller Trinity Place addition is Art Deco, rising approximately two hundred feet above Trinity Church and its historic graveyard; that the addition was planned during prosperous times to increase the capacity of the trading floor and add office space; that despite the market crash of late 1929 the Curb's Board of Governors did not abandon the idea and ground was broken in 1930; that the 14-story structure, featuring a large central entrance and metal decorative reliefs depicting various types of stocks traded on the exchange, was dedicated in September 1931; that it was renamed the American Stock Exchange in 1953; that it became part of a group headed by New York Stock Exchange in 2008 and is now closed; and that during most of the 20th century this visually prominent structure was occupied by the second largest securities exchange in the United States.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 (formerly Section 534 of Chapter 21) of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the New York Curb Exchange (incorporating the New York Curb Market), later known as the American Stock Exchange, 86 Trinity Place (aka 78-86 Trinity Place, 113-23 Greenwich Street) and designates Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 51, Lot 13, as its Landmark Site.

Robert B. Tierney, Chair

Frederick Bland, Michael Devonshire, Joan Gerner

Christopher Moore, Margery Perlmutter, Roberta Washington, Commissioners



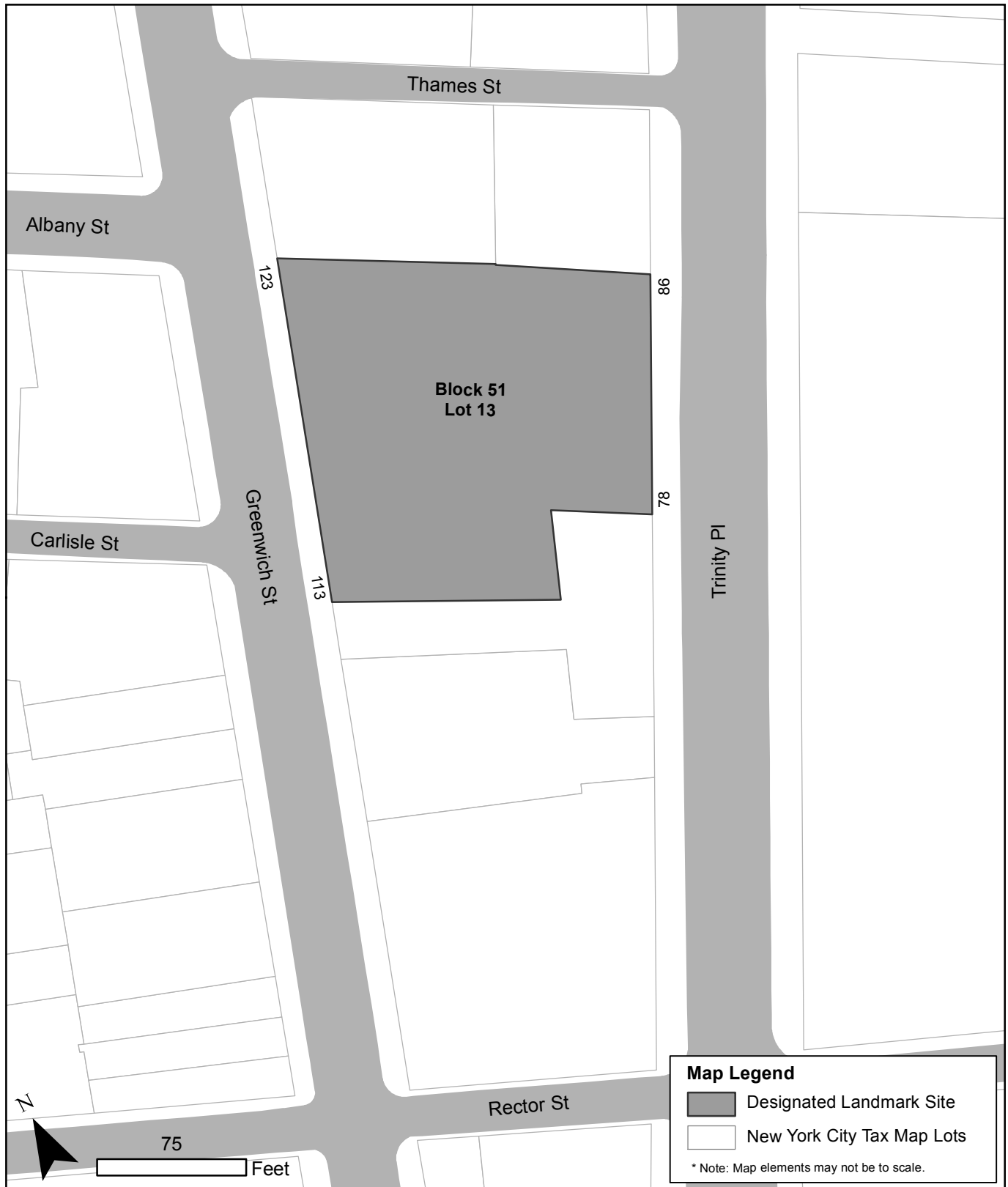
New York Curb Exchange
(incorporating the New York Curb Market building), later known as the American Stock Exchange
86 Trinity Place (aka 78-86 Trinity Place, 113-23 Greenwich Street)
Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 51, Lot 13
Photo: Christopher D. Brazee, 2012



New York Curb Exchange
Trinity Place, upper and lower facade
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2012; Olivia Klose, 2008



New York Curb Exchange
Greenwich Street facade, view south and north
Photos: Christopher D. Brazee, 2012



NEW YORK CURB EXCHANGE (INCORPORATING THE NEW YORK CURB MARKET BUILDING), LATER KNOWN AS THE AMERICAN STOCK EXCHANGE (LP-2515),
 86 Trinity Place (aka 78-86 Trinity Place, 113-23 Greenwich Street)
 Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 51, Lot 13

Designated: June 26, 2012