

Turtle Bay News

A Publication of the Turtle Bay Association

Fall 2009 Vol. 52, No. 3

Development Plans In Turtle Bay Continue, But Slowly

BY BRUCE A. SILBERBLATT, TBA VICE PRESIDENT, CHAIR LAND USE AND ZONING COMMITTEE

The building bust has left Turtle Bay with only two of seven developments presently being completed, the Alexander at 49th Street and Second Avenue and a 24-story hotel at Lexington and 48th Street. The other five are in limbo, left partially built or as holes in the ground.

Except for the repair of hazards, the skeleton at the 51st Street site of the crane collapse is untouched, with demolition delayed by foreclosure proceedings and \$800 million in pending lawsuits. Council Member Jessica Lappin is closely monitoring the situation and the projected schedule for demolition.

There has also been progress.

- Much property damage has been repaired.
- Plans have been filed to rebuild 305 East 50th Street, which was crushed in the crane accident.
- Eighteen lower-income seniors now

have affordable housing at a new seven-story building at 228 East 46th Street.

- At least six future projects are under review at the Department of Buildings (DOB).

Renovations

The Organization of Islamic Conference is converting two townhouses at 320-22 East 51st Street. The organization represents 58 Muslim nations worldwide and enjoys observer status at the U. N.

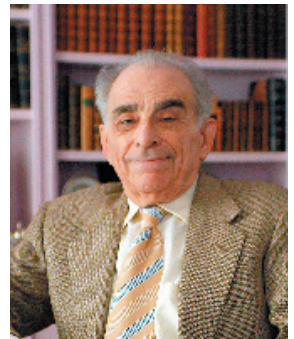
A handsome old six-story building at 235 East 53rd Street will be made into a hotel. Rather than lose it to something less palatable, the TBA adopted a “no objection” resolution. No plans have as yet been filed.

Proposed Twenty-Nine-Story Hotel

The proposed design for a high-rise hotel at 206-208-210 East 52nd Street is not compliant with zoning regulations. It was filed

prior to the DOB’s new review and approval procedures and is not subject to them. Notably, it has been approved by the same DOB plan examiner who approved the building plans at the crane site, which had an array of zoning and design flaws.

The TBA believes this plan to be illegal and has submitted documents, dating back to 1967, to the DOB to support its stand. Assisting us is Jane Swanson, Chief of Staff for Jessica Lappin, who has requested, and appears to have been granted, a special DOB review of the site. We are firmly opposed to the plan and will fight it.



Bruce A. Silberblatt

Gas Drilling Plans Alarm City

New York State’s plan to drill for natural gas in the Catskill/Delaware watershed has brought intense protests from a coalition of city and state officials, environmental organizations and concerned citizens. Worries center on the safety of New York City’s drinking water, and the quality of the upstate environment.

Drilling is proposed in the Marcellus Shale, a formation beneath the Delaware/Catskill watershed, that holds untapped natural gas reserves. Although the project would be an important new source of revenues for the state, many believe the environmental risks outweigh the benefits.

Gas extraction technology, known as “hydraulic fracture,” pumps a mixture of water, sand or ceramic beads, and chemicals into the ground to release the oil or gas below the surface and poses serious environmental threats. The New York Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has also reported high levels of

radioactivity in 13 samples of waste water brought thousands of feet up to the surface from the Marcellus Shale.

The DEC has addressed the issues in a draft 800-page environmental impact study that includes proposed protections, but these

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Natural gas drilling site on a farm in Houston, Pa., in October 2008. (From article by Abrahm Lustgarten, www.ProPublica.org, November 9, 2009. Keith Srakocic/AP Photo)

Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE)

SCRIE is a New York City state-authorized entitlement that enables eligible seniors who live in rent controlled or rent stabilized apartments, or certain residential hotel units, to receive an exemption from paying future increases in their rent. Landlords and management agents receive tax abatement credits in lieu of cash for any rent increase.

The 2009 SCRIE requirements are:

- For rent-stabilized or rent-controlled apartments, tenants must have a valid one or two-year lease.

- Rent must be at least 1/3 of net monthly income.
- Head of household must be age 62 or older.
- Assets: No limit.
- Income: \$29,000 household total.

Applications are available online at www.nyc.gov ACCESS NYC, or by calling 311, and should be mailed, along with any other documents, to: NYC Department of Finance, Attention: SCRIE/DRIE, 59 Maiden Lane - 19th Floor, New York, NY 10038, Fax: 212-232-1757.

Single Parent Resource Center (SPRC)

The SPRC is the only comprehensive agency devoted solely to providing programs and services for New York City's single parents and their families. Its services are available to support all single parents, including those who are living in transitional housing; struggling with substance abuse; or have been recently incarcerated.

SPRC offers many programs, including:

- Single Fathers Program
- Workshops For Urban Parents
- Access For Children (family reunification)
- Single Parents In Recovery
- Kids Club
- Youth Leadership

SPRC's staff comprises a large team of specialists with expertise in all areas of family and child support services. It is located at 228 East 45th Street. For more information, visit www.singleparentusa.com. To contact the center, call 212-951-7030 or email redackermansprc@aol.com.

Community Boards: Democracy At Work

New York City's 59 community boards are prime examples of citizens at work. Board members participate in service delivery, the city budget process, land-use and long-range planning, and community advocacy. Although they cannot order any city agency or official to perform any task, they are mandated to consider the needs of their districts, work with and advise elected officials on matters relating to the welfare of their community. The boards are appointed by their borough presidents and serve in an unsalaried capacity. They play a key role in improving the city's quality of life and are often successful in resolving the issues they address.

Turtle Bay is one of 10 contiguous communities on the East Side that comprise the Community Board 6 District, covering 1.4 square miles from 14th to 59th Streets, from the East River to Lexington Avenue, and extending west to Madison Avenue between 34th and 40th Streets.

Briefly in Business

- **Smart Workout.** 124 East 40th Street, Suite 603 (at the corner of Lexington Avenue), 212-661-1660. Open 7 days a week. Offers TBA members who purchase a package of 10 Personal Training sessions, an additional 11th session for FREE!

- **fSTUDIO Hair & Make Up.** 247 East 50th Street (between Second and Third Avenues), 212-750-5476, www.fstudiohair.com. Open 7 days a week from 11:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. Offers 50% off haircuts for first-time clients and 15% off all services for TBA members.

Community Calendar

- **Last Tuesday every month**
17th Precinct Community Council
Open Meeting, 6 p.m.
Sutton Place Synagogue
225 East 51st Street
212-826-3228
(No meetings July, August, December)
- **Second Wednesday every month**
Community Board 6
Full Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
NYU Medical Center
550 First Avenue
212-319-3750

Turtle Bay Association

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Web Site: www.turtlebaynyc.org

Check our Bulletin Board:
East side of Second Avenue,
between 48th and 49th Streets,
on outside wall of the supermarket.

Board of Directors

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TBA Annual Meeting

The Turtle Bay Association's annual meeting took place this year on November 9, offering members the opportunity to hear from board members about current and future issues and initiatives afoot in the community. This issue of Turtle Bay News covers key news in zoning and land use presented at the meeting.



Where Is Our Stimulus Money?

If you've wondered where the city's stimulus funds have gone, the table below will fill in the gaps.

New York City ARRA* Stimulus Spending (Office of Mayor, 11/07/09)			
Category	Stim. Funding (\$ millions)	Stimulus Amt Expended (\$ millions)	Est.# of FTE** Jobs Created or Retained through Stimulus Funding
Infrastructure	902.87	14.03	102.54
Energy Efficiency	80.51	.29	7.80
Economic and Workforce Development	65.32	18.01	1,928.23
Health and Social Support	909.03	11.71	975.17
Education	2,102.26	65.03	14,822.00
Public Safety	82.65	1.73	49.60
Neighborhood Stabilization	150.03	11.95	182.56
Medicaid Relief***	1,592.00		10,458.00
Grand Total	5,884.66	122.73	28,525.00

* American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

** Full Time Equivalent

*** Includes 10,458 City jobs retained as a result of ARRA-funded Medicaid Relief

City Tries To Grab Moses Playground - Again!

BY BRUCE A. SILBERBLATT, TBA VICE PRESIDENT, CHAIR LAND USE AND ZONING COMMITTEE

The city is once again threatening to appropriate Robert Moses Playground using two quasi-public entities, the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and the United Nations Development Corporation (UNDC), to develop the site in defiance of zoning regulations. The community opposed this scheme in the past when it first surfaced in 2002, and at recurring intervals since.

The playground occupies the western part of Robert Moses Park, an acre ranging from First Avenue to the FDR Drive, between 41st and 42nd Streets. Past proposals for the site have called for construction of an egregiously noncompliant 35-story, one-million-square-foot monolith. The building would house U.N. staff, freeing up several other U.N. properties for sale or lease, and producing massive cash flow for the EDC and UNC.

The proposed trade-off for the playground of a narrow riverfront esplanade running from 39th to 51st Streets, is inadequate to compensate the neighborhood for the loss of the park and the presence of an outscale office building. Community Board 6 has demanded both a replacement park/playground, of approximately the same shape and area in the immediate neighborhood,

and a mitigation of the office tower.

The Turtle Bay Association has consistently supported the CB-6 resolutions in connection with this issue, and also proposes the following conditions:

1. EDC/UNDC cannot put a shovel in the ground until the two mitigations demanded by CB-6 have been fulfilled. The replacement park must be up-and-running and the esplanade finished.
2. EDC/UNDC must pay the full market value of the property, based on commercial use. Property in the neighborhood has been going for anything from \$50 million to \$300 million an

acre. The funds could then be used to reacquire a replacement park sited at First Avenue between 40th and 41st Streets.

3. Financing for the property, the new building and the two mitigations, must be on hand before any alienation legislation is adopted.

The CB-6 District has the least public space in the city and can scarcely afford to lose more. Removing any public parkland in the city is bad enough, but to usurp it for commercial gain, with insufficient mitigation for the affected communities, is totally unacceptable and must be rejected out-of-hand.

U.N. Update

United Nations employees continued to vacate the Secretariat building this fall, with renovation of the empty building planned to start in early 2010. The Conference Building, including the Delegates Dining Room, will be emptied starting early next year. Until then, the Dining Room, as usual, remains open to the public.

Construction of the temporary building on

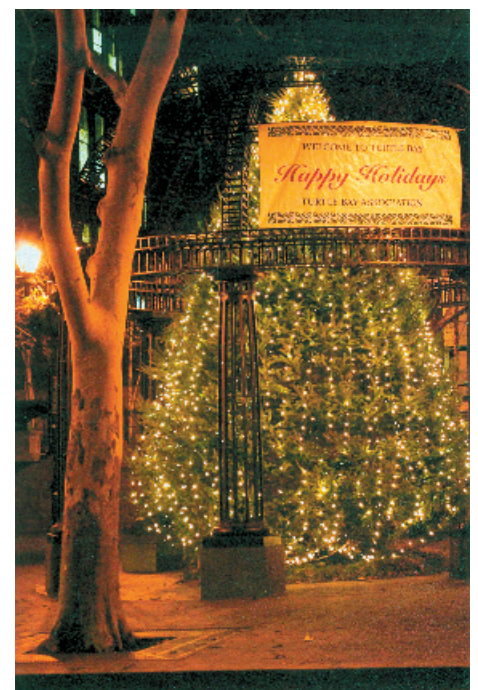
the North Lawn, to which the Secretary General's office and Conference facilities will move during renovation, continued on schedule. Most of the work is now taking place on the inside of the structure.

The General Assembly hall will be the last to be renovated. This year's opening session was, therefore, not affected.

The entire \$1.9 billion project is expected to be completed by 2013.

Holiday Tree Lights Up Dag Hammarskjold Plaza

This year's Christmas tree greets residents at the Second Avenue end of Dag Hammarskjold Plaza. The Turtle Bay Association has been donating the tree each year for more than 10 years.



News Of Elected Officials

Council Votes To Improve Parking

The City Council voted on November 16 to adopt improved parking rules and regulations around the five boroughs. Specifically, new legislation will:

- Create a five minute grace period for alternate side parking and muni-meter violations
- Improve notification about temporary and permanent changes in parking restrictions
- Improve DOT notification about various parking meter changes
- Update parking permit rules for members of the clergy.

As we go to press, Mayor Bloomberg has not voted on these changes, although on the grace period measure the City Council has sufficient votes to override a mayoral veto.

Council Member Jessica Lappin Re-elected

Jessica Lappin won a second term as Council Member for the 5th District of Manhattan, including the Upper East Side, part of Turtle Bay down to 49th Street between First and Second Avenues, and Roosevelt Island. Chair of the Land Use Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Uses, she is also recognized as a strong advocate for reducing school class size, creating new parks, and construction safety in the city. Since her election in November 2005, Lappin has been praised by the New York Times for her “steely resolve, dedication and energy.”

Lappin Joins In Protest Against Anti-Choice Amendment

The anti-choice amendment that was included in the House health care reform bill is not contained in the Senate bill thanks to intense protests. Jennifer Lappin was among the amendment’s opponents, along with U.S. Senator Kristen Gillibrand, U.S. Representative Carolyn Maloney, and prominent women’s rights groups and supporters at a press conference on November 16. In a statement following the Senate decision, Senator Gillibrand said, “The House’s

Stupak amendment would have resulted in grave risk to women and girls, particularly to low-income women. Denying a full range of reproductive services is not only discriminatory, but also dangerous, and puts the lives of women and girls at risk.”

Biotech Tax Credit Becomes Law

The city has passed a law providing \$3 million in tax credits for small biotech firms as incentive to settle and remain here, adding growth, jobs, innovation and emerging technology to the city’s economic base. Under the law, biotech firms headquartered in New York that expand their workforce by at least five percent will be eligible to receive a portion of the tax credit. Council Member Jessica Lappin sponsored the bill in the City Council.

Garodnick Calls For Government Leadership On Solar Power

Council Member Dan Garodnick has called for additional leadership from government in providing incentives, improving the energy infrastructure, and reducing bureaucratic obstacles to expand solar power in the city. He has also introduced a proposal for Solar Empowerment Zones to scale up the use of solar in low-rise industrial zones.

Council Passes Law To Secure Stalled Construction Sites

On October 14, the City Council passed a bill, authored by Dan Garodnick, to improve safety at stalled construction sites. The law allows developers to keep their building permits active in return for meeting a plan to keep their job sites safe and secure. They must also pay any outstanding fines and correct outstanding violations. There are now some 500 such sites throughout the city.

Bing Honored For Environmental Efforts

Assemblyman Jonathan Bing recently received a top rating from the Environmental Advocates of New York for his work during the 2009 legislative session. The rating recognizes the Assemblyman’s commitment to preserve New York’s natural resources, create incentives for companies to invest in alternative energy systems, and work on behalf of the environment in New York State.

Krueger Sponsors Bill For City Technical Assistance Grants

The bill, if enacted, will appropriate \$2.5 million to the department of state for technical assistance grants to be awarded to each of the five boroughs of New York City. The bill has been referred to the Finance Committee.

House Approves Maloney Bill To Activate Immediate Credit Card Reform

The House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved legislation sponsored by Representatives Carolyn Maloney, Chair of the Joint Economic Committee, and Barney Frank (D-MA) to make the effective date of credit card reforms immediate upon passing of the bill on November 4, 2009. President Obama signed the bill last spring; however the credit card companies have used extra time granted them for preparation, to raise rates and fees instead. The bill now goes to the Senate, where Senator Mark Udall (D-CO) has introduced companion legislation.

Information Available From Officials

Liz Krueger, State Senator

www.krueger.com

- Health Care Update
- Your Housing Rights
- Information For Rent Stabilized Tenants
- Information For Co-ops and Condos
- Housing Court Bill of Rights
- Report On Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR)

Dan Garodnick, Councilmember, District 4

www.garodnick.com

- Environmental Resource Guide

Scott Stringer, Manhattan Borough President

www.mbp.org

- No Vacancy? The Role of Underutilized Properties in Meeting Manhattan’s Affordable Housing Needs



Annual Night Out Against Crime Is A Smash

The 17th Precinct did it again: sponsored a successful community outreach party attended by hundreds to meet the men and women who bravely serve our neighborhood. Police officers, firefighters, and community organizations, including the Turtle Bay Association, were present at

Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza to provide key information about community safety, security and services. If you missed this year's event, join us for next year's Night Out.



Art & Culture

JAPAN SOCIETY

Serizawa: Master of Japanese Textile Design. Living National Treasure Serizawa Keisuke (1895–1984) created works of art including screens, kimonos, book covers and magazine designs. Through Sunday, January 17. Gallery hours: Tuesday through Thursday 11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Friday 11:00 a.m.- 9:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 11:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. Closed Mondays. Admission: \$10; students and seniors \$8; Japan Society members and children under 16 free. Admission is free to all on Friday nights, 6:00-9:00 p.m. 333 East 47th Street, between First and Second Avenues. Buy tickets online at www.japansociety.org, or box office at 212-715-1258.



13th Annual Contemporary Dance Showcase Japan + East Asia. Five contemporary Japanese dance companies perform. Friday, January 8, 7:30 p.m., Saturday, January 9, 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$22/\$18 Japan Society members/nonmembers. 333 East 47th Street, between First and Second Avenues. Buy tickets online at www.japansociety.org, or call the Japan Society box office at 212-715-1258.

GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL

8th Annual Holiday Train Show. On a two-level 34-foot-long layout, Lionel trains

travel through a miniature Manhattan to the North Pole. A new Long Island Railroad train joins Metro-North, New York Central and Pennsylvania Railroad cars on the elevated track, while New York City Transit's R-27 subway cars run below. Through January 18, 2010, 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. New York Transit Museum Gallery Annex in Grand Central Terminal, 42nd Street on Vanderbilt side of terminal, next to station master's office. Contact 212-878-0106 or visit www.grandcentralpartnership.org.

ST. BART'S

Concert To Usher In The New Year. Thursday, December 31, 2009, 11:00 p.m. Free, all welcome. Church entrance at Park Avenue at 51st Street.

SAINT PETER'S CHURCH

The Antara Ensemble, January 5; **Benjamin Wolff**, cello, January 12; **Mimesis**, January 19; **Lily Friedman**, piano, January 26; **Sofia Dimitrova**, piano, February 2; **Ei-ichi Shimada**, piano, February 9; **New York Composers Circle**, February 23. Tuesdays at 8:00 p.m. Saint Peter's Church, Lexington Avenue at 54th Street, 212-935-2200 or www.saintpeters.org.

Great Spirit. Icons and paintings by John Giuliani are "expressions of the mysteries of the incarnation, the divine becoming human." Through January 13. Narthex Gallery, Saint Peter's Church, Lexington Avenue at 54th Street, 212-935-2200 or www.saintpeters.org.



Clocks In The City. Paintings by Amir Wahib explore "architecture as the most significant 'object' in our daily life – an object that is functional as well as sculpturally beautiful." Through January 7. Living Room Gallery, Saint Peter's Church, Lexington Avenue at 54th Street, 212-935-2200 or www.saintpeters.org.

THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF LUXEMBOURG

Revisiting Irving Berlin. Drawings, prints and sculptures by Diane Jodes and Robert Hall, prominent artists from Luxembourg. Through January 29, 2010, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Artwork is for sale on behalf of the artists. Admission free, with appointment only. 17 Beekman Place, between 50th Street and Mitchell Place. For appointment, call Ms. Laurence Pierron at 212-888-6664, Ext. 208.

TURTLE BAY MUSIC SCHOOL

Adult Performance Workshop, January 8, 6:30 p.m.; **Suzuki Group Class Concert**, January 22, 5:30-7:30 p.m.; **Adult Performance Workshop**, February 5, 6:30 p.m.; **PS 116 Group Concerts**, February 6, 2:30-6:00 p.m.; **Suzuki Parent Workshop**, February 10, 5:30 p.m.; **Suzuki Group Class Concert**, February 12, 5:30 p.m.; **Young People's Recitals**, February 19, 5:00 p.m. and 6:15 p.m. Free of charge and open to the public, no tickets required. First-come, first-served general seating is available. Programs and schedule are subject to change without notice. Most events in Em Lee Concert Hall. Turtle Bay Music School, 244 East 52nd Street between Second and Third Avenues, 212-753-8811, www.tbms.org.

Drilling continued from page 1

are considered inadequate by opponents. A group of Pennsylvania residents, whose streams and fields have been damaged by toxic spills and whose drinking water has allegedly been contaminated by drilling is suing the Texas-based energy company that does the drilling.¹

State Senator Liz Krueger has called attention to the lasting high quality of New York City's water supply, which has never needed filtration. She points out that a filtration system of massive cost might likely be required "if drilling is allowed in close proximity to the reservoirs, rivers, and streams that supply 90 percent of the city's drinking water."

Both Krueger and Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer are leaders in the protest, which has won an extension to December 31 of the public comment period on the state's environmental impact study. Even so, the fight is not over. In a letter to Governor Paterson, Krueger stated, "Drilling must be banned in the city's upstate watershed." Stringer has also insisted that the DEC must immediately announce "a permanent and complete ban on drilling in the watershed."

For details about this crucial issue, and to voice your opinion, visit www.krueger.com or Scott Stringer at www.mbpo.org.

¹ Abrahm Lustgarten, ProPublica - November 20, 2009

Origins

Turtle Bay was originally a 40-acre grant given to two Englishmen by the Dutch colonial governor of New Amsterdam in 1639, and named "Turtle Bay Farm". After the street grid system was initiated in Manhattan, the hilly landscape of the Turtle Bay Farm was graded to create cross-streets and the land was subdivided for residential development.

Event Calendar

■ **Monday, February 8**
Valentine Party
Time TBA
Caterina's Restaurant,
316 East 53rd Street



Newsorthy Notes

Congratulations To Ted W. Bernsten. Promoted to Deputy Inspector, formerly Captain and Commanding Officer of the 17th Precinct.

In Memory Of Clifton H. W. Maloney. The husband of New York Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney passed away in his sleep on September 25, 2009 while climbing Cho Oyu Mountain on the border of Nepal and China. He reached the 27,000 foot summit on the morning of September 24, making him the oldest American to ever reach an 8,000 meter peak. An investment banker and real estate investor, Mr. Maloney worked at several financial service companies, including The City Management Corp., Electronic Bond and Share Company, and New York Securities Co., Inc. In 1974, he became a Vice President of Goldman, Sachs & Co. His last words were, "I'm the happiest man in the world. I've just summited a beautiful mountain."

Youth Stamp Club. Open to students Grades 4 and up, the club offers opportunities for beginners and collectors to have fun, learn, work cooperatively with others and prac-

tice research skills. The program is free with no charge for stamps and other materials. Everything completed by the young people will be theirs to keep. Meetings are held monthly, on Saturdays, from 10:00-11:30 a.m. The first two meetings have already taken place. The next ones are scheduled for January 16, February 13, March 20, April 17 and May 15. Sponsored by, and located at, The Collectors Club of New York, 22 East 35th Street.

To register, call 212-683-0559 or email collectorsclub@verizon.net. Visit The Collectors Club website at www.collectorsclub.org

Doe Fund's Men Save Homeless Pets. The city's Animal Care Department trains and hires formerly homeless "Ready, Willing & Able" men, providing them with jobs while also helping the city's abused and abandoned animals find new homes. Animal Care operates adoption centers in all five boroughs. To learn more, visit www.nycacc.org.



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Carolyn B. Maloney
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14th Congressional District
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New York, NY 10128-3679
212-860-0606
<http://maloney.house.gov>



TBA MEMBERSHIP COUPON

Yes, I want to join the Turtle Bay Association to help support our community's quality of life.

Annual Membership Dues

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior \$10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business \$40 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Pacesetter \$250 |

Name _____

Address _____ Apt _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

E-mail _____

☐ I would like to become more involved in TBA activities.

Please make your check payable to Turtle Bay Association.

Mail to: Turtle Bay Association, 224 E. 47th St., New York, NY 10017

BOOK ORDER FORM

Manhattan's Turtle Bay Story of a Midtown Neighborhood

A Contemporary History of Turtle Bay
Arcadia Publishing • 160 pages; 50 photos

\$15.00

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Enclosed is my check for \$_____ for ____ book/s,
plus \$3 per book for postage/handling

Make check payable to Turtle Bay Association
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New York, NY 10017

Sales Proceeds Benefit the Turtle Bay Association