

DAILY NEWS

NEW YORK'S PICTURE NEWSPAPER

Friday, April 7, 1989

Historic Washington-Tribeca?

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Community residents and businesses have organized to press for the creation of a historic district in the Washington Market-Tribeca area because the area contains the largest concentration of commercial buildings in the United States, according to members of the Washington Market Historic District committee.

"This area is literally an architectural survey of commercial architecture from 1800 to 1930," said Hal Bromm, chairman of the Committee for the Washington Market Historic District.

The proposed historic district is bordered roughly by Canal, Greenwich and Mur-

ray Sts. and Broadway.

Where's Washington St.?

"Part of the Washington Market along Greenwich St. was destroyed by the city when the World Trade Center went up," Bromm said. "Washington St. doesn't exist anymore. We don't want anymore destroyed. And, to this day, no one in city government can tell you why it was destroyed," he said.

Because the origin of Manhattan begins downtown, this area is rich in history and was where the city's business community—not only the financial district but many wholesale markets, too—began. The Washington Market was the wholesale food market.

"SoHo is famous for cast-

iron buildings," Bromm said, "but over here we have many important styles of architecture, including a fine group of cast-iron buildings, as well as fine examples of Art Deco.

2 White St.

One of Manhattan's oldest buildings, 2 White St., a little house dating back to 1807, still stands.

Although there for more than 100 years, some of the narrow streets—White, Moore, Laight, Walker, Beach, Thomas, Duane and Franklin—are still unfamiliar streets to many New Yorkers.

But many of those names, including Chambers St., which was named for John Chambers, came from people who lived in the area and

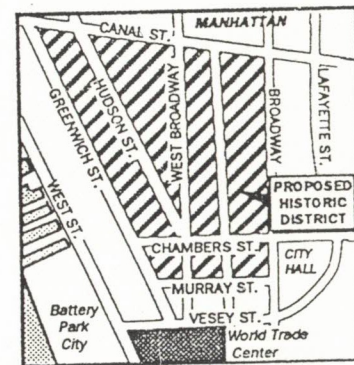
who were parishioners of Trinity Church.

The committee is staging two fund-raising events, a preview dinner April 10 and a silent auction April 15 to finance the massive research needed to present to the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

"We are doing our own research, just in case the Landmarks Commission doesn't have the money and manpower to do a complete job," Bromm said.

Celebrities in support

The Washington Market-Tribeca area has many well-known residents, including actor Robert De Niro, fashion designer Betsy Johnson, playwright Edward Albee, and painter James Rosenquist, all



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of whom are supporting Bromm's efforts.

The historic-district effort also is supported by the city's leading preservation groups, including the Council of Historic Districts, Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, and the New York Landmarks Conservancy.