

# The New York Times

JUNE 25, 2013 - FOX RESIDENTIAL GROUP IN THE NEWS - LIVING ON EAST END AVENUE By C. J. HUGHES

## East End Avenue: A Gated State of Mind

East End Avenue is not the kind of thoroughfare that casual visitors to New York are likely to stumble across while searching for restaurants, theaters or clubs. They'd have to be looking for it. Hugging the edge of the Upper East Side like fuzz on a peach, it runs only 13 blocks or so. Most of its transsecting east-west streets end in cul-de-sacs, giving the area an almost gated feel: cars are not likely to pass through on their way to somewhere else.



But there is a way in which that obscurity heightens East End's appeal. If you can endure the five-long-block slog from the Lexington Avenue subway on East 86th, you'll be rewarded: the street leads into lush Carl Schurz Park, merging into its shaded bluestone-lined path. From there, a climb of a few steps delivers a front-seat view of the boat, barge and tug parade that is the East River.

In recent years, families have surged into the area, which is home to several schools, and which Monica Weinberg, a resident who has three children, describes as "the suburbia of the Upper East Side." Dr. Weinberg, an internist, and her husband, Andrew, moved to East End in 2009 from a three-bedroom nearby in Yorkville.

She declined to say what they paid for the four-bedroom



The lush Carl Schurz Park, home to Gracie Mansion, the mayor's official residence, has a promenade along the East River and atop the F.D.R. Drive.

they bought at 170 East End, a then-new 20-story condominium overlooking the park and the river. But units of that size were selling for up to \$9 million, according to data from Streeteasy.com and other reports, which also show them trading for less today.

What concerns the Weinbergs and many of their neighbors is the potential for erosion of quality of life — and property values — if the city goes through with a \$240 million plan to build a 10-story garbage transfer station on a pier at East 91st Street. The target opening date for the station, which has federal permits, is in 2015.

Fearing a plan that envisions garbage trucks cutting through the Asphalt Green athletic complex, just a few feet from a busy soccer field, to reach the pier, Dr. Weinberg said, "I feel it is almost criminal to destroy what is such a beautiful area."

But the city, pointing out that Manhattan does not have a waste management station, argues that every borough needs to be responsible for its own refuse, and that the station is a key element of a 2006 plan to reduce the number of trucks carrying garbage through city streets to poorer areas, where current stations tend to be.

Opponents citing diesel exhaust pollution as one of their concerns have sued repeatedly to stop the station, so far without success. The issue has even injected itself into the mayoral race; most candidates are against it, which gives foes hope that the new mayor will pull the plug on the plan.

A factor in the decision may be the plant's possible vulnerability in the face of another major storm. Hurricane Sandy

# The New York Times

JUNE 25, 2013 - FOX RESIDENTIAL GROUP IN THE NEWS - LIVING ON EAST END AVENUE By C. J. HUGHES

## East End Avenue: A Gated State of Mind

last year flooded parts of 200 East End, some of whose residents camped out in the lobby of Heleen Brody's co-op, No. 180.

In 1996, her four-bedroom cost "well under \$1 million," said Ms. Brody, who works in finance. Similar units in the postwar building list at about \$2 million today.

"We like the remoteness of the place," she said. "We've always slept with the windows open so we can hear the birds." The effect of garbage trucks on such nightly rituals remains an open question.

### What You'll Find



Picnics in progress at Carl Schurz Park.

Squeezed between York and the Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive, from 79th to 92nd Street, the East End area is laden with co-ops, many dating to the postwar period.

Among them are 75 East End, a 20-story full-block monolith from 1963 with red brick and green panels, and the 1970s-era 60 East End, with 43 stories, set back on a curving driveway. Basement garages abound, and residents frequently drive to work via the southbound F.D.R. entrance at 79th.

Several prewar co-ops also stand out — for instance, 120 East End, a limestone structure that, along with 520 and 530 East 86th Street, was developed by Vincent Astor, whose great-great grandfather, John Jacob Astor, once had a country estate nearby. Condos are fewer. In addition to No. 170, there is No. 90, a traditional red-brick building dating to 2000.

A tiny historic district, on the dead-end at Henderson Place



This view of Carl Schurz Park gives a sense of its intricate architecture.

is an enclave within an enclave, with a fairy-tale-like assortment of Queen Anne-style apartments, with slate roofs, brownstone stoops and delicate metalwork.

### What You'll Pay

In mid-June there were 105 condominiums and co-ops for sale, at an average of \$1.86 million, according to Streeteasy.com.

At the high end was a five-bedroom duplex penthouse at 10 Gracie Square, an Art Deco co-op, at \$23 million. At the low end, a studio with hardwood floors at an East 88th Street co-op, was listed at \$235,000.

The market has struggled to rebound since the recession. In 2012, 31 condos sold, at an average of \$1.72 million, according to Streeteasy. In 2008 there were 76 sales, at an average of \$3 million — though 55 of them were in a single new luxury building, 170 East End, which may have skewed the total. Similarly, 151 co-ops sold in 2012, at an average of \$816,000, while 128 sold in 2008, at an average of \$1.13 million.

Whether the softness stems from fears about the garbage station project is unclear.

**Margo Mohr**, a broker with the **Fox Residential Group**, who has lived at East End and 82nd Street for 32 years, pointed out that a smaller station had stood at the same site until 1999, with nobody seeming to mind.

"I've heard that people are selling because of it," she said, "but I haven't had any problems." So far this year, "the market's been going fast and furious."

# The New York Times

JUNE 25, 2013 - FOX RESIDENTIAL GROUP IN THE NEWS - LIVING ON EAST END AVENUE By C. J. HUGHES

## East End Avenue: A Gated State of Mind

### What to Do

One of two modest retail strips runs from 81st to 82nd, offering a Gristedes market and a new deli — an offshoot of Yura, a Madison Avenue mainstay — that opened this spring. Stores used to occupy the block from 82nd to 83rd, as well, but except for a wine store, all the storefronts appear vacant. Residents rue the closing of Sirabella's, a popular restaurant, but East End Kitchen, which serves straightforward dishes like chicken breast with mashed potatoes (\$22), on East 81st, has filled the gap to some extent.



The East River dominates the view from this public walk, as well as from many residential buildings.

The large indoor pool at Asphalt Green offers swim lessons for infants as well as training sessions for adult triathletes.

The Carl Schurz Park is also home to Gracie Mansion, which hosts official city events but can also be rented for parties; a few years ago, Ms. Brody hosted an afternoon tea for her mother-in-law there.

### The Commute

The 4, 5 and 6 trains stop at East 86th Street, which is about a 20-minute walk.

Otherwise, many rely on Mario's Transportation, a private service that runs vans every 15 minutes during rush hour from York Avenue and 85th Street to various points in the financial district. One-way fares are \$6.

Buses include the M31 and M86, which come as far east as York, and the M79, which loops down East End.



This view of Carl Schurz Park gives a sense of its intricate architecture.

### The Schools

Just outside the neighborhood, on York Avenue at 78th Street, is Public School 158, the Bayard Taylor School, which runs through fifth grade. Last year it got a B on its city progress report. Also nearby, the East Side Middle School on 91st Street has 470 students. It got an A from the city.

And last year at Eleanor Roosevelt High School on East 76th Street, SAT averages were 572 in reading, 594 in math and 592 in writing, versus 434, 461 and 430 citywide.

Top private schools in the immediate neighborhood include two for girls: Brearley, on 83rd, and Chapin, on East End at 84th.



The esplanade provides exercise space for residents' best friends, including Rosie, center.

### The History

Into the early 20th century, East End was called Avenue B and York was called Avenue A, according to news reports of the time. They aligned with their downtown counterparts.

Schurz park, which encompasses 15 acres on the site of the former Gracie farm, is named for a German immigrant who in the 1800s gained renown as a journalist and a senator from Missouri; though a Midwesterner, Schurz undoubtedly had fans in the large German enclave along East End.