



**Landmarks Preservation Commission**

**Union Square Park**

Manhattan Block: 00845; Lot: 0002

**Backlog Initiative: Addressing 95 Properties**  
Manhattan A Group 2 Items

Manhattan Community Board 5  
Public Hearing Date(s): 07/12/1977; 09/20/1977



Photos: (left and) 2014 (right) undated

**Special Public Hearings**

The Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a public hearing on the backlog of buildings in the Borough of Manhattan on **November 5, 2015** and encourages interested parties to submit written testimony in advance of that hearing. Each speaker will be given three minutes total to speak, and in that time may address all of the items within Manhattan A Group 2, just particular items, or add comments to support written testimony. In order to conduct efficient hearings, we ask speakers to register in advance, and submit their written statements and materials that will be read at the hearing by **October 29, 2015** to [backlog95@lpc.nyc.gov](mailto:backlog95@lpc.nyc.gov). If you are unable to attend the hearing, your written submissions will be entered into the record and distributed to the Commissioners.

If you have questions about this property or the hearing process please contact [backlog95@lpc.nyc.gov](mailto:backlog95@lpc.nyc.gov) or call (212) 669-7817. If you would like more information about this property, please see the research file summary (over) and go to our website (<http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/html/backlog95>) and click on the link for this building's research file.



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**Union Square Park Description**

Built: 1839,1935-36

Architect: Various

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Landmark Type: Scenic

**Research Staff Hearing Statement (1977)**

UNION SQUARE PARK

Union Square was laid out as Union Place in 1811, but it was not formally opened to the public as a park until 1839. The surrounding area quickly became a fashionable residential section. The square can be related to four other nearby squares--Gramercy Park, Stuyvesant Square, Tompkins Square, and Madison Square--all laid out in the 1830's.

The tradition of using Union Square as a place for mass meetings, protests, and debate began during the Civil War. Anarchists, Socialists, and "Wobblies" met there during the years preceding World War I, and union rallies were held in the square during the 1920's and 1930's.

The present landscaping of the park which is axial and symmetrical in the classical tradition, dates from 1935-36 when the level was raised to allow for the construction of an underground subway concourse. A colonnaded bandstand was built at the northern end of the park at that time. Among the notable features of the square are the Washington Statue by Henry Kirke Brown, dedicated in 1856; the Lincoln Statue of 1868 also by Brown; and the Lafayette Statue by Frederic Auguste Bartholdi, placed in 1876. The elaborate fountain was unveiled in 1881, and the eighty-foot liberty flag pole was erected in 1924. The park remains a pleasant open space within a very busy commercial area.