Form TU-300  UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(State all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME

Charlton-King-Vandam Historic District

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: New York
STATE: New York

3. CLASSIFICATION

CLASSIFICATION (Check One)

CATEGORY

☑ Distric
☐ Building
☐ Site
☐ Structure
☐ Object
☐ Public
☐ Private
☐ Both

OWNERSHIP

☐ Public Acquisition:
☐ In Process
☐ Being Considered

STATUS

☑ Occupied
☐ Unoccupied
☐ Preservation work in progress

ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC

☑ Yes
☐ No
☐ Restricted
☐ Unrestricted

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Agricultural
☐ Commercial
☐ Educational
☐ Government
☐ Industrial
☐ Military
☐ Museum
☐ Religious
☐ Private Residence
☐ Scientific
☐ Transportation
☐ Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Various

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: New York
STATE: New York

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

New York County Hall of Records
STREET AND NUMBER:

31 Chambers Street
CITY OR TOWN: New York
STATE: New York

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

New York City Landmarks Commission
DATE OF SURVEY: Aug. 16, 1966

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

New York City Landmarks Commission
STREET AND NUMBER:

305 Broadway
CITY OR TOWN: New York
STATE: New York

Representative Charles B. Rangel 19th Congressional District
The Charlton-King-Vandam Historic District is bounded approximately by Varick Street to the west, MacDougal Street to the east, Vandam Street to the south and the north side of King Street to the north. On the north side of Vandam Street there is an unbroken row of Federal houses: almost all retaining their original steps and entrances, their pitched roofs and dormers, and their ironwork. Charlton Street, on its north side, retains what is probably the longest row of Federal and early Greek Revival houses in the city.

King Street has a different charm, with an infinite variety and unexpected juxtaposition of styles. The early apartments and the public school still have a certain grandeur while the Federal and the Greek Revival houses maintain their own distinct dignity.

In the area of Charlton, King and Vandam Streets there is so much natural preservation of early New York architecture that it is difficult to choose a few specific houses for description. Rather typical, although especially fine, are the twin Federal brick three-story houses, 37 and 39 Charlton Street. The entrances are particularly handsome and large in scale. The detail is exquisite; fluted columns and leaded glass sidelights flank the original doors. Above each doorway is the original leaded-glass transom. The ironwork in both houses is also the original.

25 Charlton Street is a rare survivor of its period and neighborhood. It retains a stable in its back yard and has a separate entrance with oval window above, and passageway to it.

On Vandam Street, the 2 1/2 story Federal brick houses with dormers at numbers 23, 25, 27 and 29 remain in close-to-original state. Their pitched roofs, and dormers, their delicately-contrived doorways, and their ironwork are representative of the Federal style.

King Street is rich in handsome three-story Greek Revival houses. Numbers 20, 40, 42 and 44 are preserved in practically their original state with brown stone doorways, roof cornices and stoops. Number 34 is another fine Greek Revival house with its doorway crested with ornament (the anthemion motif) designed in the manner associated with Minard Lafever, the great architect of the period. Number 32, which was its twin, has had a Mansard roof added, which hurts the relationship but is in itself an interesting "modernization" now old enough to have considerable charm.

There are several early twentieth century apartment houses at the eastern end of the street.

The houses east of Sixth Avenue on King and MacDougal Streets consist of rows of Greek Revival houses, built and designed together.
The Charlton-King-Vandam Historic District is an exceptionally well preserved cross-section of old New York. On its streets are some of the finest Federal and Greek Revival town houses in the City. The site has historic significance and remains as a charming residential community.

The present boundaries of the district encompass the remains of a small district which has always been a distinct and separate neighborhood. Charlton, King and Vandam Streets are linked not only physically, but by a common history. The District is bounded approximately by West Houston and Vandam Streets to the north and south and MacDougal and Varick Streets to the east and west.

The old houses on these streets are all that remain of a city plan, conceived and mapped in 1797, but almost completely developed between the years 1820 and 1829. The boundaries of this neighborhood were originally from the Hudson River (then at Greenwich Street) to MacDougal Street, and from Vandam to King Streets. This small enclave was a piece of "instant city" developed from one large country estate, by the great real estate operator of the day, John Jacob Astor. The development of these streets within a single decade gave them a continuity and homogeneity which survives today.

The estate was the site, in the Eighteenth Century, of one of the most beautiful mansions in Manhattan, the famous "Richmond Hill" built for Major Mortier. It sat on a hill four hundred feet high, surrounded by gardens, meadows and woods, all with an impressive view of the Hudson. During the Revolution, George Washington used it as his headquarters. Later, it became the Vice-Presidential Mansion for John Adams, when New York was the Capital. Later, the house was bought by Aaron Burr. With the development of the City northwards, Burr laid out his property in 1797 in city lots of 25 by 100 feet on three streets which became Charlton, King and Vandam.

After his duel with Hamilton, Burr was forced to leave the City and his estate was taken over by Astor. In 1817 Burr was paid by Astor, and the development of the property proceeded. The mansion house was rolled down the hill to the southeast.
corner of Charlton and Varick Streets (then newly opened) where it was used for many years as a theatre. The hill was then leveled, the property was subdivided and building started. Local builders bought a majority of the new lots and erected the first houses as speculations. Most of the houses were built in the early and mid-1820's. They represent today a fine display of New York Federal style town houses. (The replacements of the Federal houses on the north side of Charlton Street are fine Greek Revival houses, built after a fire destroyed four houses in 1840.)

This neighborhood was originally tenanted by prosperous builders, lawyers and merchants - the latter, mostly involved in the shipping and wholesaling of food stuffs. The markets were on the nearby wharves which were then on or near Greenwich Street. The neighborhood, particularly Charlton Street, remained settled, serene, and genteel, while comparable nearby streets of similar age became less fashionable or entirely commercial. Many houses were kept in the same family for generations, and a number of distinguished citizens continued to live here. "Modernization" was largely resisted. But, during the 1920's, the domestic character of Charlton-King-Vandam was encroached upon by large commercial buildings at the corners of Varick Street and resulted in heavy trucking. In spite of these commercial encroachments the charm of these streets was such that people continued to live there.

Since the last war, like Brooklyn Heights and Greenwich Village, this small neighborhood has steadily increased in real estate value. Run-down houses have been refurbished and once more are well maintained, owner-occupied houses.

Charlton, King and Vandam Streets remain a homogeneous neighborhood of rare architectural merit, and historic value. The aesthetic quality of this happily surviving segment of early Nineteenth Century architecture is heightened by its unexpected juxtaposition with commerce and traffic.
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Files of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: approximately 5

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Stephen Lash & Ellen Rosebrock Associates

ORGANIZATION: New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

DATE: Jan. 9, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER: 305 Broadway

CITY OR TOWN: New York

STATE: New York

CODE: 36

12. STATE LIASON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-663). I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National [ ] State [ ] Local [X]

Name: [Signature]

State Historic Preservation Officer

Title: [Position]

Date: [Date]

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[Signature]

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

ATTEST:

[Signature]

Keeper of The National Register

Date: [Date]
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Requirements: Property boundaries, where required, and north arrow.
CHARLTON - KING - VANDAM HISTORIC DISTRICT
MANHATTAN

\[\text{scale - } 1'' = 160'\]

DESIGNATED AUGUST 16, 1966
Numbers show buildings inside boundary of district
Form 10-201  
(July 1968)  

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM  

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)  

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REQUIREMENTS: PROPERTY BOUNDARIES, WHERE REQUIRED, AND NORTH ARROW.