



A Walking Tour of New York City - Civic Center

Doug Gelbert

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Each walking tour describes historical and architectural landmarks and provides pictures to help out when those pesky street addresses are missing. Every tour also includes a quick primer on identifying architectural styles seen on American streets.

The area around City Hall is commonly referred to as Manhattan's Civic Center. Most of the neighborhood consists of government offices (city, state and federal), as well as an increasing number of upscale residential dwellings being converted from older commercial structures. Architectural landmarks - ecclesiastical, commercial and governmental - surround City Hall.

New York's first City Hall was built by the Dutch in the 17th century on Pearl Street. The city's second City Hall, built in 1700, stood on Wall and Nassau streets. That building was renamed Federal Hall after New York became the first official capital of the United States. Plans for building a new City Hall were discussed by the New York City Council as early as 1776, but the financial strains of the war delayed progress. The Council chose a site at the old Common at the northern limits of the City, now City Hall Park. Construction did not begin until 1812.

That is where our walking tour will start, to explore what has happened in the 200 years since...

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