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An 1878 mansion finds a buyer in a slower week for luxury real estate

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Leslie J. Garfield

The interior of the townhouse on East 64th Street.

A historic Lenox Hill townhouse went under contract last week after a little more than a year on the market.

The home on East 64th Street was most recently listed for \$25 million, the most-expensive asking price of the 28 Manhattan luxury homes that went under contract from April 21 to 27, according to the weekly luxury market report from Olshan Realty.

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The seller of the townhouse appears to be Martin Cohen and his wife, Michele. Cohen is the chairman and co-founder of Cohen & Steers, a publicly traded investment firm known for its real estate trust mutual funds.

Cohen bought the townhouse through a shell company for \$21.5 million in 2005 before transferring it to himself and his wife outright in 2006. Cohen purchased the home from personal injury attorney Stuart Schlesinger, who has since been **sentenced** to prison time for stealing \$5 million from clients, and his wife.

At the turn of the 20th century, the townhouse was home to German American author, Civil War general and U.S. Sen. Carl Schurz.

The 8,700-square-foot Neo-Federal mansion features five bedrooms, a marble staircase, a terrace and multiple fireplaces. Between Fifth and Madison avenues, the home was built in 1878 but has been renovated to include a sauna and an elevator.

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“Because this house is an amazing house on an amazing block, even in this challenging market it’s not surprising that it sold for a good price,” said Thomas Wexler, one of the Leslie J. Garfield agents who listed the home. Wexler declined to give the final sale price, which is not publicly available at this time.

The name of the buyer is also not publicly available at this time. Cohen did not respond to a request for comment by press time.

The sale represents one of the 28 contracts signed last week for Manhattan listings asking more than \$4 million. Although the week saw a decline of five contracts from the previous week, April 2025 has overall been stronger than those of recent years. The month saw 113 contracts signed, up from 101 in 2024 and 107 in 2023. It is still a far cry from the 2021 and 2022 boom, which clocked 195 and 156 contracts in April, respectively.

Olshan also identified recent weakness in the so-called trophy market — listings asking more than \$10 million. The 12 contracts signed in that price range were the lowest number recorded in April since 2017.

The second-most-expensive home to go under contract last week was on Central Park South; it was asking \$18.9 million. The property, part of the residences in the Plaza Hotel, was most recently purchased in 2009 for \$13 million and was formerly the hotel suite of architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

Correction: This article has been updated to reflect that Martin Cohen is the chairman and co-founder, not the executive chairman, of Cohen & Steers.

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