



**CICELY HARRIS**  
Chairperson

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**CITY OF NEW YORK**  
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10  
215 West 125th Street, 4th Floor  
New York, NY 10027  
T: 212-749-3105 F: 212-662-4215

## **Harlem Heritage Markers**

### **LETTER OF SUPPORT**

April 7, 2021

On December 8, 2020 and January 12, 2021, Karen Taylor, the Founder and Executive Director of While We Are Still Are - a 501(c)3 organization that seeks to preserve Harlem's history before the passage of time and the emergence of a "post-gentrification" community erases Harlem's extraordinary legacy - came before the Transportation and Landmarks Preservation (T&LP) Committee of Community Board 10 to present the "Harlem Historic Markers Campaign".

This campaign entails the placement of 25 historic markers throughout West, Central, and East Harlem that will touch on a several of topics and eras of history centered around Harlem's heritage, including Native American, LGBT and Civil Rights histories (the full list of the sites as given to the committee is attached to this letter). The funding (\$25,000) secured for this project comes from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation, which has imposed the following parameters on the design of the markers: (1) The colors of this program's markers are blue with yellow highlighted lettering and border. Markers are 18" x 32" cast aluminum with a 7' aluminum pole; (2) The title line allows 15 characters and the five body lines can have 27 characters each, including spaces and punctuation (rendering is attached at the end of the letter).

These design parameters, along with the size of the signage, limits the appropriateness of these markers, especially in residential neighborhoods with narrow streets and historic districts, The signage as presented may also be a interfere with the myriad of street furniture placed on the sidewalks Central, East and West Harlem including: traffic signs, bus stop shelters, fire hydrants, NYC Link booths etc.

While the T&LP Committee fully supports the vision of the project, without finalized designs for the historic markers - including site plans, elevations, photographs, and other drawings detailing the appearance, scale, location, and proximity to other streetscape elements and building edifices - our committee cannot assess the appropriateness of these markers. The T&LP Committee fully endorses the 25 histories selected for commemoration and acknowledges their significance to Harlem's heritage;





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but the aesthetics of the project are unknown and will therefore require a second vetting process to determine, on a case by case basis, whether the designs of these markers are suitable to their neighborhood context. This second vetting process, which will examine each marker and their surroundings more closely, should involve all relevant community stakeholders within the immediate vicinity of the historic marker in question.

With this contingency, Community Board 10 of Manhattan understands that funds are scarce and every effort should be made to preserve Harlem history in order to educate future generations about their ancestors. We endorse the purpose and aim of the “Harlem Historic Markers Campaign” but its actual design and final locations will need to be approved at a later date when those decisions are proposed and ready for presentation. We fully support the spirit of this campaign and are committed to its success and eventual realization.

Motion to approve by vote   26   YES   0   NO   0   Abstention   0   Recusal.

Sincerely,

Cicely Harris  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board 10