



Community Board 12 - Manhattan Washington Heights & Inwood

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Eleazar Bueno, Chairperson
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

February 26, 2021

Hon. Mitchell J. Silver
Commissioner of NYC Department of Parks & Recreation
830 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10065

Re: Resolution in Support of Harlem Heritage Markers Project

Dear Commissioner Silver:

Please be advised that Community Board 12, Manhattan, passed a resolution with 39 votes in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 0 not voting, at its Tuesday, February 23, 2021, General Meeting, supporting the Harlem Heritage Markers Project proposed by While We Are Still Here, and urging the NYC Economic Development Corporation, the NYC Departments of Transportation and Buildings, the NYC Landmarks and Public Design Commissions and any other agencies to approve of and facilitate the installation of said signage.

Whereas: While We Are Still Here (WWSH) is a 501(c)(3) organization that includes long-term residents of 409 & 555 Edgecombe Avenue formed as a response to the threat that each building's history would be lost and gone forever, due both to the death of said residents and those who knew them, and to the gentrification which rapidly is changing our community; and

Whereas: WWSH, racing against the dynamic forces of gentrification and time, produced the excellent 2018 documentary, *In the Face of What We Remember: Oral Histories of 409 and 555 Edgecombe Avenue*, capturing the extraordinary history of two Sugar Hill buildings at the social, political, and cultural epicenter of the Harlem Renaissance and the Black world; and

Whereas: The WWSH Founder & Executive Director made a presentation to the Community Board 12, Manhattan Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee on February 9, 2021 regarding its Harlem Heritage Markers Project, which proposes to install twenty-five markers commemorating various persons and places in Harlem and Sugar Hill within Community Districts 9, 10, & 12, including the Audubon Ballroom (site of the assassination of Malcolm X), and 409 & 555 Edgecombe Avenue; and

Whereas: WWAH has received grants from the New York Community Trust and the Pomeroy Foundation totaling \$45,000 for fabrication, design, and installation of the signage, beginning in the Summer of 2021, and has been working with the NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC), on this project; and

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Whereas: Community Board 12, Manhattan has a history of supporting such commemoration, including a resolution passed in 2002 in support of the Harlem Heights Heritage Area, and resolutions for street co-namings on Edgecombe Avenue in honor of residents of 409 & 555 Edgecombe Avenue; and

Whereas: It is particularly auspicious during February, Black History Month, once again to reiterate that Black history is American history, and to honor the contributions of African-Americans to the historical and cultural fabric of our Washington Heights & Inwood Community Board 12; now therefore be it

Resolved: Community Board 12, Manhattan supports the Harlem Heritage Markers Project proposed by While We Are Still Here, and urges the NYC Economic Development Corporation, the NYC Departments of Transportation and Buildings, the NYC Landmarks and Public Design Commissions and any other agencies to approve of and facilitate the installation of said signage.

Sincerely,



Eleazar Bueno
Chairperson

cc: Hon. William Castro, Borough Commissioner NYC Parks
Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Comptroller
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Congressman
Ms. Jennifer Hoppa, Northern Manhattan Parks Administrator

Hon. Robert Jackson, State Senator
Hon. Brian Benjamin, State Senator
Hon. Carmen De La Rosa, Assembly Member
Hon. Al Taylor, Assembly Member
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member
Hon. Mark Levine, Council Member
Hon. Signe Nielsen, Commissioner NYC PDC