

Kelly Carroll for NYPAP

Inspired by Grassroots Stories: Community Architectural Advocacy

Dan Karatzas -- Jackson Heights Beautification Group

July 20, 2021

Kelly Carroll: This is Kelly Carroll for the New York Preservation Archive Project. I'm interviewing a series of individuals about their neighborhood preservation campaigns and I want to thank the New York State Council on the Arts for making this project possible today, and, today I'm speaking with Daniel Karatzas about Jackson heights in Queens.

Kelly Carroll: While Mr. Karatzas was born and raised in Jackson heights, it wasn't until he returned to New York City and the neighborhood to seek his fortune on Wall Street in 1986 that his interest turned to the history of the neighborhood and how it developed in the early 20th century. So, Daniel, could you describe Jackson heights in 1986 when you came back?

Daniel Karatzas: So, I moved back from upstate New York, and it just turned out I moved into one of the original garden cooperatives that had been built by the Queensboro Corporation. The buildings are built around the perimeter of the block and we share an open space in the center of the block—a very un-American kind of concept—since each building is a separate cooperative. So, beginning in '87 you know, two things happened: one is Barry Lewis had done a slide presentation on Jackson Heights using some of the old Queensboro Corporation photographs that a neighboring real estate agent had collected. He had worked for Queensboro management, which failed, subsequently failed, and they were the recipient of all the records with the Queensboro Corporation.

With Robert Stern's New York 1930 sort of piqued my interest in the neighborhood. Stern's chapter on the outer boroughs begins with Jackson Heights and he and his graduate students or, you know, assistants had dug through tons of old magazines and newsletters to find information that really had had been collecting dust for decades. So, having been inspired by that and his very good index, you know, in the back of New York 1930, I just started my own sort of search into the neighborhood history. I was at the time a securities analyst focusing on equities, and so there was a focus on digging up stories, reading public documentation and coming up with conclusions. So, it was really in 1989 that I sort of focused on doing a more serious effort at the history of the neighborhood, and you know at that time, New York City had dug itself out of the, you know, pit that it was in from the 1970s, and Wall Street was taking off, which is sort of why I had returned also and, you know, there seemed to be a lot that had gone on here that again had just sort of—with the exception of Robert Stern and his research—been totally forgotten. Except by long-term residents, some of whom were, you know, my neighbors and still around you know 30 years or so ago.

So, what I did was to go to the New York Public Library and the Queens Borough Public Libraries main branch because— (sorry for the cell phone ringing)—but it turned out that the Queensboro Corporation—the developer of Jackson Heights—had published its own newsletter beginning in 1916 or 17. So, as a promotional device for the developer, there was tons of information about what was built and when and why and wherefore. So, I basically...that was before I had a laptop so I just used a lot of yellow legal

pads which I think those notes are still in my basement! Then, to go issue by issue and try to sort of figure out what was built when and in what order. To some degree, Stern had done some of that and I went issue by issue. And what was interesting for me, because the time this was taking place, which was the spring of 1989 when I began, and the book *Jackson heights: A Garden in the City* was published in December of '90. We had just come off the 1987 stock market crash, and what was very interesting to me as a securities analyst was to see what happened to a neighborhood that was focused on the cooperative apartment when, during the Great Depression, many, many cooperative corporations failed. Interestingly, only three did in Jackson Heights which, compared to what went on in Manhattan on Park and Fifth Avenue, is actually a very small ratio. At about twenty developments that were co-ops, only three of them failed. So, there was a personal interest, a little bit of a professional interest in terms of what was going on financially. And I always tell people that I am proof, if you pick a narrow enough subject, you can become an expert in something.

Kelly Carroll: And you absolutely are considered the expert on Jackson Heights and its architecture and your book, *Jackson Heights: A Garden in the City* was very useful to me, years ago, when I was trying to learn...wrap my head around the neighborhood and what made it special because, as a lay person, when you walk into the neighborhood it just seems like it's a bunch of apartment buildings and you don't understand that they're actually garden apartments and that it was the largest and first of this type of community in the country.

Kelly Carroll: So, to back up a little bit about your work: all the research that you conducted, which then blossomed into this publication, I know that in 1987 there seems to be a lot of magical things that happened after you came back in 1986. Because in 1987 I know that the Landmarks Preservation Commission's Chair Gene Norman directed the research survey staff at Landmarks to start surveying Jackson Heights and within Community Board Three. And I also know that in 1988 that the Jackson Heights Beautification Group was founded, and they also launched a landmarks campaign. So, how did you fit into these broader initiatives that were kind of working together to protect the neighborhood's built environment?

Daniel Karatzas: So, a neighbor of mine was one of the founding board members of the Jackson Heights Beautification Group, which started in 1988. And I think I went to like the second or third meeting, such as a young person back then, because I guess sort of fundamentally...you know in me is a sense that you know your voice counts, or, you know, it...I always call it leadership by default. Which, a lot of people just assume that somebody else is going to, you know, people love to complain, especially in New York City back then. And so, it was sort of taking a little bit of responsibility for what was going on around you. So, obviously, it was nice to meet a bunch of likeminded people, and it was sort of like, I liken it to...you know Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney back in the '40s? You know, saying, "Let's put on a show!" So, it's like "Let's put on a community group!" and see what happens because there had been a time when the neighborhood was much more homogeneous, that there were a lot of organizations and we actually had a Congressman who lived in the neighborhood and so on and so forth. But, as things changed over the decades, you know, and things got worse in the '70s...you know, everybody's sort of either left or abdicated their responsibility. So, from that and seeing, you know, being inspired by other people who felt similarly, sort of my focus from seeing, like I said, Stern's book and Barry Lewis—his presentation—was to then sort of dig into the history.

I'm not a history major but having seen all those references, not just to the original Jackson Heights news, but to other architectural magazines that were published in the '20s, I started sort of that research. By the time...I think it was 1989, the group was contacted by the Landmarks Commission about either calendaring Jackson Heights or expressing interest. So, we were very lucky that my research was coincident with what the Landmarks Commission was thinking. Unlike a lot of other neighborhoods who've had to do whatever it takes to get on their radar screen, we already were. And so it was serendipity that by the time my book was ready, which, the launch was December 4, 1990, which was the date that the Landmarks Commission held a community hearing to discuss the proposed, you know, district in the neighborhood. So, we were savvy enough to sort of use that as the launch date for the book to promote sort of positive feelings towards landmarking, because you know Queens had a bad reputation at that time, with only one historic district. And I think it was the Steinway area with the original workers' housing, that said "Don't tread on us!", you know, they didn't want anything... anybody to tell them anything which sounds very similar to how a lot of Americans feel about a lot of things in 2021 but I won't go there, so...

Daniel Karatzas: You know, I plugged away at the research, knowing full well that they were moving the process forward, which made it a lot easier. In fact, the Jackson Heights Beautification Group paid to have the neighborhood photographed for the Landmarks Commission because we were in another financial crisis at the time. And that the comments was well, we want to move this forward, but you know, we don't have the resources, and we need to photograph every property in the proposed district. And so, at that time the Beautification Group sponsored actually a neighborhood architect to do the photography work to get it done so that it wouldn't, it wouldn't be dragged out any longer. So, the...my book was published, you know, in December of '90 when the hearing was held, and then in a matter of...it was actually October 19, 1993 when the district was formally approved by, I think, then the Board of Estimate or whatever the process was.

So, we were very lucky that we were on their radar screen. The book actually assisted and maybe filling the gaps of whatever their own research had come up with. And so, the designation report does quote my book as sources of information. So, you know in hindsight, we were just in the right place at the right time and didn't have to spend years fighting to get the Landmark Commission's attention.

Kelly Carroll: Right, and by this time, the Board of Estimate had been abolished, allowing City Council the power to move designations forward, and I know that that was a big help to Jackson Heights because prior to that, the Board of Estimate successfully blocked landmark designations. In terms of the Landmarks Commission partnering with the community—I found this so interesting about this district—because I also read that they also asked for research help so, that was your book that informed the research, correct?

Daniel Karatzas: Yes, I believe so, because it is you know, quoted in their designation report.

Kelly Carroll: Yeah, and then the hearing, I didn't know that that was also the date of your book launch, which was so smart in terms of community strategy. So, the December 4, 1990 hearing which was at Intermediate School 145, was that the official public hearing of the Landmarks Commission or was that a community outreach meeting?

Daniel Karatzas: That was, I know...that I had attended a meeting and I think it had to have been in late '89 when we went to the Landmarks Commission, a couple of us from the Beautification Group, and

since my book was in the works, you know, and I attended as well. And I can't remember you know the outcome, I remember being there, but it was seemingly that you know, we were somewhat on track for this, and they were going to expand the resources to move forward. And as things coalesced in 1990 and we were aware of the meeting at the local junior high school that's when we decided to sort of have that as the publication date.

The woman who designed my book was, you know, in publishing and so her insight to how to you know, leverage things was important. My you know, financial genius was that I pre-sold, because this was all...we received a grant from the grant from the J.M. Kaplan Fund for the book, but that didn't cover everything, so my idea was that there was enough goodwill, you know, in the neighborhood and amongst people who would become involved with the Beautification Group with a database of names and addresses to actually send out a mailing saying, you know, the book is on its way, um, back then, it was only ten dollars plus shipping, and so we probably had pre-sold four or five hundred copies by the time it was actually delivered so that, from a cash flow perspective, we had basically paid off every bill. And then, it was sort of onward and upward beginning the fourth, if I remember correctly, that meeting on December fourth, the only sort of naysayers were probably the houses of worship, who typically say we don't want this, because our parishioners are more important than our slate roof or architectural details and by and large, you know this is 1990 and so, most people who were for it were the ones animated and focused, the people who might not have been that positive were still sitting home watching reruns on TV. So, that's how I sort of characterize people who were notified that the meeting was taking place, so there was very little opposition. So again, it's sometimes perception versus reality.

The other thing is that there were only about three-hundred private homes in the district. The vast majority of housing units were apartments that were either cooperatively owned rentals and some condominiums. So, it wasn't as if it was all row houses and, basically, and in fact it was the first really non-row house brownstone kind of outer borough neighborhood that was landmarked. We were a 20th century development, not a 19th century, so it was different and, to a large degree, most of the co-op owners, especially those in the original buildings where the buildings had been relatively well maintained over the previous 70 to 80 years wanted to aesthetically keep things the way they were and saw value in that, so the end result was that the designation came, you know, in October of '93.

Kelly Carroll: Right, and did the Jackson Heights Beautification Group or any elected officials work with the Landmarks Commission in determining those boundaries at the time? Because with many New York City historic districts, there is often a lot of architecture that is excluded from the boundary lines that was developed at the same time, by the same architects or in your case the same corporation, so do you have any idea how those boundary lines were drawn?

Daniel Karatzas: The boundaries were...we had sort of no input into that. I mean, we were a nascent organization that was just getting its bearing. So, to some degree, you know, we didn't have the clout of the Brooklyn Heights Association and other entities like that. The demand plus I think the Commission wasn't as welcoming perhaps of, you know, neighborhood input to some degree, as they may be now, or at least they talk to about being so now so....when I looked at the boundaries, their main focus was to include the major buildings that they knew were built or developed by the Queensboro Corporation. And the way the neighborhood developed, since they could not, the Queensboro corporation could not do everything, they did allow other developers in who adhered to their aesthetic sensibilities and they had aesthetic control over what got built with very, very few exceptions. They wanted the other

developers—their buildings—to blend into what they had already built and even as the '30s went on, and things got a little bit more Moderne and stripped down, you know, they did want sort of more of vernacular details that blended into what they had built in the teens and the '20s. So, the main focus was what they could document, that the Queensboro Corporation had built, and then you know years later we attempted to, you know, broaden that into other buildings have similar quality that were contemporary with the original designation.

Kelly Carroll: Right, and in terms of aesthetics, I know that, after the designation the Landmarks Commission developed a series of guidelines specifically for storefronts. And was your group involved in that or how did that come about?

Daniel Karatzas: Yes, prior to the promulgation of those rules by the Landmarks Commission, the Jackson Heights Beautification Group, with one or two local architects had put together...I would call them not rules but sort of guidelines as to, you know, if you're going to renovate your storefront. And so those were distributed to the roughly...so, we had a lot of commercial storefronts in the district, unlike a lot of other neighborhoods where I had been told—I don't know for certain—you know, the Commission didn't like to include a lot of them, because there was always more turnover in storefronts certainly, than what houses or apartment buildings would do to their facades. But from 77th Street to 88th Street on both sides of 37th Avenue, along with 82nd Street from Roosevelt at 37th Avenue, you had dozens and dozens of storefronts. So, the good news was that, unlike say parts of Brooklyn where it was little buildings running along the commercial avenue, in Jackson Heights it was either one building going from street to street along the avenue or two halves owned by two different entities. So, even though we had what, you know, 11 or 12 blocks in the historic district of commercial buildings, it wasn't like there were 300 or 100 commercial property owners, there were probably just maybe three dozen or so. So, there was a smaller universe.

The Beautification Group's intent was a friendly way to introduce the fact that there were now rules regarding your storefront and your show window and the security gates, which were much more important back in the early '90s, maybe then now. So that was our attempt to at least, in a friendly way, introduce the concept to really the merchants, maybe more so than the property owners and then within a year, maybe like two or three years later the rules were published, I think we actually made an effort to mail those rules—regardless of what the Landmarks Commission did—to the property owners and also provide those rules to the merchants themselves. So, our on the ground or boots on the ground approach was: don't assume anything. And in a friendly way, you know, hand it to whoever's there in the store and at least, we can state that we made that outreach to them, because when you're in a more diverse community you know, we had some issues. You know, the merchants blaming, you know, the Beautification Group or some other entity, you know, for their or their property owner's negligence with regards to following the rules.

There was, maybe a year or two, where there was a lot of you know kerfuffles about that, and then, once the property owners realized that having their merchants do the right thing with regards to the Landmarks Law would enhance their property value, then suddenly they were all for—(sorry about the phone again)—they were suddenly all for this and there was relatively little problems with sort of major storefront renovations where people just gutted something you know, in the middle of the night. There might have been, you know minor...the merchants even knew that don't put a big sign or don't put a big awning, so there might have been a small sort of illegal sign, but the volume of violations fell

precipitously with the rules and with the property owners realizing that well, maybe more expensive for their merchants to do this, and maybe they helped share in the cost—I don't know—it was in their interest to follow the rules. So, relatively speaking, the last you know 10-15 years have been much less problematic in terms of reporting those violations to the Commission.

Kelly Carroll: That's excellent to hear, yeah, it's...I know that Small Business Services uses historic storefront prototypes when they're directing merchants, so what a successful storefront looks like, so there is absolute merit to this thinking. In terms of other violations in the neighborhood, I know because of my work, I would see a fence here and there, that was put in illegally, but how successful do you think that designation—almost 30 years later in 2023—has been keeping the neighborhood intact and how it looked when you started the campaign?

Daniel Karatzas: Right. So, there's been very little new construction, I sell residential real estate in the neighborhood and, just like the Karatzas family were never, you know, sales oriented people, I am proof that you know, you can still be successful in that kind of business. So, my main focus is not to see everything torn down for like, you know, new out of scale construction. There's been relatively little. The two instances where there has been have been fires, you know, you don't know how they were started, but you know, one happened just as we were in the landmarking process and so, what the Jackson Heights Beautification did with 8211 37th Avenue was to consult with the owner who, instead of building a glass tower, which was what the plan was in 1987 to 88. What...did build, not perfect, but much more referential brick, mostly brick building that actually blends in with the development. So, it's not perfect but, you know, it could have been so, so, so much worse that it's actually a major victory given they could have done whatever they wanted.

Subsequent to that there was a fire, of course, they had to adhere to the rule, there is now the first sort of modification unfortunately, along 37th Avenue are a lot of one-story commercial taxpayers that are underdeveloped so every real estate cycle that goes by, they become more and more vulnerable. So, we have the first case where the owner basically ended the leases of the commercial tenants and is now building four stories on top of the original sort of Moderne building that was there. In most cases, the owners seem to be too wary to sort of make that economic bargain to sort of stop the income for literally years before sort of the payday, and the one case right now it's probably been, you know, the years ago by...three or four years from when those leases were ended to when they're actually constructing the building now. I think they had their own financial issues, etc.

So, in the residential section it's only been an improvement, most of the large apartment buildings, whether tenant owned or rentals have adhered to the law. All of them know now to do that. The houses, you know here and there, somebody puts...it's more like fencing. So, Jackson heights was the land of no fences seemingly back in the '20s where, when you look at the original photographs, there were no fences and the Landmarks Commission wanted there to be a 30 inch or lower fences which, you know, from the early '90s people wanted fence! Big fence! You know, protect us! And it is proof that it's really now a fence more for dogs rather than burglars.

And so again, as every year has gone by, the people owning the houses and the people buying the houses in the historic district...all the ones that I've sold and our firm has sold are buying it because they're in the historic district, not because they want to trash the property to make it look as awful as so many others in other parts of the city. So, there becomes a critical mass, where instead of pushing that boulder uphill constantly it's suddenly either on a flat plateau or now rolling in the right direction. So

again, my contact, currently Katie Rice at the Landmarks Commission for the violators is typically sort of minor things that I've come across. I became the default person to email when something is seen, you know, generally but it's been a dramatic improvement. Plus even outside of the historic district some buildings decided not to strip everything off of their property and even some of the merchants in non-designated storefronts realize that you don't—you don't need an awning the size of Cleveland—to attract people to your storefront. You know, 37th Avenue, which is our main—in the historic district—commercial thoroughfare is not that wide. It doesn't need to be 40 feet tall, and so it's actually cheaper to have a smaller sign or more moderate, you know, slanted awning and that's even connected with non-historic district merchants. So you know there's been a lowering of the volume commercially across the board, even outside of the district.

Kelly Carroll: So interesting that there's been like a trickledown effect of designated properties and their appearance onto the non-designated portions because it's aesthetically successful, it's economically successful, people are coming to these businesses because it's cheaper to do it this way. So, in these non-designated areas, I know that not that long ago, two years ago, there was a push to expand the Jackson Heights Historic District, you know, since it's 1993 designation, and I know that the Landmarks Commission basically approached the group and had an offer on the table of what they thought. Can you speak a little bit about what that was and what you thought about it, and where that action is now?

Daniel Karatzas: Right. Okay. I was the one who decided to...so, is that...can you hear that okay I'm sort of hearing a little...

Kelly Carroll: Yeah, I can hear you.

Daniel Karatzas: I heard some feedback. Anyway, so I was the person who decided to get some exercise and venture into east and west of the historic district, which is really in the center part of the neighborhood. So, I created an Excel spreadsheet sort of a database and it turns out that the State and National Historic District, the research that had been done by Jeffrey Saunders actually had all the data about who the architect was when it was built, so I didn't have to search from scratch. So, I did get access to that information from the State and National designation and then created my own. And so then, we took photographs of the properties of representative photographs because, for the most part, it was a series of row houses on the side streets, and it was some apartment buildings on the avenue.

So, we submitted that ultimately to the Landmarks Commission with a request for evaluation and then you know it as the years go by, it was December of I think it must have been 98. 98? I'm so—it was 2018. I don't think it was twenty-nine— it was either 2018 or 2019 where they had us state to they expended the resources to look at what we had proposed and then sent people out to sort of confirm what it is we had proposed, and for them to then grade on a sliding scale what they thought of those blocks or buildings. So, it was a much-reduced conclusion that they came to, with color coding and everything, and so it was important that they expressed to us that they had a rationale for what they chose to include and what they chose to deem not worthy.

So, we were in the main room where the hearings are held, and there were a three or four people from the Beautification Group. And there were a number of Landmarks Commissioners, and so the one building, so I understood that you don't get everything you asked for, but the one major omission that I chose to push back on was Henry Atterbury Smith's La Mesa Verde apartments on 90th and 91st Streets between 34th and 35th Avenues. If Shively Sanitary Apartments are landmarked in Manhattan—as I've

said, for many years, if anybody still listening—is if it was in Brooklyn or Manhattan it would have been landmarked years ago.

Now, interestingly...this is a digression, the property was sold for like \$72 million. It had been sort of you know, milked like most rental buildings in New York City for a while. The original garden area had been sort of mostly intact, except the middle section that did have like a driveway running through it, but just a few years before, the old property owner decided to file to make all the interior space a parking lot. Because they had a file something, and one of the rental tenants had contacted the Beautification Group, so I saw the filing with what the property owner did—which is such a beautiful thing—is they cut down the trees, but they didn't cut them down all the way they cut them down to about waist high.

Kelly Carroll: Lovely.

Daniel Karatzas: So, we had a series a series of stumps you know, in the prop in the...

Kelly Carroll: We are frozen. Give it one moment, hopefully it will unfreeze. You're back! Okay, we had a small hiccup but the last thing I heard you say was how the owner had cut down the trees to have this stump town in front of.

Daniel Karatzas: Right, so this is actually within the gardens of the Mesa Verde. So interestingly, they never pursued it, but what they did pursue was selling it. And then, interestingly, the new owner has essentially restored the property, you know, without Landmarks' approval, but I would give it like a 90 out of a hundred. You know, you're not going to have...they could have done so much worse to it than they did. They actually restored the sky bridges, so it has sky bridges like the Shively Sanitary Apartments or the Cherokee Flats or whatever they're called, but actually more extensive than those buildings. They restored them. They did put sort of a plastic, glass, or plastic enclosure over the vertical walkways which were actually, I thought, very nicely done to protect people from rain. And they did do some facade work which was, you know, not bad given what other people have done to landmarked buildings.

They did change the windows. I don't know, maybe they don't have the muntins or the millions, the original ones weren't there, but they were a nice green color that matches the staircases. So, by and large, it actually looks better. And then they restored the gardens. So, that was the miracle, you know, I thought it would have been the year 3000 before anything happened, and it was much sooner. So, at the hearing I became the, you know, arrogant, you know, the hard-assed outer borough person who is not an architect by training—although my first year in college I was an architecture student, ended up as an engineering student, and then a business student—anyway. So, I gave them the not mister nice guy pushback about, if this was in Brooklyn you know, whatever and as I've already described. So, we left the meeting, you know I've been a little bit busier. My complaint is, you know, we have so many architects who live in the neighborhood who've come here because jeez, it's not, you know, it's much less expensive or had been than Brooklyn you know, or whatever and these apartments in private homes, you know, if they were there would be...I don't know 30 or 50 or whatever percent higher and it's been more difficult. To sort of as a summary coming you know, to the end of this perhaps, that 30 or so years ago when we were putting on the show and starting all this process, it was much easier to get people out of their homes to actually attend a meeting or to commit to coming out and rallying. It's become a lot more difficult as the technology has improved, to be able to communicate with people to get them to commit to sort of anything beyond their scope of what they're used to doing or

professionally and personally need to do. And so, you know, it's been a little bit of inertia. We have the Facebook site up and I'm linked to it, so I get all the people who are chiming in supporting it, but perhaps, you know, and then with the pandemic and everything you know so maybe it'll be 2022 when we rekindle the effort to sort of lean on them and certainly things haven't been normal for the last, you know, almost 18 months. So, hopefully as I mellow out in my you know dotage you know, maybe I'll do that, but I still have, you know, I still sort of...I know people are busy doing other things, but you know, I, what I have said is that if 1% of the population did like one hour of community service every month, the world would be a much, much different place, but it still hasn't happened. But I remain optimistic that it might. So, it's going to be, you know there's been a couple of other people, you know, so I have to be leaned on in terms of pushing that to more of the front burner than it has, but they did expend the resources to do the research and I guess anything we can get is better than nothing.

So, there are a couple of things that I wanted to fight for including La Mesa Verde which should be in there. Because I think the issue becomes...it's either an Individual Landmark or they have to link like two other buildings with it, which maybe they don't think are the greatest things they've ever seen. I don't know what all of their calculus is, but you know that's where we stand.

Kelly Carroll: Right and with La Mesa Verde, the change in ownership may actually be a wonderful thing, especially in my interactions with that building in the past where tenants who are being treated poorly who would just happen to call my old office, because we did a brochure of Jackson Heights in partnership with you. So, the new ownership if they're doing such a great job and doing the restoration of the gardens and the facade work, that might change Landmarks' mind about what they're able to include or not, because if you have a property owner who is vehemently opposed that's pretty much a nonstarter.

Kelly Carroll: Last question for you, because we are about out of time. Being the expert on Jackson Heights built environment, what is your favorite place or building in Jackson Heights?

Daniel Karatzas: So. You know, obviously the last two garden apartment complexes that the Queensboro Corporation built—The Chateau and The Towers—were built in such a sort of low density that, you know, you just know that they would never...you know, I tell people professionally they don't build them like this anymore, both in terms of their footprint on the block and the quality of with which they were built. So those...seeing the two of them together because they sort of face each other on 34th Avenue, which now has a portion of its park median restored for the last almost 30 years, which originally was there. It sort of evokes a little bit—and there is a photograph that I've used, a Brown Brothers photograph—that shows those two buildings and the median in probably about 1927. And it seems like a sort of never neverland because there's not a car on the street or a person on the street, but it sort of evokes but probably what was here. But...so that one spot is probably the one most reverential or referential back to the day. But the other conclusion I've drawn is that the legacy of the Queensboro Corporation was not restrictive housing policies which most developers aiming at the middle to upper middle class did before the Depression, but it was the thoughtfulness with which they laid out the original neighborhood and that even what was built later—well denser—was at least brick, and in some way didn't attract as much from the original neighborhood. It's just sometimes hard to figure out what was built went. So that has created, in what I call it, in a very non-technical term a very pleasant sort of environment. So, especially during the day during the week, walking even the commercial thoroughfares. The scale of the neighborhood to the now you know 80- to 100-year-old sort of charm

and character of the original buildings, that's what's I think in the long run, served us well and that's what the landmark designation has helped protect and maintain and it's a more accessible—both financially and physically—neighborhood than a lot of others. So, it's not as if it's, you know now priced out of everybody's reach and it's one of the few places in New York where we can have such a, you know, economic diversity, you know, human diversity, etc, that still works for people of various means. And because of the quality of housing stock, you know, it does appeal to people who could live elsewhere in the city or in the suburbs, but still choose a neighborhood like Jackson heights.

Kelly Carroll: I agree. It's an oasis in Queens and a wonderful place Dan. Thank you so much, this has been excellent, do you have anything final you'd like to add?

Daniel Karatzas: No, but I appreciate you got to me before I disappeared from you know, one way or another, and it's always fun to participate in things like this.

Kelly Carroll: Right, and we're going to have a party in November that celebrates all of these Community interviews, so I look forward to hopefully seeing you there, and hopefully the world will be a little bit back to normal by then as well.

Daniel Karatzas: Great, thank you so much.

Kelly Carroll: Thank you! Have a great day.