

Kelly Carroll for NYPAP

Inspired by Grassroots Stories: Community Architectural Advocacy

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield, Patricia Pates-Eaton, Ruthann Richert and Madlyn Stokely

Mount Morris Park Community Improvement Association

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Brad Vogel: Good evening, my name is Brad Vogel and I am the executive director here at the New York Preservation Archive Project, and I'm really excited tonight because we have our third installment here for you of our series called Inspired by Grassroots Stories: Community Architectural Advocacy. Now, that's a lot of words, but I want to focus in on them, because the people you're going to hear from tonight embody their organization, and especially embodies all of those things.

So, we are talking about grassroots stories. Now, this is an example of people who live in the area in Harlem that we're talking about tonight and Kelly, our host, is going to get into that a little bit further. But we're talking about real people--these are not people who are necessarily paid to do anything. They are doing this out of their love of their community. We're talking about community. We're talking about the area of Mount Morris Park--the area in Harlem--which is a real treasure trove of architectural wonders, as you will see. And we're talking about architecture, we are talking about buildings, the built environment, the places that people are actually caring about. The places that give them an anchor and a sense of place. And we're talking about advocacy because as you will see, it takes work from human beings to protect the places that we love in New York City, and that's what the New York Preservation Archive Project is all about.

I work with and I'm hosting tonight's series--we're all about telling that story of the people who actually do the work, who are out there advocating, trying to make sure that some of these memorable, integral parts of New York City remain intact for future generations. So, thank you--special thank you, really--to the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), they helped sponsor this, and also to Pat Reisinger. And before Kelly gets into introducing our panelists this evening, and the whole, the whole story that's about to unfold for you, I want to say that this is also coming to you indirectly because of the work of the Historic Districts Council, our friends there who helped this organization and this neighborhood through the Six to Celebrate program. Now, the Six to Celebrate program is also interestingly funded by NYSCA in part. But that's an effort that helps to get communities organized and assists them in pushing for historic designation, and I'm going to let Kelly take it from there. Kelly Carroll is a preservation consultant, she is also an educator and I will let her jump right in. Kelly, take it away!

Kelly Carroll: Thank you so much, Brad, and to our friends at the Mount Morris Park Community Improvement Association that have joined us tonight. This is our third series, as Brad mentioned. And what's different about the group we're going to speak to tonight is that unlike Elmhurst, Queens and East 25th in East Flatbush which were relatively new preservation initiatives, the Mount Morris Park Community has been in the business of advocacy for their landmarks, for their park, for their streets, for decades. Decades and decades. Going all the way back before the Landmarks Law even existed. So, this is a group that has a history and a culture of activism for their neighborhood.

And I'd like to start the evening with a quote from Mayor Lindsay, who spoke about this neighborhood and said at the dedication of the amphitheater and rec center of Mount Morris Park in 1970. And he said, quote: "I have a hunch that with continued involvement of the community, New York will shine brighter as the cultural capital of the world. There is perhaps more talent in this community of Harlem than in most other parts of the world put together." So, I think that quote is still relevant today and is reflective of the character of the residents and how they care for their community and work together. And they do this largely in part via the Mount Morris Park Community Improvement Association. But before we talk about that, we want to figure out how activism really started in this neighborhood.

And we have one of our guests this evening, which I'll introduce: Madlyn Stokely, who is a lifelong Harlem resident and the proud daughter of Hilda Stokely, who served as a powerful role model for social justice for Harlem residents. And she was the chairman of Mount Morris Park Rehabilitative Committee.

We have Syderia Asberry-Chresfield who is an avid community activist that has lived in the Mount Morris Park Historic District for over 30 years.

We have Patricia Pates-Eaton. She is the founder of the Mount Morris Park Community Association which formed in 1981, and we also have Ruthann Richert, who is a proud thirty-plus year resident of the Mount Morris Park Historic District who loves playing a small part in helping preserve its historic blocks, park, churches and townhouses as the community moves forward into its exciting future.

With those introductions and that background, my first question, I suppose, would be for Madeline. Would you like to describe, briefly, your mother's role as an activist and as chairman of the Mount Morris Park Rehabilitative Committee, which I understand was instrumental in bringing improvements to the park and eventually securing landmark designation for the Fire Watch Tower--which is, I'm inside of right now--and the eighteenth New York City historic district?

Madlyn Stokely: Yes, Kelly. Thank you so much, and this is so exciting to be here to share this history about this important community. So, my mother was part of the great migration from the South that came to Harlem, and she fell in love with Harlem, and she fell in love particularly with East Harlem and became very early, very early upon her arrival, she began to be very active. She always felt that Harlem should have the same things that other neighborhoods have. Everything from schools, to recreation, to just general beautification. And so, she embarked in a campaign to engage with other concerned residents in the community to bring about quality of life that should be a standard for everyone to Harlem.

And so, as it relates particularly to at the time Mount Morris Park, she felt that at that time that we did not have a quality park in East Harlem for children and families to enjoy. And so, she with other very, other very strong women began to form an organization. And it took a very long time to bring about the first discussion in quite a few years about the fact that Mount Morris Park had to be rehabilitated. It had to have some things in the park that the community needed. And so, with a lot of struggle, a lot of work, in 1963 the group won recognition and a commitment from the city to renovate the park and to install a large pool--we had a very small pool on Madison Avenue--and also the recreation center and the amphitheater. There was a big push by the city to put a bandshell as opposed to an amphitheater. Which, those of us on this call who know anything about the arts knows there's a big difference between a bandshell and an amphitheater. And so, that group under my mother's leadership really pushed back very, very hard, because they wanted a quality theater in Harlem. And as you said, Lindsay

designated--came and did the opening--that was nineteen, you said seventy. So, they got the designation of the funding in 1963 so you can imagine, it was probably--I don't know how many years before--that they were struggling and working to get people to pay attention that it needed, and then they got the designation of the funding in '63. The *New York Times* wrote the article in '64, and Lindsay opens the facilities in '70.

So, it just speaks to the fact that with a commitment you can do things, but you cannot give up. You have to keep struggling. And so that was a very brief history of my mother's work there, which I believe laid the groundwork...well, actually they built on people who were here before. I mean, she didn't just come and it was nobody doing anything, there were people here before. But to get that designation of the landmark in 1971, it was a time when they were talking about tearing down Grand Central Station, and so it wasn't a moment in history where people in the city or the state were even recognizing the fact that we had to hold on to some of our cherished buildings and designate certain communities. So, people sort of looked at her with, like she had three heads and she talked about designating this particular area as a historic district. But my mother--being the independent and strong woman that she was--and committed to the community, she and the other women working with her just continued to plug on until they were actually able to get the designation as a historic district.

Kelly Carroll: Right, and that designation came in '71 as you said, and when I was reading, when I was doing some research, digging in the archives, I was really surprised to learn that the community had been pushing landmarks at that point--in '71--for five years for landmarks designation. So, this means that the Mount Morris Park community knew that landmarking was an option for them right after the Landmark Law was created, which is really, really impressive. And it said that the Landmarks Commission quote had "pressing matters" and it didn't get around to landmarking right away, and that's why it took five years. And that it was actually the presence of bulldozers in the neighborhood that were going to demolish eight brownstones along Mount Morris Park West and 121 that finally made the Landmarks Commission jump to designate.

Can anyone tell me about the history of that and you know, some of the advocacy that went into that to finally make the Landmarks Commission move to designate the first district there, and what was the 18th historic district in New York City at the time?

Patricia Pates-Eaton: Well that again has to come from Madeline because with the demolition of those brownstones, those brownstones were taken by eminent domain by Rockefeller--John D. Rockefeller--for drug habilitation. And so, I didn't even move here until 1980. May I say that Lindsay started his campaign for mayor from the corner of 122nd Street and Mount Morris Park West in the Mount Morris Ascension Presbyterian Church. That's where he started his campaign for mayor.

Madlyn Stokely: So, what I can add to that question, in terms of trying to answer that question, is even back then--and we're having a struggle today--but even back then, there were community advocates that recognized the fact that removing buildings that could be rehabilitated for housing--housing was a priority--that drug treatment facilities were not a priority, that they were not to be brought in this community. And so, these same groups of people, and the Adares and the Dollies who lived in this area from back in the '40s, continued that struggle to stop the city and the state from changing the community--this particular community--into something that they felt was far from appropriate in such a residential community.

And so, they just continued that struggle to stop them from pulling down those buildings. It took a long time before the buildings got renovated--and then that comes into MMPCIA's history--but it was just the fortitude of just regular, everyday people who fought against that.

Kelly Carroll: Very interesting. So, we have the designation in '71 and then a decade later, we have the formation of the Mount Morris Park Community Improvement Association. And I know that Patricia was one of the original founders. And so, Patricia I would love to hear how that got started, and what galvanized you all to form the association that is still thriving today.

Patricia Pates-Eaton: Well, my catalyst, my impetus comes from the fact that I grew up on the South Side of Chicago where I understand Chicago politics, even to this day. And Chicago politics runs because there is a precinct captain on every block in Chicago who knows everybody on every block. There is one person on each block, who is attached to the Democratic Party who knows everybody on every block. And so, therefore, when I moved here and saw the dirt in the street, and this and that...and our history is, as Hilda Stokely had me to understand, believe it or not, as I'm standing up fussing about the dirt in the street, she said "Patricia, do you know that we have garbage collection every day?"

We didn't even know that in 1981. But we did, and it was filthy around here. So, my daughter--who has been moving back and forth behind me--she is the person who went up each step and put a little flyer on everybody's door saying we need a community association. It was just that simple. And people came together. I gave a designated date and people came together. Our first meetings were held at the Mount Morris Presbyterian Church, and I mentioned it because that's where Lindsay launched his campaign, which is right there on the corner of 122nd and Mount Morris West, and we still hold meetings there to this day.

And it went from there, I mean people were concerned about just quality of life issues and drug addicts putting their needles all around us. And because at that time, by 1981, the community was flooded with drugs. And you know, we were...there were so many things to be concerned about. The park itself had gone down. You know, the once beautiful park now had no grass in it. We had the beautiful trees in it, but no grass. The pool was there, but not really being used because people were afraid to come to it. And so that's where we were, that's where MMPCIA started.

And we started with a very small group, and we started with quality-of-life concerns. And then one day when I was out walking, I found out that we were about to have--and those very brownstones that Rockefeller had declared eminent domain on--they had been allowed to deteriorate, you could stand in front of them and look through them by that time. And someone had decided to put a drug treatment center there. And I said no, we can't do that. You know, we can't have an institution of that sort there. And we also had a jail sitting on the corner. So, you know, we managed to get our group together and we began to fight on those fronts.

Ruthann Richert: That's when I first moved there, and I was so elated to see these posters of a community association. And one of the first things I remember doing is protesting--we stopped traffic coming down west Morris Park West--so that they could see our signs about The Ruins. We called them The Ruins because they were just skeletons, eight skeletons of these buildings.

Patricia Pates-Eaton: And one person who was very instrumental in that was Jeffrey Roualt, who was an attorney with Metropolitan Life, and I think he's the person who coined The Ruins as a name, you know.

But he was on the forefront of what we needed. We needed an attorney to help us to understand a lot of stuff and Jeffrey was there for us, from the very beginning to help us. You told us don't take up all your time now...

Kelly Carroll: No, I know, you guys, you guys are doing, you're doing amazing.

Ruthann Richert: I would just add...regarding The Ruins, what we eventually did is teamed up with the architect school at City College and they had a contest on what those nine brownstones could actually become. And they won! And we got \$25,000 I think from that, for being the subject of their study. And I think that was one of the key things that turned the state around to release it from the rehab thing and put it out for bid. They sent out an RFP for what somebody could develop in those brownstones. And The Ruins I guess were finally made into condominiums in 2002.

Patricia Pates-Eaton: Well, first the state had to release them because the state owned the property, and we had to fight with the state for a long time to release the property to us. So that...and they finally released it to the Harlem Urban Development Corporation to allow them to develop the property, but that went through years, let me tell you.

Kelly Carroll: Yeah, there was mention of the state ownership. The Landmarks Law was so young at this point that in many articles, it questioned the legality of the Landmarks Commission including them because they weren't sure you know, they were on wobbly footing like, are we allowed to do this because the state owns them, do they have veto power? But in the end, the designation including them was a good thing. Even though it took thirty years, they are no longer in a ruinous state.

So, I heard from Ruthann about how, when she came to the neighborhood over thirty years ago, she saw the flyer and was elated about the presence of a community organization. Syderia, how did you get involved with MMPCIA? Because when I personally think of the organization, I just think of you, so I would love to know how you got started and how long you've been involved.

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield: Well, I've been involved 25 years between myself and my husband. But as soon as we saw the flyers as go up as well--I think we moved here maybe 30 years ago--but when we saw the flyers go up, that was one of the first things that we wanted to do, was just to get involved as well. I think anyone that lives in what we consider a small community--and that's because we're the historic district--and we feel really proud about where we are, and the people that are here and you want to become a part of it. So that's what we did, and I think we first started with the association during one of its many house tours.

Patricia Pates-Eaton: We met her husband, we didn't even know what she looked like, but we knew her husband and we were in love with him.

Ruthann Richert: Derek.

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield: He would love to hear that. But then, after getting involved, they were just so many things that was going on at the time. At any given period, there is always something going on.

Patricia Pates-Eaton: Oh, yeah.

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield: The Mount Morris Park Community Improvement Association and I think at that point, they were talking about having the rest of the area extended--the landmark extended--so

they were working on--when I say they, I mean the organization--was working on the extension. So, we had part of the area landmarked and there were another six blocks that we wanted to have landmarked as well. And it took five years after you know, for the original designation. Well, in 1996 the boundaries of the Mount Morris Park National Register Historic District was expanded to include

Ruthann Richert: That's right.

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield: the land, area that was not landmarked. But that was in 1996, so if you want to fast forward it took another nineteen years before we actually got that area landmarked. It wasn't landmarked until...the extension until 2015.

Ruthann Richert: Yeah.

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield: And that took a lot of work, but what was also interesting is that we got a new commissioner. And once the new commissioner came in...her name, I see it, and...

Kelly Carroll: Meenakshi Srinivasan.

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield: Okay, one more time.

Kelly Carroll: Meenakshi Srinivasan.

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield: So, I will call her the commissioner. So, once we met the new commissioner, she was gung-ho about you know, making a mark for herself and just getting things done. And I think, maybe after the first month or two, we were actually in her office sitting at her desk speaking with her about why this thing needed to be done, because it was just so many years later. And she agreed.

We worked with Landmarks very closely, we worked with people like Carroll, Kelly Carroll, the Historic Districts Council to get additional information and let us know what the hot buttons were, and who we needed to see and speak with. And that's how we were able to get that extension done. So, not only did it take time, but it was also having the right people in the right place at the right time.

Patricia Pates-Eaton: Right.

Ruthann Richert: And we would have numerous, in the second part of that second phase, the early phase, we tried to get together with the community and talk to them--the people in the extension--and try to quell their fears about you know, the control that the city may have on what they do, and you know, give them the landmarks preservation reasons that it makes your property more valuable, really, in the long run. But we had numerous meetings, then, and then there was a pause. And then the second time when we started to get with the Six to Celebrate, we had more meetings and people were much more receptive and asking the right questions.

Kelly Carroll: Right, and you all were a part of the first batch of Six to Celebrate.

Ruthann Richert: Yeah, we were in the first six.

Kelly Carroll: Yes, in 2011. And you got the designation in '15 which was forty-four years after the original historic district. So, it was very much past due. And like a lot of New York City Historic District Extensions, the architectural styles and architects outside of the district--in the what is now the extension--were identical. So, you know it was easy math to rope it in. So, when Landmarks did get around to that extension, where were you all pleased with the boundary lines or were there, was there

any controversy about any carve outs or anything like, or did you get the extension that you had hoped for?

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield: I have to say they really worked hard to give us what we wanted. And just to use myself as an example--I mean they didn't know me from anyone else--but they actually carved my building out. And I petitioned them to say no, I think that we should be included as well. And they went back and they looked at it again and then they decided, you know what? You're right, that building should be included as well. So, they did, you know, give us a lot of consideration and they came out and we were very pleased and very happy with the people that we were working with.

Kelly Carroll: That's amazing. I didn't realize that Syderia. I thought the boundary line would have started like at your house and gone down.

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield: They cut us off.

Kelly Carroll: Yeah. So, the organization often describes itself as being the squeaky wheel. And in that vein, do you think that community activism is part of the culture of Mount Morris Park?

Patricia Pates-Eaton: I think it remains. So, you know, let me tell ya I'm an old woman at this point, but I'll still write a letter or make a phone call. And as an organization, I think that we will still make a letter, make a phone call. I don't know that we still send out cards and things that we used to, you know. See, Virginia Fields, she knew that when she saw some kind of funny looking colored postcards coming into her office, that the Mount Morris Association was angry about something. So, we don't quite do it the same way, but we're still activists. And certainly Syderia has just encompassed the entire Harlem with her organization. So, you know, yeah, we're still activists, sure we are.

Madlyn Stokely: Yeah, I mean I believe activism and particularly--well in communities in general—and I speak about Black communities--because if it were not for people in Black communities who continue to feel that they had the right to challenge, and the right to push forward--that we wouldn't have much of what we have in communities around the country. If it were not some people who just said, we have a right to live with quality and dignity. I don't think that that has changed. I think the methods, like Pat said, have changed in terms of organizing and bringing people together. We're trying our best to use technology. We're trying our best also to encourage younger people to become part of it, of the struggle.

And they know how to, they know how to organize because we see with Black Lives Matter, that in an hour, they can get a thousand people to a location. So, we want to harness some of that and help them to become more a part of this particular community and help us to engage in how we move forward to the next level. Because as Pat said, many of us are at a point now where we know that you know, it's not going to be that much longer, and it shouldn't be. I mean, we should not be the only ones who are making decisions about our community. The young people, it's their future and we want to bring them in.

And when you talk about someone like my mother, when she was doing this, she was a young woman. She wasn't a mature, wise sage. She was very young and all the women that worked with her, they were young and had little children running all around them while they were out there in the park having these meetings and calling the commissioner and speaking to the funding sources. They were young. And so, the young people, we hope, will pick up and continue the struggle. And it's not just a struggle! Let me--a

lot of it is fun, we have a good time, you know? So, we hope that they see that as something that they want to do in this community as well.

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield: And not only that. You know, as much as we'd like to see things change--and they do--everything doesn't change. So, we're still fighting some of the battles that we fought forty years ago, and it's a struggle. And we can't stop the fight, and we won't. But just to think about they were trying to stop you know, the drug facility from representing the room, so to speak. The drug facilities are still around right now and we're still you know, fighting that same fight. And it's a battle, and we're just trying to get the right people to fight with us in order to make a change. But you know, forty years later we're a strong organization and we're still fighting and we're not going to stop.

Kelly Carroll: Yeah, and that was so evident when the Fire Watch Tower, which is an individual landmark designated in 1967, and sits right at the top of Mount Morris Park, Marcus Garvey Park. And speaking of struggles and battles, I know that that poor landmark was being held together with its own rust for many years. And then there was funding put aside, capital funding from the Parks Department that said we're going to fix this thing. And then, tick tock, tick tock. Nothing happens. So, that has recently been restored and opened to the public in a way that it has never been, and I would love to hear how your organization pushed to make that finally happen for the community.

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield: And that's because it was our organization that took the initiative to really start working with the Parks Department to get this done because like you said, it was something that was on their plate for years. And the Fire Watch Tower was literally falling apart, you could actually go up there and find pieces on the ground. And we said, you know, we can't have this happen. To continue to just destruct like this? So, we got the community together and we spoke with the Parks Department to find out what is it going to cost to get this done? Because we don't want to lose this structure. It's the last structure of its kind, and this is a Harlem landmark, you know, we don't want to lose this.

And we found out what it took, which was money--it's always money--and it was the perfect storm of there being elections that year. So, we were able to get the right people together to give us donations. And we ended up with \$4.7 million dollars within a matter of months, and that's what we needed to get this whole project kickstarted. So, we were very happy to be able to do that. So, the people in the community came together and we worked to make sure that this would happen. After we got the money together, and it was like okay, so you have enough money to take it down, so now how are we going to get this thing back up? We were also afraid because a lot of times when things go in boxes and they're packed away, they don't come back to life.

But the community had to get together to make sure that this was happening as well. So, when the structure was actually sent away to be recasted, I think I was on the phone with the Parks Department every few weeks, just to make sure that something was happening. And they were very responsive to say you know, this is happening, give us details, and this is why. So that worked out really well.

And what's so important--and I think a lot of people just don't realize--is that it's all relationship building. I mean you really have to build a relationship with the people in your community. And everyone that's in the community, not just the people, but all of the businesses, the Parks Department, the churches...it's everyone. And it takes a village, and that's real. And that's what it took to get this moving along, and that's what it took to get it kickstarted to make sure that you know, the renovation was happening and to have it brought back and looking the way it does behind you, Kelly. The structure is magnificent.

Patricia Pates-Eaton: Yes, it is.

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield: And it's something that will be here for decades to come. Centuries.

Kelly Carroll: Centuries!

Madlyn Stokely: Yes, and we need money to make sure it's maintained. That's the next, that's the next struggle.

Kelly Carroll: Yeah, and I was so pleased that because you know, when you go to Landmarks hearings and you get presentations from different government agencies it's all, it's all always shiny at the beginning and then when reality plays out, you don't always get what you want. But in this case, I will say that they have Parks staff there that takes people up into the structure so people can physically interact with the landmark and enjoy the views from this outcropping of stone in Manhattan, is really remarkable. So, congratulations to you all on making sure that this got done.

I think we have time for one more question, and I'm going to ask the group what's next for you? What do you think should be landmarked? What's missing from your community, or is it the landmark pursuit over? What are your thoughts?

Ruthann Richert: Well, since we were talking about the Watch Tower, part of our dream with that was also to include the acropolis. And we fantasize that there could be a vehicular to take people up to the top and a restaurant at the top, something like that. But you know, those are expensive dreams and hopefully people will be able to get up there, and do some good recreation safely soon.

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield: We'd like to continue working on the quality of life in the district as well. Because with the Department of Sanitation, they took away a lot of the garbage cans. And we're just talking about what appears to be little things, but it would really make a difference in the community. And that we're able to upgrade our quality of life. Maybe just to make sure that, let's say every tree had a border around it, or every tree had plants, or Lenox Avenue was kept clean. If we were able to just make sure that everybody in the community was just living their best life, if they could do that? But at least live a decent quality of life, and as an organization, you know, we reach out to find what it is that people need, and we try to help them with that need because our wants are great. But if we can just make sure that all the stores remain open. Everybody, you know, still has food to eat. We were able to give out PPEs during the pandemic. And we were there for people that wanted whatever it was that they needed. So, we were there for that, so we want to continue to be able to help the people in the community.

Madlyn Stokely: Yeah, I would say, as far as landmark designation, I would like to see a careful study about what buildings, what areas should be landmarked in Harlem in general, because we have a very low percentage. I just lost...we just lost a church that I grew up in on 126th Street and Madison Avenue, which is a beautiful, magnificent building. When you compare our landmark designations to an area sort of like the Village, Greenwich Village area, the percentage of landmark buildings are just miniscule here in Harlem. And so not just this district, but a movement to really embrace the beauty that's here. This is just one of the beautiful areas in Harlem. And so, to see that the expansion of historic designations and landmark designations reaches the appropriate proportion is something I would really hope to see happen.

Ruthann Richert: It's been probably about five or ten years since Community Board 10 did a study on Harlem, and they came up with about six more districts--small districts--I think one actually was designated.

Kelly Carroll: Central Harlem 130 to 132 was like the only thing they did from their list.

Ruthann Richert: But that needs to have some attention paid to it.

Patricia Pates-Eaton: And my daughter lives directly west of here on Morningside Park and the area over there, with those beautiful houses over there should be considered, certainly. Between 100 and about 114th Street up to about 123rd. There's some beautiful houses over there and there have been people over there who've reconstructed them, you know. And there was a church over there on Morningside Avenue that just did some crazy stuff which should not have been allowed to do that, but they did. So, between 122nd and 123rd on Morningside Avenue where they just, they tore brownstone out and did all kinds of stuff. So, that area over there needs to be considered also.

Kelly Carroll: I totally agree. The buildings, the architecture doesn't change above 96th Street. It doesn't, so. All right, I think we're going to we're going to stop and I'll take some questions.

And I just want to, I want to thank each and every one of you so much, and I'm glad that you're now connected with Brad Vogel and the New York Preservation Archive Project so that all those papers that we talked about earlier don't get lost, or worse. So, thank you so much. You guys are like a paragon of preservation activism in New York City, and I thank you for all of your work.

Madlyn Stokely: Thank you.

Patricia Pates-Eaton: Thank you for recognizing the activity in this area. Because the thing that started us off--quality of life, papers on the sidewalk and everything--have not changed. And as Syderia said, you know, we still need to plant trees. And I can tell you, I can remember when the Parks Commissioner Patrick Pomposello, when I told him how many trees we needed on the perimeter of the park, he said walk around and count them. And I did, and called him up and he planted trees. And we still need trees on the perimeter of the park. So, you know, things change, but they remain the same.

Syderia Asberry-Chresfield: That's true.

Kelly Carroll: Very true.