

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS,  
PUBLIC SITINGS AND  
DISPOSITIONS

----- X

SEPTEMBER 13, 2021  
Start: 10:31 A.M.  
Recess: 11:50 A.M.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING (VIRTUAL ROOM 1)

B E F O R E: KEVIN C. RILEY, CHAIRPERSON

COUNCIL MEMBERS: INEZ D. BARRON  
PETER A. KOO  
I. DANEEK MILLER  
MARK TREYGER  
MARGARET CHIN

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

KATE LEMOS MCHALE, Director of Research  
at the Landmarks Preservation Commission

ANDRE FABRE

TIMOTHY FRYE, Director of Special  
Projects and Strategic Planning at the  
Landmarks Preservation Commission

SIMEON BANKOFF, Executive Director  
Historic District Council

VALERIE JO BRADLEY, President Save Harlem  
Now

KAKUNA KERINA, resident of Dorrance  
Brooks Square and Member of Dorrance  
Brooks Property Owners and Residents  
Association

KEITH TAYLOR, President of the Dorrance  
Brooks Property Owners and Residents  
Association

MICHAEL HENRY ADAMS, wrote book Harlem  
Lost and Found

LESLIE BRIGHT, Resident of and member of  
Dorrance Brooks Property Owners and  
Residents Association

REBECCA ZACK

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

DORRIT BLAKESLEE, works for DOT  
Facilities Management

JESSICA WOROCK

DANIELLE ZUCKERMAN

NINA KOTTER

LAURA RINGELHEIM

3 SGT. MARTINEZ: Alright, computer  
4 recording is underway.

5 SGT. LUGO: Cloud recording is good.

6 SGT. MARTINEZ: Excellent. Mr. Lugo you  
7 can take us away. Thank you.

8 SGT. LUGO: Good morning everyone.

9 Welcome to today's remote New York City Council  
10 Hearing of the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public  
11 Siting and Dispositions. At this time would all  
12 panelists please turn on your videos? To minimize  
13 disruption, please place electronic devices to  
14 vibrate or silent. If you wish to submit a testimony  
15 please do so at [landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov)  
16 again that's [landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov). Thank  
17 you for your cooperation Chair Riley we are ready to  
18 begin.

19 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Good morning.

20 I am Council Member Kevin Riley, Chair of the  
21 Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and  
22 Dispositions. I am joined today remotely by my  
23 colleagues, Council Member Koo, Council Member  
24 Treyger and Council Member Chin. Today we will be  
25 holding a public hearing and votes on the landmark  
designation of the New York Public Library Harlem

1  
2 Branch, Kimlau War Memorial, and the Aakawaxung  
3 Munahanung Archaeological Site. We will also hold  
4 public hearing on the designation of the Dorrance  
5 Brooks Square Historical District and a proposed site  
6 selection for a new DOT facility at 101 Varick Avenue  
7 in Brooklyn. I now recognize Counsel to explain  
8 today's hearing procedures.

9 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

10 Thank you Chair Riley. I am Counsel, I am, I am  
11 Jeffrey Campagna Counsel to the Subcommittee, and  
12 members of the public who wish to testify were asked  
13 to register for today's hearing. If you register to  
14 testify and are not yet signed in to Zoom please sign  
15 in now and remain signed in until after you have  
16 testified. If you wish to testify and have not  
17 registered, please go to [www.council.nyc.gov/landuse](http://www.council.nyc.gov/landuse)  
18 to sign up now. If you are not planning to testify  
19 on today's items, please watch the hearing on the New  
20 York City Council Website. All people testifying  
21 before the subcommittee will be on mute until they  
22 recognized to testify, please confirm that your mic  
23 is unmuted before you begin speaking. Public  
24 testimony will be limited to two minutes per witness.  
25 If you have written testimony and would like the

1  
2 subcommittee to consider in addition to or in lieu of  
3 appearing before the subcommittee or if you require  
4 an acceptable version of a presentation given at  
5 today's meeting. Please email  
6 [landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov). Please indicate  
7 the LU number of project name in the subject line of  
8 the email. During the hearing, Council Members who  
9 would like to ask questions should use the Zoom Raise  
10 Hand Function. The Raise Hand button should appear  
11 at the bottom of the participant panel. I will  
12 announce Council Members who have questions in the  
13 order that they raise their hands. Witnesses are  
14 reminded to remain in the meeting until they are  
15 excused by the Chair. Lastly, there may be extended  
16 pauses if we encounter technical problems. We ask  
17 that you please be patient as we work through these  
18 issues. Chair Riley will not continue with today's  
19 agenda.

20 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you  
21 Counsel and before we begin, I know for the sake of  
22 time, Council Member Chin has to go to another  
23 hearing. So, I just want to allow her to give her  
24 remarks, uh, before she heads out. Council Member  
25 Chin.

1  
2 MARGARET CHIN: Yes, thank you so much  
3 Chair Riley. I have to run to City Hall for an in-  
4 person housing committee. So I really appreciate you  
5 giving me a few minutes. I just wanted to voice my  
6 support for the Kimlau War Memorial (INAUDIBLE)  
7 Commission for supporting this. This is a very  
8 important symbol for the Chinese American community  
9 and it recognized the sacrifice and a contribution of  
10 Chinese American to this country in preserving our  
11 freedom and democracy. And every year, the American  
12 Legion post 1291 in Chinatown holds an important  
13 celebration in commemoration on July 4, Memorial Day,  
14 Veterans Day and that's where the community gathered  
15 to really celebrate our history there. And I am just  
16 proud that we will Landmark this site and this is, it  
17 is just important to the community and I really urge  
18 my colleagues while I am on the subcommittee to  
19 support this. Thank you very much Chair Riley.

20 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you Chair  
21 Chin, I mean thank you Council Member Chin. Our  
22 first item is LU 830 the, excuse me if I am  
23 pronouncing this wrong everyone, Aakawaxung  
24 Munahanung Archaeological Site. This application was  
25 submitted by the Landmarks Preservation Commission

1  
2 pursuant to section 3020 of the New York City Charter  
3 and section 25-303 of the Ministry of Code of the  
4 City of New York for the designation of the  
5 Aakawaxung Munahanung Archaeological Site located at  
6 298-300 Satterlee Street in Staten Island as a  
7 historical landmark. This landmark site is located  
8 in the district represented by Council Member  
9 Borelli. Kate Lemos McHale, Timothy Frye and Andre  
10 Fabre will present on behalf of the Landmark  
11 Preservation Commission for today's item. Counsel  
12 please administer the affirmation.

13 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

14 Please raise your right hands and state your names.

15 KATE LEMOS MCHALE: Kate Lemos McHale.

16 ANTHONY FABRE: Anthony Fabre.

17 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

18 Please unmute Tim Frye.

19 TIMOTHY FRYE: Timothy Frye.

20 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

21 DO you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and  
22 nothing but the truth in your testimony before the  
23 subcommittee and answer to all Council Member  
24 questions?

25 KATE LEMOS MCHALE: I do.



1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

ANTHONY FABRE: I do.

TIMOTHY FRYE: I do.

CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you. You  
may begin.

KATE LEMOS MCHALE: Okay, great. Thank  
you. Good morning Chair Riley and subcommittee  
members. I am Kate Lemos McHale, Director of Research  
at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. Thank you  
for the opportunity to present the Aakawaxung  
Munahanung Island protected from the window  
Archaeological Site. It was designated June 22, 2021  
as an individual landmark and hopefully you have our  
slides. Great. Could we go to the next slide  
please? And as an introduction into this item and  
the following items I wanted to provide some context.  
In January of this year, LPC publicly introduced our  
equity framework which has been a priority of our  
Chair Sara Carroll. It was important for us to  
publicly reaffirm our commitment to equity in all  
aspects of our work and the framework is intended to  
guide our priorities agency wide. This includes  
enhancing transparency and accessibility and our  
regulatory work and prioritizing designations that  
represent New York City's diversity and in areas less

1  
2 represented by landmarks. So, these recent  
3 designations that we will present today as well the  
4 two that you voted on last month all reflect that  
5 commitment. Next slide please. The site is  
6 associated with over 8,000 years of occupation by  
7 indigenous people and contains the region's largest  
8 known cultural complex. It is the City's first  
9 landmark specifically recognizing the many  
10 generations of indigenous people who have lived here.  
11 Designation protects the sites below ground  
12 archaeological resources. At the public hearing on  
13 May 18<sup>th</sup>, five people spoke in support of designation  
14 including representatives of the New York City  
15 Department of Parks and Recreation, the Delaware  
16 Tribe of Indians, the Professional Archaeologist of  
17 New York City and preservation advocates. There was  
18 no testimony in opposition. In addition, we received  
19 eight letters of support. Next slide please. The  
20 landmark site includes approximately 20 acres of  
21 highly archaeologically sensitive land located within  
22 Conference House Park in Staten Island. In 1926,  
23 Conference House Park was donated to the City of New  
24 York and today it remains under the care of the  
25 Department of Parks and Recreation. Next slide

1  
2 please. The site overlooks the confluency of Arthur  
3 Kill and the mouth of the Raritan River an important  
4 estuary that significantly shaped the areas eco  
5 system. Indigenous people relied upon the area's  
6 abundant resources that surrounded the site including  
7 oysters, fish and game. The people who lived here in  
8 the Woodland period beginning about 1500 years ago  
9 when a village and cultural complex were at the site  
10 were Larnaca and spoke Munsee. Next slide please.  
11 And I think Anthony if you can mute yourself that  
12 would help. Thanks. Indigenous people were present  
13 within the landmark site for over 8000 years and  
14 archeology has shed light on what life was like over  
15 this long period. Over 19 archaeological projects  
16 have occurred in the vicinity of the site since the  
17 19<sup>th</sup> century including work by the American Museum of  
18 Natural History. These projects uncovered a series  
19 of hearts and other artifacts from about 8000 years  
20 ago and important cultural complex used over a long  
21 period of time and over 100 archaeological features  
22 primarily associated with the Woodland era  
23 settlement. Next slide please. An archaeological  
24 projects have found evidence of the sites used by  
25 indigenous people during the period of contact with

1  
2 European colonists such as projectile points made of  
3 copper and brass, materials available through trade  
4 with Europeans. And this is a 17<sup>th</sup> century depiction  
5 of the Amsterdam. Next slide please. Europeans  
6 violently colonized land in Staten Island in the 17<sup>th</sup>  
7 Century and there is little archaeological evidence  
8 of an indigenous presence in the landmark site after  
9 the mid-1670s. Englishman Christopher Billop  
10 received a land patent from the crown that included  
11 the landmark site and the land on which he built  
12 Conference House named for an unsuccessful peace  
13 conference held during the Revolutionary War. Samuel  
14 Ward purchased nearly 400 acres of land and although  
15 the area known as Wards Point was surveyed and laid  
16 out in the 1870s it remained largely undeveloped.  
17 New streets were paved in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and  
18 some curbs, street lamps and trees that lined these  
19 streets are still visible in the landmark sites.  
20 Next please. PCs research involved elaborative  
21 engagement with the City's federally recognized  
22 tribes and we met several times with the tribal  
23 historic preservation officers representing the  
24 Delaware Tribe of Indians, the Delaware Nation and  
25 the Stockridge Munsee Community Band of Mohicans.

1  
2 They provided meaningful input and guidance from  
3 experts in the old Munsee language to determine a  
4 landmark name that best reflects its indigenous  
5 significance. The photo on the right was taken this  
6 spring when members of the tribal nations joined LPC  
7 and Park staff to visit the landmark site and as we  
8 discussed with Council Member Borelli in our research  
9 we noted that the name for Staten Island found in  
10 some historic colonial documents was derived from  
11 Raritan people and was pronounced Aakawaxung  
12 Munahanung. We worked with the tribes and reached  
13 out and they reached out to what's called the Lenape  
14 Talking Dictionary which is a group of old Munsee  
15 Language Specialists to ask about the correct  
16 spelling and definition in old Munsee which is the  
17 language spoken by the Lenape. They informed us that  
18 this old Munsee name was Aakawaxung Munahanung which  
19 translates to island protected from the wind. And so  
20 the designation reflects this input and adds to the  
21 City's scholarship regarding appropriate and  
22 inclusive terminology for Staten Island and for this  
23 site. Next slide please. LPC also worked closely  
24 with the Parks Department and as with all individual  
25 landmarks LPC will review and regulate any proposed

1  
2 changes that would impact significant features of the  
3 site. In this case, we would review projects with  
4 the potential to impact archaeological resources.

5 Designation of the Aakawaxung Munahanung Island  
6 protected from the wind archaeological site protects  
7 and preserves the largest and best documented known  
8 site associated with thousands of years of indigenous  
9 habitation in New York City and it's the first City  
10 landmark specifically recognizing and protecting his  
11 indigenous heritage. So LPC recommends the City  
12 Council vote to uphold this designation. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN KEVIN RILEY: Thank you Kate.

14 We have just been joined by Council Member Barron.  
15 I, counsel do we have any Council Members who have  
16 any questions?

17 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

18 Any Council Members who have questions should please  
19 use the raise hand button now. I see no Council  
20 Member questions.

21 CHAIRMAN KEVIN RILEY: There being no  
22 more Council Member questions are there any members  
23 of the public who wish to testify on this item?

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

Um, we had Simeon Bankoff registered to testify on  
this item.

CHAIRMAN KEVIN RILEY: Okay. So, I would  
like to excuse the, the panelists so we can have the  
public testimony. Um, thank you so much LPC.

KATE LEMOS MCHALE: Thank you.

SIMEON BANKOFF: Good morning Council  
Members. My name is Simeon Bankoff. I am the  
Executive Director of the Historic District Council.  
HDCs is the support advocate for New York's historic  
neighborhoods. We are thrilled to be here to testify  
in favor of this archaeological landmark. This is  
only the second archaeological site that is being  
designated by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.  
Archaeology is a very pivotal part of the LPCs role  
within the City of New York. This specific site is  
remarkable in that it is the first one to be as, uh,  
as Kate said. The first individual New York City  
landmark to be specifically designated for its  
importance to the indigenous peoples and the pre-  
European peoples of New York. We are thrilled again  
and we strongly support this. We would also like to  
state that we are in favor of the LPCs Equity

1  
2 Framework and also continuing its archaeological  
3 work, we would recommend in fact another site is in  
4 Elmhurst-Queens where as a small plot of land was the  
5 African burial ground at 4711 90<sup>th</sup> Street which has  
6 survived three centuries as touchstone to the one of  
7 the earliest freed African American communities in  
8 the region, founded one year after emancipation in  
9 1928. Newly freed African Americans established a  
10 congregation there, the United African Society later  
11 known as the African Methodist Episcopal Church. On  
12 the site of the burial ground there are over 300  
13 bodies of emancipated African Americans who are still  
14 buried in that site. I know the Landmarks Commission  
15 is working with the developer to try to commemorate  
16 that site. And we would recommend also strongly that  
17 it be landmarked. Thank you very much.

18 CHAIRMAN KEVIN RILEY: Thank you Simeon.  
19 Counsel is there any more members of the public who  
20 wish to testify to LU-830?

21 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:  
22 Are there any members, if there are any members of  
23 the public who wish to testify please raise your  
24 hands now. There are no other members of the public  
25 registered to testify on this item.



1  
2                   CHAIRMAN KEVIN RILEY: See no other  
3 members of the public who wish to testify on this  
4 item, the public hearing on LU830 is now closed. Our  
5 next item is LU-829, the Landmark Preservation  
6 Designation of the New York Public Library, and  
7 Harlem Branch as a historic landmark. The landmark  
8 site is located at 9 West 124<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan,  
9 Council District represented by Council Member  
10 Perkin. Tim Frye and Andre Fabre will present this  
11 item. I remind you that you are still under oath and  
12 you may begin.

13                   TIMOTHY FRYE: Good morning Chair Riley  
14 and the Subcommittee Members. I am Timothy Frye the  
15 Director of Special Projects and Strategic Planning  
16 at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I believe  
17 you have our presentation. If I could get that up on  
18 the screen. All right. Thank you. Again thank you  
19 for the opportunity to present the New York Public  
20 Library Harlem Branch designated on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
21 as an individual landmark. The New York Public  
22 Library Harlem Branch is one of 67 circulating  
23 libraries constructed with funding from industrialist  
24 Andrew Carnegie in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The  
25 city's three library systems and is one of 12

1  
2 Carnegie branches designated by the prominent firm of  
3 McKim, Mead and White. In addition to its  
4 architectural significance, the library has provided  
5 civic and cultural resources and programming to the  
6 neighborhood for over 100 years. At the public  
7 hearing on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and in written testimony  
8 the commission received support for their proposed  
9 designation from 10 people and early representatives  
10 of the New York Public Library and there was no  
11 testimony in opposition. Next slide please. As seen  
12 here on the map, the library is located on West 124<sup>th</sup>  
13 Street and South Central Harlem across from Marcus  
14 Garvey Park and near the designated Mount Morris Park  
15 Historic District and extension. Next slide. In  
16 1909 one branch of the New York Library opened at 9  
17 West 124<sup>th</sup> Street. The Harlem Branch reflects the  
18 history of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Harlem  
19 and its changing demographics. When it first opened  
20 much of the area was inhabited by European immigrants  
21 and by the mid-1930s the Harlem Branch begin to serve  
22 the growing African American and Afro-Caribbean  
23 communities of the neighborhood. Next slide. As a  
24 civic space the library helped foster cultural live  
25 in Harlem. In the late 1930s it played a role in the

1  
2 black community theatre movement supported by a WPA  
3 program that constructed professionally equipped  
4 theatre in the Harlem Branch and other area libraries  
5 and also briefly served as the home of the Rose  
6 McClendon Players and Workshop Theatre. This group  
7 sought to provide performance opportunities for  
8 African American playwrights and actors including the  
9 actor, director, activist Ossie Davis. In the early  
10 1940s, the Harlem Branch also served as the temporary  
11 home of the renowned Schomburg Collection during its  
12 enlargement of its facility on 135<sup>th</sup> Street. Next  
13 slide. The Harlem Branch is one of the Carnegie  
14 Library designed by McKim, Mead and White. Getting  
15 on to this site is the 135<sup>th</sup> Street Branch is part of  
16 the Schomburg Center for research in black culture.  
17 Next, the 125<sup>th</sup> Street Branch, the Harry Belafonte  
18 115<sup>th</sup> Street Branch and finally the Hamilton Grange  
19 Branch, all of which are New York City designated  
20 landmarks. Next slide please. Today, the Harlem  
21 Branch continues to serve the needs of community  
22 residents, providing access to library resources and  
23 a range of programs. Under the careful stewardship  
24 of the New York Public Library, a classically  
25 influenced building with limestone façade has changed

1  
2 little over time and more recent work included  
3 sensitive alternations to the exterior such as the  
4 replacement of the entrance door and windows to  
5 reflect the original design. Next slide. And this  
6 committee, this concludes my presentation and the  
7 Landmarks Preservation Commission recommends that the  
8 Council vote to uphold this designation. Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you Tim.  
10 I don't have any questions. Counsel, are there any  
11 Council Members with any questions?

12 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:  
13 Are there any Council Members with questions? Again,  
14 please use the Raise Hand Button now. I see no  
15 Council Member questions.

16 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you  
17 Counsel. There being no more Council Member  
18 questions, are there any members of the public who  
19 wish to testify on this item?

20 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:  
21 Simeon Bankoff and Valerie Bradley are, wish to  
22 testify on this item.

23 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Okay. Before  
24 the public testify, I would like to excuse the LPC  
25 panel. Thank you Tim and thank you Anthony. Simeon.

1  
2 SGT. BIONDO: Starting, starting time.

3 SIMEON BANKOFF: Good morning Council  
4 Members. Simeon Bankoff, Executive Director of the  
5 Historic Districts Council (HDC) is an enormous fan  
6 of libraries and we are always thrilled to see when  
7 the City acknowledges their importance by designating  
8 them. Um, there are only 67, existing remaining  
9 library buildings from the initial Carnegie Branch,  
10 um, scattering all five boroughs and we recommend  
11 actually that all of them be considered for landmark  
12 designation. Most recently, the Historic District  
13 Council's successfully sponsored all of their  
14 inclusion to the National Register of Historic Places  
15 in the hopes that that might be able to bring some  
16 additional monies to their restoration and their  
17 maintenance. This is a fantastic library it is one  
18 of the only five in Harlem that has not been  
19 designated. Uh, Mr. Frye spoke well of its  
20 importance to the, to the Harlem community and so we  
21 strongly support this designation. Thank you very  
22 much.

23 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you so  
24 much Simeon. Uh, Counsel, you said there was another  
25 public testimony?

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

Uh, yes, Valerie Bradley.

SGT. BIONDO: Starting time.

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

Ms. Valerie Bradley, please accept the.

CHAIRMAN KEVIN RILEY: There you go Ms.

Bradley.

VALERIE BRADLEY: Am I in now?

CHAIRMAN KEVIN RILEY: Yes, you're in Ms.

Bradley go ahead.

SGT. BIONDO: Starting time.

VALERIE BRADLEY: Okay. Good morning.

CHAIRMAN KEVIN RILEY: Good morning.

VALERIE BRADLEY: Uh, my name is Valerie  
Jo Bradley and I'm President of Save Harlem Now, a  
membership not for profit advocacy organization  
dedicated to protecting, preserving and celebrating  
Harlem's irreplaceable built heritage. Save Harlem  
Now is delighted to submit this testimony. The  
Harlem community has five branches of the New York  
Public Library. Each one was designed by the firm of  
McKim, Mead and White. The opened in the Harlem  
community between 1904 and 1909. Four of the  
libraries have been designated New York City

1  
2 Landmarks and we are looking forward to celebrating  
3 the designation of the fifth one, the Harlem Branch  
4 Library. The New York Public Library is the nation's  
5 largest public library system and it has been an  
6 essential provider of free books, information, ideas  
7 and education since 1895. The Harlem Branch of the  
8 New York Public Library cited on West 124th Street  
9 across the street from our beloved Marcus Garvey Park  
10 and adjacent to the Mount Morris Park Historic  
11 District and extension is at the heart of the vibrant  
12 and historic Harlem neighborhood. Classical revival  
13 in style, built of limestone, the five McKim, Mead  
14 and White designs are similar in appearance but each  
15 has its own personality and unique features. The  
16 Harlem branch has been serving the community since  
17 its opening in 1909. Shifting from a largely white  
18 population in the early 1900s to a community of  
19 immigrants from Scandinavia in Eastern Europe and.

20 SGT. BIONDO: Time expired.

21 VALERIE BRADLEY: What?

22 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: You can  
23 continue Ms. Bradley. Go ahead.

24 VALERIE BRADLEY: Okay. After World War I  
25 to an African American community beginning in the

1  
2 Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and continuing for  
3 the next century. It has a story history as a civic  
4 center for the virgining African American community.  
5 In addition the ground breaking Rose McClendon  
6 Players the Ada Group based in the library nurtured  
7 African American Actors during this time. In  
8 addition to traditional library services the Harlem  
9 branch has been a focus of educational innovation and  
10 service providing exhibition space, performance  
11 space, a literacy center and vocational training. It  
12 is a vital community hub that provides far more than  
13 just access to free books and materials. More than a  
14 century later, the Harlem branch continues Andrew  
15 Carnegie's vision of libraries as temples of  
16 learning, ambition and aspiration for towns and  
17 cities throughout the United States. Save Harlem Now  
18 urges you to vote for the designation of the Harlem  
19 Branch Library. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN KEVIN RILEY: Thank you for your  
21 testimony Ms. Bradley and Mr. Bankoff. Any other  
22 members of the public who wish to testify on LU-829,  
23 the New York Public Library, Harlem Branch landmark  
24 designation should make themselves known now by  
25 pressing the raise hand button on Zoom. This meeting



1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

will briefly stand on ease until so. Seeing no other members of the public who wish to testify on this item, the public hearing on LU-829 and is now closed. Our next item is LU-831. The Landmark Preservation Commission designation of the Kimlau War Memorial has a historic landmark. The landmark site is located at Kimlau Square in Chatham Square in the Manhattan Council District represented by Council Member Chin. Kate Lemos McHale and Andrew Fabre will also present this item. I remind you both that you are still under oath and you may be begin whenever you are ready.

KATE LEMOS MCHALE: Thank you Chair Riley and subcommittee members. Grateful for the opportunity to present the Kimlau War Memorial in Manhattan designated on June 22nd as an individual landmark. As if our slides are available, we could go to the second slide please. Thank you. Designated by Poy Gum Lee and dedicated in 1962, the Kimlau War Memorial is a granite ceremonial gateway located in Chinatowns Kimlau Square. The arch sponsored by the American Legion is named after Second Lieutenant Benjamin Ralph Kimlau and honors Chinese American soldiers who died while serving in

1  
2 the United States military. This design combines  
3 traditional Chinese architectural forms with the  
4 streamlined modern aesthetic and it has served as an  
5 important community monument for nearly 60 years. At  
6 its public hearing on June 1st, 12 people testified  
7 in favor of the proposed designation including  
8 representatives of the New York City Department of  
9 Parks and Recreation, City Council Member Margaret  
10 Chin, the Lieutenant BR Kimlau Chinese Memorial Post  
11 1291 of the American Legion, Preservation  
12 Organizations and individuals including the niece of  
13 Lieutenant Kimlau. No one spoke in opposition. In  
14 addition, the Commission received 51 written  
15 submissions supporting the proposed designation  
16 including from the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent  
17 Association and several veteran's organizations.  
18 Next slide please. The Kimlau War Memorial is  
19 located within Kimlau Square and Chatham Square  
20 indicated by the star on this map. It was identified  
21 as part of a broader study of Chinatown as an  
22 important public monument and symbol of Chinese  
23 American contributions to U.S. history. Chinatown  
24 has a fascinating layered history while there are  
25 several designated landmarks in the area the Kimlau

1  
2 War Memorial is the first New York City Landmarks  
3 that specifically recognizes Chinese American history  
4 and culture. Next slide please. Early immigration  
5 from China to the United States was mostly related to  
6 railroad construction in the west. The completion of  
7 the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869 coupled with an  
8 outbreak of anti-Chinese violence prompted many  
9 immigrants to relocate to New York City in the  
10 vicinity of Chatham Square and by the 1880s Chinese  
11 shops faced the square. The growth of Chinatown  
12 slowed after the discriminatory 1882 Exclusion Act  
13 restricted Chinese immigration to the United States  
14 but the community built complex organizations and its  
15 restaurants were attractions by the turn of the  
16 Century. Despite being denied full citizenship and  
17 facing extensive racial discrimination approximately  
18 20,000 Chinese Americans enlisted and fought for the  
19 United States during World War II. The Chinese  
20 Exclusion Act was repealed in 1943 but it was not  
21 until 1965 that immigration from Asia opened widely.  
22 Next slide please. Chatham Square was an important  
23 junction of the Second and Third Avenue elevated  
24 train lines by the late 19th century and was cast in  
25 perpetual shadow until 1955 when the elevated tracks

1 were replaced by the subway. Can we go to the next  
2 slide please? Thanks. In 1961, a small crescent of  
3 land was laid out in Chatham Square and a public  
4 named Kimlau Square after Second Lieutenant Benjamin  
5 Ralph Kimlau. Next slide please. Benjamin Kimlau  
6 graduated from the Pennsylvania Military College with  
7 honors in 1942. The only Chinese American in his  
8 class. Despite widespread discrimination against  
9 Asian Americans Kimlau served as a Second Lieutenant  
10 in the U.S. Army Field Artillery Branch and then  
11 became a pilot. He died while attacking Chinese  
12 Military installations in the South Pacific in World  
13 War II at the age of 26. Dedicated in 1962, the  
14 memorial was a gift of the Lieutenant B.R. Kimlau  
15 Chinese Memorial Post 1291 of the American Legion.  
16 The largest American Legion post in New York City.  
17 The dedication of the monument drew large crowds and  
18 was of great significance to the Chinese American  
19 community and in particular veterans. Next slide  
20 please. The memorial was designed by the Chinese  
21 American Architect Poy Gum Lee. Born on Mott Street  
22 in 1900 he was educated at Pratt, MIT and Columbia.  
23 He worked in Shang-hi in the 1930s and became  
24 prominent there before returning to New York. He  
25

1 served as supervising architect for the New York City  
2 Housing Authority and had his own practice in  
3 Chinatown. Lee's work has been cited by scholars as  
4 among the most important Chinese American Architect  
5 of its time. The Kimlau War Memorial is a simplified  
6 version of a Pi-Low (SP?) or Pi-Fang (SP?) and I am  
7 sorry if I mispronounced that, a traditional gateway  
8 in Chinese architecture that evolved from Buddhist  
9 forms in India. Traditionally they were decorative  
10 gateways into villages or ceremony and contemporary  
11 examples are often erected as memorials or as  
12 gateways into Chinatowns throughout the world. Next  
13 slide please. The Memorial consists of a granite  
14 ceremonial gateway flanked by benches. Its design  
15 blends traditional Chinese architectural forms like  
16 the peaked roofs and brackets with a streamlined  
17 esthetic. Inscribed at the top of the arch in both  
18 Chinese and English are the words In Memory of the  
19 Americans of Chinese Ancestry who lost their lives in  
20 defense of freedom and democracy. The monuments  
21 details echo vernacular Chinese forms in a striking  
22 modern expression. Next slide please. In the 1990s,  
23 the park was expanded in design and the street grid  
24 was configured to address some dangerous pedestrian  
25

1  
2 conditions. In 2001, the park department's first  
3 historical signage in Chinese was installed at the  
4 arch. The landmark site is a lot in part and if we  
5 could go to the next slide for that. It consists  
6 just of the footprint of the memorial gateway and the  
7 adjacent benches so you can see that there. And the  
8 last slide please. The memorial sits at the  
9 epicenter of Chinatown as a site of honor for Chinese  
10 American veterans. It served as an important place of  
11 pride, gathering and remembrance of the sacrifices of  
12 the Chinese American Community for a country that has  
13 not always fully accepted them or acknowledged their  
14 contributions. It's significant as well for its  
15 design by the architect Poy G. Lee and LPC recommends  
16 the City Council votes to uphold this designation.  
17 Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you Kate.  
19 I just have one quick question Kate. I saw the  
20 barrier around the ...

21 KATE LEMOS MCHALE: Sure.

22 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Memorial. Is  
23 there any way to get any more attractive type of  
24 barriers around the memorial?  
25

1  
2 KATE LEMOS MCHALE: That is a good  
3 question. The Parks Department is doing conditions  
4 assessment and is planning restoration work. I think  
5 the barriers are, are, you know, to keep the public  
6 safe but that is something that we could with them  
7 about.

8 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you.

9 KATE LEMOS MCHALE: Sure.

10 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Counsel are  
11 there any other Council Members who have any  
12 questions?

13 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:  
14 Again, any Council Members who have questions should  
15 please use the raise hand button. I see no Council  
16 Member questions.

17 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: There being no  
18 Council Member questions are there any members of the  
19 public who wish to testify on this item?

20 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:  
21 Simeon Bankoff is registered to testify on this item.

22 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you. I  
23 would just like to excuse the LPC panel before we  
24 allow the public to testify. Simeon, you may begin.

25 SGT. BIONDO: Time starts now.

1  
2                   SIMEON BANKOFF: Council Members, Simeon  
3 Bankoff, Executive Director of the Historic Districts  
4 Council. The HDC has long been interested in the  
5 designation of cultural sites and the designation of  
6 more landmarks in lower Manhattan. We have tried to  
7 shine a light on this neglected significant sites in  
8 Chinatown for multiple classes of our Six to  
9 Celebrate Program so we are particularly pleased that  
10 the LPC is honoring this prominent public site by  
11 Chinatown's first native born architect with this  
12 designation. The history of Chinese immigrants and  
13 Americans of Chinese origin in America is a ridge  
14 complex and sadly overlooked one for a population  
15 that has been part of our city for so long, there is  
16 little in the public record and less in the public  
17 consciousness which acknowledge and honor the  
18 contribution of this varied and diverse community.  
19 We welcome the LPCs ongoing efforts to address the  
20 absence in hopes that this designation is with the  
21 first of many which engage and protect sites of  
22 community significance. There are many worthy sites  
23 including buildings within Chinatown highlighted in  
24 the Landmarks commission survey such as the Merchants  
25 Association Building designed by the same architect,



1  
2 Mr. Lee at 8385 Munch Street which are so important  
3 to New York City's rich history but whose private  
4 owners might be less inclined to preservation than  
5 the City's Parks Department. Thank you very much.

6 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you  
7 Simeon. Any other members of the public who wish to  
8 testify LU-831, the Landmark Designation of the  
9 Kimlau War Memorial to make themselves known now by  
10 pressing the raise hand button on Zoom. The meeting  
11 will briefly stand at ease. See no other members of  
12 the public who wish to testify on this item the  
13 public hearing on LU-831 is now closed. We will note  
14 vote to approve LU-830 the landmark designation of  
15 the Aakawaxung Munahanung Archaeologic Site, LU-829  
16 the landmark designation of the New York Public  
17 Library Harlem Branch and the LU-831 the landmark  
18 designation of the Kimlau War Memorial. Counsel  
19 please call the role.

20 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:  
21 Riley?

22 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Yes.

23 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:  
24 Koo?

25 PETER KOO: Aye.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC  
SITINGS AND DISPOSITIONS

34

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

Barron?

INEZ BARRON: Aye. I vote aye on all.

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

By a vote, is that everybody here? Sorry, Treyger?

MARK TREYGER: Aye.

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

By a vote of four in the affirmative with zero in the negative and zero abstentions the items are recommended for approval. The vote will be held open for Council Member Miller.

CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you

Counsel. We will not continue to the next of LPCs applications before us today. LU-828 and the designation of the Dorrance Brooks Square Historic District which includes approximately 325 buildings in two sections of Frederick Douglas Boulevard in Council Member Perkins District in Manhattan. Kate Lemos McHale and Andre Fabre from the Landmarks Preservation Commission will present this item as well. I remind you that you are still under oath. You may begin when ready.

KATE LEMOS MCHALE: Thank you Chair

Riley. Thanks for the opportunity to present the

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

designation of the Dorrance Brooks Square Historic District in Harlem designated June 15, 2021 and if we could have our slides please we could go to the second slide. Thank you. The historic district features intact streets that gives the exhibit a striking variety of architectural styles and buildings designed by prominent New York City architects. The residential enclave is significant for its association with notable African American figures during the Harlem Renaissance. Next slide please. The historic district includes two sections shown here in red between St. Nicholas Park and Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard. The eastern section abuts the southern boundary of the St. Nicholas Historic District known as Striver's Row which was designated in 1967 and this district was the, is an exciting intersection between agency priorities under Chair Carroll's leadership and Community Board 10 Preservation Priorities for Harlem. LPC has worked closely with CB10 recently designating the Mount Morris Park Historic District extension and the central Harlem west 130th to 132nd Street Historic District. The Dorrance Brooks Square District corresponds with two more of their priority areas.

1  
2 We received a request from the Dorrance Brooks  
3 Property Owners and Residents Association to evaluate  
4 the eastern section and through the Staff's careful  
5 research and analysis we identified these two areas.  
6 They are separated by recent construction along  
7 Frederick Douglas Boulevard but they are linked  
8 historically, architecturally and by their combined  
9 cultural significance. We did extensive outreach  
10 with property owners, we held three informational  
11 meetings in Zoom and several follow-up meetings and  
12 correspondence with individual property owners. At  
13 the public hearing on April 20th, 12 people spoke in  
14 favor of the proposed district including  
15 representative of Manhattan Borough President Gail  
16 Brewer, the Dorrance Brooks Property Owners and  
17 Residence Association, several preservation  
18 organizations including Save Harlem Now in the  
19 historic district's council and individuals. One  
20 property owner asked that his property be removed  
21 from the boundary. The commission also received five  
22 additional letters of support and letters from two  
23 additional property owners asking to be removed from  
24 the district. Next slide please. Prompted by the  
25 arrival the elevated rail service along 8th Avenue

1  
2 speculative rural house development in the historic  
3 district began in 1887 and continued rapidly until  
4 the early 20th Century. Apartment buildings were  
5 constructed in the 1920s completing the residential  
6 development of the area. Next slide please. The  
7 result of this rapid development of long rows of  
8 houses in similar design is the remarkable  
9 cohesiveness and notable architectural character of  
10 the streetscapes. Next slide please. The district is  
11 anchored by Dorrance Brooks Square named for the  
12 black serviceman who died in action while serving  
13 with segregated military in the First World War  
14 Dorrance Brooks was widely regarded as a hero and  
15 renowned for his bravery and service to our country.  
16 His actions helped to dismantle racist notions about  
17 black American's fitness for military service. The  
18 square was dedicated in 1925 and was the first public  
19 space in New York City to honor an African American  
20 in this way and this district is the first historic  
21 district named after an African American. President  
22 Harry Truman applauded this and was later honored at  
23 Dorrance Brooks Square after having desegregated the  
24 U.S. Armed Forces. Next slide please. African  
25 Americans who had been pushed by discrimination and

1  
2 militia out of neighborhoods on the west side of  
3 Manhattan began moving to Harlem in the early 20th  
4 Century. This also corresponded with the great  
5 migration with many more African Americans moving to  
6 New York City. During the Harlem Renaissance the  
7 historic districts row houses, apartment buildings  
8 and churches which remain remarkably intact today  
9 housed many notable people and organizations who made  
10 important contributions to the arts and literature,  
11 social justice and politician activism, healthcare  
12 and medicine, and education among other facets of  
13 society. Next slide please. The historic district  
14 was the home of prominent individuals who made  
15 influential contributions to the arts and literature  
16 during the Harlem Renaissance including SAS, W.E.B.  
17 Du Bois, stage and motion picture Actress Ethel  
18 Waters and celebrated sculpturist Augusta Savage and  
19 artist studios here included the Harlem artist  
20 skilled in the uptown art laboratory. In their home  
21 at 580 St. Nicholas Avenue, Regina Anderson, Louella  
22 Tucker and Ethel Ray Nance fostered the careers of  
23 notable Harlem Renaissance artists like Countee  
24 Cullen and Langston Hughes among many others. Next  
25 slide please. Several buildings in the historic

1  
2 district were sites of important social activism  
3 work. These include the homes of W.E.B. Du Bois,  
4 Walter F. White and Daphne Montgomery. The New York  
5 Urban League founded to improve urban conditions for  
6 African Americans in New York, the White Rose  
7 Mission, the Settlement House for African American  
8 Women and girls and the Headquarters of the  
9 Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first  
10 African American Trade Union. Next slide please.  
11 Discriminatory barriers denied African American  
12 doctors the same rights, privileges and access as  
13 their white counterparts. Important hospitals  
14 started by African American doctors to serve the  
15 Harlem Community are located within the historic  
16 district. The Vincent Sanatorium and Hospital and  
17 the Edgecombe Sanatorium and several prominent  
18 medical professionals also lived in the district  
19 opening offices there where they were not able to  
20 elsewhere. Next slide please. Notable educators  
21 advanced understanding of African History to inform  
22 the work of African American artists and writers  
23 during the Harlem Renaissance. Charles Seifert who  
24 created the Ethiopian School of Research History and  
25 Dr. John Henrik Clarke a significant author,

1  
2 educator, historian and pioneer of the Pan-African  
3 studies lived on West 137th Street and their home  
4 served as public archives. Next slide please.

5 Religious institutions established in the historic  
6 district during the Harlem Renaissance have been  
7 important centers of the community. Some of the  
8 significance, religious buildings in the district  
9 include St. Marks United Methodist Church north of  
10 Dorrance Brook Square, the Beulah Wesleyan Methodist  
11 Church on West 136th Street, Grace Congregational  
12 Church on West 139th Street and the Mount Calvary  
13 United Methodist Church on Edgecombe Avenue. And  
14 next slide please. This map shows the location of  
15 these historically and culturally significant  
16 institutions, organizations and individuals. In  
17 addition to its notable cultural significance the  
18 historic district is characterized by remarkably  
19 cohesive streetscapes resulting from its rapid  
20 development in the 20th Century. It's predominantly  
21 characterized by row houses with some institutional  
22 buildings and mixed use buildings. Those are mostly  
23 along the Avenues. Next slide please. And the  
24 historic district shows a remarkable degree of  
25 architectural integrity with limited alterations and



1  
2 very intact streetscapes. Next slide please. With  
3 its highly intact streetscapes of late 19th century  
4 and early 20th century architecture and rich  
5 associations with the Harlem Renaissance and civil  
6 rights movements, the historic district is an  
7 important reminder of both the early development of  
8 the neighborhood as well as the contributions of the  
9 African American community to the history of New York  
10 and the nation. As we celebrate the 100 year  
11 anniversary of the Harlem Renaissance it's  
12 particularly important and appropriate time to  
13 recognize and celebrate the significant cultural and  
14 social history of this district along with its intact  
15 meritorious architecture. LPC recommends the City  
16 Council votes to uphold this historic district  
17 designation. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN KEVIN RILEY: Thank you Kate.

19 If any Council Members have any questions please use  
20 the raise hand icon. There being no Council Member  
21 questions, are there any members of the public who  
22 wish to testify on this item?

23 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

24 Mr. Chair there are, there is Simeon Bankoff, Valerie  
25

1  
2 Bradley, Keith Taylor, Leslie Bright and Kakuna  
3 Kerina.

4 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: I would just  
5 like to excuse the LPC panel before we have the  
6 public testify.

7 KATE LEMOS MCHALE: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you Kate.  
9 Thank you Anthony and thank you Tim. Okay, so we  
10 will begin with Simeon. Simeon go ahead.

11 SGT. BIONDO: Starting time.

12 SIMEON BANKOFF: Simeon Bankoff, Historic  
13 Districts Council. HDC has long been interested in  
14 extending landmark protections to neighborhoods in  
15 upper Manhattan and has consulted with Community  
16 Board 10 over a decade ago when they were formulating  
17 their preservation plan. We are pleased that the  
18 plan has achieved some success in seeking the grant  
19 for preservation efforts in the area and were  
20 immensely pleased with the landmark commission took  
21 this role to designate this historic district. This  
22 historic district has been apparent in several long  
23 time preservation advocate and more recently involved  
24 community activists and residents being instrumental  
25 in bringing this effort forward successfully would

1 not have happened without the efforts of Michael  
2 Adams, Angel Ayon, Valerie Jo Bradley, Yuien Chin,  
3 the Dorrance Brooks Square Property Owners and  
4 Residence Association, Save Harlem Now, Keith Taylor  
5 and West Harlem Community Organization, to list some  
6 of key players alphabetically. Special thanks also  
7 to Marissa Marvelli for drafting the nomination, the  
8 successful nomination into the National Register.  
9 This area is both architectural remarkable and  
10 indulgent with history. It was mentioned that it is  
11 the first historic district named after an African  
12 American New Yorker and despite their presence in the  
13 City since its inception there are few places in New  
14 York City named for Black New Yorkers and even less  
15 of those have had names for almost a Century. The  
16 area attracted a diverse population over the decades  
17 with a number of standout historic personalities who  
18 helped change our country few more so then Shirley  
19 Chism, the first black woman elected to congress,  
20 Brooklyn based Chism became involved in childhood  
21 education in this neighborhood, working educational  
22 programs at Mount Calvary United Methodist Church at  
23 116 Edgecombe Avenue. This is the beginning of her  
24 career in Children's Education, a career which  
25

1  
2 eventually propelled her to serve in Congress and run  
3 for President which was another first. We applaud  
4 the Landmarks Commission for including 116 Edgecombe  
5 Avenue within the boundaries of the Historic  
6 District. We understand that there are extenuating  
7 circumstances for the intended demolition hanging  
8 over the site but we feel strongly those permits do  
9 not.

10 SGT. BIONDO: Time expired.

11 SIMEON BANKOFF: Height historic  
12 significance. We also hope that a solution can be  
13 discovered which will save this beautiful structure  
14 and find solace that LPC will be at least able to  
15 guide whatever ever development replaces the church  
16 in to a form that compliments the surrounding  
17 neighborhood. Thank you very much and I'll be happy  
18 to answer any questions.

19 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you  
20 Simeon. Ms. Bradley you can go next.

21 SGT. BIONDO: Starting time.

22 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Ms. Bradley,  
23 you have to unmute Ms. Bradley.

24 VALERIE BRADLEY: Valerie Bradley with  
25 Save Harlem Now. Save Harlem now wholeheartedly

1 supports the designation of the Dorrance Brooks  
2 Square Historic District. We celebrated on June 15,  
3 2021 when the New York City Landmarks Preservation  
4 Commission voted unanimously to designate an intact  
5 district and we are looking forward to participating  
6 an even bigger celebration when the New York City  
7 Council approves the designation of an important  
8 historic district in Harlem. The West Harlem  
9 Community Preservation Organization and the Dorrance  
10 Brooks Property Owners and Residence Association are  
11 to be commended for their efforts to produce a  
12 request for evaluation that made the case for the  
13 Dorrance Brooks Square to be designated. A stellar  
14 example of late 19th Century Architecture with its  
15 richly detailed rowed houses and majestic churches  
16 this neighborhood stands out not only for its  
17 preserved built environment but also for its  
18 historical importance. Closely associated with the  
19 Harlem Renaissance and as a gathering place for  
20 African American Civil Rights Advocacy, Dorrance  
21 Brooks will be the first historic district named in  
22 honor of an African American. A black soldier who  
23 died in action while serving in a segregated military  
24 regimen during World War I. The Dorrance Brooks  
25

1  
2 Square became the site of frequent protests against  
3 discriminatory practices in the military, labor and  
4 housing. It was also home to prominent Harlem  
5 Renaissance figures including W.E.B. DuBois, Arthur,  
6 Walter White, Civil Rights Leader Jules Bledsoe,  
7 performer and Alylia Walker all of whom hosted or  
8 participated in salons or intimate gatherings  
9 attended by nationally known names.

10 SGT. BIONDO: Time expired.

11 VALERIE BRADLEY: Dr. May Edward Chin the  
12 first African American female doctor in Harlem lived  
13 and practiced at 44 Edgecombe Avenue. Shirley Chism,  
14 the first African American woman elected to Congress  
15 started her career as a teacher at Mt. Calvary United  
16 Methodist Church and Augusta Savage an artist and  
17 sculptor started an influential community based arts  
18 program in a garage at 321 West 136th Street. Before  
19 closing, I would like to note that our Council  
20 person, Bill Perkins stands with the Harlem Community  
21 in support of the designation of an intact district.  
22 He sent a letter to that effect to our speaker, Corey  
23 Johnson. Thank you for allowing us to weigh in on  
24 the designation of this important community.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

CHAIRPERSON KEITH RILEY: Thank you Ms. Bradley. Mr. Taylor you could go next. Good morning Chair Riley and members of this committee. My name is Keith Taylor. I'm the President of the Dorrance Brooks Property Owners and Residents Association. I come before you this morning to ask that you approve this proposed Dorrance Brooks Square Historic District, the first in New York City's history to be named after an African American Harlem Hellfighter Private First Class Dorrance Brooks. In the proposed district Dorrance Brooks Square which was dedicated in 1925. This is the first public park in New York City to be named after an African American, Private First Class Dorrance Brooks. He was a patriot World War I soldier with losses like fighting for American France despite the bitter reality of Jim Crow segregation back home. A decade ago the local community board recognized the dangers of development displaying the architectural and cultural history of central Harlem and created its historic preservation plan recommending nine historic areas worthy of land marking. Two of those historic study areas would be landmarked by this proposal. Our block association with assistance from local historic organizations

1  
2 such as Save Harlem Now, the historic district's  
3 council, West Harlem Community Preservation  
4 Organization, as well as strong community support has  
5 been able to get state and federal historic  
6 designation for some of the proposed district and  
7 your approval is most significant by far. As  
8 Frederick Douglass stated power concedes nothing  
9 without demand. It never did and it never will.  
10 Find out what any people will quietly submit to and  
11 you will find out the exact measure of injustice and  
12 wrong which can and will be imposed upon them. For  
13 the Harlem African American Community which has lost  
14 so much for so long with little historical legacy  
15 remains there is special consideration to preserve  
16 and cherish. Examples include the plan to demolish  
17 the historical Mount Carrier United Methodist Church  
18 and two connected brownstones as well as the  
19 destruction of the Harlem Renaissance Artist Augusta  
20 Savage's Art studio despite local community board  
21 residents advocated for their preservation. There is  
22 no question about the proposed district's  
23 architectural, cultural or historic guide to Harlem  
24 and the greater New York City Community. It is only  
25 through strong neighborhood support that this block



1  
2 association was able to apply for State, Federal and  
3 City historic preservation and we now ask that you  
4 approve this important land marking designation.

5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you Mr.  
7 Taylor. Ms. Kerina you may go next.

8 SGT. BIONDO: Starting time.

9 KAKUNA KERINA: Good morning members of  
10 the City Council and representatives of the Landmark  
11 Preservation Commission. My name is Kakuna Kerina  
12 and I'm a resident of the Dorrance Brooks Square  
13 Historic District and a member of the Dorrance Brooks  
14 Property Owners and Residents Association. My focus  
15 is on how our association is organized because it is  
16 our goal that ultimately we would be able to support  
17 other community organizations that seek to obtain a  
18 similar type of recognition for their community  
19 members. The way we use technology, old fashion  
20 community organizing techniques to amplify our  
21 communities' voices and receive information from and  
22 communicate to the greater public to source of their  
23 support. While we did use our website as the primary  
24 vehicle for that, we, we really serve to inform our  
25 community about Dorrance Brooks first since it is

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

significance to our City's and Harlem's History and then we also inform residents about ongoing community preservation initiatives and the highlights of best practices learning from those organizations efforts. While we did build our electronic presence during the process of securing state and federal historic district status and ultimately the land marking process that we are discussing today, we also ensured that our residents were able to participate in association meetings, town halls, presentations by City, State and non-profit representatives about the process of outcomes and the future impact of land marking on the community. Early in the process we discovered that a partial input of peer organizations and individuals with specialized knowledge about community preservation there was no roadmap for us to follow. The association committed to using our experiences to create a blue print to other organizations seeking to obtain similar recognition for the hidden figures from their communities. We ensure that at every step of the process we place documents, information about the process, contact information to city, state and federal agencies and

1  
2 links to institutions as support preservation efforts  
3 on property owners and residents association website.

4 SGT. BIONDO: Time expired.

5 KAKUNA KERINA: We hope that through our  
6 experience we will be able to support other under-  
7 represented communities to succeed in their  
8 preservation efforts the importance of which has been  
9 highlighted in today's meeting on the first city  
10 landmark protecting an indigenous site and the first  
11 landmarked historic district named for an African  
12 American Citizen. Thank you for the opportunity to  
13 participate in this hearing and I hope that you will  
14 vote to approve this application. Thank you very  
15 much.

16 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you Ms.  
17 Kerina. All right. Next is Mr. Michael Harry Adams.

18 SGT. BIONDO: Starting time.

19 MICHAEL HENRY ADAMS: Hello.

20 CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Yes, we can  
21 hear you Ms. Adams, go ahead.

22 MICHAEL HENRY ADAMS: Good morning Chair  
23 Powell. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm Michael Henry  
24 Adams, I wrote the book Harlem Lost and Found. The  
25 fatal flaw of the preservation commission's

1  
2 inclusionary initiative is a matter of resources and  
3 time. When Greenwich Village was proposed as a  
4 series of little tiny historic districts which were  
5 disconnected the community said no because these  
6 districts don't represent the breath and the  
7 comprehensive area which represents the heritage of  
8 this area. Well, in Harlem our heritage has been  
9 proposed to be detected by little tiny discrete  
10 historic districts like this one and only now is that  
11 being done in a serious way and the reality is is  
12 that the commission are penalizing us for their  
13 failure to act in the past which led to all kinds of  
14 buildings being diminished and undermined in the  
15 meantime and so when we first were looking at trying  
16 to designate Dorrance Brooks as a historic district,  
17 all of our churches were still churches and were  
18 still had viable congregations and subsequently they  
19 all have been tempted by real estate developers who  
20 want to demolish our churches and replace them with  
21 luxury condos for white people and this is a  
22 occurring all over Harlem. In the last 10 years we  
23 have lost 20 historic Harlem churches. This too  
24 little too late operation really must be changed.  
25 There has to be a different way in which we have more

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

comprehensive designation and in designating Dorrance Brooks, the City Council will take up its responsibility to ensure that we at least are starting to acknowledge that there is as much at stake and worth preserving in Harlem as there is in Greenwich Village and that it shouldn't be the two thirds of Greenwich Village is protected by land marking where only 10% of Harlem is. Thank you very much for your consideration.

CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you Mr. Adams. I believe we have one more public testimony. Ms. Bright you can go ahead.

SGT. BIONDO: Starting time.

CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Ms. Bright, you're muted. Ms. Bright you are still muted. We, we can't really hear you Ms. Bright.

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA: You're unmuted now. It's not working.

CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: No, it's not working. Um, can we give Ms. Bright a phone number that she can call in on or, if Ms. Bright has written testimony she could indicate that with a nod and we could try to get that.

LESLIE BRIGHT: Can you hear me?

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

Yes I can hear you.

CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Yes, we can  
hear you.

LESLIE BRIGHT: Okay. Good morning.

Sorry for the (inaudible). I appreciate this  
opportunity to speak and to address the committee.  
Hi, my name is Leslie Bright and I am the resident of  
the proposed designated area and I am also a member  
of the Dorrance Brooks Property Owners and Residents  
Association and I would simply like to take this  
opportunity to underscore and represent. You have  
the history of, of the community in the proposal.  
What I would like to do is simply underscore the  
actual involvement of other members in the community  
and other residents by sharing with you just a little  
bit of information. In addition to the support  
provided by the advocacy groups as well as the West  
Harlem Community Preservation Association, Save  
Harlem Now and the Historic District Council in  
aiding us in getting the state and national  
designations and going thus forward with the city  
designation. I would like to underscore the  
communities involvement and just simply note this is

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

a part of the effort to finance the study and the supporting requirements to actually get the plans in place and to formulate the proposals but we actually did outreach to the community and received you know a series of letters and became through the association with the members within the designated community and held a number of information sessions in (inaudible) and as a result of that an outreach in April 2018 we received responses within 60 days from 33 households contributing \$2500 to support the effort in engaging the architect and other infrastructure and media support.

SGT. BIONDO: Time expired.

LESLIE BRIGHT: So I just wanted to (inaudible) the common and a broader interest for the individual residents.

CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you Ms. Bright and you were breaking up at the end so I don't know if you still want to submit your testimony so we can have it for the record, okay? Any other members of the public who wish to testify on LU 828 the designation of the Dorrance Brooks Square Historic District should make themselves known by pressing the raise hand button on the zoom. This meeting will be

1  
2 briefly stand at ease until you do so. Seeing no  
3 other members of the public who wish to testify on  
4 this item, the public hearing on LU 828 is now closed  
5 and the item is laid over. I now open today's public  
6 hearing on our last item, LU 835, 101 Varick Avenue.  
7 This item is an application submitted by the  
8 Department of Transportation and the Department of  
9 Citywide Administrative Services pursuant to section  
10 197C of the New York City Charter for the site  
11 selection and acquisition of a property located at  
12 101 Varick Avenue in Brooklyn for use as a DOT  
13 operation and warehouse facility. The site is  
14 located in the district represented by Council Member  
15 Reynoso and Council Member Reynoso couldn't be here  
16 today so I will be reading his remarks. He says good  
17 morning to the, to Chair Riley and members of the  
18 Committee. My name is Council Member Reynoso and I  
19 represent the 34th District in which this action is  
20 being proposed. I want to thank the committee and  
21 DOT for their work to get us to this point as I have  
22 noted to DOT previously, I believe the proposed use  
23 is appropriate for the site which is located within  
24 the North Brooklyn IBZ. However, as the City  
25 continues to rezone manufacturing insights for non-



1 industrial uses, I do not believe it is prudent for  
2 the City to continue leasing industrial sites. If  
3 DOT is ascertain that this site is necessary for its  
4 infrastructure needs we should be purchasing it  
5 outright rather than leaving ourselves subject to the  
6 whims of a developer and risking the loss of space  
7 deemed essential for city functions. I encouraged the  
8 Mayor and the Council to conduct a long-term  
9 assessment of the city's needs for industrial space  
10 and I didn't see the policy, and to identify, excuse  
11 me the policies necessary to ensure the preservation  
12 of the City's core industrial districts city  
13 facilities and other essential infrastructure. We  
14 know that updated industrial zoning is part of the  
15 any such solution and I continue to advocate for the  
16 creation of a core industrial district but we should  
17 also be identifying and purchasing sites for the  
18 long-term rather than site by site as each agency  
19 needs arises. Having said that, I do believe this  
20 action is critical to supporting DOTs mission. I  
21 support the application and I urge the members of  
22 this Committee to do so as well. Thank you and thank  
23 you so much for your remarks. Council Member  
24 Reynoso, presented for the administration we have  
25

1  
2 Dorrit Blakeslee, Jessica Worock, Rebecca Zack and  
3 Danielle Zuckerman from the Department of  
4 Transportation and Nina Kotter and Laura Ringelheim  
5 from the Department of Citywide Administrative  
6 Services. Excuse me if I chopped up any of your  
7 names. I now ask that these witnesses be unmuted and  
8 the Counsel administer the affirmation.

9 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

10 Please raise your right hands and state your names.

11 DORRIT BLAKESLEE: Dorrit Blakeslee.

12 NINA KOTTER: Nina Kotter.

13 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

14 In the order that you were called let's say it that  
15 way, we have to hear the names.

16 DORRIT BLAKESLEE: Dorrit Blakeslee.

17 JESSICA WOROCK: Jessica Worock.

18 DANIELLE ZUCKERMAN: Danielle Zuckerman.

19 NINA KOTTER: Nina Kotter.

20 LAURA RINGELHEIM: Laura Ringelheim.

21 SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA: Do  
22 you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and  
23 nothing but the truth in your testimony before the  
24 Subcommittee and in answer to all Council Member  
25 questions?

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

DORRIT BLAKESLEE: I do.

JESSICA WOROCK: Yes.

DANIELLE ZUCKERMAN: I do.

NINA KOTTER: Yes.

LAURA RINGELHEIM: I do.

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

Thank you. You may begin your presentation when you are ready.

DORRIT BLAKESLEE: Thank you. Can you pull up the pre-? Okay. Great. Perfect. So hello, my name is Dorrit Blakeslee and I work for DOT Facilities Management. I'll be presenting about 101 Varick Avenue. Next slide please. Here's a picture of the project site, 101 Varick outlined in red. DOT in collaboration with DCAS seeing the site select and acquire this privately owned site. The site lot is approximately 140,000 square feet. The site is located in an M31 Zoning District in the North Brooklyn Industrial Business Zone and the DOT units that are proposed to be located here include part of the sidewalk inspection and management abbreviated as SIM, Citywide Concrete Unit and The Traffic Operation Streetlight Storage Warehouse as well as office space. Currently the Streetlight Warehouse is

1  
2 operating out of 110 Varick under a licensed  
3 agreement. Next slide. DOT needs the new space at  
4 101 Varick due to two city priorities. SIM is  
5 expanding due to a court mandate that requires  
6 162,000 curb ramps to be installed or updated  
7 throughout the City and 25 new SIM employees would be  
8 assigned to 101 Varick and the Traffic Operation  
9 Streetlight Warehouse needed to move from 37th Avenue  
10 to provide access for DEP to finish constructing  
11 water tunnel #3 and this operation is supported by 6  
12 DOT traffic operation staff. Next slide. 101  
13 Varick has been identified by DOT as a very good  
14 location for many different reasons. Oh, can you go  
15 back to the last slide. Sorry, I skipped the, can  
16 you go to pre-, okay, there you go. The site is well  
17 served by public transit. Also there is access to  
18 Metropolitan and Flushing Avenues as well as the  
19 \_\_\_\_\_. The existing building and site is  
20 adequately sized for DOT and would require minimal  
21 changes. The site is located in M31 Zoning District  
22 and the occupancy of this building with new  
23 employment would foster economic activity in the  
24 area. Next slide please. This slide shows proposed  
25 site plan for 101 Varick. As already stated, SIM and

1  
2 Streetlight Warehouse would be located here. Please  
3 note that SIM will not be storing concrete materials  
4 or be preparing concrete on site and no new  
5 construction on the site is proposed. Next slide.  
6 As for resiliency, critical infrastructure would be  
7 protected from any potential flooding events and  
8 sustainability is also very important to DOT and is a  
9 priority for the City so DOT and partnership with  
10 DCAS will be exploring the opportunity to install  
11 rooftop agriculture, solar panels or a green roof and  
12 we have started discussing these options with the  
13 building ownership. Next slide please. A fair share  
14 analysis was performed for this site and it was  
15 determined that there was not a disproportionate  
16 concentration of similar City facilities in the study  
17 area. Next slide. This project also under a City  
18 Environmental Quality Review and it was determined  
19 that the project would not create any significant  
20 adverse impacts related to hazardous materials or  
21 contamination, vehicle trips or parking and a  
22 negative declaration was issued on April 1st, 2021.  
23 Next slide. So in summary, DOT is seeking the site  
24 select and acquire the property at 101 Varick Avenue  
25 to house an expanded SIM Citywide Concrete Unit and

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

relocate the Streetlight Warehouse. The project site is ideal for DOT for many reasons. It's located close to public transportation, it has excellent vehicle access to the City's highway system, it does both industrial and office space that is adequately sized, it is appropriately zoned for DOT operations, it requires minimal improvements and it would increase economic activity for local businesses. A Fair Share Analysis determined that there is no disproportion or concentration of similar City or DOT facilities in the area and the seeker has determined that the project would not create significant traffic, parking or environmental impacts. So that's the end of the presentation. If there are any questions, we can take them.

CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you so much, Dorrit.

DORRIT BLAKESLEE: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: I don't have any questions. I don't see any Council Members who have any questions. Counsel are there any members of the public who wish to testify on this item?

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

There are no members of the public registered to testify on this item.

CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Seeing no

members of the public who wish to testify on this item. The public hearing on LU 835 is now closed and the item is laid over. Thank you. Counsel, are we still leaving it open for Council Member Miller to vote?

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

He has not shown up so we can close that vote.

CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Okay.

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPAGNA:

The vote stands at 4 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative with 0 abstentions for the items to be approved and recommended to the full Land Use Committee.

CHAIRPERSON KEVIN RILEY: Thank you

Counsel. That concludes today's business. I remind you that if you have written testimony on today's items you may submit it to

[landusetestimony@Council.nyc.gov](mailto:landusetestimony@Council.nyc.gov) once again

[landusetestimony@Council.nyc.gov](mailto:landusetestimony@Council.nyc.gov) please indicate the

LU number or the project name in the subject heading.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC  
SITINGS AND DISPOSITIONS

64

I would like to thank the applicants, members of the public, my colleagues, Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use Staff and the Sergeant at Arms for participating in today's hearing. This meeting is hereby adjourned. Thank you everyone.



C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date           <INSERT TRANSCRIPTION DATE>