



October 28, 2019

Dear SheBuiltNYC and Ms. Chirlane McCray,

We ask you to honor Ida B. Wells and her sister activists in Brooklyn. They were truly “Sisters In Freedom.” This group choice would make a powerful statement, and the monument would educate generations of New Yorkers about a talented and fierce group of women who fought for anti-lynching legislation, equal suffrage, economic well-being, and civil rights. This selection would elevate not only these great, empowered women but also Brooklyn and New York City’s central role in the history of their movement.

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A remarkable collection of accomplished black women assisted her with public speaking, fundraising, and publicity. This sisterhood also established crucial social services and advocacy organizations, which drove the formation of the influential black women’s club movement in the United States.

The public nominations for SheBuiltNYC already include Ida B. Wells and her colleagues, Sarah Smith Garnet—the first African-American woman principal in New York, and her sister, Dr. Susan Smith McKinney—the first African-American woman doctor in New York. SheBuiltNYC is working to honor groups of women, we believe that a proper monument to them in Brooklyn include them with their partners Maritcha Lyons and Victoria Earle Matthews. Together, a statue to them would have unique power to encourage the young girls and others of our community who aspire to be great leaders.

It is impossible to understand the progress of the civil rights movement of the 20th century without understanding the work of these women. The selection of the “Sisters in Freedom” by SheBuiltNYC is obvious and deserving.

Sincerely,
PS9 Brooklyn Parent Teacher Organization

Nzingah Diallo & Raul Rothblatt, Co-Presidents

More info:

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/gilded-age-ida-b-wells/>



A Project of
**Underground Railroad History Project
of the Capital Region, Inc.**

www.UndergroundRailroadHistory.org

November 3, 2019

Dear SheBuiltNYC and Ms. Chirlane McCray,

On behalf of 5 Boros to Freedom, I ask you to honor Ida B. Wells and her sister activists in Brooklyn. As “Sisters In Freedom” this group choice would make a powerful statement. The monument would educate generations of New Yorkers about a talented and fierce group of women who fought for anti-lynching legislation, equal suffrage, economic well-being, and civil rights. This selection would elevate not only these great, empowered women but also Brooklyn and New York City’s central role in the history of their movement for equity and justice.

The public nominations for SheBuiltNYC already include Ida B. Wells and her colleagues, Sarah Smith Garnet—the first African-American woman principal in New York, and her sister, Dr. Susan Smith McKinney—the first African-American woman doctor in New York. 5 Boros to Freedom believes that a proper monument to these women to be located in Brooklyn should also include their partners Maritcha Lyons and Victoria Earle Matthews. Together, a statue honoring these women would have unique power to encourage young girls and others of our community who aspire to be great leaders.

It is impossible to understand the progress of the civil rights movement of the 20th century without understanding the work of these women. The selection of the “Birth of Sisterhood” by SheBuiltNYC is obvious and deserving.

5 Boros to Freedom is an extension of the work of Underground Railroad History Project with the intention of supporting and celebrating community engagement with the rich African American history that resides in the five boroughs of New York City as we reclaim and celebrate the silenced voices of our communal ancestors, drawing upon their strength to carry on our work for justice today.

Underground Railroad History Project is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to researching and preserving the local and national history of the anti-slavery and Underground Railroad movements, their international connections, and their legacies to later struggles, engaging in public education and dialogue about these movements and their relevance to modern society.

Sincerely,



Mary Elizabeth Stewart
Co-founder, 5 Boros to Freedom and
Underground Railroad History Project



Dr. Alan Singer, Ph.D.
Teaching Learning Technology
291 Hagedorn Hall
119 Hofstra University
Hempstead, NY 11549
516-463-5853 catajs@hofstra.edu

November 6, 2019

Dear SheBuiltNYC and Ms. Chirlane McCray,

I am writing in my capacity as the director of social studies education at Hofstra University and the author of *New York and Slavery* (SUNY 2008) and *New York's Grand Emancipation Jubilee* (SUNY 2018).

I ask you to honor Ida B. Wells and her sister activists in Brooklyn. As “Sisters In Freedom” this group choice would make a powerful statement. The monument would educate generations of New Yorkers about a talented and fierce group of women who fought for anti-lynching legislation, equal suffrage, economic well-being, and civil rights.

This selection would elevate not only these great, empowered women but also Brooklyn and New York City's central role in the history of their movement for equity and justice. The public nominations for SheBuiltNYC already include Ida B. Wells and her colleagues, Sarah Smith Garnet—the first African American woman principal in New York, and her sister, Dr. Susan Smith McKinney—the first African-American woman doctor in New York. A proper monument to these women to be located in Brooklyn should also include their partners Maritcha Lyons and Victoria Earle Matthews. Together, a statue honoring these women would have unique power to encourage young girls and others of our community who aspire to be great leaders.

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Alan J. Singer'.

**Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts**

101 Park Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11205

718.834.6760 (Office) 718.243.0815 (Fax)

mckinneyssa.com

Edgar Lin, *Principal (I.A.)*, Karen Best, *Assistant Principal*, Stan Walker, *Principal Assigned*

November 8, 2019

Tom Finkelpearl Commissioner
New York City Department of Cultural
Affairs 31 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Faye Penn
Executive Director
Women.nyc

Re: Establishment of a "Sisters In Freedom" monument at Willoughby Square Park

Dear Commissioner Finkelpearl and Executive Director Penn:

I write to ask you to honor Ida B. Wells, Sarah Smith Garnet, Dr. Susan Smith McKinney, Maritcha Lyons, and Victoria Earle Matthews at the soon-to-be completed Willoughby Square Park. These women were truly "Sisters In Freedom," who fought for anti-lynching legislation, equal suffrage, economic well-being, and civil rights. Honoring these individuals as a collective would not only elevate these great, empowered women further into our consciousness, but also highlight Brooklyn and New York City's central role in the history of their movement.

After the Memphis, Tennessee newspaper edited by Ida B. Wells was attacked by a racist mob in 1892, Ms. Wells decided to settle in Brooklyn, where many strong Black institutions were already operating. Continuing to speak and write, Ida intensified the work of her world-famous anti-lynching campaign, where she lived for three years at 395 Gold Street, one block from what I hope will be known as "Abolitionist Place Park."

This collective of women established crucial social services and advocacy organizations, which drove the formation of the influential Black women's club movement in the United States.

The public nominations for SheBuiltNYC already include Ida B. Wells and her colleagues, Sarah Smith Garnet - the first African-American woman principal in New York, and her sister, Dr. Susan Smith McKinney - the first African-American



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Edgar Lin, *Principal (I.A.)*, Karen Best, *Assistant Principal*, Stan Walker, *Principal Assigned*

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It is impossible to understand the progress of the civil rights movement of the 20th century without understanding the work of these women. I encourage the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) and SheBuiltNYC to advance this candidacy as soon as possible.

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Working together to ensure high-level learning for all...

Edgar Lin
Principal (I.A.)

Dr. Susan S. McKinney School of the Arts/13K265
718.843.6760 (W)
718.908.7862 ©



OFFICE OF THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

ERIC L. ADAMS
President

November 8, 2019

Tom Finkelpearl
Commissioner
New York City Department of Cultural Affairs
31 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Faye Penn
Executive Director
Women.nyc

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Sincerely,



Eric L. Adams
Brooklyn Borough President

ELA/rl



Community School District 13
Presidents' Council

Celia Green
President

Crystal Fischer
First Vice President

Raul Rothblatt
Secretary

Shaila Dewan
Treasurer

November 26, 2019

Dear SheBuiltNYC and Ms. Chirlane McCray,

We ask you to honor Ida B. Wells and her sister activists in Brooklyn. They were truly "Sisters in Freedom." This group choice would make a powerful statement, and the monument would educate generations of New Yorkers about a talented and fierce group of women who fought for anti-lynching legislation, equal suffrage, economic well-being, and civil rights. This selection would elevate not only these great, empowered women, but also Brooklyn and New York City's central role in the history of their movement.

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Sincerely,
*Celia Green on behalf of CSD 13
Presidents Council*

More info:
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/gilded-age-ida-b-wells/>



Lyons Community School, 223 Graham Avenue, Brooklyn, NY, 11206
Phone: 718-782-0918 Fax: 718-782-5283 Email: lyons@lyonscommunityschool.org

December 1, 2019

Dear SheBuiltNYC and Ms. Chirlane McCray,

We ask you to honor Ida B. Wells and her sister activists in Brooklyn. They were truly "Sisters in Freedom." This choice would make a powerful statement, and the monument would educate generations of New Yorkers about a talented and fierce group of women who fought for anti-lynching legislation, equal suffrage, economic well-being, and civil rights. This selection would elevate not only these great, empowered women but also Brooklyn and New York City's central role in the history of their movement.

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We chose to name our school after Maritcha Lyons because she exemplified so many of the qualities we admire and encourage in our students, as essential one being that working in solidarity with others accomplishes far more than what one can accomplish on one's own.

We throw our support behind this work. The selection of the "Sisters in Freedom" by SheBuiltNYC is obvious and deserving.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Taeko Onishi".

Taeko Onishi, Principal



MS915 | 105 JOHNSON STREET, TOP FLOOR | BROOKLYN, NY, 11201 | TEL 718.875.1021 | FAX 718.975.1983 | MS915BROOKLYN.ORG

December 2, 2019

Dear SheBuiltNYC and Ms. Chirlane McCray,

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Sincerely,
MS 915 Parents Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ansley Samson".

Ansley Samson, President

New York City Department of Education**The Dock Street School****“Where College Begins”**

19 Dock Street

Brooklyn, New York 11201

718 780 7660 Fax 718 780 7675

Dr. Melissa Vaughan, Principal**MOTIVATION****APPRECIATION****ENDURANCE****TRIUMPH****SUCCESS**

December 4, 2019

Dear SheBuiltNYC and Ms. Chirlane McCray,

We ask you to honor Ida B. Wells and her sister activists in Brooklyn. They were truly “Sisters In Freedom.” This group choice would make a powerful statement, and the monument would educate generations of New Yorkers about a talented and fierce group of women who fought for anti-lynching legislation, equal suffrage, economic well-being, and civil rights. This selection would elevate not only these great, empowered women but also Brooklyn and New York City’s central role in the history of their movement.

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Sincerely,

The Dock Street School PTA

Kevin Ryan-Young
PTA President

More info:

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/gilded-age-ida-b-wells/>

December 6, 2019

TO Raul Rothblatt and Whomever Else it May Concern:

My name is Ellen Holly.

As the great granddaughter of Susan Smith McKinney Steward and the oldest living member of my family assigned by younger relatives to speak for our extended family as a *group*, on past occasions I've made it clear how amazed, charmed and grateful we've been to the borough of Brooklyn for the many ways in which the historical accomplishments of various family members have been acknowledged and memorialized: my great, great grandfather, Sylvanus Smith, who was featured in your museum presentation of black abolitionists, his two daughters, Susan and Sarah, and Sarah's husband, the Reverend Henry Highland Garnet who, in the interest of black freedom, conferred often and directly with Abraham Lincoln.

Recently, it has been brought to my attention that future plans now exist to include Susan and Sarah in a monument designed to include five black women who had played major roles in the struggle for black freedom.

As a family we welcome that wonderful news!

Meanwhile, speaking strictly for myself, I have concerns about how things are to be handled that I hope those involved would be inclined to consider.

Although it was my fate to become an actress, my original intention was to become a painter. Speech and Drama was only my minor. Art was my major and I have never lost my interest in it or my fascination with what it can do.

When an "artist" ...i.e. a painter, sculptor, etc ... attempts to reproduce the likeness of a given person they have two choices. To try and reproduce that person as precisely as they possibly can in terms of what that person really looks like.

OR ...

To insert **themselves** into the process by presenting the person as they emerge from being viewed through the distorting prism of **the artist's own unique and overriding signature**.

An example of the second choice would be the work of Andy Warhol. Whether he is reproducing Marilyn Monroe or Elizabeth Taylor the observer's first impression is not what these women look like but how *Warhol* has chosen to look at them.

The second choice can be unfortunate. The artist chosen to paint the official portrait of Michelle Obama as our country's First Lady **and insert themselves in the process** has done this country a disservice. We who are alive in her time know what

she looks like but, come future centuries, that weak and watery interpretation of a vivid and remarkable woman I consider to be a disaster.

The Warhol approach does no harm to a Marilyn Monroe because her likeness is reproduced in a thousand other places *and always will be*.

By contrast, in re the five women planned for the statue, they are historical figures who are being introduced to the public most probably for a **first, last, and only** time in such a permanent medium as sculpture. For that reason one could hope that they would be presented **exactly as they were** without the intrusion of the artists idiosyncratic choice as to how he wants to alter the way we look at them and put his own stamp on it.

Because I keep track of how my ancestors are handled, it has always pained me that the photographs of Susan and Sarah that accompany most of the articles about them usually depict them in their fifties and sixties. Given the advances in photography it makes sense that these are preferred because they are the sharpest photographs. **But it is totally out of sync with who they were when they accomplished the things for which they were famous** including Susan's graduation from med school as the valedictorian of her class.

My point? Anything as permanent as sculpture should depict these women as the young women they were when they did all the things they are known for, not the old ladies they became in the twilight of their lives.

There are a number of things available ... lesser photographs, cameos and such that depict Susan And Sarah as **young** women.

Before any decision is made as to how the sculpture is to be handled please allow me to turn over material that, inferior as it is on its own, will give a sculptor all the information she or he needs to know in order to make an exact duplicate of what they looked like when they were young.

Meanwhile, you are probably aware of it, but if you aren't, there was a connection between my great, great aunt Sarah and Ida B Wells. Sarah was the person who, as the head of one of the organizations to which she belonged, raised the money to replace all of the machinery that had been destroyed as vandals wrecked the presses of Ida B Wells and thus was **central** in putting Wells back in business.

Thank you for whatever consideration this letter is given.

Ellen Holly

VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY
25TH SENATE DISTRICT



THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

MAJORITY SECRETARY
CHAIR

CHILDREN & FAMILIES

COMMITTEES:

AGRICULTURE

CRIME VICTIMS, CRIME & CORRECTION

EDUCATION

FINANCE

HEALTH

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PHONE: (718) 643-6140
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WEBSITE: MONTGOMERY.NYSenate.GOV

December 15, 2019

Hon. Jimmy Van Bramer
Chair

Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations
250 Broadway, Suite 1833
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairman Van Bramer:

I am writing to offer my support for the proposed "Sisters in Freedom" monument. Through honoring the memories of Ida B. Wells, Sarah Smith Garnet, Dr. Susan Smith McKinney, Maritcha Lyons and Victoria Earle Mathews we keep history alive and in the minds of generations to come.

The women who later became known as the "Sisters-in-Freedom." fought for anti-lynching legislation, equal suffrage, economic well-being and civil rights. Honoring these individuals collectively would elevate public knowledge of their movements and expand public knowledge of their struggle.

In 1892, the Memphis, Tennessee newspaper where Ida B. Wells served as editor suffered an attack by a racist mob; she decided to move to Brooklyn where many strong Black institutions were already in operation. Ms. Wells continued to speak and write. She escalated the efforts of her then world-famous anti-lynching campaign. For three years, she lived at 395 Gold Street just a few blocks from the proposed placement of this monument. This would be a fitting tribute to her legacy.

A remarkable collection of accomplished black women assisted her with public speaking, fundraising, and publicity. This sisterhood also established crucial social services and advocacy organizations, which drove the formation of the influential black women's club movement in the United States.

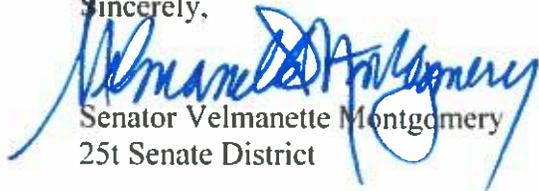
She Built NYC's public nominations already include Ida B. Wells and her colleagues, Sarah Smith Garnet—the first African-American woman principal in New York, and her sister, Dr. Susan Smith McKinney—the first African-American woman doctor in New York. She Built NYC is working to honor groups of women, I believe that a proper monument to them in Brooklyn must include

Hon. Jimmy Van Bramer
December 15, 2019
Page 2

their partners Maritcha Lyons and Victoria Earle Matthews. Together, a statue honoring them would have unique power to encourage the young girls and others in our community who aspire to be great leaders.

It is impossible to understand the progress of the civil rights movement of the 20th century without understanding the work of these women. This selection would elevate not only these great, empowered women but also Brooklyn and New York City's central role in the history of their movement.

Sincerely,



Senator Velmanette Montgomery
25th Senate District



THE COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

December 17, 2019

New York City Department of Cultural Affairs
31 Chambers Street
New York, New York, 10007

Faye Penn
Executive Director
Women.nyc

Dear SheBuiltNYC and Ms. Penn,

I am writing to offer my support for the proposed “Sisters in Freedom” monument. By honoring the memories of Ida B. Wells, Sarah Smith Garnet, Dr. Susan Smith McKinney, Maritcha Lyons, and Victoria Earle Matthews we are able to preserve and honor our history for future generations to come.

Known as the “Sisters-in-Freedom,” Ida B. Wells and her colleagues led anti-lynching campaigns and fought for suffrage and civil rights. Their contributions to New York and the nation’s civil rights history is indelible and it is incumbent on us to continue their legacy. This selection would elevate public knowledge of these historic leaders as well as Brooklyn and New York City’s role in the history of their movement for equity and justice.

The public nominations for SheBuiltNYC already include Ida B. Wells and her colleagues, Sarah Smith Garnet—the first African American woman principal in New York, and her sister, Dr. Susan Smith McKinney—the first African-American woman doctor in New York. A proper monument to these women to be located in Brooklyn should also include their partners Maritcha Lyons and Victoria Earle Matthews.

We have a long way to go to achieve a gender representative balance among our historical landmarks and this is an opportunity to highlight the work of multiple black women leaders deserving of recognition. It is impossible to understand the progress of the civil rights movement of the 20th century without understanding the work of these women — it is time to give them all their due.

The selection of “Sisters in Freedom” by SheBuiltNYC is well deserved and I am proud to offer my support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen T. Levin".

Council Member Stephen Levin, District 33

HAKEEM S. JEFFRIES
8th District, New York

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COURTS,
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND THE INTERNET

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMS, TERRORISM,
HOMELAND SECURITY AND INVESTIGATIONS

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS
CHAIR



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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BROOKLYN, NY 11224
(718) 373-0033

JEFFRIES.HOUSE.GOV

March 7, 2020

She Built NYC
NYC Department of Cultural Affairs
31 Chambers Street
New York, NY 1007

To Faye Penn and the SheBuiltNYC Team,

I write today in support of the “Sisters in Freedom” Monument proposal submitted for the citywide public arts campaign initiative to honor pioneering women who have made contributions to New York City and beyond. This group of five women, including Ida B. Wells, Maritcha Remond Lyons, Sarah Garnet, Susan Smith MckInney, and Victoria Earle Matthews is critical in educating future generations of New Yorkers about the extraordinary women who fought for anti-lynching legislation, equal suffrage, economic well-being, and civil rights.

Many people in Brooklyn are familiar with how fearless an advocate for civil rights Ida B. Wells was with her world-famous anti-lynching campaign. Her life’s work was committed to exposing injustices against Black Americans and women throughout New York and the country. She was also a founding member of the NAACP and a staunch advocate for women’s suffrage.

The proposed monument would truly amplify the collective of accomplished Black women that assisted Ida B. Wells in public speaking, fundraising and publicity in fighting for equal rights and justice. This collective of brave women also established crucial social services, advocacy, and lead the formation of the Negro Women’s Club Movement.

As the Representative for the 8th Congressional District, I believe it is important for both the legacy and progress of the civil rights movement of the 20th century to live on, that we also celebrate and honor the work of these women. I urge the SheBuiltNYC campaign for full and fair consideration for the proposed “Sisters in Freedom” Monument in the second round of considerations. Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Hakeem Jeffries

Member of Congress

Margaret Julie Finch says, June 28, 2020

1. I am the co-chair of Friends of Hopper Gibbon Underground Railroad house, and Lamartine Place Historic District, 339 West 29th Street, (between Eighth and Ninth Avenues in Manhattan, N.Y.
2. I provide this affidavit in support of Landmarks Preservation Commission, to preserve the building at 227 Duffield Street, (previously 185 Duffield) located between Fulton Street and Willoughby Street, in Downtown Brooklyn, New York, which if not stopped will cause the last surviving building inhabited by abolitionists Thomas and Harriet Truesdell [Truesdale], between 1851 and 1864 to be lost, as a visible memorial to the history of abolitionism in Brooklyn.
3. I am a preservationist, a writer, a resident of the City of New York and a citizen taxpayer of the City of New York. I reside in Manhattan on the West Side of New York City.
4. The abolitionist Thomas Truesdell, was born 1789 Woodstock, Conn. and died March 10, 1874.

On October 14th he married Harriet Lee, born July 10, 1786, and died June 29, 1862. Originally they lived in Providence, Rhode Island. Thomas was listed in 1829-30 in the *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, as the agent for Providence, R.I.
5. In 1835 Harriet Truesdell became the treasurer of the Providence Ladies Anti-Slavery Society. In 1836 in the *Liberator* newspaper, an abolitionist paper, it was announced that Harriet Truesdell sent a check for \$20. to Underground Railroad conductor John

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Rankin in Ohio. (He helped rescue the original woman who crossed the icy river with her baby, to the freedom of Ohio. She later became the source for the character Eliza in the book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.)

6. In 1836 Thomas Truesdell was a delegate from Providence to the Rhode Island Anti-Slavery Convention.
7. In 1837 the Providence [RI] Ladies Anti-Slavery Society passed a resolution supporting the well known abolitionist sisters, the Grimkes, from South Carolina who had moved to Philadelphia.
8. In 1838 Harriet Truesdell was a member of the Planning Committee for the Womens' Anti-Slavery Convention in Philadelphia, along with Julianna Tappan, (daughter of Lewis Tappan, of Pierrepont Street, Brooklyn), Maria W. Chapman, (Massachusetts); Sarah Mapps Douglas, (African American Quaker, Philadelphia); and Angelina Grimke Weld, (former slave owner of N.C. ?) Phila. & New Jersey). Their hall was burnt down by pro-slavery men.
9. In 1840, abolitionist and author Willian Lloyd Garrison stayed with the Truesdells at their home in the Fourth Ward, Brooklyn, after attending the American Anti-Slavery Society in New York City.
10. In 1851 the Truesdells moved into 227 Duffield Street (number 185 at that time.) Thomas was in business as a cotton broker in Manhattan. With them lived their two daughters, Abby K. (22) and Julia L. Batturs, (28), grand child Harriet L. Batturs (10) and a black servant Elizabeth Harris, (19) born in North Carolina.
11. 1855 Thomas was on the front page of the New York Times, as part of the West Indian Emancipatio Proclamation celebration. [Weeksville. org]

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12. Harriet Truesdell died in 1862, and Thomas Truesdell moved out of 227 Duffield Street.
13. At 309-11 Bridge Street, the Bridge Street AWME (African Wesleyan Methodist Episcopal) Church, (a block away from Duffield St.) was on the Underground Railroad, giving sanctuary to fleeing enslaved persons, (1854—1865), “in the basement the church hid and fed “the fugitive slaves who slept on the floor, when in fear of detection they descended into a sub-cellar. Dr. Amos Jorden, the congregation’s historian, said he had been told by old-timers that the runaways left markings on the wall.” the interior of the church is totally renovated. [NY Times, Safe Havens on the Freedom Line, by Sander Brawarsky, 1/19/2001 [and maap.columbia.edu]
14. This was where Nathan Egelston, a leader of the African & Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, preached. He lived two blocks away on Duffield Street, with fellow members of the Abolitionist movement. [cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com]
15. The Church was the the scene of a three day celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation on January 2, 1863.
16. In July 1863 it provided sanctuary for refugees from the Draft Riots. [see landmarked Abigail Hopper Gibbons House on 29th St. in Manhattan. In February Frederick Douglass spoke at the church, and in 1865 Harriet Tubman gave a speech before a massive crowd. [forgottenny.com]
17. William Harned, a Philadelphia Quaker, member of the American & Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and the treasurer of the NY State Vigilance Committee, lived in Brooklyn, in 1847, on Smith Street, then (?) at 130 Bridge Street, and then in the Fourth Ward, on Duffield Street. He worked closely with abolitionists Lewis Tappan and James Pennington. [He was listed in the 1850 census living with his family, including Cornelius Morris, 10,

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born in the West Indies. [“Downtown Brooklyn Research Report on the Potential UGRR”

“Association of the Duffield & Gold Street Programs” AKRF June 20, 2005 Appendix C and/or B”]

18. In 1893 Ida B. Wells lived a block away, at 436 Gold Street for a few years, and Maritcha Lyons, (ass’t principal, daughter of Albro & Mary J. Lyons, head of UGRR Colored Sailor’s Home,) organised a testimonial dinner for Ida Wells, with Victoria Earle Matthews, (a writer,) at Lyric Hall on October 5th, 1892. The two went on to found the Women’s Loyal Union. [p. 354-5, *Black Gotham, a Family History of African Americans in Nineteenth Century New York City*, by Carla L. Peterson, 2011, Yale University Press]
19. The Siloam Presbyterian Church, a stop on the Underground Railroad, was at 160 Prince Street, between Myrtle and Willoughby Streets. It has been demolished. Established 1849 to 1909, when it moved to 260 Jefferson Avenue in Bedford Stuyvesant. They kept a “freedom fund [for fleeing slaves] and invited speakers and abolitionists, Frederick Douglass and John Brown... [ourbksocial.com and google maps]
20. 436 Gold Street, between Willoughby and Duffield Streets, is important. This is where Ida B. Wells lived. The Community Board # 2 approved a motion to rename Gold Street, Ida B. Wells Street after her. [pbs.org American Experience] She spoke about lynching at Siloam Presbyterian Church in a debate with Maritcha Lyons. Her friends and associates included her sister Sara Wells Garnet, a school principal, and Susan Smith McKinney, who became the first African American female doctor.
21. I received awards with my co-chair, for the Friends of Hopper Gibbons Underground Railroad house and Lamartine Place, 29th Street between 8th & 9th Avenues, NYC, from the Historic District Council, in 2009; the Victorian Society in America in 2010, and

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from the newspaper *The Underground Railroad Free Press*, in 2009.

22. I attended the Underground Railroad conferences in Troy, NY, around 2007 & 2008 ? and lectured there once, with my co-chair.
23. The Lamartine Place Historic District, and the landmarking of the Hopper Gibbons house was created by the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission on October 13, 2009.
24. Our collected research and correspondence about the landmarking of the Hopper Gibbons Underground Railroad house and Lamartine Place Historic District were deposited in the New York Historical Society about spring 2018.

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Stony Brook University

Africana Studies

Stony Brook, NY 11794-4340

TEL: 631.632.7470

FAX: 631.632.5703

January 18, 2021

Hello:

My name is Zebulon Miletsky. I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Africana Studies and History at Stony Brook University (SUNY). I have been very involved in the Association for the Study of African-American Life and History (ASALH) for several years, including most recently as National Chair of the Academic Program Committee, for the 2019 Conference which took place in Charleston, South Carolina. I am also privileged to serve on their national governing board—the executive council. It was while attending that conference that I first learned of this project, from a colleague, Anthony J. Di Lorenzo, an Assistant Professor of History at East Georgia State College.

He has worked on this, along with others, while living in New York a few years ago. I myself live in Brooklyn—in Bushwick. I would be glad to share more information about myself, but much of that can be found here <https://zebulonmiletsky.academia.edu>

I was recalling this project that the Brooklyn Historical Society did in 2014, which did a very in depth presentation of Brooklyn's Abolitionist history. Manisha Sinha who I studied with at UMASS was involved. This can be added easily.

Links:

<https://www.brooklynhistory.org/exhibitions/brooklyn-abolitionists-in-pursuit-of-freedom/>

<http://pursuitoffreedom.org/>

Kameelah Janan Rasheed is no doubt a talented artist who is able to address difficult issues related to the Black experience in her work. Wondering if these two elements—some placards, historical markers, statues—could be put into the basics foundational elements she has provided. I think this could be a very exciting project. Thank you.

Dr. Zebulon Miletsky
Associate Professor of Africana Studies & History
Stony Brook University

STONY BROOK, NEW YORK 11794-4340 TEL: 631 632-7470

Letter and Testimony on NYCEDC Design of Abolitionist Place Park (Tuesday, January 19) from Laurence Frommer.

Dear Public Design Commission members,

I ask that you reject NYCEDC's conceptual design for public art addressing abolitionist history in Abolitionist Place Park (Willoughby Place) in Downtown Brooklyn. Not only is the presentation too vague and incomplete to make any sort of decision about it, but it represents a step-down from the Bloomberg administration's promise for this park in terms of its transparency and community engagement, its funding, and its holistic integration into the design.

First, the locations, materials, content, and typesetting are not set in this proposal. The Public Design Commission's standards (<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/designcommission/downloads/pdf/Checklist-Structures-CONCEPTUAL-4-10-20.pdf>) require that conceptual review include "drawings and materials as needed to completely and concisely present the proposal." There is no real proposal in this presentation, just assorted, vague suggestions about possibilities.

Second, there have been long-standing demands by city officials and the public that all projects run by the Department of Cultural Affairs' Percent for Art program have greater transparency. In this case, the New York City Economic Development Corporation initiated a public art process secretly without any public notice, public release of the finalist designs, or public meetings, even through Zoom. As a result, interested community advocates, historians, and the local Black community have been completely in the dark. In addition, while the presentation does not have any detail at all about the budget, our understanding is that it has been reduced significantly from Mayor Bloomberg's promise. A full budget for a worthy memorial that drives the park's design is critical since the park's creation directly destroyed the abolitionist history of Brooklyn via eminent domain. If this design process moves forward without greater transparency, the Public Design Commission risks significant public backlash which will result in delays that shall achieve the opposite of NYCEDC's aim to expedite the park's construction.

Third, any public art recognizing the abolitionist history of Brooklyn needs to be a concrete encounter with history. The history of abolitionism in Downtown Brooklyn is an extremely complex topic that involves real and numerous individuals and organizations. This memorial must be a specific encounter with the history of abolitionism in Brooklyn, not a set of "questions and prompts regarding futurity, emancipation, progress, and the complexity of narration." The word "abolition" is nowhere in this presentation, and there is no detail about how the artist would engage historians to ensure that any public art does justice to the research on this topic. The very fact that the proposal envisions an expedited "virtual" process to review possible textual "questions" during COVID-19 reveals that this public artwork is being rushed to meet NYCEDC's timetable. This plan would not give any artist time to do this complicated topic justice with expert advice.

Kameelah Janan Rasheed may be a talented artist who is able to address difficult issues related to the Black experience in her work. However, the lack of community engagement in her selection means that this process must be reformed. At the very least, this proposal should be rejected until it can be presented again with specific detail of its proposed design and its encounter with the history of abolitionism in Brooklyn.

Sincerely,

Laurence Frommer
225 W23 Street
NYC, NY 10011

January 19, 2021

Re: 27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2)

I am Diana DuCroz, speaking on behalf of Save Chelsea.

Less than two weeks ago, a full-front-page article in the *New York Times*' Real Estate section began by asking: "Are landmarks that celebrate Black history given proper consideration by city government?"

It stated: "That is a question hovering over two threatened antebellum houses once owned by abolitionists": 227 Duffield Street in Brooklyn, and 857 Riverside Drive in Manhattan.

While these historic treasures are far from Chelsea, they are part of a heritage in which we proudly have a stake, as home to the Hopper-Gibbons House, an underground-railroad site which we have fought for years to preserve.

At a time when shameful Confederate monuments are being removed from city parks nationwide, shouldn't Brooklyn celebrate the proudest aspect of its history—its role as a national center for the anti-slavery movement—in this park, just steps from 227 Duffield Street and other important abolitionist and underground railroad sites?

In referring to this treasured local history, the park's artwork might inspire visitors to seek out and learn more about the historic ground beneath their feet; the layered history—unique, irreplaceable, and site-specific—that makes New York so resonant and worth living in. "Willoughby Square Park" could be anywhere. How many other places can legitimately boast an "Abolitionist Square Park"? That's a name and history we New Yorkers are deeply privileged to own. It should never be taken for granted.

In reviewing the video of the proposal's January 11 presentation to Community Board 2's Parks and Recreation Committee, we observed that EDC could give no meaningful response to a Committee member's repeated calls for coordination of the proposed art program with Duffield place. There was no openness even to discussion. That shouldn't be an end to the conversation.

We strongly urge the Design Commission not to waste an opportunity to celebrate the historically rich abolitionist setting of this park in its artwork, and to call for a new proposal that better honors it.

1	1/18/2021 18:00:02	Anthony Beckford	voteforanthonybeckford@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video	Black Lives Matter Brooklyn
2	1/18/2021 10:33:30	Beth Bugdaycay	beth@bugdaycay.com	Yes	Zoom app with video	Library & History Committee of Brooklyn Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
3	1/17/2021 17:50:01	bianca maria orlando-mcginty	biancamaria@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video	myself
4	1/17/2021 10:30:01	Curtis Harris	Friendsofcurtisharris@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video	Myself candidate for NYC Councilmember 35th cd
5	1/18/2021 12:31:31	David Levering Lewis	dll7@nyu.edu	Yes	Zoom app with video	Emeritus Professor of History
6	1/18/2021 23:58:12	Diana DuCroz	ducroz@msn.com	Yes	Zoom app with video	Save Chelsea
7	1/19/2021 9:14:57	Elizabeth Adams	eeadams15@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video	Self
8	1/18/2021 10:20:53	Francesca Altamura	francesca.altamura@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video	Myself

9	1/16/2021 6:41:09	Jacob Morris	Blackorchidxl@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video	Myself and various neighborhood organizations
10	1/17/2021 13:19:13	Julie M Finch	jmhfinch@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video	Friends of Gibbons Underground Railroad house
11	1/17/2021 13:48:36	Julie M. Finch	jmhfinch@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video	co-chair Friends of Gibbons Underground Railroad house
12	1/19/2021 3:33:28	Ketrian Yvonne	Ketrianayvonne@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video	county committee member 57ad /44ed
13	1/19/2021 10:03:42	Ketrian Yvonne	Ketrianay@gmail.com	No		myself
14	1/17/2021 18:51:47	Laurence Frommer	laurencefrommer@yahoo.com	No		Self

15	1/17/2021 8:51:22	Lincoln Restler	Lincolnpr@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video		Myself
16	1/17/2021 7:49:10	Linda Roche	Lroche118@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video		Seaport Coalition
17	1/17/2021 10:11:12	Lynn Ellsworth	Lynnellsworth0@gmail.com	Yes	Call in (no video)	2127321025	Humanscale nyc
18	1/17/2021 8:04:37	Marina Ortiz	mortiz@ehp.nyc	Yes	Zoom app with video		East Harlem Preservation
19	1/17/2021 18:28:15	Mitty.owens@gmail.com	2maowens@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video		myself
20	1/18/2021 13:59:18	Niama Safia Sandy	niamasandy@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video		Myself
21	1/16/2021 14:39:26	Raul Rothblatt	rrothblatt@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video		Myself

22	1/18/2021 16:46:45	Raul Rothblatt	rrothblatt@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video		Downtown Brooklyn History
23	1/18/2021 13:55:33	Sabrina Gates	sabrinagates2021@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video		myself
24	1/16/2021 19:20:44	Sean Sweeney	seansweeneynyc@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video		myself
25	1/17/2021 20:12:21	Shawné Lee	Shawnelee227@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video		Myself
26	1/16/2021 17:54:46	stacey shub	staceyshub@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video		myself
27	1/15/2021 23:55:07	Todd Fine	tdfine@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video		Washington Street Advocacy Group
28	1/16/2021 15:48:59	Victoria Cambranes	vcambranes@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video		Myself as City Council Candidate D33

29	1/18/2021 8:09:10	Vivia Morgan	1viviamorgan@gmail.com	Yes	Zoom app with video	Myself
30	1/18/2021 17:23:33	Zebulon Miletsky	Zebulon.miletsky@ston ybrook.edu	Yes	Zoom app with video	Myself

27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition		
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27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Favor		
27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition	The title of this artwork is an inaccurate misrepresentation of Abolitonism in Brooklyn or anywhere else.	
27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition		https://drive.google.com/open?id=1XLFK9f0YrFNk3FugNwthhbcBaNcQYUT4
27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition		
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27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition	According to the original contract signed in 2008 with the Brooklyn Historical Society and its sub vendors this artwork installation is supposed to help educate the community and citizens of New York City in regards to the connection of the neighborhood with abolitionism and the underground railroad -this proposed artwork absolutely does not fulfill the requirements of that contract - which is a legal contract that it seems that the EDC trying to ignore By the way what does the "Power of the Porch" have to do with the history of abolitionism anyway???	
27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition	This plan obliterates local African American history, and does not include churches, abolitionists, and local suffragettes, like Ida B. Wells, who lived a block away. The house at 227 Duffield Street, home to members of abolitionist society, and active in supporting the Underground Railroad, must be preserved, as a museum. The EDC is only interested in money, and tends to be against history and preservation.	
27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition		https://drive.google.com/open?id=1ZgZaqvNPq_nS2kVSjgcRKZOn5SWbne8b
27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Favor		
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27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition	This proposal sidelines and ignores the profound Abolitionist and African-American history directly adjacent . This seems to continue a long pattern that is deeply disturbing.	https://drive.google.com/open?id=1f1IXIBk_N8faW8_8NBW4W4pDVjobwAHW

27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition	My primary concern relates to 227 duffield	
27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition	This project needs community input	
27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	Other Position		
27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition	What happened to the artist selection process???	
27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	Other Position	concerned about the process & community input	
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27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition	Downtown Brooklyn should be the 1st stop for anyone in or visiting NYC to celebrate the Civil Rights movement—even before the Statue of Liberty in my humble opinion. We should do a better job celebrating the unique, critical and powerful history of this block. I have gotten many elected officials from Congressional Representative Hakeem Jeffries down to multiple local school PTAs to support a community vision. We already have done the academic and grassroots work, but the current proposal fails to consider the massive support for preserving the history of this block.	

27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition	There is a rich, powerful, specific history that Abolitionist Place Park (formerly known as Willoughby Square Park) represents. I hope we can live up to the activists who used to live and work there.	
27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	Other Position		
27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition	As a SoHo resident of 45 years, who has picked up a little bit about art, and a downtown Brooklyn resident before that, I testify that this proposed art work is strikingly inappropriate. On MLK Day especially, can't we have a presentation celebrating his legacy and the Underground Railroad – and not the pretensions of post-modern "art"? Marhall McLuhan got it right: "Art is anything you can get away with" Reject this proposal and have more transparency.	
27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	In Opposition	The park should reflect the rich history of Abolitionist and Suffragist that lived on and around the area.	
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27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	Other Position	We need to preserve Black history and the struggle of our race	
27674: Installation of an artwork by Kameelah Janan Rasheed, Willoughby Square Park, Willoughby Street, Duffield Street and Gold Street, Brooklyn. (Conceptual) (CC 33, CB 2) DCLA%/EDC	Other Position		https://drive.google.com/open?id=1E0o5ZaaiLaULkQv3VV5UijBYHySGohJX