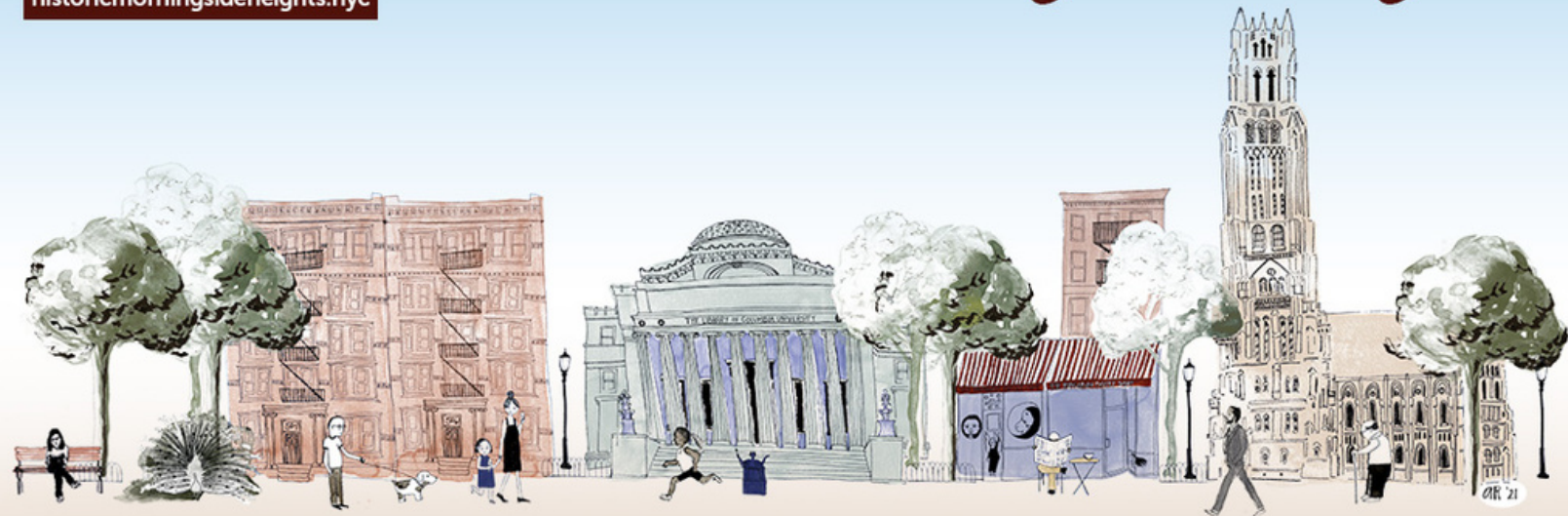


Historic Morningside Heights



"Among the city's diverse neighborhoods, Morningside Heights stands apart..." — Professor Andrew Dolkart, 1998

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Historic Districts Expansion PHASE II Campaign – Community Board 9 Passes Resolution

- Building on our successful **Phase I** designation of the Southern area of Morningside Heights, MHHDC is seeking to extend and expand designated areas under **Phase II**.
- View the corresponding **maps** of the five new expansion areas.
- The *resolution*, signed by CB9 Chair Barry Weinberg, was enabled by the Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Committee under Heather Jason, working closely with MHHDC. Manhattan BP Mark Levine, State Assemblymember Danny O'Donnell, Councilmember Shaun Abreu, and Congressman Adriano Espaillat have all offered their support.
- Read the **entire CB 9 Resolution** or see an excerpt of it on page 5.
- Our *Phase II Historic District campaign* is supported by a **petition** ([click here to sign it](#)).



UPCOMING WEBINAR: SAVE THE DATE

What is **BIG**, multi-faceted and not always staring you straight in the face?

The Hidden (and not-so-hidden) Gems of Morningside Heights

Join Architectural Historian **Gregory Dietrich** on **JANUARY 24** as he takes you on a tour of some of **Morningside Heights'** best-kept architectural secrets and more!



**SAVE THE DATE
VIRTUAL PRESENTATION
TUESDAY, JANUARY 24TH
6:30 PM
TO REGISTER, [CLICK HERE!](#)**

PHASE II OF MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS HISTORIC DESIGNATION

Morningside Heights bears the distinction of having the highest concentration of historic institutions and middle-class apartment buildings of anywhere in the United States that were built in a relatively short period of time. It is home to monumental places of worship, higher learning, and healing, which accentuate its backdrop of rowhouses and apartment buildings, culminating in streetscapes that are both elegant and eye-filling. Topographically, it is situated on a plateau historically known as Harlem Heights, while geographically it is bounded by West 110th Street to the south, West 125th Street to the north, and two Frederick Law Olmsted-designed parks to the east and to the west.

*In 2017 Morningside Heights received the first phase of historic designation (**click here to see maps of Phase I**). It is now more important than ever to finish the designation in order to preserve, protect and celebrate our community. Listed **below** are the areas we are requesting for designation as outlined in the Resolution from CB 9.*

Community Board 9 Resolution Excerpt

October 1, 2022

Hon. Sarah Carroll Commissioner



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
COMMUNITY BOARD 9
MANHATTAN

Morningside Heights
Manhattanville
Hamilton Heights

Re: Resolution reaffirming support for extending and expanding a comprehensive Morningside Heights Historic District

The following proposed five designated areas include

Morningside Heights Historic District Extension -- 62 properties roughly bounded by West 114th Street to the north, Amsterdam Avenue to the east, West 112th Street to the south, and Broadway to the west reflects two successive waves of speculative development: single-family dwelling construction and multi-family dwelling construction

Amsterdam Avenue-Morningside Drive South -- 13 properties roughly bounded by West 116th Street to the north, Morningside Drive to the east, West 115th Street to the south, and Amsterdam Avenue to the west reflects a variety of speculative, mostly mid-rise, multi-family dwellings

Amsterdam Avenue-Morningside Drive North -- 18 properties roughly bounded by Morningside Drive to the north and east, West 118th Street to the south, and Amsterdam Avenue to the west reflects a variety of speculative multi-family dwellings that encompass mid- and high-rise buildings

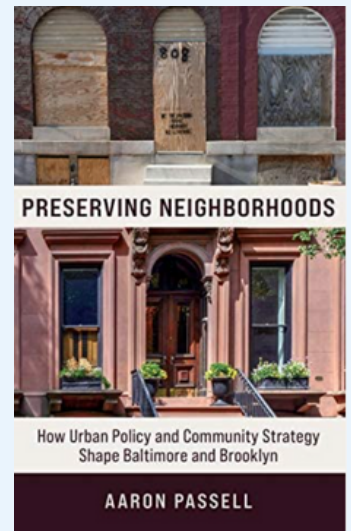
Broadway-Amsterdam Avenue -- 40 properties roughly bounded by West 123rd Street to the north, Amsterdam Avenue to the east, West 121st Street to the south, and Broadway to the west reflects a district of predominantly working-class, multi-family dwellings, along with a small concentration of middle-class, multi-family dwellings, and a discreet religious complex

Riverside Drive-Claremont Avenue -- 23 properties roughly bounded by Tiemann Place to the north, Claremont Avenue to the east, West 122nd Street to the south, and Riverside Drive to the west reflects a host of predominantly working-class, multi-family dwellings, along with a moderate concentration of middle-class, multi-family dwellings

Interview With Professor Passell

Aaron Passell is an urban sociologist currently serving as the associate director of the Urban Studies Program at Barnard College, Columbia University. MHHDC's Katerina Millner sat down with him to discuss his newest book, "Preserving Neighborhoods: How Urban Policy and Community Strategy Shape Baltimore and Brooklyn," and how its thesis informs and empowers our work at the Morningside Heights Historic District Committee.

KM: In your book you contrast instances of historical preservation in Brooklyn and Baltimore, illustrating the diverse functions of historic district designation from neighborhood to neighborhood. Can you speak to how and why distinct mechanisms of historical preservation efforts emerge in different neighborhoods?



AP: I thought of Baltimore as a top-down case where a city-wide authority interested in historic preservation thought about the city as a whole, but were working in this broader context of shrunk and not growing Baltimore. So, preservation in the context of the absence of development pressure looks like an effort to channel resources into neighborhoods by reinforcing the durability of the built environment so that it lasts, maybe, until a point where there's some excitement about a return to a denser kind of living. By contrast, central Brooklyn, because it's in the broader NY region, is a space undergoing intense, continuous, and long-standing development pressure. It's much more of a neighborhood by neighborhood sort of organized effort to grab any sense of control over a development process that is substantially out of anyone's control.

KM: Can you elaborate on the ways that grass-roots historic preservation work can strengthen the social fabric of a community and empower neighborhood change?

AP: I see historic preservation efforts as an organizing mechanism because of the ways they require community involvement; getting to know one's neighbors and neighborhood, is roughly it. You need pictures of all the contributing buildings, research on the year and dates that they were constructed, and the ways they've been used and inhabited since. You need people who know the neighborhood and can move around it; people who are willing to talk to each other because they share a neighborhood in common. The effort is likely to help them articulate that shared experience. I think of historic preservation efforts as one of the few tools available for neighborhood groups to exert some control over their shared built environment.

These remarks have been edited. Click [here](#) to read the entire interview.

McGiffert Hall

- We will continue to call on Riverside Church to work with the community to plan a reasonable real estate development deal that will serve Morningside Heights, and preserve McGiffert.
- Read a Columbia Spectator **op-ed** on efforts to save McGiffert Hall.
- Sign our **petition** to landmark McGiffert Hall. It has reached 1,066 signatures!



Next steps: Croton aqueduct gatehouse

- "The West 119th Street gatehouse, built in 1894 to replace one a few steps away, helped control the movement of water as it wended its way to a receiving reservoir." See **NYT article** by Jane Margolies to learn more.
- There had been a campaign and a NYC Parks RFP, but COVID halted these preservation efforts.
- We plan to call on Parks to reissue the RFP, and advocate that the landmarked Gatehouse be repurposed as a shared community meeting space.



WELCOMING OUR NEWEST TEAM MEMBER

We are delighted that Katerina Millner, a Barnard Psychology and Jewish Studies major, has joined MHHDC in a part-time position to support our media communications, coordinate activities, and conduct research. She will also assist when MHHDC returns to holding neighborhood tours, and social events.



"I am so excited to be part of the MHHDC team. Although I hail from Los Angeles, Morningside Heights has truly become a new home and source of continued interest. Whether it be reading in Riverside Park, admiring St. John the Divine Cathedral, sipping tea at Hungarian Cafe, or simply ambling about the neighborhood to take in its beautiful architecture, there is always fun to be had and beauty to be seen."

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

JOIN OUR CAMPAIGNS

to ***extend and expand our historic districts***, preserve McGiffert Hall, repurpose the **Croton Aqueduct Gatehouse** at Amsterdam and 119th Street, and publicly celebrate the historic character of Morningside Heights.

CLICK HERE TO GIVE A DONATION

