

**TESTIMONY BY BOROUGH PRESIDENT MARTY MARKOWITZ
TO THE LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGARDING THE
PROPOSED CROWN HEIGHTS NORTH HISTORIC DISTRICT II
October 27, 2009**

I want to thank Landmarks Preservation Chairman Bob Tierney and the agency staff, including the research unit directed by Mary Beth Betts, for following up on its commitment to come back to the Crown Heights North community in such a timely manner for the second phase proposal to enlarge the historic district.

But before I go on—thank you commissioners for your support for the recently designated DUMBO, Midwood Park-Fiske Terrace, Prospect Heights, and Fillmore Place district designations.

You continue to make Brooklyn proud.

For taking the time today to listen firsthand to what the community has to say about this architecturally significant and stunning neighborhood— and for allowing me to voice my support for the designation of extending to Eastern Parkway the Crown Heights North Historic District established in April of 2007.

I thank all the members of the Commission and to the agency staff that makes these hearings possible.

I commend the Crown Heights North Association and founding members Deborah Young, Ethel Tyus, and Gail Mohammed for their tireless efforts to ensure that as Brooklyn grows, it does so in a way that strikes the right balance between preserving the character of some of our most beautiful historic areas while also planning for our bright future.

I grew up in Crown Heights, just south of the area we're discussing this morning—on Empire Boulevard and Brooklyn Avenue— and before I became borough president, I represented most of this area in the State Senate from 1982 to 2001.

So I'm very familiar with the grandeur of the historic buildings, blocks and streets we're discussing.

These buildings generally between Nostrand and Brooklyn Avenues along streets from Bergen to Eastern Parkway represent some of the most beautiful Neo-Grec, Renaissance, Queen Anne, Dutch Renaissance Colonial, Medieval and Tudor revival architecture in Brooklyn, in New York City, or anywhere in America for that matter.

In addition, a number of historic buildings and churches, including St. Gregory's and Brooklyn Methodist Episcopal home, also continue to function as vibrant civic spaces for neighborhood residents.

For the residents, this designation preserves the unique ambiance of this neighborhood for future generations.

And for Brooklyn, it represents good planning—because we are preserving the architectural integrity of residential designs which every year lure more lovers of art and architecture to our borough.

With the completion of Rafael Vinoly's innovative design for the new Brooklyn Children's Museum nearby— we are seeing the finest of Brooklyn's past and future on display as time marches on— creating still more reasons to visit Brooklyn.

I am confident that the Landmarks Preservation Commission will agree that adding more buildings to Crown Heights North is worthy—and adopt this proposal.

Like those in so many historic Brooklyn neighborhoods, the beauty and craftsmanship of the structures in Crown Heights North have stood the test of time, and they represent the best of the warmth and character that define Brooklyn.

I look forward to seeing you again soon and working with you to preserve more Brooklyn history at the hearing, and I hope we will be able to do the same for Bedford Corners and West Midwood, and for expanding Crown Heights North once again, and Carroll Gardens and Park Slope in the near future.

Thank you.