

HISTORIC DISTRICTS COUNCIL

LANDMARKS LION AWARD

Tuesday, October 29, 2024





HILLER

A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

CONGRATULATIONS MICHAEL S. HILLER

Hiller, PC is extremely proud to congratulate its leader and managing partner, Michael S. Hiller, for receiving the Historic District Council's prestigious 2024 Landmarks Lion Award. Mr. Hiller's dedication to preserving New York City's cherished landmarks and historic districts has been unwavering. From the New York Public Library, to the Hopper-Gibbons House, and many others, he has left an indelible impact on the City. From all of us at the firm, we thank you, Michael, for your leadership and commitment to our mission of performing public interest work to preserve our landmarks. Congratulations!



HILLER, PC

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New York, New York 10022

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LANDMARKS LION AWARD

THE AWARD

Since 1990, the Landmarks Lion Award has honored those who have shown unusual devotion and aggressiveness in protecting New York City's historic buildings and neighborhoods.

THE HISTORIC DISTRICTS COUNCIL

The Historic Districts Council is the citywide advocate for New York's historic neighborhoods. HDC works to ensure the preservation of significant neighborhoods, buildings and open spaces, uphold the integrity of the New York City Landmarks Law and further the preservation ethic. This mission is accomplished through ongoing programs offering hands-on assistance to more than 500 community and neighborhood-based groups and through direct advocacy, public-policy initiatives, publications, educational outreach and participation in community events.

Originally founded in 1970 as a coalition of individuals and community groups representing New York City's designated historic districts, HDC has since grown into the foremost citywide voice for historic preservation. Following its mandate of community-based preservation advocacy, HDC works continuously to broaden and educate the preservation constituency—from producing zoning and architectural surveys of unprotected historic neighborhoods, to meeting with government officials and decision makers, to creating educational programs on the techniques and strategies of neighborhood preservation.

The driving principle behind all of HDC's work is that the preservation and enhancement of New York's historic neighborhoods, buildings and public spaces are central to the continued success of the city. This goal does not seek to enshrine the past but to guide the future.

HDC is the only city-wide organization in New York which reviews every public proposal affecting historic buildings, totaling more than 300 projects annually. A staffed committee of preservationists and architects meets regularly to review proposals submitted to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission and monitors meetings of the agency, testifying on specific projects when necessary. Additionally, HDC reviews planning proposals for their potential effects on historic properties and regularly participates as a preservation expert in community planning processes. HDC's weekly reports from the Landmarks Commission are regularly circulated to over 500 professionals and activists, as well as being posted online for the general public.

HDC's community outreach stretches through neighborhoods across the city. Locally based organizations from block associations to community boards benefit from HDC's strategic advice, technical expertise, organizational development and advocacy resources. One of HDC's most intensive programs, the Six to Celebrate, has forwarded preservation campaigns in all five boroughs and helped over 60 community groups and coalitions achieve their goals of neighborhood surveys, public education and landmark designation. Since its debut in 2011, the program has helped create over 15 New York City Historic Districts, 5 National Register Districts, over 50 sites individually designated or placed on the National Register of Historic Places, 22 neighborhood surveys, resulting in the documentation of thousands of buildings across the city and has leveraged over \$150,000 in private and public grants for community-driven projects. An illustrated guidebook with a self-guided walking tour is developed for each project area and available in print and electronic form.

HDC hosts an ambitious calendar of more than 50 public programs each year, aimed toward the general public and preservation practitioners. HDC's Annual Preservation Conference, now in its 29th year, is a daylong gathering of professionals, students and activists. HDC also offers two semesters of Preservation School every year, a four-part series of lectures which teaches people the fundamental skills of preservation activism, from how to properly photograph a building to understanding the basic principles of landmark designation to learning to read and assess architectural plans. For practicing professionals, HDC offers periodic professionally certified classes on topics such as façade inspection and building material conservation. Finally, as the best way to learn about a neighborhood is to visit it, HDC hosts walking tours of each Six to Celebrate neighborhood with additional tours of previous sites offered often. In total, over 1,500 people are served by HDC's educational and public programs annually.

*Green-Wood
congratulates*

**MICHAEL S.
HILLER**

*for his unwavering
commitment to
preservation in our city*



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HISTORIC DISTRICTS COUNCIL
& LANDMARKS LION AWARD



A FORCE INTO THE FUTURE

2024 LANDMARKS LION PROGRAM



WELCOME

John Bacon
Frampton Tolbert

INTRODUCTION OF HONOREE

Michael Devonshire
Roberta Brandes Gratz
Susan Simon
Hon. Gale A. Brewer

AWARD ACCEPTANCE & PRESENTATION

Michael S. Hiller

CLOSING

John Bacon

Award Frame generously donated
by TwoSeven Inc.

HONORING MICHAEL S. HILLER



Michael is a zoning, land-use, and historic preservation attorney who has made an almost three-decade-long career of defending New York City's landmarks. He sees his battles as crucial to the future of New York and its history. He has worked with clients across the city—community groups, advocacy organizations, and concerned stakeholders intent on preserving the places that matter to them.

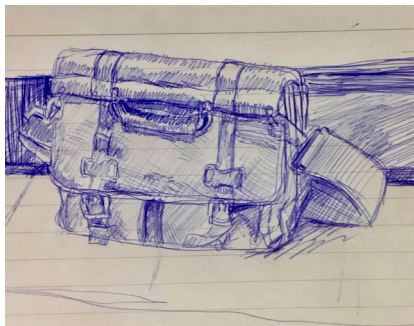
He has taken on powerful opponents in numerous high-profile cases that impacted the integrity of designated historic places. Representing Citizens Defending Libraries and The Committee to Save the NYPL, he ended the New York Public Library's plans to significantly alter their flagship; at the Hopper-Gibbons House in Chelsea he stopped an addition that would have destroyed the defining significance of this documented stop on the Underground Railroad; at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, he prevented an expansion into the greenspace within Central Park, a scenic landmark; and at First Church of Christ, Scientist on Central Park West he prevented condos from being inserted into the individually-landmarked structure.

Today he continues to represent worthy causes including the Center at West Park who are striving to save the designated West-Park Presbyterian Church from demolition as well as supporting the Merchant's House Museum in protecting its irreplaceable interiors from neighboring construction.

He has said, "As we lose the soul of the city in its architecture, its landmark buildings and historic districts, and its urban planning, we lose our identity as people. I think that is the greatest threat to New York City."

Among his other awards, Hiller previously received an HDC Grassroots Preservation Award in 2017, was designated the "protector of the little guy" by the New York Law Journal, and in 2021 was a finalist for New York State Lawyer of the Year.

Michael, thank you for sticking by our side for 17 years,
bringing us justice and closure after endless challenges.
Your honesty, integrity, passion, care and humor are unbeatable!



Ari Strimling & Cantor Lisa B. Segal, Tim Pietrzak & Catherine Shannon,
Boris Gilzon & Svetlana Lazarev, Martin Zoltowski, Pastor Stephen Christo-
pher, Pastor Jason Meade
& the Congregation of Memorial Baptist Church

(drawing by Helena Pietrzak)

When the Landmarks Commission
fails to protect a threatened
landmark

When Activists have run out of
strategies for protection

When the Preservation Community
is
at its wits end...

There is Michael Hiller,
historic preservation's best weapon

With enormous gratitude,
Roberta Brandes Gratz

LETTER FROM HDC BOARD PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



October 2024

Dear Friends,

The Boards of Directors and Advisers and the staff of HDC are so pleased to welcome you as we celebrate tonight's Landmarks Lion, Michael S. Hiller.

This year HDC has been everywhere from press conferences to community board meetings, and from City of Yes public hearings to grassroots community forums. All of this is in support of community-led efforts to save culturally, architecturally, and historically significant places in all five boroughs. Still, the backbone of our work remains the New York City Landmarks Law, which creates a regulatory framework for our advocacy. Without the law, we couldn't do what we do. Just like we need the law, we need legal minds fighting to strengthen protections for our significant historic places.

Without champion lawyers like Michael S. Hiller working to protect and uphold the legal structure for historic preservation in New York



CONGRATULATIONS

Michael S. Hiller

From the Naumburg Orchestral Concerts.
Celebrating 119 years of Free classical music
concerts.

In the Naumburg Bandshell, on the Concert
Ground of Central Park

NAUMBURG

ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

FOUNDED 1905

City, there's a significant chance the integrity of the Landmarks Law could become compromised and eroded over time. Michael's fierce dedication and passion is something that HDC can use for inspiration in our work going forward over the next year and I know this is something that our honoree will speak further to this evening.

But first just a few of HDC's initiatives this year:

We launched NEED (Neighborhoods Expecting Equitable Designation) Landmarks, a growing coalition of community organizations advocating for designations in neighborhoods underserved by landmark designation.

HDC continues to monitor Buildings at Risk, our list of designated landmarks at risk of demolition, and have had some success at getting LPC to be more aggressive in their monitoring, including several sites where restoration work is underway after many years of neglect.

The Six to Celebrate program fights on for diverse communities and their community preservation efforts from a new programming series for the Garment District to a survey of Rose Hill/Kips Bay and a list of sites being presented to LPC for consideration.

We have much ahead of us, but tonight, we raise a glass and toast our Landmarks Lion, Michael S. Hiller! We cannot do this in a vacuum but must work with colleague organizations, community groups, and you to fulfill our mission to protect New York's historic resources, both in designated historic districts and beyond.

Warm Regards,
John Bacon and Frampton Tolbert
President Executive Director



**Richard Hampton
Jenrette Foundation**

Advancing education,
innovation, and
stewardship in the fields
of historic preservation,
decorative arts, and
historic landscapes.

Jenrette.org



The NYC Bar Association, - NYPL Collection.

*Congratulations to
Michael S. Hiller
as the 2024
Landmarks Lion Award
recipient.*



**THOMAS A. FENNIMAN
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Without
Michael Hiller
The Center at
West Park
would be
luxury condos

Michael - Thank you for your passion!
With love and gratitude, The CWP Board,
Staff, and the entire Upper West Side.



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Pratt Institute's graduate
program in Historic
Preservation congratulates
HDC's 2024 Landmarks
Lion, Michael S. Hiller.

Thank you for your
important work on behalf of
NYC landmarks!

Congratulations to this
year's Lion Award
recipient,

Michael S. Hiller

Essex Works Ltd

“Finally, an economist
who understands
sustainable housing policy!”

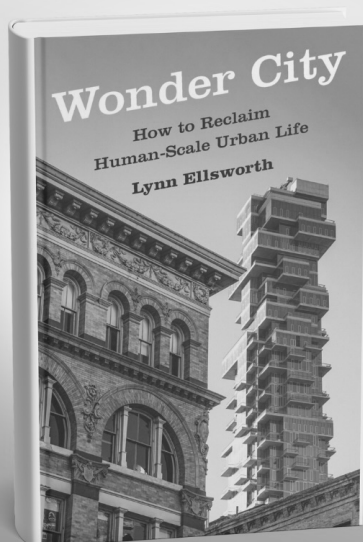
—Patrick M. Condon, University of British Columbia

"Wonder City **challenges the architecture and urban design ideas** that have dominated for many decades and **offers specific reforms** that prioritize human-scale urban environments for all."

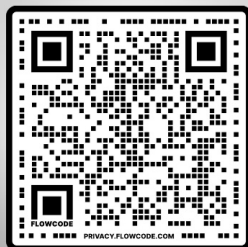
—Tom Angotti, Professor Emeritus, CUNY

"Wonder City **blows up the myths** that underlie the real estate growth machine in New York City and beyond... Her **masterful critique of trickle-down housing policies** includes a **brilliant** take-down of economist Edward Glaeser."

—Steven W. Semes, University of Notre Dame School of Architecture



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A Brighter Future, Together



Thank you for your support of the Historic Districts Council. Whether this is your first time attending a Historic Districts Council event, or you are a longtime Friend, you have helped us continue our mission as the citywide advocate for historic neighborhoods. Historic Districts Council has helped protect almost every one of the thousands of landmarks buildings and the over 150 officially designated historic districts across the City of New York.

Historic Districts Council is the only citywide organization in New York which reviews every public proposal affecting historic buildings and neighborhoods. We offer a full range of public programs, including walking tours, Preservation School, and our annual Conference. Our Six to Celebrate program has supported preservation campaigns in all five boroughs and has helped over 50 community groups and coalitions achieve their goals of neighborhood surveys, public education, and landmark designation. We could not do this work without you and there is so much more to do.

So today, we ask that you commit to the Historic Districts Council of tomorrow. We ask that you make a year-end gift to Historic Districts Council, or that you remember us in your estate or retirement plans. Future New Yorkers will thank you for it and so will we.

With each new connection made and person engaged, we are ensuring that New York's future will include its past. Your gift will ensure that New York's future includes a strong, healthy, and vibrant Historic Districts Council as well.

Please contact Development and Administration Manager Kaija Mendez-Bryan at (212) 614-9107 for further information you may also visit hdc.org/donate, or scan the code on the back cover.

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*Congratulations to Michael S. Hiller,
2024 Landmarks Lion Award Recipient!*



*Riverside Church (left)
and 1 Union Square West
(above), both currently under
restoration by WBMA.*



ARCHITECTURAL RESTORATION
SINCE 1975



**Union Square Community Coalition
is proud to
recognize all the preservation work that
Michael S. Hiller has done to make our city
a better place to live.**

About US

The Union Square Community Coalition (USCC) was established in 1980 to reverse the dramatic deterioration of Union Square Park due to years of municipal neglect and to help return it to its historically significant role as one of the great open spaces in New York City. A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, USCC was among the very first community groups in New York City created to help protect a city park. For more than forty years USCC has fought to improve the park's use for children and communities.

In addition to park issues, USCC monitors development and zoning laws that impact the area. We work to maintain an environment low in density to preserve the light, air and green space that characterize the park's unique neighborhood. Since 1980, USCC has been instrumental in getting 12 buildings landmarks and more than 400 additional buildings protected by campaigning to create the Ladies' Mile Historic District.

We were successful in doubling existing playground space in the park and defeated the proposal for a year-round restaurant inside the historic pavilion. For more than 130 years, the park's pavilions have served many functions: a play space for children, a bandstand, a reviewing stand, a speakers' rostrum and a focal point for labor rallies and social protests. USCC strongly believes in the use of the pavilion and the North Plaza for these purposes.



Union
Square
Community
Coalition

**Union Square Community Coalition would
like to honor the memory of
Jack Taylor.**

Jack worked tirelessly as a preservationist since the 1980's after he retired as an editor of Family Circle Magazine. He was a longtime member of the Union Square Community Coalition and kept us informed of all the preservation work he was doing.

Some of Jack Taylors' many accomplishments included: In 1989, as president of the Drive to Protect the Ladies' Mile District, he helped preserve this area as a historic district. Ladies Mile runs from 15th to 24th Streets and Broadway and Sixth Avenue and is comprised of late 19th and early 20th century shops.

After 14 years of lobbying the Landmarks Preservation Commission Jack Taylor helped to create the East 17th Street/Irving Place Historic District. Tammany Hall was designated as a historic site in 2013, after 29 years of lobbying.

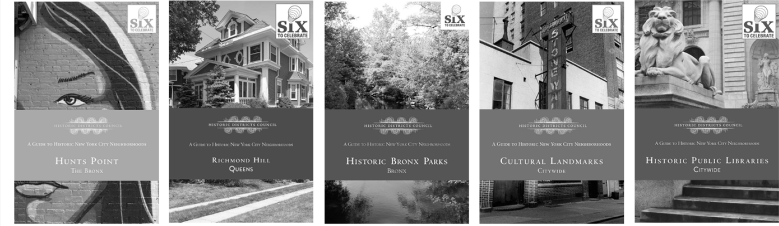
Jack Taylor's knowledge and dedication to preservation is truly missed and cannot be replaced.

*Congratulations to
this year's Landmark
Lion,
Michael S. Hiller!*

John Bacon

The
SIX TO CELEBRATE
Guidebook Collection

Visit www.6tocelebrate.org for a look at our entire guidebook collection.



As part of the Six to Celebrate program, HDC has created walking tour brochures for each neighborhood.

The two-color guides are professionally designed and incorporate information on significant historical, architectural and cultural sites in each area along with black and white photographs and a neighborhood map.

The 2022 brochures are now available! You can download each brochure for free or purchase a set on our website sixtocelebrate.org, or scan the code below.





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Our mission is to ensure the preservation of significant historic neighborhoods, buildings and public spaces in New York City, uphold the integrity of New York City's Landmarks Law, and further the preservation ethic.

Please support the Historic Districts Council to help preserve New York's history – and future.

To donate scan the code below or visit hdc.org/donate

