

# Civic News

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The Newsletter of the Park Slope Civic Council | Spring-Summer 2010

# Ortner Winners Honored at March 7th Council Meeting

The Annual Park Slope Civic Council Ortner Preservation Awards are given to encourage renovations, new construction and interventions that enhance and sustain the neighborhood's appearance. This year's winners included an eclectic house of worship, an historic apartment building, and a group of concerned citizens:

Park Slope Jewish Center 1320 8th Avenue (for Exterior Restoration), presented to Park Slope Jewish Council, RAND Engineering and Architecture, Lawrence Exterior Restoration - Built in 1925 and added to the National Registry of Historic Places in 2002, PSJC was designed by Allen A. Blaustein, a young Jewish architect who borrowed elements from different religious buildings to create a unique structure. In 2017, diagonal cracks in the parapet signaled danger: the wall needed emergency bracing to stabilize it while the plans could be drawn up for construction. In the end, along with other major work throughout the building, the parapet wall was rebuilt from the top of the arched window line on up.

Pictured below: 47 Plaza Street West (for Rehabilitation of an Historic Structure), presented to PL-UN Tenants Corp, RKLA Studio Landscape Architecture, Forerunner Creations, Artistic Masonry - Being stewards of a Rosario Candela building comes with responsibility, one the residents of 47 Plaza Street West know too well. The 330 foot fence and historic garden encircling the building suffered through 80 years of Brooklyn winters and repairs and it showed. Corrosion and too many layers of paint left filigree on the newel posts unrecognizable. Accidental damage and outright theft of sections were filled with chain link fencing. After considering many less expensive options, the residents decided to honor the vision of Candela and had the entire structure restored. 3½ tons of aluminum were used casting new pieces that could not be saved.



**543 11th Street (for Neighborhood Intervention), presented to Anwar Shaikh, Stephanie Doba, Mary Courtney** - A neighbor of 543 heard some disturbing news: "They told us they are planning to condo the building. They have submitted plans to Landmarks for a 'penthouse addition' on the top of the building and a proposal to build out the back of the entire building by 12 feet. We checked and they submitted the plans to landmarks on July 28th. They are pretty confident things will go through as planned." The plans were clearly out of proportion to the surrounding buildings, and if allowed, the full height rear extension and penthouse would block light and air into the shared green space of the neighboring properties and establish a bad precedent for future developers.

#### **6oth Annual Park Slope House Tour!**



Photograph by Cynthia Dantzic

A gut renovation of this charming 1882 Neo-Grec home above has resulted in a sleek, contemporary interior with a beautifully designed kitchen. A living room wall features framed paper doll dresses as well as a mirror surrounded by shoe lasts. In the stairwell is a window with lovely stained glass. The backyard is a Certified Wildlife Habitat and solar panels are installed on the roof.

The 2019 Park Slope House Tour, a self-guided tour organized by the Park Slope Civic Council, will take place Sunday, May 19 from noon to 5:30 PM. Following the tour at 6:00 PM there will be a lecture by local architect-historian Francis Morrone.

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Anwar, Stephanie and Mary took the lead in organizing the neighbors, getting petitions signed, and setting up groups to present at CB6 and LPC meetings. LPC found in favor of the residents, restricting the height of the extension to only two stories, and dictated the penthouse have a lower profile. While they hoped for further downsizing, the group said, "On the whole, we are most gratified by the active response of our neighbors, and happy that it had an important effect."

**Sponsored by Tarzian Hardware**, the Ortner Awards honor Everett and Evelyn Ortner for their work in Park Slope, transforming a neighborhood in disrepair to the vibrant community of today.

#### **ALSO IN THIS ISSUE**

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#### PRIDE IN OUR HISTORY

#### A MORE SUSTAINABLE PARK SLOPE

#### From our New President

Spring has signaled a sense of renewal and optimism, both in our beautiful neighborhood of Park Slope as well as within the ranks of the Park Slope Civic Council. I have been particularly struck by the commitment to volunteerism that exists within our community. It is with a sense of pride that I share a sampling of the myriad efforts and accomplishments of our fine organization.

We recently presented a wonderful array of independent short films through Art Slope's *Shorts in The Slope*. The talent and creativity that was exhibited in this two-day presentation was genuinely impressive. Earlier in the year, proceeds from the 2018 Park Slope House Tour afforded the Civic Council the opportunity to award community grants to several deserving organizations within the Park Slope community. In March, we were very pleased to honor three recipients with the Ortner Preservation Awards for Exterior Restoration, for Rehabilitation of an Historic Structure, and for Neighborhood Intervention.





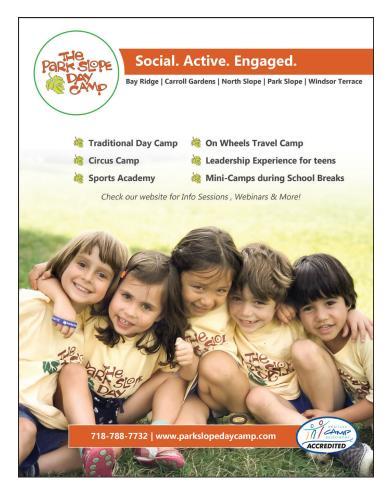






The Park Slope Civic Council Executive Committee, from left to right: Rory Dineen, Vice President, Timothy Gilles, Membership Secretary, Joe Rydell, President, Erica Stauffer, Treasurer, and Candace Woodward, Corresponding & Recording Secretary

Most recently, we named the recipients of the Lovgren Award to two organizations and one individual who have exhibited extraordinary service to the community in both professional and volunteer capacities. We eagerly anticipate our spring events, which include the 2019 Annual House Tour in May, and the presentation of \$10,000 worth of scholarship awards for community service to deserving high school seniors at our annual June trustee meeting.



So much altruism. So much activity. So much passion. And yet, in spite of this extensive array of activities and involvements, the Civic Council would likely not exist without the volunteer efforts and support of all of our readers and members. I am heartened by the level of community involvement and humbled to count myself amongst the hundreds of diligent volunteers who have contributed to our very rich mosaic.

It is with gratitude that I invite all of you to continue your generous efforts with the Park Slope Civic Council. Whether you are a sponsor, a donor, a volunteer, a member, trustee, or a community member, your impact has been profoundly felt and we are the thriving organization we are because of you.

Respectfully submitted, *Joe Rydell, President* 

# Civic Council Announces Community Service Grant Winners

Each year the Park Slope Civic Council awards community service grants to local organizations supporting the work of local community groups and non-profits for their work and commitment to improve the health, vitality and diversity of our community. Awards are given for projects in the arts, education, youth programs and civic improvement and are funded by the Civic Council's annual House Tour. This year, the Council is delighted to support the following organizations:

The Brooklyn Youth Music Project (BYMP) is an independent, community-based organization serving musicians ages 5-18 dedicated to extending the reach of musical training to young musicians in Brooklyn, supporting the development of lifelong learners, and contributing to a culture of youth musicianship. They currently offer three programs which include orchestra, jazz ensemble and summer camp programs. The BMYP grant will help fund their free community orchestra concert scheduled for June 9, 2019 that will bring classical music to the Park Slope community via some very talented local young musicians.

*Dancewave* provides NYC youth access to a supportive dance experience that embraces and encourages individuality, equipping students with life skills to unlock their potential as people and community members. Dancewave's foremost goal is to provide students of all socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds with the chance to study dance. Grant funds will support a Moving Together class and Dancewave Company performance at the Old Stone House and JJ Byrne Park in June 2019 that coincides with the opening of the new Dancewave Center.

The *Old Stone House* grant will support its Community Art Exhibition Program with at least 2 exhibitions to be mounted in 2019: Race & Revolution: Reimagining Monuments and a two-person show featuring artists Tahil Carl Kamali and Justin Sterling. Exhibitions will be accompanied by various programs including artist talkbacks, workshops and performances, further engaging audiences in the themes of the exhibitions.

One Breath Rising is an improvisational arts company featuring poetry, jazz and dance performances. Since 2016, they've had a partnership with 440 Gallery, and together have brought spoken-word artists and musicians to the gallery one Sunday a month for ten months. Funding from other sources supports the writers and poets, and One Breath Rising 's PSCC grant will increase the number of musical performances and provide musical accompaniment for spoken-word presenters.

Since its inception in 2005 *Opera on Tap* has partnered with The Old Stone House on various music projects and has received a PSCC grant for A Musical Walk Through America's Volatile Political History, "an immersive musical experience exploring our national divide and how it relates to our history." Opera on Tap will be partnering with famed American song archivist Paul Sperry and historian William Parry on developing a narrative and curating a collection of American song dating from and focused on moments in our history when politics has led to heightened violence in our nation.

# The Park Slope Civic Council Supporting a Lively, Safe, Green and Beautiful Park Slope!



#### Our Mission Statement

The Park Slope Civic Council promotes the health, vitality and character of the Park Slope neighborhood and advocates for the interests of residents, businesses and others with a stake in the community.

# Support Your PSCC and help us to

### Sustain the Relevance, Viability and History of This Community We Call Home.

Make your check payable to The Park Slope Civic Council and mail with this form to: Box 172, 123 Seventh Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11215, or sign up online at www.parkslopeciviccouncil.org

			Enclosed is my check for:
Primary Contact (and company name if applicable)		Email	☐ Household: \$40
			☐ Business/Professional: \$100
Other Adult Member of Household (if applicable)		Email	☐ Benefactor: \$250
Street Address			── Non-Profit/Organization Partner: \$50
000000114442500			☐ Student/Elder Community (65+): \$25
City	State Zip	Phone	Other: Contribution of \$
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# **Proud of our Park Slope History**

# Park Slope Military History is in Good Hands

Built on farmland in 1893, the Park Slope Armory was originally created to house the 14th Regiment of the U.S. Militia. Made up primarily of Brooklyn abolitionists, the 14th Regiment fought bravely in the Civil War and was referred to (not affectionately) as "those red-legged devils" by Confederate General "Stonewall" Jackson. Guarded in front by the statue of a WWI soldier known as "Iron Mike" since 1921, this armory is as important historically as it is today -- providing shelter for some, an exercise haven for others, and the Park Slope Veterans Museum that allows us all to look back with pride at the men and women who fought bravely in a number of wars, both domestic and international. Made up of 5 large rooms, this museum, run by PSCC Trustee Tom Miskel, also serves as a meeting place for community groups and block associations.

The Museum's Managing Director, Tom Miskel, cares deeply about collecting and archiving all types of military history. The Museum has an overflowing library of books from all American wars, two large rooms featuring historic photos, posters, uniforms, and weapons, and a newly-opened collection of printed newspapers that have military significance. Front page headlines shout the names of Kennedy, Hitler, Nixon -- a treasure trove of primary sources!

Open by appointment only for both individuals and groups, this museum is well worth your time to check out. Miskel is a knowledgeable and passionate caretaker, and is a go-to source not only about all things military but also about Park Slope history. Born and raised in Park Slope and a veteran himself, Miskel pivots between looking backwards (the museum) and looking forwards (running the PSCC's Toys for Tots drive). Last year, the PSCC's Toys for Tots drive collected over 3,200 toys for local children, helping to make the holiday a happy one for many families.

If you would like to add to the museum's growing archives, please reach out to Tom if you have any photos or books on either military or Brooklyn history, or any military paraphernalia you would like to donate at www.parkslopeveteransmuseum.net.









Photo Credits: statues clockwise from top left - Civil War Union soldier (Leslie Gallager), WW I "Iron Mike (Natalie Gill) and Spanish Civil War soldier (Leslie Gallager); Credit - 1905 postcard (Abraham and Strauss Department Store)

#### **Our Park Slope Commune**

by Louis Menashe

By the end of the '60s, my wife and I, and two other families were beyond the mythic dividing line captured in a phrase of the time, "Don't trust anyone over 30," but we were close enough to the experiments of the period to try something ourselves: We would start and live in an urban commune. We were too attached to our jobs and extended families to go off and break ground in, say, New Hampshire or Vermont, as so many of the young were doing, but we discovered Brooklyn's handsome brownstone neighborhood of Park Slope, astride beautiful Prospect Park. We resolved to launch our "Vanguard Commune" there at a time when those brownstones were selling at very affordable prices, and we located a spacious, four-story "Roman brick" building with two entrances on 6th Street down a block from the Park.

We looked forward to a single kitchen in our commune, meals taken together regularly, all house chores and costs distributed equally, and, most alluring of all, shared child-care for our kids who ranged in age from one to seven, with one on the way. We weren't radical communards, out to smash the family and open-up monogamous relationships; the three families would remain intact, each autonomous within a collective setting, governed by mutual affection and a shared progressive politics.

#### FLASH FORWARD...

Our commune blueprint was attractive on paper, but collapsed for want of marital unity among the original would-be practitioners. The '60s atmosphere of loosening marriage ties shot down two of the unions, while mine and Sheila's stayed intact. We re-dubbed the "Vanguard Commune" as "Rearguard Realty." The same fate ultimately befell the commune next door, "Sideguard," we called it, though its communards really practiced the communal idea – one kitchen, in the best definition – for a much longer period than our feeble, short-lived experiment. Their families broke up; lovers replaced husbands and wives, new faces displaced the old, death intruded – Rachel Fruchter, an ardent movement feminist and founding communard, was hit and killed by a van while she rode her bicycle in Prospect Park. Today, Sideguard and Rearguard, née Vanguard, have become condos and coops, converted from their original communal or would-be communal spaces. You might say that the inception, then demise, of our communal idea matched the trajectory of radical politics from the '60s to the present.

New arrivals to Park Slope during the '80s and beyond to the 21st century consider us "pioneers". We were pioneers, in the sense of helping revive a neighborhood that had visibly declined after WWII; we and others like us took over vacant brownstones in stages of disrepair, and worked hard to restore them, anticipating the gentrification that made Park Slope the magnet it is today for families of professional and other elite backgrounds. Ah, the irony. Many radicals like us prepared the terrain now occupied by the gentry. As political pioneers, we offered our homes for meetings to groups protesting the Vietnam War until it ended in 1975. We hung out at the Mongoose Coffee House on Union Street. Like other such establishments across the country, it was a center of anti-war activity. Mongoose, however, had a remarkable after-life: it helped spawn the Park Slope Food Co-operative, one of the nation's largest and most durable co-ops. A sign of its distinction: people from Manhattan crossed the river for its goods! I and Freddy Ciporen, an original would-be communard, joined the Co-op and spent many hours working there until our commitment flagged.

But the Co-op is still here. So are we.

Adapted from Menashe's "The Triple Whammy" and Other Russian Stories: A Memoir (Washington, D.C.: New Academia Publishing, 2018)

### 17th Century Old Stone House:

Contributing to our Quality of Neighborhood Life & Anchoring our Community by Staying Hip & Relevant!



The Old Stone House pictured above was built in 1699 by Claes Arentsen Vechte and his son Hendrick. Claes's son Nicholas, born in 1704, lived at the Old Stone House with his wife, Abigail, through the Revolutionary War. Nicholas R. Cowenhoven, Nicholas Vechte's grandson, sold the farm to Jacques Cortelyou in 1790. The Cortelyous sold the farm to Edwin Litchfield in 1852.

PSCC readers are likely to be familiar with the long history of the Old Stone House (OSH) and Washington Park. Originally built in 1699 by the Vechte family, developed as a ballfield by Edwin Litchfield in the late 1880's, and established as a playground by Robert Moses in 1934, the house's narrative is inextricably linked to the evolution of Brooklyn.

Today, the story of the site continues to be relevant in ways that contribute to the quality of neighborhood life. In early April, the 78th Precinct Youth Council kicks off its annual season on a field built atop the original home of the Brooklyn Dodgers, back when they were known as the Brooklyn Baseball Club, playing on the site until 1898.

Later this spring, students from MS 88 will participate in The Democracy Project – a process drama-based afterschool program where students examine the issues faced by the Continental Congress from the 1760's through the American Revolution, writing their own declarations of independence and exploring the impact of individual choices and actions.

OSH colleague, Chef Denzell Washington, will lead monthly baking days this spring and fall for neighbors to explore roasting and baking in OSH's outdoor wood-fired oven, drawing on the resources of the Sunday Down to Earth Farmers Market.

OSH's new Director of Gardening, Ryan Gellis, will be working with Brooklyn-based artist Iviva Olenick to plant demonstration beds of flax and indigo so neighbors will be able to explore elements of 18th century historic textile production. OSH's 1.5 acres of gardens reflect the farming history of the site with a contemporary focus on permaculture, native and useful plants and storm water reduction – a particularly important element as we plan for the future sustainability of the Gowanus. OSH also offers a Compost Membership for neighbors that may not have access to NYC's community compost program.

Email them at info@theoldstonehouse.org for more information about these and other programs at the Old Stone House.

### **Brooklyn Conservatory of Music:**

#### Nurturing Local Musical Talent For Over a Century

by Martin Porter, Marketing & Communications Manager, BKCM

Founded in 1897 by German immigrants violinist Adolf Whitelaw and pianist Mary Forster Deyo as a classical conservatory serving 200 students, the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music (BKCM) has grown to serve 15,000 people of all ages and backgrounds in Brooklyn and throughout New York City. BKCM was initially located at Franklin Avenue and Lefferts Place in Brooklyn. In 1944, it moved to its current home -- an 1881 five-story mansion at 58 Seventh Avenue in Park Slope, designed by S. F. Evelette in the Victorian Gothic style, with Queen Anne elements. Originally built as the residence of William M. Brasher, a major manufacturer of oilcloths during the mid-to-late-19th century, the building subsequently became the Park Slope Masonic Club in 1924 before it was occupied by BKCM. The building was landmarked as part of the Park Slope Historic District in 1973, and went through a major renovation and modernization in 1999.

Today the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music offers a wide range of programs. The Community Music School has private and group instruction for students of all ages in nearly every orchestral and band instrument. The Conservatory offers many ensembles for Adults including the Brooklyn Conservatory Chorale (BCC), the Brooklyn Conservatory Community Orchestra (BCCO), and various chamber ensembles. The Suzuki Division trains young children using a method that is recognized worldwide as a highly effective approach for teaching kids the language of music. The Music Partners Program provides subsidized music instruction at little or no cost to 4,000 underserved individuals in schools, pre-K programs, youth and senior centers throughout NYC. Children and adults with special needs can grow through the transformative experience of making music with a trained music therapist in the Music Therapy Program both at the Conservatory headquarters in Park Slope and at sites in 4 boroughs serving over 1,500 clients. BKCM also presents concerts and workshops for the community throughout the year by a wide variety of ensembles and presenters.



Founded in 1897 the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music now occupies a landmarked 1881 Victorian Gothic Style Mansion at the corner of 7th Ave & Lincoln Place



# Proud of our Park Slope History



The Brooklyn Collection is the local history division and archive of the Brooklyn Public Library. Located on the second floor balcony at the Central Library, it is a resource for the study of Brooklyn's social and cultural history. The Collection's goal is to document the rich history of Brooklyn, from pre-colonial times to the present. The Collection received its designated space in 1997, and has become one of the largest publicly-accessible archives for the study of Brooklyn's social and cultural history in the 19th and 20th centuries. Documenting every aspect of the borough's past in a variety of media, their holdings include more than 5,000 books, 200,000 photographs, manuscripts, newspapers, maps and atlases, directories, prints, illustrations, sheet music, posters, ephemera, databases and digital collections. The Collection is continually growing, and contemporary news items related to Brooklyn are added to their files daily. They actively document and archive web content for Brooklyn-based websites through their web archive with the Internet Archive's Community Webs project.

The Brooklyn Collection is also the home of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle archive, Brooklyn's newspaper of note from 1841-1955. The Eagle's "Morgue," a newspaper term that signifies the files, articles and photographs that were published and were no longer used, was donated to the library in 1957. This unique and informative collection makes up the largest part of their archive and many of the images from this collection (like the five images above) can be viewed via their digital collections portal.

The Brooklyn Collection strives to document the ongoing life of the Brooklyn community and to be active participants in our borough through exhibits, programming and outreach efforts as well as through their award-winning education partnership program, Brooklyn Connections, which engages with Brooklyn students from grades 4-12 and teaches them essential research skills. Visit the Brooklyn Collection at the Central Library at 10 Grand Army Plaza.

### **Sustaining Our Local Businesses**



The woman standing in line to pick up a prescription in late fall 2015 burst into tears. In front of her, another long-time customer of Peter, Frank and AnnaMarie was just told that Palma Chemists, then located at the corner of Garfield and 7th Avenue, was closing in December. Customer records and standing prescriptions would be transferred to a chain pharmacy.

For more than 50 years, Palma provided care and comfort to neighbors. And, according to their Facebook page, "economic circumstances...beyond their control," forced the family business to close its doors. Few local businesses maintain as intimate a connection to customers as the local chemist. Attention paid to each prescription written by different doctors and the expertise to look out for potential problems can save a life. And the willingness to explain patiently and dispense informed common-sense advice for people whose personal health information only a local pharmacist could know is a heartrending loss after many decades of regular patronage.

Our community has many local merchants who have looked after our families for close to 5 decades or more. We celebrate them. Cherish them. And remind all of our readers to visit many of those who are listed here.

Berman Realty (since 1969), Carroll Cleaners (since 1939), El Viejo Yayo (since 1965), Charmaine's Hair Salon (formerly Joseph's, since 1968), Leopoldi's True Value Hardware (since 1966), Neergaard Pharmacy (since 1888), Nitehawk Theater (reuse of 1908 Marathon/1928 Sanders/Pavilion Theater), Park Slope Barber Shop (since 1904), Pintchik Paint (since 1940), Purity Diner (since 1929), San Toy Laundry (since pre-1937), Slope Music (since 1856), Tarzian Hardware (since 1921), Townsley and Gay Real Estate (since 1967) and many more.

#### PSCC Community Service Grants continued from page 2

**Piper Theater** has brought free, outdoor, professional theater productions to Park Slope since 2000, and has run a summer education workshop for 150 youth. Piper's PSCC grant will support expansion of its Brooklyn Writers Group. The project will commission new plays from five local Brooklyn writers and showcase the plays for one night each in free performances at the Old Stone House. Piper describes the project as "an opportunity for emerging playwrights, actors, directors and stage managers who are eager for exposure, and creates a forum for young members to be exposed to new work.

**PS 282** is a District 13 school located on Sixth Avenue, between Berkeley and Lincoln Place. Their grant will support the PTO's project "Green Zone," which maintains three grade-specific gardens on school grounds that not only teach about "land beneath the cement" but are used to teach natural science concepts. This grant will contribute to the installation of new infrastructure including a drip irrigation system, cinder blocks to prevent rats from burrowing through the sides of raised gardens, and the completion of a "Pollinator's Garden."

**Spellbound Theatre**, founded in 2011 as artists-in-residence at the Old Stone House, is a company devoted to creating original, multi-disciplinary performances for the very young. Spellbound produces original plays for audiences ages 0-5 and conducts early childhood education programs and community events for families with young children. Their grant will support their family outreach Pop-Up Performance series at the Old Stone House which is presented 10-12 times over the year for families with children ages 2-5.

Spoke the Hub Dancing Inc., a local not-for-profit dance and community arts organization, has received a PSCC grant for administrative outreach and securing local business sponsorship to help sustain Gilligan's Comedy Showcase and The Salon at the Spoke the Hub Re-Creation Center at 748 Union Street. Gilligan's is described as a monthly comedy club-variety show organized by comic-writer Gabe Pacheco "featuring the hottest young funny people currently making the New York comedy circuit." The Salon is "an informal cultural and social 'gathering' loosely modeled after the informal turn-of-last-century European salons where artists share their works-in-progress in an informal and supportive setting," including a variety of new dance, music, theater, film, music, clowning, and storytelling by local performing artists.

# A Prospect Park Gateway is Getting a Face-Lift!



Grand Army Plaza is the formal entrance of Prospect Park. In 1889, the Plaza became the site of the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch, which was dedicated in 1892 to commemorate those who fought with the Union troops during the Civil War.

The Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch was landmarked in 1975, when the structure was in severe disrepair, and in 1976 the figure of Columbia literally fell from her chariot. The City undertook a restoration of the Arch in 1980.

Now nearly 40 years later, the Arch is once again in need of restoration. In August 2018, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that the City would be providing \$8.9 million to restore Grand Army Plaza, more specifically the historic Soldier and Sailors Memorial Arch and the landscaped berms that frame the Plaza. This funding will enable the Prospect Park Alliance (PPA) to replace the Arch's roof, clean and repoint the brick and stone structure, repair the interior iron staircases that lead to the roof, and replace the interior and exterior lighting.

The project will also include replanting the landscaped berms that frame the Plaza on its east and west sides, which are sustained by Prospect Park Alliance horticultural crews and volunteers. This includes adding new trees and replacing the existing chain link fence with a low steel panel fence. Additionally, the PPA will remove the broken bluestone pavement that surrounds the plaza's John F. Kennedy Memorial and the Bailey Fountain with granite pavement.

Now in its design phase, this project is slated to be completed by Summer 2021. Follow its progress at PPA's Capital Projects Tracker at <a href="https://www.nycgovparks.org/planning-and-building/capital-project-tracker">https://www.nycgovparks.org/planning-and-building/capital-project-tracker</a>.



#### 60th Annual House Tour continued from page 1

Tickets are now available for \$25 on the Park Slope Civic Council's website and can be purchased for \$25 at local merchants and realtors starting May 1. Beginning at noon on May 19, tickets will be sold for \$30, shoe covers will be available and House Tour Brochures will be distributed at our Starting Point – Poly Prep Lower School, 50 Prospect Park West at 1st Street.

#### Highlights of More Homes on the House Tour

The lovely foyer of an **1891 Renaissance Revival home** leads into a garden floor apartment whose walls are hung with a wonderful collection of paintings and prints. A table was inherited from the owner's great greatgrandmother, widow of a Union soldier from Indiana, who was killed in Sherman's campaign. The inviting kitchen features stunning quartzite countertops and backsplash. Both the master bedroom and rear sitting room lead to the garden.

A Neo-Grec style home built in 1887 by architect Charles Werner, was gut renovated four years ago, collaboratively by Sara Klar Ltd and the owners. A large Senegalese mask presides over the living room. A chandelier by lighting designer Brendan Ravenhill hangs above the handsome walnut dining table. A stunning Lacanche French range and the custom Marazzi puzzle tiled floor anchor the new kitchen extension. Upstairs, bold, beautiful tiles adorn the walls and floor of the spacious bathroom. The skylight on the third floor sheds light throughout the house, including the appealing children's bedrooms.

An 1892 Romanesque Revival home was designed and built by the Allan Brothers, a team of architects and builders, and renovated by Horrigan O'Malley Architects. A center staircase anchors the parlor floor, which features beautiful oak wainscoting and parquet hardwood flooring. A painting of a jazz scene by Andrew Turner hangs on a wall in the front parlor; a MacKenzie-Childs lamp resides here as well. The middle parlor boasts chairs from the home of a former Williamsburgh Savings Bank executive, a lovely decorative fire box as well as a WWII-era samurai sword. The handsome kitchen, which leads to a large deck, features marble countertops and backsplash. Upstairs, the spacious office is lit by a large skylight. A collection of masks and a mural by Katie Merz are highlights of the family room.

As a result of a renovation by Neuhaus Design Architecture and Tamara Eaton Design during which walls were removed, light floods into the parlor floor of an **1880 French Neo-Grec home** designed by architect William Gubbins. On the walls of the parlor floor are two large and dramatic framed pieces — a photograph of a "glitter sandwich" as well as a line drawing of a geode. The beautiful kitchen features a Lacanche range, marble countertops and a vintage-inspired chandelier. The kitchen leads into the music room, where a piano and two Australian didjeridoos reside.

Many thanks to our Media Sponsors Park Slope Parents and Park Slope Neighbors and to our Sponsors Brown Harris Stevens, The Corcoran Group, Halstead Property and Douglas Elliman Real Estate.

Proceeds from the House Tour fund the Civic Council's Grants Program. Look for more descriptions and photos of Tour homes, and to get tickets on our website at www.parkslopeciviccouncil.org.

#### Comments on Draft Gowanus Rezoning

The Park Slope Civic Council believes that any new City zoning actions must respect the existing residents of the neighborhoods affected by the rezoning and enhance the social, cultural, economic and racial mix of the community.

To that end, please read our statement on the proposed Gowanus Rezoning Plan at http://tinyurl.com/y3yda7zt.



# A More Sustainable Park Slope

## Civic Sweep - A Legacy for Sustainability

By the Hon. Bernard J. Graham

I am a past president of the Civic Council, and I look back proudly on the events that some of us "old-timers" were involved in. The Civic Sweep originated in 2001 which seems like a million years ago.

September 2001 was my first month as a newly-elected Park Slope Civic Council President. We had not set had our September meeting when the World Trade Center was attacked. Needless to say that changed almost everything, but Park Slope and New York as a whole recovered and we quickly went back to many of our usual activities. The issue of garbage and the poor condition of the sidewalks and streets had become a focus for many people. The truth is that the streets were much dirtier than they are today. The Sanitation garbage cans on the street corners were overflowing every day. Weekends were particularly bad and summers unbearable from a garbage perspective.

Prior to 2001, the Department of Sanitation would make one weekly pickup down the commercial strips of Fifth Avenue and Seventh Avenue. I don't think there was a weekend pickup at all. As a result, after every weekend or after street fairs, the garbage spilled onto the sidewalk. The lamp posts and traffic light poles also suffered from abuse. The common practice of many small businesses such as moving companies and music venues was to tape flyers to the lamp posts. The poles also served as a spot to tape random flyers offering used furniture, guitar lessons, or help finding lost pets. The flyers were taped one over the other in multiple layers and made for an ugly display. Interestingly, I joined the Civic Council on the most recent Civic Sweep a few months ago (for nostalgia mostly) and joined a crew sent out to clean up the lamp posts and the graffiti. Today the lamp posts are remarkably free of flyers and graffiti, which probably can be credited to the internet moving much of the small business off of lamp posts. Who would have known? But in early 2000s it was unsightly.

The Annual Civic Council Forum was very much a focus in those years and the Civic Council always tried to put together a relevant and substantive meeting each year. After the tragedy of 9/11 subsided somewhat, the decision was made to host the annual forum on the topic of "garbage." It was an odd topic but resonated immediately and led to Old First Church being completely filled with Park Slopers concerned about the garbage problem. Our local elected officials all showed up. The Department of Sanitation Commissioner, John Doherty, came. Everyone had a comment, complaint or suggestion. The event actually succeeded almost immediately which was quite a surprise. It led to our City Council representatives obtaining funding for a second trash pick up along the avenues and funding for anti-graffiti programs.

The surprising success of our garbage forum directly led to the Civic Sweep. In those years we had a number of hard-working volunteers who were not shy about rolling up sleeves and getting a little dirty. The leader of this group was our Civic News editor at the time, the incomparable Burnley Duke Dame. Another dedicated volunteer, who I recall putting in many hours, was David Alquist, who rode his bicycle around with permanent paint cans (green for mail boxes, silver for lamp posts and black for traffic lights) to cover up graffiti.

Burnley, in particular, had a zealot-like passion for organizing the initial Civic Sweeps. The first Civic Sweep was part of a program called "The Clean Streets Project" and it was a joint effort between the Civic Council and the Park Slope Merchants Association. The first event began with Burnley arriving with a panel truck of dozens of shovels, brooms and cans which she had wrangled directly from the Department of Sanitation. Many Civic Council members and trustees attended. An effort was made to invite middle schoolers to volunteer (my own children were prodded to attend and returned a second time when they figured they could put it on their high school applications). Also, we connected with the District Attorney's office who arranged for a good number of "clients" who needed to do a little community service.

One of my fondest memories of the Civic Sweep was the people with disabilities who came from the group home in Park Slope where they lived. I joined their group in the clean-up and their enthusiasm was inspiring. I

### **Urban Farming Grows in Brooklyn!**



It's 2009, and urban farming is about to explode with small rooftop farmand community gardens popping-up around the city. But Viraj Puri and Eric Haley, two of the initial founders of Gotham Greens, wanted to build a large sustainable commercial-scale urban farm that could supply lettuce and herbs harvested that same day to local NYC restaurants and grocery stores. They initially tried to find a vacant plot of land, but quickly abandoned that idea as there was nothing available. New York, however, has many large unshaded and unused rooftops that could work beautifully for urban agriculture. The two put together a business plan, won the grand prize in the 2009 NY Green Business Competition, raised additional capital, and were joined by their third partner, Jennifer Frymark, who had expertise in greenhouse design, plant nutrition, pest management, and environmental sensors. She also had worked for NASA to develop a greenhouse for Mars, and managed greenhouses in Antarctica!

They settled on hydroponic farming, which is a perfect technique for an urban rooftop, and opened their first greenhouse in Greenpoint in 2011. You don't need bags and bags of dirt or compost hauled up to the roof, or constantly have to change the soil. In fact, the whole point of hydroponic farming is that no soil is required at all. To grow, plants need sunlight, oxygen, CO2, water and nutrients. Gotham Greens provides all of those things to the plants in its greenhouses and adds nutrients to the water – everything the plant needs comes from that water. And even though hydroponic farming is all about the water, Gotham Greens is highly efficient there, too. The company uses only about one-tenth the water of conventional agriculture, and that irrigation water is captured and reused in its greenhouses.

Hydroponic farming is also very space efficient: the half-acre greenhouse above Whole Foods Market produces what can be grown on a 10-acre conventional farm and yields 26 harvests a year. And the greens are pesticide-free—workers use a device that looks like a blow dryer to release ladybugs and lacewings to keep flies, aphids and other pests to a minimum. The company also uses 100% renewable electricity to power all of its farms and offsets the electrical demands with solar power, LED lighting, advanced window glazing, passive ventilation and thermal curtains.

From three greenhouses in NYC, one in Chicago, and additional greenhouses planned for Baltimore, Chicago and Providence, Gotham Greens is set to become a national urban farmer supplying hyper-local farm-fresh lettuce and herbs all year round. Check it out for yourself! Beginning April 17th, Gotham Greens will kick off their seasonal free weekly tours (April-November) at their Gowanus greenhouse. Tours occur on their outdoor observation deck every Wednesday at 6 PM and are weather dependent. Reserve your spot at <a href="https://bit.ly/2D0V1cW">https://bit.ly/2D0V1cW</a>!

think many people got more out of the work than what they put in which is always a positive sign...

The Civic Sweep began in front of P.S. 321 (if memory serves) and rotated to the Old First Church and J.J. Byrne Park on Fifth Avenue. Those first few years had a festive feel, t-shirts were handed out, food was abundant, music was played and a good time was had by all. I am very happy that it continues. Keep up the good work!

#### Advertisement

Has your home suffered water damage and you suspect mold contamination? Do you have health concerns as a result?

For the past twelve years, EnviroBliss has been the leading specialist in indoor air quality and remediation. Located in the heart of Park Slope at 325 Flatbush Avenue, Pierre and his crew specialize in the least toxic and effective treatment of water damage to homes and offices. In contrast with conventional mold remediation firms, EnviroBliss uses non-toxic products that have stood the test of time, which not all green products do. Their vision is to enable sustainable cleaning using the least toxic methods in order to enhance the quality of overall life. EnviroBliss promotes cleanliness in all surroundings to ensure safety, home health, comfort and productivity. Their mission is to boost higher productivity through highly skilled engineering in the removal of mold and other indoor inhabitants that threaten the safety of the environment of millions of homes and businesses throughout the tri-state area.



Pierre is licensed and highly experienced in mold remediation. He has spent the past 23 years performing all levels of hygienic maintenance, and refurbishment work on heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. Pierre is also certified by the ACAC, American Council for Accredited Certification, formerly known as the American Indoor Air Quality Council. EnviroBliss only staffs experienced, licensed technicians. They supply cleaning solutions that bring value to their clients whether at home or at the workplace. EnviroBliss' concern is to make the lives of all their clients stress-free and as smooth as possible. For the past decade, EnviroBliss has worked with countless families with individuals that suffer from asthma, bronchitis, allergies, and other respiratory diseases that are extremely susceptive to mold and chemicals. Expect the best quality HEPA vacuums and the latest in least-toxic methods that capture and remove suspended microparticles left behind after conventional remediation. Envirobliss can assist your family in a healthier home, as they have with so many other individuals and families.

May Dooley, a mold inspector, and owner of EnviroHealth Consulting, Inc., says of EnviroBliss: "Pierre has worked with many of my mold inspection clients. These individuals largely come through doctors' referrals and tend to be very sensitive to mold. Invariably they comment on how accommodating and detail-oriented he and his workers are. A recent comment from a couple living in Manhattan was, 'Pierre is amazing! We are so happy with his work!' I have worked with Pierre for over ten years since the company was founded in 2007. Clients even beyond the tri-state area, as far away as Pennsylvania and Delaware, have spoken highly of his work. I relax when I know that EnviroBliss will be on the job."

What clients have to say on YELP about EnviroBliss:

- "A fantastic job of removing the mold by hand, so I didn't have to breathe in any chemicals. I have not suffered from any mold-related illness since [they were] here several years ago. I call [EnviroBliss] whenever I see any kind of discoloration in my home to see if it's mold, and [they] always tell me honestly when it isn't!"
- "[They are] very meticulous and super clean...Mold remediation is not a pleasant process, but EnviroBliss makes it as smooth as possible."

Give a call with your questions and concerns. Pierre will be glad to speak with you.

Phone #: (718) 252-0404

Email: enviroblissllc@verizon.net



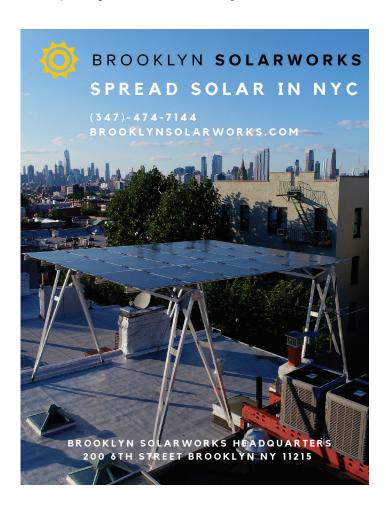
# A More Sustainable Park Slope

#### The Time to Act is Now!

Sustainability. The term reminds us of the old saw about the varied opinions of New Yorkers: ask ten different people for their feedback on this word and you'll get ten different answers. There are other similar "alities" and "ilities" in our lives such as, frugality, responsibility, and morality; sustainability is a shared value. The Park Slope community is keen to cultivate this common good on a local, regional and global level.

Societies that work toward sustenance require the courage to change the status quo and build solutions based on sound science and effective politics. We are heartened to note New York State political leadership crafting The New York State Energy Plan that includes Reforming the Energy Vision (ny.gov/REV4NY). Momentum might be attained by NYS Energy Research and Development Authority's (NYSERDA) Electric Vehicle Program bolstered by the application of \$127.7M received from the Volkswagen settlement.

Policy Director of the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President, Ryan Lynch, has noted that Brooklyn is recognized as a national leader for Passive House, with more than 35 projects completed or in progress! Take a peek at <a href="https://www.brooklyn-usa.org/during-earth-week-bp-adams-hails-passage-of-borough-board-resolution-calling-for-zero-energy-standards-to-be-set-in-new-brooklyn-construction-projects/">https://www.brooklyn-usa.org/during-earth-week-bp-adams-hails-passage-of-borough-board-resolution-calling-for-zero-energy-standards-to-be-set-in-new-brooklyn-construction-projects/</a>. The Borough President has established the Renewable and Sustainable Energy Taskforce (ReSET), "a collaboration with City and State agencies, higher education institutions, and green policy think tanks that is focused on advancing a sustainable future for Brooklyn." Keep an eye out for the ReSET meeting planned for the morning of April 24, 2019 at Brooklyn Borough Hall, to include a presentation on the Green NewDeal. NYC can increase sustainability initiatives, and see results, by linking them to economic development.



Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter Delegate, Carl Arnold, emphasized that the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report published in October 2018 concludes that our planet will warm 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels by 2040 if emissions continue to increase at their current rate (https://atlantic2.sierraclub.org/). Humanity has 12 years to limit climate change catastrophe. We cannot wait, the time to act is now!

### Recycling & Reuse in Park Slope Making a Difference



The good news is that communities and eco-minded entrepreneurs around the world fine-tune the recycling and upcycling process every year, and Park Slope happens to be home to a stellar example of one of these companies making a big difference in our planet's health: Big Reuse. Founded in 2005 as Build It Green!NYC and renamed Big Reuse in 2015, their mission is "to divert materials from landfills, minimize carbon emissions, and provide our community with quality, low cost building materials and home furnishings." Big Reuse also takes furniture, homegoods, clothes, and books -- pretty much anything that is in very good condition and reusable. Open seven days a week from 10-6, they recently relocated to just behind Lowe's at 1 12th Street. Their new location is open for people to donate unwanted building materials, and for people who want to snap up deals as they furnish their own houses and apartments! Big Reuse also has a community composting site co-located with the Gowanus Canal Conservancy's nursery where they produce compost to give away to the community for greening projects. Donate, shop, or volunteer (or all three!) and help to make our community a better one. Here are some other local recycling/upcycling resources:

The Department of Sanitation (DSNY) has a website that points people towards where they can both donate and find second-hand goods.

Founded in 1970, GrowNYC works with the NYC Department of Sanitation to feature a constantly-updated listing of where to recycle nearly anything you can think of and where to go to swap with your neighbors.

The Gowanus outpost of the Lower East Side Ecology Center (469 President St) that began in 1987 accepts the following items for recycling: "working and non-working computers, monitors, printers, scanners, keyboards, mice, cables, TVs, VCR & DVD players, phones audiovisual equipment, video games, tablets, cell phones, and PDAs." They do NOT accept air conditioners, microwaves, or other household appliances. They opened their Gowanus E-Waste Warehouse in 2012 with thousands of old and antique pieces of technology, and this Prop Library rents these items to movie productions on a regular basis. These items are for sale to the pubic, as well.

Sims Municipal Recycling Education Center (472 2nd Avenue) Located in Sunset Park, this family-friendly facility cleverly pulls back the curtain on how recycling works and offers free interactive 90-minute tours for students and interested adults alike.

**Terra Cycle** has an ongoing partnership with the Park Slope Food Coop (782 Union Street) to accept hard-to-recycle plastics. Be sure to read the guidelines carefully before heading there with your recycling.

#### A VIEW FROM THE STREET

By Jill Cornell, Community Engagement Coordinator, NYC Emergency Management

After Hurricane Sandy, faith-based groups, community organizations, and elected officials in New York City scrambled to find and distribute information and recovery resources to residents. New York City Emergency Management realized that more all-hazards community level coordination was needed. In response to this need, the Community Preparedness team created the Community Emergency Planning Toolkit. The toolkit provides guidance on how communities can create their own emergency plan and highlights resources available to residents. Community groups across the city have also created community-based plans in response to other emergencies. These emergencies show not only the value of preparing, but also the need for inclusive community-led planning. Inclusive planning ensures that individuals with disabilities and/or access and functional needs and other groups that have been traditionally underserved, are included in community emergency planning. Planning steps included in the toolkit are identifying hazards, creating communication plans and resource directories, and connecting response efforts to city and volunteer networks.

Part of developing a community emergency plan includes identifying potential vulnerabilities in your community. This year, NYC Emergency



Community groups across the City (like the Canarsie Bootcamp team pictured above) have also created community-based plans to manage the response to other emergencies.

Management's Hazard Mitigation Unit created a website to catalogue the hazard mitigation landscape in New York City. The website provides resources, maps, historical timelines and links to various hazard mitigation projects throughout NYC. Highlights include a map of current and proposed mitigation and information on community resources. The key to creating resilient communities is existing social connections. Utilizing existing networks and relationships among non-profits, community boards, faith-based organizations and houses of worship allow communities to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies.

# PASSIVE HOUSE Solutions for a More Sustainable Park Slope

Living in a 150-year-old home built in the 1870's is the very definition of "sustainable." Brooklyn brownstones are built to last and were designed for comfort and efficiency before many of the amenities we take for granted were even dreamt of. But also, before we knew the full extent of our impact on the planet and the climate.

Buildings account for the majority of global warming gas emissions. The electricity we buy and the gas, or oil, we use directly for heating and cooking contribute almost half of the carbon emissions responsible for warming the planet and changing the climate. Furthermore, homes are the largest emitter in the built environment as a whole.





Our homes, however, can be part of the solution. Park Slope neighbor, preservationist and local architect Jane Sanders renovated her 439 Bergen Street home pictured above, originally built in the 1870's, to be air-tight and well-insulated, but also designed to maintain a constant supply of fresh filtered air delivered through an energy recovery ventilator.

The Sanders' adaptive reuse of their home realized their goal to live in a Passive House. The home is now a high-performance building, engineered to provide year-round comfort and superior indoor air quality – while using 50-80% less energy than a conventional building. This home – similar to many a row house in NYC – was at the opposite end of the energy usage spectrum before the transformation.

The reimagining of their home was done without sacrificing many of the original features. Sanders, the owner and project architect, reclaimed and restored stair railings, a marble mantle, and plaster moldings. The mantle, relocated to the parlor level, now houses an ethanol fireplace that requires no ventilation.

Usable space in the cellar with increased ceiling height was gained by installing a new insulated slab and drainage system. A new stair links the family room in the cellar to the main living space above.

These are basic principles of a Passive House: continuous insulation, air tightness, constant ventilation with heat recovery, and high-performance windows. These features allow the house to have a minimal heating and cooling system.





Box 172, 123 Seventh Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11215

# Join! Renew! Donate! **Volunteer!**

### www.parkslopeciviccouncil.org

### **Upcoming Events**

May 2nd & the 1st Thursday of every month (except July & August) - Park Slope Civic Council Board Meeting: Old Stone House in Washington Park (check website beforehand to confirm location), 7 - 9:00 PM. Scholarship Awards Ceremony and Potluck at the Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 6. All are welcome! Visit our monthly calendar for updates at www.parkslopeciviccouncil.org.

Weekends in May - Gowanus Canal Conservancy's Seasonal Plant Sale on Saturday May 4th, 11AM-2 PM at the Park Slope Food Coop, 782 Union St. (between 6th Ave and 7th Ave); for other neighborhood plant sales and to visit the GCC nursery by appointment email plants@gowanuscanalconservancy. **org** or call (718) 541-4378.

Spring 2019 Gowanus Canal Conservancy (GCC) Public Volunteer Events on Saturdays, 10 AM-1 PM, May 4, May 18, June 1, June 15: GCC staff and volunteers install gardens, take care of street trees and bioswales, propagate native plants, and much more. Public events are open to all ages and skill levels. All activities are outdoors and located in the Gowanus neighborhood (location confirmed when volunteers sign up). To sign up for volunteer events, please email volunteer@gowanuscanalconservancy.org.

May through August along 5th Avenue - Fairs, Music, Summer Strolls and more, sponsored by the Park Slope 5th Avenue BID: see their fun-packed schedule of activities on p. 11 or get more event info at parkslopefifthavenuebid.com.

Saturday, May 4th Annual Plant & Artisan Sale & a Kick-Off to Spring with a Concert - 10 AM - 2 PM at the Old Stone House in Washington Park: Concert sponsored by Halstead's Saghir Lewis Team.

Sunday, May 19th - 60th Annual Park Slope House Tour, self-guided tour of historic Park Slope homes and the 19th Century Montauk Club, Noon - 5:30 PM: kicks off at Brooklyn Poly Prep Lower School at 50 Prospect Park West and ends with a lecture by historian Francis Morrone in the Committee Room next to the Cafeteria at the NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital (506 6th Street). Tickets for the Tour and lecture are required and can be purchased in advance for \$25 on the Park Slope Civic Council website at www.parkslopeciviccouncil.org, at local merchants after May 1, and for \$30 on site the day of the tour.

May 21st & the 3rd Tuesday every month forward (except July & August) "Office Hours" - A Casual PSCC Hangout: at The Commissioner, 247 5th Avenue (between Garfield and Carroll Street) at 7 PM. Members and neighbors are welcome! Visit the PSCC website for meeting information at www.parkslopeciviccouncil.org.

Opera on Tap, a 2019 PSCC grantee, in collaboration with the Old Stone House, will present an immersive musical walk through America's political history the weekends of July 5th and 12th. The program will feature a collection of American songs dating from pivotal moments in our history. For more information, go to https://www.operaontap.org/newyork/.

Thank you to our Park Slope Civic Council Editorial Contributors:

Ron Daignault, Rory Dineen, Kedin Kilgore, Kimberly Maier, John Mazurek, Érica Stauffer and Candace Woodward



Sunday, May 19th - The Fabulous Fifth Avenue Fair - 10 AM to 6 PM, between Sterling & 12th Street on 5th Avenue, Park Slope: The Fabulous Fifth Avenue Fair is a Park Slope tradition! Eighteen blocks are filled with local eateries, watering holes, mini stores, local art and non profits all showing off everything #theother5th has to offer! Come join your neighbors in celebrating spring and the community!

For more information on this year's Fifth Avenue Fair go to: http://parkslopefifthavenuebid.com/looking-for-fair-info/



Established 1896 as the South Brooklyn Board of Trade. Incorporated 1938.

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