



**THE NEW YORK  
LANDMARKS  
CONSERVANCY**

July 14, 2020

**STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE HARRIET AND THOMAS TRUESDELL HOUSE, 227 DUFFIELD STREET, BROOKLYN AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK**

Good morning Chair Carroll and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to join elected officials, neighbors, and advocates to support designation of the Harriet and Thomas Truesdell House as an individual landmark.

The Truesdell House merits designation for its history as the residence of abolitionists Harriet and Thomas Truesdell. Despite alterations and additions, this mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Greek Revival building maintains its original height, scale, configuration, materials, and many decorative details. It has clear connections to the pre-Civil War era when the Truesdells first occupied it.

There has been some question about whether the House was part of the Underground Railroad. By the inherent secretive nature of this activity, physical evidence would be hard to document; however, the association with the Truesdells makes the strong case for designation. In fact, the scarcity of extant sites connected with abolitionist history makes designations such as this one all the more compelling.

The Landmarks Law calls on the LPC to safeguard places that represent New York City's cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history for multiple reasons, including the fostering of civic pride, and promoting the education of New Yorkers. Designation of the Truesdell House will fulfill that mandate. This House is one of few remaining that can be definitively associated with New York's abolitionist movement. It has been nearly lost to demolition several times. There should be no delay in ensuring that it is protected and honored.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the Conservancy's views.