
THE BROADWAY DEMOCRATS

◆ District Leaders: Curtis Arluck, Paula Diamond Román ◆ President: Pat Almonrode◆

Election Season!

Hear from our September 13th Primary Candidates!

✓ **Danny O'Donnell**

Assemblyman, 69th AD

✓ **Daniel Marks Cohen**

State Committeeman, 69th AD

*State Senator Bill Perkins (30th) and State Committeewoman Lynn Thomas (69th)
are unopposed and won't be on the September Primary ballot.

Hear about our Plans leading up to November 8th!

✓ **Stephanie Miliano**

Victory 2016/Hillary for America, Manhattan

✓ **Basil Smikle**

Executive Director, New York State Democrats

✓ **Presentation on the Campaign Storefront**

Thursday, September 8th

Sign-in at 7:45 pm * Meeting at 8:00 pm

Bank Street College

610 West 112th Street

(between Broadway and Riverside)

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Volume 41, Issue 7

September 2016

District Leader's Report

Curtis Arluck

Victory for Morningside Gardens and Grant. For several years, voters at the 100 La Salle St. (Morningside Gardens) and 75 La Salle and 1315 Amsterdam (Grant) poll sites have faced increasing impediments to voting, because overzealous interpretations of the Americans with Disabilities Act closed these poll sites, forcing them to walk long, uphill distances to get to their new, allegedly “accessible” polling locations. Initially, the NYC Board of Elections resisted appeals from area elected officials and residents to address the ridiculous specter of a law that was designed to assist disabled voters being used as a club to make it much harder for them to vote. But after a determined campaign, featuring 750 petitions signatures and several stories in the media, the BOE finally got the message, sent a team of people who worked to make the poll sites accessible to everyone’s satisfaction, and victory has seemingly been achieved. For Morningside Gardens, 80 La Salle St. (more accessible than 100 La Salle) will become the new poll site for the 99th ED (80, 90 and 100 La Salle and 549 W 123 St.) in time for the Sept. 13 primary. The other two Gardens Buildings will continue to vote at 1295 Amsterdam, across the street. For Grant, the 75 La Salle and 1315 Amsterdam poll sites won’t reopen until November, as they require large ramps to be built. But once opened, these poll sites, we are assured, will never be closed. Congratulations to the residents of Grant and Morningside Gardens—especially our own Joan Levine!—who led this fight, and to Danny O’Donnell, Mark Levine, Bill Perkins and Gale Brewer for their vocal support. Sometimes citizen action *does* work.

Sept. 13 Primary: Vote for Danny and Dan! Many people don’t realize that our beloved Assembly Member Danny O’Donnell and esteemed State Committee Member Dan Cohen face opposition in the Sept. 13 primary. Danny has been a leader in the Assembly on so many issues, from marriage equality to tenants’ rights to prison reform. Most importantly to me, his staff has aided several thousand constituents, and saved many hundreds

from eviction. His opponent, by contrast, has had no involvement whatsoever with the district he only recently moved into. But at least Danny’s opponent is merely a blank slate. Dan Cohen’s challenger is our district’s answer to Donald Trump: virulently anti-Semitic, misogynist, racist and homophobic. All the more reason to re-elect Dan, a leader in making the State party more reform and progressive, and a champion for our community as well.

And for State Senate in the 31st District:
(Bill Perkins, 30th District, is Unopposed)

Since the Club’s position is no endorsement, I don’t want to go out on a limb in these pages. I can tell you who *not* to vote for: Marisol Alcantara, because she is a supporter of and is supported by the Independent Democratic Caucus, an ally of the State Senate Republicans, the main reason why our state government is so dysfunctional and regressive. Robert Jackson has had a long, distinguished career and led the fight for the Fiscal Equity Lawsuit, Micah Lasher is young, dynamic and full of ideas. Both would represent us well; Marisol Alacantara, because of her ties to the IDC, would not.

November Campaign Storefront. We are closing in on a space at 103rd and Broadway next door to where our 2012 storefront was. In any event there will be buses to PA and phone calls to the swing states. Stay tuned!

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District Leader's Report

Paula Diamond Román

I’ve Become “Friends” with the NRA. I did something recently that I never thought I would do. I “liked” the NRA on Facebook (FB). For those of you who don’t know, that means that everything the NRA posts in their social media war on sensible gun laws gets posted on my FB “page”. I did this because I thought it was important to know what the NRA was saying so that we in the gun violence prevention (GVP) community could counter it.

The NRA’s most recent social media campaign is called “Trigger the Vote” and it asks everyone what

“[t]he best way [is] to express yourself? Register to vote so you can protect your rights at the ballot box!” Ordinarily, that would be my claim as well. I’m a Democratic District Leader; registering liberal Democrats and getting them to the polls is my avocation. However, this year, as we campaign for the first woman president, we have another opportunity to respond to the NRA.

“US Congress! NRA! How Many Kids Did You Kill Today!” Recently I joined the research committee of brand-new GVP organization, Gays Against Guns, formed in the wake of the death of forty-nine people, and the wounding of an additional fifty-three people, who just wanted to go out dancing on a lovely summer’s night in Orlando. Gays Against Guns is using peaceful actions to:

- Ban access to high-capacity magazine guns and assault weapons,
- Create stricter background checks,
- Close the loophole that allows sales of weapons at gun shows without background checks,
- Ban gun sales via the internet, and
- Block people on the FBI watch-list from purchasing guns.

One of the projects that I’ve worked on is a list of the members of Congress who have received money from the NRA, which was distributed at the “Unity Rally and 72 Days of Action on Gun Violence,” launched with an August 27th protest in front of the NRA headquarters in Washington, D.C., attended by members of Gays Against Guns chapters from across the country, in collaboration with members from the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the National Action Network (NAN). Gays Against Guns followed this with a commemoration at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial for those who died in Orlando and a “die-in” on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

Gays Against Guns used this opportunity to distribute this list of “NRA puppets” to visitors to the nation’s capital at the height of the summer tourist season in the hope that they would return to their home states with the message that “the gun lobby is killing this country” and vote these members of Congress out of office in November.

Obviously, not OUR Elected Officials. In the most recent edition of their infamous “report card,” both Assemblyman Danny O’Donnell and State Senator Bill Perkins got Fs from the NRA. Last time they were graded, Congressman Jerry Nadler and our candidate for Congress in the 13th, Adriano Espaillat got Fs as well. However, there are a lot of elected officials who get As from the NRA.

So, I got carried away with the list and started looking at who gave back to the NRA as well. *District of Columbia v. Heller (2008)*, the first ruling on the 2nd Amendment in decades, supported the right to have a loaded, unlocked gun in the home, but it also supported the possibility of restrictions on unfettered access to guns. *D.C. v Heller* was followed by *McDonald v. City of Chicago (2010)* which challenged Chicago’s gun registration rules and was most notable for the *amici curiae* (“friends of the court”) brief filed with this case, signed by 309 Members of Congress. Friends of the court or friends of the NRA?

Working on this list reminded me that many of these “NRA puppets” have challengers in November; in fact, some of those currently in the House are seeking to move up to the Senate. This gives us a remarkable opportunity to contribute to GVP legislation by building a new Congress with fewer “NRA puppets” in it. At the same time that we are working towards electing Hillary Clinton president, over her opponent, a gun-happy friend of the NRA who claimed that a couple of “good guys with guns” would have prevented the tragedy at Pulse, we can also work towards changing the orientation of the Congress towards guns. We have the opportunity to do something concrete to prevent another Columbine, another Virginia Tech, another Aurora, another Newtown, another Orlando.

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Assembly Member’s Report

Daniel J. O’Donnell

Access to the polls for Morningside Gardens and Ulysses S. Grant Houses. As many of you know, the residents of Morningside Gardens and Grant Houses have been fighting to keep their polling sites accessible, after the NYC Board of Elections moved many of them to PS36. In the past, residents (many of whom are elderly or have disabilities) voted within walking distance of their homes. With the move to PS36, residents were concerned about travelling up hills and across busy intersections to vote at the new site. This change was done to comply with strict Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements for polling sites. Yet despite their good intentions, the Board did not take into account how residents would get to an ADA compliant polling site.

In response, residents held rallies, signed petitions, and contacted me and other elected officials to support their efforts to reverse this change. I am proud to say that our call for better access to voting

has been answered! The Board of Elections came to survey potential poll sites in Morningside Gardens and Grant Houses and as a result, a polling site at 80 La Salle Street in Morningside Gardens will be open for the Primary Election on September 13th. In addition, the Board is considering opening polling sites in other buildings within Morningside Gardens and Grant Houses in time for the General Election on November 8th.

CitiBank on 111th Street & Broadway. The terrible fire of January 2014 that struck the Citibank building on Broadway may seem long past, but concerns with the site remain today. To date, the site remains vacant and the temporary structures around it created new issues. For over a year I have held meetings with Citibank and several neighbors and local business owners to discuss the construction delay, conditions surrounding the building, and general safety in the area. I am pleased to share that Citibank intends to reopen a bank within the existing structure, thus ensuring that the landscape of our neighborhood remains unchanged.

Please know that I am still monitoring the situation and will continue to do all I can to ensure that conditions in the area are improved. After weeks of structural repairs, maintenance of the site, and the progression of construction permits, a tentative schedule is now available:

Phase I: Shell restoration—October 2016 through December 2016

- Demolition
- Building scaffolding
- Restoration of façade

Phase II: Core construction—December 2016 through July 2017

- Restoration of roof top
- Infrastructure construction, i.e. stairs, elevator and MEP installation:

Phase III: Branch construction—July 2017 through December 2017

- Build out of new branch

If you would like to be kept up to date on developments, or have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

D'Agostino's on 110th and Broadway. In April 2016 we lost a valuable establishment when D'Agostino Supermarkets vacated their space on the corner of 110th and Broadway. Fearing another vacant storefront on Broadway, as well as the loss of food sources, I wrote a letter to Columbia

University urging them to seek prospective supermarket retailers that would adequately serve our community. I noted how important it is to retain our communities' access to food while ensuring that food prices remain affordable and employment practices remain fair to supermarket employees.

I am pleased to announce that Columbia University has secured another supermarket for the D'Agostino space on Broadway. They anticipate that the grocer will open towards the beginning of 2017 after renovation. Please do not hesitate to contact my office for more information as I will continue to monitor developments regarding the space.

Primary Election. I am thankful as always for the support and endorsement of the Broadway Democrats. I have proudly represented the residents of Manhattan Valley, Morningside Heights, West Harlem, and the Upper West Side since 2003. As you may know, I am facing an opponent in the Democratic primary on September 13th.

He's a first-time candidate, newly residing in the 69th Assembly District, but I'm taking his challenge seriously and want to thank you for all your help—because, in this unusual election cycle, you just never know. I am holding a fundraising event on Thursday, September 8 from 5:30 to 7:00 pm at Macchina, 2758 Broadway on the corner of West 106th Street. I invite you to join me. To RSVP visit my website www.danieljodonnell.com

With thirteen years of experience serving in the Assembly, including as Chair of the Ethics committee; as lead legislative sponsor in the years-long successful fight for Marriage Equality; and currently as the Chair of the Corrections committee, I understand Albany—what works, what doesn't, and how to change it.

If re-elected, I will continue to fight (loudly) for robust civil liberties, affordable housing, accessible healthcare, a clean and safe environment, and equal treatment for all New Yorkers.

This year, divisive and hateful rhetoric has threatened the progress we have all achieved together, and highlights how much work remains to be done. Now, more than ever, it's important to send a strong message up and down the ballot that hate does not win elections.

Please join me. It is crucial that we keep up the positive momentum in the upcoming session and in years to come. I am deeply grateful for your support

and encouragement. I thank you in advance and look forward to continuing our vitally important work together.



From the Steering Committee

Susan Crawford

Voting to Keep the “Public” in Public

Education. For most of the time I have been involved with education advocacy, I’ve had direct involvement with the public school system in New York City. With my children now “aged out,” I find myself mixing more and more with voters with no direct connection to public schools. They are often confused over how and why charter schools have become such a contentious issue. So contentious, in fact, that the NAACP and Black Lives Matter—two organizations the children of whose members and constituency are presumably the primary target of charter schools—are calling for a moratorium on them. How did we get here?

In the 1990s, charter schools were initially proposed by Albert Shanker, no less, as alternatives to local public schools that were not meeting the needs of students for whom alternative approaches might work. The concept for these alternative “charter” schools was to experiment with alternative models of teaching and learning. Practices found to be effective could then be “scaled up” into the larger system.

By the mid-2000s, however, this model for “incubators of innovation” was being replaced by a much larger and broader agenda for expanding charter schools wholesale, in a way that is tantamount to privatizing them. An excellent description of this trajectory is found here (and below “The Walmartization ...”), describing how the Walmart Family Foundation found in charter schools a new way to arrive at something that vouchers had not yet yielded: taxpayer-funded parent “choice” for their children’s schools.

In spearheading the charter school movement, foundations and hedge fund managers have collaborated on a vision of governance that should give pause to anyone concerned that public education stays under the purview of the public in general, and taxpayers in particular. Most charter schools receive public tax dollars, but are privately managed. Who are the managers? Educational Management Organizations (EMOs), answerable not to the public, but to the charter’s board of directors, or the authorizing authority that granted

the charter. These authorizers are usually at the state level. Each school is overseen by a board of directors, who are in turn not elected by voters, or even by the parents of the school’s students.

This article is a brief introduction to how and why charter schools differ from the neighborhood public schools with which most voters are familiar. (See articles below for more related reading.) As we gear up for another election that will have its share of candidates backed by the charter school lobby, the distinction between the two becomes increasingly important for voters who want to keep the “public” in public education!

- www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2016/03/17/the-walmartization-of-public-education/
- www.nytimes.com/2010/05/10/nyregion/10charter.html
- www.dissentmagazine.org/.../got-dough-how-billionaires-r...
- www.thenation.com/.../9-billionaires-are-about-remake...
- www.usuncut.com/class-war/how-these-5-famous-billionaires-are-dismantling-black-public-schools/
- www.motherjones.com/politics/2016/08/black-lives-matter-naacp-moratorium-charter-schools... and here is the NYT on the same subject –
- www.nytimes.com/2016/08/21/us/blacks-charter-schools.html?utm_source=Master+Mailing+List&utm_campaign=ae95c23b6b-
- www.washingtonpost.com/news/education/wp/2016/08/30/national-labor-relations-board-decides-charter-schools-are-private-corporations-not-public-schools/#comments



From the Club Membership

Laura Friedman, President, Morningside Heights Historic District Committee

An appeal to Morningside Heights residents and owners:

In recent years Morningside Heights has been subject to out-of-scale development that has undermined its distinct sense of place.

Currently online for development in our community are two 35–40-story buildings on 122nd Street, a potential 15-story building on 120th street, and many, many “soft sites” (places that are low that

can be torn down for large scale development; think of Banco Popular on Broadway at W.111th Street).

Historic district designation will ensure that both new building construction and redevelopment of existing buildings be undertaken in a manner that respects neighborhood context and character.

We are very close to a first phase of a Historic District in our community. Roughly (meaning excluded properties exist within this area), this district is between 110th Street-116th Street, Riverside to Amsterdam. We will begin negotiation on Phase II of the District (which would be the rest of the Heights, east and north) by the end of 2017.

It was the vision of people before us that made this community the beautiful place it is. Please be a part of that vision for the future.

By sending a letter to the Landmarks Preservation Commission in support of a Historic District, you will help maintain our historic gem of a community, not only from developers, but also for generations to come. In the letter, note your building's address, and if you are an owner or rent. Please make sure you send your letter to the emails at the end of the sample letter. The email address of Chairperson Srinivasan is: MSrinivasan@lpc.nyc.gov

Here is a sample letter:

Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair
Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chair Srinivasan,

I am an owner in the Proposed Study Area for a Phase 1 of the Morningside Heights Historic District. I reside at _____ and I am writing to inform you that I fully support a Historic Designation for our community.

Community support of the establishment of this historic district has been unwavering for nearly two decades, and I sincerely appreciate the recent commencement of the designation process. However, I believe many worthy buildings and blocks still need to be included.

New York City's Landmark Law requires a historic district to have "special character or special historic or aesthetic interest," represent "one or more periods of styles of architecture typical of one or more eras in the history of the city," and constitute

"a distinct section of the city." With the majority of Morningside Heights built at the very beginning of the 20th century alongside the expansion of the IRT subway line, beautifully intricate Beau-Arts styling throughout the neighborhood, and an almost unrivaled architectural unity, it is unquestionably clear that Morningside Heights fulfills these criteria.

My own building fits seamlessly into this historical context.

Thank you again for commencing the designation process for this wonderful and deserving neighborhood. I look forward to hearing about future progress.

Sincerely,
Name
Address

cc: Assembly Member Daniel O'Donnell
miglioren@assembly.state.ny.us

New York City Council Member Mark Levine
District7@Council.nyc.gov

Executive Director Sarah Carroll, Landmarks
Preservation Commission
SCarroll@lpc.nyc.gov

Morningside Heights Historic District Committee
info@morningsideheights.org

CC ADDRESSES – (You can send emails to the elected officials or hard copies)

**Council Member Mark Levine
District Office Address**
500 West 141st Street
New York, NY 10031
akeefe@council.nyc.gov

**State Assembly Member Daniel O'Donnell
District Office**
245 West 104th Street
New York, NY 10025
miglioren@assembly.state.ny.us

**Morningside Heights Historic District
Committee**
Columbia Station
P.O. Box 250405
New York, NY 10025
Lrahip@aol.com

Manhattan Boro President, Gale Brewer
jmates@manhattanbp.nyc.gov

Membership

In order to vote in club elections (endorsements, elections of officers, judicial convention, amendments), you must be an eligible, voting member of the Broadway Democrats. You must have attended at least one of the previous nine monthly public meetings and you must pay your dues. Dues partially defray the costs of presenting forums and putting out this newsletter. Dues are \$25; senior dues are \$10.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Special Interests: _____

The Broadway Democrats
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FIRST
CLASS

Assemblymember: Daniel O'Donnell
District Leaders: Curtis Arluck,
Paula Diamond Román
President: Pat Almonrode
Newsletter Editor: Gretchen Borges

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Election Season!

Thursday, September 13th 7:45 p.m.

Bank Street College of Education

610 West 112th Street (between Broadway and Riverside Drive)