



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Bill Perkins

Senator Perkins Receives Historic District Council's Friends in High Places Award

BILL PERKINS May 19, 2011

| ISSUE: **HISTORICAL PRESERVATION**



(left to right: Senator Perkins, HDC President Leo Blackma, Landmark West Executive Director Kate Wood)

Senator Bill Perkins was presented with the Historic District Council's Friends in High Places Award Thursday evening May 12th. Taking place in the lovely flower-filled garden of the Church of the Pilgrims in Brooklyn Heights,

the moving ceremony was only marred by particularly cool weather. However, the kind remarks made by HDC board member Kate Wood, who directs Landmark West, one of the most active preservation groups in Senator Perkins' district, could not have been warmer (remarks seen below).

Senator Perkins was born and bred in Harlem and has dedicated his life to serving the communities of upper Manhattan.

But more important than biology, philosophy, or geography, this “Friend on High” is a true friend of preservation, whether it’s leading the charge to defend the integrity of the landmarks process when it came to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and 2 Columbus Circle, or supporting the designation of the historic African-American neighborhood Addisleigh Park in Queens.

This points to one of Senator Perkins’ most inspiring, refreshing qualities. When an important preservation issue rears its head, Senator Perkins does not first consult his district map. He consults his conscience. And he does the right thing. Immediately. Consistently.

And an excellent indication of his conscientiousness is his astute selection of the great Michael Henry Adams to be his frontline point person on preservation issues.

In 2005, then-Council Member Perkins wrote a probing, visionary report entitled, “Forty Years of New York City Landmarks Preservation: An Opportunity to Review, Reflect and Reform.” He wrote:

If it is true that those who forget their history are doomed to repeat it, then it is certainly true that a city that forgets its landmarks, forgets itself... Let us look at the first forty years of landmarks preservation as a foundation. And let us strengthen the law and policy, so that coming generations can build firmly on what we leave behind.

Let us all thank our lucky stars to call Senator Bill Perkins our friend.