



June 15, 2023

Hon. Lincoln Restler
410 Atlantic Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11217

Dear Councilmember Restler,

We, the Executive Board and members of the Independent Neighborhood Democrats (IND), write to you to urge you to support the proposed “Sisters in Freedom” monument at Abolitionist Place Park (Willoughby Square Park).

At our April 2023 meeting, IND was honored to have a friend of the club, Raul Rothblatt speak to us about the proposed monument. He explained that the monument would honor the memories of the “Sisters in Freedom,” which consisted of Ida B. Wells, Sarah Smith Garnet, Dr. Susan Smith McKinney, Maritcha Lyons, and Victoria Earle Mathews. Together, they were instrumental in fighting for civil rights and women’s suffrage. Thanks to their hard work, all Brooklynites, New Yorkers, and Americans owe these brave women a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid.

Though, we can preserve their legacy by memorializing it with a monument so that future generations will know the story of the Sisters in Freedom and, with any luck, will be inspired to continue fighting for justice.

Needless to say, IND was not at all surprised when Mr. Rothblatt told us that the proposed monument was, by far, the most popular proposal submitted to your office for this year’s participatory budgeting (PB). But, IND was shocked to learn that it was excluded as an option on the PB ballot for District 33 residents.

However, you can make this right.

We implore you to work with Mayor Adams, Speaker Adams, and your colleagues to ensure that funding, via discretionary funds, for the creation of the Sisters in Freedom monument at Abolitionist Place is included in this year’s City budget. With your help, Brooklyn will continue to honor those who have been instrumental in the struggle for equality.

We look forward to seeing your diligence in this matter.

In solidarity,
Independent Neighborhood Democrats