



November 17, 2022

Supervisor Peter Van Scoyoc and Members of the Town Board  
Town of East Hampton  
159 Pantigo Road  
East Hampton, New York 11937

Dear Supervisor Van Scoyoc and Members of the East Hampton Town Board,

Preservation Long Island, the Preservation League of New York State, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the leading historic preservation advocacy organizations at the regional, state, and national levels have all identified the James Brooks and Charlotte Park Studios and Residence as a top priority for preservation and rehabilitation due to the property's exceptional significance in the history of mid-century modern art and design. The buildings used and occupied by Charlotte Park and James Brooks represent a unique opportunity to celebrate their legacy for the benefit of East Hampton residents and visitors, connecting their lives and careers to a broader culture of artistic achievement in this part of Long Island. In 2021, Preservation Long Island listed the site in its Endangered Historic Places List; the National Trust similarly included it on its the "Eleven Most Endangered Places" list in 2022; and the Preservation League named the site one of its "Seven to Save" properties in 2022.

We continue to express our concern for the buildings' condition if they remain poorly maintained, and urge, in the strongest possible terms, the Town of East Hampton to take swift and significant steps to stabilize and protect the Brooks-Park Studios and Residence ahead of the 2022-23 winter season to prevent further damage, particularly due to water infiltration.

We know full well that their current unprotected status is not due to a funding constraint, but a deficit of political will. The Town has the authority – in fact, the obligation – as well as the funding necessary to stabilize the buildings, and to hire a consulting preservation architect qualified to conduct a thorough assessment of the buildings' condition and the feasibility of rehabilitation. In § 112-1-50A[4], the East Hampton Town Code requires the Town to "manage and maintain historic properties consistent with accepted standards for historic preservation" (see also § 64-E.9[d] of the enabling New York Town Law). In regard to hiring a consulting preservation architect, please see § 64- E.13 of the enabling New York Town Law for the Peconic Bay Region Community Preservation Fund, which explicitly permits expenditure of fund monies for "cost of employees and independent contractors to implement the provisions of this section."

Preservation Long Island, the Preservation League of New York State, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation encourage the Town of East Hampton to treat the Brooks-Park Historic Landmark as the treasure that it is, a place that tells the stories of James Brooks and Charlotte Park and their contributions to the development of Abstract Expressionism, as well as an opportunity to celebrate the extraordinary artistic

heritage of the Springs. Given the property's historic significance and cultural importance, we urge the Town of East Hampton to secure the site.

Our collective lenses are focused on preserving this unique, irreplaceable cultural and historic heritage site. Further neglect is the least attractive and most unpopular option. We will follow up in 30 days and eagerly await news of your action.

Sincerely,



Seri Worden  
Senior Field Director  
National Trust for Historic  
Preservation



Sarah Kautz  
Preservation Director  
Preservation Long Island



Katie Eggers Comeau  
VP for Policy and Preservation  
Preservation League of NYS