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June 13, 2022

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

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

The Preservation League of New York State was pleased to list the Brooks-Park Home and Studios as one of our “Seven to Save” properties for 2022-2023, joining our colleagues at Preservation Long Island and the National Trust for Historic Preservation in identifying this fascinating site as one most worthy of highlighting for special attention.

The Preservation League is New York’s statewide not-for-profit preservation organization. We invest in people and projects that champion the essential role of preservation in community revitalization, sustainable economic growth, and the protection of our historic buildings and landscapes. We lead advocacy, economic development, and educational programs across the state. Every other year, our “Seven to Save” list highlights properties of statewide significance, focusing on the economic and community-building benefits of historic preservation.

Our Seven to Save selection committee was impressed by the Brooks-Park property due to its unique architectural and historical significance and its potential to be both a recreational and historical asset to the town of East Hampton. The committee was equally impressed by the passion of local advocates and their vision for the future of the property as an artistic and environmental sanctuary. Charlotte Park and James Brooks drew inspiration from the natural world while in their home and studios; those who visit today can similarly immerse themselves in nature while also experiencing and learning about the artists’ contributions to Abstract Expressionism and their place in the remarkable Long Island art community in the mid-twentieth century.

The League commends the Town for its foresight in purchasing the property using CPF funds in 2013, and designating the property as a local landmark in 2014. We look forward to joining our colleagues at Preservation Long Island and the National Trust in working with the Town of East Hampton toward a secure and productive future for the Brooks-Park site. All three organizations bring valuable experience and knowledge that we hope will help the Town identify a path forward that not only recognizes the remarkable history of this site and its original owners’ contributions to the Abstract Expressionist movement, but also provides the benefits of immersion in the arts and nature to those who visit the property today.

We urge the Town to fully commit to the preservation of all four buildings and the grounds, including support for the preparation of an independent conditions assessment, complete mothballing of the buildings to protect them from further deterioration, and the earmarking of CPF funds for preservation of the buildings. Along with other advocates, we would be interested in knowing the Town's timetable for receiving the engineering report that is currently underway, and voting on next steps.

The League looks forward to working with you on this exciting and worthwhile project. We hope to be able to meet with you this summer, and in the meantime, join our colleagues at Preservation Long Island and the National Trust in offering any technical assistance or information our staff can provide to you and your constituents in this important undertaking.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KCC', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Katie Eggers Comeau
Vice President for Policy and Preservation

Cc: Brooks-Park Art and Nature Center
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Preservation Long Island