



17 July 2018

The Honorable Robert Tierney
Chairperson
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairperson Tierney:

I write to request that the Landmarks Preservation Commission act to preserve 186 Spring Street in Manhattan, and move forward with the designation of the proposed South Village Historic District.

The Gay and Lesbian independent Democrats has a very special connection to the 1824 house at 186 Spring Street because it was the residence of at least two of our founders, Jim Owles and Bruce Voeller. In 1973, Mr. Owles was the first openly gay candidate for political office in New York City which as you can imagine at that time was revolutionary. Also, Bruce Voeller lived at 186 Spring Street and he helped found both the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the Gay Activists Alliance. Mr. Voeller made significant contributions to our communities, including conducting the first research that established that condoms prevent the spread of HIV as well as coining the term Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Greenwich Village is the place where the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community started, but the historic house at 186 Spring Street with its many famous residence may be the exact location of our movements birthplace.

The entire South Village was home to so many prominent musicians, artists, and writers as well the center of the modern LGBT movement. People like James Agee, WH Auden, Harold Norse, Allen Ginsberg, John Cage and Merce Cunningham among many others called the South Village home for so many years - their contribution to the very fabric of the South Village and New York City is incalculable.

I believe there is overwhelming evidence of the historic nature and significance of 186 Spring Street, and that of the entire South Village. I strongly urge the Commission to preserve 186 Spring Street and designate the South Village Historic District as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott B. Melvin', written over a white background.

Scott B. Melvin
President