



*Testimony in Support of the Proposed Designation of the  
Julius' Bar Building, 159 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Manhattan,  
as a New York City Landmark*

*Tuesday, November 15, 2022*

My name is Andrew Dolkart, and I am one of the co-directors of the NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project, a cultural heritage initiative founded by historic preservationists in 2015 to document historic places connected to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community in the city's five boroughs.

The Project strongly supports the designation of the Julius' Bar Building as a New York City Landmark. In the early 1990s, my co-directors, Jay Shockley and Ken Lustbader, and I were part of the Organization of Lesbian and Gay Architects + Designers (OLGAD), a pioneering group that advocated for LGBT historic sites at a time when the field of historic preservation paid little attention to sites of cultural significance, let alone ones connected to the LGBT community. In 1994, OLGAD created what we believe is the first map in the country to document LGBT historic places, and the building that houses Julius' was included in this effort.

In 2015, when the NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project formed, one of our first priorities was to continue what OLGAD began more than twenty years earlier. We took the initiative to undertake the necessary research and write the text for the nomination of Julius' to the National Register of Historic Places, which was approved in April 2016, one day before the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the so-called "Sip In".

Julius' is located just a few minutes' walk from the more famous Stonewall Inn, but its place in LGBT history is just as significant. The events at Stonewall in June 1969 did not exist in a vacuum. In the decades leading up to that uprising, bars were one of the few places that LGBT people could gather openly. Yet, at the same time, there were always inherent risks since the mere presence of a homosexual in a bar was considered to be disorderly: frequent police raids and other forms of entrapment could lead to arrest, loss of employment, and physical and mental abuse, among other threats. With photographers in tow, the game-changing public action by the Mattachine Society on April 21, 1966, which culminated at Julius', was the earliest planned effort to capture LGBT discrimination in real time.

When we give walking tours in the area, we typically end at Julius', and young people, in particular, are often surprised to learn that at one time, even in New York City, even in Greenwich Village, LGBT people faced these hardships in bars, of all places. Julius' is therefore not only a great place to gather and have drinks with friends, but also a valuable teaching tool. We thank Helen Buford, the owner of Julius', for her incredible stewardship of the bar and its history, and for collaborating with and supporting our Project from the very beginning.

The NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project proudly supports this proposed designation.

Thank you.