



# NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project

Making an invisible history visible

[www.nyclgbtsites.org](http://www.nyclgbtsites.org)

June 5, 2023

Planning and Land Use Management Committee  
John Ferraro Council Chamber  
Room 340, City Hall  
200 North Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Council File Number: 20-1341

*Testimony of the NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project  
in support of the proposed Historic-Cultural Monument nomination  
for the Morris Kight Residence*

The New York City LGBT Historic Sites Project strongly supports the designation of the Morris Kight Residence as a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument (HCM) for its connection to gay rights activist Morris Kight, a major figure in the LGBTQ civil rights movement in Los Angeles. In its own SurveyLA initiative, the City of Los Angeles has been aware of the site's significance as a known resource through its inclusion in the *LGBT Context Statement*, completed in 2014.

The NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project, founded in 2015 by historic preservation professionals, is an award-winning and nationally recognized cultural heritage initiative and educational resource documenting LGBTQ place-based history in New York City. The Project has documented hundreds of sites from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to 2000 that are important to LGBTQ history and illustrate the community's influence on New York City and American culture. This has led to the designation of LGBTQ landmarks at the city, state, and national levels. The links between Los Angeles and New York City are numerous, and we have worked with our colleagues at the Los Angeles Conservancy to spread the message that LGBTQ history is American history.

Los Angeles holds an important place in the history of LGBTQ activism, with one of its earliest contributions – the founding of the Mattachine Society in 1951 – leading to highly influential chapters elsewhere, including New York City. Morris Kight's house at 1822 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street in Westlake should be preserved as a significant, tangible place in that history, one that helps tell the story of the gay liberation movement in Los Angeles.

The designation of the Morris Kight Residence as an HCM would also send a message to Angelenos that the City of Los Angeles values LGBTQ place-based history as it does all its diverse history. This is particularly crucial at a time when LGBTQ rights have faced pushback across the nation. While LGBTQ history and people are everywhere, it is imperative that major cities like Los Angeles – with a large LGBTQ community that has contributed greatly to the city's history and culture – lead the way in recognizing this vital part of our collective American heritage.

While living in the Westlake house, Kight co-founded the Los Angeles chapter of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF), which originally formed in New York City directly following the 1969 uprising at the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village. The LA chapter of GLF met and operated out of Kight's home. During this period, Kight also co-founded the Gay and Lesbian Community

Services Center, which is known today as the Los Angeles LGBT Center, and the Christopher Street West gay pride parade, which was first held in 1970 on the one-year anniversary of the Stonewall uprising. The earliest Pride marches provided unprecedented opportunities for large numbers of LGBTQ people to come together openly and in solidarity, fighting for equal rights and visibility while instilling pride.

The City of Los Angeles has the opportunity to recognize the Morris Kight Residence as a significant contributor to the city's history. We urge the City of Los Angeles to designate the house an HCM so that current and future generations of Angelenos and visitors can better understand LA's cultural heritage in all its diversity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amanda Davis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "A" and a trailing flourish.

Amanda Davis  
Project Manager

on behalf of

Andrew S. Dolkart, Ken Lustbader, and Jay Shockley, Co-Directors