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Do Not Let The Reclamation of The Bronx's Cultural Legacy Spur More Gentrification

BY **MARK NAISON** | OCTOBER 19, 2015

It is great to see the cultural landmarks of the Bronx, such as the street jazz great Maxine Sullivan lived on, be officially recognized by the New York City Council. And great to see the incredible musical legacy of the Bronx honored by programs like the Bronx Music Heritage Center of [WHEDCo](#).

But it will all go to naught if the Bronx becomes a hot tourist site, is discovered by developers, and rents start to skyrocket, so that current residents are forced out and the young people who now live in the neighborhood will not benefit from the inspiring history that is being uncovered and shared.

Given what has happened in Park Slope, Fort Greene, Clinton Hill, Williamsburg, Harlem and the Lower East Side, and given what is starting to happen in [Bushwick](#), Bedford Stuyvestant and Washington Heights, that scenario is hardly a remote possibility.

The late Morgan Powell warned us what was coming when he sounded the alarm about the market rate housing that was being approved for the [West Farms area](#), and those alarms should go off extra loud given the luxury towers slated to be built across from Harlem near the Third Avenue Bridge.

The many people who have worked so hard to gain recognition for the diversity and resilience and cultural creativity of Bronx neighborhoods before during and after the disinvestment cycle hit the borough did not do so to make the Bronx a site of [real estate investment](#) and cultural tourism that would leave its working class and immigrant population out in the cold, or displaced into nearby suburbs.

But unless its residents and community leaders and elected officials mobilize NOW to make sure Bronx communities remain affordable and prevent displacement, the worst is sure to come

Mark Naison is a Professor of African-American Studies and History at Fordham University and Director of Fordham's Urban Studies Program. This article originally appeared at [withbrooklynaccent.blogspot.com](#).

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