

## AHAC Annual Report 2025

Thank you for this opportunity to review the year and keep you informed on the activities of the AHAC. As you know, Ken Sargeant stepped down from his chairmanship position and Sherry Horowitz and I (Valerie Leis) agreed to function as co-chairs. Our meetings have taken place 11 out of 12 months. Also, effective this past September, Jessica Sewell graciously agreed to act as secretary. Our liasions, Maria and Nora have been very helpful in these transitions. We have seen new members join AHAC and welcome them and their contributions to a group that works well together.

2025 saw the realization of initiatives generated in 2024. They include the first phase of the Banner Program, the Peace Pole, and the Jazz Riverview Concert Series, each having gained momentum throughout the year.

### BANNERS

The banners were extremely well received. Our thanks go to the DPW for their care and installation. The reception at the Black Cow with posters of the banners was standing-room only and Cornelia Cotton gave a very complete talk about each of the artists, many of whom she had known. The banners' impact was observed by the Town of Greenburg as evidenced by its intent to emulate them there.

The banners program requires considerable research including historical documentation, ascertaining artist connections to Croton and the identification of photographs of acceptable quality for reproduction. Each has proven to be a limiting factor. The efforts of Bre Pettis have been exemplary.

The second phase is well on its way. Design has been completed and they ready are for production with hanging as soon as the weather permits in 2026.

### CONCERTS

The concert series continued with packed houses at the library. These were staged on Feb 16 and April 6, and on Sept 28 honoring Jesse Beller. Then in conjunction with the Hansberry Coalition on Oct. 5 there was a tribute **concert** to the "Mighty Triumvirate - Hansberry, Simone and Baldwin. Two other concerts are scheduled for next year, one observing Aaron Copland on Feb.8, and another on March 22 in conjunction with Croton Council on the Arts, Women's Month Celebrations.

### ART SPACE

Also carried over from prior years are ongoing group discussions about the number one AHAC priority which is the establishment of housing for an Arts and Cultural Center for the Village, particularly about Gouveia, which was donated to, and accepted by, the Village for that purpose.

The Council recognizes that it may be some time before Gouveia Park can become an Arts and Cultural Center, as funding for such a project remains a challenge. In the interim, the AHAC is seeking to find space elsewhere in the village and surrounding communities. Toward that end, our final meeting of the year took place at Maple Commons. Artists outside the council were invited to attend and give their opinion on the suitable uses for the space, which Mr. Regan, the builder of the complex, has generously offered. Art space considerations will continue to be in the forefront of our efforts.

### ART INSTALLATIONS

Continuing also from prior years have been conversations about where art, and what kind, may be embedded in the Village not only on private property but upon village owned parcels including parks. With recognition that supporting these kinds of initiatives is part of our mission, locations for the peace pole were discussed. A copy of a map with some possible sites is attached.

The Peace Pole was the first permanent art installation to be completed this year. An inaugural ceremony at Croton Landing is in planning for spring 2026.

#### EVENTS and INITIATIVES

In addition to initiatives first conceived in prior years, AHAC's Drum Circle resulted in a good deal of community participation. Replicating that event during cold months is difficult but we are looking for possible venues. It will certainly be revisited in the spring. The 2025 circle was led by Alex Dyer a former AHAC chair and he has agreed to lead one again.

Dispersed throughout the year many other projects have been introduced with formal proposals soon to follow and can be expected. They vary in complexity and some may require substantial funding but are significant in re-establishing Croton as the arts-forward community it once was.

They include the following:

- Line dancing: Sherry Horowitz and Bre Pettis
- Decorative benches around the village: Samantha Raines
- Another concert series: Andy Farber and Ken Sargeant
- Chalkin' on Hudson: Jessica Sewell and Ken Sargeant
- Plein air art event(s): Valerie Leis
- Poster Contest: Valerie Leis

We also recognize that there are other roles for AHAC and we will be considering them:

- Public Arts Projects need a review process that is encouraging, community focused and fair.
- Developing such a process is a high priority for AHAC: Sherry Horowitz and Valerie Leis.

A Village requirement that all new large scale construction projects designate 1% of the costs for the arts. Many other communities, including Peekskill, have adopted such legislation. Bre Pettis.

The community would benefit from an Architectural Review Board: Valerie Leis.

