

We have a chance
to redeem New York City,
building by building.

I urge the LPC to take
immediate action to protect
857 Riverside Drive.

*–Raul Rothblatt
Downtown Brooklyn
Abolitionist History Advocate*

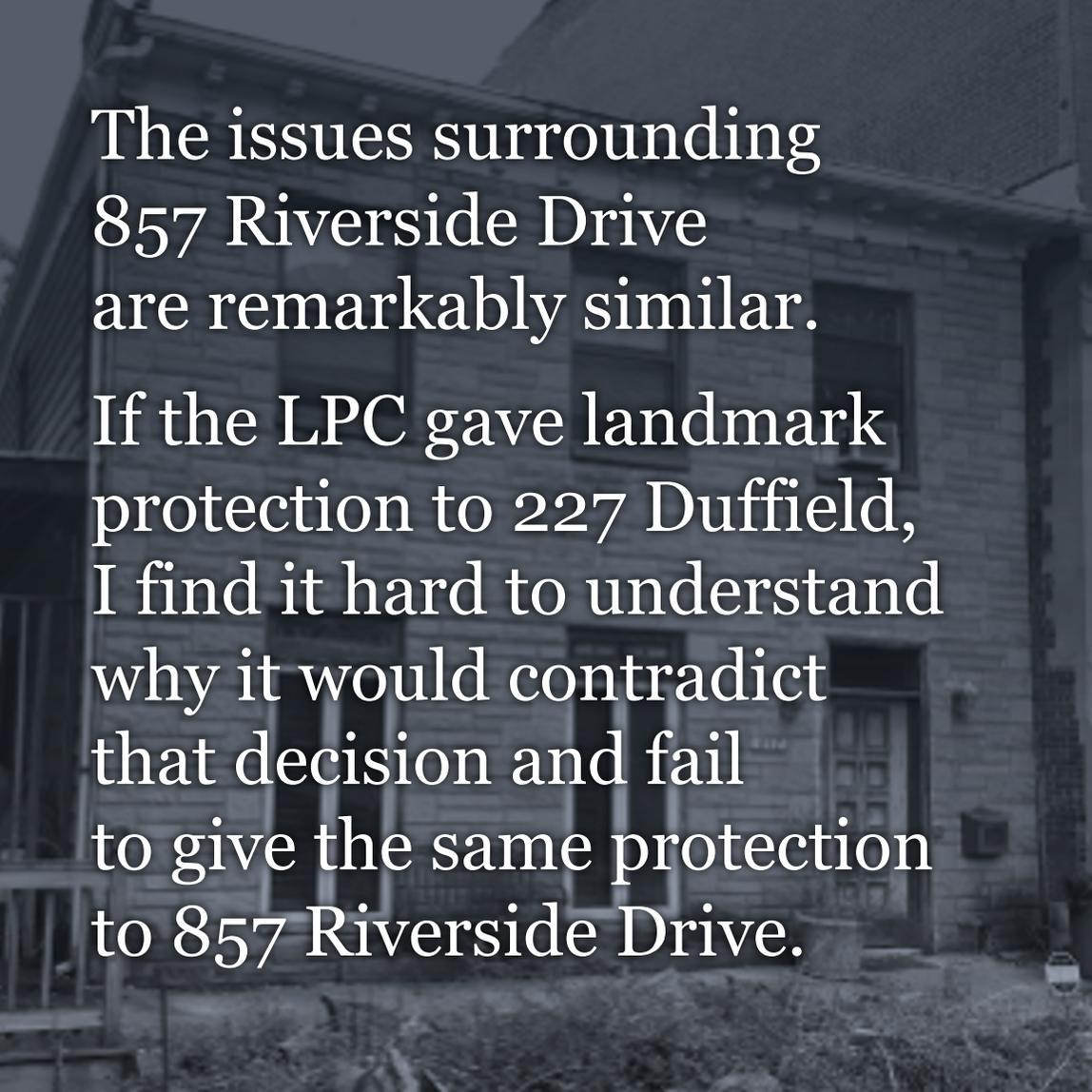


I became an advocate of 227 Duffield in 2004, and for the first five years of our struggle, we worked hard to convince the LPC to give landmark protection to Mama Joy's home.

When I met with LPC Chair Robert Tierney in 2009 and asked him about landmark status for the likely stop on the underground railroad, without irony he responded, *"That train has left the station."*

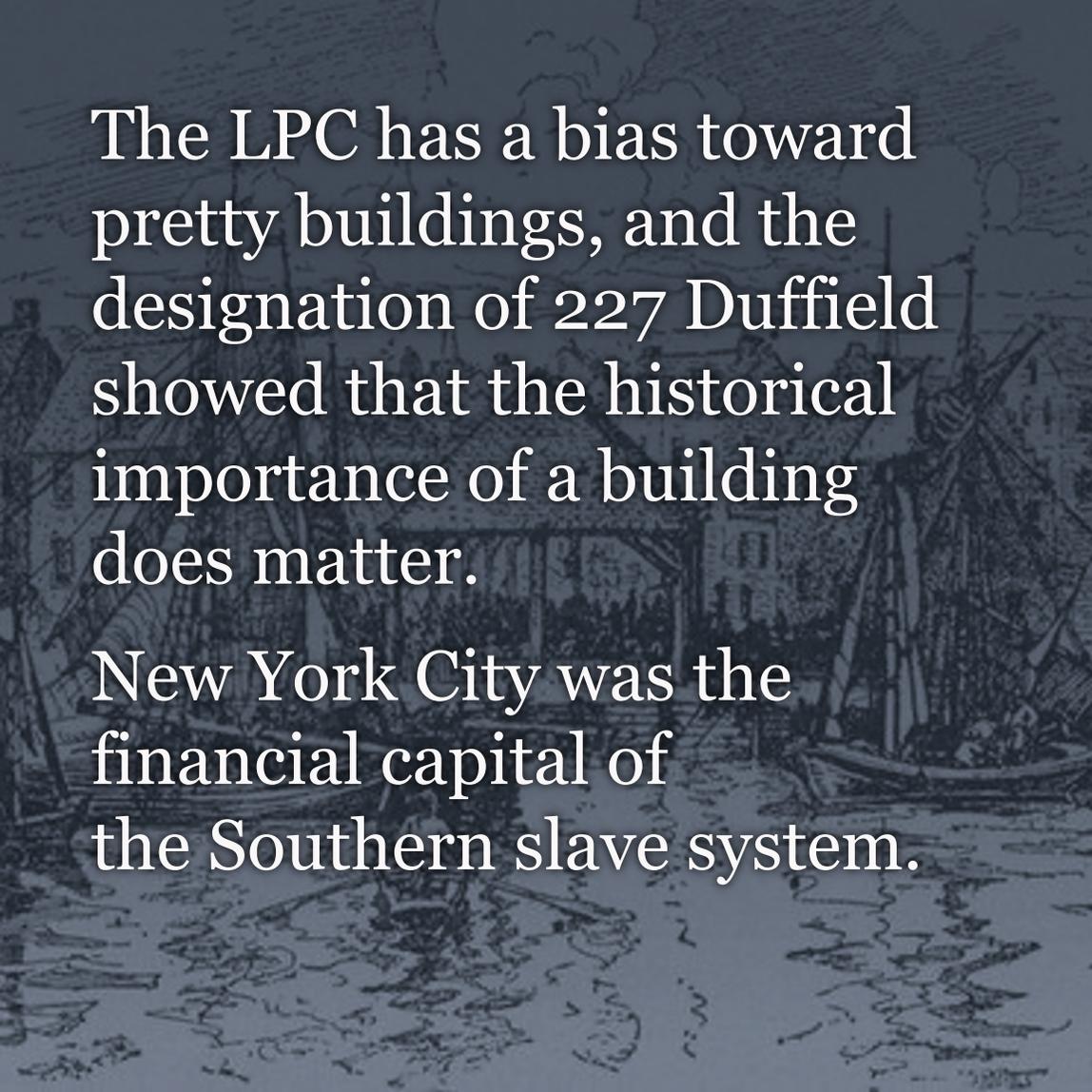
It took another dozen years for the LPC to finally correct their previous denial of the importance of 227 Abolitionist Place.

The designation was a victory for people who love the LPC and who celebrate that it was living up to its mission.



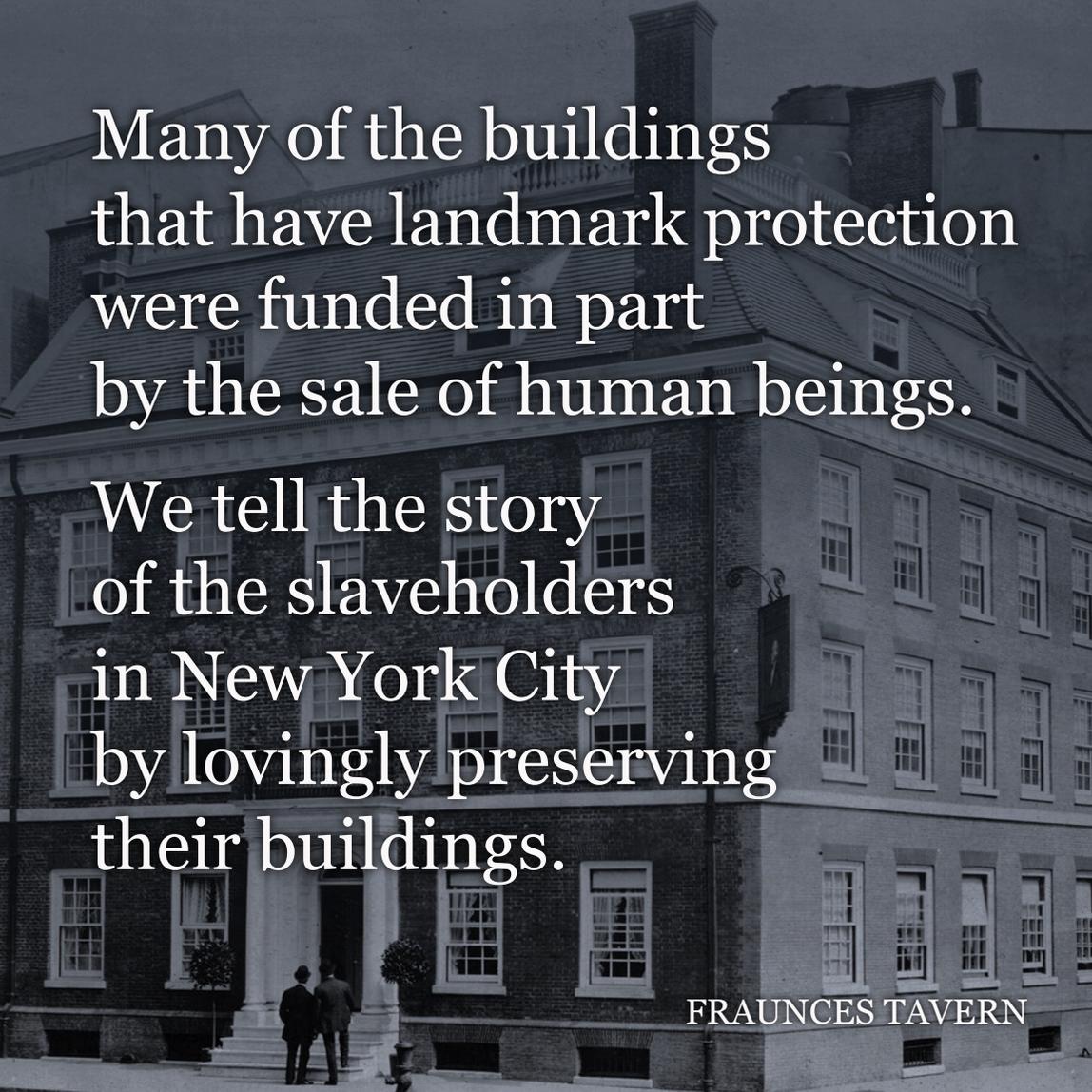
The issues surrounding
857 Riverside Drive
are remarkably similar.

If the LPC gave landmark
protection to 227 Duffield,
I find it hard to understand
why it would contradict
that decision and fail
to give the same protection
to 857 Riverside Drive.



The LPC has a bias toward pretty buildings, and the designation of 227 Duffield showed that the historical importance of a building does matter.

New York City was the financial capital of the Southern slave system.



Many of the buildings
that have landmark protection
were funded in part
by the sale of human beings.

We tell the story
of the slaveholders
in New York City
by lovingly preserving
their buildings.

FRAUNCES TAVERN

The LPC's mission is not to protect the story only of slaveholders.

We have a chance to broaden the story of New York City.

Obliterating the remnants of the people who resisted slavery is an abomination, and it is not a task worthy of the LPC.

In 2021 it seems to be doing a better job and did a big splash with its equity framework during Black History Month in 2021.

But the equity framework loses credibility if it is neglected after February ends.

227 Abolitionist Place is important because its owners stood for freedom at a time when the civic and business leaders of Brooklyn openly supported White Supremacy.

But this was not just the case
in Brooklyn.

I am inspired by the story of
857 Riverside Drive, and it is a
powerful message that the
Abolitionist spirit in New York
was not confined to my borough
of Brooklyn.

**BLACK
HISTORY
MATTERS**

SaveRiverside.org





Letter of support from RAUL ROTHBLATT,
Downtown Brooklyn Abolitionist History Advocate
and a major force in the years long effort to designate
227 Duffield Street as a NYC Landmark.