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## **NYC DDC, DOT, and Senator Adriano Espaillat Celebrate the Completion of W. 215th Step Street Reconstruction**

### *Century-old Step Street restored for Inwood community*

**NEW YORK**— Yesterday, the Department of Design and Construction (DDC), New York City Department of Transportation (DOT), and State Senator Adriano Espaillat announced that the West 215th Step Street reconstruction in Inwood was complete at the stairway’s ribbon cutting ceremony. The W. 215th Step Street was first built in 1915 and serves as a vital pedestrian corridor between Park Terrace East and Broadway. Reconstruction began in September 2013.



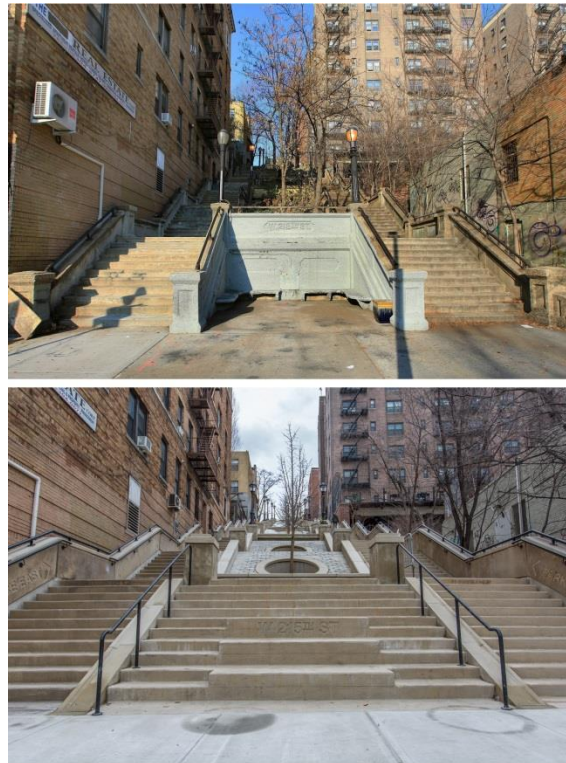
(Left to right: Assemblyman Guillermo Linares, DDC Commissioner Feniosky Peña-Mora, Manhattan Community Board 12 Chair Shah Ally, State Senator Adriano Espaillat, Councilmember Ydanis Rodriguez, and DOT Manhattan Borough Commissioner Margaret Forgiione)

“This Step Street has connected Inwood residents to the subway and local businesses for a full century, and we are happy to continue that legacy with our partners at the DOT,” said **Dr. Feniosky Peña-Mora, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Design and Construction**. “In keeping with Mayor de Blasio’s vision for healthy living in the city, W. 215th Step Street serves as an option that expedites travel through the neighborhood and encourages pedestrians to exercise by walking up and down the stairs to

reach their destinations. With the addition of bike channels, we also hope to encourage cyclists to incorporate Inwood in their routes with the knowledge that they can easily access the neighborhood without having to fret about carrying their bikes.”

“Inwood is known for its steep hills, and the West 215th Step Street serves as a vital means of access,” said **DOT Manhattan Borough Commissioner Margaret Forgiione**. “Thanks to funding from the Federal grants and State Senator Espaillat, I am pleased to see reconstruction completed so that the Inwood community can now enjoy a safer, greener, and a more welcoming stairwell to reach their destinations.”

**State Senator Adriano Espaillat** (D-Manhattan/Bronx) said, “It’s exciting to see a renovated 215th Step Street open to the public after years of working to restore this century old neighborhood connection. These steps, which tie Inwood together, are now safer, more convenient, and more aesthetically pleasing, thanks to the work of the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) and Department of Design and Construction (DDC).”



(Above: Before-and-after of the DDC’s reconstruction of W. 215 Step Street)

At 110 steps, 200 feet long, and 35 feet wide, the W. 215th Step Street connects a residential section of Inwood to Broadway, a more commercial street with subway access (1 subway line). The W. 215th Step Street reconstruction and rehabilitation is part of a larger citywide effort to revitalize step streets, which serve as crucial community corridors. At a cost of \$2.49 million, the project was funded through a Federal grant, along with funding from State Senator Espaillat (then Assembly Member), and former Council Member Robert Jackson.

The design of the new Step Street took into consideration community input and the City’s commitment to design quality:

- Additional lampposts with LED lighting, including two restored landmarked “globe” lampposts
- Improved drainage, with the addition of two drainage channels and more stormwater collection points. This includes permeable cobblestones surrounding the tree beds, that are designed after step streets in Paris
- Added handrails, guardrails, and wider steps for improved safety
- Installation of bicycle channels, which allow bikes to be walked along the steps without being carried
- Linden trees (species: Tilia Americana McKSentry ) for added greenery
- Motivational quotations related to steps and achievement by Martin Luther King, Jr. (“Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the whole staircase.”) and Lao Tzu (“A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.”)
- Directional and step inscriptions, indicating the location and the number of steps and distance traveled up them

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#### **ABOUT THE NYC DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION**

The Department of Design and Construction is the City’s primary capital construction project manager. In supporting Mayor de Blasio’s lenses of growth, sustainability, resiliency, equity and healthy living, DDC provides communities with new or renovated public buildings, new or upgraded roadways, sewers, water mains in all five boroughs. To manage this \$10 billion portfolio, DDC partners with other City agencies, architects and consultants, whose experience bring efficient, innovative, and environmentally-conscious design and construction strategies to City projects. For more information, please visit [nyc.gov/DDC](http://nyc.gov/DDC).