

ASLA HONORARY MEMBERSHIP NOMINATION NARRATIVE

Nominee: Warrie Price, President, The Battery Conservancy

Nominee's Address: 1 Whitehall Street / 17th Floor / New York, NY 10004

Nominee's Phone: 212.344.3491

Nominator: Laura Starr, Past President NY ASLA; on behalf of ASLA NY Chapter

For more than two decades, Warrie Price has been a powerful force in reacquainting Downtown Manhattan with its open space, history, and legacy of natural abundance. Through The Battery Conservancy, which she founded in 1994, Warrie has overseen the redesign and reconstruction of New York City's birthplace and Downtown Manhattan's largest public park. What was once a barren hardscape has become a variegated urban oasis with sustainable year-round gardens, an urban farm, moments of levity and play, and honored tributes to the past. Every detail of The Battery reflects Warrie's unflagging enthusiasm and commitment to stewardship of the natural world, history, and city life.

Born in San Antonio, Texas, Warrie's path to The Battery began at the University of Texas at Austin, where she became acquainted through a roommate with Lady Bird Johnson (Honorary ASLA). Mrs. Johnson became a lifelong mentor to Warrie, introducing her to the joys and importance of public service and landscape stewardship. As a result of this relationship and time spent observing a life in service in the White House, Warrie joined the Foreign Service, acting as an Assistant Cultural Attaché in Santiago, Chile. After four years of service in Chile, Warrie received a fellowship to attend Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, where she became one of the first women to graduate with a Master's of Public Administration in 1972.

From Harvard, Warrie was recruited into the NYC Bureau of the Budget, where she received an immersive education in City function and finance. A subsequent assignment with Citicorp and a stint as Chair of Manhattan's Community Board 8 rounded out her experience with in-depth lessons in private-sector management and technology, land use and community-based planning, and the politics of New York City's dynamic neighborhoods. She served on the boards of the Boston University School of Medicine, Scenic Hudson, and the Manhattan Borough President's Taskforce on Waterfront Development. She was a founding director of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin, Texas, which exists to introduce people to the beauty and diversity of wildflowers and native plants. In upstate New York, she created the 1740 Farmstead Garden, which fosters native and sustainable landscapes, and has been featured in the Garden Conservancy's Open Days program.

In 1994, Warrie set her sights on The Battery. Located at the tip of Lower Manhattan, this 25-acre park was the historic landing point for Dutch explorers, and today is a point of passage for visitors to the Statue of Liberty. Castle Clinton, a National Parks Service monument and centerpiece of the park, was built to serve as a fort in the War of 1812, and served from 1855 to 1890 as the United States' first official immigration center. The Battery is a historic gateway to both the city and the country; Warrie, encountering the dilapidated park in 1994, saw potential for the landscape to better honor the site's history.

Using acumen acquired through her experiences navigating the city's public, private, and political sectors, Warrie formed The Battery Conservancy, forging key partnerships with the City of New York, New York State, and the US Federal Government, all of whom have jurisdictions within the park. Under her leadership, the Conservancy has raised more than \$44 million in private gifts, leveraged to secure an additional \$80 million in government funds. The Conservancy has been lauded as a model for public-private partnerships; its work has succeeded in revitalizing New York City's oldest continuously-used public open space.

Today, The Battery sees over 6 million visitors and 12 million commuters annually. Its once-barren acreage boasts 75,000 square feet of lush gardens featuring sustainable perennials and native plantings designed by Piet Ouldof, and a grove of 140 plane trees that stand sentry in the Battery Bosque. The park's thoughtful redesign accommodates large gatherings and performances while carving out space for individual contemplation or quiet conversation. Moments of amusement and joy are sprinkled throughout the park in the form of a spiral water fountain, pavement-embedded musical chimes, and (soon to come) a new playground and carousel. In 2010, Warrie partnered with nearby Millenium High School to dedicate an acre of the park for use as an urban farm. Her influence can be seen in the park's minutest details: a bulkhead fence, commissioned through an artists' competition, tells the story of harbor ecology; new, commissioned, chairs will soon replace standard park benches; bamboo used in the urban farm was recycled from a rooftop sculpture at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Beyond revitalizing The Battery's physical landscape, Warrie has worked tirelessly to honor the park's history, embedding historic references into new features. The new SeaGlass Carousel's nautilus shell structure, soundtrack, and details recall the original New York Aquarium, housed at The Battery from 1895-1941. Online, Warrie has honored Castle Clinton's legacy by creating an invaluable resource at CastleGarden.org, where 70 years of immigration records are now publicly accessible and searchable.

Looking toward the future, Warrie has become a committed advocate for improving Manhattan's resiliency to climate change and storm events, offering to explore topographic alterations to The Battery in order to protect the vulnerable Financial District and create new visitor amenities. Just as her attention to detail, indomitable energy, and crystalline vision have guided the transformation of this precious public space for 20 years, so we expect them to lead us into a sustainable, resilient, and beautiful future. It is with the greatest pleasure that I recommend her for Honorary ASLA membership.

Sincerely,



Laura Starr, ASLA

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Honorary Membership Nomination
Carolyn Mitchell
Coordinator, Honors and Awards
The American Society of Landscape Architects
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Dear Ms Mitchell,

I have known Warrie Price ever since she was growing up in the same neighborhood where my family lived in San Antonio. Our friendship through the years deepened after we both became New Yorkers and I had the opportunity to admire her political savvy and civic-mindedness. As fellow "parkies," I took note of the way in which she used her education in city planning and public policy from the Kennedy School of Government to launch a volunteer career in public service. While remaining a heart-and-soul New Yorker, she has maintained loyalty to her Texas roots, as her participation in the founding of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center testifies.

After seeing how, as chairman of Community Board 8, Warrie led the reconstruction of all six parks in the CB8 district and was instrumental in creating a new park overlooking the East River at 59th Street in 1993, I suggested that she establish a public-private park partnership for The Battery based on the Central Park Conservancy model. Fortunately for everyone who loves New York, she accepted the challenge to oversee the implementation of a master plan to guide the park's restoration.

Today, Warrie's success in working with landscape architects and architects to transform what was in the 1980s a severely neglected and abused major public space is evident. It is based in no small degree on her ability to forge partnerships with overlapping jurisdictions of city, state and federal agencies, private sector organizations, and individual donors.

Her commitment to landscape embraces gardens as well as parks, and horticulture as well as people. This is evident in the Battery Bosque, a series of perennial beds within the park, and the Battery Urban Farm.

I believe Warrie Price exemplifies the ideals of the ASLA, of which I am an honorary member, and hope that her great achievements will be recognized with the prestigious Honorary ASLA award.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Barlow Rogers



The City of New York

Manhattan Community Board 1

Catherine McVay Hughes CHAIRPERSON | Noah Pfefferblit DISTRICT MANAGER

Honorary Membership Nomination
Carolyn Mitchell
Coordinator, Honors and Awards
The American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Re: Honorary Membership Nomination of Warrie Price

Dear Ms. Mitchell,

I understand that The New York Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) would like to nominate Warrie Price for a National Honorary ASLA award.

Manhattan Community Board 1 wholeheartedly supports the nomination of Warrie Price, the Founder and President of The Battery Conservancy, recognizing her years of dedication.

Ms. Price's vision has included recovery of a significant park of both national and international significance and influence after the tragedy of September 11, 2001, and Superstorm Sandy when water levels on land reached seven feet. In addition, she led the creation of the first Urban Farm in our community which has brought together school children of all ages and backgrounds to connect with the soil and our roots.

In a densely populated community of 65,000 residents, 320,000 workers and 14 million tourists as of 2014, Ms. Price has made The Battery the jewel of Lower Manhattan parks. Millions of visitors pass through this precious park that has been transformed from a once forlorn, deserted area. They enjoy an oasis of green that would never have been realized without her leadership and persistence.

The Battery Conservancy is now also becoming a key leader in using parks to help us become more resilient as we adapt to extreme climate change.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Catherine McVay Hughes'.

Catherine McVay Hughes
Chair

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To the ASLA Board of Trustees;

I am writing to endorse the nomination of Warrie Price as Honorary ASLA.

Possibly no person has done more to support the practice of landscape architecture and public gardens as Warrie Price, founder Administrator, and President of the Battery Conservancy, overseeing the extraordinary revitalization of historic Battery Park.

I have known Warrie for over two decades, working as her lead partner representing the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation. Warrie conceived of and built a board of citizens for the Battery Conservancy, long before there were significant numbers of residents living in Lower Manhattan. She worked to convince the city and elected officials to support this partnership and sprinkled magic on this tired, worn-out park whose best days may well have been in the 19th century, when Castle Clinton served first as a performance space, then an immigration center, and as an aquarium.

While it was no easy task to build political and financial support to raise over \$100 million in public and private funds, Warrie saved her passion for the landscape of the park. She was the first person to bring extraordinary Dutch plant expert and garden designer Piet Oudolf to New York City, to design the Gardens of Remembrance, and she worked with notable landscape architecture firms, including Saratoga Associates, Olin Studio, Cooper, Robertson & Partners, and Starr Whitehouse to create both master plans and designs for various segments of the park.

Seemingly indefatigable, irrepressible, and irresistible, Warrie found strength in the aftermath of the devastation of 9/11 to use the awful damage as a springboard for the psychic and physical renaissance of Lower Manhattan, literally making gardens bloom from the ashes of the worst attack in America's history. She rose to the challenge again, in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, and now her vision for a beautifully restored and enlivened park is almost complete. Always, her watchword was "beauty," and for being an unapologetic advocate for the power of beautiful gardens and landscapes in the lives of New Yorkers and visitors from all over the world, no one could be more deserving of Honorary ASLA membership than Warrie Price.

Sincerely,

Adrian Benepe
Senior Vice President
Director of City Park Development
The Trust for Public Land

Honorary Membership Nomination
American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC
20001

Honorary Membership in ASLA

Letter in support of Warrie Price
Founder and President of The Battery Conservancy

Dear ASLA Executive Committee and Board of Trustees:

It is an honor to support the nomination of Warrie Price for Honorary Membership in the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Warrie has completely reimagined The Battery. Her remarkable leadership and ethos is grounded in her true love for the urban landscape and, most of all, for the people who are enriched every day by its presence. Year after year, I have observed her tireless commitment to The Battery and its astonishing landscape. Her guidance and vision touches so many. She is a diligent and poetic collaborator; lively and supportive with a unique and spirited curiosity. Warrie is truly an exemplary leader and I wholeheartedly support this Honorary Membership.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Thomas Phifer FAIA

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