

Rozanne Look



May 19, 2022

RE: Application for Induction of Linda Leaks into the Cooperative Hall of Fame

To The Cooperative Hall of Fame Committee:

I have been working in the field of affordable housing for over 30 years in DC. Linda has helped create more cooperatives in DC than anybody I know. Some of the ones that she helped create include:

- Champlain Court Cooperative – 2370 Champlain Street, NW
- Malcolm X Cooperative – 1701 Euclid Street, NW
- Ella Jo Baker Intentional Community Cooperative – 2548 University Place, NW
- 919 L Street NW Cooperative – 919 L Street NW
- Nehemiah Cooperative – 2425 14th Street, NW
- Harriet Tubman Cooperative – 1111 Lamont Street, NW
- 1425 T Street Cooperative - 1425 T Street, NW
- Florian Gardens Cooperative – 9th and Peabody Street, NW
- Voices of Madison Cooperative – 700 Madison Street, NW

I first met Linda when we worked together at Washington Inner City Self Help in the late 1980's. She was a tireless advocate for using cooperatives to prevent tenants from being displaced from their homes due to rapid gentrification. We worked together to create several cooperatives using DC's unique Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA). Tenants could purchase their buildings and finally have control over their housing. Linda was the tenant organizer, and I was the project manager that got the financing for the purchase and renovation of the buildings.

Linda had a unique way of interacting with tenants to put them at ease so they could focus on the problem at hand. Even when facing threats of eviction, she could help tenants focus on the next steps – how we are going to solve each problem – one after the other. She gave tenants hope and confidence that we were going to be successful! And Linda never gave up. Year after year she has been on the front lines of fighting for affordable housing.

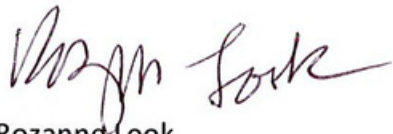
Many years later I worked again with Linda on the Ella Jo Baker Intentional Community Cooperative. I was the Director of Project Development at Manna, a DC non-profit real estate developer. The Housing Authority was willing to donate four vacant buildings to Manna. So

Manna brought the buildings and Linda brought the people to create "Ella Jo" - a beautiful intentional living community that helped activists gain a safe living space, to support them in their struggle to organize for justice throughout the city. Working with Linda and the rest of the Cooperative members was the highlight of my more than 30 years of developing affordable housing in DC!

Because of these reasons, I strongly recommend Linda Leaks be inducted into the Cooperative Hall of Fame.

Please contact me at 202-534-1051 if you would like more information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rozanne Look". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rozanne" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Look".

Rozanne Look

Director of Project Development of Manna, Inc.