

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 240091)

RESOLUTION

Honoring and commemorating the life and legacy of revered Philadelphian, professor, and architect, Emanuel Kelly.

WHEREAS, Renowned architect and Temple University Professor, Emanuel Kelly, passed away on January 12, 2024, at the age of 80; and

WHEREAS, Kelly was widely recognized as an expert in city planning, urban design, and neighborhood revitalization and was involved in numerous notable projects including the refurbishment of courthouses in City Hall, and the creation of the new West Philadelphia High School, the Criminal Justice Center, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the John Coltrane museum, and the Big Cat Falls at the Philadelphia Zoo; and

WHEREAS, In 1976, Kelly teamed up with Vincent Maiello to found Kelly Maiello Architects, one of the City's first Black-owned architectural firms, which went on to design many cultural landmarks in Philadelphia, including the President's House at Independence Historical Park, the Pennsylvania Convention Center expansion, the Kingsessing Recreation Center renovation and still maintains a robust roster of clients; and

WHEREAS, Among his many awards and accolades, Kelly had his work recognized by the Beyond the Built Environment advocacy group. He also received the Minority Enterprise Development Committee's 2002 Pioneer Award, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's 2010 Visionary in Historic Preservation Award, and the 2020 Medal of Distinction from the Pennsylvania chapter of the American Institute of Architects; and

WHEREAS, Always a proponent of thoughtful design and development, Kelly was known to champion projects that preserved the historical context of the surrounding neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, With a goal of promoting social equity through design, Kelly cofounded the Community Design Collaborative in 1991, was active with the Design Advocacy Group and the National Organization of Minority Architects, and in 1993 became the first Black president of the Philadelphia chapter of the American Institute of Architects; and

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WHEREAS, As an educator, Kelly was no less prolific. Remembered by his students as insightful and approachable, he spent 20 years as a professor of architecture at Temple University before retiring in the early 2000s; and

WHEREAS, Taking an active role in local government, Kelly became the chair of the Philadelphia Art Commission in 2015 and served on both the Philadelphia Zoning Reform Commission and the Philadelphia Community Development Forum; and

WHEREAS, Never one to slow down, at the time of his passing, Kelly was on the design team for the African American Museum of Bucks County as well as a Board member of the Fabric Workshop and Museum and Design Advocacy Group Steering Committee member; and

WHEREAS, Kelly was born in Philadelphia on September 18, 1943, raised in West Philadelphia, and graduated from West Philadelphia High School, initially working construction jobs, gaining experience in design and project management; and

WHEREAS, Realizing his budding passion, Kelly ultimately entered Drexel University night classes in 1961, graduating in 1971 with a bachelor's degree in architecture, later earning a master's degree in city planning and urban design from Harvard University in 1974; and

WHEREAS, A dedicated family man, Kelly loved spending time with his family and friends, traveling the world with his wife, Dyan, and was a lover of arts and culture; and

WHEREAS, Kelly will be remembered across Philadelphia as a design professional, affordable housing advocate, teacher, and friend; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Honoring and commemorating the life and legacy of revered Philadelphian, professor, and architect, Emanuel Kelly.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Dyan Kelly, in recognition of this occasion, further evidencing the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the eighth day of February, 2024.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Gauthier

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Gauthier, Landau, O'Rourke, Brooks, Squilla,
Harrity, Driscoll, Gilmore Richardson and Ahmad