



Tenant Inquilino

Housing for people, not profit

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Metropolitan Council on Housing
339 Lafayette St.
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PERIODICAL



State's Highest Court OKs Mass Eviction

By Steven Wishnia

The tenants of 47 East Third Street suffered a major defeat June 3 in their struggle to avoid mass eviction, when the state's highest court ruled that there are no limits on the number of apartments a landlord can claim for personal use.

The state Court of Appeals unanimously upheld a February 2007 ruling by the Appellate Division. Because the rent-stabilization laws allow landlords to recover "one or more" apartments for use as their primary residence, it said, the Third Street tenants could not stop the building's owners, Alistair and Catherine Economakis, from evicting them all and converting the 15-apartment building into a five-story mansion.

Tenant Barry Paddock called the decision "disastrous" in an e-mail to supporters, saying it "gives a giant green light to other landlords looking to empty their buildings of rent-regulated tenants."

"This case is a symbol of a new Gilded Age where

wealth comes before human needs," said Stephen Dobkin, one of the tenants' lawyers. "There's a critical shortage of affordable housing. Allowing one owner to recover 15 apartments for his own use severely undermines the protections of the rent-stabilization law and the preservation of affordable housing."

Dobkin argued that the Economakis' plans for the building were "a demolition in sheep's clothing," that permanently removing 15 apartments from the rent-stabilization market was "fundamentally different" from an owner occupying one or two apartments themselves or claiming them for a family member. And if a landlord wants to claim occupancy of an apartment for personal use, he continued, the law says the apartment must remain in the rent-stabilization system, they must occupy the apartment reasonably soon after it is vacated, and they must occupy it for three years. That would be im-

possible in this case, he contended, as the Economakis would be unable to occupy the apartments until all the tenants were gone and the renovations completed.

State Supreme Court Justice Faviola Soto accepted those arguments. In 2006, she held that the Economakis would need permission from the state Division of Housing and Community Renewal in order to remove the entire building from rent stabilization. But the Ap-

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pellate Division overturned Soto, and the Court of Appeals upheld it.

The Appellate Division said the law requiring landlords to get permission

from DHCR before taking the building out of rent stabilization applies only when the owner required

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HPD Bars Predatory Trinity House Sale

By Kenny Schaeffer

The city Department of Housing Preservation and Development has decided to block the proposed sale of Trinity House, a Mitchell-Lama rental on Manhattan's Upper West Side, because the terms of the agreement did not ensure that the apartments would remain affordable after the sale.

The agency rejected the sale of Trinity House, a 199-apartment building at 100 West 92nd St. built by Trinity School in 1969, to condominium developer Pembroke Properties for a price estimated at more than \$30 million. According to Amy Chan of Tenants & Neighbors, who helped mobilize support to block the sale, HPD acknowledged that the high price—which included a \$24 million profit

for Trinity School—meant that the transaction would have been predatory. To make a profit at that price, the new owner would have had to force existing tenants out and raise rents to market levels, in contravention of the Mitchell-Lama program's express purpose.

On May 23, a joint press release issued by City Councilmember Gale Brewer, state Senator Bill Perkins, Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, Assemblymember Daniel O'Donnell, and Rep. Charles Rangel praised HPD for responding to community pressure by refusing to sanction the proposed sale.

"I see this as a step in the right direction for the City of New York and an agency that has not done all that

it can for preserving affordable housing," Rangel said, adding that he hoped HPD "will continue to play a more aggressive role in executing its mission of housing preservation."

Councilmember Brewer pointed out that the supply of affordable Mitchell-Lama apartments in her Upper West Side district has fallen precipitously as owners have "opted out" of the subsidy program. "There were 20 in my area six years ago, and now there are only three, including Trinity House," she noted.

Although the sale to Pembroke appears blocked, Trinity School says it is determined to dispose of the property. The Trinity House tenants are working to put together an offer, possibly in partnership

with a nonprofit, to ensure that the building remains affordable permanently.

"Tenants are elated that HPD has decided to do what we feel is the right thing, to preserve the affordable housing that is so important to the city," declared Christine Spencer, cochair

of the Trinity House Tenants Association. "We hope that Trinity School will decide to work with us to come to an agreement that will benefit everyone in the community."

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DHCR Commissioner Speaks on Rent Reform

By Kate Pastor

Excerpts from a City Limits Weekly interview with state Division of Housing and Community Renewal Commissioner Deborah VanAmerongen.

Given your years working in housing, what vision do you bring to this job? Do you have specific goals for the agency?

Absolutely. I, first of all, feel like housing is an incredibly important issue and one that has not received enough attention. While the mayor has made it a big issue here in the city of New York and has made a concerted effort through the efforts of groups like Housing First to have it be a prominent issue, I don't think it has received enough attention at the statewide level. I think a lot of people in the state capital and a lot of people in previous administrations, or people that are still with the state Legislature, looked at affordable

housing as a social-service kind of program. And while we certainly serve important needs for persons who need affordable housing, I also feel very strongly that it is economic development, and it is community revitalization, and that that message in combination with the social service needs that we are serving is a winning argument for affordable housing.

New York State was at one time a real leader in the field of affordable housing. The first public housing in the nation was here in New York City. The Mitchell-Lama program was created by the New York State Legislature. It was a model for other programs done around the country and never has been completely replicated anywhere else. We were the first state and one of the leaders in utilization of federal resources when the federal government was investing a lot in affordable hous-

ing. A lot of work was done here in New York, and I feel like we had somewhat slipped in recent years. And I thought: I want to take us back to that time where we are a leader in affordable housing.

As one of your first orders of business you closed the "unique and peculiar" loophole. Why did you do that? [Previous interpretations of this regulation gave landlords a way to bring rents in former Mitchell-Lama buildings up to market rate.]

"Unique and peculiar" was something that, frankly, I'm surprised this agency was able to refrain from taking a position on for as long as it had. I felt like it was fundamentally unfair to both the owners and the tenants. Owners of properties, or a person who was interested in purchasing a property, were making an investment with an assumption about what they thought they might get in rents, which I think was a false assumption. It was a misinterpretation of what the "unique and peculiar" regulation was ever intended to be. But because the agency had

never said, 'no, that's not correct,' some people took that gamble and paid more for properties than could be supported by what the rents were actually going to be.

It was a much worse situation for tenants, because a lot of them were actually in danger of losing their homes. So I think it was fundamentally inappropriate for us as an agency to not articulate the fact that these buyouts or opt-outs of either Mitchell Lama or other government programs did not in any way look or sound like a "unique and peculiar" application. I think it's appropriate for a government agency to say what their regulations mean, and not to sit back and say 'well, you know, you can continue operating in the dark, and it's okay.' We're going to try to deal fairly with people and be honest about what we think our own regulations mean.

Would you, or do you, support legislation that would lower the amount landlords could raise rent on vacancies?

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EL INQUILINO HISPANO

La corte más alta del estado da el visto bueno a desalojo en masa

Por Steven Wishnia

Los inquilinos del 47 este de la calle 3 sufrieron el 3 de junio una derrota importante en su lucha para evitar un desalojo en masa, cuando la corte más alta del estado decidió que no hay límites en la cantidad de apartamentos que un casero puede reclamar para su uso personal.

La Corte de Apelaciones estatal confirmó unánimemente una decisión de febrero de 2007 tomada por la División de Apelaciones. Ya que las leyes de renta estabilizada permiten a los caseros recuperar "uno o más" apartamentos para uso como su residencia principal, dijo, los inquilinos del este de la calle 3 no pudieron evitar que los dueños del edificio, Alistair y Catherine Economakis, los desalojaran a todos y convirtieran el edificio de 15 apartamentos en una mansión de cinco pisos.

El inquilino Barry Paddock llamó la decisión "desastrosa" en un correo electrónico a sus partidarios, al decir que "da luz verde a otros caseros con vistas a vaciar sus edificios de inquilinos de renta

regulada".

"Este caso es un símbolo de una nueva Época Dorada donde la riqueza precede a las necesidades humanas", dijo Stephen Dobkin, uno de los abogados de los inquilinos. "Hay una escasez crítica de vivienda asequible. Permitir a un dueño recuperar 15 apartamentos por su propio uso socava severamente las protecciones de la ley de renta estabilizada y la conservación de vivienda asequible".

Dobkin sostuvo que los planes de los Economakis para el edificio fueron "una demolición disfrazada de cordero" y que eliminar permanentemente 15 apartamentos del mercado de estabilización de rentas fue "fundamentalmente distinto" a que un dueño ocupara uno o dos apartamentos o los reclamara para un familiar. Además, si un casero quiere reclamar la tenencia de un apartamento para su uso personal, continuó, la ley dice que el apartamento tiene que quedarse en el sistema de estabilización de rentas, el casero debe ocupar el apartamento

razonablemente pronto después de que se vacíe y debe ocuparlo por tres años. Eso sería imposible en este caso, afirmó, ya que los Economakis no podrían ocupar los apartamentos hasta que todos los inquilinos se hubieran ido y las renovaciones se hubieran completado.

La jueza de la Corte Suprema Estatal Faviola Soto aceptó estos argumentos. En 2006, ella falló que los Economakis tenían que conseguir el permiso de la División de Vivienda y Renovación Comunitaria (Division of Housing and Community Renewal, DHCR) estatal para eliminar el edificio entero de la estabilización de rentas. Sin embargo, la División de Apelaciones revocó el fallo de Soto y la Corte de Apelaciones la confirmó.

La División de Apelaciones dijo que la ley que exige a los caseros conseguir el permiso de la DHCR antes de remover el edificio de la estabilización aplica sólo cuando el dueño requiere las unidades para propósitos de negocio o si

el costo de resolver infracciones igualaría o excedería el valor de la propiedad. Este fallo, sostuvo Dobkin en una carta a la Corte de Apelaciones, "no plantea ninguna circunstancia en la cual se impidiera a un casero tomar todos los apartamentos en un edificio para después sacarlos de manera permanente del mercado de alquiler".

La Corte de Apelaciones pasó por alto a este argumento al decir que la Legislatura "tenía la intención de permitir a los dueños vivir en sus propios edificios si eligen hacerlo".

El caso regresa ahora a la Corte de Vivienda, donde los Economakis tratarán de desalojar a los inquilinos. "Los Economakis tienen la carga de probar que están actuando de buena fe y que planean ocupar 15 apartamentos. A nosotros eso parece una carga pesada", dice Dobkin.

Sin embargo, al hablar prácticamente, dice el inquilino Da-

pasa a la página 4

Los Ajustes de la "Junta de Regulación de Renta" de la Ciudad de Nueva York (Orden No. 39)

Para los contratos de apartamentos de Renta Estabilizada que comienzan el 1ro. de octubre de 2007 hasta el 30 de septiembre de 2008.

Renovación de Contrato

Los caseros tienen que ofrecer a los inquilinos de renta estabilizada una renovación de contrato dentro de 90 a 120 días antes de que venza su contrato actual. La renovación de contrato tiene que mantener los mismos términos y condiciones que el contrato que vencerá, excepto cuando refleje un cambio en la ley. Una vez que se haya recibido el ofrecimiento de renovación, los inquilinos tienen 60 días para aceptarlo y escoger si van a renovar el contrato por uno o dos años. El propietario tiene que devolver la copia firmada y fechada al inquilino dentro de 30 días. La nueva renta no entrará en vigencia hasta que empiece el nuevo contrato, o cuando el propietario devuelva la copia firmada (lo que suceda después). Ofrecimientos retrasados: si el casero ofrece la renovación tarde (menos de 90 días antes de que venza el contrato actual), el contrato puede empezar, a la opción del inquilino, o en la fecha que hubiera empezado si se hubiera hecho un ofrecimiento a tiempo, o en el primer pago de renta fechada 90 días después de la fecha del ofrecimiento del contrato. Las pautas de renta usadas para la renovación no pueden ser mayores que los incrementos de la RGB vigentes en la fecha en que el contrato debía empezar (si se lo hubiera ofrecido a tiempo). El inquilino no tiene que pagar el nuevo aumento de renta hasta 90 días después de que se haya hecho el ofrecimiento.

Asignación de Subarriendo

Los caseros podrán cobrar un aumento de 10 por ciento durante el término de subarriendo que comience durante este período de las pautas.

Tipo de Contrato	Renta Legal Actual		Contrato de 1 Año	Contrato de 2 Años
Renovación del Contrato	Todos		3%	5.75%
Contratos para Apartamentos Vacíos	Más de \$500	Incrementos por desocupación cobrados en los últimos 8 años	17.25%	20%
		Incrementos por desocupación no cobrados en los últimos 8 años	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, más el 17.25%	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, más el 20%
	Menos de \$300	Incrementos por desocupación cobrados en los últimos 8 años	17.25% + \$100	20% + \$100
		Incrementos por desocupación no cobrados en los últimos 8 años	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, + 17.25% + \$100	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, + 20% + \$100
	Renta de \$300 a \$500	Incrementos por desocupación cobrados en los últimos 8 años	17.25% o \$100, lo que sea mayor	20% o \$100, lo que sea mayor
		Incrementos por desocupación no cobrados en los últimos 8 años	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, mas 17.25%, o \$100, lo que sea mayor	0.6% por el número de años desde el último incremento por estar vacío, mas 20%, o \$100, lo que sea mayor

Programa de Exención de Incrementos de Renta para las Personas de Mayor Edad Las personas de mayor edad con renta estabilizada (y los que viven en apartamentos de renta controlada, Mitchell-Lama y cooperativas de dividendos limitados), con 62 años o más, y cuyos ingresos familiares disponibles al año sean de \$27,000 o menos (para 2006) y que paguen (o enfrenten un aumento de renta que les haría pagar) un tercio o más de aquel ingreso en renta pueden ser elegibles para una congelación de renta. Solicite a: NYC Dept of the Aging, SCRIE Unit, 2 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10007 o llame al 311 o visite su sitio Web, nyc.gov/html/dfta/html/scrie_sp/scrie_sp.shtml.

Programa de Exención de Incrementos de Renta para Minusválidos Inquilinos con renta regulada que reciben ayuda económica elegible relacionada con discapacidad, que tengan ingresos de \$17,580 o menos para individuales y \$25,212 o menos para una pareja y enfrenten rentas iguales o más de un tercio de sus ingresos pueden ser elegibles para un congelamiento de renta. Solicite a: NYC Dept. of Finance, DRIE Exemptions, 59 Maiden Lane - 20th floor, New York, NY 10038. Llame al 311 para una solicitud o vaya al sitio Web en www.nyc.gov/html/dof/html/property/property_tax_reduc_drie.shtml

Las unidades desvanes
Los aumentos legalizados para unidades

de desván son un 2.5 por ciento por un contrato de un año y 5.25 por ciento por dos años. No se permiten incrementos para las unidades de desván vacías.

Hoteles y SROs

El aumento es un 0 por ciento de la renta cobrada el 30 de septiembre de 2007 para los apartamentos de hotel de clase A, casas de alojamiento, hoteles de clase B (30 o más habitaciones), hoteles de una sola habitación y pensiones (clase B, 6-29 habitaciones).

Exceso de cobro

Los inquilinos deben estar al tanto de que muchos caseros se aprovecharán de las complejidades de estas pautas y concesiones adicionales, además del poco conocimiento de los inquilinos del historial de renta de sus apartamentos,

para cobrar una renta ilegal. Los inquilinos pueden impugnar los aumentos de renta sin autorización en las cortes o al presentar una impugnación con la agencia estatal de vivienda, la División de Vivienda y Renovación Comunitaria (Division of Housing and Community Renewal, DHCR). El primer paso en el proceso es ponerse en contacto con la DHCR para ver el registro oficial del historial de renta. Vaya a www.dhcr.state.ny.us o llame al 718-739-6400 y pida un historial de renta detallado. Luego, hable con un abogado o defensor experto antes de seguir.

Para las pautas previas, llame a la RGB al 212-385-2934 o vaya al www.housingnyc.com

Los inquilinos de Boston responden a la crisis de ejecuciones hipotecarias

Por Steven Wishnia

Traducido por Lightning Translations

Los derechos de los inquilinos afectados por ejecuciones hipotecarias se han vuelto una cuestión de importancia en Boston, donde más de 2,000 familias enfrentan el desalojo solamente porque viven en edificios con hipotecas ejecutadas.

Lo peor de la crisis se encuentra en los vecindarios del sud-este como Roxbury, Mattapan, Dorchester y Hyde Park, escribió el Concejal Municipal Mike Ross en su bitácora de Web. Sin embargo, los inquilinos del área se han organizado contra la crisis al celebrar reuniones semanales y hacer campaña en los edificios que enfrentan ejecución hipote-

caria, dice Steve Meacham, un organizador de City Life/Vida Urbana.

Lo que más ha captado la atención han sido los seis bloqueos al desalojo que han organizado. “Cada vez, la entidad financiera ha cedido y dicho que iba a negociar”, dice Meacham. “Pero todo eso realmente está en un estado de cambio continuo. Las compañías hipotecarias rehúsan hablar, acuerdan hablar, hacen promesas, se retractan de los acuerdos”.

Las cuestiones clave, dice Meacham, son si las compañías hipotecarias permitirán a los residentes de los edificios con hipoteca ejecutada pagar renta, si

aceptarán ofertas de los residentes para comprar los edificios en su valor tasado y si el movimiento puede detener los desalojos después de la ejecución hipotecaria, sea con acciones directas o con legislación que vetaría los “desalojos sin culpa”, o sea los desalojos injustificados, después de la ejecución hipotecaria. Las compañías hipotecarias, los bancos y las entidades financieras tienen un problema con esto, dice, porque alquilar apartamentos o vender los edificios en la tasa del mercado supondría cobrar mucho menos dinero que los pagos hipotecarios y no quieren “admitir que los edificios han perdido la mitad de su valor de la burbuja”.

En la legislatura de Massachusetts están pendientes tres proyectos de ley que tratan el problema. Uno de ellos establecería una moratoria de seis meses para todas las ejecuciones hipotecarias que

resultaran de las prácticas de los préstamos de alto riesgo. Otro requeriría la aprobación judicial antes de que una ejecución hipotecaria pudiera seguir adelante. El tercero vetaría desalojos “sin culpa” en edificios de hipotecas ejecutadas, al impedir que los bancos desalojen a inquilinos sin justificación. Este proyecto de ley congelaría las rentas en edificios con hipotecas ejecutadas, lo que le ha ganado la oposición de organizaciones de caseros, pero permitiría a un nuevo propietario desalojar a los inquilinos, según Ross.

El 14 de mayo, el Concejo Municipal de Boston aprobó unánimemente un mensaje de autonomía que apoyó la legislación de causas justificadas. Meacham dice que una audiencia en abril atrajo 200 partidarios y sólo una persona que testificó en contra de los proyectos de ley.

desalojo en masa

viene de la página 3

vid Pultz, el fallo de la Corte de Apelaciones significa que los inquilinos tienen que demostrar que los Economakis no planean vivir allá realmente. El estándar de prueba que los Economakis tienen que alcanzar es bastante bajo, dice, y en la Corte de Vivienda, “parecía que tropezábamos con un juez conservador tras otro, tenían tantos prejuicios en contra de nosotros”.

Ya que los Economakis sostienen que lo único que quieren hacer es crear un hogar para su familia, el caso puede girar en desenredar la maraña de trámites de bienes raíces por los que obtuvieron el edificio y lo pusieron a sus nombres, dice Pultz. Él explica que la pareja fue involucrada con una compañía que compró el edificio en un procedimiento

de ejecución hipotecaria. Entonces la compañía se declaró en quiebra y entregó el edificio a la pareja como individuos, aparentemente gratis. Los inquilinos también sospechan que el padre de Catherine Economakis, Peter Yatrakis, fue involucrado de una manera u otra, ya que los dos son propietarios en conjunto de una compañía de administración de propiedades y su nombre aparece en los trámites de bancarrota.

Si los Economakis desalojaran a los inquilinos y no se mudaran al edificio, si decidieran alquilar los apartamentos desocupados a la tasa del mercado o venderlos como condominios o cooperativas, no habría consecuencias legales en absoluto. El único castigo que existe en la ley es que no podrían alzar las rentas en los apartamentos de renta estabilizada que quedaran en el edificio, lo que carecería de sentido si no quedarán apartamentos de renta estabilizada.



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DHCR

continued from page 2

I haven't even heard anybody talk about changing the vacancy allowance. ... When it gets to things like this that I've not had the opportunity to talk to the governor about, I think it's somewhat inappropriate for me to articulate personal opinions about things when he may or may not agree with me. And at the end of the day, I'm a gubernatorial appointee, and I will advance the position that the governor takes on these matters. So that one was not one that I had spent anytime looking at. I was not even aware there was legislation to lower it, so I haven't even had a chance to think through whether it makes sense to do that.

Same answer to repealing high-rent vacancy decontrol?

Well, the Governor's Program Bill that we have advanced does not repeal it. It would increase the levels to \$2,800. And we've continued to support that legislation this year. I don't expect the Senate's going to take up any of the rent-regulation reform package this year. I guess they could surprise us and take something up, but I'd be more than slightly surprised. We will have the opportunity because there will be a new legislature in 2009 and we'll have a decision to make about whether to do the same Governor's Program Bill or to do something else.

What about rent overcharges other than major capital improvement (MCI) increases? Is there anything new on that front?

We've dealt with the issue of preferential rents, which can come into overcharges. We're obviously aware of the fact that there are ownership groups where we tend to get more complaints and so more concern is raised about them. So while being conscious that we're not trying to target a particular owner because of rumors about them or something, where there are instances and there's been a pattern of complaint or concern raised, we try to look at those very closely.

... We're looking very closely at the issue of preferential rents. We're trying to figure out if there are ways, through regulation, to make some changes to the way that we would look at preferential rents that would address some of the concerns raised. And I will say, just being perfectly candid, we were further along in that conversation with Governor Spitzer and some of his folks than we now have had the opportunity to be. So I'm hoping that after this legislative session concludes we can restart some of those conversations, and I think we will put forward some more regulations to deal with some of these issues. I'm hoping that by the fall we'll be able to come out with a package of regulatory reform in some of these areas.

The full text of this interview appeared in City Limits Weekly, www.citylimits.com. Reprinted with permission.

Inquilinos de mayor edad y minusválidos

Las personas mayores de 62 años o más, en vivienda de renta regulada, Mitchell-Lama y algunos otros programas, con ingresos disponibles anuales de familia de \$27,000 o menos (el año pasado) y quienes pagan (o enfrentan un aumento de renta que les obligaría a pagar) un tercio o más de estos ingresos en renta pueden llenar los requisitos para una Exención de Incrementos de Renta para las Personas de Mayor Edad (Senior Citizen Rent Exemption, SCRIE). Solicítela a:

The NYC Dept. of the Aging
SCRIE Unit
2 Lafayette Street, NY, NY 10007

Los inquilinos minusválidos que reciben ayuda financiera relacionada con invalidez y tienen ingresos de \$17,580 o menos para individuos y \$25,323 o menos para una pareja y quienes enfrentan rentas iguales a o más de un tercio de sus ingresos pueden llenar los requisitos para la Exención de Incrementos de Renta para Minusválidos (Disability Rent Increase Exemption, DRIE). Solicítela a:

NYC Dept. of Finance
DRIE Exemptions
59 Maiden Lane – 20th Floor
New York, NY 10038

La información sobre DRIE y SCRIE está disponible en el sitio Web de la ciudad, www.nyc.gov, o llame a 311.

Foreclosure Crisis Hammers Tenants: Government Fiddles as Rental Market Burns

By Joe Catron

Two studies released in April show that the ongoing foreclosure crisis, along with other economic trends, has turned the tables of the housing market sharply against tenants, both nationally and in New York City. Meanwhile, government at every level remains oblivious to the rental crunch, focusing exclusively on benefits for the subprime lenders and mortgage defaulters who got the rest of us into this mess.

On April 30, the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University issued America's Rental Housing: The Key to a Balanced National Policy. Addressing challenges to affordable rental housing in general, it reveals that by December 2007, 20 percent of foreclosure actions nationally targeted absentee owners of one- to four-family rental properties, that "the foreclosure process generally overrides existing rental lease provisions," and that such cases "typically lead to the eviction of tenants." With 1.3 million properties foreclosed in 2007, we can safely assume that over 250,000 families faced eviction for assuming that their landlords knew how to manage their money.

Other powerful forces also weakened affordable rental housing nationally. A turbulent credit market cut the number of multifamily units completed last year to 169,000—only two-thirds of the

2002 total and one-third of 1986's record high. Simultaneously, the ongoing mortgage fiasco drove almost a million new households into the rental market, raising the population of renters by 2.8 percent.

A similar analysis, released on April 14 by New York University's Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy, showed that foreclosures targeted rental housing far more disproportionately in New York City. Of 15,000 foreclosures filed in the city last year, 60 percent were on multifamily buildings. And of 30,000 households living in foreclosed properties, fully half, totaling about 38,000 individuals, are renters.

Renter households in Brooklyn absorbed 48 percent of these foreclosures; 18 percent, more than one-sixth of the city's total, came in two low-income community districts, Bedford Stuyvesant and East New York/Starrett City. Queens and the Bronx followed with 25 percent and 17 percent of rental foreclosures, respectively.

Each stratum of government has largely ignored the foreclosure crisis' effects on renters. Last December, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and City Council Speaker Christine Quinn launched the "Center for NYC Neighborhoods" with a combination of city and private funds. Targeting "over 14,000 families" occupying their

own mortgaged homes, the Center apparently offers no programs for foreclosed renters.

The news from Albany is a little better, with both a one-year foreclosure moratorium that passed the Assembly and Gov. Paterson's bill requiring a 60-day foreclosure notices and pre-foreclosure mediation apparently protecting rental properties. But neither bill offers any additional protections to tenants in the properties they cover, both make the possibly fatal assumption that owners of these properties will act responsibly and use the opportunities made available to them, and neither is likely to win approval from the Republican-controlled state Senate.

Nationally, most proposals, including bailouts, have been written to deliberately exclude rental properties. Even the Saving Family Homes Act of 2008, introduced by Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva (D-Arizona), which would introduce a new system of rent controls for foreclosed homes, explicitly excludes all homes not occupied by the owner and all buildings exceeding one residential unit.

"This bill is urgently needed for the millions of American families facing risk of foreclosure, and I am glad to have had the opportunity to make this statement that the sanctity of the American home and family should take precedence in this time of crisis," Grijalva

claimed in a press release. Apparently hundreds of thousands of renters' families and homes enjoy no such sanctity or precedence.

Unbelievably, a bill approved by the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, which includes Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-New York), would raid \$1.7 billion in Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac surpluses intended for a National Affordable Housing Trust Fund and redirect them to a foreclosure bailout instead. The Trust Fund, if approved, will mandate the first new federal investment in low-income housing since the 1970s. Rep. Barney Frank (D-Massachusetts), sponsor of a competing House bill, has promised that "a fight is brewing" over the proposed reallocation.

These proposals stem from an assumption, unchallenged nationally, that homeownership is an objective good and should be facilitated by government—even at the expense of those who have never owned and face no prospect of doing so, not to mention those who made wiser investment decisions by turning down subprime mortgages and remaining renters! Tenants should seek to counter this assumption and win equal consideration of our issues in policy debates at every level, by holding accountable those elected officials who choose to act as if we do not exist.

Boston Tenants Respond to Foreclosure Crisis

By Steven Wishnia

The rights of foreclosed tenants have become a major issue in Boston, where more than 2,000 households may be facing eviction simply because they live in foreclosed buildings.

The crisis is worst in the southeastern neighborhoods of Roxbury, Mattapan, Dorchester, and Hyde Park, City Councilor Mike Ross wrote on his blog. But tenants in that area have organized against it, holding weekly meetings and regularly canvassing buildings facing foreclosure, says Steve Meacham, an organizer with City Life/Vida Urbana.

Most spectacularly, they've organized six eviction blockades. "Each time the lending institution has backed down and said they would negotiate," says Meacham. "But all that is really in flux. The mortgage companies refuse to talk, agree to talk, make promises, back out of agreements."

The key issues, says Meacham, are whether mortgage companies will let residents of foreclosed buildings pay rent, whether they will accept offers from residents to buy the buildings at the appraised value, and whether the movement can stop post-foreclosure evictions by either direct action or legislation banning "no-fault" evictions

after foreclosure. Mortgage companies, banks and lending institutions have a problem with this, he says, because renting apartments or selling the buildings at market rate would bring in far less money than the mortgage payments, and they don't want to "admit the buildings have lost half their bubble value."

Three bills to address the problem are now pending in the Massachusetts legislature. One would place a six-month moratorium on all foreclosures resulting from subprime lending practices. A second would require court approval before a foreclosure can go forward. The third would ban "no-fault" evictions in foreclosed buildings, preventing banks from evicting tenants without just cause. That bill would freeze rents in foreclosed buildings—which has earned it the opposition of landlord groups—but would permit a new owner to oust the tenants, according to Ross.

On May 14, the Boston City Council unanimously passed a home-rule message supporting the just-cause legislation. An April hearing attracted 200 supporters and only one person testifying against the bills, says Meacham.

Eviction

continued from page 1

the units for business use or if the cost of removing violations would equal or exceed the value of the property. That decision, Dobkin argued in a brief to the Court of Appeals, "posits no circumstance in which a landlord would be prevented from withdrawing all of the apartments in a building in personal-use eviction proceedings and then withdrawing them permanently from the rental market."

The Court of Appeals ignored that argument. It said the Legislature "intended to allow owners to live in their own buildings if they choose to do so."

The case now will return to Housing Court, where the Economakises will try to evict the tenants. "The Economakises have the burden of proving that they're acting in good faith and that they plan to occupy 15 apartments. We think that's a tough burden," says Dobkin.

But practically speaking, says tenant David Pultz, the Court of Appeals decision means that the tenants must prove that the Economakises do not genuinely plan to live there. The bar is pretty low for them to prove that they do, he says, and in Housing Court, "we seemed to get one conservative judge after another... they were so prejudiced against us."

As the Economakises are claiming that all they want is to create a home for their family, the case may turn on untangling the tangled web of real-estate transactions by which they obtained the building and put it in their names, says Pultz. The couple was involved with a company that bought the building in a foreclosure proceeding, he explains. That company then went into bankruptcy, and it handed the building over to the couple as individuals—apparently for free. Tenants also suspect that Catherine Economakis's father, Peter Yatrakis, was somehow involved, as the two co-own a property-management company and his name appears in the bankruptcy papers.

If the Economakises were to evict the tenants and then not move in, if they decided to rent the vacant apartments at market rate or sell them as condos or co-ops, there would be no legal consequences. The only penalty in the law is that they would be unable to raise rents on the remaining rent-stabilized apartments in the building—which would be utterly meaningless if there were no rent-stabilized apartments left.

Assembly Passes Most of Rent-Reform Package

By Jenny Laurie

Two busloads of tenants rode to Albany on May 13 to cheer as the state Assembly passed nine renter-related bills. The nine included a bill to repeal vacancy decontrol (sponsored by Linda Rosenthal, Manhattan, and Jim Brennan, Brooklyn), and one to repeal the Urstadt Law and give New York City home rule over rent regulations (by Vito Lopez, Brooklyn).

The bus trip was organized by ACORN and Housing Here and Now and included members of the Real Rent Reform Campaign.

The other pro-tenant bills passed would address longstanding problems that make housing less affordable in New York and the surrounding suburbs.

They included:

- making preferential rents permanent for as long as the tenant remains in the apartment (Hakim Jeffries, Brooklyn);
- cutting the increase on vacant apartments from 20 percent to 10 percent (Lopez);
- making major-capital-improvement rent increases temporary surcharges (Daniel O'Donnell, Manhattan);
- preserving affordability in bought-out project-based Section 8 buildings (Lopez);
- raising the income and rent thresholds for high-income decontrol (Jonathan Bing, Manhattan);
- increasing the penalties for harassment of tenants (Sheldon Silver,

Manhattan); and

- limiting evictions for personal use to one apartment in a building (Lopez)

The Assembly did not pass two other bills that are part of the Real Rent Reform Campaign's package. One would put both Section 8 and Mitchell-Lama buildings built after 1974 under rent stabilization. Advocates were disappointed to find that it had

not yet been considered by the Assembly Housing Committee, a prerequisite for passage by the full body. The other, sponsored by George Latimer (Westchester) would reform the rent-guidelines boards in New York City and the surrounding counties, but it had not yet been formally introduced.

The bills are not expected to go anywhere in the state Senate this year. All

but three of the Democrats in the Senate signed a letter to Majority Leader Joe Bruno asking that he pass them, but not many advocates think that will happen until the Democrats control the Senate.



NYC Rent Guidelines Board Adjustments (Order No. 39)

for Rent Stabilized Leases commencing Oct. 1, 2007 through Sept. 30, 2008

Lease Type	Current Legal Rent	One-year Lease	Two-year Lease	
Renewal Leases	All	3%	5.75%	
Vacancy leases	More than \$500	Vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	17.25%	20%
		No vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 17.25%	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 20%
	Less than \$300	Vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	17.25% plus \$100	20% plus \$100
		No vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 17.25% plus \$100	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 20% plus \$100
	Rent \$300 to \$500	Vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	17.25% or \$100, whichever is greater	20% or \$100, whichever is greater
		No vacancy allowance charged within last 8 years	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 17.25%, or \$100, whichever	0.6% times number of years since last vacancy allowance, plus 20%, or \$100, whichever is greater

Renewal Leases

Landlords must offer rent-stabilized tenants a renewal lease 90 to 120 days before the expiration of their current lease. The renewal lease must keep the same terms and conditions as the expiring lease, except when reflecting a change in the law. Once the renewal offer is received, tenants have 60 days to accept it and choose whether to renew the lease for one or two years. The owner must return the signed and dated copy to the tenant in 30 days. The new rent does not go into effect until the start of the new lease term, or when the owner returns the signed copy (whichever is later). Late offers: If the owner offers the renewal late (fewer than 90 days before the expiration of the current lease), the lease term can begin, at the tenant's option, either on the date it would have begun had a timely offer been made, or on the first rent payment date 90 days after the date of the lease offer. The rent guidelines used for the renewal can be no greater than the RGB increases in effect on the date the lease should have begun (if timely offered). The tenant does not have to pay the new rent increase until 90 days after the offer was made.

Sublease Allowance

Landlords can charge a 10 percent increase during the term of a sublease that commences during this guideline period.

Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption Program

Rent-stabilized seniors (and those living in rent-controlled, Mitchell-Lama, and limited equity coop apartments), 62 or older, whose disposable annual household income is \$27,000 or less (for 2006) and who pay (or face a rent increase that would cause them to pay) one-third or more of that income in rent may be eligible for a rent freeze. Apply to: NYC Dept. for the Aging, SCRIE Unit, 2 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10007 or call 311 or visit their Web site, www.nyc.gov/html/dfta/html/scrie/scrie.shtml.

Disability Rent Increase Exemption Program

Rent-regulated tenants receiving eligible disability-related financial assistance who have incomes of \$17,580 or less for individuals and \$25,212 or less for a couple and are facing rents equal to more than one-third of their income may be eligible for a rent freeze. Apply to: NYC Dept. of Finance, DRIE Exemptions, 59 Maiden Lane, 20th floor, New York, NY 10038. Call 311 for an application or go to the Web site at www.nyc.gov/html/dof/html/property/property_tax_reduc_drie.shtml.

Loft Units

Legalized loft-unit increases are 2.5 percent for a one-year lease and 5.25 percent for two years. No vacancy allowance is permitted on vacant lofts.

Hotels and SROs

There is no increase on rent charged September 30, 2007 for Class A apartment hotels, lodging houses, Class B hotels (30 rooms or more), single room occupancy (SRO) hotels, and rooming houses (Class B, 6-29 rooms).

Rent Overcharges

Tenants should be aware that many landlords will exploit the complexities of these guidelines and bonuses—and the tenant's unfamiliarity with the apartment's rent history—to charge an illegal rent. Tenants can challenge unauthorized rent increases through the courts or by filing a challenge with the state housing agency, the Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR). The first step in the process is to contact the DHCR to see the official record of the rent history. Go to www.dhcr.state.ny.us or call (718) 739-6400 and ask for a detailed rent history. Then speak to a knowledgeable advocate or a lawyer before proceeding.

For previous guidelines, call the RGB at (212) 385-2934 or go to www.housingnyc.com.



Housing Crisis Spreads to 'Near Poor'

Working-class "near poor" families, especially those with children, are increasingly endangered as rents escalate in New York City, according to "Making the Rent: Who's at Risk," a study released last month by the Community Service Society.

"Rates of housing hardship among the near poor," the report said, "are rapidly approaching those of the poor. This is dramatically striking among near-poor families with children, a pattern that suggests that intensifying pressures in the rental market may well account for the continuing surge in homeless families seeking shelter, despite the city's efforts at prevention."

The report defines the "near poor" as those with incomes of less than twice the federal poverty level, or between \$15,000 and \$30,000 for a family of three.

The hardships listed include falling behind in the rent, having utilities cut off, and having household members doubling up or seeking public shelter.

In 2006-2007, the report said, 48 percent of poor renters and 44 percent of near-poor renters experienced at least one of those hardships, and 29 percent of the poor and 20 percent of the near-poor experienced more than one.

The crisis has gotten worse since 2006, when an earlier "Making the Rent" study found that among the poor, two-thirds paid more than half their income for rent and half paid more than 60 percent; among the near poor, one-third paid more than half their income and more than half paid more than 40 percent.

To ameliorate the crisis, the report recommends preserving Mitchell-Lama, federally subsidized, and public housing; increasing Section 8 funding; and strengthening rent controls. It also suggests increasing the federal earned-income tax credit for people in areas with high housing costs and extending state and local property-tax credit to low-income renters.

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Report Cites More Than 200 Illegal Hotels

By Jenny Laurie

On June 1, the Working Group on Illegal Hotels, a coalition of housing groups and elected officials, released a report documenting the illegal use of more than 200 buildings in Manhattan as commercial hotels. The report documents the growing practice of landlords violating their buildings' residential zoning or classification by renting space to tourists for overnight visits or to businesses to house employees for a month or two. By doing this, owners replace permanent residential tenants (both rent-regulated and market-rate) with short-term visitors.

Complaints first started coming in from tenants in apartment buildings in 2004, when the Internet hotel booking business became popular, according to John Raskin, director of organizing at Housing Conservation Coordinators, talking on the Brian Lehrer Show on WNYC. The complaints grew to the point that he and elected officials in Midtown, downtown and the East and West sides formed the Working Group to educate and involve city agencies in combating the problem. The report just released is the group's attempt to document the scope of the illegal renting.

The practice occurs in two types of buildings, apartment buildings

and single room occupancy buildings (which are usually called SRO hotels, but are not legally hotels for tourists). The report lists numerous complaints from permanent residents who describe increasing pressure on them to leave as the illegal use grows in a building.

The most vulnerable tenants live in the SROs, which provide housing to some of New York's poorest and most socially marginal tenants—the ones most at risk for becoming homeless if they lose their room. The report highlights the Broadway Studios SRO on West 101st Street, which formerly housed 120 low-income tenants who paid \$200 to \$500 a month for a room with a shared bathroom. It now has only 12 remaining permanent tenants, with all the other units rented to tourists and international students (packed in



Matt Wade of the West Side SRO Law Project speaks at a press conference on illegal hotels June 1. At left is State Sen. Liz Krueger; right of Wade are Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal, City Councilmember Dan Garodnick, and 279 E. 44th St. tenant association chair Alan Lawrence.

four to eight per room), allowing the owner to earn \$400 a night.

Tenants in both kinds of buildings notice problems such as drunken rowdy behavior, late-night noise, and security problems. One caller to the radio show said that her building was once a safe, clean, and friendly place, but now is "dirty, noisy, and you never know who you are going to find" when you step out your apartment door. In some of the buildings, owners have stepped up attempts to evict rent-regulated tenants, and in one on Bleecker Street, the owner has put out all the permanent market-rate tenants to make room for tourists.

Legal tourist hotels, which by law must be in commercial districts, must obey special fire safety codes—and must be designed to allow a visitor to easily escape in case of fire. Those protections, like special lights and marked fire exits, do not exist in residential buildings, which means that the short-term visitors, unfamiliar with the buildings' layouts, are in more danger in a fire or an emergency.

State Senator Liz Krueger, who represents Midtown and the East Side, said on the Lehrer show that owners of illegal hotels with 421a tax abatements are misusing them. "\$188 million in 421a tax abatements, which were supposed to be used for affordable housing has been stolen," she said.

What's a tenant to do? The report explains that tenants can now call in complaints to 311. Since the start of the Working Group, the Bloomberg administration has created an Office of Special Enforcement to improve follow-up from 311 calls and enforcement. The office was able to get a court-ordered end to renting to transients in three buildings owned by Jay Podolsky, a notorious SRO landlord on the Upper West Side.

Advocates complain, however, that while enforcement has improved greatly, the fines are

not high enough to discourage the landlords who do the illegal renting. In addition, the report explains that the complexity of local laws makes it possible for landlords to evade prosecution, particularly around use for long-term stays.

The report recommends that zoning regulations be changed to establish distinct residential zones that don't allow long-term stays (anything less than 90 days) and zones that would permit extended-stay hotels—zones that are currently commercial districts. It recognizes that there is a legitimate need for corporate housing in New York City, for employees who need to stay in the city for two weeks to two months for job assignments. Unlike most other parts of the country, New York City does not allow corporate-stay hotels.

It also recommends clarifying Department of Buildings rules, so that a minimum of 90 days stay is required to qualify for regular residential use, and greatly increasing the fines for owners who are found to be running an illegal hotel. Advocates would also like the city to be able to go after other entities that help illegal owners find customers. Finally, the Working Group would like the state housing agency rules to declare that running an illegal hotel is harassment of permanent rent-regulated tenants.

In addition to HCC and Krueger, the members of the Working Group are: Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer; State Senators Thomas K. Duane, Liz Krueger, and Eric Schneiderman; Assemblymembers Richard N. Gottfried, Micah Z. Kellner, and Linda B. Rosenthal; City Councilmembers Gale A. Brewer, Daniel R. Garodnick, and Rosie Mendez; Goddard Riverside's West Side SRO Law Project, and the West Side Neighborhood Alliance.



West Side residents protest illegal hotels.

Senior and Disabled Tenants

Seniors, 62 or older, in rent-regulated, Mitchell-Lama and some other housing programs whose disposable annual household income is \$27,000 or less (for the previous year) and who pay (or face a rent increase that would cause them to pay) one-third or more of that income in rent may be eligible for a Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE). Apply to:

The NYC Dept of the Aging
SCRIE Unit
2 Lafayette Street, NY, NY 10007.

Disabled tenants receiving eligible disability-related financial assistance with incomes of \$17,580 or less for individuals and \$25,212 or less for a couple facing rents equal to or more than one-third of their income may be eligible for the Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE). Apply to:

NYC Dept. of Finance
DRIE Exemptions
59 Maiden Lane - 20th floor
New York, NY 10038

DRIE and SCRIE info is available on the city's website, www.nyc.gov.

COURTESY OF WEST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE

Californians Vote Down Rent-Control Ban

By a 3-2 margin, California voters defeated a ballot initiative that would have eliminated rent control in the name of protecting property owners from “eminent

domain” seizures.

In a special election June 3, voters rejected Proposition 98, which would have barred the government from using eminent do-

main to take property for private development—and also decontrolled all vacant apartments in the state. It received 39 percent of the vote.

Voters approved Proposition 99, a competing initiative that limited the use of eminent domain to public-works projects and would not affect rent control. Sponsored by a coalition of local governments and tenant groups, it got 62 percent of the vote.

The vote protects the 1.2 million Californians who live in rent-controlled units, primarily apartment tenants in Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Jose, Oakland, and Berkeley and mobile-home residents in smaller cities and towns.

Property-rights groups conceived Proposition 98 as a response to the Supreme Court’s 2005 *Kelo* decision, which allowed governments to force the sale of

property to private interests if they could claim it would promote “economic development,” as with the Atlantic Yards project in Brooklyn. But with the rent-control ban added, the Prop 98 campaign drew most of its financing from real-estate interests; one Bay Area real-estate mogul donated nearly \$1 million. Opponents included Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and the head of the state chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons.

“The voters saw that Proposition 98 was a deceptive initiative—in fact, the worst kind of ballot abuse where a populist issue is used to conceal an attack on renters, the environment, homeowners, and our communities,” Tom Adams, board president of the California League of Conservation Voters, told the *Los Angeles Times*.

—Steven Wishnia

NYCHA Threatens Massive Budget Cuts

The New York City Housing Authority may raise rents and close all its community and senior centers in order to close a \$195 million budget gap, agency officials told the City Council on May 29.

Agency chair Tino Hernandez and general manager Douglas Apple told a Council hearing that the highest-income tenants in the city’s public housing—those making more than \$20,000 a year—would face increases of 5 to 15 percent. The authority would also close its 94 community centers, shut the 147 senior centers the city runs in the projects, and eliminate all of its youth, arts, sports, and job-training programs.

Hernandez said the city had “no choice” if it wanted to keep its public housing open. NYCHA has already made substantial cuts over the last several years, including deferring capital projects and laying off more than 2,000 work-

ers—almost one-sixth of its labor force. One problem, city officials told the *New York Times*, is that Congress has not appropriated all the money NYCHA qualifies for under federal funding formulas. The city receives slightly more than 80 percent of the funds it should receive under those formulas. The city and state have also eliminated regular annual operating assistance for public housing, which had been about \$87 million.

On May 1, about 3,000 city workers and public-housing residents rallied at City Hall to protest the Bush administration’s underfunding of public housing. At the Council hearing, about 25 protesters chanted “Put residents first!”



Starrett City Deal Protects Affordability

The Starrett City complex in Brooklyn will only be sold if the new owner promises to keep it affordable for 20 years, according to a deal announced June 1.

A memorandum of understanding among the owners and federal, state, and local housing officials sets guidelines intended to “preserve Starrett City as affordable housing” for working and middle-class families.

A key provision is legislation sponsored by Sen. Charles Schumer that would put the 60 percent of the units in the complex that do not already receive federal Section 8 subsidies into the program for the next 20 years. That would enable the new owners to charge higher rents without forcing ten-

ants to pay the increase.

The complex, along the Belt Parkway in southeast Brooklyn, opened in 1974. It is home to around 14,000 people, who occupy 5,881 apartments in 46 buildings. The owners tried to sell it for \$1.3 billion last year, but opposition from residents, housing activists, and politicians stopped the sale. Opponents feared that the new owner would raise rents and force out tenants in order to make their money back.

In exchange for keeping the apartments affordable, the new owners would also get a property-tax abatement from the city and the right to build more apartments and stores on the site.

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

LOWER EAST SIDE BRANCH at Cooper Square Committee
61 E. 4th St. (btwn. 2nd Ave. & Bowery)
Tuesdays 6:30 pm

CHELSEA COALITION ON HOUSING
Covers 14th St. to 30th St., 5th Ave. to the Hudson River.
322 W. 17th St. (basement), CH3-0544
Thursdays 7:30 pm

GOLES (Good Old Lower East Side)
171 Avenue B (between 10 and 11 St.)
by appointments only except for emergencies. 212-533-2541.

HOUSING COMMITTEE OF RENA
Covers 135th St. to 165th St. from Riverside Dr. to St. Nicholas Ave.,
537 W. 156th St.
Thursdays 8 pm

LOWER MANHATTAN LOFT TENANTS
St. Margaret’s House, Pearl & Fulton Sts.,
212-539-3538
Wednesdays 6 pm-7 pm

MIRABAL SISTERS
618 W. 142nd St., 212-234-3002
Saturdays 1 - 4 pm

PRATT AREA COMMUNITY COUNCIL
201 DeKalb Ave., Brooklyn,
718-522-2613 ext. 24
3rd Wednesday 6 pm

VILLAGE INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS
26 Perry St. (basement), 212-741-2994
Wednesdays 6 pm

WEST SIDE TENANTS UNION
4 W. 76 St.; 212-595-1274
Tuesday & Wednesday 6-7 pm

HOUSING CONSERVATION COORDINATORS
777 10 Ave.; 212-541-5996
Mondays 7-9 pm

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS
Covers Sunset Park and surrounding neighborhoods
443 39 St., Ste. 202, Brooklyn
By appointment only. 718-686-7946, ext. 10

QUEENS COMMUNITY HOUSE
Forest Hills Community Center, 10825 62nd Dr., Forest Hills
(718) 592-5757, ext. 280
Mondays and Wednesdays ... 9:30-11 am

QUEENS COMMUNITY HOUSE
Pomonok Community Center, 6709 Kissena Blvd., Flushing
(718) 591-6060
Fridays 10 am-12 pm



METROPOLITAN COUNCIL ON HOUSING

Met Council is a citywide tenant union.

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Membership: Individual, \$25 per year; Low-income, \$15 per year; family (voluntary: 2 sharing an apartment), \$30 per year. Supporting, \$40 per year. Sustaining, min. of \$100 per year (indicate amount of pledge). For affiliation of community or tenant organizations, large buildings, trade unions, etc. call 212-979-6238.

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I am interested in volunteering my time to Met Council. Please call me to schedule times and duties. I can counsel tenants, do office work, lobby public officials, attend rallies/protests.

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Address _____ Apt. No. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone Number _____ Email _____

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