

Next issue:
Oct. 22-23

The Main Street WIRE

Roosevelt Island's Community Newspaper

in association with Website NYC10044



Meeting photos: Margery Rubin

RIOC Slates An Open Forum Thursday Night

The Board of Directors of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation has scheduled an evening meeting for Thursday night, October 14.

The session, to be held in Chapel of the Good Shepherd, is billed as an "open forum" in which residents can be heard on any and all subjects.

The evening session and the open-to-all-speakers is part of a new RIOC openness under its new President, Rob Ryan. In his RIRA President's Column (page 2), Patrick Stewart suggests a number of issues that are likely to be raised by residents.

History Group Schedules Lecture Series, 1895-Present

In 1895, *Blackwell's Island* was in transition, becoming New York City's *Welfare Island*. Metropolitan Hospital was moving from Wards Island into the Octagon and its wings, which had previously been an "asylum for the indigent insane," and the present-day residential *Roosevelt Island* was not yet a gleam in anybody's eye.

That history of Roosevelt Island is to be the subject of four lectures and a field trip, organized and presented by Judy Berdy of the Roosevelt Island Historical Society. They're free for Historical Society members, \$5 for Seniors and students, and \$10 for all others. The series, to begin Wednesday,

October 20, at 8:00 p.m., will start with *Life at Metropolitan Hospital* and consider the Octagon from an architectural perspective as well as its uses over time. A second session will trace the beginning of social work and early 20th-century life.

Additional sessions, to be held in the Island House Community Room, will look at nearby Queens, the Historical Society's newly-organized archives. A final session will involve a field trip to St. George's Episcopal Church, where the graveyard is the final resting place of many Blackwells.

For information, call 688-4836 or e-mail jbird134@aol.com.

Grannis, Mendez Agree to Cooperate In New Effort on Self-Governance Law

Pete Grannis and Olga Mendez shared a Roosevelt Island platform Tuesday night. In a Maple Tree Group meeting in the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, 130 residents listened as the legislators, both Democrats, talked about resident rule for Roosevelt Island, its prospects, and how to produce legislation that will satisfy each of them, Island residents, and the Republican Governor – and find its way into law before the last brick is mortared into place in the Island's current development boom.

Their positions are tightly proximate to competing Island opinion on the matter.

- Assemblymember Grannis, who introduced a bill drafted by the Maple Tree Group in the last legislative session, wants clear guarantees that a "RIOC2" controlled by elected Islanders won't suddenly face a fiscal crisis, a capital shortage, or an insurance famine. "I don't think the gamble is worth it," he said.

- Senator Mendez, whose version of the bill took a form more acceptable to Governor George Pataki – and therefore more likely to pass the Republican-controlled Senate and get the Governor's signature – favors a takeover in short order, even with some risk, and even if crosses and dots may be temporarily missing from some t's and i's. She quoted Franklin Roosevelt: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

On the Island, the Mendez position has become associated with the Maple Tree Group and is favored by those who worry that bad development decisions made by non-residents may overtake a slower route to self-governance – perhaps making the self-governance effort moot.

The Grannis position is associated with Residents Association President Patrick Stewart and others who favor a low-or-no-risk transition to self-governance – or perhaps even an alternative approach in which residents would simply hold a majority of seats on the RIOC Board of Directors.

The contrasting positions were manifest Tuesday night in audience reaction, questions, and certainly in the individual monologues of Mendez and Grannis – and even some dialog between them.

In the end, they promised Islanders and each other, as well as the Maple Tree Group convenor, David Bauer, that they would work together to find a legislative formula acceptable to each and, hopefully, to the administration in Albany.



But along the way, they made their positions clear:

Grannis
"For five years, we have been dealing with a Pataki administration, and I have a great deal of skepticism about why this Governor does what he does," Assemblymember Grannis told the Island audience. "I have found the administration to be extraordinarily partisan, very petty at times, very secretive, and certainly at many times not focused on the issues. All of a sudden, I find them in a position where they're willing to talk about self-governance, and so I have a degree of skepticism about why they're doing it."

"My concerns come down to where the bill ended up in the final

negotiations between the Senate, the Maple Tree Group, and others that were interested in the bill. That was beyond us, because we were given a bill at the end of the negotiations and were told, 'Here's the bill. Take it or leave it... If you change one word, we won't do the bill.' I don't function that way."

Later, he added, "I'm just worried about buying a pig in a poke."

Grannis went on to list his requisites for self-governance:

- Maintenance of existing provisions governing State indemnification in the event insurance coverage is not adequate or is unavailable.

- An independent review of RIOC's financial condition.

See **Grannis/Mendez**, page 6

Word for Word: Jeffrey Glen

RIRA's Development Law Firm Talks About Rules of the Game

The Legal Action Committee of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA) has retained a law firm, DeForest & Duer, to advise and represent residents in development matters. At an event Tuesday, September 28, to raise funds for RIRA's legal war chest, a partner in the firm, Jeffrey Glen, discussed the firm's role and various issues in Island development. A full transcript, including introductory remarks by RIRA President Patrick Stewart and Vice President Joan Christianson, who chairs the Legal Committee, is available on the Internet at <http://192.104.18.139>. Glen's words follow.

As we see our role, it's in two areas and, we hope, not a third. The role is to advise the residents of the Island on issues that pertain to the Island development. That may mean technical land use work – for example, there will be Environmental Impact State-



ments [EIS] coming up on that in the future, for sure. Southpoint [will involve] technical work, but also work that affects development in a somewhat oblique but necessary way. For example, more development will necessarily impact on the traffic patterns that currently exist. The spill-over effects are something developers tend to ignore, and government often overlooks. We are acutely aware of those issues. It is a small environment...

The best representation of community groups is to tell you the parameters within which development must occur, and then for the group to handle the politics. The power is with the people who are involved in the process. Developments are affected and can be changed and halted by litigation [but] it's expensive. Invariably, the government is on the other side because it's part of the development. That means that their lawyering comes free. You cannot go dollar-for-dol-

lar against government and big developers. You have to pick your issues and hit them carefully.

Let's take Southpoint as an example. We all know that in the GDP (General Development Plan) Southpoint is designed to be parkland – the Roosevelt Memorial and the possibility of some kindred uses. It is not designed to have two 26-story [hotel towers]. I start from that premise – we are preserving the original goals.

Do you need to anticipate litigating Southpoint? I hope not. The goal is to stay out of court. We will, of course, tell you if we believe things are marching along that can only be stopped by bringing a lawsuit. We will advise you what kind of a suit can be brought, estimates on cost, what your chances are, but our hope is that we'll never have to get there. ...

See **Law Firm**, page 6

Just How Dead Is Stealth Development?

Before voting “no” on a proposal to add a second story to the Island’s west shore mini-schools, the resident members of RIOC’s Capital Planning and Development Committee (CPDC) saw and heard considerable detail on the plan, and there was a serious cooperative study of how views would be affected. The detail was impressive, and the “no” decision made in a September meeting was a well-informed one. (It is *advice* only, with the RIOC Board responsible for a final decision.)

But the amount of detail CPDC heard about the much more extensive Southtown development was meager by comparison.

In an August meeting, CPDC Chair Frank Angelino asked the resident members, “Are you comfortable at this point with having the Board take it up to do the designation of these two people [The Related Companies and The Hudson Companies] as the developers for the project?” Angelino’s full preamble and question ran 406 words (and is posted on the Internet at <http://192.104.18.139> as part of the full transcript of that portion of the discussion), but this was, essentially, a “How are you leaning now, based on what you know so far?” vote – and only a sense of the committee, really, on the choice of developer, *not the specifics of a plan* Hudson/Related last presented to a community meeting half a year back.

On that basis, the sense of the committee was “yes,” with statements surrounding the vote indicating clearly that members expected to take a look at a good deal of the detail of the project.

But on that basis, the RIOC Board voted September 22 to accept Hudson/Related and, it would appear, *the essentials of their plan* for Southtown. In the language of the Board’s resolution, “the Plan and Project for approximately 2000 units submitted to the Board dated April 20, 1999, [is] hereby approved...”

But CPDC didn’t consider:

- Specifics of how an 80/20 income ratio will be achieved
- Exact placement of the buildings and street
- Community givebacks
- Amenities
- Possible merchant locations and services
- Traffic circulation in/through/around the area

Take placement of the buildings and the extension of Main Street, for example. Attorney Robert Chira, a Rivercross resident, has pointed out that current plans for Southtown put the first building directly astride the visual sight-lines of the present Main Street – a *great wall*, as Chira derisively calls it, psychologically separating the existing buildings of Northtown (Eastwood, Island House, Rivercross) from the newcomers in Southtown. (See composite map below.)

Chira’s fears about the “wall” may or may not be well-founded. It may be perfectly OK that those walking on the present Main Street will not see into the heart of the new development, and it may be perfectly OK that those living there may not sense that the present Main Street buildings are part of *their* community.

If there’s even a small chance that Chira is right – that those of us now living here will feel “walled out” by the Southtown design, then the placement of the Main Street continuation, the placement of the first building, and the overall layout, should be the subject of active and detailed consideration by CPDC. Once concrete is poured, it’ll be too late.

It’s understandable that both RIOC and the developers wanted to seize the opportunity of a medical institution taking all of the first building, thus easing marketing considerations. But it’s a bit suspicious – perhaps even a bit reminiscent of Jerry Blue’s RIOC – that CPDC was asked to vote only on the developers – not their plan – but RIOC’s resolution gave an OK to the substance of the plan itself.

CPDC should look immediately and carefully at more of the details – physical and otherwise – of the plan. CPDC and RIOC and Hudson/Related alike should consider carefully how the plan “connects” (or doesn’t) with the present Roosevelt Island community.

DL

The e-mailboxes of several Islanders were full last week, bursting with electronic back-and-forths between members and backers of the Maple Tree Group’s efforts to move forward on self-governance legislation, and those less eager to accept the most recent version under active consideration in the Legislature. One Islander, reading the exchanges, tried to introduce a bit of restraint into the on-line debate. These are his words.

To all the e-mailers, letter writers, name-callers, innuendo-droppers, gossips, rumor-spreaders, philosophers, English majors, etc., etc., etc.

Jerry Blue must be having a personal gratification field day with the current communications going on between RIRA/Maple Tree Group and others. He was trying very hard to polarize the island while he was here (divide and conquer), and here we are doing it to ourselves. Congratulations to all.

We all have something to say. We all have opinions and judgments and feel we need to defend

island observer

them and ourselves. We think ours are better, more brilliant, more profound, more politically correct, more, more, more, than the next person’s. But, guess what? Our opinions do not make a difference and will never make a difference. They only serve the person who has the opinion. I also have opinions.

We have lost focus of the context of RIRA and MTG and are battling over the content. The context might be something like “An island that works for everyone” or “A quality of Life Island” or “A community that cares”, etc.

When that is established, then there needs to be a commitment to it, agreed upon by everyone. How you know if you are committed is by your actions and only by your actions. If your actions are a match for the commitment or a correlate of the commitment, then you are committed. If your actions are not in alignment with the commitment, guess what? You are committed to something else. It’s not wrong or bad. It’s just not commitment to what you said you’re committed to.

We need to get back to the fundamentals of what makes this Island great and stop taking things personally.

Do y’all remember a while back when Patrick wrote on the blackboard all of the good things that we noted that we have on the island? It seems that we may have forgotten those.

We need to look at what is possible now that everyone has had something to say about what others have had to say.

Harry Small

Letters

To the Editor:

With the apparent impending construction of the Southtown towers, I suggest that just prior to its demolition, the nurses residence be renamed *The Blue Building*.

Marc Diamond

The RIOC Board of Directors will be holding their October meeting in the evening, and they have designated this meeting as an Open Forum wherein anyone may speak from the floor on any issue they choose. The meeting will be held at the Chapel of the Good Shepherd on Thursday, October 14th, at 7:00 PM. This is a wonderful opportunity for the community.

I have been impressed so far with the level of communication and cooperation RIRA has received from our new President of RIOC. But I firmly believe that it behooves us to let the Board of Directors know directly that the presence of friendlier management at RIOC has not lessened our concern as a community about the issues that affect our daily lives.

Naturally, the members of the Common Council will be there to reflect the views of the buildings they represent. But I would like, particularly, for as many residents as possible to attend. The members of this community are inevitably thoughtful and articulate in speaking at Board meetings, and there are a couple of new Board attendees who have never witnessed a Board meeting of Jerry Blue’s, and who seem to think that the passionate involvement of the residents in local affairs has been exaggerated, or at least eliminated by the presence of the new President.

There are major issues facing this community. The following is a list of some of the matters that are under consideration by this Board:

Construction of Southtown could ruin our quality of life here if not handled properly. We must show the Board that we will not tolerate the loss of Capobianco field for a new ramp for construction purposes. And this is the time to get the Board to publicly confirm Robert Ryan’s assertion that the community will continue to have a strong hand in shaping the plans for the development of Southtown. This, too, may be the Board meeting during which the mini-school issue will be decided. The Marriott development of Southpoint has yet to be ruled out. I have been told that



Patrick Stewart

we are facing another increase at Motorgate. We have heard nothing about the Eldercare project for some time. We have had no update on the status of the Metrocard for the Tram. We have yet to see RIOC’s 1998 Financial Statement dated March 31, 1999. The report of the Army Corps of Engineers on the seawall remains long overdue. The audit of Public Purpose money has still not been done. There are issues with Public Safety’s handling of parking and other traffic regulations, as well as many quality of life issues.

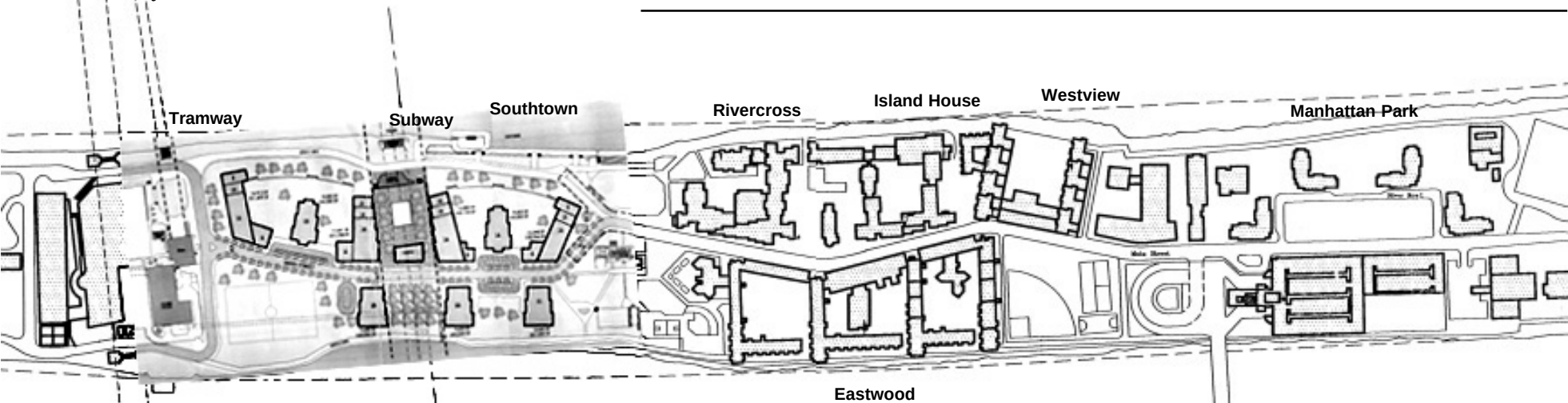
There’s plenty to be passionate about, and this is the opportunity to let them hear what’s on your minds. This is the first Open Forum since Blue came here in 1996. Let’s show them how deeply we care about

our Island.

I want to thank you for your response to my request that you come to the Pete Grannis session at the Maple Tree Group meeting. It goes without saying how much I appreciate Assemblyman Grannis and Olga Mendez giving their time to clarify this issue. It was a productive evening and will help to shape self-governance issues to come.

I seem lately to be always calling for more of your time, but there is no more important time to participate than at this upcoming Open Forum Board meeting.

I have been asked by one member of the Common Council to include with this column a disclaimer that the views I express here are my own, and may not reflect those of each of the thirty Council members. I must admit that I thought that this was obvious, as was the fact that I do not universally support the editorial positions of *The WIRE*. As a Common Council member, conducting Council business, I have only the same single vote that any other Council member possesses. But as the elected President of RIRA I strive sincerely in this column to reflect the voice of the community as I hear it from the residents, and I will continue to do so until I hear from the residents that those views have changed.



Island map with Southtown plan superimposed over it shows how sharp bend in Main Street, just south of Blackwell House and Rivercross, departs from the gentle bends which avoid a “canyon” effect but, according to architects, invite the eye to see that there is something beyond each bend – a continuation of the street. The first building scheduled for construction in Southtown will, according to those critical of the plan, create a “wall” across the line of Main Street, separating present buildings and residents from those in the new development. (See editorial, top left of this page.)

Gaspar AlmoDuvar

Gaspar AlmoDuvar, born on Roosevelt Island November 19, 1936, left this world September 30, 1999, at Coler Hospital. A memorial service is scheduled for today (Saturday, October 9) at noon, at Chapel of the Good Shepherd.



Gaspar was a devoted father to Andre and Jacques and an adopted father to many Island children. He was a brother-in-law to Lillian and Sterling and a beloved husband to his wife of 35 years, Gwen.

Gaspar enjoyed being in the service of others and being a chauffeur. He was among the founders of the Community Library, a volunteer at the Cabrini Thrift Shop, and he performed many services for the Island's handicapped, until he became physically unable to do so. Gwen often volunteered Gaspar's services to anyone who needed help.

His ashes will be scattered in Hawaii, where he vacationed eight times.

George Roht

George Roht, longtime resident of the Island, died at home September 29. The cause of death was cardiac arrest.

George and Helen Roht moved to Roosevelt Island in September, 1975. They were among the earliest residents in the earliest building here, Island House.

George had a long career as a New York State civil servant in the Labor Department. On the Island, he was a co-founder, with Herman and Dorothy Reade, of the Community Library. When it moved to its present location, George built many of the bookcases. He served on the Board for many years, and he felt he was lucky to have lived long enough for the New York Public Library (NYPL) to recognize it as a branch.



George was an avid reader. His favorite books were mysteries. When the librarians from NYPL audited the collection here, they reported that this branch had the most complete collection of murder mysteries in the entire system.

George was a permanent member of the first Main Street Theatre company. He had significant roles in *Ten Little Indians* and *The Crucible*. He was an expert woodworker, and many residents still have the shelves George built for them as an act of neighborliness when they first moved in. For the grandchildren, he carved exotic animals.

He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Helen Geffen Roht, a 50-year veteran of the United Nations; a daughter, Professor Naomi Roht Arriaza at the University of California; and two grandchildren, Laura and Rafael.

A memorial service will be held Sunday, October 10, at 3:00 p.m., at the Synagogue, in the Cultural Center, 548 Main Street.

The WIRE

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COMING UP

Compiled by Claire Friedland – phone/fax 317-8523

At the Senior Center

Monday (closed October 11)
9:00-10:00, **Stay Well** (Exercise)
10:00-12:00, **Computer Class**
10:00-11:00, **English as 2nd Language** (beg)
11:00-12:00, **English as 2nd** (intermediate)
11:00-12:30 (October 25), **Metocard Bus**
12:45, **Arts & Crafts**
Tuesday
9:45-10:45, **Jazzercise with Barbara Parker**
12:30-2:30 (October 12 & 26), **VNS Service**
1:30, **Bingo**
7:00 p.m. (October 12), **General Meeting**
Wednesday
9:00-10:00, **Stay Well** (Stretch)
10:00-11:00, **English as 2nd Language** (beg)
11:00-12:00, **English as 2nd** (intermediate)
1:30, **Games**
Thursday
10:00-11:00, **Tai Chi**
12:30, **Movie**
Friday
10:00-11:00, **Citizenship Class**
10:00-12:00, **Creative Arts Workshop**
10:30, **Blood Pressure Screening**
7:00-9:00 p.m., **Korean English**
Saturday
7:00 p.m., **Bingo**
7:00 p.m. (October 30), **Birthday Party**

Special Events

Call in advance for details: 980-1888
Tue., Oct. 12, 7:30 p.m., **General Meeting**
Wed., Oct. 13, **Daily Double Luncheon at Belmont Race Track**
Wed., Oct. 20, **RISA Atlantic City Trip**
Sat., Oct. 30, 7:00 p.m., **Halloween Party**
Wed., Nov. 3, 9:30-2:30, **Free Flu Shots**

Sat., Oct. 9, 10:00 a.m., Fall Tree Walk sponsored by the Roosevelt Island Tree Board, leaving from Main Street in front of PS/IS 217.

Thur., Oct. 14, 7:00 p.m., RIOC Board of Directors meeting, Chapel of the Good Shepherd.

Tue., Oct. 19, 6:30 p.m., Book Discussion Group, Black and Blue by Anna Quindlen, Library. Meets third Tuesday of each month; admission free but pre-registration suggested.

Wed., Oct. 20, 7:45 p.m., Roosevelt Island Photographic Society meeting, Eastwood Community Room, 536 Main Street. Information: **752-5034**.

Wed., Oct. 20, 8:00 p.m., Island History Lecture, Blackwell's Island – The Octagon and Life at Metropolitan Hospital, 1895-1936, sponsored by Roosevelt Island Historical Society, Island House Community Room. \$10, but free to RIHS members. Reservations/membership: **688-4836**.

Sat., Oct. 23, Halloween issue of The Main Street WIRE. Deadlines: Advertising in the paper, Fri., Oct. 15; decision on stuffers for *The Bag*, Mon., Oct. 18; bag materials due Oct. 20. **Future issues:** Nov. 6, Nov. 20 (Thanksgiving issue), Dec. 4, Dec. 18 (Christmas/New Year issue); Jan. 8, 2000, Jan. 22, 2000, and generally every two weeks thereafter. Advertisers wishing to be included in unscheduled **EXTRA** editions, *without notice at the time*, are invited to call **826-9055** to make their interest known. **Phone/fax** for news, (212) **826-9055/755-2540**; urgent/advertising news, 917-353-1647; phone/fax for advertising inquiries, (212) **751-8214/755-2540**; phone/fax to list your Island organization's event here, **317-8523**.

Wed., Oct. 27, 8:00 p.m., Island History Lecture, The Beginning of Social Work and the Metropolitan Hospital School of Nursing, sponsored by Roosevelt Island Historical Society, Island House Community Room. \$10, but free to RIHS members. Reservations/membership: **688-4836**.

Wed., Nov. 3, 8:00 p.m., Island History Lecture, 300 Years of Queens History, an overview of neighboring communities through stories and pictures, sponsored by Roosevelt Island Historical Society, Island House Community Room. \$10, but free to RIHS members. Reservations/membership: **688-4836**.

Wed., Nov. 10, 8:00 p.m., Island History Lecture, Archives Night – Island History from the 17th Century to Today's Community, sponsored by Roosevelt Island Historical Society, Island House Community Room. \$10, but free to RIHS members. Reservations/membership: **688-4836**.

Public Safety Blotter

8/21/99, Harassment, 513 Main St., Female approached officer, stated her boyfriend had slapped her in face while they were at the Back Page. Victim wanted to press charges. PSD officers brought male to PSD office, issued a "C" summons, released him.

8/21/99, Missing Property, 540 Main St., A person requested entry into apartment, RIHM Service Manager authorized lock drilling. Upon entering apartment, victim noticed several items were missing. When entering the roommate's assigned room, they noticed the aforementioned items and several packed boxes. NYPD responded, prepared report.

8/24/99, Burglary, 8 River Rd., Manhattan Park General Manager phoned PSD, stating unknown person(s) had removed glass partitions from outside of property. She stated that on 7/5/99 other window partitions were also removed, as well as aluminum casings from eight windows, approximately valued at \$1200. Inside alarm did not activate on 7/4/99. NYPD responded, prepared report.

8/25/99, Larceny, 688 Main St., Officer noticed rear passenger side window shattered. Motorgate supervisor notified. Owner responded, stated numerous CD's missing, dashboard damaged. NYPD responded, prepared report.

8/30/99, Found Property, 560 Main St., Anonymous female surrendered wallet to PSD officer, containing valuables. All items placed in locked cabinet by the PSD officer.

8/31/99, Grand Larceny, 688 Main St., Female phoned PSD, stated she had returned to her auto, found front and back windows partially open. Unknown person had forced them open and gained access to car. Assorted cassettes, taxi radio, antennas, cd player were missing. NYPD responded, prepared report.

9/2/99, Larceny, 688 Main St., A woman entered PSD stating she had found her car doors unlocked, glove compartment open, and radio missing. Officer observed radio missing. Victim will contact NYPD.

9/4/99, Vehicle Accident, 36th Ave. and Vernon Blvd. PSD responded to vehicle accident at 36th Ave. @ Vernon Blvd. EMS took four victims to hospital, both cars severely damaged. NYPD at scene.

9/6/99, Fire, 875 Main St., Anonymous caller phoned, stating that smoke was coming out of the Octagon Building. PSD and Coler Hospital responded and observed

smoke from the building, 911 was notified. FDNY, NYPD, EMS, and PSD arrived at scene. FDNY Chief stated fire was suspicious, that they would not enter building because fire was very intense and the structure was insecure.

9/8/99, Missing Property, 536 Main St., Director of Island Kids entered PSD, stated that upon returning after long weekend, she noticed that several electronic devices totaling \$270 were missing from an unlocked closet. She further stated that all doors and windows were locked. NYPD prepared report.

9/12/99, Harassment, 609 Main St., Employee of China I phoned PSD stating she had been struck. Upon officers responding, male resident stated he had purchased food and had found a foreign object on top of the food. He was reimbursed, however, employee threw ketchup down his back causing his arm to inadvertently strike her. Victim refused medical attention, although her cheek was red. Perp. issued a "C" summons. NYPD on scene.

9/12/99, Verbal Dispute, 560 Main St., Woman phoned PSD, stating she had heard what sounded like a man and a woman shouting which was confirmed by RIHM service personnel. Officers responded to where the verbal dispute was reported and the couple confirmed they had been arguing. NYPD responded, prepared domestic incident report.

9/17/99, Larceny, 688 Main St., PS Officer responded to scene, victim said his rear driver side window was shattered and unknown person removed \$25, but left other currency and valuables. Officer noticed glass inside and outside of the vehicle. NYPD prepared report. PSD Officers searched area with negative results.

9/17/99, Reckless Endangerment, 688 Main St., A person stated that upon returning to his vehicle someone had thrown eggs at him and his children at 10 River Rd. He looked up and saw 2 males on balcony. PSD Officer responded and NYPD prepared report.

9/19/99, Disorderly Conduct, 250 Main St., RIOC bus driver reported that a male was threatening him with a bottle. Officers responded, brought perp. to PSD, issued him a "C" summons.

9/19/99, Harassment, 552 Main St., PS Officer was accosted by female resident who stated she wanted to speak with her, when officer refused, she followed her threatening her. Perp. wanted to follow

officer into PSD office, but was stopped. An officer spoke with the woman, warned and admonished her. NYPD prepared report.

9/20/99, Fire, 625 Main St., PS Officer responded to possible fire on second floor. Upon arrival he noticed smoke filling up hallway on first floor and a woman approached the officer stating there was a fire in her apartment. FDNY and NYPD responded. Fire was extinguished. Two people were treated by EMS and released. Red Cross was notified.

9/23/99, Order of Protection Served, 531 Main St., At request of female, PSD Officer tried to serve order of protection against her spouse, who refused same; he also refused to leave premises. NYPD responded and issued court summons, escorted perp. off premises.

9/25/99, Investigation, Vernon Blvd. & Queens Pl., A bus driver informed PS Officer he had observed a woman being assaulted, when he attempted to assist her a shot was fired at him. Alleged perp. fled in his car, he pursued him to Motorgate. NYPD repoded, alleged perp. was uncooperative, then complied, was taken to crime scene by NYPD. Disposition of case as yet unknown.

9/26/99, Verbal Dispute, 4 River Rd., Female phoned PSD, stated her ex-boyfriend visited her and verbal dispute erupted. He left apartment, but took her apartment keys. NYPD responded, prepared report.

9/29/99, Robbery, 510 Main St., Livery driver informed PSD Officer he had been victim of armed robbery by unknown person (1 male, 1 female) that he had picked up in the Bronx. Upon arrival on R.I., perp. displayed what appeared to be a gun. They took \$78 from his wallet and had fled. The fare was \$25.

9/30/99, Criminal Possession of Stolen Property, 686 Main St., PS Officer responded to Gristede's on a call for possible shoplifting. Gristede's employee said he had seen perp. place two cans of powdered milk in shopping bag, and leave the store without paying for the items. Employee waited outside, asked perp. for bag, which perp. gave to him; he further asked for receipt. At that time perp. attempted to run. Perp. was subdued and escorted into Gristede's to await PS. He was placed under arrest by PSD Officer. Perp. was transported to 19th Precinct for processing.

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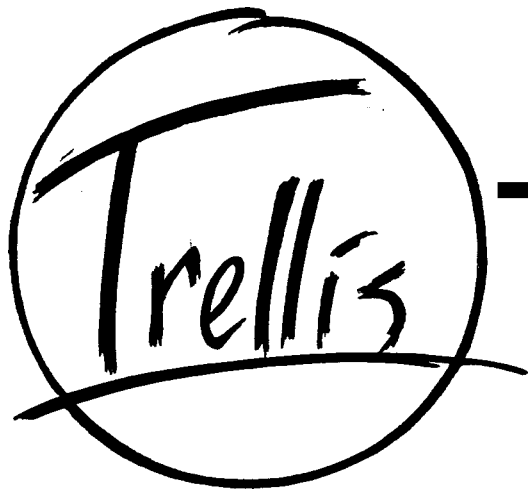
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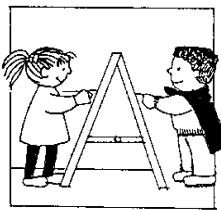
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HALLOWEEN FESTIVITIES

Saturday, October 30, 1999

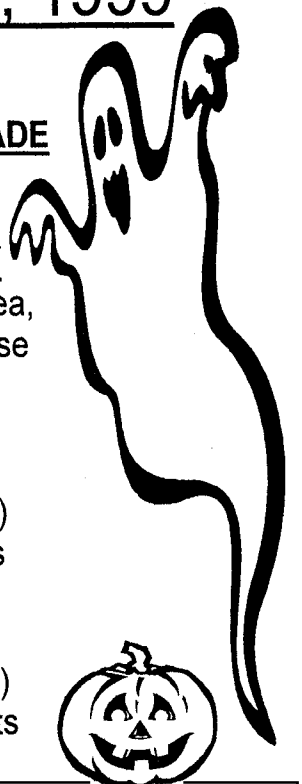
(Rain or Shine)

11:00 a.m. **ANNUAL HALLOWEEN PARADE**
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11:30 a.m. **TRICK OR TREAT FESTIVITY**
CENTER (Basketball Court Area,
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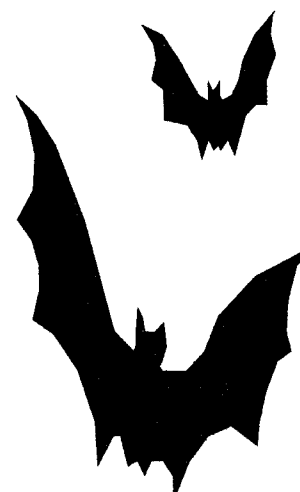
6-8 p.m. **MASQUERADE PARTY**
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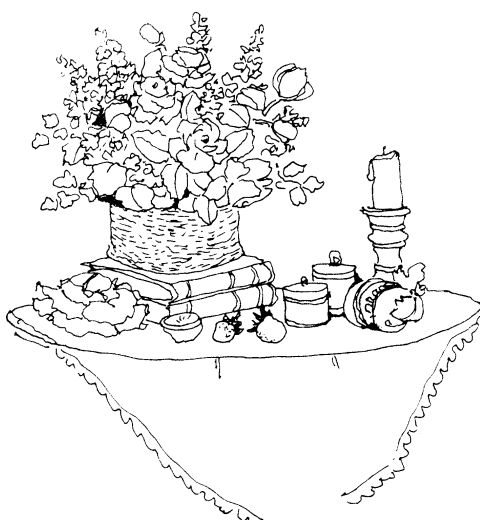
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Grannis/Mendez from page 1

- Provision for a comprehensive engineering report assessing the status of the Island’s facilities and overall physical condition.
 - An agreement to repair or reimburse for current capital needs – a guarantee, essentially, that a RIOC2 won’t be stuck with the results of neglect of the Island’s physical plant under former RIOC President Jerome Blue.
 - Commitment to fund future capital needs either through State appropriations or through authority to issue bonds.
 - Development of a definitive statement of who’s responsible for what on the Island – RIOC’s areas, and those in the State’s or City’s bailiwick.
- Grannis added, “When contemplating changes of this magnitude, it’s better to be safe than sorry.”

Mendez

Senator Mendez emphasized the need for compromise in working out an acceptable bill, saying, “Three people have to come together – the Senate, the Assembly, and the Governor.”

She criticized Grannis for a low level of involvement in the final crafting of the final bill offered in the last legislative session, then drew applause when she said, “I believe that the people of Roosevelt Island, who have maintained a beautiful dream about this community, should be the masters of their own destiny.”

On the matter of fiscal soundness, she said, “I have a commitment from the Governor’s office that, for existing conditions, after \$500,000 the State would come in and take care of the additional costs.”

Questions

In response to a question from RIRA Common Council member Jeremy Burns about the possibility of compelling the administration to release information Grannis considers essential to planning for self-governance, Mendez said: “Do you know what complicates matters? Political rhetoric. I think that we have to make a determination here: What do we want to accomplish first? How can we accomplish what we want with the least number of obstacles? Instead of political partisanship, and ‘Give me this, give me that,’ I know for a fact that once we resolve the issue of self-governance, there is going to be a transition period in which nobody accepts any property unless aware of how much... We have to make a specific determination of what we want to know if we really are serious about



Pete Grannis answered a question asked by Frank Farance (foreground) as Olga Mendez and MTG convenor David Bauer (left) listened. MTG meets Monday nights at 7:30, usual in the Chapel.

obtaining self-governance. You can ask for everything you want and investigate everything you want, and you’re not going to accomplish anything.”

Grannis responded, “The Senator is correct. The goal is to work this out rather than confront the Governor. But if he signs the bill, to count on him coming back and saying he made a mistake.”

Several questioners asked both Mendez and Grannis how thorough their knowledge would have to be on various questions of finances and Island condition before a bill could be run through the legislative system. “I fear [a quest for] the ‘perfect’ may drive out the good,” said Ethel Romm; both Frank Farance and Lee Edelman pointed out that some information such as a definitive clarification of the responsibilities of various governmental entities might require years of investigation or negotiation.

Island House resident Paul Doganges asked both legislators if there might be some provision in the legislative process to allow residents a final review of a completed bill before it became law. Off-the-cuff, Grannis thought it might be possible, perhaps even to the point of allowing a referendum on the Island.

One questioner, Steve Marcus, articulated the concerns of many residents: “It grieves me to see the mismanagement over the last 6-7-8 years. We’re talking about Manhattan Park, which doesn’t add a whole lot to the community; it wasn’t designed that way. We’re talking about a baseball field [and] soccer field that [are] flooded all the time. We’re talking about hare-brained schemes like building an old-age center under a bridge, a giant hotel at the tip, and right now the worst thing is this plan to take away our one open space, and they’re going to build dormitories for medical students. This is unforgiveable. I don’t trust this government to make any decisions for me. ... Is there any way to get a stay of execution while a [self-governance] bill is being discussed? I think that there’s a sense of urgency here to get a bill just because, if we wait a year, we’re not going to have much of an Island left.”

Marcus also asked Grannis: “I get a sense that [for you] a lot of [this] has to do with fact-finding. Ms. Mendez said you can have the bill and there’s a fact-finding period afterwards. If the facts are so horrific that it really endangers us, she says, you know, let’s go back and renegotiate. What do you think of that?”

Grannis responded that a stay is “worth exploring.” But, he said, “I think this is a sophisticated, complicated, sensitive issue. We ought to have a great many more facts on what the state of affairs is on the Island, and maybe [we would find] the Island isn’t in dire need of repairs. But I’d like to know, as many other people would, as in any other transaction, whether or not things are as they’ve been conveyed to us.”

Further Efforts

At Wednesday night’s meeting of the Residents Association Common Council, Patrick Stewart proposed establishing a working relationship between the Council and the Maple Tree Group, asking Linda Heimer, as Chair of the Council’s Government Relations Committee, to consider what kind of structure might work best. Heimer, who is active in the Maple Tree Group, is to return with a recommendation at the next Council meeting.

Law Firm from page 1

It is our experience that if our role is to prevent a particular proposed project, one thing that’s very important is not to jump in too early. If you jump in too early, several things happen. The first is that if the government believes that it is engaged in a process, and you attempt to stop it before it’s gotten anywhere, you can guarantee that your legal fees will be astronomical, because the inertia of the governmental process is to let things continue. Hopefully, at the end of the day they die of their own weight. That happens frequently. But to attempt to come in early when you don’t have a huge war chest is probably not a good tactic.

[Second,] It is extraordinarily unlikely that any development for Southpoint or Octagon Park could proceed without a full EIS. Can’t guarantee it. But the law of New York is quite good that what’s called “major impact” requires a full EIS. Surely the Marriott project requires one. Under both the RIOC statute and the State environmental statutes, there is a fairly elaborate set of public hearings which precede the production of any EIS.

I believe that if a well-informed and powerful citizens group, such as this, makes a substantial contribution in the public hearing process of the EIS, two things will happen. One is you may actually get things changed because the developer may see that it’s easier to buy people off than to fight them. A second possibility is that if you articulate the positions well and the EIS that comes out does not incorporate it, you’ve created a good litigation tool. You may well decide that the first thing to spend any substantial money on in the Southpoint fight is an environmental consultant, not a legal consultant. Under Jerry Blue you couldn’t make predictions about RIOC. But if they run like a moderately rational agency, I do not believe they will attempt to avoid the open hearing process. I can’t overemphasize the importance of having a well-articulated position at those hearings, because when hearings are given to the public you’ve got to use them. You can’t avoid them. ...

You are not hiring us to engage in a litigation at this point. ... I don’t anticipate that kind of problem coming up for at least a year or so. It may never come up. If it does, that’s what you’re looking at. If it does, you’ll have weeks, if not months, of lead time to decide whether you actually want to spend your money on this kind of thing. You’ll have the benefit of our advice to say, “Here are your chances of initial success, and ultimate success,” which may be two very different things. [For example...] Here’s the cost to slow it down so you can start mobilizing the community...

[Responding to question about how the process of producing an Environmental Impact Statement, or EIS, works:] Here’s how the EIS works, in a nutshell. A lead agency is designated by the government. In this situation it would be odd if RIOC did not designate itself to be the lead agency. Under the lease and the GDP it is 80% likely that any development at Southpoint would require a modification of the ground lease and a modification of the development plan, and if so, it is 90% likely that if RIOC didn’t ask the City to join them in that process and you asked me to sue them, we would win that particular little piece of litigation. But I don’t think they’re going to try to cut the City out, because politically, it’s just too nutsy to do. Assuming that RIOC decides that it wishes to go ahead to enable something to happen at Southpoint, it will initiate an EIS process, and it is likely they will invite the [developer] to initiate an EIS process with RIOC the lead agency. If the EIS does not consider the effect of modifications in the lease and the GDP, I believe it would be rejected by anybody looking at it. Consequently it’s very likely that the Mayor’s office and the City Planning Commission will be asked for their views on the environmental impact of various types of changes in the lease and GDP. How long would that process take? Minimum, six months, maximum, probably ten. At the end of the process a large number of volumes of unreadable and uncarryable stuff gets dumped on the desk of somebody over at RIOC and that the is the proposed or preliminary EIS. Then there’s another hearing process. I suspect that the City Planning Commission would give comments on the preliminary EIS. [Along the way,] there are things that we would raise. For example, “Have you asked the Corps of Engineers for their view?” That’s always a good bunch to ask because they are really slow at doing anything.

[Responding to a question about Southtown:] I don’t know whether the Southtown about to be built is considered a major modification under the law. If somebody were to ask, “What is the point of vulnerability on Southtown?” I would look to see whether whatever changes occurred from the plan that was approved by the Board of Estimate fall within the concept of major modification. If they do, it raises a very interesting legal point (and “interesting” always means delay), which is, “Does the City Council take up where the Board of Estimate left off when they got rid of the Board of Estimate?” If RIRA wanted to stop Southtown, the initial place I would look at is whether there was an appropriate process in changing whatever was changed from the Board of Estimate approval... Six years later, something’s been changed. That’s where the legal vulnerability would be.

But to start that kind of an action you have to be very convinced that you’re willing to carry it through to the highest court in New York State, because you can be guaranteed that the government will appeal, and [then] it’s as if you hadn’t started because under the rules, government filing a notice of appeal essentially wipes out the lower court decision; you start again at the higher level. ... Construction usually doesn’t start because banks won’t fund it in that situation, [so] you can’t get the economics [to work]. Having said all of that, I have never seen a major project in New York that was [in] litigation that didn’t have at least a six-month delay simply by bringing the case. It’s just the way the world works.

If there is a substantial body of people within the RIRA community that want to have a hard look taken at whether Southtown can be improved, that’s something you should do very quickly.

If you have identified a problem which is not fully analyzed in the existing EIS, which is now, I think, six years old, because of changes in the plan, in theory you could go to court to see if a judge agrees that it’s a sufficiently major change to require an updating of the EIS. So the answer is, there is a legal process available to you.

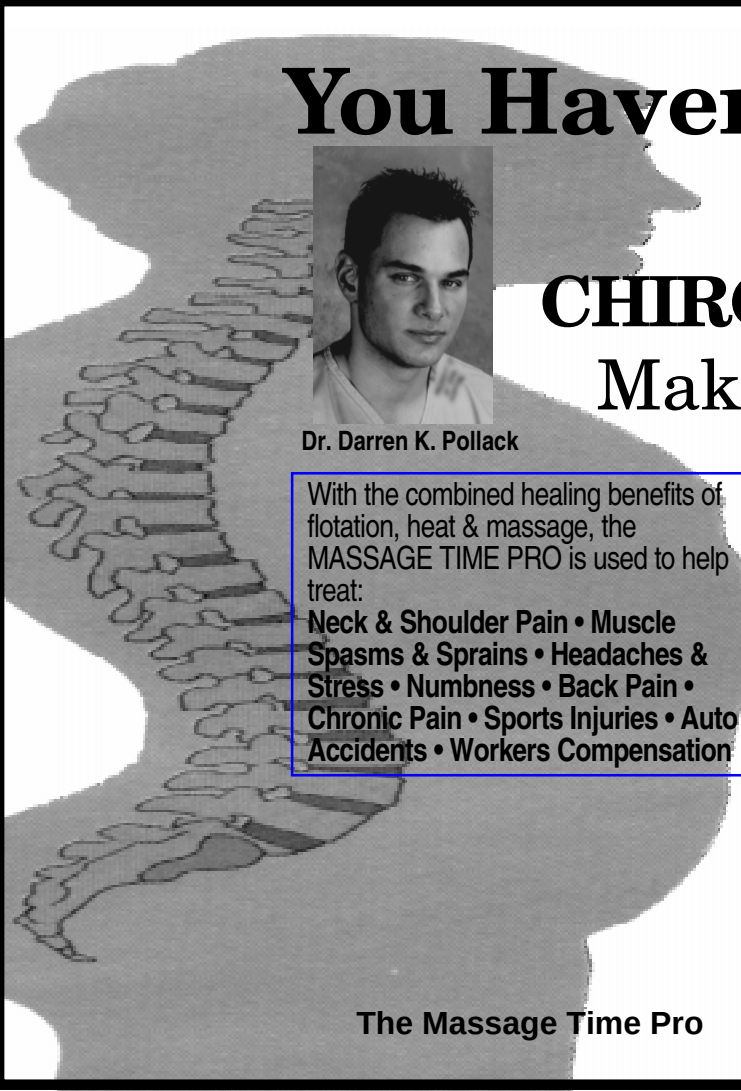
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