

Next issue:
Jan. 22

The Main Street WIRE

Roosevelt Island’s Community Newspaper

in association with Website NYC10044



Rivercross resident Steve Marcus addressed the RIRA Common Council Wednesday night, asking the Residents Association delegates “to show some leadership” on Southtown. Marcus chairs the steering committee of Roosevelt Islanders for Responsible Southtown Development (RIRSD), a group raising funds to fight for changes in the design of the new development. In an emotional moment, Marcus’ wife, Nurit, inset, demanded an end to RIRA inaction on the development, which her husband called “a disaster dropped on us.” He told the Council, “You have been nowhere. How can you sit on the sidelines and watch this rape of our small Island take place?”

Grannis Releases New Bill for Self-Governance

Assemblymember Pete Grannis has released a revised bill for Roosevelt Island self-governance that calls for a 13-member “RIOC2” Board, with 11 to be residents.

Nine of the residents would be elected; two others would be appointed by the Mayor. Two members, the President and Vice President of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA) would be elected Island-wide.

- The proposed composition of the Board:
- Elected from buildings**
 - 2 Eastwood
 - 2 Manhattan Park
 - 1 Island House
 - 1 Rivercross
 - 1 Westview
 - Elected Island-wide**
 - RIRA President
 - RIRA Vice President
 - Appointed Residents**
 - 2 appointed by Mayor
 - Ex Officio**
 - Director of the Budget
 - Commissioner of DHCR

The proposed legislation, which is Grannis’s response to a bill introduced last legislative session by Senator Olga Mendez, also tightens provisions having to do with the transition of power from the current Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) Board to the RIOC2 Board. It provides explicitly for State indemnification of the Island’s managing entity from high-

award law suits. And it codifies a promise Mendez reported Governor George Pataki made to her that the Island would be protected against catastrophically high costs related to errors of past management or the Island’s capital needs.

The Island’s Maple Tree Group (MTG), which originated the legislation last year, voted Monday night to ask revision of the new Board-election provisions. The changes would reduce the size of the Board, and would call for all elected members to be elected Island-wide. The group felt that a smaller Board would be more effective, and that candidates not tied to specific buildings would have a better chance of producing the best possible Board. MTG recently became a sub-committee of the RIRA Common Council’s Government Relations Committee.

The proposed legislation will now be discussed further – in the Residents Association Common Council, among other places – to provide feedback to Grannis and Mendez, who agreed in an October 5 Town Meeting to cooperate in formulating a bill.

As in previous versions, the new bill calls for the RIOC2 Board to hire a professional manager for the Island. It would thus end the practice of the Governor-appointed RIOC Board accepting appointees of the Governor in the top job at RIOC.

Whitaker & Stewart Confirmed to RIOC Board

Acting December 21, the State Senate confirmed Susan Whitaker and Patrick Stewart to voting seats on the Board of Directors of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC). Both had been nominated nearly two years ago, in February, 1998, by New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, and had sat with the Board as non-voting observers starting in November, 1998.

Law Suit to Delay and Change Southtown Appears Near Certain

There will almost certainly be legal action to stop or delay Southtown. That’s the one solid fact that emerges from three weeks of frantic activity in the Roosevelt Island community.

There could be as many as three actions filed before a 120-day deadline expires in less than two weeks:

- A new organization, Roosevelt Islanders for Responsible Southtown Development (RIRSD), has raised enough cash in a short campaign to institute an action.
- In the course of its hunt for an attorney, RIRSD found one attorney – Rivercross resident Robert Chira – who appears likely to file on behalf of at least one other client or group of clients.
- And Wednesday night the Common Council of the Roosevelt Island Residents Association (RIRA) voted conditionally to hold an emergency meeting this morning (Saturday, January 8) to decide whether or not to put its legal counsel on the case.

RIRA

Wednesday night’s extended RIRA Common Council meeting was completely occupied with the Southtown question. The Council voted to hold an emergency meeting Saturday morning at Chapel of the Good Shepherd if it is able to verify, with its legal counsel, that a 120-day limit for taking legal action is about to expire.

The deadline arises because, under the law, the action of a State agency must be challenged within four months. Because the Board of Directors of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) voted September 22 to approve a resolution granting “final designation” to developers Hudson and Related, that period will expire within the next two weeks. While doubts were raised Wednesday night about when the 120-day clock may have started, several attorneys, including two specialists in such actions consulted by *The WIRE*, have confirmed the time limit for an “Article 78” action.

RIRSD

Roosevelt Islanders for Responsible Southtown Development was formed in December after its founders became aware of the 120-day time limit. Rivercross residents Steve and Nurit Marcus, with their daughter Elior, had appeared repeatedly at RIOC and RIRA meetings, asking that the plan be reconsidered because it would destroy the present soccer/baseball field and substitute a smaller soccer-only field near the Queensboro Bridge in the southeast corner of the Southtown acreage.

The Marcuses became alarmed, and alerted other residents, when they came to believe RIRA would fail to act before the 120-day deadline. They formed RIRSD, with a five-member steering committee, as the primary outcome of a hastily-called December 21 meeting. Within days, they had cash or pledges approaching \$5,000. Steve Marcus, who chairs the steering committee, says fundraising has continued apace, but his group has decided not to release financial figures, concerned that they might be tactically useful to the opposition.

Chira

Attorney Robert Chira admits he is even more tactically secretive, and he issued a firm and repeated “no comment” in response to *The WIRE*’s questions about his client(s), his legal strategy, and his timing.

But Chira has a long history of concern about Southtown. He was instrumental in preparation of a response to the original Ramati plan. That consisted largely of an “Alternative Southtown Design” prepared by the architectural firm of Thoreson & Linard. (A critical comparison of that plan and the Hudson/Related plan are available on Website NYC10044 at <http://www.nyc10044.com/wire/1909/hoch1909.html>). Chira also spoke at the September 22 RIOC Board meeting, pointing out that he had been denied access to a copy of the resolution the Board was about to pass, and criticizing “the wall” between Southtown and Northtown that he felt would appear with construction of the first Southtown building.

Background

While Southtown is seen by many as essential to the future because the State has stopped subsidizing Island operations, attitudes about the current state of the project range from complete acceptance to total rejection, the latter being a view that nothing at all (well, maybe a park) should be built on the Southtown site.

But that area of the Island is formally designated for development in the contract between New York

City and New York State under which the State controls the Island. And, while the property lay dormant for two decades when no developers came forward to construct the housing called for in the Island’s General Development Plan (GDP), the past three years have seen an orderly march through the approvals process by RIOC and the developers, The Related Companies and The Hudson Companies.

The process both started and staggered under the RIOC Presidency of Dr. Jerome Blue, which ended in June after a stormy three-year run in which RIRA President Patrick Stewart and others vowed to block any development while Blue was running RIOC.

One effort to give residents a voice in the process was creation of two advisory committees to the RIOC Board, including a Capital Planning and Development Committee (CPDC). That move, by Commissioner Joseph Lynch of the State Department of Housing and Community Renewal, put several selected residents in a position to advise the RIOC Board on development matters. So far, the committee, chaired by Board member Frank Angelino, has advised against second-story expansion of the Island’s west shore mini-schools, and has advised for acceptance of Hudson/Related as Southtown developers. The Board has still not acted on the mini-schools recommendation after several months, but moved quickly to approve Hudson/Related when CPDC gave the development team a thumbs-up. RIOC also approved Hudson/Related’s “project and plan” in its September 22 resolution – a surprise to some residents who felt they had been assured there was still adequate time to lobby for changes in the plan, or felt too many questions remained unanswered when final designation was given to Hudson/Related.

Hudson/Related and RIOC, meanwhile, believe that the community has had fully-adequate opportunity for input; they have recently been joined in that view by RIRA President Patrick Stewart.

As a matter of record, the original time-line projection for Southtown provided only a two-month period for “public comment,” but the developers have presented their plan in essentially the same form since April, 1999, at several meetings, ranging from unannounced sessions of CPDC through meetings with RIRA’s Planning Committee, to a full-blown Town



Opposing Sides Nurit Marcus listened Wednesday night as Prof. Richard Wade told the RIRA Common Council, “No plan can be perfect. This Southtown plan is the best we have seen.”

Meeting. Even so, those attempting to stall and change the project feel the sessions were pro forma and that the changes Hudson/Related made in response were minor and inadequate.

Motives

Those planning legal action to halt the process face a somewhat tricky set of choices. To grant their request for an Article 78 review, a court must see legal grounds – some flaw in execution of the process or some overlooked environmental consequence – to put the brakes on. That means environmental experts and attorneys must battle over one set of concerns while the activists’ real concerns may be substantially different.

For example, RIRSD has cited a series of complaints about the currently-approved layout of Southtown:

- **The wall:** The building planned for first construction will, they say, effectively place a “wall” across Main Street, showing what Steve Marcus called “its backside” to the existing community.
- **Loss of the soccer/baseball field:** Those against the plan lament potential loss of the green expanse between Blackwell/Rivercross and the derelict Nurses

Pages of Thought and Opinion

Who Dropped the Ball?
Who Picked it Up?

Suddenly, there is a blitz of activity over Southtown. Within the past three weeks, the Common Council of the Residents Association has had some surprises. It learned, late in the game, that the four-month time limit for challenging the RIOC Board’s bundled approval of Southtown developers Hudson and Related *and their plan* was near expiration.

The Common Council learned that, in part, because some residents, alerted by Steve and Nurit Marcus – who had previously pled their case repeatedly before Common Council meetings – formed Roosevelt Islanders for Responsible Southtown Development (RIRSD) and got busy spreading the word.

Because they live in Rivercross and needed to work quickly, the Marcuses started with Rivercross in rallying interested Islanders, and quite naturally produced a bulletin that appealed specifically to their Rivercross neighbors. It’s therefore tempting, if one opposes their ride of Paul Revere, to see the issue they bring as a Rivercross issue.

It isn’t. The six-member RIRSD steering committee (which includes members from Eastwood and Island House) are sounding the alarm because they correctly perceive that the soccer field Hudson/Related propose to construct down by the power plant is a mistake. It might be a wonderful soccer field, but so removed from our daily lives that (at best) it will serve that purpose only, while our present soccer/baseball greensward also serves as a community common – a pleasant, green area that could be the centerpiece of a fully-integrated community once Southtown is finished.

The Marcuses and RIRSD are derided (see Patrick Stewart’s RIRA President’s Column, page 3) for joining Robert Chira in seeing the building scheduled for first construction as a mistake, as well. Where Stewart sees a perfectly fine placement, Chira and the Marcuses see a wall squarely astride the line of Main Street, separating the existing community from the planned new community.

Chira and the Marcuses and all the others who dislike the wall effect of that first building *may* be wrong. **But the thing is, they may be right.** And if the only way to prove they’re right (or wrong) is to build it, that’s a mighty permanent and immovable proof to erect.

So we applaud the Marcus effort, through RIRSD, to rally their fellow residents to act, particularly when their repeated pleas to the RIRA Common Council went unheeded – and particularly when the Common Council failed to notice the ticking clock in the 120-day window.

Conflict of Interest

We note with sadness the answer Patrick Stewart gave when he was asked Wednesday night if there might be a conflict between his voting membership on the RIOC Board and his vote, as RIRA President, for RIRA not to bring legal action against the RIOC Board.

The sad part is that Stewart’s “proof” to the Common Council that there’s no conflict was to repeat to the Council the assurances of a *State attorney* that there is no conflict – the same State attorney, apparently, who had asked if he would be willing to resign from RIRA in order to serve on the RIOC Board.

DL



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If we had a soap opera announcer as part of this publication, he’d start off this next script...
Last WIRE, you’ll remember, Residents Association President Patrick Stewart rose to the defense of Frank Angelino, Chair of the RIOC Board’s Capital Planning and Development Committee (CPDC), calling Angelino “the greatest asset this community has on the RIOC Board of Directors,” and challenging The WIRE “to produce any shred whatever of any evidence” to contradict Stewart’s evaluation that Angelino’s “long history of community service in New York City” is anything but “remarkable and impeccable.”
Unfortunately, Stewart simply missed the point of the December 4 news analysis piece he was criticizing. Or perhaps he felt a need to avoid dealing directly with the evidence that the community’s stake in an orderly and thoughtful Southtown approval process has been sacrificed. The solution? Pretend *The WIRE’s* December 4 analysis was an attack on Frank Angelino, and defend Angelino.

That’s a diversion. Angelino doesn’t need defending, and the analysis was not an attack on him. It was a simple rendering of the facts – that although the CPDC “sense of the committee” vote was clearly *only* an approval of Hudson/Related *as Southtown developers*, the RIOC Board went further – *it also* gave its green light to the developers’ “project and plan.”

In short, the RIOC Board, Angelino included (and with not a whisper of protest from Stewart) voted a resolution that went well beyond the advisory “sense” elicited, by Angelino, from CPDC. As **Stewart** told a meeting of the Residents Association Common Council (with RIOC President Robert H. Ryan at his side), **“My understanding of all of that was that it was the sense of the committee to approve the developer, not the plan, not the architecture, none of that, because there wasn’t anything to approve... They haven’t done any of that stuff yet, so what we agreed to was to approve the developer and nothing else.”**

With those words, recorded and transcribed exactly, Stewart made his own position-of-the-moment clear: CPDC had not recommended approval of the developers’ plan.

RIOC President Ryan also made it really clear in the CPDC meeting in this exchange with CPDC member Marc Diamond:

Diamond: **We’re looking for final approval at this point, but it’s final approval of the developer as opposed to final approval of his project.**

Ryan: **Correct.**
So there’s simply no question that the RIOC Board’s vote exceeded any advice given by CPDC. Reporting that fact isn’t an attack on Frank Angelino. But it’s at the heart of a collage of evidence that resident influence on the shape of Southtown is, at best, a wispy illusion. (The full transcript of that portion of the CPDC meeting is available on-line at **http://www.nyc10044.com/wire/2003/cpdctran.html**.)

And that’s the “process” Stewart chooses to defend with Frank Angelino as its proxy: A setting in which the few resident members of CPDC generate *advice* which will then be ignored if it conflicts with plans already in place, or followed if it fits those plans, or exceeded if it doesn’t quite include all the RIOC Board would like. That’s no “process” at all. It’s a cynical game of “Let’s pretend,” and by both his comments and his silence, Patrick Stewart (who, let’s remember, is President of the *Residents Association*) seems too eagerly to have taken on the role written for him by the Pataki administration: Chief resident pretender and apologist.

But they’re not even doing a good job of *pretending* that residents have a chance for meaningful influence over the shape of Southtown.

When Stewart claimed, at the last RIOC Board meeting, that the Capital Planning and Development Committee “has met in the open nine times; it has been publicized; it’s open to anyone who wants to attend those meetings,” he had a convenient lapse of memory. The facts:

- CPDC meetings weren’t opened until Spring, after a late-March request from *The WIRE* to Commissioner Joe Lynch of the State Department of Housing and Community Renewal for a ruling on the matter.
- **All CPDC meetings were held off-Island.**
- Had residents been invited, and attended, the conference room used would have accommodated only a handful.
- The meetings were generally held at 6:30 on week-day evenings, an unworkable time for most interested residents.
- Not all the meetings were publicly announced.
- **Comments from the general public were not allowed.** A couple of residents who did attend found

that only members of the Committee and designated developers or RIOC staff were allowed to speak.
• Not all the meetings dealt with Southtown, and in fact...
• The CPDC meeting at which that “sense of the committee” vote was taken *did not even have Southtown on the agenda.* Any resident hoping to comment on Southtown would not have been forewarned, even if the meetings did provide for public comment – which they did not.
Let’s recall that just a year ago, had Jerry Blue held such important meetings off-Island, rarely announcing them, disallowing resident comment, and inserting items into the agenda at the last minute, Stewart would have howled – and rightly so. Today, the howl has become a swoon.

In his last President’s column, Stewart himself described RIOC’s request for a CPDC endorsement of Southtown developers as “precipitous,” thereby admitting that critical decisions about the future of Roosevelt Island are being made on a hurry-up basis. “Precipitous” applies equally to the RIOC Board vote in which the “plan and project” were approved in an end run that exceeded the scope of the advisory sense of CPDC.

Stewart finds himself in the odd position of endorsing precipitous decision-making about Southtown. But development is not a decision whether or not to clean the streets. Development is permanent. *The WIRE* points these things out not as a criticism of Frank Angelino, but as a telling of the facts the community has a right to know.

The reason given for the precipitous decision, incidentally, was that the developers had located an east-side medical institution willing to provide tenants for an entire building – very likely a fairly transient population (nobody was quite saying) – and if it turns out to be a population of folks who are unlikely to have any long-term commitment to this community, *that* in itself is a matter that should be reviewed *by residents*, by RIRA, by CPDC, not simply ratified by a quickie vote of the non-elected RIOC Board that has only one voting resident on it.

If there is “process” and a provision for resident input, these questions:

- If the community is to have something to say about development (including Southtown), why hasn’t RIRA put together a brainstorming session in which residents can have a *genuine dialog* with the developers?
- Why didn’t somebody in Patrick Stewart’s close orbit think to challenge the RIOC assertion that the order of construction must be tailored to fit RIOC’s budget rather than what’s best for the community?

There are so many questions, in fact, about failure of the process to consider residents’ best interests that it’s *ludicrous* (to borrow Stewart’s word) that he would put himself forward as a defender of the process – a process which is either broken or designed to create the *illusion* of resident input while ignoring it.

So the substance of Stewart’s last *WIRE* column has to be rejected for attempting to divert attention with an unnecessary defense of Frank Angelino instead of addressing the embarrassing questions and the main point of the December 4 analysis: ***The process has been used to thwart resident influence and input, not enable it.***

That is, no doubt, on the minds of those who are collecting funds to mount a legal challenge to the RIOC Board’s approval of the Southtown plan. That’s a move which has yet to play itself out, but it’s what happens when the “process” is used to circumvent real input by residents, then is defended by those in power.

DL

Letters

To the Editor:
I’d like the community to know that I had excellent help from Security Officer Al Wright on Sunday, when I lost my purse somewhere between the subway and 580 Main Street. Officer Wright drove me between the two locations in an attempt to find it, and I appreciate his help.

Clarissa McCraley

Letters Policy

Letters Policy: *The WIRE* welcomes letters to the Editor, to the community, and to/from officials, and will consider publication on a *Name Withheld* basis, but the writer’s name, address, and telephone number must be provided. **Preferred methods of submission:** PC-standard 3.5-inch floppy disk (any wordprocessing software) left at 531 Main Street addressed to *The WIRE*; by e-mail to **mainstreetwire@rcn.com**; or typed, double-spaced copy left at 531 Main Street, or faxed to (212) **755-2540**. Clearly handwritten letters will be considered. We cannot take dictation of letters by telephone. **All letters are subject to editing for length and clarity.**

Last night the RIRA Common Council voted overwhelmingly not to support the newly formed group “Roosevelt Islanders for Responsible Southtown Development” in their well publicized drive to stop the development of Southtown. I cannot speculate on what basis each of the Councilors made his or her own decision, but I feel it is my responsibility to explain to you exactly why I too voted against it.

There are any number of misstatements and distortions in the literature this group has been distributing around the community. The group has done little or nothing to examine the factual basis of their claims.

Separately they have put on paper only amongst themselves the true basis of their motivations. Although these issues were not addressed directly last night, I will deal with the most flagrant misstatements here.

Southtown is being “rammed down our throats”. These developers have paid more scrupulous attention to community input than any in the history of the Island. Public meetings have been going on regularly since 1996. They have done far, far more than they are legally required to do. They will continue to do so, now at this critical stage, not only because RIRA will be able to demonstrate incontrovertible facts (unlike this committee), but for the overpowering reason that these developers will also be the permanent managers of the new community, and are not here to simply build it, take their profit and run. They are unquestionably the pre-eminent developers of middle-income housing in New York. We have not seen a single instance of arbitrary or unreasonable behavior on the developers’ part anywhere in this process. And the negotiating process is a long way from being over yet.

“The Wall” is my personal favorite. I could do an entire column on The Wall. The fact is that, due to the bending of Main Street, anyone going out their front door onto Main Street (other than from Rivercross) already faces a wall...the wall of Rivercross itself or Eastwood. Further, the alternative put forward by the creator of the “wall issue” creates an extension of the current ugly canyon to extend entirely to the Tram, blocking off all water views on both sides, and puts buildings much closer to Rivercross and Eastwood than does any other plan submitted. The current plan affords the same water view directly ahead that we now all enjoy once any pedestrian passes Rivercross.

“No plans have been made to protect residents from noise, pollution, construction traffic and other construction activity.” All the dozens of legal requirements have already been met, as they must be if construction is to begin. Further plans to minimize the disruption are under negotiation now, which, legally, is the only point where the parties could begin to discuss this issue. The developers and RIOC have given every commitment possible to keep disruption to the minimum. Of course, construction will be inconvenient for all of us, but without the construction of Southtown, this community is doomed to fiscal failure.

“PS217 is already overcrowded. There’s no provision for additional schoolchildren.” If PS217 is overcrowded at all, it is by the children who are being bussed in from other parts of the city. Resident children in PS217 will only reduce the number of bussed children, not overcrowd our schools in any way.



Patrick Stewart

Groundbreaking could not possibly happen until the middle of May, even if everything goes without a single hitch from now until then (and it won’t).

“No time limit on construction, could last 10 years or more.” There are firm contractual time limits built into the agreement. Breaking them carries severe penalties for the developer. Delays once ground is broken will destroy any profitability for the developers. The phase this group is trying to stop is scheduled for completion in a single year.

“No commitment to family oriented affordable housing.” There is a mandatory inclusion of this type of housing built into the agreement based on the GDP.

“It’s a RIOC giveaway. Developer gets land for peanuts.” The developer doesn’t get the land at all, it is and will remain State land leased from the City. And since the amount of annual ground rent has yet to have been decided, it is purely speculative to call it anything at all. It is for the ground rental income that the State is pushing Southtown in the first place.

“Community pays millions for infrastructure, developer zero.” The agreement states that RIOC is paying up to \$4.5 million for the infrastructure of the middle income phase of the development; all further infrastructure costs (80% of the total) are borne by the State in a 50-50 split with the developer.

“Octagon Park funds diverted to Southtown instead of completing the Park.” Not one penny of the funds that were committed to finish the water-tunnel portion of Octagon Park will be used for infrastructure, or for anything else than Octagon Park. RIOC’s own infrastructure funds are being used, as planned.

What the Committee does not put onto the materials it is circulating and posting throughout the community are the clear declarations that the steering committee made on the circular it distributed throughout Rivercross (only) when it first sent out its urgent call to action. The headline read “Your life on Roosevelt Island and the value of your Rivercross apartment are less than a month away from a permanent and radical change for the worse.”

Other quotes from this document include: “...It (Southtown) will turn our part of town into an “old town ghetto” – the poor folks with the Mitchell-Lama state-aid apartments.”

“...As a result, the value of your Rivercross apartment will drop significantly...”

“...We don’t have to find solid legal grounds for stopping Southtown. All we have to do is find adequate grounds for an initial restraining order to stop construction from starting...”

These motives seem to me vastly different than the motives that are

Carl Johnson Takes Varsity Honor



Carl Johnson has won a Varsity Football Award at New York Military Academy (NYMA).

The Eugene L. DiNallo ’47 award, given to the team’s outstanding player, was presented to Johnson November 17.

Johnson is a graduate of PS/IS 217, and a member of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini Parish, where he was an altar server. A Senior at NYMA, he’s the son of Mona Johnson of 580 Main Street.

New York Military Academy, located in Cornwall-on-Hudson, New York, was founded in 1889 by Civil War veteran Colonel Charles Jefferson Wright. It’s a co-educational independent college preparatory boarding school for grades 7-12.



COMING UP

Compiled by Claire Friedland – phone/fax 317-8523

Mon., Jan. 10, 8:00 p.m., Toastmasters. For information, call **687-4010**.

Wed., Jan. 12, 6:00 p.m., PTA of PS/IS 217 general membership meeting, school library.

Thur., Jan. 13, 11:00 a.m., RIOC Board of Directors Meeting, Chapel of the Good Shepherd.

Sat., Jan. 22, next issue of *The Main Street WIRE*. **Deadlines:** Advertising in the paper, Fri., Jan. 14; decision on stuffers for *The Bag*, Mon., Jan. 17; bag materials due Jan. 19. **Future issues:** Feb. 5, 19; Mar. 4, 18; Apr. 1, 15, 29; May 13, 27; June 10; July 1 (for July 4); Aug. 26; Sept. 9, 23;

Fax or phone event information to 317-8523. Please provide a phone number for follow-up. There is no charge for listing Island events here.

Oct. 7, 21; Nov. 4, 18; Dec. 2, 16; Jan 13, 2001; 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/breaking news, 917-353-1647; phone/fax for advertising inquiries, (212) **751-8214/755-2540**; phone/fax to list your Island organization’s event here (no charge), **317-8523**.

Thur., Jan. 24, 8:00 p.m., Toastmasters. For information, call **687-4010**.

Tue., Feb 1, 6:00 p.m., PTA Executive Board meeting; all parents of 217 students are welcome.

Wed., Feb. 2, 8:00 p.m., RIRA Common Council Meeting, Chapel of the Good Shepherd.

Thur., Feb. 10, 6:00 p.m., Annual International Dinner of PTA in school cafeteria. Information: **980-0294**.

At the Senior Center

Monday

9:15-10:15, **Stay Well** (Exercise)
10:00-11:00, **English as 2nd Language** (beg)
10:00-12:00, **English as 2nd** (intermediate)
12:45 **Arts & Crafts**
6:30, **Evening Line Dancing**

Tuesday

9:45-10:45, **Jazzercise**
1:30, **Bingo** (RISA)

Wednesday

9:00-10:00, **Stay Well** (Stretch)
10:00-11:00, **English as 2nd Language** (beg)
10:30-11:30, **Creative Arts**
11:00-12:00, **English as 2nd** (intermediate)
1:30, **Games** (RISA)

Thursday

10:00-11:00, **Tai Chi**
12:30, **Movie**

Friday

10:00-11:00, **Citizenship Class**
10:30-11:30, **Blood Pressure Screening**

Special Events

Call in advance for details: 980-1888

Mon., Jan. 10, 11:00-12:30, **Metrocard Bus**
Tue., Jan. 11, 12:30, **VNS Service**
Fri., Jan. 14, 12:30, **Foot Lecture**, Free Screening
Mon., Jan. 17, **closed** (Martin Luther King Day)
Wed., Jan. 19, **RISA Atlantic City trip**
Mon., Jan. 24, **Metrocard Bus**
Tues., Jan. 25, 12:30, **VNS Service**
Fri., Jan. 28, 12:30, **Birthday Party**
Sat., Feb. 8, **Mohegan Sun Casino** (RISA trip)
Sat., Feb. 15, 22, 29; 7:00 p.m., **Bingo**

being published to the general community.

This community spent three years in exhaustive effort to rid ourselves of irresponsible RIOC management. We defeated Jerry Blue on the basis of fact, and on the basis of absolute integrity in the face of his lack of the same. Responses to his irresponsible moves did frequently call for dramatic action, and the community provided it when it was needed.

See **Stewart**, page 7

Locks for Seniors

Roosevelt Island Seniors can get a free second lock for their apartment doors through a program of the City Department of Aging. The process involves calling for a residential security survey, provided free by the 114th Precinct, after which a referral for the free second lock goes to the Department of Aging.

Eligible Island residents can get started by calling Officers Paul Chatham or Suzanne Lowney at **718 626-9324**. The whole process takes 2-3 weeks.

Southtown from page 1

Residence. Hudson/Related and RIOC have promised a better replacement soccer field at the southeast corner of the site, but RIRSD sees the present fields as the community’s greensward or common, pointing to it as the “only river-to-river view between Southpoint and Lighthouse Park.”

RIRSD also cites concerns unrelated to the layout:

- The potential for school overcrowding and the absence of plans to deal with the additional children the development will bring.
- Parking at Motorgate and traffic on Main Street.

- Lack of an agreement on the time span of construction. (The original timeline produced by Morse Diesel, RIOC’s representative for Southtown construction, put the period at five years, but exact phasing and timing was not addressed before the RIOC Board voted final designation status for Hudson/Related.

RIRSD also sees “no commitment to family-oriented affordable housing,” worries over the “trucks, noise, congestion and pollution” of the construction period. Its flyer suggests, without specifying them, that there are “too many unresolved environmental problems.”

Whatever law firm brings whatever action for whatever community entity, those “environmental problems” may offer enough legal traction to halt the process. Another option might be a demonstration that RIOC didn’t follow its own rules or established procedures – for example, by voting a resolution that exceeded the scope of advice given by its advisory committee, CPDC. Finally, plaintiffs might make a claim that funds RIOC plans to use to extend infrastructure (water, sewer, electric, AVAC) have been misappropriated.

Triggering any court action is likely to bring progress on Southtown to at least a temporary halt while a court finds its way through the facts and applicable law, because bankers won’t lend construction money if there are obvious problems ahead.



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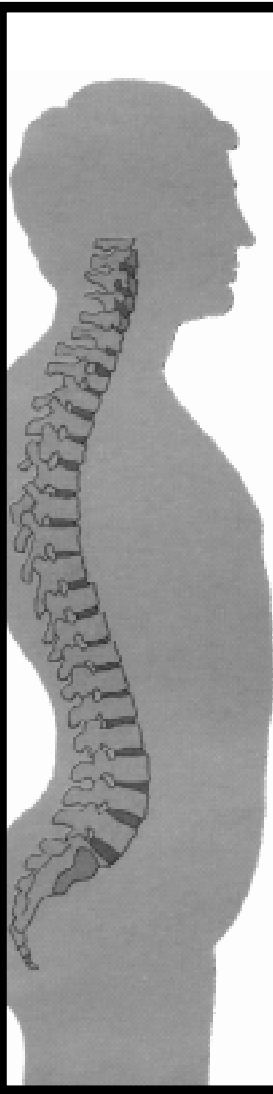
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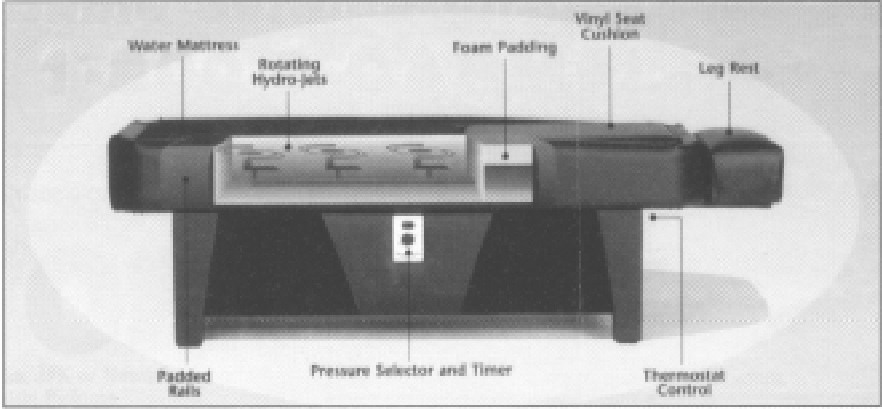
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December 1-15, 1999

12/2/99, Attempted Robbery, 500 Main St., Female resident entered PSD, reported an assault. Several officers immediately responded to scene, 911 was notified for NYPD, EMS response. Complainant stated a youth had approached him, attempted to rob him of his coat. Upon his resisting, the perpetrator drew a knife, tried to cut the victim's face. The victim put up his hand to protect his face, which resulted in victim suffering a deep laceration to his left index finger. Other officers searched the Eastwood complex for perp. with negative results. NYPD, EMS responded, EMS transported victim to Elmhurst Hospital. The youth stated he did not know nor had he ever seen perpetrator prior to the attack.

12/2/99, Found Property, 555 Main St., Doorman entered PSD handed in handbag he had found containing one bank card, one Costco card, one yellow metal ring, US\$270, etc. Owner of the property had inquired at PSD about the lost property prior to the handbag being turned in. The owner was contacted, responded to PSD, verified the contents of handbag, was given property and signed for same.

12/2/99, Hazardous Condition, 686 Main St., Officer noticed hazardous condition at rear of Gristede's. Deputy responded, observed piles of garbage, wooden crates, plastic containers, stacked to approximately four feet in height, and blocking the entire loading dock, the inside of the loading dock, as well as the fire exit. There was also a vehicle parked in the midst of the garbage. A Gristede's employee stated he would have it cleared up and would advise store manager, who was not present at the time.

12/3/99, Fire, 575 Main St., Doorman at scene called RIHM service to location of a small leaf fire in Stairwell "B". PSD officer responded. Condition corrected.

12/5/99, Fire, 595 Main St., Officers observed smoke emanating from outlet in bathroom; 911 was notified. FDNY responded, verified the cause was from a water leak in wall in bathroom wall's wires. RIHM supervisor turned off water.

12/7/99, Suspicious Person, 546 Main St., Officer responded to scene, upon arrival encountered a male, mid-30's near elevators in hallway near elevators, asked him if he was a resident, he replied no, that he was visiting, upon being asked which apt., he stated he was leaving. Officer suggested he take elevator, he began walking then fled down the stairs. Officer requested additional units while in pursuit, but lost sight of individual on "J" stairwell on the 4 floor. A complete search of building was conducted with negative results.

12/8/99, Criminal Mischief, 609 Main St., Anonymous male informed officer that some kids had thrown an object that had shattered window at China 1 Restaurant. He could not provide identification nor which way they had fled. Officers searched area w/ negative results. RIHM super arrived & secured broken window.

12/8/99, Lost Property, RIOB Bus #2, RIOB bus driver found leather wallet containing US\$64, one Foreign Mission ID, two bank cards, one Costco card, etc. Wallet was secured at PSD. Owner came to office, retrieved the afore-mentioned, and signed for the property.

12/9/99, Fire, 510 Main St., Anonymous male entered PSD, reported fire in new trash can. PSD officer responded, extinguished fire.

12/12/99, Criminal Mischief, 580 Main St., Officer responded to scene, resident stated upon returning to apt., she had noticed that bottom of her apt. door was dented. Officer confirmed dent in door. NYPD prepared report.

12/12/99, Disorderly Conduct, 532 Main St., Arrest. Officer responded to scene, where perp was acting in a threatening manner. He was seen pushing, shoving a resident male. He was detained, issued a "C" summons & released.

12/12/99, Assault, 532 Main St., Arrest. Officer responded to scene, observed resident male fighting with another male, latter stated the other had struck him on face with a full 20 oz. plastic bottle. EMS responded, treated man @ scene. Perp. was placed under arrest, transported to 19 Pct. by two PSD officers in a PSD patrol car. Perp. was transported to central booking, where he was refused because of a previous medical condition. He was taken to Bellevue Hospital & subsequently back to central booking.

12/13/99, Vehicle Accident, 688 Main St., Goldwater bus was struck by RIOB bus #8 breaking left rear view mirror. There were no passengers in Goldwater nor in RIOB bus.

12/13/99, Flood, 546 Main St., Resident entered PSD reported a flood in her apt. Officer responded, confirmed flood in front of apt. RIHM service supervisor responded, turned off water, due to a cracked piece in the toilet.

The WIRE publishes this information as received from the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation, and takes no responsibility for its accuracy or completeness.

12/15/99, Water Leak, 580 Main St., Officer responded to location of water leak. RIHM supervisor & officer went to apt., there was no one there & using RIHM key entered apt. where they found water leak @ kitchen sink that had faulty faucet. Maintenance turned off faucet and cleaned up. Apt. was secured again.

December 16, 1999-January 3, 2000

12/16/99, Found Property, 567 Main St., Resident entered PSD, surrendered US\$12.00 found on the ground. Money secured @ PSD after it was counted in presence of reporter.

12/16/99, Found Property, 559 Main St., Credit Union employee found student Advantage card, gave same to PSD Director. Officer contacted owner, she came to PSD, retrieved her property.

12/18/99, Criminal Mischief, 595 Main St., Resident phoned PSD, stated door had been tampered with, someone had placed paper in top lock which did not damage lock. NYPD refused.

12/19/99, Criminal Mischief, 556 Main St., Officer noticed cracked window at scene, notified RIHM & employee. No injuries incurred – searched for perps. w/negative results.

12/19/99, Noise, 513 Main St., Numerous complaints were received about loud noise, they would be asked by PSD officers to lower music & they would comply.

12/19/99, Investigation, 510 Main St., Officer noticed large group of males at scene, possible physical dispute was about to commence. Other officers responded, and off island individuals entered their cars & departed. On island males remained at scene. There had been no physical altercation. Two officers remained until they left. NYPD responded but crowd was already gone.

12/20/99, Investigation, 580 Main St., Anonymous female entered PSD said her 5-year-old was inside stalled elevator. RIHM service was notified, responded but elevator doors were open. Supervisor stated he would inspect the elevator. No injuries were incurred.

12/20/99, Vehicle Accident, 688 Main St., Non-resident female phoned PSD said she was going west when vehicle #2, which was driving against arrow on floor struck hers as well as a parked car. All cars incurred damages. A message was left for owner of parked car No one was hurt. NYPD responded & prepared report.

12/21/99, Vehicle Accident, 200 Main St., Officer responded to scene, was advised that vehicle #2 attempted to pass vehicle #1 on the left, which was parked behind off loading bus, thusly damaging vehicle #2. Driver of veh. #1 (while waiting for NYPD, complained of feeling ill, EMS responded, transported him to Mt. Sinai Queens. NYPD responded.

12/22/99, Vehicle Accident, 200 Main St., Non resident driver backed up car striking tram employee's parked car, scratching it. No injuries were incurred, NYPD refused. Driver of car was issued 2 summonses, i.e., failure to produce registration, insurance card. Subsequently, he did.

12/22/99, Vehicle Accident, 595 Main St., Female informed D.O. she had parked vehicle, when returning to car, she saw another vehicle back up into hers, breaking the mirror, scratching fender, door. Vehicle owners exchanged documents & refused NYPD & EMS.

12/22/99, Harassment, 552 Main St., RIHM receptionist entered PSD w/ General Mgr., reported that resident male, with whom receptionist & General Mgr. have had previous dealings, had demanded to see another employee, when informed there was no one else he became abusive & left office w/his wife. NYPD responded & spoke w/victim.

12/22/99, Property Damage, 560 Main St., Bounty hunter notified PSD he was going to scene to apprehend perp. wanted for bail jumping and proceeded to kick down door & apprehend perp. Apt. door lock was damaged beyond repair. RIHM superv. said he could not fix the lock until the next morning, advised perp's wife to put chain lock on door.

12/23/99, Criminal Mischief, 570 Main St., Owner phoned PSD said there was a broken window at location. Officer responded, confirmed same, area was cautioned off. RIHM was notified, they were aware of situation. On 12/22, officer noticed broken window & had notified RIHM service.

12/24/99, Fire, 200 Main St., Officer reported FDNY was responding to scene regarding brush fire, which they extinguished. There was no property damage, cause of fire unknown & there were no injuries. Officers searched area w/negative results. Southgate secured, it had been unsecured w/pad-lock on it.

12/24/99, Lost Property, 300 Main St., Resident entered PSD, said she was in tram, boarded RIOB bus, when she descended from bus she noticed her purse was missing, identified driver, who stated purse was not on board. Officer searched bus w/negative results. Victim stated purse contained several credit & bank cards, cell phone, US\$500, apt. & car keys. NYPD prepared report.

12/25/99, Harassment, 580 Main St., Friend of victim informed officer of a verbal dispute between two residents. Officers responded, resident stated sister's ex-husband (also resident w/separate room) had threatened them with bodily harm. Both persons refused to leave apt., there were no injuries. NYPD responded, prepared report.

12/26/99, Alarm, 625 Main St., PSD responded to alarm sounding atscene.

Officers searched interior/exterior areas, all doors were locked & secured. NYPD responded. Ultimately alarm went off, PSD officer checked area & all was in order.

12/27/99, Harassment, 686 Main St., Officers responded to fight @ scene. Security guard stated group of island youths entered, started a fight w/ two G's employees. Security guard was hit on head w/fist, but refused to elaborate on who was involved or on incident.

12/27/99, Disorderly Conduct, 579 Main St., Arrest. Officer patrolling asked driver twice to move car from in f/o hydrant, he refused. When officer asked for identification to give him summons for parking in f/o hydrant, he refused. Other officers responded, due to driver acting in violent manner. He was given two "C" summons: one for disorderly conduct, and for failure to comply, and one for parking.

12/28/99, Petit Larceny, 560 Main St., Officer responded to report that female youth had removed a Walkman valued at US\$90 from apt. & fled to Island subway station. Officers apprehended youth, brought her to PSD YO, who retrieved stolen property. Complainant refused to press charges. Walkman returned to complainant.

12/29/99, Dispute, 510 Main St., Resident entered PSD, stated resident male pushed her, she had no sign of injury. NYPD responded, perp. stated he had not touched her. EMS arrived, transported her to Mt. Sinai, Queens.

12/30/99, Escort, 4 River Rd., Officers escorted Man Park mgr. & housing inspector, who had court order to correct any/all violations at location, which tenant refused. Tenant did not allow pictures to be taken & refused to sign court order.

12/30/99, Suspicious Package, 523 Main St., Anonymous male reported he had seen suspicious green duffel bag in f/o location. Officers cautioned off area, directed pedestrian, vehicle traffic. PSD & NYPD determined contents were not dangerous. There were no injuries/damage reported.

12/30/99, Gas Leak, 546 Main St., Anonymous person reported gas smell @ scene. Officers responded, confirmed heavy smell of gas. RIHM superv. responded, door to door check made, they drilled lock, gained entrance w/ PSD, there were several pilot lights out. Condition corrected, apt. door secured.

12/31/99, Harassment, 543 Main St., (off-Island), Non-resident male approached officer, informed him four unknown males assaulted him in Queensbridge Houses, LIC & had followed him to Roosevelt Island. He could not identify them. NYPD responded, prepared report, escorted victim home.

1/1/00, Disorderly Conduct, 513 Main St., Arrest. PSD Sgt. responded to a dispute in front of 513 Main St. among several males. Four males were attempting to restrain another male to prevent a fight. Additional officers responded and separated the males. One male informed officers he was punched by individual others were attempting to restrain. Victim did not want to press charges or give any additional information. The perp. attempted to strike victim again in the officer's presence and was taken into custody. Another male attempted to prevent officers from taking perp. #1 into custody, and was also taken into custody. While in custody, resident male resisted as he was being led into PSD vehicle #2, kicking rear door open, striking another legally parked car. Owner of the car stated the damage was approx. \$150. PSD vehicle suffered damage to interior and exterior. The group was dispersed and both perps were given "C" summonses. There were no serious injuries and no weapons involved. All the males appeared to have been drinking.

1/1/00, Vehicle Accident, 579 Main St., Officer received a complaint from victim, who stated he was driving southbound when another car hit his. EMS was refused. NYPD responded, prepared report.

1/1/00, DWI/ Marijuana Possession, 549 Main St., Non-resident crashed a van into PSD vehicle #4, he also struck a PSD sergeant on his left shoulder with van's mirror. When officer asked for his documents, he noticed man appeared intoxicated. He was taken into custody by PSD officer, transported to 28 Pct. When searched, man had a bag of marijuana in his pocket.

1/1/00, Noise Complaint, 513 Main St., Officer responded to complaint about loud music, reported that it was not loud. Officers went to complainant's apt., but resident refused to open door, wanted to speak only to supervisor & when she did, hung up the telephone on him.

1/2/00, Missing Property, RIOB Bus, Resident female informed officer she had lost her purse. She said she had traveled from subway station via RIOB bus. Both locations were searched w/ negative results. Purse contained US\$24, 1 bank card, 1 Visa, etc.

1/3/00, Theft of Services, 580 Main St., Non-resident cab driver informed officer that two unk. males ran out of his cab without paying the \$15 fare. They ran down the 580 breezeway. Officer checked the area w/ negative results. Victim refused NYPD report.

1/3/00, Assault, 555 Main St., RIHM employee phoned PSD, said there was a person throwing knives @ location. Officers responded, spoke w/ victim who had a cut on arm administered by a butter knife wielded by room mate. Perp. became irate & was handcuffed by sergeant until she calmed down. EMS responded, transported perp. to Elmhurst Hospital for evaluation.

Sarah Johnson

SPORTSWIRE

FOOTBALL The Youth Program’s Flag Football League 1999 season concluded December 18 with championship games. In the 11-13 Division, the Vikings completed their Cinderella march to the championship by upsetting the favored Packers 25-20. The game was hard-fought and competitive throughout and was not decided until the final two minutes when the Packers, driving for the go-ahead touchdown, were stopped at the Vikings 5-yard line.

Members of the championship team were Alpha Bah, Michael Chambers, Chris Dominguez, Rahim Drame, Karam Hider, Eric Miranda, John Palermo, Anthony Pompey, Felipe Souto, and Brandon Steuber.

In the 14-16 Division, the Dolphins defeated the Colts, 52-14. The game was close for a half, with the Colts only trailing 19-14 at halftime. However, the Dolphins took the opening kickoff of the second half and drove to the Colts 10-yard line where, on 4th down, Alex Sheppard hit Jeff Rogiers on a halfback option pass for the critical TD. After that, the rout was on. Members of the championship team were Ennaldo Burgos, Josh Burnette, Alhassan Camara, Scott Davis, Devon Epps, Terrence Moses, Jeff Rogiers and Alex Sheppard.



Zach Russem tries to complete a pass for the extra point after touchdown.



Championship Action Jon Hudson scores the Colts' first touchdown as Tertence Moses reaches for his flag. (In flag football, a tackle consists of snatching an opponent's flag from around his waist.)

Airspace Redesign Community Workshops

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is in the early phases of an airspace redesign project, which encompasses New York/New Jersey and Philadelphia metropolitan areas. It will also include air traffic affecting Connecticut, Delaware, and Pennsylvania. This area services over 8,000 flights a day and includes 3 of the top 10 most delayed airports in the country. Some of the airspace initiatives might include: modifying or developing new air routes, modification or development of new departure procedures at various airports in the study, modification of noise abatement procedures, modification to arrival fixes, and development of new arrival area concepts.

The FAA will host several community workshops beginning in late September 1999 and ending in February 2000. The workshops will provide a forum for early public involvement prior to any airspace redesign project initiatives. The purpose of these workshops is to invite public comments with respect to airspace redesign initiatives. These workshops are not limited to environmental concerns, but will be open to a full range of community ideas.

All comments will be compiled and reviewed by the FAA during the redesign process. It is anticipated that a formal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process will be implemented once design alternatives have been formulated. The FAA will revisit community locations to solicit environmental concerns at that time.

Community workshops will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. at the following locations in the local area:

- January 11th, Marriott Marquis, New York, NY, (212-398-1900)
- January 12th, Crowne Plaza, White Plains, NY, (914-682-0050)
- January 13th, Sheraton Suites, Weehawken, NJ, (201-617-5600)
- January 19th, Public School #182, Bronx, NY, (718-822-7777)
- February 3rd, Ramada Plaza, JFK Airport, Jamaica, NY, (718-995-9000)

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SENIORS NEED VOLUNTEER TAX COUNSELOR – 1/1/2000 through 3/15/2000; last volunteer, who served over 100 Island residents a year, is retiring. Training will be provided through RSVP. Call Selena Ng at **980-1888**.

EXPERIENCED TUTOR for primary, secondary school students; adults returning to or finishing school. (212) **223-0157**

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FREE NOTARY for SENIORS – See Dolores Green at Senior Center. **223-4077**.

EXPERT PAINTER – Island references, **751-8214**

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32B-J Members

Dr. Resnick is on the panel of the Building Services Health Fund. Call the Fund at (212) 388-3900 to schedule your first appointment

Stewart from page 3

If we are to continue to demonstrate that it is we who are being responsible, we cannot arbitrarily resort to dramatics that are not based on facts, and we must take as a presumptive obligation that we proceed to discover those facts with all good due diligence *before* we move to dramatics.

As much as I dislike drama solely for the sake of drama, I dislike even more drama concocted out of misinformation and distortion, and I dislike most of all drama created for hidden motivations.

There are real issues with Southtown which remain to be resolved. They will be. A group of extremely hard working, dedicated individuals have spent hundreds of hours within the sole confines of the hard facts that will eventually arrive at the imperative compromise that the vast majority of the community wants, and will more than approve, including 95% of Rivercross. I give you my personal promise

that the General Development Plan will not be compromised. That is the most basic requirement of my job, and, by the way, the job of any Common Councilior.

We are working on a solution that will be far more effective, and far less costly, to gain the ends we all want. We will, I promise you, accomplish a great deal more than this Committee could ever do, and we will accomplish it in a way in which we can all legitimately take pride. And we will accomplish it without endangering the essential Southtown development that is so critical to the survival of this community as a whole.

I do not make promises easily or glibly, and I give you my word that I will not fail to deliver on this one.

Patient hard work may not make for dramatic copy, but it surely will make for better governance.

Oh, and, by the way, am I the only person who misses Jim Bowser’s even-handed editing of *The WIRE* so much? Let me know.

Roosevelt Island Beacon Program

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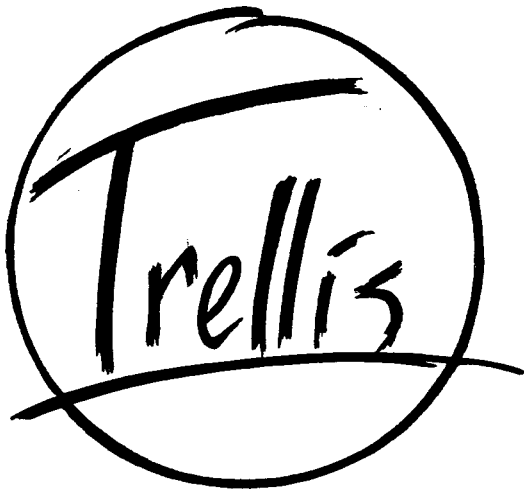
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Pick up Registration Form at:
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Call (212) **935-4645** or (212) **527-2505**



Happy New Year

All those zeros... It’s like a new beginning and the temptation is strong to look forward, never back. But *the good old days* are still with us at Trellis, where we’ll welcome you with a great cup of coffee, a warm smile, and the food that keeps getting better and better with every new beginning, every day.
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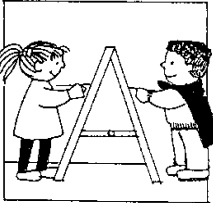
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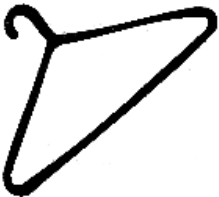
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Coverage provided at all times, when office is closed, by Dr. Grimm or by her group, Uptown Pediatrics.
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