

KEEP FIGHTING

Rent Law Renewal

Rent stabilization and rent control laws are set to expire June 15. The Legislature must renew these controls. But that's just the beginning, this time, tenants are fighting to renew and strengthen these protections, which have been considerably weakened by our State government. Unless they are strengthened, we will continue to lose even more affordable housing—more than ever.

As someone who has lived in Chelsea for more than 30 years, I have seen the changes in our neighborhood as rent protections have been weakened. 30 years ago, I saw all levels of income...young and old...born here...or new to this city...new to this country,...there was room and space for all! As rent protections have weakened, our neighborhood has changed and will change even



By Gloria Sukenick, CRDC Executive Committee

Where will teachers, policeman, aspiring actors and artists, new-to-the-city young people, young families, senior citizens find homes?

more if rent protections are not strengthened. Where will teachers, policeman, aspiring actors and artists, new-to-the-city young people, young families, senior citizens find homes? Rent protections must be strengthened!

Here's the story...the landlord lobby has big \$\$\$\$\$ at their disposal and has 'influenced' many of our State legislators in past years. This allowed landlords to 'legally' reap huge profits at the cost of driving huge numbers low income, working class and middle income New Yorkers out of their homes, and, often, out of the city and creating 'market-rate' apartments available to only those with very deep-pockets.

This year, however, the tenant movement is mobilizing to fight hard for the repeal of 'vacancy-decontrol' law which deregulates vacant apartments that rent for \$2000 a month. Landlords have countless

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April 21st Forum: Rent Regulations/Affordable Housing



The CRDC is hosting a discussion of rent regulations reform and the need for affordable housing. Guest speakers include Richard Brender, Co-Chair of Real Rent Reform's Communications Committee and Mary Tek from the grassroots organization, Tenants & Neighbors. The event will be April 21st, 7-9 PM at the Elliot Center, 441 west 26th St.

LETTER FROM THE CRDC PRESIDENT

First Things First.



Although we are a few months into 2011 our February club elections mean that we're just barely into a new club year. It's usually my practice to look back at what we set out to do – and then notice everything we didn't get to. But last year was one of the most productive we have had in a long, long time. We explored and took stands on many issues:

- Health care in our neighborhood.
- Sugared beverages.
- Prisoners and the census.
- Flood control.
- BRC's move into our neighborhood.
- Reforming New York's elections.

We also helped Eric Schneiderman get elected New York State Attorney General. Where there is passion, there is power.

Some of the passion – but not the power that accompanied it – was lost to us this year as some of our long-time friends and supporters died: John Kreyve, Rebecca Cooperman, Charlotte Sinovoi, Lynne Chaleff, Donald Whelan, and Susan Cohen.

Now our task is to look to 2011. What do we want to accomplish? This is one of those rare years when we actually have the luxury of asking why; there are no major elections this year, no stadiums on the horizon and no stand-out battle to preserve the character of our neighborhood.

So I'd like everyone to think about why we still exist as a "reform Democratic club" and what that means. When we were founded, it meant a fight against Tammany Hall; later it was a fight for a fairer judicial selection process; at one point, it was even a fight to make sure McCarthy's sidekick Roy Cohn did not take over the Democratic Party in New York. But why do we exist now – and what does that mean? What do you personally get from being a member of CRDC and why do you participate? I look forward to your answers.

Steven Skyles-Mulligan

Rent Law Renewal cont'd

legal and semi legal methods to keep rents forever rising until that magic number is reached. Also important to tenants is the repeal of the Urstadt Law which bars New York City from enacting rent laws stronger than the state's.

Tenants only hope is with the State Assembly, since the State Senate is Republican dominated and based upstate where rent laws do not exist. They have staked their future with landlords for decades and have been plotting an end to rent regulation for years.

In the past years, tenants have made trip after trip to Albany... lobbying the Senate, rising at the crack of dawn, returning late at night, all to no avail. The number of affordable, rent regulated apartments have been rapidly dwindling away...changing the face of New York City....a city rapidly becoming a city for the rich only.

This year, the strategy to keep the affordable housing that still exists, should not repeat what has been a useless effort, the landlord lobby has more than enough money to buy their influence in Albany...therefore, tenants are pushing for a more militant approach. The Assembly should not vote on any key legislation – until stronger rent protections are passed into law!

Anything less, will not be enough to save what's left of affordable housing in New York City

Will it happen?

2011 CLUB ELECTION RESULTS

CLUB PRESIDENT
Steven Skyles-Mulligan

TREASURER
Paul J. Groncki

VICE PRESIDENTS
David A. Caraway, Donathan Salkaln
Maarten de Kadt, Lydia R. Hummel

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY
Linda Longstreet

RECORDING SECRETARY
John R. Johnson

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS AT LARGE
Muriel Beach, Andrew Berman, Paul Goetz,
Sandy Marsh, Lee Sinovoi, Jay Stockman,
Gloria Sukenick, David Warren

The CRDC 2010 Annual Community Award Winners

Chelsea Reform Democratic Club is pleased to honor those who have worked alongside us to advance community, progressive causes and responsive government at our annual Spring Brunch

Thomas P. Schuler is known to everyone in New York City politics as a tireless worker, organizer and connector. He has been active in CRDC for over 20 years, much of the last 10 as our District Leader.



Judy Wessler is a determined advocate for public health and currently serves as the Executive Director of the Commission on the Public's Health System (CPHS).



She has been active in the effort to replace St. Vincent's to meet the community's needs. Judy will receive The Esther Smith Award.

taught and comforted thousands of people. She has also worked with countless seminarians passing through our neighborhood. Liz will receive the first annual Doris Corrigan Award (and Doris will help present it).

The Council of Chelsea Block Associations (CCBA) has helped improve the quality of our neighborhood since the 1960s. Among the issues they have taken on: safety; sanitation; waterfront access; support for the Chelsea Historic District; and preservation of independent businesses.



Elizabeth G. Maxwell was Program Director of the Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen and Associate Rector of the Church of the Holy Apostles from 1989 – 2010, Liz has fed,



Marvin Kohl is a philosopher and retired professor at the State University of New York – Fredonia. He has been an active member of CRDC for many years, serving for five years as Executive Vice President of the Club. Marvin will receive a special club service award.

THE REAL ESTATE TRADE:
**An Industry That Needs
 Protection From Itself**



by Donathan Salkaln,
 CRDC Vice President

Today's activities of N.Y.C. real estate is very comparable with what the commercial fishing industry did to our local ocean and waters. I grew up near L.I. docks, and watched commercial fisherman motor out to sea to net, drag, and rake in every living thing they possibly could, before unloading their daily hauls onto their fleet of Ford F150's. Then they'd skipper their boats over to the gas pumps and claim poverty, while refueling for their next day's haul. Meanwhile, they'd be making enough money, to not only pay off their new boats, but also buy more boats.

Commercial fisherman have since stripped our local ocean of just about all fish, scallops, and oysters. Regulations have since been put in place to protect their industry from themselves, but I'm still buying fillet of Tilapia (whatever that is) from China and Bassa (whatever that is) from Vietnam.

The real estate industry has been doing much the same thing on land —netting and dragging for every dollar, dime and nickle it can —and then claiming poverty, while making billions.

With no land left, the real estate trade has targeted us. Our families and friends have been out-priced elsewhere, our favorite stores, delis and restaurants are shuddering, and just about anything that's still dear to us has become a target. Like ambulance chasers, they've been going after our hospitals (St. Vincents Hospital is just the latest). And, they're probably salivating for the space of all those Senior Centers that the city is planning to close. Please don't forget the bankruptcy mess the industry whipped up for our neighbors, just east of Chelsea: Peter Cooper Village and Stuyvesant Town!

The commercial fisherman that I knew were good people, that maybe tried too hard to make as much money as they could, before the sun went down. But, like them, the real estate industry (and just as we found with the financial industry) needs more regulations to protect them from themselves. Without more regulations they will not only continue to rake in all the future from both commercial and residential properties, but also all our rights to work and live as happy clams, in New York City.

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UPDATES

CLUB RESOLUTION: CLIMATE CHANGE RISKS March, 2010

The last several months have been very busy getting inclusion of storm surge barriers in various state and city plans for the next decade: NYC 20/20 Waterfront Vision Statement, NYPLAN, and NYS Sea Level Task Force report, including comments by Duane and Gottfried. Both Hudson Guild and VID have now joined our coalition. In conjunction with Stony Brook Manhattan, we are planning a two day symposium on methods to control storm surges and flooding up to 2080 and beyond.



by Robert Trentlyon,
 CRDC member

Editors Note: The recent tsunamis in Japan and New Zealand, coupled with the rise of the oceans level, local reports of extreme rise of tide levels during new and full moons, give more urgency to this resolution.

CLUB RESOLUTION: ST. VINCENT'S HOSPITAL AND PROVISION OF MEDICAL SERVICES TO THE WEST SIDE OF MANHATTAN SOUTH OF 59TH STREET February 2010

This past March 10th, the Community Board 2 & 4 held a joint meeting at Hudson Guild Fulton Center, addressing the lack of local Chelsea emergency healthcare needs in Chelsea with the presentation of a \$120 million emergency care center joint venture of the Rudin Family real estate developer and the North Shore- LIJ Health System. It was met with loud opposition by local groups who wanted a full service hospital to replace the closed St Vincents Hospital. Even a past club president, Roberta Gelb, spoke, demanding that doctors be "Specialists, Not Generalists." —D.S.



A doctor gets vocal at March's meeting.

CLUB GUEST SPEAKER: TOM ROBBINS November, 2009

Tom Robbins, who treated our club to an entertaining evening of tales of backroom city politics, has recently left the Village Voice. His departure coincided with the layoff, of fellow veteran scribe, Wayne Barrett. As reported by the NY Observer, Robbins was not only frustrated that the paper couldn't find room for Barrett. but also state of today's media: "We are turning into an echo chamber in which stories of small value get bounced around over and over, as opposed to a story with meat on it's bones." —D.S.

PO Box 1120
Old Chelsea Station
New York City, NY 10113-1120

Chelsea, Madison Sq., Flatiron, Rosehill



UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, April 21, 7-9 pm

Regulations/Affordable Housing Forum, Endorsement of Judicial Delegates and District Leaders

Elliot Center, 441 West 26th Street,
(between 9th & 10th Avenues)

Saturday, May 7th, 12-2:30 pm

CRDC Spring Brunch

Nisos Restaurant

176 8th Avenue (at 19 Street)

Saturday, May 21st

CRDC Street Fair

6th Avenue

Executive Committee Meetings:

April 7th, May 5th

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Send monthly newsletter by: Email or Postal delivery

Please pay your 2011 dues so you can vote for our 2011 officers and Members-At-Large. Please fill out the coupon below and mail to our postal box, or you may renew by going to our website, www.crdcnyc.org.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone (Day): _____

(Evening): _____

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\$30 Individual \$45 H'Hold \$100 Patrons

\$15 Ltd. Income \$20 H'Hold Limited Income

Make checks payable to CRDC and mail to:

PO Box 1120, Old Chelsea Station

New York City, NY 10113-1120

Questions? Call 212-924-5433, email us at

info@crdcnyc.org, or visit our website at www.crdcnyc.org