

# The Park West Tenant

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The Newsletter of the Park West Village Tenants' Association info@pwvta.org September 2009

## TRAFFIC... NOISE... DANGER! WE'RE BLOCKED!

A long-time resident of 792 Columbus Avenue notes, "The loading dock on 100th Street at Columbus opens at 5 a.m., so we hear the trucks *beep-beep-beeping* early in the morning. I would love to know what is allowed... legally."

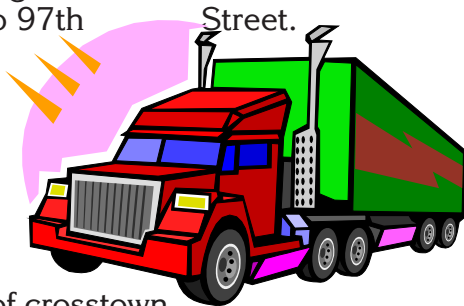
Another neighbor at 784 Columbus adds, "I am now being woken at around 6 a.m. from Whole Food truck noises at the loading dock. A friend on the 9th floor is disturbed every morning by trucks starting at 5:45. Is that something we should document or is that an acceptable hour?"

On a recent Thursday morning during rush hour, neighbor Harvey Lichtman observed three delivery trucks lined up along the west side of Columbus Avenue at 97th Street. Cars heading down Columbus were forced to shift to the left lane, and then, with limited visibility, make a sharp right around the trucks in order to turn onto 97th Street.

Idling and parked Whole Foods delivery trucks have recently joined this corner's already overwhelming mix of crosstown traffic, pedestrians, schoolchildren, construction vehicles and lane blockages, Ryan Center foot traffic and vehicles, parking garage entrances and school buses. Although a part-time crossing guard is assigned to this dangerous corner, the situation is now on overload and begs for further safety analysis — immediately.

These and other scenarios are now commonplace in and around Park West Village. The opening of Whole Foods a month ago has exacerbated congestion, and neighbors are justifiably concerned about what will happen when the rest of the gargantuan Columbus Square mall opens for business.

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## THE TAKING OF PARK WEST VILLAGE 792

Once again, we are under siege as the Chetrit Group and Jewish Home Lifecare (JHL) prepare to swap land on 100th Street for land on 106th Street.

In a colossal property exchange, JHL would give their property on the south side of 106th Street between Columbus and Amsterdam to Chetrit.

This site, almost a block long and a block wide, would be developed by Chetrit as luxury apartment buildings.

In exchange, Chetrit would give JHL the tiny (in comparison) parking lot outside Park West Village's 792 Columbus, on the south side of 100th Street between Columbus and Amsterdam, to build a 22-story JHL facility.

JHL maintains that they originally planned to build on their 106th street property. They sent out 2,000 bids to developers to purchase part of their land, with those funds to be used

TAKING OF PWV continued on page 3

## ALBANY INACTION FOR TENANTS

On September 10, about 150 tenants went to Albany to lobby for pro-tenant legislation at a special session of the NY State Senate.

Both bills on the table — repeal of personal-use eviction and repeal of vacancy decontrol — had already been passed by the Assembly, but unfortunately were removed from the Senate's final agenda later that day.

There will be another special session soon and tenants will again make their presence known in Albany.

State Senator Bill Perkins is supportive, but the situation in Albany is so convoluted and controlled by outside interests that tenants' rights are taking a back seat.

Let's stay alert and take action so our senators know we will work ceaselessly to get pro-tenant legislation passed! For more information, see [www.PWVTA.org](http://www.PWVTA.org)

Mary Lee Baranger of 784 Columbus Avenue shares the following: “I was walking home at 9 p.m. and found the sidewalk at Whole Foods on 97th Street blocked by orange cones and yellow tape. Their guard said it was for my own safety as a huge truck was about to come in.

He wanted us (three at that moment) to cross to the south side and then re-cross in the middle of the street. They are privatizing the sidewalk. They want people to cross mid-block, not at the light. That must be a safety issue!”

Another neighbor experienced the same scenario that evening and adds, “Whole Foods positioned a flagman out on 97th Street, stopping traffic as it crossed Columbus and forcing cars to block the box — which is definitely illegal.”

Mary Lee mentioned the incident to Melissa Mark-Viverito on primary election day and notes that “*privatizing the street* were her (Melissa’s) words!”

Traffic and safety on 100th Street between Amsterdam and Columbus is also of major concern, and will become even more critical if the Jewish Home Lifecare gains permission to build its planned 22-story nursing home on the parking lot of 792 Columbus Avenue.

An exasperated local resident pointed out that 100th Street is “Clogged to the gills now. I’ve never seen it so dysfunctional and glaringly open to accidents.”

The chaos ensues from double- and triple-parked cars that block visibility into the 792 parking lot and pedestrian walkway, cars that carelessly back into angled parking spaces and onto the sidewalk where schoolchildren walk, the busy new Columbus Square loading dock, as well as police, fire and emergency vehicles.

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## PWV Picnic Draws Happy, Hungry Crowd

Residents of all ages from the seven PWV buildings and 808 Columbus Avenue were invited to bring “food to share” to the PWV picnic on Sunday, September 13, in a garden space behind 400 CPW.

The day was beautiful, the food was great, the neighbors terrific. Thanks to PWVTA and the Park West Community Network (PWCN) for organizing this wonderful event!

**YES WE CAN!** If you have any frustrations and concerns similar to those of your neighbors, or have any suggestions we could all use, please consider the following actions:

- Phone the City of New York at “311” to report safety violations, noise complaints, idling vehicles, traffic concerns, security issues, construction violations, etc.
- Get a record of your complaint and forward it to **complaint@PWVTA.org** so we can compile and build a better, stronger case for action.
- Write, email or call all our elected officials, and provide the PWVTA with copies of these letters, emails, etc. Our website, PWVTA.org is a great resource for names and contact details of these political advocates.
- Contact major stakeholders at corporate headquarters of the new Columbus Square retailers. Please CC the PWVTA on this too.
- Attend community and PWVTA meetings.  
*We have strength in numbers!*

Photos thanks to Liz Pisanchik

September 13, 2009



to finance the construction of a new facility. Initial interest was expressed by 72 companies; once the recession hit, only three were left standing.

Enter Chetrit with a different proposal: no money exchange — just a simple land swap.

As the proposal currently stands, Chetrit would get to work on more new development on Manhattan's west side; and JHL would get to cram a 22-story senior health facility onto an extremely congested block that already houses a firehouse, a police station, a health center, a church and a library.

Also part of the proposed site are a roadway entrance to 788 and 792 Columbus, the parking lot behind the health center, and the entrance to underground parking below the new building at 808 Columbus.

In addition, the loading dock for the new Columbus Square commercial tenants on the southwest corner of Columbus and 100th Street exists as part of this site.

This deal looks great to Chetrit because legally, they have used up their floor area ratio and cannot build any more residential buildings in Park West Village.

But conveniently, the as-of-right parking lots for both 784 and 792 are zoned for community facilities; permissible uses include nursing homes, hospitals, schools and dormitories.

At the Monday, September 14th Community Meeting called by Westsiders for Public Participation and co-chaired by the Park West Village Tenants' Association, neighborhood tenants and condo owners discussed the proposal and expressed concern about placing such a huge facility on 100th Street.

As for now — with so many double- and triple-parked cars on 100th Street — it is a miracle that fire trucks and emergency vehicles even get through. Imagine what could come!

A 792 resident reported that many serious accidents have occurred recently on 100th Street because of increased pedestrian and vehicular traffic from the new development on both Amsterdam and Columbus Avenues.

Cheryl Strong reported that her anti-swap group, Stop the Swap, has urged New York State Attorney General Andrew Cuomo's office to look into the legality and feasibility of the swap.

Finally, it was agreed that a coalition would

be formed to include the Park West Village Tenants' Association, Stop the Swap, and Westsiders for Public Participation.

Representatives from each of the PWV condo boards and representatives from both 50 West 97th Street and 120-140 West 97th will also be invited to join, with the coalition's mandate devoted to totally opposing the land swap.

### PWVTA EXECUTIVE BOARD ACTS

On September 22<sup>ND</sup> the PWVTA Executive Board authorized President Maggi Peyton to initiate the organization of the new group: the **Park West Community Coalition**.

More info can be found at [www.PWVTA.org](http://www.PWVTA.org)

*PLEASE CUT-OUT THE SMALL FLYER BELOW & POST IT WHERE YOUR NEIGHBORS WILL SEE IT - TO ENJOY & LEARN ABOUT OUR FDNY NEIGHBORS!*

**PARK WEST NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY GROUP PRESENTS**



**NEW YORK CITY**

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

*A HISTORY FROM INCEPTION TO THE PRESENT*

**Robert Holzmaier Chief, 11th Battalion**

*36 years in the NYC Fire Department*

*Fire Extinguishing from 1609 ♦ Hooks and Ladders, Horses and Dogs*

*Great Conflagrations ♦ Attempts at Burning Down the City*

*Volunteer Firefighters ♦ The Local Fire House For Over 100 Years*

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2009 6PM**

**at Bloomingdale Library**

**150 West 100<sup>th</sup> Street, 2nd Floor**

*(between Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues)*

**FREE EVENT**

**Columbus-Amsterdam Business Improvement District**

**For further information: 212-666-9774**

# CITYWIDE TENANTS DEMONSTRATION TENANTS RALLY

## Thursday, October 1 City Hall at 1pm

Giti Dadlani: [gdadlani@tandn.org](mailto:gdadlani@tandn.org)

Tenants & Neighbors 212-608-4320 ext. 316

Become a member of Tenants & Neighbors: [www.tandn.org/get\\_involved.htm](http://www.tandn.org/get_involved.htm)

DOWNLOAD & POST FLYER: [www.PWVTA.org](http://www.PWVTA.org)

### *PWV Flea Market* Sunday, October 18

Raindate: Sunday, October 25

Register at [www.pwvfleamarket.com](http://www.pwvfleamarket.com)

Questions: e-mail [pwvflea@gmail.com](mailto:pwvflea@gmail.com)  
or leave a message with The Vaux Con-  
cierge at 372 Central Park West.

The PWVTA Executive Board regularly meets on the third Tuesday of the month, except July and August (see PWVTA.org for info).

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, October 20, 7:30 pm. Door opens 7:00 for cookies & community at the Ryan Health Center, 110 W. 97th Street, downstairs. PWVTA members are welcome to attend.

Produced by the PWVTA Communications Committee.

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To help report, edit, compose, design, or distribute, call the PWVTA Hotline: 212-662-2610, or write [Commo@pwvta.org](mailto:Commo@pwvta.org).  
Submit content articles to: [Editor@pwvta.org](mailto:Editor@pwvta.org).

### JOIN YOUR NEIGHBORS – RENEW NOW!

**PLEASE RETURN THIS MEMBERSHIP / ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP COUPON  
TO YOUR BUILDING REPRESENTATIVE OR MAIL TO:**

Park West Village Tenants' Association  
P.O. Box 20339, Park West Finance Station, New York, NY 10025-0339

Name: ..... Building: ..... Apt: ..... Phone: .....

Rent-stabilized tenant  Market-rate tenant  Renting from private owner  Owner Email: .....

Check for 2009 membership dues enclosed, **payable to PWVTA**  \$40  Other\*: \$ .....

Check for 2009 associate membership dues enclosed, **payable to PWVTA**  \$35 .....

Check includes additional contribution to Legal fund. Amount: .....  Check for MCI Legal Fund only: .....

\* If you cannot make full \$40 payment of your annual dues, please pay what you can.

Your membership card will be delivered to you.