

The Park West Tenant

Vol. 31, No. 1

The Newsletter of the Park West Village Tenants' Association

January 2006

2006 MEMBERSHIP YEAR BEGINS

Be one of the first in your building to join or renew your membership in PWVTA. Become part of the effort to:

1. Continue to protect and preserve the Park West community – its ambience and quality of life.
2. Continue to work with new tenants to return apartments to rent-stabilization.
3. Assure provision of required services, e.g. repairs in apartments and to appliances.
4. Pursue MCI issues affecting the Columbus Avenue buildings.
5. Monitor the maintenance of grounds, including benches and playgrounds, of the Columbus Avenue buildings.

Together, we can accomplish these goals. Please send us the coupon on back!

WELCOME NEW TENANTS

Did you know that the 784, 788 and 792 Columbus Avenue buildings – a part of Park West Village – are RENT STABILIZED? That means that there may be a legal rent for your apartment. That legal rent may be less than you are paying now! Even if you signed an agreement not to challenge your rent, that agreement is not valid.

Interested in finding out more? Call the Park West Village Tenants' Association Hotline: 212-662-2610. You'll be more than welcomed!



MCI Application Still Under Review

The MCI application filed by the landlord for 784, 788 and 792 Columbus remains in the hands of the DHCR for a determination which may not be made for some time. The application was originally received early in 2005 at which time the PWVTA retained attorneys to (a) file a Freedom of Information request to obtain a copy of the application and to (b) request an extension of the deadline to answer the application.

Several additional extensions were required in order for an engineer to analyze the improvements to the roofs, water tanks, boilers and elevators.

continued on page 2: MCI APPLICATION

PARK WEST VILLAGE SIDEWALKS UNSAFE?

The grounds around 784, 788 and 792 Columbus at Park West Village have seen better days. The playgrounds are outdated and dismal, and the benches have gone missing one by one.

In the warm months the grass and shrubs are often unkempt and filled with trash, and dumpsters have become a regular part of the landscape. And most recently, the sidewalks are in a

continued on page 2: UNSAFE SIDEWALKS

MEMBERS' HOLIDAY PARTY

Downstairs at the Ryan Center was the location for the PWVTA Holiday Party on January 12th. Approximately 75 friends and neighbors had the opportunity to relax together and enjoy good conversation. Everyone joined in providing the answers to an entertaining quiz about our community. There was plenty to drink and interesting food to enjoy, including spicy Indian samosas from Tandoori North – and a delicious cake!

We thank the Holiday Party Committee for a wonderful job. We look forward to next year and hope this becomes an annual event.



Photo by Esquire Anthony

Holiday Party Committee: Daphne Myers, Lois Hoffmann, Francine Brewer, Emily Margolis and Mary Livingston

Unfortunately, the DHCR failed to place the extension request for the 788 Columbus case in the correct file. The DHCR, then processed the application for that building alone, and in the absence of an answer, granted the landlord's claims, with a minor exception. PWVTA's attorney challenged DHCR's rent increase ruling and DHCR has granted a reconsideration of that case. Our answer for the three buildings was filed on October 14, 2005. However, the ruling still stands for 788 until DHCR arrives at a final decision.

Not unexpectedly, with knowledge that the 788 ruling is under reconsideration, our landlord has nevertheless billed tenants for the MCI increase allowed in the DHCR order. PWVTA has advised tenants in 788 to continue paying the same rent they paid in October 2005. In addition, when preparing renewal leases, the landlord has added the MCI increase to the base rent and then applied the Rent Guidelines Board increase on top of that.

The PWVTA attorneys advise tenants to sign the lease renewal even if they have questions about the amount. Those questions will be addressed when there is a final determination. All tenants are advised to keep accurate records pertaining to their rent payments.

Now There's a DRIE

On October 10, 2005 New York City enacted a law which extended to disabled renters the same kind of rent increase exemption presently granted to seniors by SCRIE.

The new Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) is available to applicants who meet four criteria. First, the applicant must rent an eligible apartment, which includes rent-stabilized and rent-controlled units. Second, the applicant or spouse must be disabled. Third, the applicant must be receiving certain specified disability benefits, such as Social Security Disability Income or SSI. Fourth, household income must not exceed a specified amount.

If all criteria are met, the renter will be exempt from rent increases, and the landlord will be credited by the City for the exempted amount on his property taxes.

state of disrepair. A few weeks ago management tore up the sidewalks to install a telephone line, but the holes in the cement were left unfilled. Because there were no orange work cones or caution signs to warn pedestrians that there was recent and incomplete construction, a PWV tenant fell and was injured.

Since then the holes in the sidewalks have been filled in with cement and yellow "caution" tape was placed around those areas for one day.

Tenants from the CPW buildings have also been concerned about the state of the sidewalks on 97th Street in front of the tennis courts (property which also belongs to PWV Acquisition, LLC). Apparently there have been accidents there as well.

Last winter and again this winter the 392 CPW condo repeatedly failed to clear snow and ice from the 100th street side of the building. The law requires owners to keep public sidewalks in and around their property safe for pedestrians. Snow and ice must be cleared promptly after a storm, and if ice reappears for any reason it must be cleared again.

If you encounter icy sidewalks in or around Park West Village, note the location and, if the sidewalk borders a building, the building address. Call 311 immediately to report the violation. You do not have to give your name or address. Needless to say, tenants should watch their step when walking throughout Park West Village.

Produced by the PWVTA Communications Committee.
Contributors: Francine Brewer, Vivian Dee, Dean Heitner, Susan Jarvis, Judith Bloch, Mary Livingston, Emily Margolis, Chuck Tice, and Daisy Wright. To help report, edit, compose, or distribute, call the PWVTA Hotline: 212-662-2610.

Applications can be downloaded from the Internet or obtained from:
NYC Department of Finance
DRIE Exemptions
59 Maiden Lane, 20th Floor
New York, NY 10038

 **JOIN YOUR NEIGHBORS – RENEW NOW!**

PLEASE RETURN THIS 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:

Check for 2006 membership dues enclosed, **payable to PWVTA.** \$40 Other: \$

Check includes additional contribution to Legal fund. Amount: \$

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

Your membership card will be delivered to you.