

The Park West Tenant

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The Newsletter of the Park West Village Tenants' Association

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PARK WEST VILLAGE SHORT-TERM RENTALS

ARE OUR APARTMENTS THE PWV HOTEL?

Stories of apartments being offered illegally for short-term rentals are regularly reported. We read about a landlord making much more money in this manner than by offering a regular lease. Other stories are about the tenants who try this scheme to make money on the bedroom that a grown child left behind.

We often hear about AIRBNB, but other sites operate in a similar way. The issue is currently a hot topic among affordable housing advocates.

In May 2011 new regulations went into effect under the New York State Multiple Dwelling Law, banning short-term rentals (less than 30 days) in buildings that are zoned as residential, unless the tenant stays in the apartment as well. Local Building, Fire and Housing Maintenance Codes establish stricter fire safety standards for hotels, and this type of rental in residential buildings does not meet these standards.

As tourism in New York City has grown to record numbers, internet sites (AIRBNB and others) set up to facilitate short-term rentals

have been used by tenants with an extra bedroom, and, increasingly, by landlords who have found the short term rentals more lucrative.

This article examines the issue in Park West Village, where there is a mix of condominiums, market-rate apartments and rent-stabilized apartments.

In the four condo buildings of 372, 382, 392 and 400 Central Park West, there are Boards of Managers bylaws in place regulating this activity. At 400 CPW, the bylaws state that "no portion of any apartment unit may be rented, nor any apartment unit be rented on a daily or weekly basis." At 372 CPW, according to the management agency, no unit can be rented without Board approval. At 392 CPW, there is a similar bylaw in place, and, although we did not hear from 382 CPW in time for this article, we presume that building has a similar rule.



Simply because there is a condo bylaw, however, does not mean this short-term rental activity does not exist. There are rent-stabilized apartments remaining in these buildings too. While not subject to Board bylaws, such units, if rented in this manner, present serious complications as described below.

Across Columbus Avenue, the three PWV buildings 784, 788 and 792 Columbus Avenue are a mix of market-rate and rent-stabilized apartments, and short-term rentals are becoming a problem of increasing concern for many tenants.

One resident of 784 Columbus spoke of the rentals offered there through www.roomorama.com, where "Parc West Village" apartments are offered, with linen service, at \$215 a night, plus other fees. ("Gorgeous Upper West Side Getaway!") The operation appears to be managed on-site. Not all visitors have been happy, however, with several leaving negative

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PWVTA Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, January 20 7:30pm

at the Ryan Community Health Center
110 West 97th Street

Agenda: Officers & Committee Reports
Update on JHL proposed building
Tenant parking for 784 and 792

PWVTA members and associate members
are welcome to attend.

MORE INFO: write Info@pwvta.org or call
PWVTA Hotline 212-662-2610.

comments about getting the key to just get in (“we’ll leave the door open for you”) and dirty linens upon arrival. The lobby fills with luggage at certain hours, just like a hotel lobby.

While some rental tenants may be reluctant to complain lest they be subjected to harassment, at least one has filed a complaint with the City’s 311 system. A recent news article described the investigative squad of NYPD, FDNY and Buildings Department inspectors who travel in groups of three and determine the hotel-use, whether it’s a tenant or landlord offering the unit.

The City Council will hold a hearing on Tuesday, January 20, at 10 AM on illegal hotels operating out of residential buildings. Housing Conservation Coordinators, a Chelsea-based tenant organization, urges people to come and testify: call Bennett Baumer 212-541-5996 x16. *next column top >>*

ACTIVATE YOURSELF!

Let’s get 2015 off to a strong start! Please join *your organization* and help support those neighbors who work very hard for the issues we’ve described here. *The more members we have, the stronger we all are!*

We invite you to take an active role — serve as a PWVTA Building Representative or an Alternate Rep, join the Executive Board on a committee, or serve as a PWVTA officer. Just write Maggi Peyton at President@PWVTA.org.

We encourage and welcome your participation in the PWVTA any way you can. Help make the PWVTA work even better for you and the entire Park West Village community!

Rent-stabilized tenants need to take special care. While a short-term rental may not violate the Building Code, it may be a lease violation or a rent regulation violation as an unauthorized sublet, and could result in loss of the tenant’s home.

A case is now pending in another (non-PWV) Central Park West building where the rent-stabilized tenant has been renting out her second and third bedrooms regularly, earning significant income, and the landlord seeks to evict her. She turned her rent-stabilized apartment into a commercial enterprise, and now may lose both her home and her new-found income.

BUILDING REPORTS

372 CPW COMMUNITY TOWN HALL meeting planned for Wednesday, February 11

LOCAL FOLKS INVITED TO MEET WITH CONGRESSMEMBER JERRY NADLER

THURSDAY January 15 4 p.m.

**Goddard Riverside Community Center
593 Columbus Avenue (88th Street)**

Produced by the PWVTA Communications Committee.

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The PWVTA Executive Board meets the third Tuesday of each month, except July and August. The next meeting is Tuesday, January 20, 7:30 p.m. at the Ryan Health Center, 110 W. 97th St. PWVTA members welcome! Open at 7pm for cookies and community.

JOIN YOUR NEIGHBORS – RENEW NOW!

PLEASE RETURN 2015 MEMBERSHIP COUPON TO YOUR PWVTA BUILDING REP

or MAIL to: Park West Village Tenants’ Association, P.O. Box 20339, Park West Finance Station, New York, NY 10025-0339
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!

Name: Building: Apt: Phone:

Email:

Check for 2015 membership dues enclosed, payable to PWVTA \$ 50 Other*: \$

Condo owner Check for 2015 associate membership dues enclosed, payable to PWVTA \$ 35

Check includes additional contribution for Legal Fund. Amount: \$

* If you cannot now make full \$50 payment for your annual dues, please just pay what you can.

Your status: rent-stabilized tenant market-rate tenant condo owner **Your membership card will be delivered to you.**

I want to be more involved. Here are my interests: