

J-51 Tax Abatement, Stuyvesant Decision and I.P.N.

On October 22, 2009, New York's highest court ruled that rent stabilized apartments in Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village must remain stabilized (regardless of the tenants' income or the landlord's investment in renovating the apartment) because the owners were receiving J-51 tax abatement. This decision supports the central claim in the Independence Plaza J-51 lawsuits -- that apartments in a building receiving a J-51 tax abatement must be rent regulated.

We believe that DHCR (the state agency charged with overseeing rent stabilization) has been waiting for this decision before acting on the Independence Plaza cases. The judge ordered DHCR to make its decision about IPN's rent stabilization status early next year.

If DHCR decides, as we think they should, that IPN's apartments are rent stabilized DHCR will look back four years from the date of their decision or the date on which a tenant filed a Rent Overcharge Complaint to decide what the tenant's base rent should be. In 2008 several hundred tenants filed such complaints with the help of the IPNTA and our lawyer, Seth Miller, of Collins, Dobkin & Miller. Others wishing to file such complaints now in order to place a time limit on the four-year clock, should do so. The relevant form is available at <http://www.dhcr.state.ny.us/Forms/Rent/ra89.pdf>.

Be sure to note that you are a resident of IPN and that other complaints are pending. As with any administrative or legal action you may want to hire a lawyer to assist/represent you.

 *IPN Holiday Party*

Sunday, December 20, 2009

5:00 - 8:00 pm

310 Greenwich St

2nd Flr Community Room

All Tenants are Invited!


TENANTS MEETING Nov 18, 2009 - 7:00 pm, 310 Greenwich St, 2nd Flr Community Room

- Stuy Town Decision
 - Sub-metering and electrical usage
 - Treasurer's Report
 - Voting on proposed bylaws revision
- All tenants are encouraged to attend!**

Voucher Leases

Voucher tenants! Don't be worried because you haven't received your leases yet.

HPD signs the voucher for each tenant, then management must produce an original of the lease renewal so HPD can confirm the contract rent is correct and the same as voucher. For some reason this year there was a glitch in the process, so they are a bit backlogged. We'll keep you posted.



Building Services Meeting with Management — Oct 09

310 Greenwich St: In our discussion regarding entryway and boiler area, Management informs us that their contractors are currently working in the back section of the walkway, which has been re-designed. Weather permitting, the entire area (sidewalk, building entries and front gate) will be replaced within 4-6 weeks. We are concerned about gate access for pedestrians, wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers, and asked to see plans for the gate before it goes in.

Lobby Work: We discussed the unfinished lobby work in all buildings, especially the buzzer for the ADA-compliant door. Management said re-wiring will allow opening the door from the concierge desk. The buzzers will be modified to allow residents to activate them from the outside of the building.

Broken Washers in Laundry Rooms: We reported that the new machines were breaking down very often. A rep from Hi-Rise informed Management that repairs would be done even without a work order (despite our reports to the contrary), since it's in Hi-Rise's best interest to have working machines. When first installed, many machines broke down because of excess soap. The new machines are energy efficient and use less water, so require only a small amount of soap. Follow instructions for how much soap to use. We are not sure this is the only problem and are investigating further.

Elevator Emergency Procedures: Several residents reported being trapped in the elevator for 45 minutes. Some mistakes were made by new employees. Following our communica-

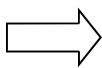
tion with the Police and Fire Departments about proper procedures, Management agrees that the doorman should call 911 and Centennial (the elevator company) concurrently if a resident is trapped, unless the Centennial mechanic is already on-site. They further stated that they will retrain door people and security staff of their protocol, which is to engage the resident(s) in conversation through the intercom and let them know help is on the way. Building staff have been instructed NOT to attempt to remove passengers from the elevator because they are not trained rescue workers and don't want to risk injuring a resident.

Dishwashers: Some residents are still being told that they must wait for a replacement if repairs are not possible, some only recently informing the Tenants Association. (If we don't know, we cannot help!) We had discussed this issue with Stellar Management's main office quite a while ago. Management states that they will honor their agreement to replace defective dishwashers with a working machine (new or used) within five (5) business days. They reminded us that they are not obliged to provide new dishwashers and report that some residents refuse to accept dishwashers that are not brand-new, even if operational and in good condition, in which case they move on to the next resident on the list. We have requested that Management explain this to all workers in the Maintenance Department. Debbie Dolan has obtained a copy of the waiting list to review. If you continue to have a problem, contact the Tenants Association.

Refrigerators: As far as Management knows,
(Continued on Reverse)

How to Report Emergency or Maintenance Issues

- ◆ If someone is in a health crisis, or there is a fire, FIRST call 911 immediately. THEN call the doorman to alert them.
- ◆ To dial the front desk, on a regular phone line, dial 48# - when you hear the tones, hang up. You will be called back. At this time, only phones connected to the phone system can call the lobby. If you use a computer based phone line, call the security office at: (212) 376-4161. If you change your phone number, make sure to notify management and the front desk.
- ◆ For repairs, contact 1-800-313-0611.
- ◆ For management, contact (212) 962-3530



No timely results? Or need help with Voucher, LAP or Free Market issues?

Contact the Tenant Association by leaving a note (with your phone/address clearly printed) in the "IPNTA" box in each lobby; or email: info@ipnta.org.

Bylaws Revision

The Executive Board proposes some changes to IPNTA's bylaws, which have not been revised since 2002. The proposed changes aim to: reflect the current membership dues (\$25 per adult resident and \$15 per senior resident); reflect the current number of IPNTA officers (9); avoid the scheduling of meetings and elections during the summer months when residents tend to be away; set a realistic timeline for elections while at the same time allowing for the independence of the Election Committee; and spell out the responsibility of IPNTA officers and residents alike to protect the confidentiality of IPNTA records.

The proposed bylaws revision will be posted on the IPNTA website a week before the Nov. 18 meeting and then voted on at the meeting by members in good standing. Also to be posted on the website before the meeting is an accompanying document that identifies the proposed changes. Any IPNTA resident who does not have internet access may obtain a copy of the proposed bylaws and the accompanying document by placing a request in the IPNTA lobby box, as soon as possible.



Health Information for IPN Residents

Flu Season and Prevention: If you need assistance and cannot get to a doctor, call the **H1N1 flu hotline: 1-800-808-1987** (available 24 hours a day).

Access Community Health Center: has recently opened in our area, serves people of all ages, and includes a wide range of physical and mental health services. It accepts many insurance plans and offers sliding scale discounts for those without insurance.

Access: 83 Maiden Lane (6th floor), 212-895-3410
<http://www.ahrcnyc.org/>

In Memoriam... It saddened us to say goodbye to Pauline Ford (aka Pearl or Polly) of 40 Harrison, who passed away in August, 2009.



We will miss her effervescent personality, ready smile, encouragement and helpfulness. Polly donated a lot of time during the week of struggle after 9/11/01. She was a good friend to many here and will be missed, but never forgotten.

Building Services *(continued)*

there is no waiting list for replacement refrigerators. If an inoperable appliance is not repairable, it is generally replaced the same day. As above, some residents refuse to accept refrigerators that are not brand-new. If told you have to wait, please contact Management and remind them of this policy. Certainly contact the Tenants Association with any remaining problems.

Apartment Renovations and Fumes: We've received complaints about residents getting sick from fumes attributed to new floor installation. Management believes those fumes were from the sealant used on repairing the older parquet floors. They claim that the polyurethane has a strong odor but is not toxic. Staff will be reminded to ensure adequate ventilation and sealing the bottom of the apartment.

Townhouse Area-Pavers: There was concern

about the danger of catapulting pavers uprooted on the North Plaza. Management stated that the high winds occasionally blow the pavers, which are not cemented down, out of place. They believe the pavers are too heavy to become airborne and repair them as soon as the wind subsides.

Fire Doors on Each Floor: We reported a problem with fire doors (not closing properly), which are designed to prevent fires from spreading. Management said their maintenance staff is now checking all fire doors to ensure they are self-closing and will repair those that are not.

Excessive Heat in Some Apartments: Some residents have complained about excessive heat, even when their radiator valves are off. Management says that the heat settings have been adjusted and automatically turn on when the outside temperature falls below the level established by the NYC Housing Maintenance Code and the NYS Multiple Dwelling

laws. If your radiators do not respond to the adjusted valves, call Maintenance. If you are not getting results, contact the Tenants Association.

Calling the 800 Number to Report Maintenance Issues: Management stated that major floods and fires are considered emergencies and building staff will respond to such calls any time of the day or night. Of course if you have a fire, you should call 911 immediately. During regular business hours, calls are prioritized and work-tickets issued. One maintenance person and one porter are on duty until 11:00 pm seven days a week, but immediate response after 5 pm may not be possible.

Bathroom Exhaust Vents: Vents should be taking air OUT of the bathroom. If a vent is not working as an exhaust (if air is blowing IN), call the 800 service number to schedule repair.



IPNTA Executive Board: Pres: Diane Lapson • Secretary: Judy Bernstein • Treasurer: Jean Hartman • Vice Presidents: Ed Rosner, Diane Stein, BJ Berti, Alan Howard, John Lynch and Marnee May. **Committee Heads:** Elissa Krauss (Legal) • John Scott (Political), • Mariette Bailey (Environmental) • June Grancio (Holiday collection) • Elizabeth Saenger (Nominating)

The Independence Plaza North Tenants Association is staffed entirely by volunteers. Contact us to help.