

J-51 Update (We apologize for the newsletter's lateness - we needed to wait for updated information on the J-51 issue.)

As you know, on August 30, 2010 State Supreme Court Judge Marcy Friedman ruled for the tenants in the J-51 tax abatement lawsuit. Stellar Management said they would appeal the ruling on an "expedited basis". **Despite this statement, they have not yet filed for the appeal.**

An appeal is filed in steps. Stellar took the initial step by filing a "notice of appeal" dated Sept. 13, 2010. They have 9 months from that date, until June 13, 2011, to file the

legal documents for the appeal or to seek a further extension of time for "good cause". We can move to dismiss the appeal after the filing deadline has passed if the court has not given Stellar an extension of time.

We must sit tight for now while Seth Miller, our attorney, continues to move forward tying up loose ends, until the deadline above for filing an appeal has passed. Seth is on top of the situation. HCR (formerly DHCR) is waiting to see if the appeal

comes through before moving forward as well.

For free-market tenants who are considering hiring a lawyer we recommend retaining Seth Miller. As you know he is an excellent, seasoned tenant lawyer with a lot of experience in this area of the law, and also valuable for his knowledge of our case. But of course you can hire any lawyer you choose or even choose to represent yourself.

Rent Stabilization Apartment Registration

So far, management has registered LAP tenants for stabilization, but has not started on the voucher or free market tenants.

The LAP tenants should have received copies of papers filed by management regarding rent registration of their apartments (initial and annual registration) with DHCR, now HCR, Homes and Community Renewal. IPNTA posted notices asking tenants to verify all the information, including figures, and give two copies of each of these forms to the IPNTA VP's. Voucher tenants' apartments should be registered next, followed by free market tenants (up until 2006 residency). As soon as voucher tenants receive their forms (can be up to 5 separate forms), please make two copies of each form and put under the door of your building VP's apartment - or leave in the lobby tenant box for building VP.

- Edmund Rosner, 80 N. Moore, 37L
- Diane Stein, 40 Harrison, 15A
- B.J. Berti, 310 Greenwich, 6J
- Alan Howard, Townhouses 368B Greenwich

Rent Stabilization and Albany

In June 2011, rent regulations for New York State will be under serious jeopardy. Legislators, senators and the governor will all be involved in making important decisions about the future of rent stabilization. HOWEVER, please note that a building that is stabilized as a result of a J-51 tax abatement will NOT be affected, even if regular rent stabilization is ended.

Of course, we do not want to see the end of rent stabilization. Your IPNTA Executive Board believes in

preserving and creating new affordable housing - for everyone. We will keep you posted about activities supporting rent regulation. In the meantime, we await HCR's instructions regarding the stabilization of IPN.

YIKES: Bedbugs!

We spoke with management about our concern relating to a few recent reported cases of bedbugs in IPN apartments. They were apparently unrelated cases and infestation was not heavy. According to management, IPN has NOT had a major problem with the dreaded bedbugs. More likely these are tenants who thought they had bedbugs after getting a harmless rash or seeing an insect.

If you suspect bedbugs, don't panic. The first step is to put bugs in a jar for later inspection. Tenants should call maintenance at 1-800-313-0611 and request an evaluation. Generally, management's contractor schedules an inspection within 24 hours of the initial report. If the contractor confirms the presence of bedbugs, both the tenant and management are informed. The tenant must then contact management to schedule an appointment for treatment.

There is a preparation list (provided by management) of specific procedures to be completed by the tenant before the treatment can commence. Upon notice of preparation completion, management schedules an appointment, generally within a few days. Because tenants are encouraged to leave their apartment for 5 hours from the start of treatment, the treatments are usually scheduled in the morning. A follow-up inspection is scheduled at that time for a later date to complete the process. If you feel too much time has elapsed from the first to the final inspection,

please contact maintenance at 1-800-313-0611 and keep us posted.

No fee is charged to the tenant UNLESS 1) a tenant fails to give management 24-hour notice of cancellation, or 2) the apartment is not fully prepared (prepped) when the technician arrives to start the treatment. In both instances, a \$100.00 fee imposed on the tenant.

Go to www.nyc.gov [http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/vector/bed-bug-guide.pdf] for more detailed information on how to avoid transporting bedbugs into your apartment.

Heat Problems at IPN

This winter a number of tenants complained about heating issues in their apartments. If you haven't contacted us, we don't know about you.



Here's the recommended procedure to follow:

- 1) Call maintenance at 1-800-313-0611. Going down to see the maintenance person is not the same as there is no record kept if you don't call the number above. If you do not get immediate results and have to call again let the IPNTA know.
- 2) Don't hesitate to call 311 and report a heating problem that is not being addressed or repaired by management in a timely manner. HPD actually gets complaints from IPN when you call 311. Without that, our problems are not considered.
- 3) If you get no results from the above, contact Alec Schierenbeck at ASchierenbeck@manhattanbp.org in Borough President Scott Stringer's office. The BP's office contacted the IPNTA after hearing from some tenants that they were freezing in

(Heat Problems...)

their apartments. Again, if you do not call the maintenance number above, or 311 or the BP's office, no one will know you are having a problem that is not being addressed.


Keep us informed so we can also assist -- either e-mail us at info@IPNTA.ORG or leave a note in the lobby tenant box.

Time Bank Organization

Time Bank is a worldwide movement, where members bank hours of volunteer work and in turn, receive assistance when they need it. For example, if you help tutor a child, or go grocery shopping for someone, or give someone a lift in a car, you are banking hours that you can "spend" by calling for help moving furniture or whatever routine chores you need assistance with. Unlike a charity, it's an exchange of support: everyone contributes something and everyone benefits.

After a presentation at Community Board I, Diane Lapson followed up with Mashi Blech, Director of Community Organizing, to see how Time Bank could work for the Independence Plaza community. The reps from Time Bank would like to attend our next TA meeting and give a presentation. We'll keep you informed.

**Help Yourself
and your neighbors...
Volunteer with IPNTA**

Holiday Collection — We had a very successful 2010 holiday collection for our porters and maintenance men. We collected \$30,800.00--porters (who do not receive individual tips) received \$1,230.00 each and maintenance men \$1,025.00 each. As always, we did not distribute money to doormen, who are given holiday tips individually by tenants. Thanks so much to all of you who generously contributed! 

Dog-Walking Around IPN

For some time, IPN townhouse plaza residents have been upset about dog-walking on the plazas. Some tenants walk their dogs without cleaning up after them or leave pooper-scooper bags in front of residents' apartments. Late last year, after numerous complaints to management, signs **BANNING DOG-WALKING ON THE PLAZAS** were posted at the 3rd floor exits in all three buildings.



In Memoriam: Anne Compocchia

We have been saddened by the passing of several tenants this winter, among them Anne Compocchia, longtime downtown and IPN community activist.

Anne was directly responsible for many of the amenities we have downtown including our permanent ball field. She was a good friend and neighbor to many at IPN and will be missed but never forgotten. More details about her contributions to the community can be read in the local papers.

HPD: Early Inspections of Voucher Apartments

In early January, some voucher tenants were distressed to discover HPD inspectors at their door. The required advance notification was not mailed or received by tenants - or arrived the day of the inspection. Additionally, in previous years the inspections had been scheduled in April or May, not January.

IPNTA immediately followed up with HPD, demanding answers. As a result, tenants who were not at home will not be penalized for inspections attempted without the required advance notification, which HPD agreed was inappropriate. HPD also agreed that at least 10 to 14 days notice must be given. HPD claimed the earlier inspection necessary to handle everything in a timely manner.

Senior News...

➤ Grab Bars

In the past, IPN seniors were able to get grab bars through funds secured by former Councilmember Alan Gerson's office, organized with help from the IPNTA and Caring Community, Tribeca's senior center, located on the 2nd floor of 310 Greenwich St.

However, those funds no longer exist. We are looking into an alternative source. If you need grab bars, please let us know by leaving a note in the lobby tenant box. Include your name, phone number and apartment number and we'll find a solution.

➤ Resources

A Community Board I task force, assisted by some IPNTA board members, created a fabulous senior resource listing for our area last year.

To see the list of resources go the link below on the CBI website: www.nyc.gov/html/mancb1/html/resources/services.shtml#seniorservice or follow the link posted on www.ipnta.org.

➤ Caring Community

We were very dismayed to hear that proposed budget cuts coming from Albany have slated many senior centers in Manhattan for closing.

Caring Community, Tribeca's senior center, located on the 2nd floor of 310 Greenwich St, is among the centers listed as threatened due to the budget cuts. State Senator Daniel Squadron and City Councilmember Margaret Chin immediately went into action to fight these cuts.

Of course, the tenants association will give our full support and we will probably call on tenants to help support the cause. Under new supervision, the Caring Community, which serves all seniors downtown (not just IPN) has begun some great new programming, and serves a hot lunch each day for a very minimal amount. Right now you can help by writing, e-mailing or calling:

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224
Email address: www.governor.ny.gov
Phone: (518) 474-8390



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.