

REPORT FROM THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Interim Executive Director Jay Marcus

It has been a busy year! Hope started construction on 56 Cooperative apartments on Lexington and Madison Avenues plus an additional scattered 23 apartments. Almost two thirds of these apartments will be affordable to low-income families. We have also received financing to make major capital improvements to Muscoota – the first housing developed by Hope in the 1970s. Renovations are expected to begin in the summer of 2010. As demonstrated by the above, Hope's development team, Stephen Starensier, Nellie Plumey and Sam Gonzalez, have done amazing work.

We have a major addition to Hope Community. I hope you have the opportunity to meet our new Director of Property Management, Evette Marshall. Evette comes to us with a bag full of great ideas on how to make our properties look and operate better.

In these difficult financial times, we are indebted to our fiscal staff – led by CFO Marie Iammatteo – who keeps us up to date on how the money flows in and (more quickly) flows out.

We could not have made it through this difficult year – nor could many of our residents - without our community partners. While there are so many –

there are several we call upon day to day – the 23rd and 25th Precinct, the East Harlem/El Barrio Anti-Displacement Task Force, Palladia, the Visiting Nurses Program, Museo de El Barrio, Operation Fight Back, Community Voices Heard, STRIVE, and many others.

Also, please take a look at Hope's East Harlem Voices website, which has videos, discussions and articles on many local issues. Always feel free to call or stop by to talk to myself or Carmen Vasquez (Hope's Deputy Director) to tell us your ideas. The residents of the buildings we manage and our neighbors here in East Harlem are the most important part of the Hope family and we look forward to another year of working together.

Evette Marshall Appointed Director of Property Management Department



Evette Marshall

Evette Marshall has come on board to oversee the agency's Property Management Department. Ms. Marshall has over 20 years of building management experience. Prior to joining Hope, Evette was the Director of HUD Property Management at Manhattan North Management in Harlem. Ms. Marshall has also served with Nickmarsh Dermot Realty and Related Management.

Board Transitions

Veteran board member Ann Henderson has been elected Chair. Ann has been affiliated with Hope since the early '80s and lived in East Harlem for over 20 years, before moving to the Bronx. She is dedicated to Hope's vision of improving East Harlem. As Associate Director for Cooperative Preservation at the Urban Homesteading Assistance Board, Ms. Henderson brings extensive experience working in the NYC nonprofit housing field and East Harlem low-income co-ops. Ann strongly believes tenants should be involved in building repairs, neighborhood policing, and supports selling buildings to tenants.

New board member Kathleen Benson has worked in East Harlem all of her professional life and has been actively engaged with the community for over 20 years. She currently serves as Project Director of Exhibitions and Publications at The Museum of the City of New York.

Ms. Benson is a member of the East Harlem Historical Organization and a board member of East Harlem Preservation, Inc. In 2008, she was the recipient of Hope's East Harlem Community Service Award.

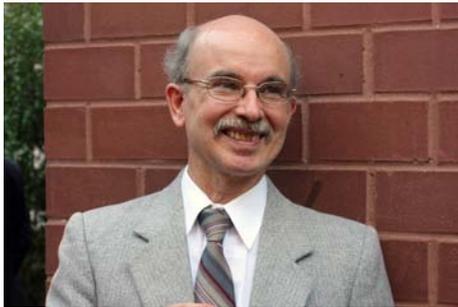


New Board Member Kathy Benson

2009 Annual Gala and Community Service Awards



Emcee Lynda Baquero & Honoree Rei Pérez (Ctr.)



Board Member / Honoree William Ofenloch



Honoree Leticia Rodriguez (right)



Honoree Assistant Chief Raymond Díaz (Ctr.)



Honorees Raphael Benavides & Edward Mateus

Spirit of East Harlem Mural Restored; Hope Sponsors Public Forum on the Cultural Significance of Outdoor / Street Art

On June 13, 2009, Hope Community's landmark Spirit of East Harlem mural on East 104th Street was inexplicably defaced. Designed by Hank Prussing in 1978, the four-story mural is famous for its depiction of neighborhood residents engaging in everyday activities and has served as a cultural attraction for over 30 years.

The incident quickly generated much public interest and was the subject of a June 26 feature story, "Vandals Sully an Ode to East Harlem," by New York Times columnist David Gonzalez.

Hope Community received an outpouring of support from neighborhood residents, local artists, and the business community.



Manny Vega restoring the Spirit of East Harlem mural

Soon after, vendor Reed Rickman of Apex Mechanical presented Hope Deputy Executive Director Carmen Vasquez with a generous donation for restoration of the mural.

Hope then commissioned muralist Manny Vega, who'd served as Hank Prussing's apprentice and helped restore the badly weathered painting in the mid-1990s.

A familiar fixture in the neighborhood, Mr. Vega easily attracted dozens of local residents who regularly stopped to watch and chat with Manny as he worked to complete repairs to the landmark painting.



Defaced Spirit of East Harlem Mural

Hope Community also sponsored a spirited discussion on the historical and cultural significance of street art with outdoor muralists Manny Vega and James Top, independent filmmaker Vagabond, and author Janet Braun-Reinitz.

The August 13th event was held at the Ortiz-Wittenberg community room and was moderated by writer Frank Perez.

The mural continues to generate discussion as graffiti artists and local youth debated the ramifications of the incident.

Soon after completing his work on the Spirit of East Harlem, Manny Vega began a series of temporary murals alongside a wall on East 105th Street near Lexington Avenue, just one block north of Hope's painting. He hopes to expand his project to cover other empty walls throughout the neighborhood.



Frank Perez, James Topp & Janet Braun-Reinitz



New awning and freshly painted facade at Valencia Bakery on East 104th Street

MAINSTREET PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS CONTINUE

Hope Community has continued to invest New York State Main Street dollars into the East Harlem “Gateway Area,” the neighborhood located around the 103rd Street subway station. With funding from both the Main Street program and the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone, the agency has made improvements to a three-block contiguous area around Lexington Avenue from 102nd to 105th Street.

Valencia Bakery, a long-time retail fixture located on 104th Street selling special-occasion cakes and pastries, revitalized its building façade with a new awning and a fresh coat of paint. The Manhattan Neighborhood Network, which administers Public Access cable

television services in the city, has also benefited from the grant for construction on the historic firehouse located at 175 East 104th Street. When completed, East Harlem’s Fire Engine Company No. 53 will house community space and provide educational services to youth and adults on television broadcasting.

The Main Street grant was dispersed according to priorities laid out by East Harlem small business owners and residents last summer. Part of the funds was used to replace nine New York City trashcans along Lexington Avenue with new, high-end litter baskets. Hope Community also funded extensive repair and maintenance work for trees that line 103rd and 104th Streets between Park and 3rd Avenues.



New litter receptacles on Lexington Avenue

Trees New York has used grant funds to educate youth and adults on the merits of street trees in neighborhoods like East Harlem. The organization also held tree care and flower planting workshops throughout the summer and fall and installed two new bike racks on 103rd and 104th streets

Hope Community will be using the remaining funds to renovate the façade of some of its neighborhood residential and office buildings.

Renovations Underway at Hope



Madison Avenue Buildings Get a Makeover

Hope Community Inc is moving forward to renovate and improve the many buildings in its portfolio and in June of 2008 initiated extensive work in the three buildings of New Frontiers 1 with the assistance of HPD.

Redevelopment work includes façade repairs, new windows, new roofs, kitchen cabinetry and refurbishment of bathrooms.

We are happy to report that work is scheduled to be completed this month.

Additionally, Hope Community closed on financing with HPD in June of 2009 and has commenced renovation and capital improvement work in the six individual buildings of New Frontiers 2 and New Frontiers 3.

Work is expected to take about one year and will include roofs, facades, windows and apartment improvements.



23 East 108th Street (Madison Avenue)

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Highlights of Recent Hope Community Events



Last June, Hope's board chair Ann Henderson joined agency staff and local partners at a farewell luncheon for Executive Director Robin LeBaron, who joined an energy programs consortium in Washington D.C. where he will develop programs to finance energy efficiency improvements in residential buildings.



On July 21, several turtles were delivered from their winter home at Central Park East II to bask in the summertime waters of the Modesto Flores community garden pond. The annual tradition has helped create a bond between Hope Community and local students and educators, who frequently stop by for lunch-time breaks and class tours.



On July 24, Leader Spring Fellow Cristy Johnson presented Hope with a recognition plaque and grant for serving as a mentor agency during her weeklong stay in New York. Johnston, Executive Director of the San Francisco-based Excelsior Action Group, studied Hope's management, programming, and operations policies



Dozens of community artists and residents attended the July 18th edition of Poetas Con Cafe. The annual summertime event included feature performances by poets Mariposa and Jesus Papoleto Melendez, and a surprising number of open mic presentations by highly esteemed artists.



Hope employees and board members enjoyed an afternoon cookout during the agency's annual summer outing last August. While some stayed near the grill in the rear garden, others played cards, dominoes and other games inside the community room at Hope's Carlos Rios Senior Residence.



Hope Community's Carmen Vasquez, Stephen Starensier (bottom left), joined Interim Executive Director Jay Marcus at an October 29th City Hall rally to protest the diversion of Battery Park City surplus funds historically intended for NYC affordable housing.