

# Coalition for a Livable West Side

Leading the fight for a better city environment.

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## After the BSA Hearings - Back to the Court!

The Bureau of Standards and Appeals (BSA) ruled in favor of the city, **but** it failed to evaluate the environmental and land use consequences of building Riverside Drive South on landfill, as required by law.

That failure by BSA is the basis for our new court challenge to both the BSA and the City. New York State Supreme Court Judge Leland DeGrasse will hear our case.

Donald Trump and the Riverside South developers must abide by their prior legal commitments concerning the main roadway in the development. We have asked the judge to annul the Builder's Pavement Plan under which a new Riverside Boulevard (Riverside Drive South) is being built on illegal landfill.

With the help of our attorney and our urban planning consultants, we will prove our case.

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## Another "Art of the Raw Deal"— But This One's Not By Trump! Latest Ansonia Post Office Move to Inflict Massive Pain on the West Side

Donald Trump is the Master of the Art of the Raw Deal, but he has a close second, none other than our own taxpayer-owned U.S. Postal Service (USPS)

The Ansonia P.O. (APO) has announced that by March 31st, it will move once again, this time from its present W. 66th Street location to the 55-story Millennium tower, called Lincoln Square on W.68th St. and Columbus Avenue.

But that's not all that's moving. The USPS intends to move the APO's Mail Processing Center - now on West 61st Street near Amsterdam - to the West 68th Street site.

And what could that move mean? Ten or more mail processing center trucks a day, each one a 2-ton to 5-ton monster. But the USPS needs a new 50-60 foot curb cut right on West 68th Street, between Broadway and Columbus Ave., for those trucks-- and it **must** get permission from the Department of Transportation (DOT) for the curb cut.

All that noise, congestion and increased air pollution will be added to an already - overburdened block with its Food Emporium loading dock, Reebok Sports Center, a parking garage, delivery trucks servicing local retail stores, and 13 Sony movie theaters that attract a dozen school buses daily for the IMAX theatre alone!

How did this disaster-in-the-making come about?

Let us begin the tale of a convoluted deal in which our own U.S. Postal Service appears to have been part of a plot to put one over on taxpayers and Westsiders. There is a clear case of deception on the part of the USPS.

Millennium Partners needed the original APO site on Broadway, between W. 68th and W. 67h Street, for their 55-story mixed tower. (continued on page 2)



Your support is very important because it ensures that we will be able to continue the "war" to protect our environment and the community. Recently, Trump declared victory over the Coalition and the community. **Sorry Donald, the "war" is not over !**

We can continue the battle only with your on-going financial support. Contribute something. **(Every dollar counts!)** Renew your membership. Your tax-exempt contribution will be **matched by our Challenge Fund grant!** Increase your tax deductions by donating stock to the Coalition.

## Coalition for a Livable West Side

P.O. Box 78 New York, N.Y. 10023-078

Maximize your contribution via our **new** Challenge Grant.

Your membership expiration date is in the upper right hand corner of the label. If expired, please renew. If you are not a member, please join. Thank you.

# Riverside South

## Trump Organization Says Much of Site is for Sale



In December, 1998, at a Community Board 7 meeting, Charles Reiss, Vice-President of the Trump Organization said that all of the sites below West 66th Street are for sale. And Trump is asking \$140 million dollars just for Parcels N, L and M.

### Problems:

- Parcel N -There must be a new Environmental Impact Statement.
- Parcel N must go through a new ULURP (7-month public review process).
- Parcel N buyer responsible for building new streets, and an extension of Riverside Drive South from W. 61st. to W. 59th St. , which must connect to Route 9A (West Side Highway)
- 526,000 square feet of zoning floor area from Parcel's L, M and N have been **transferred** to Buildings A/B, C/D, E/F and I.
- **All** buyers must build new streets, an extension of Riverside Drive South and are bound to financial obligations listed in the Restrictive Declaration.

### ◆ For Sale

Building G	66th to 65th St.,	18 stories	288 apartments	130 cars
Building H	65th to 64th St..	31 stories.	345 apartments.	49 cars
Building I	64th. to 63rd St.	41 stories	510 apartments	326 cars
Buildings J1	63rd to 62nd St..	38 stories	408 apartments	225 cars
Building J2	63rd to 62nd St..	28 stories	245 apartments	225 cars
Buildings K1	62nd to 61st St..	33 stories	373 apartments	256 cars
Building K2	62nd to 61st St..	28 stories	241 apartments.	225 cars
Building O	62nd to 61st St.	28 stories	241 apartments.	No cars.
Building L	61st to 60th St..	23 stories	163 apartments	170 cars.
Building M	60th to 59th St.	18 stories	295 apartments	160 cars
Parcel N	59th to 61st St.	1.8 million sq. ft studio.	30 story building	413 cars

### ◆ Trump Says He Will Build

Building A	72nd to 71st St.	32 stories	287 apartments	319 cars
Building B	71st to 70th St..	49 stories	584 apartments	288 cars
Building E	68th to 67th St.	33 stories	444 apartments	107 cars
Building F	67th to 66th St.	27 stories	310 apartments	107 cars

✍ **Add 3 to 4 floors to each for building mechanicals. Also can be bigger through the transfer of zoning floor area in Riverside South.**

### Council Member Eldridge Requests Park Bids Asks Why \$11 Million Is Not Enough

Almost 5 months ago, Council member Ronnie Eldridge wrote to the Commissioner of Parks, Henry Stern and “expressed great concern about the lack of process for approval of changes to Phase One plans for Riverside South park. She wrote:

“...I am particularly concerned about the over-budget bids. It would be helpful to see the budget originally proposed and the specific bids to understand why eleven million dollars is not enough to finance the original proposal for Phase One of the park. We believe any changes posed, for whatever reason, must adhere to the Restrictive Declaration or go through the proscribed review process for approval.”

Commissioner Stern has not responded (as of this printing).

We applaud Council Member Eldridge for her determination to hold the city, Trump and the developers accountable.

The Coalition continues to fight Trump’s attempts to renege on his financial commitments to build the “World Class Park” he promised to build. He is using every ploy to save money at the expense of that park.

### Assemblyman Stringer Seeks to Limit 421-a

Assemblyman Scott Stringer is introducing legislation that would nullify the use of the 421-a state program for new sites in Manhattan that are **below 96th Street**. The 421-a real estate tax abatement program, was supposed to stimulate the building of apartments on economically unattractive sites in New York City where housing would otherwise not be built. The sites were to be “vacant, predominately vacant, or under-utilized”.

The law was immediately **perverted**. **Trump** received a \$50 million tax abatement when he built Trump Tower on “under-utilized” Fifth Avenue.

In a 421-a program which allows a developer to get a 10-year real estate tax abatement (**fully exempt** for 6 years, then phased in over the next 4 years.), by constructing low-income housing. The developer receives 421-a certificates which can be sold. Each low-income unit, regardless of size, provides real estate tax abatements for **five** market-rate apartments. The developer’s taxes at the **new** site are frozen at the amount the owner paid **before** the new construction

**Here is an example of an abuse of 421-a.**



### 200 Riverside Boulevard

Trump is applying for a 421-a real estate tax abatement (10-year program) for the 53-story condominium at 200 Riverside Boulevard (W. 69th - W. 70th St.).

What does that mean? If granted, it would result in a **\$4.3 million per year** tax loss to the City, in return for only 77 low-income units. Not exactly a fair deal for **all** taxpayers!



### Community Gardens For Sale

The City says it has to increase revenue by selling City-owned land that community gardens now occupy. The condo owners at 200 Riverside Boulevard will cost the City \$4.3 million dollars per year (see 421-a). We doubt that the City will raise that amount from the sale of **all** the community gardens! “...bulldozing a working garden is an act of neighborhood violence.” fr. NY Times Editorial, 1/14/99

## Another “Art of the Raw deal”—But This One's Not By Trump!

[Continued from page 1]

The APO lease, which was to expire in 2006, did not contain a demolition clause that could result in the eviction of the Post Office.

So what followed was a mysterious two year long negotiation between the USPS and Millennium Partners.

On February 3, 1992, Millennium filed their plan with the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB). The plans included the post office, loading platforms and a 50-foot curb cut. But on February 27th, the DOB disapproved the plans, stating a special permit [for the curb cut] was required. So what did Millennium do? With the consent of the USPS, it submitted an amended application to DOB, **without the post office and loading platforms**

Why no post office? Because without it and the curb cuts, the project did not need any special permit from the city. Therefore the 55-story tower could be built without any community review.

The amended plans - **without the post office and loading platforms** - were approved by the DOB on May 27, 1992

But now, lo and behold, on June 3, 1992, the USPS and Millennium signed a contract in which the USPS paid **Millennium \$9.5 million in cash** to buy condominium space for its future home in Lincoln Square. All this despite the fact that neither the **APO** nor its needed **loading platforms** were in the building plans

Then in 1994, the deception continued - when Millennium Partners filed a 421-a application without the APO and loading platforms!

But what about the signed contract and the \$9,500,00 payment to Millennium?

In 1998 the plot thickened. The USPS told Community Board 7 that it is moving the Ansonia Post Office and the Mail Processing Center into its Lincoln Square condominium space. Furthermore it said that it always intended to move into the Lincoln Square space.

A curb cut of 50-60 feet is now needed.

The infamous curb cut, with all the

accompanying traffic nightmare, is apparently, according to the USPS, a done deal.

Not so fast, says the West Side community. The USPS must get permission from the Department of Transportation (DOT) for the curb cut. And DOT should demand that the USPS immediately submit an application for the curb cut to DOT. Then DOT **should reject** it!

Coalition urges DOT to begin an immediate traffic study of the area - 59th St. - 72nd St., West End Avenue to Central Park West.

We have asked **Congressman Jerrold Nadler** to have the entire matter investigated by the appropriate Federal authorities.

**ACTION;** Write to: Commissioner Wilbur L. Chapman, DOT, 40 Worth St., New York, NY 10013. Urge him to require the USPS to submit an application for the curb cut. Ask DOT to immediately implement a broad traffic study of the area.

## Earthquake Code and Riverside South Revisited - Cost vs Safety

When the city enacted Local Law 17 on February 21, 1996, many developers rushed to file their building applications before the new Seismic Code became effective. Local Law 17 requires that all buildings over three stories tall be designed to withstand moderate earthquakes and it also requires larger, more flexible columns, extra reinforcement of floors, walls, and lighter roofs. When buildings are not built on bedrock - like most of Riverside South, which is largely landfill)) - the rules require that a stability analysis be submitted to demonstrate that the foundation could survive a potential earthquake that would liquefy the underlying soil.

Trump beat the deadline with applications to the Department of Buildings (DOB) for 15 buildings. But the applications for three buildings (A, B, C- W. 70th to W. 72nd St.) **were rejected** by DOB, Trump resubmitted and received approval, even though the deadline had passed! We guess that there was no concern that the site has a high potential (greater than 50%) during an earthquake, of the soil turning into a near-liquid (liquefaction).

Why the rush? A structural engineer who is constructing a building on bedrock, has estimated that complying with Local Law 17 has added between 7% and 12% to the cost of the project. Perhaps that's why Trump was in such a hurry to meet the deadline despite the risk on his site.

## “The City’s Birthright Sold for Air Rights.” by Paul Goldberger, NY Times, 5/31/87 [Excerpts.]

Although this article was written more than 11 years ago, it is unfortunately still true!

“These are strange times. There seems to be a tower proposed for every block in Manhattan, and the city Government is coming to look as if it were less interested in guiding and directing private development than in cheering it on. At a time when the city is actively selling or

leasing its own properties... for mega-size office development, what is to distinguish the attitude of the city from that of the average private developer?

The city is no longer our protector, but a full-fledged participant in the orgy of Manhattan real-estate development. This is the sad truth — that the municipal Government which at its best should be a moral force for good development, has

shown so little interest in anything except accommodation. It is not the job of private developers to set limits; it is their job to make money. It is the function of the city to represent the public interest and forge into the building process the values that matter, which often means drawing the line. And that is just what the city has chosen not to do...”

**The Coalition for a Livable West Side's prime goal is protecting our community and environment!**

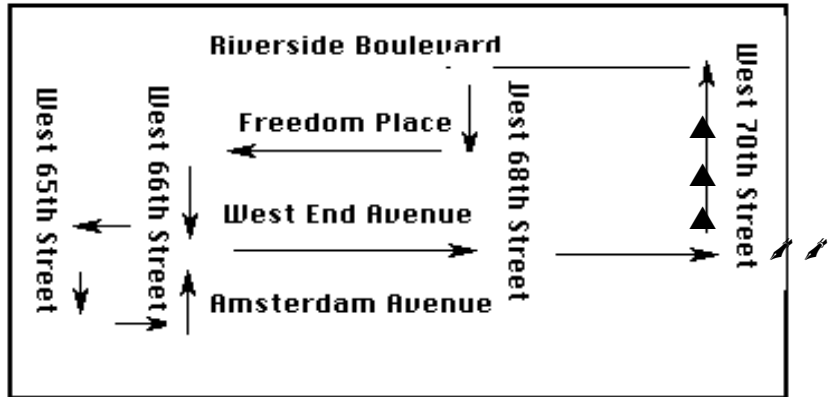


**The M-72 Bus - An update**

The Department of Transportation (DOT) plans to remove the M-72 bus stops on W. 66th and W. 68th Street and West End Avenue in order to accommodate the residents of the two Trump buildings - W. 68th St- W.70th St and Riverside Boulevard. The public's response to Coalition's request for letter/petition to DOT was enormous! DOT received hundreds of letters and more than 2,000 signatures. Yet, DOT has not responded.

In January 1999, Community Board 7 requested that DOT discuss the following westbound rerouting of the M-72 bus westbound:

- West onto W. 70th St.to Riverside Boulevard,
- South to W. 68th St. on Riverside Boulevard,
- East on W. 68th St. to Freedom Place,
- South on Freedom Place to W. 66th St.,
- East on W. 66th St. to West End Avenue.
- South on West End Avenue to W. 65th St.,
- East on W. 65th St.to Amsterdam Ave.,
- North on Amsterdam Avenue to W. 66th St.,
- West on W. 66th St. to West End Ave.,
- North again on West End Ave.
- A stop has been requested for W. 65th St. and Amsterdam Avenue.



Right now, the M-72 bus travels down West End Avenue. The developers are providing Jitney service to and from the two new buildings. Why must the MTA change anything?

**Community Board 8 Urges City to Institute Responsible Planning**

Community Board 8 (CB8) - on the Upper East Side- is concerned that a resurgence in residential and commercial development throughout Manhattan, with several as-of-right projects planned for CB8, has created a tremendous strain on infrastructure in the areas of traffic and transportation, emergency services (ie, fire and police response), sanitation, schools, and health facilities.

It overwhelmingly adopted a resolution on December 18, 1998, urging the Department of City Planning to take immediate steps to begin the process of rewriting New York City's Zoning Resolution with an emphasis on responsible, thoughtful planning and development and urged that **priority be given to development that respects and protects the integrity of communities.**

CB8 encourages the participation of all community boards and other interested members of the public in this process.

**ACTION:** Write to Commissioner Joe Rose, NYC Planning Commission, 22 Reade St., New York, NY 10007 and tell him you support CB8's resolution for the rewriting of the City's Zoning Resolution so that **priority would be given to development that respects and protects the integrity of communities.**

✂ If your company has a **Matching Gift** program, please apply on behalf of the Coalition. We now can **accept gifts of stock!** We have no paid staff. If your membership has expired (see upper right-hand corner of your label), please renew. If you are not a member, **please join.**

I wish to support the Coalition's efforts on behalf of the community . I wish to support Coalition's lawsuit..  
 I wish to contribute ( ) \$1000. ( ) \$500. ( ) \$250. ( ) \$200. ( ) \$100. ( ) \$75. ( ) \$50. ( ) \$25. ( ) other  
 Annual dues \$25. Renew 1999 dues. ( ) Pre-Pay Dues ( )

Please make checks payable to: CALW, Inc. - Write Challenge Grant in lower left-hand corner of check.  
 Mail to: CALW, Inc., P.O. Box 78, , New York, N.Y. 10023-0078. Contributions are tax deductible [section 501c3].

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- I can help raise funds for the lawsuits.. ( ) I can help with publicity. ( )
- I can distribute the Coalition newsletters, important flyers, etc. in my building. I need ( ) copies.
- I can attend important meetings, hearings, etc. ( ) I can help with \_\_\_\_\_