

Hook's mystery planters

BY PAUL DEBENEDETTO

Fear not Red Hookers: an obscure Manhattan business group is not encroaching on Pier 41 — even though more than a dozen weathered planters appear to indicate otherwise.

A row of aging planters adorned with logos for Manhattan's 34th Street Partnership are enjoying a second life not-quite-beautifying the waterfront behind Fairway, raising occasional questions about their out-of-borough provenance and holding as much garbage as greenery, according to critics.

The flowerpots — which were apparently so unattractive the Midtown merchants group struggled to give them away — popped up on the Brooklyn waterfront in 2002 after the 34th Street Partnership bought newer, sleeker, plastic street furnishings that are easier to clean and harder for graffiti writers to tag.

And after eight years of wear and tear on 34th Street and a decade along the pier, some locals claim Manhattan's concrete cast-offs are a bad fit for Red Hook.

"It looks like you're taking
Continued on Page 18

WAR OF WORDS



'TO'-CHE: Mark Vincent says the city wrongfully ticketed and towed his car because traffic agents misread a sign — but two judges disagree.

Photo by Bess Adler

Driver fights judges over meaning of 'to'

BY NATALIE O'NEILL

Justice is blind — and it doesn't understand English very well, according to one angry Park Slope motorist.

Tenacious driver Mark Vincent is battling the courts after two judges refused to overturn a parking ticket and towing fees leveled against him by the city after traffic cops penalized his vehicle for parking beneath a vague "No standing" sign on Prospect Park West last fall.

Vincent claims he parked his red Honda on Prospect Park West near Ninth Street on Oct. 3 under a sign reading: "No Standing, 8 am–10 pm, April to October."

Traffic enforcement officers interpreted the word "to" to imply that parking was barred through the end of October — not the start of the month — then towed his car and several other vehicles.

The Department of Transportation has since replaced the signs on the roadway — where drivers lost a lane of traffic and 22 parking spaces to make way for a contested two-way bike lane — with ones indicating the rule is only enforced through Sept. 30, evidence that Vincent claims proves he was in the right.

But the motorist says justice still hasn't been served, even after two appeals and numerous hours spent compiling evidence, writing letters, and making phone calls to judges.

"It's obviously and egregiously unjust," he said.

Continued on Page 18

Deal saves ships

BY WILL BREDDERMAN

Brooklyn's shipping industry will remain afloat, for now, thanks to a deal that will keep Customs inspectors working in Red Hook's port until 2017, federal officials, waterfront insiders, and politicians say.

Federal overseers stationed at the Red Hook

Container Terminal will continue to hand-inspect shipments under a new, five-year agreement between Customs and Border Protection and the Port Authority.

The decision came after Customs announced last year it would slash costs by

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WHERE TO?: Donna Chilson, picked up a package in imaginary "Frooklny."

Post office invents 'Frooklny'

BY ELI ROSENBERG

Our proud borough has been given many nicknames and abbreviations over the years, and now the United States Postal Service — a stickler for proper addresses — has offered up a confusing new one straight out of a Dr. Seuss tale: "Frooklny, N.Y."

The much-maligned Kensington Post Office misspelled the borough's name on thousands of package pick-up slips, instructing residents in the 11218 zip code to come to the post office on McDonald Avenue in this still-undiscovered town to get packages that couldn't fit through their mail slots.

And it doesn't seem that they're going to correct the error: the post office, which has taken heat because of its long lines and allegedly rude workers, was still using the botched pick-up slips when this reporter visited.

"We printed out a whole batch of these," said a sta-

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On Third Avenue, park your bike at a meter

Plan will let you lock your ride to city's old 'lollipops'

BY WILL BREDDERMAN

Perhaps Bay Ridge is bike-friendly after all.

Residents continually plan to bring bike lanes into Bay Ridge, but now merchants along Third Avenue are cheering the Department of Transportation's proposal to repurpose obsolete "lollipop" meters into bicycle racks.

Robert Howe, president of the Third Avenue Merchants Association and an avid cyclist, said the racks would be a boon for cyclists who can't find a place to hitch their wheels in car-friendly Bay Ridge.

"I know whenever I'm riding my bike, I'm always looking for the tallest pole I can put my bike on," Howe said. "You see people chaining their bicycle up to trees and alternate side parking signs all the time," he said. "This program would obviate that need."

The city gave Third Avenue merchants the option to have the meter in front of their store converted into a bicycle rack once new muni-meters are installed in the fall.

Several merchants including restaurateur Anthony Loupos, who owns Glow Thai between 71st and 72nd streets, have already jumped at the chance.

Loupos said he was very excited about getting more two-wheeled business rolling past his eatery.

"Last fall on a nice day we would see four or five tables per day come on bicycle," he said.

Loupos also claimed that the racks would help him protect his eatery's delivery bike, which thieves have pedaled away with in the past because it wasn't securely fastened to anything.

Howe hoped the city's plan would motivate more Ridgites to leave their motorized wheels at home and bike to their favorite stores



TWO THUMBS UP: Third Avenue Merchants President Robert Howe (left) and Glow Thai owner Anthony Loupos are pumped to see this parking meter become a bike rack. Photo by Steve Solomonson

and restaurants.

"[Ridgites] are famous for driving two blocks to the store," he said. "Maybe this will cut back on that bad habit."

Loupos agreed that Bay Ridge residents need to move away from their steering wheels and get behind a set of handlebars.

"There are so many benefits and no downside," he said, stating that more bike traffic would decrease automobile congestion and maybe even free up parking spots. "If you live on 95th street, there's no reason

to haul 2,000 pounds along with you to travel 20 blocks so you can go the gym or get a coffee from Dunkin' Donuts."

Yet many Bay Ridge residents don't agree with Howe and Loupos.

Over the years, the neighborhood has thwarted the city's attempts to bring more bicycle lanes into the neighborhood.

Last June, then-Community Board 10 member Bob Cassara, a biking advocate, clashed publicly with his peers and with Councilman Vincent Gentile (D-Bay

Ridge), who shot down plans to put in a bike lane along Bay Ridge Parkway. Some say Cassara was drummed out of CB10 as a result.

Cassara praised the city's bike rack conversion program.

"It's an inexpensive way of getting bike racks and getting more people on the streets," Cassara said.

"We should be doing more things like this. Any merchants who are against this aren't informed about how having more people on bikes can increase business."



BOTTOMS UP: Jonathan Stan mixes a drink named for former presidential candidate Rick Santorum — and something else.

He's out, so drink up

BY NATALIE O'NEILL

A cocktail named after Republican presidential hopeful Rick Santorum has turned out to be more popular than the candidate himself.

The ex-Senator with the dirty, little Google problem pulled out of the race for the GOP nomination long after it became clear he didn't have the backing he'd need to take on President Obama — but a beverage riffing on a randy neologism of the sweater vest aficionado's surname will remain on the menu at Pacific Standard on Fourth Avenue to meet the demand of hundreds of thirsty pub-goers.

Bartender Glynn Sullivan says she has mixed dozens of the boozy concoctions, which consists of orange vodka, Baileys, bitters, and, yes, chocolate flakes. She claims they're particularly popular among ladies looking for a sweet drink and out-of-towners who get a kick out of the sexually suggestive reference, which this newspaper will not explain, and, as a family publication, urges readers not to Google.

"Some people who order it don't even know who the politician is — or about the other thing — but they like it because it tastes like a milkshake," Sullivan said.



SIP RICK: Pacific Standard in Boerum Hill is still serving a chocolate cocktail named after the former presidential candidate.

AP Photo / Matt Rourke

The other usage of the candidate's name began spreading in 2003, when Dan Savage, a popular sex columnist, mounted a campaign to shame the then-Senator for comparing homosexuality to bestiality.

So what happens if the conservative poster boy falls out of the 24-hour news cycle and fades from the limelight entirely?

"We'll probably rotate the drink out," Sullivan said.

"I was never a fan of his, anyway."

Pacific Standard [82 Fourth Ave. between St. Marks Place and Bergen Street in Boerum Hill, (718) 858-1951]. For info, visit pacificstandard-brooklyn.com.

'RESTORE' THE G

Old maps prove Brooklyn's ride should head to Church

BY NATALIE O'NEILL

Saving an at-risk extension of the G train won't just make strap-hangers happy — it will preserve the beloved train's historic role as the line for Brooklyn's working populace, historians and transportation advocates say.

When the crosstown local first rumbled through Brooklyn in 1937 as the "GG," it traversed the borough between Greenpoint and Kensington, giving factory workers a much-needed transportation link between North and Brownstone Brooklyns that ran late into the night.

The crosstown line served Fourth Avenue–Ninth Street, Seventh Avenue–Ninth Street, 15th Street–Prospect Park West, Fort Hamilton Parkway, and Church Avenue — it's current, but temporary, terminus — on and off until 1976, when officials nixed the train's five southernmost stops as factories closed, ridership dwindled, and the city struggled financially, transit historians said.



HISTORY ON ITS SIDE: The beloved G train was built to ride to Kensington.

The current renewal of service, which brings the so-called "Brooklyn Local" back to Park Slope, Windsor Terrace, and Kensington, has once again made it a train for laborers, this time in the borough's burgeoning creative workforce — and severing it again could stop Brooklyn's boom in its tracks, activists claim.

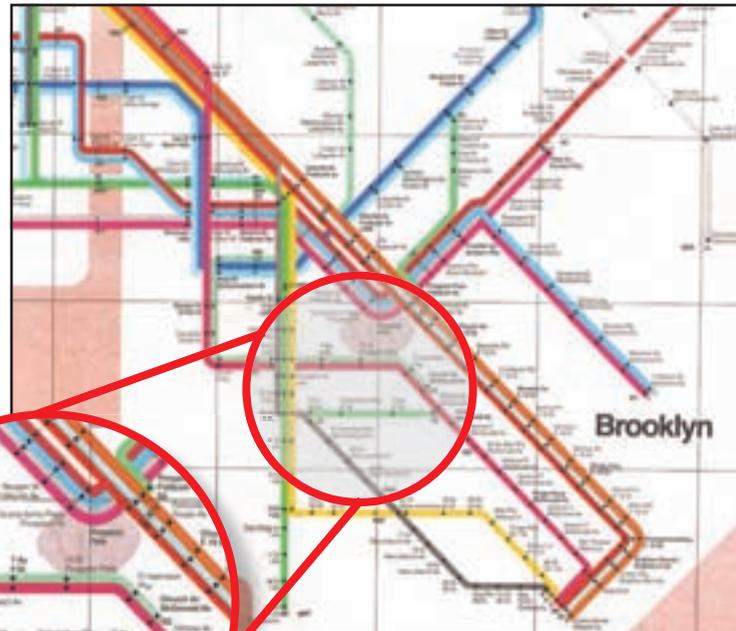
"Cutting five stops on the G train would hurt thousands of

residents and small business owners," said Dan Cantor of the Working Families Party, a group circulating a petition to save the added stops.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority extended G train service to Church Avenue when it started a \$257.5-million renovation of the Culver Viaduct in 2009. When that rehabilitation project wraps up next winter, the line is slated to be cut, despite widespread outcry.

Many Brooklynites rely on the G train for life, work, and love — but to save the renewed service, they'll need to prove it to the MTA, said transit historian Peter Derrick.

"The service makes sense," said Derrick. "When a service is heavily used, you can justify it." Straphangers and politicians



MAP QUEST: This 1970s subway map shows the Brooklyn Local ran to and from Church Avenue.

are now fighting to save the extension — and some 15,000 people have signed petitions supporting the cause.

"The population along this line is only growing," wrote Briana Campbell, who signed a petition circulated by Williamsburg Democratic District Leader Lincoln Restler. "It seems ludicrous

that the MTA would want to cut service."

MTA spokesman Charles Seaton said the agency has not yet made up its mind about whether it will maintain the G train extension, but he did say officials will take note of the voice of working Brooklynites before making a final ruling.

"Everything will be considered," he said.



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Ridge food cart vendor lawyers-up

Accuses two business owners of harassment

BY WILL BREDDERMAN

Two Fifth Avenue merchants blocked a food cart from parking on a bustling street corner by illegally bolting benches to the sidewalk at the street vendor's usual spot, attorneys for Sammy Kassen, the manager of Middle Eastern Halal Cart, claimed.

Lawyers from the Street Vendor Project, an advocacy group that fights for the rights of street vendors, slapped Lone Star bar owner Tony Gentile and Brooklyn Bagels Cafe co-owner Mike Boutross with cease-and-desist letters last week, demanding that the duo stop harassing the purveyor of gyros and sodas.

"They placed benches in the spot illegally and they've been harassing them through lots of different ways, through the media, and in person by blocking the cart," said Sean Basinski, a spokesman for the Street Vendor Project.

But Gentile and Boutross denied that they moved the benches, and Boutross added that he has no intention of listening to the request because he hasn't done anything wrong. He also claimed that he threw the note in the trash.

"That guy's lying through his teeth," Boutross said. "Maybe he doesn't know who I am or what I look like, and he has me confused with someone else."

Still, Boutross was quick to criticize the cart, claiming that Kassen doesn't have to pay rent or utilities as brick-and-mortar merchants do.

"It's not right that I'm paying \$5,000 a month in rent, and this guy is there in the hottest spot in Brooklyn with a permit he pays for once a year," said Boutross.

Some claim that neighborhood merchants are against the food cart because it's run by Middle Easterners, but Boutross, who is Lebanese, says his ha-



TAKING A STAND: Lawyers for Sammy Kassen (above) say their client is being harassed by competing Bay Ridge restaurateurs, who they claim illegally installed benches (below) where Kassen normally parked his food cart.

Community Newspaper Group file photos / Will Bredderman



tred toward Kassen's rolling kitchen is purely business, not personal.

"You aren't going to hear me saying 'those filthy Arabs,'" he said. "I'm a filthy Arab! It's not about that. It's about fair competition."

Gentile has been accused of trying to physically block the cart from parking on Fifth Avenue on March 24 — getting hurt in the process — and took steps to install flower boxes on Kassen's usual hang out spot.

Yet no one knows who put in the benches, which sprouted up on Fifth Avenue overnight on March 22. Merchants say that one of the benches was uprooted from Fifth Avenue and 87th Street and moved to Middle Eastern Halal Cart's usual spot.

Kassen said he's seen both Gentile and Boutross lurking around the cart with tape measures and believes the two men are plotting against him.

"I'm 100 percent sure they're in it together," said Kassen. "I've seen them together, measuring the spot." Basinski, the food cart advocate, said he wants to meet with Boutross in person to alleviate the bagel shop owner's concerns.

"We'd like to explain to him the cart is not a threat to him," said Basinski, citing studies that say mobile vendors do not harm brick-and-mortar businesses.

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Neighbors: This club is over the top

Williamsburg residents fear more noise and traffic on street

BY AARON SHORT

A Manhattan nightclub owner wants to open a new venue on N. First Street, but neighbors of the so-called Williamsburg Manor fear the planned discotheque won't mind its manners.

Alexander Dimitrov hopes to transform a warehouse near the waterfront into a phantasmagoric play-scape complete with vertical French gardens, an enormous rooftop patio, and enough room for 300 people to party until 4 am on weekends.

But residents of several condo buildings near the proposed venue say the project is ill-planned and worry its noise will overwhelm their sleepy street.

"Why did the city allow this block to be rezoned for high-end residential units if they're going to let a party venue open up in the center of these residences?" said neighbor Jenice Malecki, who collected a petition



CLUB DREAD: A Manhattan bar owner wants to put a cavernous nightclub in this N. First Street warehouse – but residents fear it will keep them up at night.

Photo by Stefano Giovannini

with 83 signatories opposed to the club.

Dimitrov defended his business plan, saying his nightclub between Kent and Wythe avenues will make the neighborhood better.

"This is a commercial area, and when you bought your property you took chances," said Dimitrov, who has already started renovating the space. "I am

trying to improve this area, not convert it. You should go out more often."

About 50 Northside residents lambasted Dimitrov at a key Community Board 1 committee meeting last week, ridiculing his plan as extravagant and mocking the decor and amenities at his Manhattan club, Mehanata, which boasts a bathroom sink that looks like a woman's posterior, a fleet of party buses modeled after San Francisco cable cars, and a refrigerated "ice cage" where waiters in Russian military garb serve booze amid furniture and glassware made from ice.

Dimitrov promises the Manor will reflect Williamsburg's more laid-back party crowds.

"I don't think Manhattan would work in Williamsburg," Dimitrov said. "One space has nothing to do with the other."

It's not just the inside of the club that neighbors

are worried about — critics fear the street will be jam-packed with taxis, livery cabs, and party buses since Dimitrov's venue does not have a parking lot.

"There are so many open questions here, and even if they were answered, it's not the right place for this venue," said CB1 member Ward Dennis. "This is too big, the street is too narrow, there isn't enough room to double park, and the area is all residential."

The board's liquor license committee unanimously voted to deny the Williamsburg Manor its license. The full board will vote on the application on April 17.

North Brooklyn's CB1 has swayed the state to deny liquor licenses to some applicants in the past, and the board has moved aggressively against bars and restaurants it perceives as noisy, denying Metropolitan Bar's liquor license



TAKING A STAND: Williamsburg resident Jenice Malecki has rallied more than 80 of her neighbors and community board members to oppose a hulking new nightclub.

renewal request and pressuring Pies 'n' Thighs to remove its sidewalk benches.

But its decisions are merely advisory and the State Liquor Authority, which has the ultimate say over whether a new business can serve beer and liquor, has approved the vast majority of new applica-

tions in Williamsburg and Greenpoint.

"We take the views of the community board into consideration and when there is strong opposition we may forward the application to members of the authority for final determination," said State Liquor Authority spokesman Michael Smith.

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Prokhorov visits, won't stay

BY DANIEL BUSH

The owner of the Brooklyn-bound Nets bought the \$1-billion Barclays Center — but he won't pony up for a new home in the borough.

Russian billionaire Mikhail Prokhorov promised that the team's under-construction Prospect Heights home — which is slated to open with a Jay-Z concert on Sept. 28 — would be the world's greatest arena during a tour of the Atlantic Avenue facility on Tuesday.

But the 6-foot-8 basketball aficionado, who made his fortune in mining, said he won't buy a house in posh nearby neighborhoods like Park Slope or Fort Greene to shorten his commute when he flies in from Moscow for Brooklyn Nets home games this fall.

"I'm a rich Russian who would drive up the prices," Prokhorov said. "It's not the best time to buy for me."

The self-made mogul is



SUPER POWERS: Nets owner and Russian oligarch Mikhail Prokhorov (left) and developer Bruce Ratner visited the under-construction Barclays Center on Tuesday. Photo by Stefano Giovannini

the 58th wealthiest person in the world with holdings of \$13.2 billion, according to Forbes Magazine.

Prokhorov's Onexim Group purchased 80 percent of the Nets for \$200 million in 2009.

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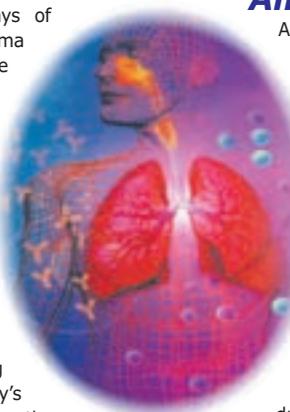
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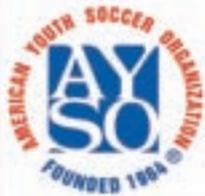
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A LOOK BACK IN TIME: The Flatbush Sears building was designed in 1932, when the store was a one-stop shop for all the borough's tool and appliance-related needs - and now it may be preserved.

PUSH TO SAVE SEARS

City poised to landmark iconic building

BY ELI ROSENBERG

The oldest Sears in Brooklyn could soon be a historic landmark, joining the famed Parachute Jump and Green-Wood Cemetery on the borough's roster of preserved sites.

The city's Landmarks Preservation Commission has already held two of the three hearings needed to ensure that the Sears Roebuck and Co. store on Beverley Road and Flatbush Avenue keeps its art deco-style exterior long after its glory days are over.

Brooklynites applauded the move, although few could remember the last time they stepped foot in the store.

"Landmarking is good because it makes a place look better, and it gives it more prestige and interest," said Mary Kay Gallagher, a real estate broker in Ditmas Park.

The building could use a bit of both these days: it was designed during the architectural golden age of the 1930s, but fell upon hard



ICON: The Flatbush Sears fell on hard times in the 1960s, when management boarded up its windows to deter vandals

Photo by Steve Solomonson

times in the 1960s when its once-impressive glass windows were replaced with concrete to thwart vandals.

Neighborhood old-timers have fond memories of the former go-to spot for tools and appliances in a booming post-war economy.

"I've been going there since I was 2," said the Flatbush Food Co-op's Tom Valentino, 72, adding that he would accompany his carpenter father on his regular trips there to buy supplies.

"He would go there every weekend because many of the tools were guaranteed and could be replaced."

The national chain, which announced last month that it was closing 53 of its home improvement stores, supported the landmark designation, but declined to comment.

"The building exhibits many of the iconic design elements found in many early Sears, Roebuck and Co. stores and has served generations of New York City shoppers," the company wrote in a letter to the Commission, which has yet to cast its deciding vote.

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Experts say Fidler has the votes to win election

BY DANIEL BUSH

Councilman Lew Fidler will pull out a victory over GOP attorney David Storobin in their deadlocked race to replace disgraced former state Sen. Carl Kruger, according to experts analyzing the latest poll numbers from the special election.

Experts say the Marine Park Democrat, who trailed Storobin by just three votes in the undecided two-week-old race, will win the battle for the more than 300 unopened absentee ballots and affidavits both sides have challenged, which will put him over the top.

Fidler is already ahead by more than 100 votes, experts claim. Court-appointed referees said that 145 of Storobin's challenges were valid and should be counted.

Richard Hasen, a leading election law specialist from the University of California, said candidates invariably

challenge ballots they think they'll lose, so the 145 votes Storobin objected to should go to Fidler once Supreme Court Judge Larry Martin validates them.

Referees also recommended that Martin throw out 38 votes that Fidler and Storobin challenged and validate 37 of the votes Fidler questioned — votes that should go to Storobin.

The jury is still out on more than 120 challenges, which both parties say were obtained fraudulently.

Political insiders say Martin will likely order the Board of Elections to add the votes the referees validated to the final count, and hold a court hearing on the remaining 124 in question. Sources predict Martin will most likely throw out the votes Fidler and Storobin say are fraudulent, giving Fidler the lead.

Storobin's election-night lead of 120 votes jumped to 143

after the Board of Elections completed a paper ballot recount, but the GOP attorney's margin of victory shrank to three votes after half of the 700-plus absentee ballots and affidavits were tallied.

If neither candidate is leading by more than 110 votes after the challenges are reviewed, the city said it will conduct a second recount, or a re-count.

But whoever wins won't have much time to represent the wide swath of Southern Brooklyn real estate, which stretches from Brighton Beach to Bergen Beach — the

district is not included in the new state-approved district maps, which take effect at the end of the year.



Photo by Steve Solomonson

IN IT TO WIN IT: Experts say Councilman Lew Fidler will be victorious in the race to replace disgraced state Sen. Carl Kruger.

Ports are saved

Continued from page 1

eliminating manual inspections at the port — a move longshoremen and politicians feared would make shipping to Brooklyn more expensive and sink an industry that has dwindled in the borough for decades.

Lou Pernice, president of the Brooklyn chapter of the International Longshoremen's Association, rejoiced at the news.

"I'm happy about that situation, of course," said Pernice. "If Customs had done what they were planning on doing it would have driven business out of Brooklyn."

Dock workers and politicians claimed a removal of Customs specialists — who hand inspect about 3,800 containers in Red Hook annually — would sweep away 700 jobs and cause an increase in pollution and security risks in the borough, as suspicious cargo would need to be trucked overland for closer examination in Staten Island or New Jersey.

Amid outcry from longshoremen and politicians including Reps. Jerry Nadler (D-Red Hook), Michael Grimm (R-Bay Ridge), and Nydia Velazquez (D-Red Hook), and Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-Park Slope), the feds issued a 90-day extension, which was set to expire on April 6, that kept inspectors in Red Hook.

Customs officials touted the deal.

"The agreement takes into account the unique geography and terminal operations at Red Hook, the potential economic impact if certain aspects of Customs' operations were moved off the terminal, and the overall flow of trade through the port and the region," the agency said in its statement.

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Big deal on Bedford

Another huge real estate turnover paves way for chain retail

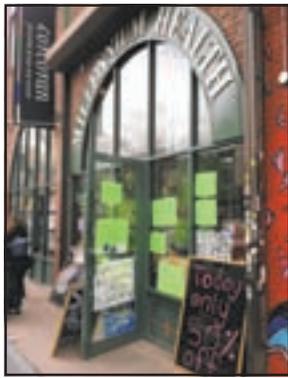
BY AARON SHORT

The Bedford Avenue property owner who sold off some of his land to make room for Whole Foods is parting with another major parcel across the street, paving the way for another big-time tenant and ending the decade-long run of two small businesses in Williamsburg's Northside.

Landlord Yehuda Backer sold the majority stake in a commercial property housing the Bagel Store and Millennium Health at the corner of N. Third Street to Manhattan real estate investor Joel Schreiber earlier this month.

Backer would not disclose how much he earned in the transaction — a sale finalized a few days after he took out a \$3.75 million mortgage on the site — but he told this paper it was “quite a lot.”

He said Schreiber plans to combine the two storefronts and lure a large retail entity or a bank to the strip.



STALWART: Millennium Health will close after 10 years on Bedford Avenue. CNG / Aaron Short

“You’re not going to see a Starbucks there,” said Backer. “It’s too expensive for them.”

The swap is the latest change on a block of Bedford Avenue where independent businesses have given way to corporate chains.

Last month, organic grocery behemoth Whole Foods

announced its plans to open a store at the corner of N. Fourth Street after Backer sold a block-long property to developers for \$23 million. The gym New York Sports Club is slated to join the new supermarket, while the bank HSBC and pharmacy chain Duane Reade have already set up shop on the block.

Rising rents on the street have made the block inhospitable to small businesses, according to Millennium Health proprietor Mohammad Aamir.

Aamir claims Backer wanted to triple his rent to about \$30,000 a month when his lease ended — so he chose to move to another storefront on Bedford Avenue near S. Second Street instead.

“I’d rather move to Manhattan and pay \$25,000 a month, and make double the money,” said Aamir. “It’s not possible to pay that kind of rent, and there’s a lot of

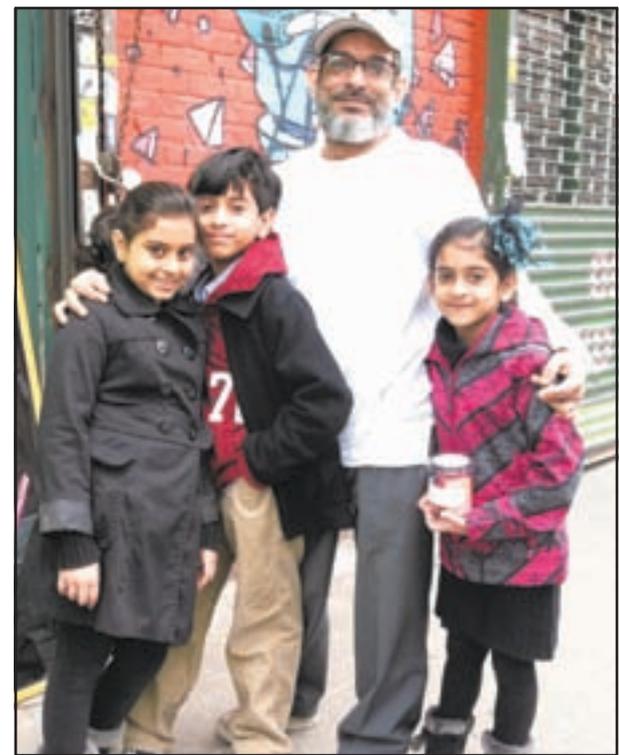
competition out here.”

Bagel Store owner Scott Rosillo claims he rejected an offer to stay in the space and pay \$15,000 per month — double his current rent.

“The premise of Williamsburg as an artist community with small businesses providing for that community is going away,” said Rosillo, who opted to move his shop to a site on Bedford Avenue and S. Fourth Street. “Eventually that population is moving to the Southside — and it’s already begun.”

Backer said he offered Rosillo a chance to expand into both storefronts, but claims the bagel-maker rejected the pitch and asked for a rent reduction instead. Both parties are still hashing out a financial dispute over the property in court.

Some locals are mourning the rapid transformation that converted Williamsburg



PACKING UP: Millennium Health owner Mohammad Aamir and his family will relocate their store in Williamsburg after their landlord sold their building to make room for national chains or a bank. Community Newspaper Group / Aaron Short

from a neighborhood of artists lofts to a community of luxury waterfront high-rises and chain retail, but Backer is wowed by the transition.

“In 1985, you couldn’t walk anywhere without stepping on a needle,” said Backer. “Today it’s a different world.”

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Good kids treated to pizza prizes

PS 249 kicks off new incentive program

BY ELI ROSENBERG

A Ditmas Park school has figured out the best way to keep its kids positive: pizza parties.

PS 249, an elementary school on Marlborough Road, has started its Positive Behavior Intervention Services, a program in which kids and classrooms get points for good behavior. Those points can add up to get them movie and popcorn days, dance-offs, and, yes, pizza parties.

"It gets the staff involved and it's fun for us," said Kathleen Amsterdam, the Prospect Park South school's guidance counselor, who helped organize the festival. "The kids are constantly bombarded with testing and homework and requirements — but this is the best way to keep them engaged."

PS 249, which got an A in the city's report card grading system, officially kicked off the program last week with an exciting fair filled with performances, African drumming, and poetry readings. Some administrators even dressed up as bees to remind students to be safe, responsible, and respectful.

And school officials say the program of incentivizing positivity is working wonders.



BEHAVIORMODIFIERS:(Above) Third-grader Peniel Sepulveda, 8, reminds her classmates to say "thank you" during PS 249's good behavior event on April 5. (Right) Firefighter Jim Lee played the bagpipes at the event.

Photos by Elizabeth Graham

"We're changing things so you would say, 'Walk in the hallway,' not, 'Do not run in the hallway,' so everything has a positive connotation," said Amsterdam. "Once we have good rules established, the teachers model it for the students."

Talk about positive reinforcement!



Postal

Continued from page 1
tion employee, nearly cracking a smile as a resident handed her one as a souvenir.

Customers waiting on line couldn't believe the United States Postal Service would make such a boo-boo.

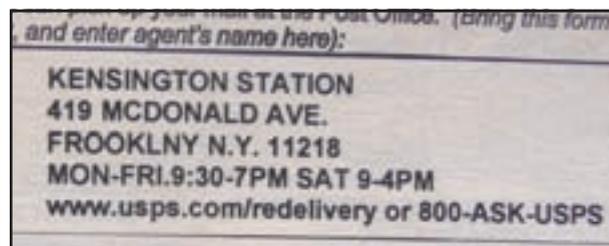
"I thought it was a joke, but the guy in front of me had the same one!" said Robin Wertheimer, a Windsor Terrace resident who headed to the Kensington Post Office to pick up her package after she couldn't find Frooklly on any map.

The United States Postal Service would not comment on the misspelling — but a spokeswoman gasped in surprise when we told her about the error.

"I can't believe that!" she said.

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"I can't believe that!" she said.



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Aytasia Ramos tries on some of the fashionable goodies.



(Above) Teens donate prom accessories from last year and (right) Wynobe McClam shows off some dresses. Photos by Stefano Giovannini

Prom time: Girls give, get dresses

BY NATALIE O'NEILL

These do-gooders give new meaning to the term “dress for success.”

A group of philanthropic fashionistas are giving underprivileged teenage girls a stylish incentive to graduate — in the form of sparkling prom and graduation gowns.

“It gives them something to be proud of,” said volunteer Shaniqua McClam.

“We’re bringing glam to the non-profit realm.”

Dozens of fashion-loving folks — department store executives, designers, and students — donated roughly 550 secondhand-but-first-rate dresses at South Oxford Space in Fort Greene last month.

The garments ranged from classic to cutting-edge, including a gold beaded chiffon and an unused “Cin-

derella style” dress valued at \$900.

The department store Forever Yours also gave away 300 dresses and designer Gwen Beloti will donate one as well, McClam said.

Volunteers from the group, dubbed L.A.C.E. — Learning, Achieving, Creating, Empowerment — will hand out the gowns, first-come, first-serve at a Bed-

ford-Stuyvesant elementary school on May 5.

“We hope it gives them some incentive to graduate — to look good and feel good,” McClam said.

L.A.C.E. prom dress giveaway at CS 21 (180 Chauncey St. between Reid and Patchen avenues, Bedford-Stuyvesant), May 5 from 9 am–3 pm. Free. Register at lacedressgiveaway.eventbrite.com.

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Students jazz up Marine Park

'Thoroughly Modern Millie' a major hit

BY COLIN MIXSON

Brooklynite plays a country gal — who becomes a city slicker!

Kids in grades six through eight were greeted with roars of applause following their performance of "Thoroughly Modern Millie" at Marine Park's PS 207 on April 3 and 4, a sterling adaptation of the 2002 Broadway musical, which won the Best Musical Tony award, about a country girl headed to the big city.

"I've seen the Broadway version and it was wonderful," said the school's drama director, Kimberly Simek, "but I'd rather see the kids."

The story, set in the 1920s, follows Millie Dillmount, played by eighth-grader Taylor Haniss, who escapes from the bland monotony of life in Kansas to the glittering towers and busy streets of the Big Apple, where she's intent on forgetting about love and marrying for wealth.

But things don't exactly pan out like Dillmount expects and, one mugging, an orphan-snatching landlord, and 18 song-and-dance



A MASTERFUL MUSICAL: (Above) Taylor Haniff as Millie Dillmount, and Jordan Beecher as (spoiler!) her love interest Jimmy Smith, lit up the stage during the The Fillmore Academy Drama Club's production. (Right) Trevor Graydon III, played by Thomas Scarpaci, and Miss Dorothy Brown, played by Hannah Daskalakis.

Photos by Steve Solomonson

routines later, she learns that a life without love — wealthy or not — may not be what she needs, after all.

Throughout all the antics, singing, and dancing, the play's lead stole the show with her talent and professional-



ism, said Simek.

"Taylor did beautifully," she said. "To see her grow from the beginning of the process to how she did on stage was phenomenal. It was a very meaty roll and I think she did fantastic."

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CONCRETE JUNGLE: The city wants to convert this patch of concrete at Avenue M, Elm Street, and E. 15th Street into a gravel pedestrian plaza – but not all Midwood residents are cheering the plan.

Plaza war: Midwooders battle over sidewalk

BY ELI ROSENBERG

Midwood residents shot down the city's controversial plan to turn Elm Avenue near Avenue M into a pedestrian plaza last week, claiming the closure of the small side street would create massive traffic backups in an already congested neighborhood.

The Department of Transportation and the Midwood Development Corporation want to close Elm Avenue between E. 15th Street and Avenue M to traffic to free up space for the proposed plaza — which they want to call “Dorman Square” — but residents attending a Community Board 14 committee meeting on the issue panned the plaza, claiming its construction will do more harm than good.

“That street was closed for two years and there was chaos,” said CB14 member Ephraim Nierenberg. “There are a lot of people using those streets during the week.”

But the city's Department of Transportation disagrees. The agency contends that only 95 cars use the street an hour, far less than the amount of cars driving on other streets that the city turned into pedestrian plazas.

Residents who use the



NEW AND NOTEWORTHY: The plan for a similar pedestrian plaza in the Bronx gives an idea of what the city wants to do to the island on Elm Avenue.

street everyday say the city's numbers are way off.

“Why don't you come at 4 pm Monday through Thursday and you will see that your statistic of 95 cars an hour is out of whack!” CB14 member Zvi Plotsker told city representatives. “In the summer there are many more cars from day camps — there is no way there are just 95 cars.”

Yet proponents say Elm Avenue, which is considered a slip lane because it feeds into Avenue M, is a dangerous roadway and needs to be shut down.

Chaudhry Ahmad, who owns a Dunkin' Donuts on Elm Avenue near Avenue M, said he's witnessed more than three car crashes

on Elm Avenue in recent weeks — the most recent occurring last Wednesday night.

“I see a lot of accidents when people try to merge onto Avenue M,” said Ahmad, who admitted that he supported the plan. “This plaza is going to be better for businesses and better for people.”

Supporters of the plan say there is nothing harmful with blocking Elm Avenue to traffic and turning the street and a small, oval-shaped pedestrian island near the Q train station at Avenue M into a tranquil gravel court with metal chairs and tables.

Those against the plan are just afraid of change, supporters said.

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CHEAT GETS 15 YEARS

Suspected of murder, Delvicario goes away for fraud

BY COLIN MIXSON

A suspect in an unsolved 2008 slaying of two married Marine Park attorneys was sentenced to 15 years in prison last week after pleading guilty to helping the murdered couple bilk more than \$1 million from their hapless clients — a plea arrangement that outraged homicide detectives who believe the convicted con man gunned the victims down in their bed.

“Delvicario’s fraud arrest didn’t bring us any closer to who did the killing,” one police source told this paper. “But I guess everyone has their priorities.”

Prosecutors say Robert Delvicario preyed upon divorce attorney Mark Schwartz’s client list with the lawyer’s permission — a fraud conspiracy that was hatched shortly before Schwartz and his wife, Christina Petrowski-Schwartz, were found assassinated inside their E. 33rd Street home.



UP THE RIVER: Robert Delvicario was sentenced on multiple fraud charges.

Detectives believed that Delvicario killed the two attorneys over cash they had already taken from Schwartz’s clients — and were outraged when their case against him fell apart as Brooklyn District Attorney Charles Hynes filed fraud charges against him and

three business associates.

Delvicario ultimately pleaded guilty to enterprise corruption.

Investigators say someone crept into the Schwartz’s home near Fillmore Avenue in the middle of the night and shot both victims in the head as they slept. Whoever did it must have been to the couple’s home before: he managed to subdue the couple’s protective German shepherd, which was found leashed in the backyard the next morning.

Investigators said that Delvicario had known Schwartz for decades and had been to his house repeatedly, but defense attorney Michael Cibella insisted that his client had nothing to do with the killings.

“There’s a laundry list of suspects,” Cibella told reporters. “The [district attorney’s office] brought the enterprise corruption indictment hoping to crack the homicide. But that never happened.”

No one has been arrested for



KILLED IN THEIR BED: Mark Schwartz and his wife Christina Petrowski-Schwartz were murdered in their home in 2008. Police suspected that Robert Delvicario, who was sentenced on fraud charges last week, played a role in their death.

File photo / Tim Wienci

the double murder.

Prosecutors never brought up the killings at the sentencing.

“The defendant stole and laundered over a million dollars in money,” Brooklyn prosecutor Laura Neubauer told Judge John

Walsh. “The bulk of theft was from innocent and unknown victims.”

Delvicario, who wore a rosary under his orange Department of Correction jumpsuit, declined to speak during his sentencing.

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Seniors make, then destroy art



WHACKING DAY: (Above) Maureen Edwards made a bull for the Piñata Fiesta. (Center) Seniors used their canes to whack the homemade piñatas. (Right) Mavis Baptiste and Lucille Jones show off the piñatas they made before the art was bashed to bits by fellow seniors.
Photo by Stefano Giovannini



BY AARON SHORT

It's certainly more action-packed than crocheting.

This week, a handful of artists taught septuagenarians and octogenarians at Fort Greene's Grant Square Senior Center how to make, and break, their own piñatas thanks to a city arts program arts sponsored by the

Brooklyn Arts Council and the Department of Cultural Affairs.

Paper manipulator Meg Keys helped a dozen seniors transform dozens of gently used copies of last week's edition of our sister publication, *The Brooklyn Paper*, and a bag of flour into figures that resembled bulls, bald eagles, and children's

faces (not their grandkids, we checked).

When they finished their sculptures, the senior artists wrapped their canes in streamers and took turns whacking their creations into submission, releasing a mix of hard candies and mini Milky Ways across the center's multipurpose room.

Keys, who makes piñatas

through her firm, Llaves Designs, loved working with her newest students, and said she learned even more from them, too.

"They were some of the most amazing and inspiring woman I've ever had the pleasure of working with, and watching them have at the piñatas was pretty great too," she said.

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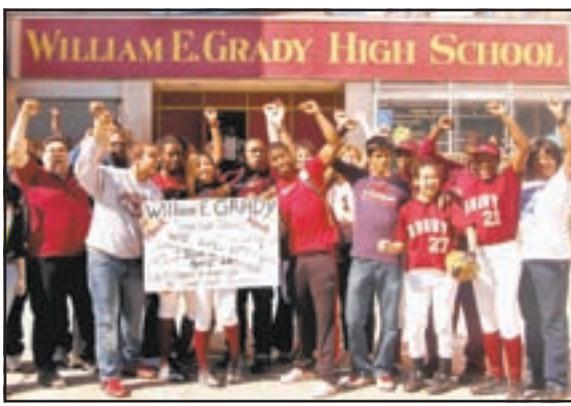
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SAVED: Parents, teachers, and students celebrated the city's decision to keep Grady High School open. Photo by Arthur De Gaeta

City: Grady High won't be shuttered

BY DANIEL BUSH

Grady High School has made the grade.

The Department of Education agreed to keep William E. Grady Career and Technical High School open last week, removing it from a list of 33 schools slated for closure after parents, teachers, and students argued that its improving evaluation scores proved the once struggling Brighton Beach institution is on the road to recovery.

Supporters said Grady's annual city-issued report card, which jumped from a D to a B in just two years, proved that the school deserved a second chance.

"That's what got us off the list," said Jane Marziliano, the parent of a junior at Grady, who led a rally to save the school last month. "Everyone's so relieved."

Grady landed on a state list of failing schools in 2010, prompting the Department of Education to bring in Principal Geraldine Maione and put the school in a federally-funded transformation program that would have funneled more than \$2 million to the school over the next three years.

But the funding never materialized.

The Bloomberg administration and the United Federation of Teachers couldn't agree on an appropriate teacher

evaluation system by the end of 2011, forcing the city to switch gears and sign Grady up for the harsher turnaround program, where federal dollars come only after the school is closed, half the staff is fired.

The policy then establishes a new school in the building — a disruption critics claimed would have derailed Grady's progress.

Schools Chancellor Dennis Walcott agreed, saying on April 2 that Grady and six other schools on the chopping block that scored A and B grades on city-issued report cards over the years — including Franklin D. Roosevelt High School in Borough Park — showed enough improvement to remain open.

"We have come to believe that these schools have strong enough foundations to improve," Walcott said.

Opponents of the proposed closings cheered the Department of Education's decision.

"The idea that A and B schools deserved to be closed made a mockery of the Department of Education's system, as the agency has apparently now realized," said Michael Mulgrew, the president of the United Federation of Teachers.

A city panel will decide the fate of the 26 other schools facing closure later this month.

Firing line: Sheepshead Bay High remains on school's cut list

BY DANIEL BUSH

Sheepshead Bay High School parents and teachers are furious over the news that the Department of Education is moving forward with its plans to close the Avenue X school after sparing seven public institutions facing the same fate.

A yearly city-issued report card for the Sheepshead Bay High School dropped from a C grade in 2010 to a less-than-stellar D last year, but parents argued it has shown other signs of improvement.

Parent coordinator Salvatrice Shipone said hallways are cleaner, student brawling is down, and the graduation rate has risen by 17 percent since 2003.

"We've been improving every year," Shipone said. "Is it perfect? No. But we've



STILL AT RISK: The city wants to reopen the school under a new name and fire up to half of its staff. Photo by Steve Solomonson

come a long way."

Sheepshead Bay High is on a list of public schools slated for closure under a turnaround program where federal dollars are allocated to learning institutions that reopen under a new name

and fire half their staff by July 1.

The Department of Education removed seven schools from the list that received A or B grades in the last year, including Franklin D. Roosevelt High School

in Borough Park and William E. Grady Career and Technical High School in Brighton Beach.

A city panel will vote on closing Sheepshead Bay High School, as well as the rest of the schools on the list, at a hearing on April 26.

But Shipone believes Sheepshead Bay High might be saved.

"There's still high hopes that the city will reconsider," she said. "It's not over yet."

Department of Education spokesman Frank Thomas said schools like Sheepshead Bay High School would benefit from the program.

"This is an opportunity to assess and keep what is working, and also bring in a new wave of talent," he said.



Taking aim

Kids, teens, and several adults — including Anthony Baldini of Marine Park — flocked to Lenape Playground on April 8 for an archery lesson, courtesy of park rangers.

Photo by Steve Solomonson

BROOKLYN BUBBLES OVER

Canarsie seltzer men continue to churn out the poor-man's champagne

BY AARON SHORT

This must be what nostalgia tastes like.

The city's last remaining seltzer factory is a Canarsie staple, where Kenny Gomberg and his bubbly crew of seltzer makers have been bottling the beverage at the Gomberg Seltzer Works for more than 50 years.

There were dozens of bottling plants in Brooklyn at one time, but they all dried up, save for the one on E. 92nd Street.

As he fills the void left behind when the other seltzer companies fizzled, Gomberg has bought up hundreds of vintage seltzer machines, wooden crates, and glass bottles to keep his business running.

And hundreds of loyal customers continue to order his refreshments, he said.

"It's not the taste they want, it's the bite," said Gomberg. "Strong seltzer has good pressure in the bottle, and it stays that way for months."



WHAT A GAS: (Left) Kenny Gomberg is the owner of Gomberg Seltzer Works, which produces from 3,000 to 4,000 bottles of seltzer each week. (Above) All the old-fashioned bottles are marked with the company's stamp. Photo by Bess Adler

The process of making the calorie-free drink has largely remained the same: city tap water travels through three filters using sand, charcoal, and paper to pu-

rify the water, before it is chilled at 33 degrees.

Then, carbon dioxide gets pumped into the mixture so the gas bonds with the water at the

molecular level.

Finally, a seltzer filler takes an empty glass bottle and fills it in a century-old British-made carbonation carousel, which forces the gaseous liquid through its spigot.

"It couldn't be simpler," said Gomberg.

These days, Gomberg fills nearly 4,000 bottles per week, which six delivery men, including the country's oldest seltzer man, Eli Miller, 89, distribute to families throughout the borough by hand.

"Seltzer is still the poor man's champagne," said Miller.

Gomberg himself drinks 26 ounce bottles of seltzer for dinner every night — which can lead to gaseous interruptions.

"Yes, you belch, but it doesn't make you fart," he said.

"Nothing like a good hearty greps."

Gomberg Seltzer Works [855 E. 92nd St. at Avenue D in Canarsie, (718) 257-9369] Open weekdays 7 am-4pm, Saturdays 9 am-1pm.

Planters

Continued from page 1

hand-me-down clothes," said Eugene Moore, who rejected an offer from the 34th Street Partnership to take the planters when he served as head of an East New York business-improvement group a decade ago. "It's a little tacky."

The Manhattan group shopped the planters around before giving the boxes to Red Hook property owner Greg O'Connell for free.

Taking something old and making it new again is part of the Red Hook ethos, said O'Connell, who converted an 1870s warehouse

into a high-end grocery store, studios for artists, and apartments, and turned Manhattan's old planters into, well, Brooklyn's old planters.

"We like to recycle," said O'Connell, who won't replace the planters. "In Red Hook, that's what we're all about."

Recycling is well and good, but some Brooklynites say aesthetics are important, too — especially when the most eye-catching parts of many of the planters are the fading or scratched-off logos promoting the 34th Street Partnership.

"Make it so it's not so obvious that they're recycled," said Cobble Hill resident Geoffrey Lewis.



TRANS-PLANTERS: This cement planter on Pier 41 in Red Hook came from (gasp!) Manhattan. Photo by Bess Adler

Words

Continued from page 1

Vincent first appealed the \$125 citation — which doesn't include an additional \$225 he shelled out in towing charges — in December.

He then sent a package containing photos, newspaper clippings, and forms explaining the mishap to Deputy Chief Administrative Law Judge Brian Keneey.

The following month, Keneey denied his appeal without explaining why, the driver said. Keneey did not return calls seeking comment.

Vincent's fight didn't

stop there. He sent a second appeal to Judge Virginia Hollingsworth — but she rejected him too, explaining drivers should simply assume the worst if a street sign isn't clear.

"If there is no specified end date indicated, the regulation should be read to include the entire month," she wrote. "Summons is sustained."

Vincent says Hollingsworth's reading of the law borders on illiterate, but interpreting the word "to" can be tricky when describing a time frame, according to Harvard University English professor Joseph Harris.

In some cases, "to" doesn't imply the full du-

ration of both dates, but other times it does, Harris said.

"There's no ultimate right and wrong; it's a matter of custom and interpretation," he said. "The most important interpretation comes from the guy writing the tickets."

Vincent disagrees and now says he is considering taking the case to a higher court. And even though the filing fee for such a procedure is roughly \$310 — more than twice the cost of the ticket itself — Vincent said it's not about the money.

"It's the principle," he said.



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LOAD ON HIS MIND: Metropolitan Citymarket owner Al Hamdan says the city is forcing him to accept a loading zone in front of his Fourth Avenue business. Photo by Bess Adler

Loading zone bounce Grocer doesn't want drop-off spot

BY WILL BREDDERMAN

The city is giving a Fourth Avenue supermarket owner his own loading zone — but it's just a way to slap unsuspecting motorists with more tickets, the outraged merchant claims.

Al Hamdan, owner of Metropolitan Citymarket on Fourth Avenue near 93rd Street, said he's being

forced to provide space for the zone that once lay in front of Goustaro Eatery down the block.

Parking spot-strapped motorists pushed the city to pull the loading zone from Goustaro Eatery because the conflicting signs confused motorists and took away too many cherished spaces.

Slope fights another bar

BY NATALIE O'NEILL

Park Slope residents say a planned music venue just blocks from the soon-to-open Barclays Center gives new meaning to the term “bad chemistry.”

Neighbors of the proposed Kemistry Lounge on Flatbush Avenue say a venue with live performances, DJs, a full bar, dancing, and an exit on a residential block of Prospect Place will bring noise and ruckus to their quiet community.

“It's disruptive; it turns the street into liquor lane,” said neighbor Harold Gruber. “It's going to make it impossible to sleep.”

Gruber and other neighbors are fighting the venue's liquor license bid, saying the “Vegas-style” club — which is slated to accommodate 250 revelers in a grocery store-sized space until 3 am on Saturdays, 2 am on Fridays, 1 am on Thursdays, and 11 pm on other nights — will draw a rowdy not-from-the-neighborhood crowd.

Pointing to the bar's since-removed Facebook page, which featured images of scantily clad ladies and described the club as “sexy,” neighbors claim the venue would be a booze-soaked nuisance and are urging its owners to close earlier and relocate the Prospect Place exit.



Photo by Elizabeth Graham

ANGRY NEIGHBOR: Harold Gruber and other Park Slope residents are fighting Kemistry Lounge, a planned nightspot on Flatbush Avenue and Prospect Place.

A spokesman for Kemistry, Peter Flores, promised the Prospect Place exit will only be used during emergencies and insisted the venue will be a good neighbor.

“It's not a nightclub or a cabaret — it's a restaurant-bar,” he said. “It's nothing out of the ordinary.”

But neighbors of the planned venue fear noisy nightlife could become a way of life in northern Park Slope, where planned arena-side venues sparked similar uproar this week.

On Tuesday, dozens of Park Slope

and Prospect Heights residents stormed a Community Board 6 meeting to protest the Barclays Center's bid for a liquor license, calling for an unparalleled dry arena in an attempt to stop thousands of inebriated sports fans from bombarding their streets after games.

And that wasn't the first protest of its kind: last year, a proposed bar called Prime 6 became a proxy battle in the war over the Atlantic Yards mega-project when neighbors bashed the planned pub for promoting a bottle service and live music, claiming the venue didn't match the character of their neighborhood. The bar eventually opened as Woodland, a farm-to-table restaurant.

Neighbors also protested Player's Gastro Pub and Sports Bar on Pacific Street at Flatbush Avenue, saying it would turn the street into a hub for drunken hoops fans.

Kemistry owner James Brown did not return calls and e-mails seeking comment by press time, but he recently told Park Slope Patch, which first reported the lounge drama, that he wants the venue to feature an art space with book readings.

“It won't be as crazy as the community thinks,” Brown said.

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Weirded ladies to meet on the beach

Freaky feminists will convene in Coney

BY COLIN MIXSON

A panel of professional women will convene in Coney Island to discuss female independence and entrepreneurship — but don't be surprised if they show up wearing nipple tassels or bedazzled, lobster claw gloves.

As part of Coney Island USA's annual sideshow convention "Congress of Curious People," a coterie of New York's most outrageous, beautiful, and admittedly less-than-typical ladies will assemble to tell the world what it's like to be weird women.

"It will be very much about getting close to these women, who are generally implied as being unavailable to the public," said Jo Weldon, also known as "Jo Boobs" or "Boobzilla," head mistress and founder of the New York School of Burlesque, who will be moderating the "Wild Women Panel" on April 18. "Where else can you get so up close and personal to these crazy people?"

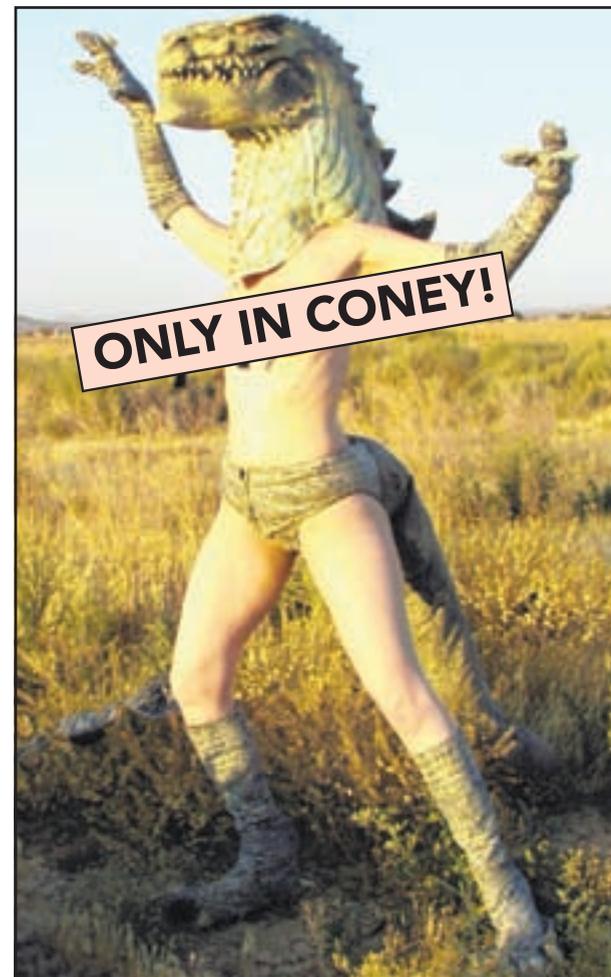
The discussion will feature women whose acts range from the traditional burlesque of Bunny Love, to the more bizarre half-woman, half-crustacean boogie of Bambi the Mermaid.

The sword-swallowing male magician, The Great Fredini — one of the original curators of "Burlesque at the Beach" — will add some testosterone to the discussion.

Female performers have long dominated the field of burlesque, but they're role in Coney Island's sideshow history is perhaps less well known.

Burlesque experienced a resurgence in popularity in recent years — sparking greater interest in the part women played in carnival-style attractions, sources said.

In a change of pace for the women on stage, this



LADIES NIGHT: Who better to moderate a forum on the world's weirdest women than Jo Weldon, seen above as one of her alter-egos, Boobzilla, and at left in a more traditional burlesque get-up. She'll talk about sideshow and carnival life for some of the strangest female performers from around the world. Courtesy of Jo Weldon

Bambi the Mermaid.

"Just being able to do super-outrageous performances that are, I know, kind of confrontational, but I like it when people say they were really disturbed. I like blowing people's minds," she said.

Coney Island USA [1208 Surf Ave. between Stillwell Avenue and W. 12th Street in Coney Island, (718) 372-5159] April 18, 9 pm. \$10. Visit www.coneyisland.com.

week's panel is less about spectacle and more about education.

Audiences will hear about the history, performances, and styles of America's least-domesticated women — and perhaps gain some insight into why these wild women do what they do, and do it with such pride.

"I really like the complete and utter unconventional freedom of it," said

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