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BROOKLYN Weekly

Jan. 10, 2016

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PS 307 rezoning approved

BY LAUREN GILL

The city will go ahead with a controversial plan to expand a Vinegar Hill elementary school zone next year to include students from Dumbo, after a panel of public school parents voted last Tuesday to approve the scheme.

Members of the local community education council voted 6-3 in favor, despite objections from families in both neighborhoods that the education department is rushing in without considering what will happen when it pushes a bunch of wealthy white kids into a school that serves mostly minority students — concerns “yes” voters said were motivated

Continued on page 9

DOCTOR'S NOTES



THE QUACK AND THE DEAD: “Dr. Glassheart,” a musical comedy about an incompetent doctor, will start at the Brick Theater on Jan. 14.

Photo by Stefano Giovannini

Musical needles health industry

BY COLIN MIXSON

Turn your head and laugh.

A new musical comedy belting its way onto a Williamsburg stage will poke fun at the American health care system with songs and a healthy dose of satire. The title character in “Dr. Glassheart,” opening on Jan. 14 at the Brick Theater, is a thinly-veiled caricature of prominent snake oil salesmen, says the show’s writer.

“It started off as a musical exposé about being able to laugh at our health-care system through the point of view of this doctor, and he’s sort of a Doctor Oz meets Gary Null meets Sanjay Gupta,”

Continued on page 6

Locals pan bus plan

BY COLIN MIXSON

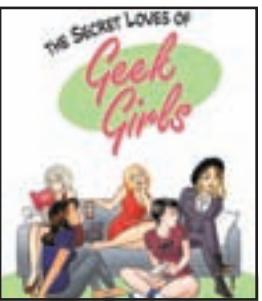
They’re shouting “Stop the bus.”

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority must put the brakes on a plan to create a bus-only lane on Flatlands Avenue and Kings Highway, local leaders say.

The authority aims to

implement a B82 Select Bus Service between Canarsie and Sheepshead Bay, but the service relies on dedicated bus lanes to speed public transit, and losing a lane would be too much for the jam-packed, four-lane thoroughfares, an area elected said.

Continued on page 9



GEEK LOVE: The book launches at Powerhouse Arena on Jan. 11.

The dating lives of female geeks

BY ALLEGRA HOBBS

Call it the romance of the nerds.

A group of girl geeks will unveil a collection of nerdy love stories next week, telling tales of romance, sex, and dating from a previously unheard female perspective — women who pledge allegiance to Tol-

ken, science-fiction shows, and comic books. But the writers of “The Secret Loves of Geek Girls,” which launches at Dumbo’s Powerhouse Arena on Jan. 11, say the anthology is also a love letter to fandom, and the way it celebrates devotion to pop culture.

“Whatever you’re ob-

sessed with is a good thing and is celebrated,” said Crystal Skillman, a Boerum Hill playwright who will speak at the book launch. “That’s what geek culture means to me.”

In the book, Skillman shares her story of falling for her husband, comic book

Continued on page 6

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B'klyn's losing its religions

Boro churches are going residential

BY ALLEGRA HOBBES

It is the Borough of Churches no more!

Greenpoint's historic Church of the Ascension has sold its parish hall to a developer, which will turn the Java Street building into apartments — just the latest in a long line of Brooklyn holy houses to lose their religion as parishioner numbers decline and demand for housing increases.

Brooklynites may not like worshipping in churches anymore — but sure do love living in them, says one developer.

"I think people are drawn towards old churches," said Chris Horrigan of Horrigan Development, which will transform the 19th-century Java Street parish hall into residential units.

The church's landmarked Kent Street sanctuary, part of the Greenpoint Historic District, will remain untouched as a place of worship while the connected event space will get a facade makeover — though part of the original brick will remain intact — and will gain two stories to make room for 18 residential units, Horrigan said.

The church decided to sell the largely unused building — only the ground-floor of the old three-story structure was still safe for habitation — to help pay for much-needed repairs to the main sanctuary and clergy housing, said a church leader.

"The size of our congregation and the economic capacity of our congregation would make it an enormous challenge to attempt to fix any one of our three properties," said Rev. John Merz.



ASCENSION: The Church of the Ascension in Greenpoint sold its neighboring parish hall — which will become apartments — to fund much-needed repairs on the main sanctuary and clergy housing.

Photo by Louise Wateridge

tion to Brownsville.

Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church

The Williamsburg church will lease a large chunk of its property on Wythe Avenue, between S. Second and S. Third streets, to developer Watermark Capital, which plans on building a 19-story, 130-unit building there. But the Catholic parish ensured its holy ground was in good hands before it sealed the deal — the developer has agreed not to use the space for any sacrilegious activities involving abortion, pornography, or euthanasia, according to a DNA Info report.

"There are simply not the numbers to sustain congregations that can maintain the healthy functioning of these structures," said Merz.

Here are some other sacred Brooklyn buildings on the path to secularization:

Hebron Baptist Church

Developer CS Real Estate is in the midst of turning this former Bedford-Stuyvesant house of worship on Willoughby Avenue, between Throop and Thompsons avenues, into a 16-unit apartment building, but will largely preserve the existing brick facade as the ground floor. The church has moved its congrega-

Saint Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church

The church sold this majestic 145-year-old holy house on Washington Avenue between Willoughby and

Continued on page 10

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ON THE HOOK: The Van Brunt Street property where a developer plans on building a hotel.

Photo by Louise Wateridge

A Van Brunt suite!

Developer plans new hotel for Red Hook street

BY LAUREN GILL

A seaside getaway is just a B61 bus-ride away!

A developer plans on building a 19-key hotel near the Red Hook waterfront, according to plans filed with the city last week. The transit-starved nabe may not be the most obvious location for a boutique lodging, but some people will pay good money to vacation in a secluded coastal hamlet, notes one real estate insider.

"This could be a weekend destination," said one broker who asked not to be named. "I think if they did something sort of cool and interesting it could work."

Borough Park real-estate mogul Abraham Leser wants to erect a five-story inn on Van Brunt Street between Beard and Van Dyke streets, as first reported by New York Yimby. The building would include a dining room, recreation area, and a rooftop terrace, plus medical offices on the second floor, according to the still-pending application.

Out-of-towners may need to avail themselves of an Uber — the hotel plans only call for eight parking spaces, and it is a long hike to the nearest subway station — though a ferry stop and 12 Citi Bike stations are coming to the neighborhood in 2017.

But who needs to cross the Gowanus Expressway when you can spend your time strolling the sleepy streets sampling regional delicacies and shopping for local handcrafts?

"I think it's a fun place to visit because of the scale of it, because it's not really developed, and the waterfront is so amazing," said the real-estate guru.

Notably, the location is also ambling distance from Atlantic Basin — where luxury cruise liners often dock for a spell — and the site of a massive waterfront office and retail complex an Italian developer plans on building between

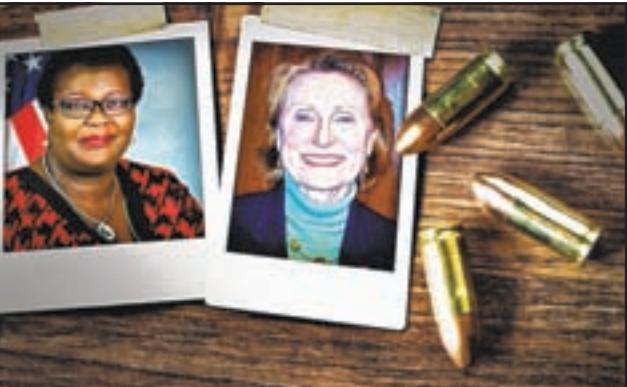
Coffey and Wolcott streets.

Leser seems to be a fan of car-free living — the developer angered Bensonhurst residents earlier this year after filing plans for a 13-building apartment complex on the site of the old Maple Lanes bowling alley with zero parking spaces.

Current zoning would allow him to build his lodging without going through a lengthy public review process or getting approval from Council. But the clock is ticking — the land is in one of the city's so-called Industrial Business Zones, where Mayor DeBlasio will soon make it much harder to open hotels.

NRA takes aim at local pols

Bullets for Persaud, Simon



TOO ON-TARGET: Critics say this photo the National Rifle Association published is a threat against Brooklyn pols Roxanne Persaud, left, and Jo Anne Simon.

BY MAX JAEGER

Talk about a powder-keg situation.

The National Rifle Association took aim at two Brooklyn politicians on Jan. 4 — responding to the pols' calls to limit bulk ammunition sales by posting photos implying violence against them. The picture, which accompanies a screed from association-backed America's First Freedom magazine editor Mark Chesnut, depicts Polaroid photos of State Sen. Roxanne Persaud (D-Canarsie) and Assemblywoman Jo Anne Simon (D-Boerum Hill) surrounded by bullets.

The rifle association lowered itself to base bullying to try to get its message across, Persaud said.

"They are using intimidation and fear in the same manner that mass shooters are using guns and ammunition to create an atmosphere of fear," she said.

Mayor DeBlasio and a slew of Brooklyn politicians and activists decried the National Rifle Association following the posting.

Councilman Jumaane Williams (D-Canarsie) tweeted "The absurdity is insane," and Councilman Brad Lander (D-Park Slope) called the tactic "beyond outrageous."

Persaud and Simon announced draft legislation last month to limit the number of bullets a person can purchase over a 90-day pe-

riod to two magazines per gun owned.

Chesnut claimed the pols don't know enough about gun ownership to legislate it, but Simon called the writer clueless.

"First of all, he doesn't know anything about what we know," she said.

The proposal doesn't aim to limit constitutional rights, rather it is meant to protect constituents from increasing gun violence, Persaud said.

"In portions of the district that I represent, there is senseless killing, and overall, gun violence is on the rise," she said.

Indeed, police tallied 65 shootings in East New York's 75th Precinct, which Persaud partially represents, out of a total 1,130 shootings city-wide in 2015 — more than any other Brooklyn command, law enforcement data shows.

The law would also bar people from buying ammunition for weapons they are not legally allowed to possess.

Earlier this year, police busted a Canarsie man they say smuggled more than 100 high-powered guns into Kings County over the course of a year.

Both pols have received e-mail threats since announcing the proposal, Simon said.

The National Rifle Association did not respond to a request for comment.

Cops: Guy with 'Team USA' tattoo had a masturbation marathon

BY RUTH BROWN

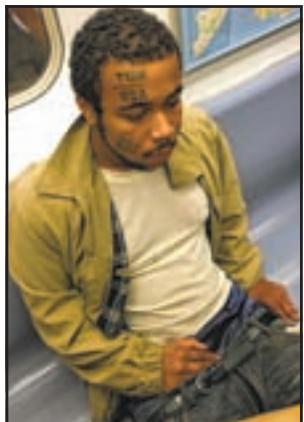
Police arrested a man with "Team U.S.A." tattooed on his forehead, who they say masturbated on a subway train while ogling a female straphanger on the afternoon of Dec. 27.

The guy got on the Manhattan-bound 2 train in Crown Heights at around 4 pm, then allegedly spent more than 30

minutes "manipulating his penis" while staring straight at a 29-year-old woman, according to a report.

The lady snapped a photo of the alleged self-starter, which shows "Team U.S.A." printed prominently on his forehead, police said.

Cops arrested the suspect and charged him on Dec. 30, authorities said.





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WORK OUT: As part of her training to ready herself for the more than 19,000-foot ascent up Mount Kilimanjaro, Red Hook local Jamie Slater walks to work in Downtown Manhattan over the Brooklyn Bridge wearing her full pack of gear, weighing about 20 pounds, every day. Photo by Jason Speakman

Mountain do!

This Red Hooker practices for her Kilimanjaro hike on Brooklyn Bridge

BY COLIN MIXSON

Talk about peak condition!

A Red Hook woman is lugging a 20-pound pack over the Brooklyn Bridge during her daily hike to work, training to scale Mount Kilimanjaro on Jan. 16.

"I'm pretty determined to make the climb," said 41-year-old Jamie Slater, who is tackling the mountain to raise funds for research into multiple myeloma — a form of cancer that kills more than 11,000 people in the United States per year.

The graphic design artist is joining a nine-day trek up and down Africa's tallest peak — the height of more than 13 Empire State Buildings at 19,431 feet — alongside a team of 16 other Americans hailing from across the country, including four survivors of the deadly disease. Slater is taking part in honor of an old work buddy, who is also a survivor.

Each member of the team is responsible for raising \$10,000 for the cause — although a few have raised

as much as \$30,000, and the team to date has amassed \$200,000, according to Slater.

She hopes the climb will show those suffering from the potentially fatal cancer that there is hope, and that not only is recovery possible, but that survivors can go on to accomplish incredible feats of athletic prowess.

"We're letting people know who think this is a death card that there are people not just living with it, but they're able to create and do these amazing feats, like climbing Mount Kilimanjaro," said Slater. "And their ability to do that is a direct result of research for new medications, and that's what we're raising money for."

The party will spend seven-and-a-half days ascending up the mountain and one-and-a-half-days going down in temperatures ranging from -20 to 100 degrees, but the most harrowing leg of the climb will be the short final ascent to the peak, Slater said.

"We're going to be a small city moving up the mountain," said Slater.

To reach the top, the team will awake at around midnight — when winds are expected to be at their most mild — and trudge to the top guided by lamp light as they suck at the thin air that only contains about half the amount of oxygen at sea level.

The climbers will only be able to spend about 15 minutes at the peak before heading down the other side of Kilimanjaro, or they risk suffering serious illnesses related to lack of oxygen.

"Your body isn't meant to be in that level of altitude," said Slater, who did some altitude training in Rocky Mountain National Park.

The 17 Americans will be accompanied by a support crew of no fewer than 80 porters, each carrying about 25-pounds worth of gear — including one unlucky fellow whose task is to haul the group's toilet up and down Africa's tallest peak.

"We're going to be a small city moving up the mountain," said Slater.

So, how did you do in 2015?

Weekly's Resolution Accountability Project checks in

BY COLIN MIXSON

So many New Year's resolutions are wishful dreams, appearing briefly in sudden fits of holiday optimism before dying quietly in the face of life's grim reality. But not at Courier Life, where we hold Kings County's movers and shakers to account for the vague promises they made to themselves, but were foolish enough to share with us.

We checked in with last year's promise-makers, and added a few new faces who *will* be forced to follow up in 12 months.

ALAN MAISEL

Councilman (D-Marine Park)

Last year's resolution: Lose weight.

The follow through: Maisel didn't lose any weight. It's unclear if he gained weight.

"I'm not doing well," he

said.

This year's resolution: To get his chores done before he dies. It should be noted that Maisel is not suffering from a terminal illness — that we know of.

"It's to do my undertakings before the undertaker takes me under," said Maisel, enigmatically.

THERESA SCAVO

Chairwoman, CB15

Last year's resolution: To eat better.

The follow through: She's doing great.

"It's been going excellent," said Scavo. "I feel great, and I'm going to keep up my walking and my dieting."

This year's resolution: To keep it up.

"You get to a certain age, you got to watch what you eat, or you become a whale,"

said Scavo. "I'm not going to let that happen."

VINCENT GENTILE

Councilman (D-Bay Ridge)

Last year's resolution: To leverage his constituency's racial diversity as a force for good in the neighborhood.

The follow through: He's still got work to do.

"I don't think it's fully accomplished," said Gentile. "It's a continuing resolution and I don't think you can accomplish that in a year."

This year's resolution: The exact same thing, but more.

"It's to move forward," he said. "We've reorganized and reconstituted the Unity Task Force, which has members of different religious and ethnic communities, and it's looking to host activities that would

promote the type of community we have, which is a multi-ethnic and religious community. So that goes in line with that resolution."

DICK ZIGUN

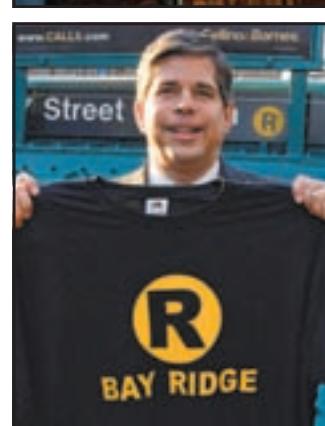
Mayor, Coney Island

Last year's resolution: To enjoy the sweet, sublime pleasure of central air and indoor heating at his Coney Island USA arts center.

The follow through: It didn't go well. Apparently, the air conditioner is on the fritz. Zigun did, however, lose 15 pounds.

This year's resolution: To bring the long-abandoned landmarked Shore Theater back from the brink.

"2016 is the year ded
Continued on page 8



ROCK-SOLID RESOLVE: (Clockwise from above) CB 15 chairwoman Theresa Scavo aims to keep eating healthy. Coney Island USA founder Dick Zigun has resolved to save the Shore Theater. Councilman Vincent Gentile said he still has work to do to ease racial tensions in Bay Ridge.
File photos

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All about that brass

Balkan music fest showcases Raya Brass Band

BY LAUREN GILL

These bands are Balkan up!

Park Slope's ornate Grand Prospect Hall will shake with the rollicking sounds of the Balkans on Jan. 15 and 16. Brooklyn's own Raya Brass Band will be among the 60 vibrant outfits performing on the four stages of the Golden Festival, and the band's accordion player says that six-piece is charged up to play for its hometown audience.

"It's definitely one of the more exciting gigs of the year for us because everyone's a fan and they know us," said Matthew "Max" Fass, of Prospect Heights.

This year marks the 31st incarnation of the festival — a yearly institution thrown by local band Zlatne Uste — and the seventh time Raya Brass Band has played the raucous gathering. The group has played Golden Festival every year since it formed in 2008, during a week of music, singing, and dancing lessons (and all-night extravaganzas) at a Balkan camp in the Catskills.

The brass, percussion, and accordion combo began as a pan-Balkan wedding and dance band, playing traditional music from across southeastern Europe. About three years ago, says Fass, the members started composing their own original tunes in the Balkan style. They still play eight to 12 wedding a year and meet plenty of colorful characters along the way, said Fass.



BROOKLYN'S BRASS BAND: Raya Brass Band will put on two high-energy performances of Balkan music at Golden Festival on Jan. 15 and 16. April Renae

"The people who hire a roving Balkan brass band for their wedding are going to be interesting people," he said.

The lively group will play on both Friday and Saturday nights of the festival, which will also feature acts from across the world, including Turkish band Dolunay, brass band Black Masala and New Orleans-fusion outfit Blato Zato.

But the audience is the most important part of the event, said Fass, who claims that the hordes of dancers is what makes the music so special.

"What I like about Balkan music is that it's more than just the music — it's about community involvement," he said. "Often when these Balkan-style wedding bands are playing, many people know the dances — and the dancing and the music are very strongly inter-linked."

Golden Festival at Grand Prospect Hall [263 Prospect Ave. between Fifth and Sixth avenues in Park Slope, (718) 788-0777, www.grandprospect.com]. Jan. 15, 7 pm–12:30 am; \$35. Jan. 16, 6 pm–2 am; \$55. \$80 for both nights.

MUSICAL

Continued from page 1

said Bushwick playwright Jason Trachtenburg. "He's clean, he's well presented, but he does offer some questionable medical advice."

The play follows the unorthodox career of the titular Dr. Glassheart as he romances his nurse, and

provides unsound medical advice to his hapless patients, including one "Rico from Puerto Rico," who seeks treatment for shell shock following tours in Vietnam and the Persian Gulf. Rico soon finds that Dr. Glassheart offers only bad medicine.

"The doctor has no advice whatsoever to offer Rico," said the playwright. "He's losing touch

with reality. He's having flashbacks to his internship, he dreams of being a singer-songwriter, and he falls asleep during every session he has with Rico."

Soon, Rico from Puerto Rico realizes he must solve his own problems, a message Trachtenburg hopes rubs off on his audience.

"That's the message

of all messages, it's up to us to heal ourselves," he said.

But "heal thyself" is not a serious prescription for audience members with a medical emergency.

"We'll put a disclaimer on the program that this show is not a substitute for actual medical help, and we cannot be held responsible for any medical advice

given during the show," said Trachtenburg.

The author has performed with the jazz band Pendulum Swings and with his family in the indie-rock act the Trachtenburg Family Slideshow Players, but decided to take a more traditional musical approach for the play's 10 songs.

"They're very show tune-y in a Cole Porter,

spanning all ages and orientations — include tales of finding love at a gaming convention and incorporating fan obsessions in the bedroom.

The collection — like the world of geeks itself — is a way for women who share niche interests to meet over their obsessions and talk about love with others who understand their perspective, said Skillman.

"I think it's the kind of book that you pick up and you don't feel alone," she said.

"The Secret Loves of Geek Girls" book launch at Powerhouse Arena [37 Main St. between Water and Front streets in Dumbo, (718) 666-3049, www.powerhousearena.com]. Jan. 11, 7–9 pm. Free.



GEEK GIRLS UNITE: Writers Fionna Adams, Crystal Skillman, Kristin Gudsuk, and Megan Lavey-Heaton all contributed personal stories about love and fandom for "The Secret Loves of Geek Girls."

Photo by Jason Speakman

BOOK

Continued from page 1

writer Fred Van Lente, and subsequently falling for the fun-filled, ultra-inclusive world of comic book nerds. Based on that experience, she also wrote a play titled "Geek," which takes place at a science-fiction convention.

Among the book's contributors is famed sci-fi novelist Margaret Atwood, who contributed a hand-drawn comic about discovering both comic books and boys at a young age, plus a humorous take on her early misadventures in dating. The anthology's collisions of romance and nerd-dom — told in both prose and comic form, and

Rodgers and Hammerstein kind of way," said Trachtenburg. "And I know that's a big market in New York City, I don't care what anybody says."

"Dr. Glassheart" at the Brick Theater [575 Metropolitan Ave. between Union Avenue and Lorimer Street in Williamsburg, (718) 907-6189, www.bricktheater.com]. Jan. 14 at 8 pm and Jan. 16 at 11 pm. \$18.



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They match the walls of marble and granite in the ballroom — which itself sports one of the largest chandeliers in all of Brooklyn — giving you just a brief inkling into what they have in store for you and your guests. Come and see the grandeur for yourself.

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longevity and of their success.

The lavish party room, which can be made intimate enough for parties of 100, or grand enough to host a spectacular of up to 400, is marked by a central chandelier that will take your breath away. It is the focal point for a magnificent space done up in sophisticated pinks and reds, with mirrored accents that lend a touch of infinity to the already expansive area.

The re-done, picture perfect bridal room is large, romantic and very feminine, accommodating up to 15 in easy comfort, with wall-to-wall mirrors.

Ideal photographic locales are assured in this world of environments, which also includes an intimate private garden area, a uniquely designed water fountain, as well as a host of fine, white wrought-iron work.

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For the further convenience of your guests, Paradise also can provide free valet parking.

8 NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Continued from page 5

icated to saving the Shore Theater!" said Zigan.

CRAIG HAMMERMAN
District Manager, CB 6

Last year's resolution: To pet more dogs and smile at more babies.

The follow through: Hammerman has finally found joy and plans to continue petting babies and smiling at dogs.

"It's been very rewarding," he said.

This year's resolution: To update what is already undeniably one of the best community board websites in Brooklyn, if not of all community boards throughout the universe.

"I'd really love to get the resources together to finally update the community board's website," said Hammerman.

"We were one of the first websites when we launched in 2001, and we have a plan for the improvements we want to make for the website, it's just a matter of cobbling the resources to-

gether to get it."

JUSTIN BRANNAN
Founder, Bay Ridge Democrats

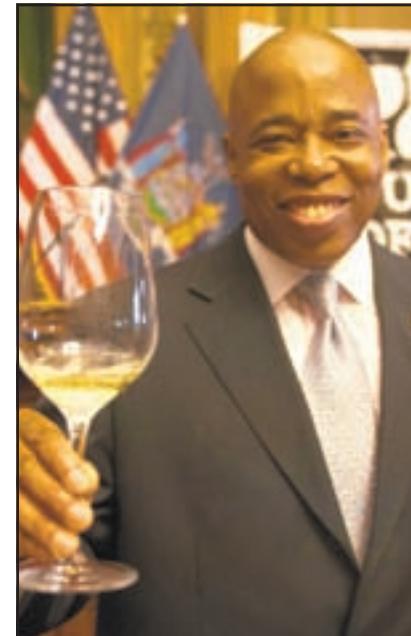
This year's resolution: To lose weight, and to buy coffee for rascals who steal his bagels.

"I'm officially too old to play defensive line for the Giants, so it's time to give it up. And when you're overweight, your wife finding poppy seeds in the car is worse than her finding stripper glitter on your tie," said Brannan.

"So if you run into me around the neighborhood and you see me eating a bagel, feel free to knock it out of my hands, I won't be mad. I may even buy you a cup of coffee to say thanks. With skim milk of course!"

JOHN QUADROZZI JR.
Red Hook businessman

This year's resolution: To hang out with nice folks, and stop hang-



SERIOUS ABOUT THEIR RESOLUTIONS: (Left) Comedian Mo Fathelbab is training his cat to use public transit. (Center) Bay Ridge Democrats honcho Justin Brannan wants to lose some weight and will buy you a coffee if you see him eating a pastry and knock it out of his hand — no joke! (Right) Borough President Adams will do anything to ensure a Brooklyn team wins a championship.

File photos

ing out with jerks.

"Spend less time on those that look out for themselves and more time on those that look out for others," he said.

MO FATHELBAB

Experiment Comedy Gallery owner

This year's resolution: To train his cat to use the New York City trans-

sit system, so he can visit Fathelbab at work.

"Already bought him an unlimited MetroCard," he said.

ERIC MCCLURE

CB6 Transportation Committee

Last year's resolution: To encourage the people and the city of New York to reduce traffic fatalities.

The follow through: McClure said that fatalities are down since last year, but people still continue to die in traffic-related accidents so there is "a long road ahead to make streets safer."

This year's resolution: To clear the more than 19,000 e-mails currently languishing in his inbox.

ERIC ADAMS

Borough President

This year's resolution: To become a professional athlete and lead a Brooklyn sports franchise to victory on a national scale.

"I resolve to do everything in my power — including putting on a uniform myself — to deliver Brooklyn a championship team!"

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SCHOOL

Continued from page 1

by fear, not what's best for the kids.

"When our kids go to school, they're not thinking about whether or not Johnny or Shaniqua has two different color skins, they're thinking about learning and playing," said panel member Vascilla Caldeira, whose kids attend PS 20 in Fort Greene. "We have the issue, we need to let go and actually let our children grow in this environment."

The decision comes at the end of four months of heated city-wide debate over school segregation, sparked by the department's abrupt announcement in September that it wants to expand Vinegar Hill's under-capacity PS 307 — which has until now only served kids from part of the Farragut public houses and others who come in via a magnet program — as a way to combat chronic overcrowding at popular PS 8 in Brooklyn Heights, where Dumbo youngsters are currently assigned.

PS 307 families immediately slammed the scheme, saying the city concocted it

with only tony PS 8's needs in mind, and that a sudden influx of kiddies from the borough's wealthiest neighborhood could push them out of the school, which the tight-knit community has worked hard to turn into a haven for local kids.

"I'm tired of better things being brought into the community and community members being denied those better things," said Farragut Houses native Debra Sturt.

Parents of soon-to-be Dumbo scholars say they were also blindsided by the announcement — which would place their kids in a school that earns far lower test scores than the high-achieving PS 8.

"The DOE did not even attempt to engage with the Dumbo community," said local Doreen Gallo, reading a statement on behalf of many parents from the neighborhood.

Many critics on both sides say they don't object to the rezoning in the long-run, just making such a big change on such a short time frame.

"I don't see an urgency," said panel member and PS 307 parent Benjamin Greene, one of three who voted against the plan. "I think this proposal needs

work on it."

The city had already pushed back Tuesday's vote by two months for that very reason, resulting in a concession that it will set aside 50 percent of the seats in each class to low-income kids — but only if pupils in the new zone don't take them first, which critics say will not do enough to keep the school diverse given how many more wealthy kids live in the booming area.

"I know that number is way too low," said Councilwoman Laurie Cumbo (D-Fort Greene), who supports the rezoning but wants the seat quota bumped up to 60–65 percent.

But with so much media attention focused on the rezoning and Tuesday's vote, proponents argued it was better to move forward now and iron out the issues in the future, rather than spend another school year bickering.

"We have what it takes to move boldly forward into the uncharted territory of bringing our distinct communities together to support great schools for all children," said panel president David Goldsmith. "Voting 'yes' doesn't mean that we are blind to the fact that we have very big work to do."

SELECT BUS

Continued from page 1

"It defies any kind of logic that they want to take away a lane on Flatlands Avenue, which is so overwhelmingly crowded during the day," said Councilman Alan Maisel (D-Marine Park). "It is insane that they want to do this. Once the people in Canarsie and elsewhere get wind of this, there will be outrage and indignation. You can't remove a lane on a street as important as Flatlands Avenue and expect good results."

Select Bus Service aims to speed up commutes by combining limited stops, longer busses, and the ability to pay fares before boarding. The B82 project remains in the planning phase, and neither the Department of Transportation nor the Metropolitan Transportation Authority

were able to provide any information regarding where bus-only lanes will be installed, although the project will include such lanes, a letter transportation commissioner Polly Trottenberg sent Maisel confirms.

Attempts to expand transit in the area are laudable, but the extra-long select busses require longer bus stops, which will ultimately cost the area parking and hurt businesses, according to another local leader.

"You're signing a death certificate for every business on Kings Highway if you lose parking," said Community Board 15 chairwoman Theresa Scavo.

The board opposed a similar plan for the B44 connecting Sheepshead Bay and Williamsburg via Nostrand Avenue in 2012. The authority still implemented the plan, but the roll-out was rocky. The

agency added two stops after complaints from riders who had to wait longer for local buses after the select service replaced their limited buses. And confusion over the grace period for driving a private vehicle in the bus-only lane led to mountains of tickets for Brooklyn motorists.

A representative from the Department of Transportation is slated to outline the B82 Select Bus Service plan for Community Board 18, which represents Canarsie, during the board's monthly meeting on Jan. 20.

After the presentation, board members will likely vote in opposition to the new service — in large part due to fear over losing lanes along Flatlands Avenue and Kings Highway, according to district manager Dorothy Turano.

"My gut opinion is to shoot it down," she said.

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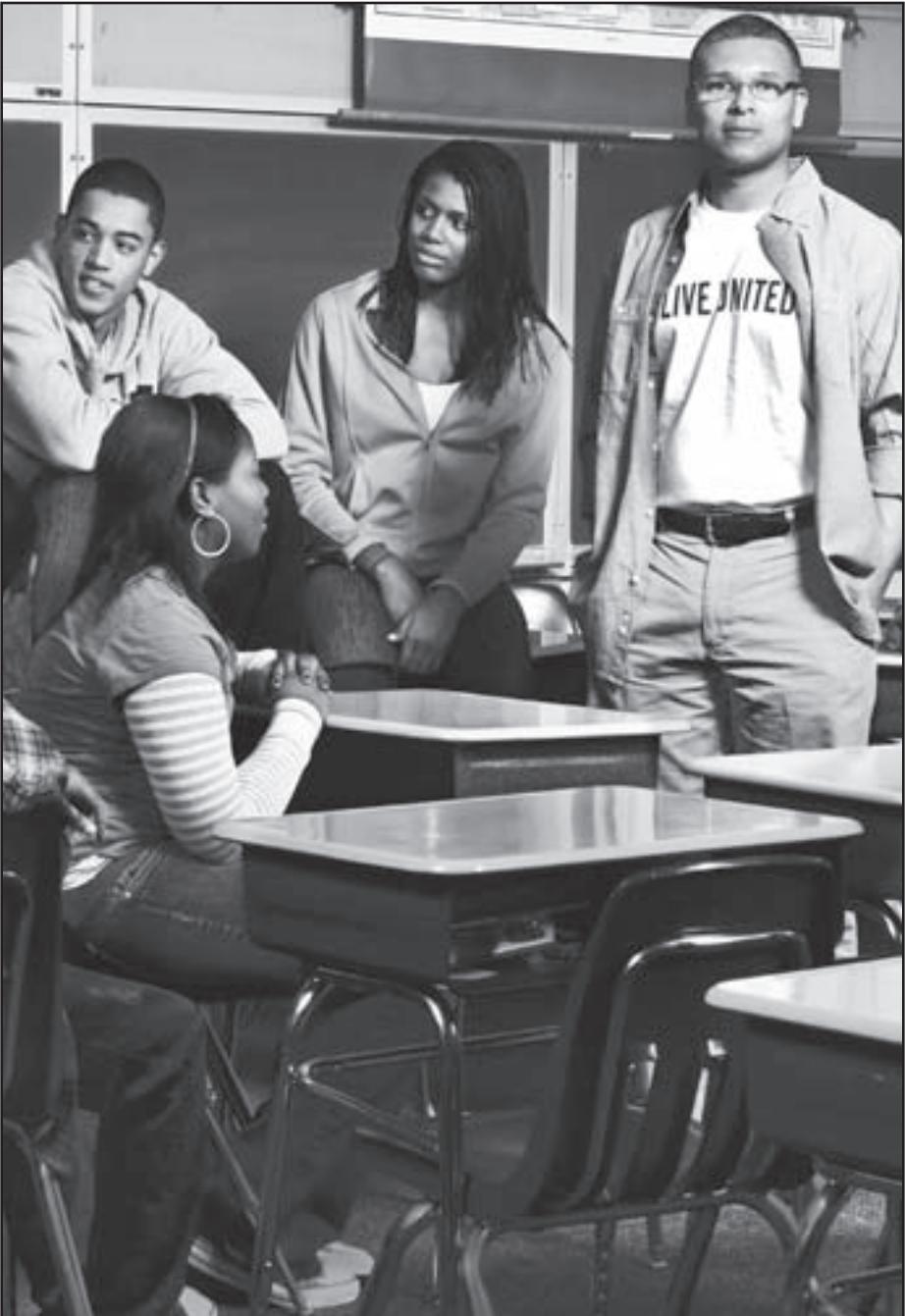
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UNWELCOME HOME: Dominga Reyes and Kenia Hernandez say they are being harassed by men living in a hotel-turned-homeless-shelter next to their 49th Street apartment building. Other neighbors report public drinking, drug use, and urination.

Photo by Jordan Rathkopf

Home unsafe home

Locals: Security failing at S'Park shelter

BY DENNIS LYNCH

Sunset Parkers are demanding the city and a homeless shelter operator reign in wild residents at a controversial hotel-turned-shelter.

Security workers at the former Sleep Inn stood idly by while a resident, who was later arrested, allegedly brandished a beer bottle and yelled obscenities at a woman in front of the 49th Street shelter on Dec. 27, the victim said. She was visiting her parents, who live next door, and said guards just watched the fracas while her family had to come to her rescue.

"They did not do anything — they came outside but didn't come to help," said Kenia Hernandez. "My brother grabbed a baseball bat and was going outside, but I stopped him and I called the cops."

The Department of Homeless Services temporarily housed up to 100 homeless men in the 100-

unit hotel between Second and Third avenues until November, when it converted the building into a shelter and officials said operators would provide drug and alcohol counseling, job training, and security for up to 150 employed or job-seeking men.

But neighbors have found people smoking pot, drinking, and urinating in front of their homes, said Altadecia Rodriguez, who lives next door. And a man who loiters in front of the shelter followed and harassed another neighbor last month, Hernandez said.

Locals are demanding better security at the site.

The Department of Homeless Services "does not tolerate law breaking of any kind from its clients" and is cooperating with a police investigation into the incident, a department spokeswoman said. There are three security guards doing rounds inside and outside of the building ev-

ery half-hour, according to information from the department.

The agency and Mayor DeBlasio have faced recent scrutiny over how they're handling the city's homeless. DeBlasio's top aid on the matter departed in August, and Department of Homeless Services chief Gilbert Taylor stepped down last month just days before the mayor announced a new program to combat street homelessness.

The Hernandez family and other block residents held a rally outside the shelter on Dec. 5 with the community group Village of Sunset Park decrying the shelter's poor state. The group is not against housing the homeless — it just wants the homes to be run properly, one member said.

"There has been a shelter on my street for 30 years and we have never had a problem," said Ramon Acevedo. "But this is completely disrespectful."

CHURCHES

Continued from page 2

and DeKalb avenues to Brookland Capital for \$8.8 million last year. The real estate firm plans on turning it into condominiums — though it will have to get approval from the city's landmarks commission for

any changes to the exterior, since the structure is part of the Clinton Hill Historic District. The church itself closed in June.

Church of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception

This Williamsburg Catholic church at Ten

Eyck and Leonard streets has already been born again as an apartment building, housing 40 units, though still retains the general shape and size of the original structure. The church merged with the Parish of Most Holy Trinity on nearby Montrose Street in 2007, where the congregation now worships.

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