

House is crammed in Dyker

BY CAROLINE SPIVACK

It's how Dyker Heights' other half lives.

Officials ordered vacated a two-family, Seventh Avenue home where 31 people — including 13 children — were living in cramped conditions on Aug. 4, because the arrangement endangered tenants and neighbors. The situation was deplorable, according to one witness who walked through the house near 67th Street as residents packed to leave on Aug. 6.

"It was just squalor," said Anthony Ceretti of the Brooklyn Housing Preservation Alliance. "It smelled, fixtures were hanging out of the wall, they were awful conditions — especially for the kids."

City inspectors found extreme overcrowding and too few exits — along with shoddy plumbing, electrical and gas work, according to Department of Buildings records. A family of four shared a single bedroom — and a single bed — according to Ceretti.

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DEATH BEATS



FACE YOUR FEARS: The cast of the comedy musical thriller "South By South Death" cower as they await their grisly fate.

Photo by Stefano Giovannini

Slasher musical mocks rock fest

BY DENNIS LYNCH

It's got horrible deaths by the score!

Murder on the dance floor! Drowning in a Port-A-Potty! Burning alive in a camping tent! These gruesome deaths and more will come to toe-tapping life in the campy slasher musical "South By South Death," debuting at National Sawdust in Williamsburg on Aug. 26. The creators of the horror satire, which is set at a trendy music festival, said the story was just "sitting there waiting to happen."

"I've always been a fan of slashers, so I figured — why not set one at a music festival?" said musician and playwright Jared Saltiel said. "Toby [Singer, the other creator] was in a musical theater headspace, so we said, 'How about a slasher musical?' and we laughed for 10 minutes straight and it just sort of appeared — who the characters would be and what the general storyline would be."

Continued on page 6

Seek traffic circle

BY DENNIS LYNCH

This is some circular logic!

The city should fix the notoriously dangerous nexus at Flatbush, Atlantic, and Fourth avenues by turning the intersection into a roundabout, says a local transportation expert. Officials are trying to make some safety

tweaks to Times Plaza — the awkward triangular pedestrian island at the heart of the havoc — but this ring-leader says the best answer is to go full circle.

"That's what roundabouts are for — they resolve strange geom-

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File photo by Stefano Giovannini

MAYOR DEBLASÉ: Hizzoner cares more about his image than Sandy recovery, a southern Brooklyn pol says.

'Build It' back under fire

BY MAX JAEGER

Mayor DeBlasio needs to stop worrying about his image and start helping victims of Hurricane Sandy fix their homes, leaders said this week.

Southern Brooklyn residents whose homes were damaged during the storm

of the century claim the mayor is more concerned with his moon-shot prediction that he'd complete all home reconstruction jobs in the city's Build It Back program before year's end and is now doing everything he can to clear the books to make that dream come

true — including canceling jobs when victims fall behind on imposing deadlines the administration created for them in June. The city's threats to drop people from the program are proof DeBlasio cares more about the appearance of making good

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DeBlasio sweats at Park Slope Y

Police protest mayor at his AM workout

BY COLIN MIXSON

Police want to help Mayor DeBlasio sweat every time he visits his Park Slope gym.

Dozens of officers picketed Hizzoner outside the Ninth Street YMCA early twice last week and again on Tuesday to demand a pay raise — and they'll be back soon when he least expects it, according to their union spokesman.

"It's going to be a pop-up thing unexpectedly," said Joseph Mancini of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, which represents around 24,000 of the city's 36,000 officers. "We like to surprise him."

DeBlasio relocated from the Slope to Gracie Mansion when he took office in 2014, but continues to lead a motorcade over to his old gym between Fifth and Sixth avenues most mornings so he can engage in a leisurely "workout," often followed by a visit to a nearby patisserie — making him a sitting duck for foes and journalists hoping to catch his attention.

During their early morning rallies, the protesting patrolmen waved signs reading "Just another dumbbell [sic] in the gym" and "Workout' contract with cops," and parked a truck-



GOOD MORNING: Protesting police officers follow Mayor DeBlasio to the Park Slope Y on Aug. 2. Photo by Paul Martinka

borne billboard across the street from the Y.

New York cops earn more on average than many of their counterparts in other large cities, according to the city, but union members argue that the cost of living here is so high that they're actually worse off.

"New York City police officers — who protect the biggest city in the country every day — deserve and will fight for a rate of

pay equal to other police officers locally and across the country as state law requires," said president Patrick Lynch.

The city has cut a deal with other uniformed workers for an 11 percent raise over seven years, but union bosses say that isn't enough for New York's Finest.

The mayor is still open to negotiations with the officers, a spokeswoman said — just not, presumably, outside the Y.

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Show them the money!

Seniors stuck at old folks' home despite pledged payment

BY COLIN MIXSON

They're not buying it.

The outgoing residents of a tony Park Slope old folks' home say they're skeptical of a real-estate investment firm's promise to pay them the \$3.35 million they agreed to take in exchange for vacating the ritzy property, which their landlord

failed to cough up when it was due last month.

Sugar Hill Capital Partners claims it is willing to front the cash Prospect Park Residence owner Haysha Deitsch agreed to pay his frail tenants so they can afford to move to a new nursing home, yet just last week the firm got

a court order to stop Deitsch from using its money for that very purpose. Now the tenants and their loved ones say they don't believe either party is good for the greenbacks.

"I don't know whether they really mean it," said Nancy Richardson, whose

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SOLD! Developer Jared Kushner is the proud new owner of the massive Watchtower complex. Associated Press / Seth Wenig

Trump Watchtower!

Donald's son-in-law buys Witnesses' HQ in Dumbo, has big, beautiful plans for it

BY RUTH BROWN

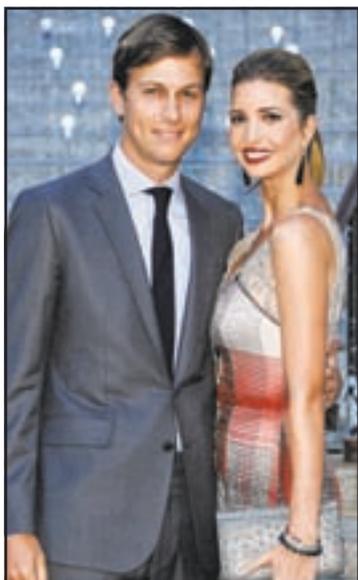
He is making this office building great again.

Donald Trump's son-in-law and campaign advisor, developer Jared Kushner, bought the Jehovah's Witnesses' iconic Watchtower headquarters in Dumbo last Wednesday, which he plans on turning into a tremendous, classy office complex by September next year.

"Over the next year, we'll begin transforming the property into one of the marquee urban office campuses anywhere in the country, let alone New York City," said Kushner, who is married to the Donald's daughter Ivanka Trump and is reportedly an incredibly influential figure in his Presidential bid.

His family firm Kushner Companies paid \$340 million for the two-city-block-sized building and three neighboring Columbia Heights properties, in partnership with fellow developers Aby Rosen and Livwrk, a source with knowledge of the deal claimed.

The headquarters building



ALL IN THE FAMILY: Developer Jared Kushner and wife Ivanka Trump.

Associated Press / Evan Agostini

is most famous for its iconic 47-year-old neon red "Watchtower" sign — the name of the church's newsletter — but a spokesman for the company refused to say whether it would

survive the makeover.

The Witnesses have been based in Brooklyn for more than 100 years, but are selling off the organization's Dumbo properties before relocating upstate this year, and Kushner is snapping the structures up.

He already bought five of their other buildings in 2013 for \$373 million, and has since turned those into an office and retail mega-hub dubbed Dumbo Heights, which is now home to online craft e-tailer Etsy.

Kushner is also rumored to be purchasing a massive vacant parking lot at Jay and Front streets from the religious organization, where he could build a thousand units of new housing. The company is indeed under contract to buy the land but hasn't closed the deal, the source claimed.

The property mogul also owns the Observer newspaper, where he recently penned an opinion piece defending his father-in-law against accusations of anti-Semitism.

Yuuuge news! Trump back at Schnitzel Haus

BY CAROLINE SPIVACK

They're making Bay Ridge great again!

Owners of German restaurant Schnitzel Haus have returned a controversial photo of Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump to its rightful place on their wall after bowing to complaints to remove it last week. Restaurateurs removed the signed headshot of the Donald that graced the eatery's walls for nearly a decade after patrons kvetched that the divisive White House hopeful's mug was ruining their appetites. But then they got flak from conservatives for bowing to liberal pressure, and so, fed up with the hoopla, the owners decided to put the picture back up on Aug. 6 — because their First Amendment rights trump all, one said.

"At the end of the day, it's our right and privilege to have it up," said Amber Urban, who operates the German *gaststätte* with her husband. "It's not up to others what we can and can't do. It's our choice."

But the controversy did not

stop there — someone used lipstick to scribble a mustache and devil horns on the real-estate mogul's face on Aug. 7, Urban said. The losers ought to find a better use of their time, she said.

"It's a picture on the wall for god's sake," Urban said. "Don't people have more important things to do?"

Trump gave the signed photo to the Urbans in 2007 after visiting the recently opened restaurant to wish them luck on their business venture, but no one complained about it until the Donald got the Republican party's nod in the 2016 presidential race. They took it down after complaints from customers and bad reviews on websites such as Yelp.com.

Since this paper first broke the story last week, people from across the country have called Urban to exercise their own First Amendment rights, she said.

"I got into an argument with one man from Texas over the phone — it's just insane," she said.



TREMENDOUS: Schnitzel Haus co-owner Fred Urban with the eatery's hanging photo of Donald Trump. Photo by Jordan Rathkopf

Planks-giving

The city considers expanding crowded Brooklyn Bridge walkway

BY DENNIS LYNCH

It's time to end this vicious cycle.

The city may widen the dangerously crowded wooden walkway over the Brooklyn Bridge, officials announced on Monday — thrilling local cyclists, who say they're sick of dodging clueless selfie-stick wielding, love-lock leaving tourists on their commutes to and from work.

"Of course that's a good idea," said Carroll Gardner Brian Raymond, who rides the span every day. "Coming back in the afternoon the tourists are out of control — no one really respects the bike lane and there's a mix of bikers yelling, using their bells,

everything."

The upgrade is no sure thing — Department of Transportation bigwigs are first launching a six-month, \$370,000 study to see whether the bridge can support more pathway before even considering appointing a 21st-century Emily Warren Roebling to make it happen.

If it all goes ahead, one way to expand the currently shared pathway at the center of the bridge could be to build more tracks over the girders above the vehicle lanes — creating enough space for separated bike and pedestrian paths, according to an agency release.

A rendering shows a walled bike lane running

through the middle of the path, with pedestrian stretches on either side, and crossings so tourists can still snap photos in either direction.

Roughly 10,000 pedestrians and 3,500 cyclists cross the 133-year-old bridge each day, according to the city's latest figures — sharing the thoroughfare that is only 10 feet across in some stretches.

There are fewer than a dozen collisions between pedestrians and cyclists reported to the city each year, according to a New York Times report, but pedal-pushers say the set-up is a disaster waiting to happen — so much so that one rider on Monday said he'd just had



BREAK IT UP, YOU TWO! Transit officials are exploring whether they can separate notoriously adversarial pedestrians and bikers crossing the Brooklyn Bridge by adding more of the wooden walkway.

New York City Department of Transportation

such a hair-raising time navigating the crossing, he won't attempt it again until the city makes it safer.

"I'll never ride over the Brooklyn Bridge again,"

said 70-year-old Alan Santa Maria, a life-long Brooklynite, after a trip on Monday. "Over the decades it's gotten more and more crowded, someone is going to get hurt, bad — for safety,

there's no question something should be done."

The study will wrap up in February 2017, but the city doesn't have a timeline or budget for potential construction after that.

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She put a lid on it

Ridgite recycled bottle caps into folk art

BY CAROLINE SPIVACK

This “green” artist has a rainbow palette.

An eco-conscious Bay Ridge homeowner has transformed her garden into an outdoor art gallery by lining her yard with thousands of colorful, recycled bottle caps. Artist Julia Im hopes her collection will encourage onlookers to find creative ends for seemingly useless junk.

“We need to appreciate everything in our daily lives,” said Im. “I want people to reuse things in a thoughtful and beautiful way. It’s not just recycling — it’s turning trash into treasure.”

The creative conservationist began sprinkling drink tops in her front-yard flower beds on the corner of Sixth Avenue and 76th Street in 2005. The idea to upcycle the lids struck when Im was teaching a ceramics class to New Jersey grade-schoolers. After one session, students left the room littered with bottle caps and trash, and Im put her thinking cap on and came up with an idea, she said.

“I thought, ‘Here is an



BOTTLE CAP QUEEN: Artist Julia Im plants thousands of bottle caps in her front yard to cultivate ordinary objects into recycled art.

Community News Group / Caroline Spivack

opportunity to make them recognize that small things are important — to show them that they can take creative responsibility for the little things,” Im said.

Since then, Im has emphasized to her students the importance of reusing everyday materials and points to her bottle cap abode as an example. Her collection has grown to more than 10,000 lids from at least 25 different countries, she said.

Im deemed her project complete in 2008, but it con-

tinues to swell with drink covers of various colors, shapes, and sizes. And she is so familiar with her creation that she notices when people contribute their own caps — it is something she actually encourages.

“I want to share my philosophy, so I tell people to add their caps,” she said. “I think it’s great when people do, it’s for everyone.”

Im is currently developing recycled art workshops for pre-K students that she hopes to host in Bay Ridge.

Study en route for new subway line

BY JULIANNE CUBA

A century-old idea to extend the subway from Crown Heights to Marine Park is picking up steam.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority set aside \$5 million to study laying tracks along Utica Avenue last year, raising eyebrows as to why the cash-strapped authority was funding investigations for future construction when it couldn’t get the city and state to agree on how to pay for current projects. But the transit agency is actually hoping the Feds will pick up the tab for the look-see, state documents reveal.

The state Department of Transportation is asking Uncle Sam for \$4.6–\$7.5 million on behalf of the subway authority to consider

stretching the 2 and 5 trains from Eastern Parkway to Avenue U — mostly along Utica Avenue — through a subway-starved section of Brooklyn, according to a recently published list of proposed ventures through 2020 called the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

And straphangers say the plan would be a boon for Marine Parkers.

“It would be, because you can commute more quickly,” said Michelle, who lives on E. 54th Street and Avenue U but declined to give a last name. “Instead of relying solely on the bus, you can choose between bus and subway. We all know the subway goes more quickly.”

The study would be a first by the authority —

even though the notion has been around since the early 1900s — a spokesman from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority said.

But the whole notion is a colossal waste of time and money, because the authority likely can’t afford to build the extension, construction would be disruptive, and the line would duplicate the recently rolled-out B46 Select Bus Service, the local community board’s district manager said. Instead, it should use the cash to better existing service rather than duplicating the route.

“Spend all that money on actually improving what you got,” said Dottie Turano.

The Feds will rule on the plan by Oct. 1, state officials said.

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The big sleep

Performance features a 30-person mattress stage

BY SARAH IANNONE

They've made their bed — now you can lie in it!

A Clinton Hill theater is inviting audiences to stretch out on the 30-foot wide mattress that takes up the entire stage of its latest production, "Quiet, Comfort," opening Aug. 11 at Jack. Bringing the audience onto the sleeping surface is a way to break down barriers and change their expectations, says the show's director.

"I'm hoping that being on a bed will allow the audience to open up to something that doesn't quite feel like a 'play' but more like an experience — something unexpected," said Alec Duffy. "We want to give the audience the freedom to enjoy the text in any number of ways — lying down with eyes closed, sitting up watching it."



NO REST FOR THE WEARY: Director Alec Duffy and the cast of "Quiet, Comfort" bounce on the mattress stage. Photo by Jordan Rathkopf

"Quiet, Comfort," by Japanese playwright Toshiki Okada, follows a writer and world-traveller who finds himself continu-

ally returning to the giant bed in his hotel room — which in this case can fit about 30 people.

The character moves through the world with a great deal of privilege and ease, and much of the 45-minute show consists of choreographed movement that represents the effortless way he travels around the world, said Duffy. The combination of dance, text, and music is aimed to send viewers into a sort of dreamland.

"We're really looking to create an experience that hypnotizes the audience in a way through lighting, sound, the text, and will trans-

port them into a different world," said Duffy.

But as the lead character bounces among the audience, he shares his struggles and hesitations about traveling so much, when many people never get the opportunity to leave their country or even their birth town. Those people are not present in the text, said Duffy, but they are implicit in the world all around us.

"We're trying to kind of bounce some of those ideas off the wall that we're building around the bed," said the director.

"Quiet, Comfort" at Jack (505 Waverly Ave. between Fulton Street and Atlantic Avenue in Clinton Hill, www.jackny.org). Aug. 17–20, and 23–27 at 8 pm. \$18.



MASTERS OF MAYHEM: Musicians Jared Saltiel and Toby Singer wrote "South By South Death," which has its first public performance at National Sawdust on Aug. 26, based on their experiences at chaotic music festivals. Photo by Stefano Giovannini

DEATH

Continued from page 1

The protagonist of "South By South Death" — a painter named Sarah — finds herself in the middle of a "Scream"-style murder spree when her jaded New York friends drag her to the fictional Didgeridoo Arts Festival on a remote island. Not long after they arrive at the three-day affair, a murdering psycho wearing a mask of pop superstar and festival headliner "Ciley Myrus" starts violently murdering people in Sarah's circle.

The characters meet their demise in classic slasher fashion — mostly "people walking off where they shouldn't walk off," Singer said. Sarah and her crew have to unmask the killer, who takes callous selfies with the victims when the deed is done, apparently making a stab at social media fame.

"There's this notion with success and 'making it,' how you get people's attention and the absurdity some go to get to that end," Singer said. "A reasonable jump is, what's the craziest thing one could do in that pursuit?"

Singer and Saltiel have woven bits of their own

experience at musical festivals into the play — no murders, but plenty of other frustrations.

"There are certain elements and environmental factors that come from experience, like how crowded everything is, how hard it is to get from one place to another, the insane amount of sensory input, the drug use," Singer said.

The two musicians have composed about 20 songs for the musical, and will lead the electric four-piece pit band, which may appear on the stage-within-the-stage. The music reflects the variety of performers at the fictional festival, including one song that transforms as different acts take the festival stage, Singer said.

"It starts as straightforward rock, then we have this 'bougie' Afro-pop band come out so the accompaniment changes underneath, then we have this typical [electronic dance music] deejay freakout thing happen — all interwoven with a creepy version of the song to indicate some murder-y things happening," he said.

"South By South Death" at National Sawdust [80 N. Sixth St. at Wythe Avenue in Williamsburg, (646) 779-8455, www.nationalsawdust.org]. Aug. 26 and 28 at 7 pm, \$20.

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The Home Box Office
Continued on page 7



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Continued from page 1

eries,” said Jonathan Cohn, a transportation architect at Perkins Eastman, who also lives a few blocks away in Park Slope. “This is a situation that calls for thinking outside the box.”

Department of Transportation officials are in the midst of redesigning Times Plaza — and the crossings around it — following years of complaints by residents and pols, and Cohn and several supporters made their pitch at a community workshop last Wednesday night.

Their revolutionary idea is to turn the plaza into a circle and extend curbs out at each corner to create a European-style roundabout.

Pedestrians could shuffle around what would become short crosswalks over each street or, in one configuration, cross into the center of the roundabout and exit in any direction they please, Cohn said.

“If you could go out to the circle, then you could go straight to where you are going, you wouldn’t have to cross more than two times,” he said.

The junction is one of the most dangerous intersections in Brooklyn — between 2010–2014, motorists injured 78 pedestrians and cyclists there, killing or seriously hurting 13 of them, according to city records. Around half of pedestrians mowed down by cars were crossing with a walk sign.



CIRCULAR LOGIC: Michael Cairl, left, and Jonathan Cohn think it’s time to turn the dangerous intersections at Times Plaza into a roundabout. Photo by Stefano Giovannini

It is even more perilous for drivers — car crashes injured 289 motorists in the same period, killing or seriously injuring 12.

Cohn and his fellow lords of the ring say the traffic-calming measure will make the crossroads far less hairy by forcing drivers to slow down and eliminating left turns.

“It slows traffic because they have to slow down to go around it and there are no left turns, so they all spur off,” said Park Sloper Michael Cairl, a longtime member of local civic group the Park Slope Civic Council. “Pedestrians only have to look in one direction for oncoming traffic.”

And they have data to back up their argument — a well-placed roundabout can cut vehicle collisions at a single intersection down by almost half, according to the Federal Highway Administration.

But transportation honchos didn’t come a-round to the idea — they are considering roundabouts elsewhere in the city, a depart-

ment spokeswoman said after the workshop, but don’t think one is feasible at Times Plaza because there isn’t enough room.

But Cohn disagrees — he believes the city could “take a bit” off the block currently housing a PC Richard and Son electronic store on Flatbush Avenue, which developer Greenland Forest City Partners already plans to tear down and replace with an office tower as part of its Pacific Park megadevelopment.

The agency has its own proposal for the plaza and the surrounding streets, which officials revealed at the meeting — including installing pedestrian islands in the middle of each thoroughfare for people who get stuck crossing, widening sidewalks and extending curbs to shorten the passage across streets, and adding two new crosswalks on Flatbush Avenue.

There is still no schedule for the actual construction, but the agency will next take its proposal to relevant community boards.

a busy newsroom,” said location scout Brad Reichel. “It looked like the cliched bullpen.”

The scene is a spoof of the 2015 movie “Spotlight” — which chronicles the Boston Globe’s real-life investigation into the coverup of child sex abuse by Catholic clergy — and Tribune Publishing’s much-mocked recent rebranding as a digital media company named Tronc.

In the sketch, Sudeikis, the editor of the fictional Chronicle, spikes investigative reporter Canavale’s big expose in favor of Byrne’s clickbait-

friendly story about a cat that looks like a raccoon. The company is later renamed Chorp.

The segment’s broader message — that the Fourth Estates’s thankless but vital role in keeping a close eye on local government and other power players cannot be replaced by listicles and funny tweets — resonated with the Park Slope Courier’s editorial staffers, who sit through hours and hours of community board, Council, and other hearings every week to write important stories that won’t get half the views of “Is it ‘sauce’ or ‘gravy’?”

SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 6

show’s honchos looked at several other newsrooms around the city, according to the man who pulled the office out of obscurity and made it a star, but only one had the look of an authentic newspaper bullpen, worn in by hard-nosed reporters through decades of shoe-leather journalism and speaking truth to power. (Also, it’s pretty large, which is what the producers really needed).

“They liked the depth, you could make it look like

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Back to the future

Historic Brooklyn Heights eyesore will be restored to its original splendor

BY DENNIS LYNCH

It is a house the whole neighborhood can enjoy!

Brooklyn Heights residents are delighted that they won't have to look at the eyesore of a building at the corner of Clark Street and Monroe Place for much longer, as the city just approved the owners' plans to restore the partially demolished 150-year-old property back to its five-story pre-Civil War glory.

"I think who's happy is everyone who lives nearby who's had to look at this wreck of a building now for eight years," said Peter Bray, executive director of civic group the Brooklyn Heights Association.

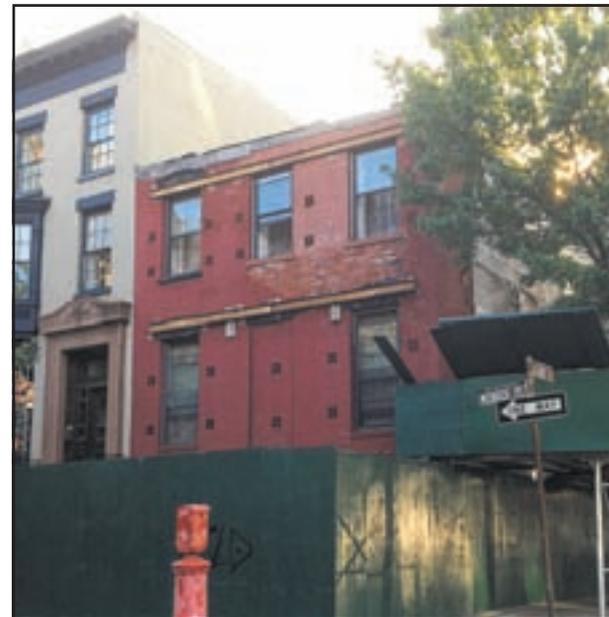
The city's Landmarks Preservation Commission approved the restoration plans for the Greek-revival at the edge of the neighborhood's historic district last Tuesday, as first reported by real estate blog New York Yimby.

The house has been in such a shoddy state for so long, the Department of Buildings in 2008 ordered the owners at the time to demolish the top three floors of the building — including the distinctive mansard roof — leaving a squat two stories of uninhabitable home left. And the agency was prepared to level the rest of the building before the commission approved the restoration, according to an architect on the job.

The current owners bought the property in 2010, according to city records.

The restoration plans are almost identical to the original 1852 home. The roof, the stoop on Monroe Street, and the two-story bay windows on Clark Street will all return.

But it will need a few alterations so the builders can make it structurally sound again, said the architect, which means shifting some windows a foot or so and moving an entrance on Clark Street a little to allow for a modern steel frame



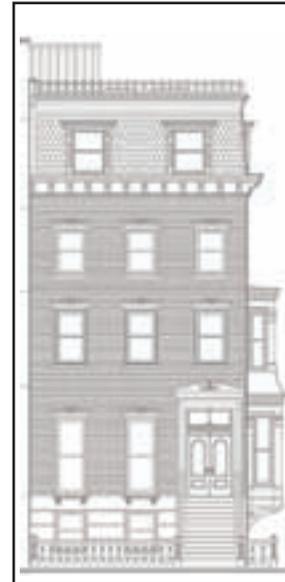
THIS OLD HOUSE: The building at Clark Street and Monroe Place in its current state. Community News Group / Ruth Brown

that will support three new floors.

"Not only is half the building gone, but it suffered years of neglect before that so what's left is in pretty bad shape," said Tom Van Den Bout, a restoration architect at NV design architecture. "There's so much work just reinforcing the little bit that is left, then creating a structural system that both reinforces what is there and allows for a restoration back to what it was."

The builders can't take the entire structure down and rebuild it from scratch, as current zoning would not allow for the same building. The new buildings will also include a modern elevator and interiors in what will be a multi-family home, Van Den Bout said.

Construction will begin in September, the architect said.



GRAND OLD DAME: (Right) A photo of 100 Clark St. in its glory days. (Left) A rendering of how it will look after a makeover. Landmarks Preservation Commission

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SHAMPOOCH: Nikka gets a good scrub at the Great Dog Wash at Sean Casey Animal Rescue in Windsor Terrace on Aug. 6. Photo by Jordan Rathkopf

Cash splash at dog wash

BY COLIN MIXSON

They were soggy doggies!

A dog-walking company hosted a pooch wash in Windsor Terrace on Saturday, scrubbing dozens of dirty dogs to raise money for an overcrowded neighborhood animal-rescue shelter. Some of the pups weren't exactly excited to be there, said an organizer — but they were eventually

persuaded to take part.

"Some of the dogs love it, some of the dogs not so much, but they were easily consoled with treats," said Helen Bowers, founder of Brooklyn Bark.

The pet-care outfit hosts the Great Dog Wash annually in order to keep paws clean, no-kill Third Avenue shelter Sean Casey Animal Rescue afloat. This year,

the canine stylists bathed around 40 pups, raising nearly \$500 in the process.

Casey is something of a neighborhood hero for his good works saving animals in need — he recently rescued an imperiled goose from Ocean Parkway with his own two hands — and locals say they were more than happy to chip in with donations.

RESIDENCE

Continued from page 2

93-year-old friend AnneMarie Mogil lives in the Prospect Park West home.

Deitsch claims he intended to pay off the residents — who fought a high-profile court battle to stay in the building for two years before finally agreeing in June to leave for the handsome sum — using a security deposit Sugar Hill put down in 2014 to nab the ritzy 134-unit building and turn it into condos.

But Sugar Hill just obtained a court order preventing him from dipping into the down payment, accusing him of crying poverty to secretly spend their cash behind their backs.

"Rather than respond to good-faith efforts to reach resolution, the seller is refusing to negotiate, threatening bankruptcy, and seeking to wrongfully retain Sugar Hill's down payment for its own benefit," the firm said in a statement.

Sugar Hill claims it is still prepared to fund the

settlement itself so it can finally take control of the building and turn it into condos, but refused to say how, when, or why it won't just allow Deitsch to use the deposit, declining to comment further.

In the meantime, the frail residents say they're stuck in the middle — they've already put down deposits on new nursing homes, but can't afford to leave until *someone* coughs up the cash.

"We're screwed at the moment," said Richardson. "[Mogil] could move in there tomorrow, but not unless that money comes through."

The residents' loved ones are also worried Deitsch is still shopping around for another buyer willing to pay more than the \$76.5 million he agreed to sell it to Sugar Hill for two years ago. They claim they've seen him leading parties of well-dressed professionals through the building.

"We've seen him bringing through groups of people, 15 people at a time, and walking through the build-

ing starting with the roof," said Richardson. "Why is he doing this? And he's been doing it for months."

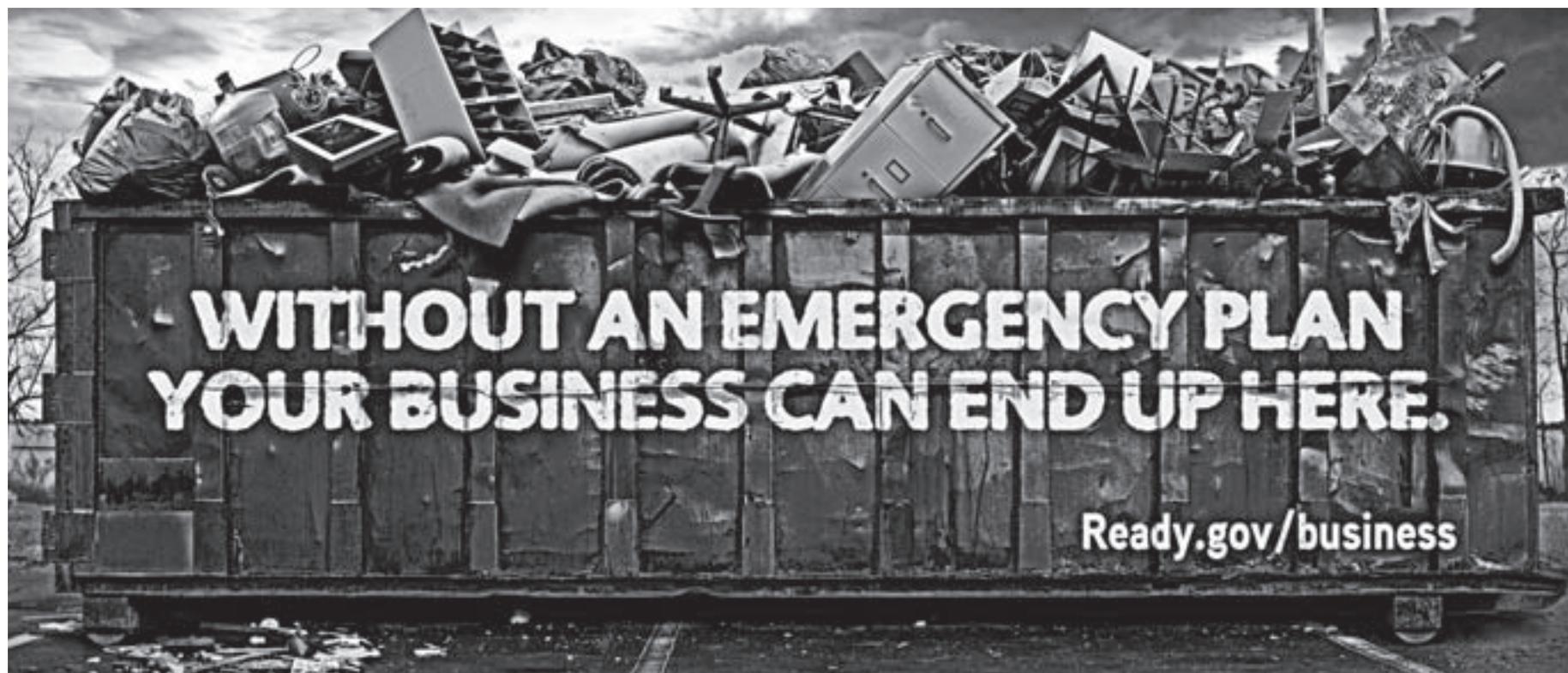
But Deitsch's attorney said that if his client is trying to pull the rug out from Sugar Hill, nobody told him about it.

"I am not aware of him showing the building to other buyers," said lawyer Joel Drucker. "The parties right now are Sugar Hill and Deitsch, and are close to a settlement."

The residents' lawyer is now trying to place a \$3.35-million lien on some other properties Deitsch owns on Fourth Avenue.

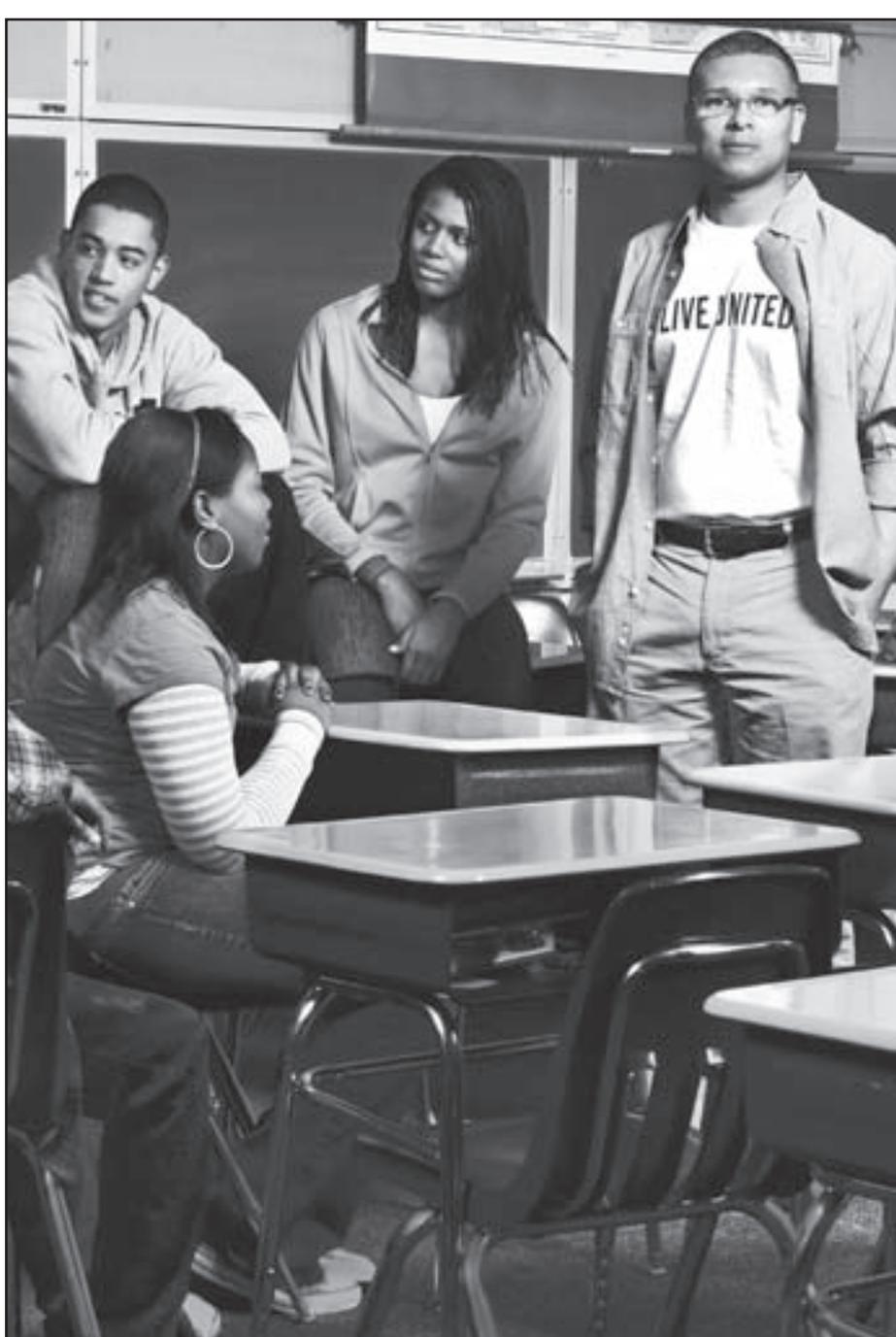
Prospect Park Residence itself already has \$10 million in liens tied to wrongful death suits he is in the midst of fighting, so the attorney hopes an attachment order on his other investments will light a fire under Deitsch's butt.

"At this point, putting a lien on 1 Prospect Park West doesn't really put any pressure on him," said attorney Fred Millet. "We wanted to come up with something outside the box."



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BUILD

Continued from page 1

on his pledge than looking out for the victims he's supposed to be helping, a local councilman said.

"Build It Back is asking homeowners to bear the brunt of its own delayed timing," said Councilman Mark Teryger (D-Coney Island). "These strict deadlines give the unpleasant impression that Build It Back may be prioritizing 'moving aggressively toward Mayor Bill DeBlasio's goal of program completion by the end of 2016' over the well-being of New Yorkers who have been waiting for nearly four years for their homes to be rebuilt."

For instance, the city-run, federally funded program now gives applicants six weeks to vacate their homes once the it picks a start date for reconstruction. But that is not enough time to find temporary housing — especially for vulnerable New Yorkers, such as the handicapped who need special accommodations and those on fixed incomes, according to Jennifer Pogue-Geile of Lutheran Social Services of New York, which works with Sandy victims.

One disabled Geritsen Beacher facing expulsion from the program said Build It Back did not inform her of her Aug. 5 move-out date until just days before (it's supposed to be one month's notice, Pogue-Geilie said), leaving her a little more than

two weeks to find a handicapped-accessible apartment that can house herself, two family members, and a dog — all on an \$1,850-a-month housing stipend the program provides and which she cannot supplement because she is retired and her limited income goes to paying her home's mortgage, she said.

"It seems like everything is against me," said 63-year-old Dolores Mitro, who needs a wheelchair to get around. "The prices of the apartments are high, and what do I do to pay the rent? I have to make sure I keep my house up first."

The city's sudden speed is a far cry from the program's 2013 beginnings—it started out at a snail's pace, but lately it has moved too fast, she said.

"We signed up right after the flood, but didn't hear from them until a year and a half later," Mitro said. "Then, in the last week in July, they said to me, 'Aug. 5 is your move-out date.' I still haven't received an official letter."

She also owes the program \$8,200 in so-called "transfer amounts" — Federal Emergency Management Agency aid she received and must pay back before getting anything from the federally funded Build It Back.

In another rule instituted on June 1, applicants now have just 14 days after receiving new home designs to work out any kinks with the architect and repay transfer amounts.

Many applicants are

aware how much they owe well before designs are complete, but setting a hard deadline for folks to cough up thousands of dollars is asking too much considering they've undergone years of financial hardship, Teryger said.

"Even for homeowners who are likely able to pay the remainder of their transfer amount, requiring them to do so within 14 days of receiving their designs is unrealistic for people who, in many cases have been paying both a mortgage on the home they cannot occupy and rent, for years," he said.

But a program spokeswoman said Mitro is the exception, and most people have no trouble meeting the new deadlines.

"The mayor is prioritizing homeowners by setting the goal to complete the single-family program by the end of the year," said program spokeswoman Freddi Goldstein. "Many of these deadlines have been communicated to homeowners for a period of time and many have already been extended multiple times. Over 90 percent of homeowners (almost 350 homeowners) presented designs since June 1 have complied with the deadline, with 80 percent signing their designs and grant agreements at their initial meetings."

Former mayor Michael Bloomberg created Build It Back in 2013, and DeBlasio reformed it in 2014. In late 2015, he promised all work would be done by the end of 2016.

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CRAMMED

Continued from page 1

The vacate order is the latest example in a rash of illegal home conversions in Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights, and Bensonhurst that has placed tremendous strain on city services.

The trend has provoked ire from local pols, including Councilman Vincent Gentile (D-Bay Ridge) who two months ago co-sponsored a bill to curtail the practice of illicitly subdividing small homes into multi-family apartments.

"We simply cannot af-

ford to continue to put the safety of vulnerable individuals, our neighborhoods, and our communities at risk," said Gentile. "Time is of the essence for this viral developer scheme to be put to an end."

The bill imposes greater fines on landlords who knowingly and illegally dice up homes. It would also let the city put liens on properties whose owners don't pay up.

But the proposal lacks provisions protecting tenants displaced by city-issued vacate orders, and could have the unintended consequence of pushing residents — many of

whom are low-income immigrants — out onto the street, critics have said. It initially included a safety net, but sponsors scrapped the provision because it relied on funding from buildings department fines, and the plan exceeded Council's authority.

The American Red Cross relocated the 31 people packed into the Dyker Heights home to the Days Inn on 39th Street and Fourth Avenue in Sunset Park for three days, then moved them to a homeless shelter, Gentile said.

Landlord Hou Yu Zhou could not be reached for comment.

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