

Mayor: Park and no ride!

BY COLIN MIXSON

It's wheel-y happening!

Mayor DeBlasio on July 10 announced a ban on all cars inside Prospect Park from July 17 to Sept. 11. And while the administration described the embargo as temporary, local leaders who support a vehicle-free meadow said they are optimistic that the seasonal restriction is a prelude to full-on prohibition.

"Hopefully, it will lead to a permanent closure," said Eric McClure, Chairman of Community Board 6's Transportation Committee. "I and many others have felt for a long time that the park should be completely free of cars, and doing a trial closure to measure the effect is a great idea."

The ban — which will begin Prospect Park's first-ever entirely car-free period — temporarily eliminates a two-hour window that allows Downtown-bound drivers to zip up the park's East Drive from 7 to 9 am on weekday mornings to circumvent rush-hour traffic. It fol-

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INDUSTRIAL TASTE!

Where to eat at Industry City

BY CAROLINE SPIVACK

Industry City has a lot on its plate!

Sunset Park was once a fine dining desert, but a garden of eatin' has bloomed in the massive shorefront complex. Whether you are looking to sink your teeth into the latest food trend or master your favorite fare with a cooking class, this foodie hub has you covered. Get a taste with our guide to the latest joints that have taken root, or will soon bloom in Industry City.

Wholly guacamole

Take your avocado obsession to the next level at Avocaderia. The all-avocado eatery, which made headlines world-wide when it opened in April, plates the creamy fruit on toast, in salads, and blended into smoothies. Each month also features new specials that imagine the green goody in a unique form. July's creations include "Avo chocolate mousse" and an "Avo burger" that uses the fruit as a bun.

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AVOCADO FIX: Liza Zusman with Avocaderia holds up a toast featuring the creamy fruit.

Photo by Jordan Rathkopf

A hole problem

BY CAROLINE SPIVACK

Talk about a sinking feeling.

The city has finally filled in a recurring sink-hole that swallowed most of a Bay Ridge bike lane, but locals gripe that because the street's asphalt continues to sag, it's just going to

cave in again. Shoveling asphalt is just a temporary fix unless something is done about the underlying cause, said one community leader.

"This particular pot-hole has been there for some time. It's been filled

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Photo by Caleb Caldwell

PAST MASTER: Marcia Ely helped to curate a new exhibit on Prospect Park.

Prospect Park of the past

BY LAUREN GILL

It's a look back at Brooklyn's Backyard!

The Brooklyn Historical Society is celebrating Prospect Park's 150th anniversary with a new exhibit that looks back at the history of the massive green space. "The Means

of a Ready Escape," which opened July 12, explores the many different ways that Kings County residents have used the 526 acres of fields and trees over the years, according to one of the show's curators.

"The exhibition really looks at how the park has

been an escape for generations of people," said Marcia Ely.

The show looks at five eras of the meadow's history: its origin as a home to Native Americans, the initial plans from famed Central Park designers Fred-

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NEW DIGS

Work starting in Sheepshead Bay's 'courts'



BACK TO WORK: Build it Back plans to fix the sewers and raise the homes in a private section of Sheepshead Bay known as the "courts." File photo by Angel Zayas

BY JULIANNE CUBA
They're movin' on up!

The city's Hurricane Sandy-recovery program Build it Back plans to finally break ground this month to raise the homes in a private section of Sheepshead Bay known as the "courts," while also replacing its old and clogged sewers to prevent future flooding.

The neighborhood's private pipes, which the city is not responsible for fixing, connect dozens of homes to the public line — and after years of planning, pleading, meeting, and negotiating, Build it Back has agreed to replace the shoddy infrastructure on the taxpayer's dime — just this one time — if the homeowners agreed to form a homeowners association and maintain the sewer lines in the future.

It took months to get most homeowners on board with the association, so nearly five years after the storm ripped through and destroyed the neighborhood, it's about time repair work begins, said one Stanton Court homeowner, who originally scoffed at the idea.

"I'm feeling good about it, I'm glad it's going to happen," said Mike Rodriguez. "Hopefully everything is done according to plan."

Worker's for the city's sluggish, scandal-ridden, and over-budget Build it Back program plan to put their shovels to the dirt within the week to start replacing the failing sewers that often flood with sewage in heavy rain — they will also rebuild 17 homes and elevate 15 of them that sit about five feet below sea level in two different sections of the courts, bounded by Nostrand Avenue, Batchelder Street, Shore Parkway, and Emmons Avenue.

The project took a lot of planning in order to overcome the courts' unique difficulties — such as extremely narrow streets, wide enough only for foot traffic — so it's great to see it all finally happening, said the local councilmember.

"I believe it's one of the only places in the city where they are not only rebuilding and elevating, but also rebuilding the infrastructure. People have been living there for years with sewer backups — literally sewer water — where every time it rains there, was there was not puddles or ponding, but more like pools of water," said Councilman Chaim Deutsch (D-Sheepshead Bay). "And I believe that working with Build it Back and with res-

idents there, finally it's becoming a reality where we will improve the people's quality of life."

Some worry that the courts' rows of homes, many of which have been abandoned and overrun by cats in the wake of the 2012 superstorm, could potentially be an open invitation for homeless people to take up residence. Rodriguez and his wife have already moved out of their Stanton Court home, and in with their son in Coney Island in preparation for work to begin, but he still repeatedly checks in on his house to deter those less fortunate from moving in, he said.

"I'm concerned about the squatters coming in, that's one of the reasons why I've been staying here," Rodriguez said.

But Build it Back will ensure the security of each home, said a spokesman.

"Safety and security of residents' homes in Build it Back's care are a top priority," said Matt Viggiano. "Build it Back works with local precincts in areas where homes are under construction so that all safety concerns are addressed quickly."

Work is slated to begin this week and wrap by the end of the year or early 2018, a spokesman said.

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It's lit-erature in Park Slope

Pavilion Theater's marquee displays artists' movie-inspired haikus

BY COLIN MIXSON

Haikus on marquee. Brooklyn films inspire street art. See it in Park Slope.

Nitehawk Cinema owners handed the old Pavilion Theater's marquee to a band of local artists who are using the display to showcase haikus inspired by films set in Kings County. And while the illuminated, wrap-around sign may have been made to advertise movie showings, it could not be more perfect for the Japanese short-form poetry, according to the bards.

"The marquee itself is such an interesting canvas, in that there's enough room for a title, a blank space, and three lines of poetry," said Drew Pisarra, who started the project with poet Molly Gross. "It's practically built for haikus."

The poetic pair, who operate under the moniker



DANCING WORDS: Poet Diane Mehta wrote a haiku for "Saturday Night Fever" that now graces the marquee at the Pavilion Theater. Nitehawk Cinema

Saint Flashlight, sought out public spaces where they could bring their art to the masses and originally approached the nearby Oak Park Pharmacy at 205 Prospect Park West about

using its façade. But that plan fell through, however, and when it did, the artists did a literal 180 and saw the perfect canvas staring them in the face, according to Pisarra.

"We turned around and there was the movie theater," he said.

The owners of Williamsburg's Nitehawk Cinema, who leased the historic Pavilion Theater at 188 Prospect Park West last year, were only too happy to offer their signage for passers-by's cultural enrichment, Gross said, although the marquee will be reclaimed to display film showings when the venue reopens sometime next winter.

"Nitehawk's owners have been amazing," Gross said. "They get what we want to do, and have been very supportive."

The proprietors sug-

gested the artists focus their poems on Brooklyn-based films, leading Gross to select "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn," "Saturday Night Fever," and Spike Lee's "She's Gotta Have It" for the first round of haikus, which will emblazon the marquee until the end of the month, when three new poems will debut.

Gross penned the piece about Lee's flick, while Park Slope poet Diane Mehta and Williamsburg bard Karen Hudes were tapped to distill the others into 17 perfect syllables.

And though the haikus fit flawlessly on the Pavilion's marquee, Pisarra said the theater does not always have the letters needed to produce all of the poems, which requires some literary logistics to ensure there are enough



KINGS COUNTY BARDS: Poets Molly Gross and Drew Pisarra wrote and solicited poems inspired by Brooklyn-based films and stuck them on the marquee of the Pavilion Theater. Photo by Jason Speakman

As, Bs, and Cs.

"Your haiku may be great, but if we're short on Ys, maybe your poem gets

bumped to the next month, and we put in the poem that we have the letters for," he said.

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To bare or not to bare

Naked, all-male production of 'Hamlet' to play Prospect Park

BY JULIANNE CUBA

What a piece of meat is a man!

An all-male group of actors wearing only their birthday suits will perform a nude version of Shakespeare's "Hamlet" in Prospect Park next month. The thespians will bare their bodkins during four productions of the Bard's tragic play, starting on Aug. 10, and the actor playing Laertes says that the lack of pantaloons will force the audience and the actors to concentrate on the words, words, words.

"It raises the stakes of the play because as actors that is the one time that we are totally in the most vulnerable state, we have nothing to protect us," said Mike Press. "It also raises the stakes for the viewer, because they have to get over the fact we are naked and really listen to what it is we are saying."

Last year, Torn Out Theater group used an all-female troupe for its production of "The Tempest," so it seemed only fair to give men the same opportunity to explore body positivity through



AND THUS THEY CLOTHE THEIR NAKED VILLAINY: Thespians Miles Butler, Clinton Powell, Max Wingert, and director Pitr Strait rehearse before their naked debut of "Hamlet" on Aug. 10.

Photo by Jason Speakman

the words of the Bard, said director Pitr Strait — and he think "Hamlet" is the perfect play for those themes.

"Shakespeare had a lot of themes he returned to over and over, and one of the biggest ones was trying to be yourself, to learn who you are, learning to truly be yourself — to thy own self be true. That free-

dom to be yourself has a lot to do with the body," said Strait, who lives in Park Slope. "We wanted to find a story that has this idea of trying to be free, even when everyone in the world is telling you that you're crazy — to tell a story where men are free in their own bodies."

The actors will begin the show in costume, but

will show off more and more of their too, too solid flesh as the show goes on, said Strait. The lack of costumes will be especially challenging for the actors playing female characters, who will have to use body language to embody the more restricted life of a woman in the 1500s.

Presenting the Bard in the buff may make some a little wary, but pushing people's boundaries is the point of art, said Strait.

"Art is supposed to make people uncomfortable — I really love that idea if your life is stable and secure then maybe it's good to have art come in and shake you up a bit, and if your life is full of anxiety and worry then art should be there to say you're not alone, it's okay to be who you are," he said. "That's what we are trying to do."

"Hamlet" at Prospect Park's Music Pagoda (at the north end of the Nethermead, enter at Ocean Avenue and Lincoln Road in Prospect Lefferts Gardens, www.tornouttheater.org). Aug. 10–12 at 5:30 pm, Aug. 13 at 2 pm. Free.

HISTORY

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erick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux; its first 100 years; the park's graffiti-ridden decline in the 1970s and '80s; and its modern incarnation under the management of the Prospect Park Alliance.

Among the memorabilia and photos are pic-

tures of people practicing archery, playing lawn tennis, and riding in swan boats — all once-popular activities that might surprise visitors, said Ely.

"I think people are going to enjoy seeing all of the things the park was used for back at the turn of the century," she said.

At one point, 300 lawn tennis courts covered the Long Meadow and the

Neathermead, and a "water carousel" on Prospect Park Lake featured a 200-person yacht that circled the water.

Ely hopes that the exhibit will enlighten people about the rich past of the grassy knoll, which she says offers a more complete connection to nature than any other spot in the boroughs.

"Being able to go to the

park and look down to the meadow and see nothing but grass and trees is really unlike anything else in this entire city," she said.

"The Means of a Ready Escape" at Brooklyn Historical Society [128 Pierrepont St. at Clinton Street in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 222-4111, www.brooklyn-history.org]. Open Wed–Sun; noon–5 pm. \$10.



ALL ABOARD: The seasonal tug-boat-turned-eatery the Wheelhouse offers nautical fare and refreshing summer cocktails. Industry City

INDUSTRY

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Avocaderia [238 36th St. between Second and Third avenues in Sunset Park, (347) 227-0350, www.avocaderia.com]. Open Mon–Fri, 9 am–4 pm; Sat–Sun, 11 am–5 pm.

Light eating

The latest sit-down eatery in Industry City, Filament at the Landing, offers a high-brow twist on pub grub. Culinary craftsmen Vincent Chirico, who also runs two Mediterranean-inspired spots on the distant isle of Manhattan, has brought some of more well-known dishes to the better borough, including charred octopus served on a bed of jalapeno pesto, and a chicken-under-a-brick dish. In addition to bold bites, the space features a courtyard bar, pool tables, and shuffleboard.

Filament at the Landing (220 36th St. between Second and Third avenues in Sunset Park, (347) 417-8494). Open Mon–Tue, 9:30 am–8 pm, Wed–Fri, 9:30 am–10 pm, Sat, noon–10 pm, and Sun, noon–6 pm.

Booze cruise

Belly up to seasonal tug-boat-turned-eatery the Wheelhouse, now

landlocked in an Industry City courtyard. The team behind the Manhattan-docked vessel Frying Pan are serving up a slew of nautical fare, including lobster rolls, ceviche tacos, and spiced shrimp banh mi, along with beer, wine, and cocktails. You can settle at any of the benches around the courtyard, or migrate mere steps to the Brooklyn-themed mini-golf course for a round.

The Wheelhouse at Industry City Courtyard 5/6 (enter on Second Avenue between 34th and 35th streets in Sunset Park, (347) 902-4829, www.fryingpanwheelhouse.com). Open Mon–Wed, noon–8 pm; Thu–Fri, noon–9 pm; Sat, noon–8 pm; Sun, noon–6 pm.

All that and dim sum

Downtown dumpling spot Yaso Tangbao will open its second location at Industry City later this month. The Shanghai-inspired shop will feature on-site seating for on-site eating of its delicious dumplings, which include blue crab and pork soup dumplings. Noodles, soups, and other traditional delicacies are on the menu.

Opening soon at 253 36th St. between Second and Third avenues in Sunset Park in Industry City.



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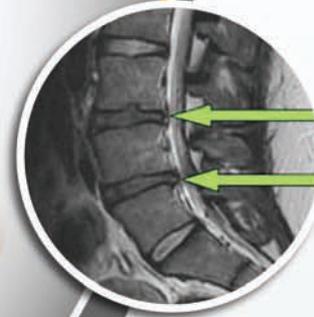
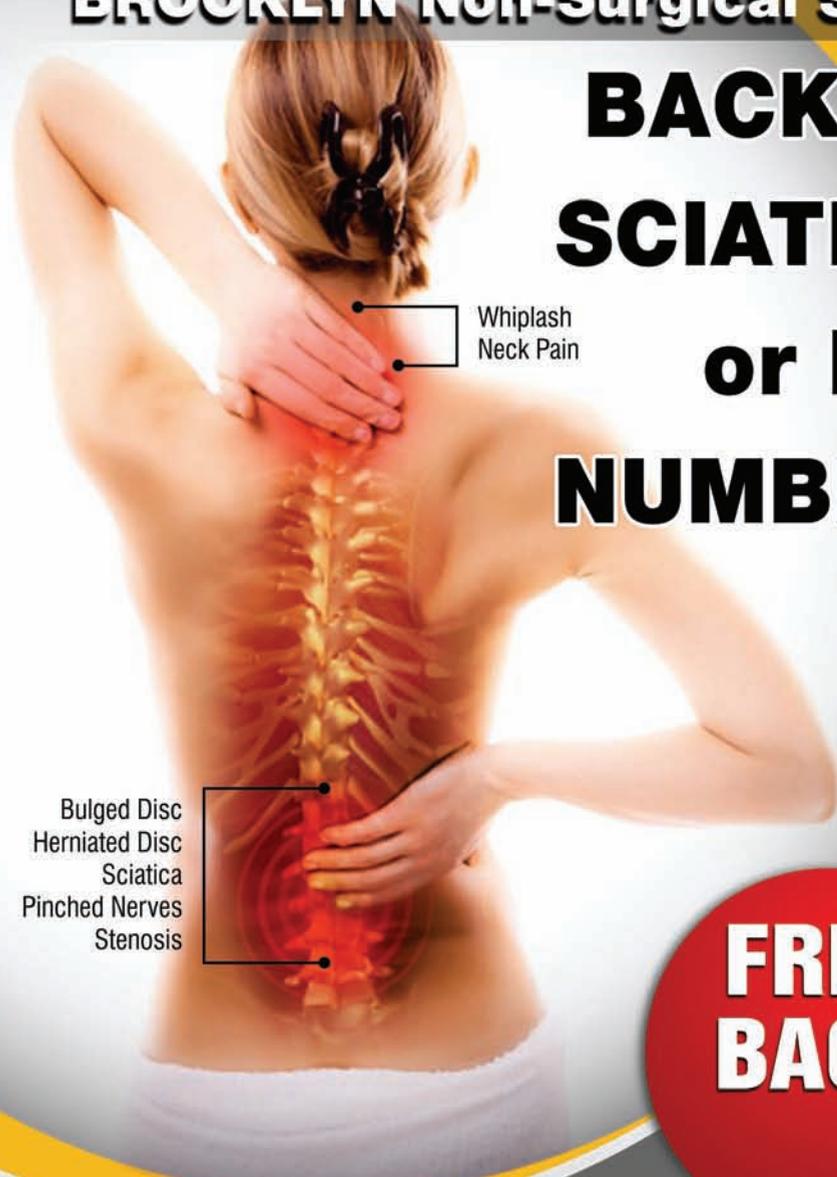
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Canarsie's ferry hail

Residents start a petition demanding boat stop

BY JULIANNE CUBA

They don't want to miss the boat! Canarsie residents are busy collecting hundreds of signatures for a petition they plan to deliver to City Hall demanding Mayor DeBlasio keep his word and look into adding the coastal neighborhood as a new stop on the city-wide ferry system, the local pol said.

"Hopefully we'll get thousands of interested people to sign on this petition asking the Mayor to seriously consider putting the ferry in," said Councilman Alan Maisel (D-Canarsie). "I want the Mayor to know there's a lot of interest in having a ferry and it wouldn't be an uneconomical venture, people will use it."

Hizzoner promised a roomful of residents at a town hall last September that a ferry stop at the federally-run Canarsie Pier was "on the table" — but now nearly a year later with no progress, locals are fed up with being left high and dry, and so decided to take

matters into their own hands, said resident Marc Want from the Canarsie Improvement Association, the group that launched the petition.

"We want it at Canarsie Pier because it can very nicely service all of Brooklyn South, people can walk to it from quite a number of different places, can ride bikes in, or drive in, there is parking available at the pier," said Want. "It's just a great access point."

And the response so far has been incredible — about 1,000 people have already signed their names, said Want.

"We have a lot of people. We're not only getting signatures as we walk through the park and go to meetings, but people come up to us and ask for forms," he said. "This morning I was in the park and a lady hands over to me four pages — she felt it's such a great idea."

And with the impending closure of the L train, which shuttles Canarsie straphangers across the

East River into Manhattan, the need for more speedy and direct transportation is even more dire — because sitting on a bus in bumper-to-bumper traffic across the bridge wastes nearly three hours of the day and is just not practical for commuters, said Want.

"Some of us take the bus into the city periodically for work and some of us drive, and it puts a tremendous strain on individuals to spend three hours a day traveling, because the bus takes about an hour-and-a-half — that's just too much," said Want.

The current South Brooklyn ferry route — which sails from Bay Ridge to Sunset Park, Red Hook (with a weekend detour to Governors Island), Brooklyn Heights, and Dumbo before heading to Manhattan — is already overloaded, forcing the Economic Development Corporation, which oversees the service, to buy three additional, larger boats.

But many still feel the routes leave out several transit-starved



PIER PRESSURE!: Canarsie resident Marc Want from the Canarsie Improvement Association is collecting hundreds of signatures to send to the mayor to bring the ferry to Canarsie Pier. Photo by Georgine Benvenuto

neighborhoods, including Canarsie, Coney Island, Brighton Beach, and Marine Park, said Councilman Mark Treyger (D-Coney Island).

But building out a proper loading dock at Canarsie Pier is more complicated than at other sites along the current routes since it's owned and operated by the

National Parks Service, and it's unclear at this point whether it would require an act of Congress or simply some administrative work to get it up and running for the ferry.

Locals are hoping that a fat stack of petition signatures will prove to the city that demand is high for a ferry stop in Canarsie.

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A HOLE

Continued from page 1

and then sunk again, and filled and sunk," said Josephine Beckmann, district manager of Community Board 10. "It'd be more effective to fix whatever is causing it. Clearly it's being undermined by something — they have to determine what and fix it."

It took the city nearly two weeks to investigate the two-foot-wide cave-in on 72nd Street and Third Avenue after Beckmann alerted the Department of Transportation. But the agency referred the issue to the Department of Environmental Protection, which handles water infrastructure, assuming that a leaky pipe was to blame. But that agency determined that the street is sinking because of nearby Con Edison infrastructure, according to a city rep.

Now repairing the real issue falls to Con Edison, which did not respond to requests for comment.

In the meantime, the city temporarily paved the gaping hole, which obstructed a bike lane, but shoddy work still left the street with a deep dip and cyclists would rather bike in the street than roll over the uneven ground, said one block local.

"Today I had to basically avoid it, which defeats



SHODDY WORK: The city temporarily patched a cave-in on the 72nd Street bike lane on July 6, but the shoddy repairs left a dip that cyclist Alejandro Suarez felt was perilous for bikers. Photo by Georgine Benvenuto

the purpose of a bike lane," said Ridgite Alejandro Suarez, who felt the difference rolling over the repairs on July 6. "They patched it but it's not level and is still a hazard."

Since then, city workers have returned for additional repairs, but the street is still not level, and instead of a dip, a small mound of asphalt creates a separate hazard for cyclists.

It is absurd that the depression has turned into such a debacle, said another cyclist.

"This is such a simple

thing to get right. Instead of just dumping asphalt, flatten it out," said Ridgite Rich Molinaro. "But what's even the point? Because won't it just sink again? Instead of dragging their feet addressing the problem, do it all right at once."

Workers returned yet again on July 10, and placed a metal sheet over the trouble patch.

It has been more than a decade since that stretch of 72nd Street has been repaved and possibly longer since it received major upgrades, which is probably why the city is having trouble keeping the pavement even, said Beckmann.

"That street is really bad," she said. "When you travel up it, it feels like you're driving over speed bumps, but that's just the street."

Community Board 10 has advocated for city funds to overhaul the street for years, but to no avail. And it does not help matters that no one wants to take responsibility for the street.

Investigators with the Department of Environmental Protection may have determined that it's up to Con Edison to get to the bottom of issue, but it wouldn't be the first time in the area the agency passed the buck to the utility company when the responsibility actually fell to the city, said Beckmann.

PARK CARS

Continued from page 1

lows the mayor's 2015 decree that pulled vehicles from the meadow's West Drive, which let Coney Island-bound motorists cut through Brooklyn's Backyard during the evening rush and generally saw less traffic than the Downtown-bound route.

Fewer cars travel on the East Drive in the summer than in cooler seasons — about 300 per hour as compared to 400 per hour in the fall — and the city expects the ban will have negligible effects on streets surrounding the park, according to the mayor's office.

Studies conducted by the Department of Transportation after West Drive's permanent closure found

that the most affected drivers' travel times increased by less than a minute, and the agency will hold similar tests to determine how closing the East Drive affects its users' morning commutes.

DeBlasio's announcement delighted car critics who have decried vehicles in the park as a crime against nature for more than a decade, according to the head of a group that advocates for alternative transportation, who said he plans on pushing the city to make the temporary prohibition permanent.

"It's a big move in a much safer direction and our focus now is in making it permanent," said Paul Steely White, of Transportation Alternatives. "We hope to make a convincing case to the mayor that leaving the

park in place for park users is the best policy, and should be the rule, not the short term exception."

White, who spent a week monitoring motorists on the East Drive with his team earlier this year, said drivers routinely broke the road's 25-mile-per-hour speed limit, creating a hazard for park pedestrians.

The anti-car activists shared their findings with the city, but White said that the temporary ban was more likely motivated by the growing popularity of alternative travel options and an approaching September primary.

"I think politicians understand that this has always been a common sense issue, but now it's a popular issue," he said. "Being an election year, no decisions are taken lightly."

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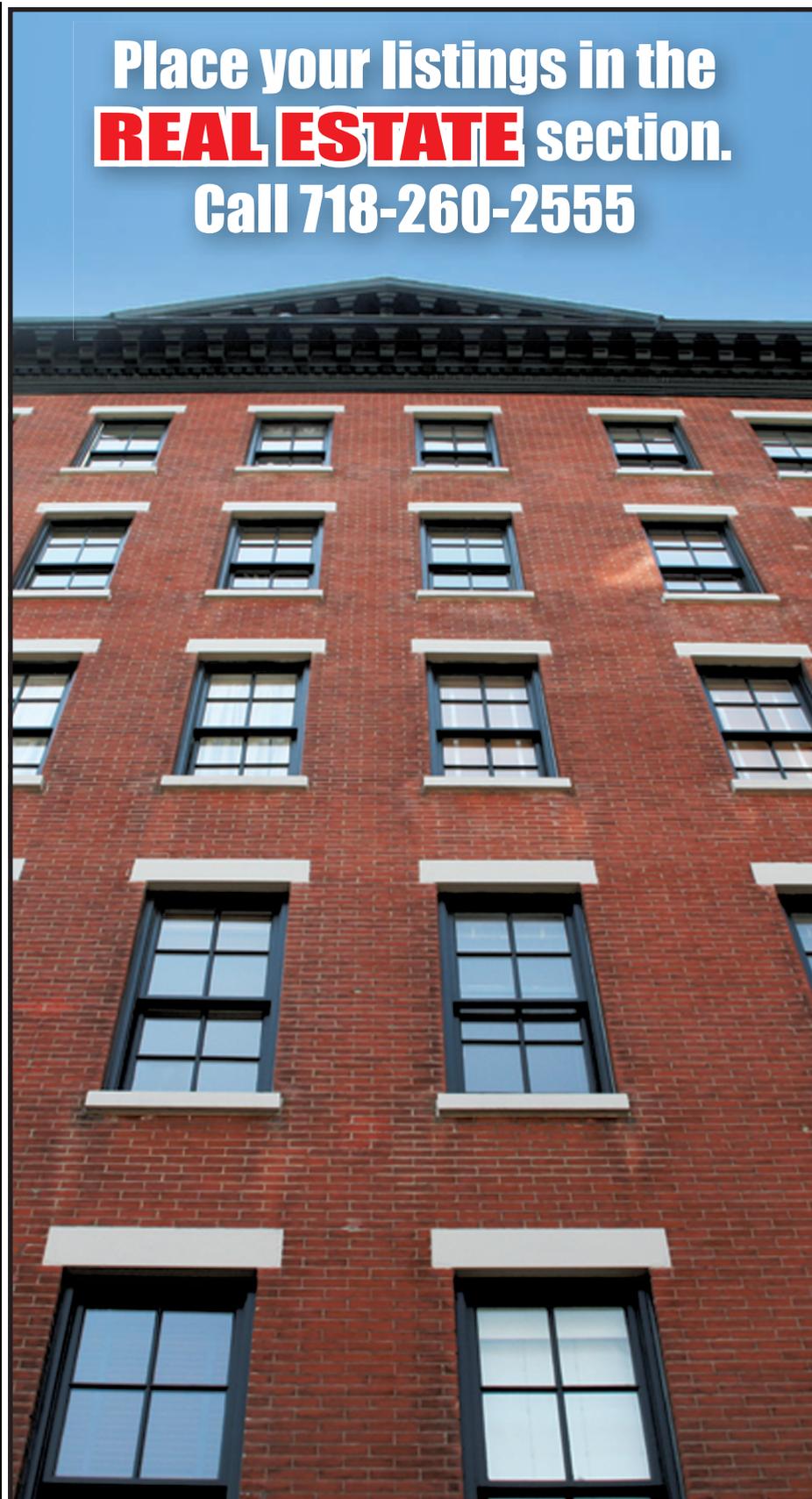
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