

The Park West Tenant

Vol. 10 Number 2

The Newsletter of the Park West Village Tenants' Association

MAY 1985

STATE LEGISLATURE TO VOTE ON HOUSING AND TENANT LEGISLATION JUNE 5-6

Can You Go to Albany?

Tenants from New York City will head for Albany June 5 to join others from all over New York State to make their presence felt as the State Assembly and Senate consider the extension of laws governing rent stabilization and co-op/conversion. PWV residents are invited... urged... to join.

Why Go?

A strong tenant presence signals legislators we pay attention to the bills they sponsor and the votes they cast. It has been evident in past years that senators and assembly representatives are very conscious of our presence and that it strengthens the position of legislators favoring tenant protection.

What Are the Arrangements?

Buses sponsored by the New York State Tenant and Neighborhood Coalition (NYSTNC) will leave from the Upper West Side and other points in Manhattan the morning of June 5. One bus will return late that night. Most tenants will remain overnight as the Legislature frequently meets far into the night when dealing with expiring laws and their extension.

The buses will arrive in Albany for a 1 p.m. gathering of all the tenants. A press conference is scheduled for 2:30 p.m., after which tenants are expected to fill the legislative galleries.

To make Reservations

Bus reservations may be made by returning the slip below. Tenants will be responsible for making their own reservations for overnight accommodations. NYSTNC has reserved a block of room at the

Albany Motor Inn
Tel: 1-518-465-8811
Cost: \$30 single
\$39 double

Please state you are with the NYSTNC group.

Meals: Your own estimate. There will be an optional wrap-up lunch at the motel for \$10 each.

Should these accommodations run out, NYSTNC will help arrange others. NYSTNC phone: (212) 964-7260.

Help! Can anyone fix a Sanyo phone-answering machine? PWVTA's doesn't work. If you are able and willing, please call Carl Harm, 662-2610.

What Choices for the Legislature - and You?

More or Less Protection?

Rent regulation laws "sunset" (expire) June 5; bills to extend them and provide other protections to tenants, and competing bills to limit protection, are before both the Assembly and the Senate.

Laws regulating the co-op/condo process—to safeguard both renters and prospective buyers—sunset June 30. A rash of proposals are before the Legislature: some strengthen, some weaken, the position of "insiders" to retain choice over what happens in their buildings in the face of owner pressure for a quick turnover of apartments at higher prices and rentals.

Opportunities for PWV'rs

Some of the proposed bills affecting PWV residents are briefly summarized below. Letters from the tenants to our representatives can affect the passage of these and other bills. Emergency Tenant Protection Act (EPTA)—which establishes rent stabilization in New York City—"sunsets" and is up for renewal. Some bills would extend EPTA statewide.

A 6409—amends EPTA to give local Rent Guidelines Boards subpoena power to require landlords to open their books, thus enabling future rent increase to be based on actual income and expenditure rather than present estimated cost increase.

S1905-A 2695—would limit Major Capital Improvement (MCI) rent increases from the present 15% to 6% per year, and would make the increase a temporary surcharge rather than a permanent rent increase. Opposing banks and landlords who have financed improvements in over 400,000 apartments since 1977 claim that future rehabilitation will be impaired.

A 6046—amends co-op/condo conversion protection laws to extend full tenant protection statewide.

A 6047—raises from 15% to 25% the number of tenants who must purchase their apartments for a non-eviction conversion plan to go ahead, and will require that they be bona fide tenants in occupancy rather than outside purchasers. This would help assure that Park West Village residents who want to remain residents be the ones to choose—not vacant apartments and outsiders.

A 5242—clarifies responsibility for repair and maintenance for non-purchasing tenants after conversion.

A 6484—Tightens the "warehousing" standards by reducing from 10% to 5% the proportion of apartments a sponsor can hold vacant before and during the red herring period (no limit now during the red herring period).

Too Few Incentives to Build

Unless and until more incentives to provide low and moderate income housing are incorporated in the budgets, legislation and regulations of federal, state and city governments, tenants will remain on the defensive. The need is glaring: the 1984 Housing Needs Analysis prepared by New York State's Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) showed a gap of a million housing units between what is available and what is needed. This shortage squeezed 40% of all renters in the State to pay more than 30% of their income for shelter, with the number of people unable to pay and consequently becoming homeless on the increase.

State programs to get more housing built or rehabilitated are few. Housing Trust Fund of \$50 million was passed this spring—helpful but a drop in the bucket. The Federal Government has cut back by more than half since 1980 its housing support through HUD and the Farm Mortgage Home Administration, and proposes another 50% cut this year by amalgamating the HUD and FMHA programs. (Senator Moynihan has made one rescue proposal.) New York City put forward in February its first major housing proposals in eight years: though critics say these fall short of being the "comprehensive strategy" they claim to be, they are a controversial start.

Subsequent newsletters will deal further with City and Federal proposals. Letters particularly to our Senators urging more action to increase housing availability are very much in order now.

WHOM TO WRITE (all in Albany, New York)
Governor Mario M. Cuomo, Executive Chambers, 12224
Hon. Stanley Fink, Speaker, New York State Assembly, 12248
Hon. Warren Anderson, Majority Leader, N.Y. State Senate 12247
Hon. Alexander (Pete) Grannis, Chairman, Housing Committee, N.Y. State Assembly, 12248
Hon. John Daly, Chairman, Housing Committee, N.Y. State Senate, 12247
Hon. Leon Bagues, New York State Senate, 12247
Hon. Edward C. Sullivan, N.Y. State Assembly, 12248

To get copies of bills: Call 1-800-342-9860. Ask for bill by its number.

Reservation for the Albany Legislative Session June 5-6

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I enclose a check of \$25.00 made payable to PWVTA for round-trip fare.

Please mark check: for June 5 bus trip.

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Housing/Community Calendar

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I will have to return the night of June 5.

or

I can stay over for the full session to return June 6. I will arrange accommodation.

Name(s) _____ Apt. _____
(please print)

Address _____ Tel: _____

Please return this slip and your check by June 2 to:

784 — Apt. 10-G 788 — Apt. 4-0 782 — Apt. 3A 372 — Apt. 10-P 382 — Apt. 19-W
392 — Apt. 7C 400 — Apt. 18S

Note: If you would like to go and cannot pay the full fare, please inform your building representative. A small fund will be available for that purpose. Residents are also invited to contribute to PWVTA for the Travel Fund for that purpose.

Housing/Community Calendar

May 19 — 2 p.m. — Lincoln Center — demonstration for affordable housing and tenant protection at Annual Republican Fund Raiser.

May 23 — PWVTA Legal and Grievance Committee meets: 8 p.m., call 662-2610 for place.

May 30 — 8 p.m. — PWVTA Executive Board, Trinity Church, 161 W. 100th St.

June 3 — Rent Guidelines Board to hold public hearings on rent increases at Police Plaza Auditorium, behind Municipal Bldg. Call 349-2262 for exact time: probably 9:30 a.m.