

ALLIANCE UPDATE

The 93-94th Street Preservation Alliance Remains Active Responding to Challenges to Open Space in Our Neighborhood



The 93-94th Street Preservation Alliance was formed in 2009 in response to news that Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School planned to expand its 94th Street buildings into the existing open space (or “donut”) between its 93 and 94th Street structures. Many neighbors on Central Park West and the side streets were alarmed by the initial plans, which included bright lighting and an air conditioning and heating system that would have run 24/7 sending disruptive noise and exhaust to neighbors on all sides.

The Alliance, as well as others, fought the initial plan at Community Board Meetings. In response, Columbia Prep prepared a second plan which involved sinking some of their new structure into the “donut.” Members of the Alliance spoke at the Landmarks Preservation Commission hearing on the project. As a result, the Commission required further changes to lower the structure in the donut. Construction on the project is expected to begin sometime this year. We will be keeping tabs on the project, in efforts to keep noise and disruption as minimal as possible.

In order to collect funds for legal advice, The Alliance became a charitable group affiliated with the Open Space Institute. Because of this alliance we continue to respond to challenges to open space that threaten our neighborhood, particularly on Columbus Avenue. Years ago, when tenements were torn down to make room for the Upper West Side Urban Renewal District, broad sidewalks and plazas at street corners were created to compensate for the new bulky, tall apartment houses. Since zoning for the Renewal District expired a few years ago, landlords have been seeking (and getting permission) to build into that open space on Columbus Avenue. Along with other neighborhood groups The Alliance testified against a misbegotten plan to fill the open space on Columbus between 95 and 96th Streets. As a result, the landlord backed down and the space remains.

However, we understand that plans are in the works that may enclose the Food City plaza at 94 Street and Columbus Avenue, and intend to work to maintain and improve this open area that is an amenity to our neighborhood.

You can help by adding your voice when it is needed. Keep posted about the Alliance’s activities by joining our email list. Just send your email address to BL_Michaels@msn.com to receive occasional bulletins.



PRESIDENT’S POTPOURRI

Dear 336 CPW Friends and Neighbors,

Please mark your calendars and plan to join your friends and neighbors at the 2011 annual meeting. The meeting will convene at 7:00 PM EDT on Monday evening, May 9, 2011. The venue, same as last year, is the Alexander Robertson School, located at 3 West 95th Street, half a block west of CPW on the uptown side of the street. We expect a full agenda, and we also would like to maintain our strong attendance record of the past few years (in person and by proxy). Meeting materials have been distributed, and we hope you will deposit your proxy in the white ballot boxes in the lobby, whether or not you plan to attend in person.

Well, that dopey groundhog got it all wrong. He had no clue when Spring was coming, and, until last week, neither it seems did we. But be of good cheer, keep the faith and enjoy the explosion of color in the park. Spring has finally arrived. It is the same story in the building – generally speaking – with one or two notable exceptions.

We were waiting for delivery of the last three terra cotta stones to complete the remedial work in the cornice which had been promised successively for late November, December, January and so on. They arrived in February but were not really “discovered” until late in February and the installation work did not begin until March. Cutting a long, sad story a bit short, the last stone did not fit. How this happened is something of a mystery (“an error crept in”), despite the volumes of email exchanges, learned discussions by all involved, unexpectedly modest efforts on the part of the participants to move “blame” to others, and several meetings, one of which I attended. So, the better part of two days was spent by all concerned – Shaws, Melvin, DNA, Orsid and Sergio, plus more than half a day from me – to insure that the specifications for the new replacement-replacement cornice stone would be correct and the manufacture of the unit would perfectly fit the opening left in the cornice. To insure success, we extracted another “mirror image” stone to the missing one out of the cornice – happily intact – and shipped it to Shaws in England as a model for what we need in the last stone. Now we are waiting for those two – the model and the last missing piece. With a bit of good fortune, we may have those two back and ready to be installed by the end of May: at least that is what we heard – with caveats – from Shaws. As my father used to say “The good Lord willing and the creek don’t rise,” we may have the cornice finished and in first-rate condition by the first of June.

The last big obstacle to “getting finished and back to normal” – do we remember what that is? – is the northeast corner steel, lintel and brick work. In brief, the work from the ground up through the 5th floor – lintels, steel, waterproofing and masonry -- is complete. The steel work consists of removing rust top to bottom and welding plates over deteriorated sections that require structural reinforcement. In some places, there were actually large holes rusted through the entire column. The remaining steel work runs from the 6th to the 16th floors and, as this is written, did, in fact, commence on April 14. The estimated completion date – subject to weather and other vagaries – was seven working days from start, so we are getting very close. Upon completion of the steel work and the waterproofing which follows behind the steel work, the masons will return to re-

install the brickwork from the 6th to the 16th floors. The estimated time for completion of the masonry is approximately two floors per week – subject to the usual vagaries and uncertainties. In simple terms, I will tell you we are flogging the project and everyone concerned to get this done as early in June as possible, and in all events by the summer solstice. Keep all your digits crossed.

As I have previously reported, our counsel is engaged in compensation discussions with counsel for the engineers who performed the defective work in 2005-2007 as well as their insurance company. We have placed our claims on the table and have given preliminary damages estimates. The other side is reviewing those. We have entered into a tolling agreement which suspends the statute of limitation to facilitate these discussions. The building is represented in these negotiations by David Rubin of Golenbock Eiseman Assor Bell & Peskoe LLP. David was introduced to you last July at the meeting to update shareholders about the remedial repair work. He will be in attendance and available to answer your questions at the annual meeting.

We have concluded our auction process for storage room #4 on the first floor. As a result, we now are receiving \$600 per month for that room for the next two years. This represents an 85% increase, which parallels the increase we achieved for storage room #5 achieved back in 2009. We are continuing to work to let storage room #3, which remains available. We are also working to achieve a satisfactory new agreement for storage rooms #1 and #2. These are important initiatives, as we work to keep operating results in line with our aggressive budgeting for 2011. We are working to keep spending in line as well, although the strain of oil price increases and real estate tax increases is presenting a continuing challenge.

The market for apartments in the building is showing resilience. The closing of 14-A occurred early in the new year. Recently, apartment 4-F went to contract and should close, subject to conditions (mortgage, board approval, etc.) sometime in the second quarter. Apartment 2-C has gone to contract and is expected to close mid-year sometime. Moreover, we understand there may be two other apartments that either have been on the market or will be shortly. In the meantime, we continue to work generally in the direction of supporting the marketability of apartments in the building, as well as toward all initiatives that support strong valuations.

The board completed its counsel selection process in March. We have selected Mr. Eric Balber of the firm of Balber, Pickard, Maldonado & Van Der Tuin, P.C. to act as our general outside counsel. Mr. Balber will be present at the annual meeting and we will introduce him to shareholders. He has an extensive resume of co-op and condo clients, many on Central Park West, and a lengthy career of experience in the field. Please feel free to bring any questions you may wish to ask him.

With very best regards,

Mike Schell

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STAFF PROFILE

Flavio Perez



Flavio Perez has been the nighttime porter for 336 for thirteen years. He started off as the night man and has continued in the role, even though he sometimes fills in during the day. He prefers to work at night. As he says, he has grown used to the nocturnal life and likes working by himself.

Flavio grew up in New York City on the Lower East Side. He could hear as a young child but lost most of his hearing by the time he was a teenager. Flavio was very close to his grandmother who raised him. During his childhood she took him to Europe where they traveled to France, Germany and England. He fondly remembers London, especially.

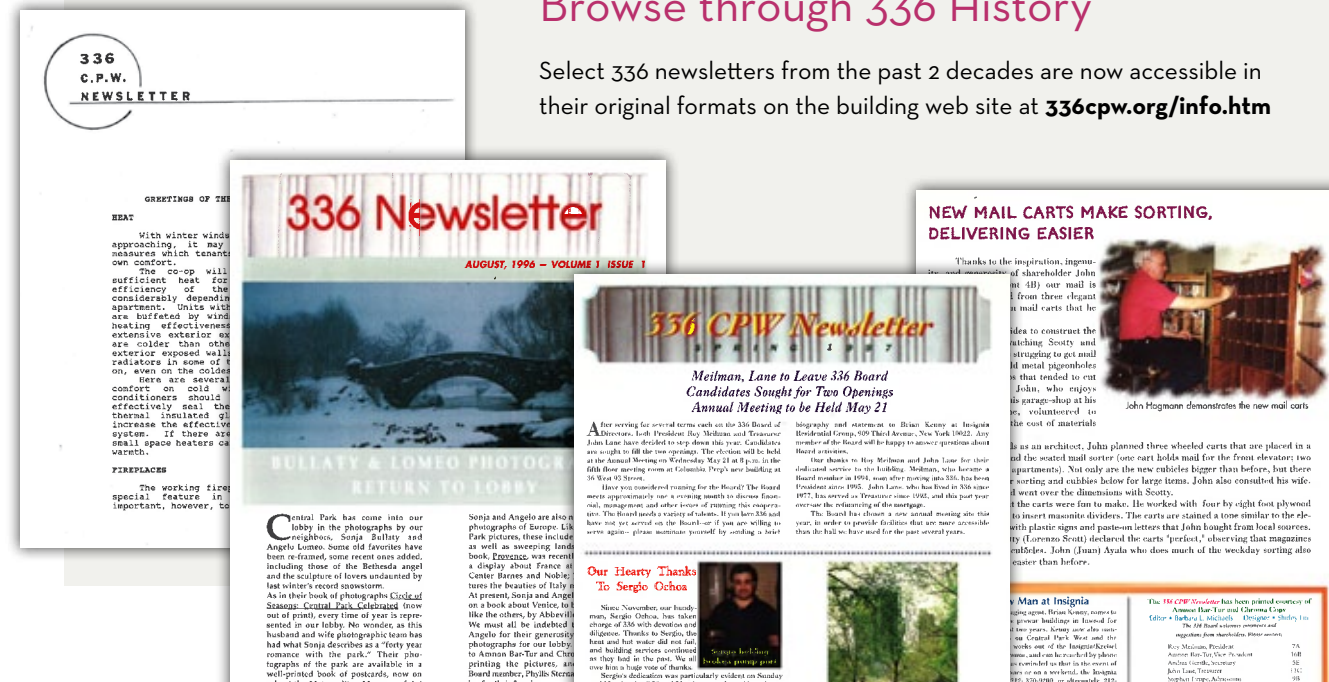
In his free time Flavio is an avid fitness enthusiast- working out in the gym every day and keeping up his mileage. When the weather is good he likes to run 5 miles a day around the streets of his neighborhood in Nassau County. He also spends time with his fourteen-year-old daughter who recently moved back from Guatemala and lives close by with her maternal grandmother.

He loves to read – especially the New York Times, Post and Daily News every day. Sorting the papers at 4 a.m. and scanning the front pages sparked part of his interest in news.

He is looking forward to his new hearing aids. Flavio's compromised hearing makes it hard to do everything from watching television—he has to turn the sound up so loud he's afraid it will disturb his neighbors—to having conversations with residents of 336. It is one reason he prefers the night shift—it is just easier for him to manage. But Flavio has high hopes that with support, there is the possibility of seeking treatment and getting new hearing aids that might dramatically improve his daily life.

Browse through 336 History

Select 336 newsletters from the past 2 decades are now accessible in their original formats on the building web site at 336cpw.org/info.htm



Central Park has come into our lobby in the photographs by our neighbors. Sonja Bultay and Angelo Lomeo. Some old favorites have been re-framed, some recent ones added, including those of the Bethesda angel and the sculpture of lovers undaunted by last winter's record snowstorm. As in their book of photographs *Circle of Seasons: Central Park Celebrated* (now out of print), every time of year is represented in our lobby. No wonder, as this husband and wife photographic team has had what Sonja describes as a forty year romance with the park. Their photographs of the park are available in a well-printed book of postcards, now on

At present, Sonja and Angelo on a book about Venice, for like the others, by Angelo Lomeo. We must all be indebted to Angelo for their generous photographs for our lobby to Amnon Bar-Tar and Chris printing the pictures, an Board member, Phyllis Steiner

Since November our husband, Sergio Ochoa, has taken charge of 336 with devotion and diligence. Thanks to Sergio, the heat and hot water did not fail, and building services continued as they had in the past. We all owe him a huge vote of thanks. Sergio's dedication was particularly evident on Sunday

biography and statements to Brian Koenig at Insignia Residential Group, 509 Third Avenue, New York 10022. Any member of the Board will be happy to answer questions about Board activities.

Man at Insignia
The 336 CPW Treasurer has been printed courtesy of Insignia. Brian Koenig, comes to a private building in Insignia for three years. Keep your eye on the corner Central Park West and the border of the Insignia/Residential area, and on the way to Insignia. It is a great view of the city of New York as seen from the Insignia. Brian Koenig, Treasurer, Insignia Residential Group.

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