

## A New Public Middle School is Coming to 75 Morton Street

In 2007, the Spitzer Administration listed several excess state properties to be sold. I was notified one was in my district, 75 Morton Street in the Far West Village. I wanted to ensure it would be used, at least in part, for educational purposes and was pleased when the Assembly took my advice and prevented a sale from occurring without a prior appraisal.

That set the stage for organizing parents, elected officials, and others to demand that the building be used for a desperately needed middle school. Local parents helped keep the spirit alive by holding rallies, amassing petitions, and delivering an oversized post card to education officials in Albany. In 2010, the need became even greater when the Department of Education relocated the Greenwich Village Middle School to the Financial District, leaving the neighborhood without a single middle school. This effort would pay off and last year the City committed itself to purchasing the property from the state for \$40 million.

However, before 75 Morton Street could officially be handed over to the School Construction Authority (SCA), which is the agency responsible for building new schools within the bound-

aries of New York City, the existing facilities of the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) needed to be relocated. The space selected for this relocation was located downtown in an area hit particularly hard by Sandy and the relocation was delayed.

Finally, on March 21st a deal was struck between the City and the State, and the building was officially turned over to the SCA. The City plans a middle school of at least 800 students there, and I am committed to ensuring that the Community is fully engaged with the SCA and the Department of Education (DOE) when it comes to planning the facility. I am also committed to ensuring that 75 Morton Street remains a traditional public school, and that none of the seats are usurped by a charter school wedged into the building.

While this is terrific news, the need for more public school seats remains, as more and more families are living downtown and our elementary schools remain incredibly overcrowded. We will continue to work with parents and education officials to address these needs.



Assemblymember Deborah Glick with Joan Malin, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of NYC.



Assemblymember Deborah Glick speaking at a rally to support the unionization of fast food workers.

## Understanding this Year's Budget and Its Process

The New York State budget process begins with the Governor issuing an executive budget. The Assembly and Senate then hold joint hearings on that proposal. Afterward, each house passes its own resolution reflecting their priorities. Yet through this process, the executive budget remains the primary document and there are some legal restrictions on the ability to change its programmatic language. Negotiations between the three parties work to reconcile these different sets of priorities.

This year's budget provided opportunities for celebration and discontent. We, in the Assembly, worked hard to provide an extra \$435 million more than last year for NYC schools. This is more than \$203.2 million over the executive budget proposal for our schools.

The budget also dedicates \$300 million per year for two years for Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) in NYC. We were happy to increase the number of preschoolers who may participate in this program, which is being rolled out this year in phase one.

We had some success in adjusting the flawed implementation of Common Core standards and cancelling the inBloom student data system contract, including having all stored data erased. Regrettably, the governor and Senate seized the opportunity to assist charter schools by restricting the Mayor's ability regarding co-locations.

In the area of higher education, we provided more funds for SUNY and CUNY designed to provide resources for critical maintenance on aging structures and building of new 21st Century research and classroom structures. For the first time in 14 years, we were able to increase funding for the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) which particularly helps CUNY, as they have a majority of TAP financed students.

The budget also offers tax relief for New York City residents by providing \$85 million in tax credits for homeowners, condominium and co-op owners, and renters by implementing a "circuit breaker" plan. The "circuit breaker" will run for 2 years and will factor in household income to determine the property tax break.

There was an attempt to include additional Speed Cameras for New York City (NYC) and to extend the program into Nassau and Suffolk counties. Unfortunately, we were not able to complete the proposal but there is a commitment by the Speaker to include up to 120 more cameras at school sites in NYC and over 50 cameras in both counties on Long Island. Speeding, especially in school zones, is one of the most egregious and preventable causes of death and injury. I look forward to working with the rest of the Assembly on this safety measure.

## The Outsized Role of Charter Schools

While it may come as a surprise to some, I am not entirely opposed to the idea of charter schools. The original intent of charters was to create environments where students who were unable to be adequately served by traditional public schools would have their needs met. Charters had the ability to operate outside of certain regulations in order to ensure those students' success. An example of this sort of school can be found in Broome Street Academy (BSA), a charter high school located in my district whose student body is predominantly made up of homeless and foster youth. BSA is located in the same building as The Door, a service agency for youth, and their partnership allows BSA to offer students the unique supports they need to thrive that a traditional public school may not be able to offer due to funding and personnel constraints.

Whereas BSA represents a fulfillment of the intent of those who originated charter schools, many charter school operators represent a divergence of that intent. Charter schools were never meant to replace traditional public schools, and they were certainly never

meant to serve neighborhoods where traditional public schools have been successful. Charter networks now seek to open locations in districts like Manhattan's District 2, which has many of the best schools in the City and whose parents and Community Education Council have clearly stated that they neither want or need charters serving their children. Charter schools often portray themselves as responding to the impassioned pleas of parents; however, the last few years have shown us case after case of charter schools expanding into neighborhoods over the strong objections of parents, who want to fight to maintain the integrity of their local neighborhood schools.

The recent budget battle has again shown the power of charter school interests and the outsized role they have taken on in discussions about the future of public education. Charter schools serve roughly 6% of the total student population in New York City. Special interests that support charters have made concerted efforts (including a \$5 million ad campaign to support the changes made in the

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*Assemblymember Deborah Glick at an event with State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli.*



*Assemblymember Deborah Glick, Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal, and Assemblymember Richard Gottfried at a rally to ban fracking.*

## The Damaging Impact of Illegal Hotels

When I first moved to Greenwich Village, I fell in love with the streetscape but quickly realized that the people who lived in my community were the reason to stay. Larry, the "Collector" of Bedford Street, Hestor on Grove Street with the bugle, artists painting classic Village views on street corners—these were the unique personalities that gave the Village its character and although I understand that change is a part of life, not all change is created equal. One change that has helped erode the character of the neighborhood is escalating rents for both residences and commercial space. New York has been an enterprise that thrived on mixed-income and mixed-use neighborhoods. Without affordable housing options, our neighborhoods erode, life-long residents are driven out, and the cohesive community we have relied on for stability disappears.

New York has been my home for my whole life. I spent my childhood living in Queens and eventually moved to the West Village where I have lived for my entire adult life. I, like many of you, have watched neighborhoods I love completely evolve into something new. Some of these changes are for the better, some are not. The bond that holds a community together, regardless of all of these changes, is rooted in the ability to access affordable housing.

We can't just focus on fighting to add new affordable units to the market. Protecting the affordable housing stock that we already have is equally important. A major, often overlooked, threat to our affordable housing is short-term sublets, commonly referred to as illegal hotels.

Under a New York State law, no residential unit in a building with 3 or more units can be sublet for less than 30 days. The main intent of this law was to prevent landlords from diverting rent-stabilized units to short-term rentals, which is more profitable. Renting a room in your apartment for less than 30 days is not illegal under law, but you should check to ensure it's not a violation of your lease. Additionally, short-term sublets are often a violation of local New York City zoning in a residential area, as it is considered commercial activity. So, even if your

lease, co-op, or condo grants you the ability to sublet, doing so for under 30 days is still illegal.

Some people argue that the sharing economy means that renting or owning your apartment means you are free to do with it as you like. But this "sharing" mentality can actually be quite selfish when the concerns of one's neighbors are summarily dismissed. In small buildings, having one unit used for transient tenants puts the other tenants' safety and quality of life in jeopardy. With strangers coming and going, permanent tenants' safety can be compromised. Visitors tend to cause disruptions at various times of day and night. In hotels, there are more stringent fire and occupancy code requirements. Hotels have sprinklers, appropriate egress, and inspections for occupancy. The fire routes and safety instructions are posted in the rooms and lobby so anyone, including first time visitors, are able to respond appropriately to an emergency. These regulations do not apply to most residential buildings.

Furthermore, when you rent a hotel room in New York City, a hotel occupancy tax is collected. Presently, online rentals are not collecting or paying these taxes because this activity is illegal. While attempts to allow for tax collection may materialize, the collecting of taxes alone does not mitigate all the other concerns raised by short-term rentals of residential units.

We have all heard that one of the popular online sites, AirBnB was recently valued at around \$10 billion. The pressures for corporate profit will continue to grow, but I believe we should not allow the safety of our communities, or our housing stock, to be traded for corporate gains. I know we all live in an increasingly expensive city, and extra income is helpful, but short-term rentals are a serious threat to our neighborhoods.

If you suspect someone in your building is using an apartment as an illegal hotel, you should call 311 and report it. Feel free to then reach out to my office with the complaint number, and we will follow up on the inspection.

# Fun Day Trips



*After a long, hard winter, it's time to celebrate the coming summer. To help, I've compiled a list of some of my favorite day trips in New York.*

## Quick Trips:

### **The Cloisters/Fort Tryon Park**

99 Margaret Corbin Drive, New York, NY  
212-923-3700

<http://www.metmuseum.org/en/visit/visit-the-cloisters>

The Cloisters museum and gardens, a branch of the Metropolitan Museum of Art devoted to medieval European art and architecture, include elements dating back to the 12th century in a serene setting. Nestled in Fort Tryon Park, the museum is an otherworldly oasis found right here in Manhattan.

Directions: Take the A train to 190th Street

### **Rockaway Beach and Boardwalk**

Beach 3 Street to Beach 153 Street and  
Boardwalk to Atlantic Ocean, Queens, NY

<http://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/rockawaybeach/>

Enjoy the beautiful beaches of the Rockaways and help support the area's post-Sandy revitalization. While the Rockaways were hit hard, they've come back, along with plenty of new restaurants and activities for those visiting.

Directions: Take the A train to Far Rockaway/Mott Avenue

### **Brooklyn Botanic Gardens**

150 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY  
<http://www.bbg.org/>

From the Cherry Trees collection to the Shakespeare Garden, the 52 acre Brooklyn Botanic Gardens offer an escape from urban life in the middle of Brooklyn. Once you're done exploring the gardens, the Brooklyn Museum, Grand Army Plaza, and Prospect Park are all a quick walk away if you want to make a day of it!

Directions: Take the 2 or 3 train to Eastern Parkway

## Getting Out of the City:

### **Storm King Art Center**

1 Museum Road, New Windsor, NY  
(845) 534-3115

This roughly 500 acre open air museum contains what is possibly the largest collection of outdoor contemporary sculpture in the country. The museum includes permanent and temporary exhibits, and is a perfect destination for those who want to spend a day outside exploring art.

### **Hyde Park, NY**

[www.historichydepark.org](http://www.historichydepark.org)

Explore Hyde Park, home to the Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site, which includes the FDR Presidential Library and Museum and the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt. After touring the Roosevelt home, you can visit the Eleanor Roosevelt National historic site at Val-Kill, or the Vanderbilt Mansion historic site. So much of New York and the country's history can be found here!

As an added bonus, you can reach the FDR Presidential Library and Museum by public transportation—simply take Metro-North to Poughkeepsie and take a short shuttle from the station. For more information on the shuttle, call the National Park Service at 845-229-5320.

### **Bear Mountain State Park**

Bear Mountain, NY  
(845) 786-2701

Located just 45 miles from New York City, Bear Mountain State Park is a fabulous place to escape the City. Bear Mountain features a large play field, lakes and river access, as well as a swimming pool, a museum, a zoo, a merry-go-round, and perhaps most importantly, beautiful views of the Hudson River Valley.

## The Outsized Role of Charter Schools *From page 2*

budget) to ensure that they maintain a central position in ongoing debates about public education. The focus on charters has allowed these schools to distract from the significant needs of traditional public schools, which serve the vast majority of our students, as well as the monopolization of much needed resources, whether they be financial resources or the physical space that is so often at a premium in the many districts facing severe overcrowding.

All of this clearly shows that charters have shifted their function as sites to serve specific groups of students whose needs are not being met. Whether for-profit or non-profit, many are businesses which seek to grow their market share. In order to do so, they will continue to compete with traditional public schools for resources and, as has happened in other cities, may seek to eliminate traditional public schools altogether. In addition, these more corporate-supported charters cherry pick students and parents. One of the most clear determinants of student success is involved parent(s) and draining

those parents from struggling traditional schools only deepens the challenge for educational excellence.

While I believe that this is not the goal for many operators, and many charter schools like BSA seek only to better serve a unique population, the push for increased resources for charters should be acknowledged as part and parcel of a broader push towards the privatization of public services like public education and against unionized workers, and needs to be recognized as a serious threat to neighborhood public schools.

Therefore, it is increasingly important that those of us who support traditional public schools persist in raising our voices and fighting on their behalf. I am immensely proud of the schools in my district, but I recognize the struggles that they face, and the impact of underfunding, overcrowding, and co-locations throughout the City. I am, of course, happy when any child gets a good education. I just don't think that you have to eviscerate the public school system to do it.

Deborah Glick's

## NEIGHBORHOOD UPDATE



ASSEMBLYMEMBER  
66<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT  
NEW YORK CITY

*HOW TO REACH US:*  
Call 212-674-5153 or  
email [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:glickd@assembly.state.ny.us)



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### Helping Veterans Transition

The high cost of engaging in war isn't only the horrible loss of life, or the staggering financial cost, but also the impact on civil society of our failure to successfully transition soldiers back into civilian life. Upon returning home, veterans confront a myriad of hurdles in returning to civilian life. From employment opportunities, to their mental health needs, to determining what, if any, course of higher education they should pursue, veterans can feel overwhelmed and unprepared to make many of these decisions. There are two programs that I would like to highlight that are assisting veterans in getting the services they need.

One organization that has been created to help veterans is the **Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA)**. Through their Rapid Response Referral Program, they offer a one-stop resource for Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans that helps veterans navigate their transitions and achieve their post-military goals by providing case management including New GI Bill Enrollment, Unemployment Compensation, VA Healthcare Enrollment, Mental Health Services, Legal Services, Employment Services, Housing Services, Free Tax Services. Veterans in need of support can contact IAVA by emailing [transition@iava.org](mailto:transition@iava.org) OR calling 1-855-917-2743.

I also worked with **SAGE (Services and Advocacy for LGBT Elders)** for a program with Senior Veterans to get their status changed. There have been substantial changes to the status of LGBT soldiers. Many LGBT citizens served when there was rampant discrimination as a matter of government policy. They were separated from service with a "less than honorable" discharge which made them ineligible for services from various benefits, including health care through the Veterans' Administration (VA). SAGE will work with these veterans to obtain a change in their discharge status. This will create new opportunities for veterans to access important federal benefits that would save money for the state and localities which now may provide assistance by getting discharge status changed after the demise of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell.' It is estimated that shifting a minimum of 150 veterans from public assistance to federal VA benefits would return \$850,000 to the State for the first year of the LGBT Elder Veterans Initiative. I'm proud to have worked hard to get this program funded. It is a matter of justice.



*Assemblymember Deborah Glick  
at a VOCAL-NY rally celebrating  
the passage of a 30% rent cap for  
Homeless & At-Risk People With  
HIV/AIDS.*