



DAVID YASSKY
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SANITATION & SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

August 6, 2009

Mr. Edward Skyler
Deputy Mayor for Operations
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Deputy Mayor Skyler,

I am writing to bring your attention to the overwhelming amount of stalled construction sites in and adjacent to my district. According to the Department of Buildings, out of the 397 stalled construction sites in the City, 35 are located in the 33rd District and an additional 15 are located within just a few blocks of the 33rd District. There are 33 stalled development projects in Williamsburg alone.

As a result, my district is now littered with thousands of feet of construction fences that have become an unavoidable and dangerous eyesore for the community. Many of these fences have not been adequately maintained and are frequently in such a poor state of disrepair that they have collapsed on the streets thereby blocking sidewalk access and opening gaping holes to dangerous and unsupervised construction sites.

Some of these abandoned developments now house large construction pits that have filled up with rainwater – including one 60,000 square foot site across the street from McCarren Park – and have become infested with mosquitoes and overrun with rats. Additionally, as these locations have fallen into a state of disrepair and neglect, they have become a magnet for neighborhood trash. Most recently, self-described “gutter punks” have come to Williamsburg to squat in some of these empty and unguarded sites so that they can have a base for their illicit drug use, panhandling, and fighting.

The cumulative effect of all these stalled development projects on the quality of life in my district can not be underestimated or ignored. I am therefore urging the administration to devote its energy and resources to addressing this blight immediately. As such, it is critical that the police monitor these construction sites to ensure that there are no squatters or trespassers on these lots. It is also incumbent on the Department of Buildings to insure that all construction fences are safe, upright, and in good condition. The Department of Sanitation must be given the resources necessary to keep all these

streets clean and the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Health must ensure that these sites not become overrun with rat and mosquito infestations.

Additionally, I ask that you work to ensure that Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) pay particular attention to my district regarding the Housing Asset Renewal Program (HARP). Converting unsold condominiums, unrented apartments and stalled construction sites into affordable housing will not only create long promised affordable housing but will also go a long way to improving the quality of life of the 33rd District.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Yassky". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping tail.

David Yassky
Council Member, 33rd District