



As spring began to bloom, Woodlawn came together to re-dedicate Healy Field. I joined Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, Congressman Eliot Engel and members of the Woodlean Boys and Girls Club to honor Sean Healy and kick-off the season.



On May 2 I joined Assembly Member Mark Gjonaj to re-name Mosholu Parkway South as Margaret J. Mack Triangle, honoring Ms. Mack's passion for civic engagement and improving her community.

SENIOR CITIZENS, KEEP YOUR RENT FROM INCREASING, IF YOU...

- ▶ Are at least 62 years old
- ▶ Have a household income of \$50,000 or less
- ▶ Live in a rent regulated apartment
- ▶ Spend more than 1/3 of your income on rent



THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
MELISSA MARK-VIVERITO, SPEAKER

LEARN MORE

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NYC.GOV/RENTFREEZE

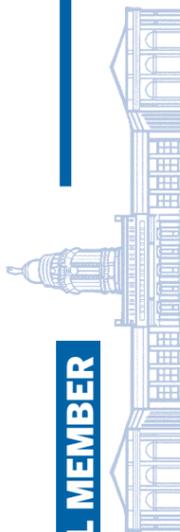
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ASK FOR SCRIE (SENIOR CITIZENS RENT INCREASE EXEMPTION)

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NEWS FROM COUNCIL MEMBER

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NEWS UPDATE • SPRING 2015

FROM COUNCIL MEMBER

Andrew

Cohen

11TH DISTRICT, BRONX

DEAR NEIGHBOR,

It has been a long but successful winter, with spring delivering plenty of results!

Residents of the Northwest Bronx have been waiting to see the Van Cortlandt Park pedestrian bridge project come to life since 1999. This particular project has been a priority of mine since I was a Van Cortlandt Park activist and the construction of the bridge was the subject matter of one of the first meetings I had after taking office. The addition of a pedestrian bridge to the city's third largest park would allow members of its neighboring communities to easily access both sides of its 1,146 acre landscape, which was unfortunately divided after the construction of the Major Deegan Expressway in 1939. With the help of my colleagues, Borough President Diaz, Speaker Heastie, Senator Klein, Congressman Engel and Assembly Member Dinowitz, I am happy to say that we were able to work with the Department of Environmental Protection and the NYC Parks Department to jump-start this stalled project and make it a reality.

I wrote and co-wrote two pieces of legislation that were signed into law by Mayor Bill de Blasio on May 5. The first, Intro 555-A, requires the Department of Finance to have ombudspersons on staff to help make NYC Rent Freeze Programs more accessible for seniors, persons with disabilities and their landlords. The second, Intro 433, will require the "baby-proofing" of apartment building common areas, tamper-resistant electrical outlets must be

installed in any new construction and caps must cover electric outlets in existing buildings, in order to protect curious children from an electric shock.

I am happy to report that Participatory Budgeting was a huge success for District 11! With over 1,300 votes, you were able to determine how \$1 million dollars of capital funding was spent on community improvements. I take the responsibility of allocating tax dollars very seriously. I found, the first time I did it, to be a heavy responsibility. Having the community share in that responsibility made the process more inclusive and I enjoyed hearing your suggestions as to what our neighborhoods really need.

As always, my office is here to help; many people use my office for our free notary service, NYC Rent Freeze (SCRIE/DRIE) applications and many other issues. If you have a problem that is important to you, then it is important to us. Feel free to send an email, call or drop-in to our centrally located office to personally meet with a member of my staff who will be happy to help you.

Sincerely,

Andrew Cohen
Council Member

@ANDREWCOHENNYC



WORKING TO IMPROVE ACCESS-A-RIDE

On April 23 the Committee on Mental Health, with the Transportation Committee and the Committee on Aging held a joint hearing about accessible transportation and connecting those with disabilities to our transportation network.

Access-A-Ride is an essential method of transportation for people who find using public transit to be too great of a challenge and there are many improvements that can be made. Priorities of mine include stream-lining the application process and reducing the need for appeals.

At the City Council, we are working to decrease wait times and increase reliability for those who are eligible to receive Access-A-Ride services. As the Chair of the Mental Health Committee, I look forward to making sound improvements to this important issue.

GUIDE-A-RIDE BUS SCHEDULES ARE BACK IN THE NORTH-WEST BRONX

After receiving several complaints from members of my constituency concerning the lack of bus schedules posted at bus stops throughout the district, I requested the MTA bring back Guide-A-Ride bus schedules to the Bx7, Bx10, Bx20, BxM1, BxM2, BxM18 and Hudson Rail Link stops.

Previously, not all of the bus routes were displayed on each Guide-A-Ride canister. As a result, many residents were unable to plan their bus routes before getting on. The Operations Planning and Scheduling units of New York City Transit, MTA Bus Company and Metro-North (Hudson Rail Link) have come up with a solution: combine similar bus routes in one panel.

For example, in North Riverdale, the Bx7 and Bx10 will share a panel. In South Riverdale, the Bx10 and Bx20 will share a panel. Throughout the entire route, the BxM1 and BxM2 will share a panel; leaving one panel on each for the Hudson Rail Link and the BxM18.

MOSHOLU PARKWAY RENOVATION

Mosholu Parkland is a major thoroughfare in my district that connects the Bronx River Parkway to the Henry Hudson Parkway. However, it not only is a thoroughfare but a parkland that is utilized by the surrounding communities. It has been brought to my attention that the last major renovations to the parkway were completed in 1979 and it is clear that upgrades to both the streets and the parkland are sorely needed.

I recently hosted a town hall on how we can improve Mosholu Parkway in conjunction with Council Member Torres, Assemblyman Gjonaj, the Friends of Mosholu Parkland and the Bedford Mosholu Community Association. We were joined by community residents, parks and transportation advocates, FBIA representatives and city officials, all of whom walked around the room enthusiastically sharing their thoughts on what improvements are needed for the parkway, the surrounding parkland and side streets. My office has compiled the list of the suggestions offered and I am looking forward to continuing a dialogue with the community, Department of Transportation and the Parks Department on how we can implement many of these ideas.

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING



PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING RESULTS

Thousands of residents throughout District 11 came out to cast their vote in the Participatory Budgeting process in April. Out of 11 projects, residents of the community were permitted to vote for five projects from four different categories: education, parks and recreation, transportation and libraries. Of those 11 projects, the top five that you voted to receive funding are:

- **M.S./H.S. 141 AUDITORIUM RENOVATION**
 - o **\$375,000** will be used to upgrade the 55 year old auditorium used by 1,400 students and several other community organizations. Installation of new stage drapes and replacements of wooden seats that are in disrepair.
- **BUS COUNTDOWN CLOCKS**
 - o **\$120,000** will be used to install bus countdown clocks at Bx1, Bx10, Bx16 and Bx34 bus stops throughout Wakefield, Bedford Park, Woodlawn, Riverdale, Kingsbridge and Norwood to alert commuters as to how many stops away their next bus is.
- **P.S. 24 TECHNOLOGY EXPANSION**
 - o **\$70,000** will be used to purchase two computer carts consisting of 36 laptop units each to help students in their current curriculum and prepare them for future subject matter, as well as college readiness.
- **SPUYTEN DUYVIL PLAYGROUND RENOVATION**
 - o **\$400,000** will be used to reconstruct the existing wading pool as an accessible spray shower and install new pavement, fencing, seating, planting and utilizes.
- **VAN CORTLANDT LIBRARY**
 - o **\$300,000** will be used to replace the outdated a leaky roof to prevent water damage to the facility.

With the Mosholu Library and P.S. 8 projects coming in as close runner-ups, I decided to also allocate funding to them as well:

- **P.S. 8 AUDITORIUM RENOVATION**
 - o **\$450,000** will be used to replace the outdated seating in the 60-year-old auditorium, a common area use for community meetings and performances throughout the year.
- **MOSHOLU LIBRARY WINDOW REPLACEMENT**
 - o **\$300,000** will be used to install new windows and frame to help insulate the facility during the summer and winter months.

CITY HALL UPDATES



- **Passing Legislation: Intro 555-A and Intro 433**
On May 5, Mayor Bill de Blasio signed two pieces of legislation into law.

Intro 555-A, legislation I co-wrote with Council Member Julissa Ferreras, will require the Department of Finance (DOF) to designate employees of the department to serve as experts and ombudspersons for the NYC Rent Freeze Programs. The addition of these employees will help make NYC Rent Freeze Programs more accessible and the application process easier. As the chair of the Mental Health Committee, I am doing everything I can to ensure that the elderly and disabled who are eligible for NYC Rent Freeze Programs are able to easily enroll and stay in their homes.

Intro 433, legislation I wrote requiring tamper-resistant receptacles to be installed in any new construction and caps covering outlets in existing buildings.

Playing on their hands and knees, a child's curiosity will draw them to outlets that are on their level, in which they will insert whatever - keys, pins, paperclips or their own fingers. An electric shock upon a child's body can result in severe burns, injuries or even death. While most parents take steps to "baby-proof" their own homes, the common areas of their buildings are often left unprotected.

I'm proud to say that this legislation balances all concerns, weighing the risk of just one curious child being electrocuted with the severity a single shock can cause upon their small bodies against the relatively low burden of installing these easy and inexpensive devices. It's an inexpensive solution to a gap in our current laws, which left apartments' common areas exposed and children's safety at risk.

- **Resolution 426: Calling on the State to eliminate the sunset provisions from NYC rent freeze programs.**

I have been working diligently with Council Member Helen Rosenthal on Resolution 426, which calls on the state to eliminate the sunset provisions included in the major 2014 expansion of eligibility for the NYC Rent Freeze Program, as proposed in state legislation by Assembly Member Brian Kavanagh and Senator Diane Savino.

The 2014 expansion, which raised the maximum annual income eligibility to \$50,000, has provided a rent freeze to tens of thousands more seniors and tenants with disabilities, will expire and be repealed automatically in July 2016 if the state does not renew the law. A repeal of that expansion would place those seniors and tenants with disabilities in danger of losing their homes due to rising costs.



I had a great time welcoming seniors from throughout the district to City Hall as part of LiveOn NY's Advocacy Day.



On May 8th, I joined Speaker Carl Heastie, Assembly Member Jeffrey Dinowitz, Senator Jeff Klein, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. and Congressman Eliot Engel to announce that the long-awaited pedestrian bridge will be coming to Van Cortlandt Park!