

## ***THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS***

Cathedral Station ♦ P.O. Box 1316 ♦ New York, NY 10025 ♦ (212) 866-6378

Website: ThreeParksDems.org ♦ Email: ThreeParksDems@aol.com

### ***President***

Theresa Canter, Interim

### ***Editor***

Ray Schwartz (tapsch@nyc.rr.com)

### ***District Leaders***

Bob Botfeld  
Cynthia Doty

### ***State Committee***

Lynn Thomas

## **JANUARY 9, 2009**

FEATURED SPEAKER: Wayne Barrett, Senior Editor, The Village Voice  
"An Analysis of the Presidential Primaries"

DATE: Wednesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008

TIME: 8:00 PM

PLACE: American Youth Hostel (HI-NY)  
891 Amsterdam Avenue at 103<sup>rd</sup> Street

ROOM: Chapel

### **AGENDA**

**7:45 PM Sign-in**  
**8 PM Call to Order**

1. President's Report & Announcements
2. District Leaders' Reports
3. Wayne Barrett, Village Voice
4. State Committee Reports
5. New Business
6. Adjournment

### **CALENDAR**

**Wed., Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008 8 PM**  
**Three Parks Meeting,**  
PLACE: HINY, 891 Amsterdam Ave. at 103<sup>rd</sup> St.

**Fri., Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008**  
**Last Day to Register for the Presidential Primary**

**Mon., Jan. 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008 Martin Luther King Jr. Day**  
**MLK March & Peace Program, 2 PM**  
Place: Holy Name Church, Amsterdam Ave & 96<sup>th</sup> St

**Wed., Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 8 PM**  
**Three Parks Board Meeting**  
Place: HINY, 891 Amsterdam Ave. at 103<sup>rd</sup> St.

**Thursday, Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>, 6:30 PM**  
**Community Housing Forum, Sen. Bill Perkins**  
Place: Goddard Riverside, 593 Columbus Ave.

**Tues, Feb. 5, 2008 Presidential Primary**

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Theresa Canter

Well, I never expected to be writing this column again...but, I assure you it is only temporary! As most of you know by now, Josh Pepper has stepped down as President of Three Parks to take a position with the NYS Attorney General's office. As First VP I will take over the duties in the interim until the next board/officer election this February. We thank Josh for all of his hard work and dedication to Three Parks, and we wish him good luck in his exciting new venture!

And, I wish a Happy New Year to everyone! A happy year it will be indeed when we take back the Oval Office... and take back our country in November of 2008! With focus on the upcoming Presidential Primaries, our special guest speaker for the next Three Parks meeting on **Wednesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>**, will be **Wayne Barrett**, the investigative reporter and senior editor for **The Village Voice**. He is the author of many articles and books about politicians, in particular one Rudy Giuliani. He will give us his analysis of the upcoming national election, specifically the front runners and their prospects in the early primaries, and discuss the grand illusion of Giuliani and his rise in the Republican polls. This should prove to be an interesting meeting! Put it on your calendar now, and don't forget to invite your friends and neighbors. We have a lot on the agenda for our January meeting; we will start promptly at 8:00 PM, so please come on time!

Many thanks to our key speaker at our November meeting, **Aziz Huq**, a Deputy Director of the Brennan Center for Justice. He gave a very interesting and well-received presentation on presidential power and national security. In addition, we were privileged to hear from the **NY Solidarity Committee for Katrina/Rita Survivors** and their update on recovery and housing issues in New Orleans.

Three Parks will also be having its annual

membership meeting in February. At that time, all officers and members of the Board of Directors for 2008 will be elected. Please take a look at the proposed slate printed elsewhere in the newsletter. Nominations can also be taken from the floor.

In order to vote at Three Parks meetings you must be a member in good standing. New members are eligible thirty days after application and the payment of dues. All members must be current with their dues and have attended at least one club meeting within the previous six months. So, if you haven't paid your Three Parks dues for 2008, now is the time to do it!

Well, Three Parks continues to live up to its reputation! We had another wonderful holiday party! The Chapel looked very festive, (thanks to our State Committee Woman, Lynn Thomas and crew), the food and drink was plentiful, the turnout was great and the DJ (**and dancing**) was terrific! Please check out this link <http://www.threeparksdems.org/Album/photos.html> to see just how much fun we had! Thank to Steve Max for taking the pictures and posting to our website. And, many thanks to all of those who worked hard to pull it together, and to all of you who brought food for the table and canned goods for the food pantry. A good time was had by all!

### Zoning Sneak Attack

By Steve Max

With our new neighborhood zoning having just gone into effect, Mayor Bloomberg's Planning Commission proposes a city-wide redefinition of the zoning law (a "text amendment") which will allow developers to increase the value of units within existing limits. Community Boards and organizations around the city were notified just last week and given only until January 7<sup>th</sup> to comment on the changes. We need to respond quickly and strongly as this is only the beginning of attacks on down-zoning throughout New York.

The law now requires setbacks of the upper stories of new buildings letting more light reach the street and creating a less walled in feeling.

The new law, among many other things, eliminates some setback requirements allowing higher street walls with apartment space shifted from the rear of the building to the more valuable street side. Another proposal allows some rooftop utility towers (bulkheads) to rise four stories above the zoning limit. Developers can then move basement utility functions up to the roof freeing basement space for saleable uses. Broadway heights could go from 14 to 18 stories

That all of this is happening over the holidays with many people away or absorbed in festivities can hardly be a coincidence. What is the City trying to hide by denying the Community Boards adequate time to evaluate these proposals? They are the only public agencies with the expertise and independence to do so. Worse, unlike actual zoning changes, Community Board opinion here is only advisory. The real fight will be in the City Council.

The amendments come in the guise of a proposal from the NY Chapter of the American Institute of Architects which claims that the only outcome will be, "flexibility to encourage variety and design excellence." In this case beauty is not truth. More valuable units equal more profits, giving developers greater incentive to demolish even larger existing buildings, buildings that tend to have affordable apartments. Surely architects and their developer employers realize this.

In strong opposition are Landmark West, WestSiders For Responsible Development, Three Parks District Leaders Cynthia Doty and Bob Botfeld and Assemblyman O'Donnell who said in a statement to CB #7, "I advocate for the disapproval of this amendment...The proposed change is counter to the lengthy democratic process undertaken by my community to downzone and protect the character of this neighborhood."

## Next Steps

- **Community Board #7. Wednesday, January 2, 2008**, 7PM at Temple Anshe Chesed, 251 West 100th Street (Broadway-West End Avenue). It is vital that the Board rejects these proposals on both substantive and procedural grounds. The Land Use Committee made a good start toward this at their December 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. **PLEASE ATTEND THIS MEETING.** Call Lynn Max at (212) 666-3129.

- **Write and call Council Members Inez Dickens and Melissa Mark Viverito**  
Tell them to vote NO on the American Institute of Architects Zoning Text Amendments.

### Inez Dickens

250 Broadway

New York, NY 10007

212-788-7397

[dickens@council.nyc.ny.us](mailto:dickens@council.nyc.ny.us)

### Melissa Mark Viverito

250 Broadway

New York, NY 10007

212-788-6960

[viverito@council.nyc.ny.us](mailto:viverito@council.nyc.ny.us)

- **Write and call Borough President Scott Stringer.**  
Office of the Borough President, 1 Centre St. NY, NY 10007. 212 669-8300.

As with the Community Boards, the Borough President has no formal jurisdiction, but he can be a powerful voice.

Details and updates at

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

## **Judicial Pay Raises**

by Steve Strauss

On December 13th the State Senate passed a judicial pay raise bill by a vote of 57 to 0 (Senators Schneiderman and Perkins both voted for the bill). It's past time for the State

Assembly to do the same. Judges and members of the State Legislature have not had a pay increase since 1999. Judges are paid \$136,000 per year, less than the starting salary for first year lawyers at big NYC firms. It is widely assumed that the Legislature is holding judicial pay increases hostage to increase the opportunity to raise legislative salaries. The State Senate has now dropped that strategy and raised the pressure on the Assembly. It is time for Speaker Silver to stop damaging our judiciary and allow a vote for judicial pay increases.

What's the Speaker afraid of? While he could pass a legislative pay increase over the Governor's veto in the Assembly, he's afraid that Senate Democrats would not support the override of a Governor's veto in the Senate. (The Republican majority in the State Senate is too small to override a veto without Democratic votes.) He's probably right, but, in Albany's style of doing business he needs to find another issue to tie to legislative pay increases.

Condolences are extended to Three Parks Board Member Mary Ann Marks on the death of her grandson.

Condolences are extended to the family and friends of Olivia Bradshaw, a long time member and election inspector.

## **Why No Endorsement**

By Lynn Max

Recently a club member asked me why the club hasn't made an endorsement in the Democratic New York State Presidential Primary. Actually, the officers and board members did discuss the possibility of endorsement informally and concluded that the club was divided, with members supporting and working for many different candidates. What is the point, we thought, of trying to achieve consensus where none exists? More importantly, it is crucial that we go into the general election with the greatest degree of unity behind the Democratic nominee whoever he or she is. That

unity and the good feelings of members working together that we had in the 2004 Kerry/Edwards storefront would not be promoted by the negativity that can result from endorsement debates. No member came to the Board or to a meeting formally suggesting that an endorsement be made, so the matter was never discussed further.

This doesn't mean that the club has been sitting out the election. On the principle of "Captains Choice," we had a day of tabling at which we had nominating petitions for all the candidates who had petitions available in New York. Nominating petitions for candidates were also available at the November meeting. After that, people went their own ways to work for the candidates of their choice. Some active members traveled to campaign in other states. Others went to rallies and fundraisers. Three members petitioned to get themselves on the ballot for convention delegate without club endorsement. Of course we will all come together behind the Democratic nominee with unity, organization and Three Parks spirit and determination.

Happy New Year!! See you at the polls on Super Tuesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, and On To Democratic Victory in 2008!!

## **DISTRICT LEADER REPORT**

By Cynthia Doty

Happy New Year to all! Let's hope that 2008 brings not only major political change (meaning the Democrats win back the White House and gain a veto proof majority of progressive Democrats in the House and Senate), but also a return to peace and diplomacy. This will take a lot of hard work and effort, but all are possible.

We in Three Parks expect to have many opportunities to show our campaign skills from the Presidential primaries, to the November election, from the Congressional races to the State Senate elections. We will be organizing lots of volunteer activities from phone banking to canvassing trips to fundraising events. It

promises to be a very exciting year!

Looking back on 2007 we saw the community-based planning movement grow throughout the city. Our down-zoning of the area from 97<sup>th</sup> to 110<sup>th</sup> Streets was one of the successes of that struggle. Three Parks played a leading role in that campaign for which we should all feel very proud. In other places, however, the communities were once again denied. The City Planning Commission, for instance, approved Columbia's zoning plan over Community Board 9's negative vote, saying that Columbia's needs should have priority. Instead of requiring Columbia to genuinely collaborate with the community and produce a comprehensive proposal that respects the communities' vision for their neighborhood, City Planning and then the City Council reverted to business as usual and approved Columbia's plans with various agreements attached, including promises of huge amounts of city money, specific details of which have still not been made public. Apparently back room deals are still the mainstay even though hundreds of community members participate in endless planning meetings, hearings and governmental review sessions. And even after a community does win a grass roots campaign, as we did in CB 7, various behind the scenes maneuvering can easily undermine those results. The Jewish Home and Hospital tried to redefine their commitments to the Stern Building residents and now City Planning wants to change various architectural codes which would alter major aspects of our new plan.

So the struggle continues, locally and nationally. But rest assured Three Parks will be out there on the frontlines in 2008. Please come and join us!

### **Membership Dues for 2008**

It is time to renew your membership to Three Parks. Renewals can be mailed using the membership form in the newsletter or dues can be paid at Three Parks Meetings.

### **Newsletter Submission Deadline**

January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008 will be the deadline for submissions for the February newsletter. Please send articles to Ray Schwartz at [tappsch@nyc.rr.com](mailto:tappsch@nyc.rr.com).

### **Three Parks Holiday Party Pictures**

Visit the Three Parks website to view all the Holiday Party pictures.

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

### **Nominees for Three Parks Officers and Board Members**

The Nominating Committee has met and reported out the nominees for the next Board of Directors as follows:

#### Officers

President: Daniele Gerard

First VP: Judy Wood

Second VP: Theresa Canter

Recording Secretary: Lauren Williams

Corresponding Secretary: Ray Schwartz

Membership Director: Lynn Max

Treasurer: Ellen Flax

#### Board Members at Large:

Dan Berger

Jock Davenport

Arlene Geiger

Ernestine Gallagher

David Kogelman

Marie Lunn

Maryann Marks

Patrick O'Shaughnessy

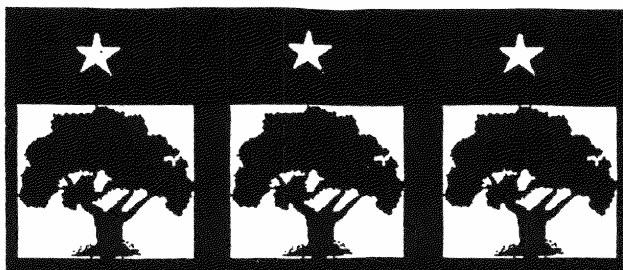
Corine Pettey

Milivoy Samurovich

Deborah Thomas

Ken Tulloch

Yvonne Vulliemoz



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Please pay your 2007 dues by filling out the form below and bringing it to the next meeting or by mailing it with your check to:

***Three Parks Independent Democrats  
Cathedral Station P.O. Box 1316  
New York, N.Y. 10025  
Attn: Treasurer***

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## **2008 MEMBERSHIP FORM**

*New Member* \_\_\_

*Renewal* \_\_\_

Membership Category -- Check One

Individual (\$20) \_\_\_\_\_

Family -- two adults in the same household (\$30) \_\_\_\_\_

Student/Senior Citizen/Low Income (\$8) \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor (\$40) \_\_\_\_\_ Patron (\$100) \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_

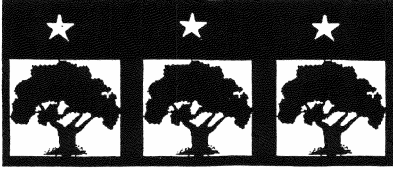
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Check here if you prefer to receive the newsletter via email.**

**Please make out all checks to "Three Parks Independent Democrats - Dues 2007"**



*Three Parks Independent Democrats*  
Cathedral Station P.O. Box 1316  
New York, NY 10025

## **NEXT MEETING**

**Wednesday, January 9, 2008**

**Wayne Barrett: An Analysis of the Presidential  
Primaries**