

COMMUNITY PLANNING BOARD 12
Borough of Manhattan

711 West 168 Street, New York, New York 10032

**The
City
of
New
York**



December 19, 2002

Herbert Pardes, M.D.
President
New York-Presbyterian Hospital
161 Fort Washington Avenue
New York, NY 10032

Dear Dr. Pardes:

The following resolution was unanimously passed by Community Board 12-Manhattan at our General Meeting on December 17, 2002.

- Whereas:** The Washington Heights-Inwood Ambulatory Care Network Corporation (ACNC) was created in the 1980s through a collaborative effort between Presbyterian Hospital and Community Board 12-Manhattan, the Presbyterian Hospital Community Health Council, elected officials and other community leaders with the aim of improving the quality and availability of health care to local residents; and
- Whereas:** The ACNC has been the legal sponsor of 45 specialty care clinics inside the hospital, nine primary care practices in the community and six school-based clinics; and
- Whereas:** The board of the ACNC – consisting of 10 members from the hospital and nine from the community – recently voted to disband as a legal entity with the understanding that New York Presbyterian Hospital would directly operate all the ACNC facilities as of January 1, 2003; and
- Whereas:** Representatives of the hospital attended the meeting of the Health and Environment Committee of Community Board 12-Manhattan on November 7, 2002, assuring the committee that “operationally” nothing will change after this reorganization and that the same services will be provided to the community at the various ACNC sites, just under different sponsorship; and
- Whereas:** Community Board 12-Manhattan considers the ACNC to be a major success story that has exemplified the hospital's commitment to serve as the principal health care provider of the Washington Heights-Inwood community; and
- Whereas:** Community Board 12-Manhattan believes that despite the dissolution of the ACNC as a legal entity, it is essential to carry on the spirit and the original intent of the ACNC; therefore
- Be It Resolved:** That Community Board 12-Manhattan calls upon New York Presbyterian Hospital to pledge formally that it intends to continue operating the various ACNC facilities with at least the same level of services as before, that its commitment to continue the initiatives it and the ACNC have undertaken will not be

Chairman: Zead Ramadan

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District Manager: Gregoria Feliciano

diminished and that in particular it will continue the following policies in regard to providing ambulatory care to this community:

- The medically indigent will continue to be served by the former ACNC facilities, and no "self-pay" patients will be turned away.
- Continuity of care, increased access and improved quality of health care for local residents shall remain guiding principles for these services.
- Local physicians will continue to be granted access to their patients in the hospital, including admitting privileges and academic appointments at the medical school.
- Case management will be provided to the patients with the most severe health problems.

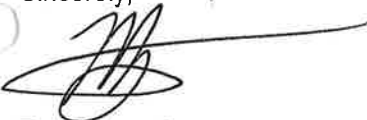
**And Be It
Further**

Resolved:

That to ensure a continued collaboration between the New York Presbyterian Hospital and the Washington Heights-Inwood community, the hospital – in conjunction with Community Board 12-Manhattan, the Presbyterian Hospital Community Health Council and the Washington Heights-Inwood Council on Aging – should create a community advisory board to review and monitor the ongoing operation of its ambulatory care services, that it should furnish detailed status reports to that board, comparable to those provided to the ACNC board, and that it should provide at least a 120-day notice to that board in the event of any plan to reduce services or close any clinics or off-site practices.

We would appreciate your response regarding this resolution at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Zead Ramadan
Chairman

c: Antonia C. Novello, M.D., Commissioner, NY State Department of Health
Walid Michelen, M.D., V.P., NY-Presbyterian Hospital
Helen Morik, V.P., Government & Community Affairs, NY-Presbyterian Hospital
Edith Prentiss, Chair, Presbyterian Hospital Community Health Council
Fern Hertzberg, Co-Chair, Washington Heights and Inwood Council on Aging
Susan Bendor, Co-Chair, Washington Heights and Inwood Council on Aging

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**The
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December 20, 2002

Honorable Michael Bloomberg
Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor Bloomberg:

The following resolution concerning the illegal conversions of residential housing units in Washington Heights & Inwood was passed by Community Board 12, Manhattan, at its General Meeting on December 17, 2002:

WHEREAS: The Washington Heights and Inwood community encompassed by Community Board 12, Manhattan, is among the most densely populated areas in New York City; and

WHEREAS: Our community is suffering from such a severe and immediate shortage of affordable housing that it rises to the level of an emergency situation; and

WHEREAS: The illegal conversion of hundreds of residential units to commercial space has exacerbated the severe housing shortage and potentially jeopardizes the safety and structural integrity of buildings; and

WHEREAS: A New York City Fire Chief has informed Community Board 12 that illegal conversions delay FDNY access to buildings and complicates their ability to extinguish fires; and

WHEREAS: The glut of illegally converted commercial units contributes to the deterioration of the quality of life in residential areas, by increasing traffic flow causing both sidewalk and street congestion and increased noise and air pollution from vehicular traffic; and

WHEREAS: Community Board 12, Manhattan has complained for years about this situation to the Department of Buildings and the Department of Consumer Affairs, and documented numerous illegal conversions in its 1995 and 1996 correspondence to the Department of Buildings; and

WHEREAS: Community Board 12, Manhattan recognizes that, despite the zoning code, sections of Audubon and Amsterdam Avenues have become de facto commercial corridors and is studying the possibility of legalizing storefronts on those two avenues; and

WHEREAS: The continuing proliferation of illegally converted residential units into commercial spaces elsewhere throughout Washington Heights and Inwood, especially in mid-block buildings, must at long last be addressed; therefore,

BE IT

RESOLVED: That Community Board 12, Manhattan, urges New York City to take the following actions to deal with this serious problem:

- 1) Effective immediately, the Department of Buildings should stop all future illegal conversions of residential housing units in Washington Heights and Inwood in order to preserve the remaining housing stock.
- 2) When a commercial space operating in a residential zone becomes vacant, that space should revert to residential housing.

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- 3) Create a one-stop licensing center for business, with a database listing all residential and commercially zoned space and a detailed explanation of all permits and licenses allowed. Connect every city and state-licensing agency to the database and require they check it before furnishing any permit or license.
- 4) The Department of Consumer Affairs and the Department of Business Services should increase outreach and the availability of materials, in multiple languages, to entrepreneurs so they are aware of all zoning and building code regulations and their impact on the location of a business.
- 5) Prohibit public funds from being used to fund illegal conversions.

**AND
BE IT FURTHER
RESOLVED:**

Community Board 12, Manhattan, calls upon our public officials to enact legislation making landlords liable for renting residential space for non-conforming use, and withhold tax benefits for landlords who permit illegal conversions. Furthermore, include a mechanism providing legal assistance to commercial tenants assisting them in the recovery of costs and damages from property owners who rent residentially zoned space for non-conforming use without providing full disclosure to the business owners.

We will reach out to you shortly to schedule a meeting in order to discuss the course of action.

Thank you.

Sincerely,


Zead Ramadan
Chairman


Maria Luna
Chair, Land Use


Beatrice Hall
Chair, Housing & Human Services


Martin Collins
Chair, Economic Development

Cc: Hon. George Pataki, Governor
Hon. Charles Rangel, Congressman
Hon. David Paterson, State Senator
Hon. Herman Farrell, Assemblyman
Hon. Miguel Martinez, Councilman
Hon. Robert Jackson, Councilman
Hon. A. Gifford Miller, Speaker & Majority Leader
Nicholas Scoppetta, Commissioner, FDNY
Marc V. Shaw, Deputy Mayor, Operations
Dennis M. Walcott, Deputy Mayor, Policy
Peter Madonia, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor
Brain Herbst, Deputy Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Amanda Burden, Chair, Dept. of City Planning
Martha Stark, Commissioner, Dept. of Finance
Tino Hernandez, Chairman, NYC Housing Authority
Mark Page, Director, Office of Management Budget
Hon. Adolfo Carrion, Bronx Borough President
Hon. Helen Marshall, Queens, Borough President
Hon. James Molinaro, Staten Island, Borough Pres.
Hon. Martin Markowitz, Brooklyn, Borough President
Andrew Alper, President, Economic Dev. Corp.
Lindsay Eason, Sheriff, Fire Department
Lee Chong, Director, Land Use, Housing, & ED
Flores Forbes, Deputy Director, Land Use, Housing, Eco. Dev.
John Warren, First Deputy Commissioner, Dept. HPD
Hon. Betsy Gotbaum, Public Advocate
Hon. Eric Schneiderman, State Senator
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Assemblyman
Hon. William Thompson, Comptroller
Jerilyn Perine, Commissioner, Dept. of Housing Pres. & Development
Daniel L. Doctoroff, Deputy Mayor, for Eco. Development & Rebuilding
Carol Robles-Roman, Deputy Mayor, for Legal Affairs
Vincent Lapadula, Sen. Advisor to the Mayor, Office of the Mayor
James Chin, Commissioner, NYC Bd. of Standards & Appeals
Martha K. Hirst, Commissioner, Dept. of Citywide Admin. Services
Christopher O. Ward, Commissioner, Dept. of Environmental Protection
Earl Andrews, Vice Chairman, NYC Housing Authority
Verna Eggleston, Commissioner, Dept. of Human Resource Admin.
Susan Kupferman, Director, Dept. of Operations
Raymond W. Kelly, Commissioner, NYPD
Brian Anderson, Commissioner, Dept. Records & Information Services
Barbara Lowry, Executive Director, N. Manhattan Improvement Corp.
Charles Corliss, Ph.D., Executive Director, Inwood Community Services
Martin Englisner, Executive-VP, YM & YWHA, Wash. Heights and Inwood
Dennis C. Reeder, Exec. Director, WH & Inwood Development Corp.
Yvonne Stennett, Executive Director, Community League West 159 St.
John Swauger, Executive Director, WH & Inwood Coalition Inc.
Homer Young-Kennedy, Chair, Inwood Community Coalition