



NORWOOD NEWS

Vol 28, No 16 • PUBLISHED BY MOSHOLU PRESERVATION CORPORATION • AUG. 20-SEPT. 2, 2015



**INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER:
WORRIES ON LEGIONNAIRES' | PG. 4**



**RESIDENTS DEMAND
NARCO FREEDOM BLDG. CLOSE | PG. 2**

PROJECT RENEWAL BUILDING AGAIN

\$85 Mil, supportive/affordable complex in Bedford Pk. coming 2018



Rendering courtesy Edelman Sultan Knox Wood/Architects LLP

THIS RENDERING SHOWS a pair of proposed supportive/affordable housing buildings slated to go up at 2880 Jerome Ave. in Bedford Park, making it one of many new hybrid models for the underserved.

By **DAVID CRUZ**

Residents can expect another supportive/affordable housing hybrid in the neighborhood, adding to a cluster of new specialized housing sites in Norwood/Bedford Park and fueling an ongoing tug of war between residents and non-profit housing groups over the community's vision.

Project Renewal, a not-for-

profit housing provider with another site in Bedford Park, is slated to construct a 12- and 14-story building complex at 2880 Jerome Ave. Currently occupied by two single-family homes, the property is in a persistently troubled portion of Bedford Park, with few amenities save for some 24-hour bodegas and a C-Town supermarket. Developers are expected to appear before

Community Board 7's Land Use/Housing Committee in September to provide a thorough outline of the project.

"We will ask tough questions," said Jean Hill, CB7's committee chair for Land Use/Housing, "We're not hostile, but we will ask tough questions." "If we over saturate this area with supportive housing, will other developers come and want to build

here?" The Land Use/Housing Committee evaluates any housing proposal, later issuing a confidence or no confidence vote. But their vote is relegated to being purely advisory, given the "as of right" status designated to these projects.

Debate has since arisen over whether Norwood/Bedford Park has become a "dumping ground"

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Vol. 28, No. 16

Norwood News is published bi-weekly on Thursdays by Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC)
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Bronx, New York 10467
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IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

**Worries Over Narco Freedom Bldg. Mismanaged in Bedford Pk.**

By JASMINE GOMEZ

For the past year, neighborhood resident Aldo Perez has waged war on a homeless shelter and synthetic marijuana use in Bedford Park. He's now turning to a halfway house for recovering addicts, which he claims, condones drug use, loitering and fistfights in front of the building. And he's fed up.

And Perez is not alone. A chorus of residents has also complained about some of the activity that includes syringes being thrown out of windows or tenants exposing themselves.

The so-called three-quarter home at 2846 Briggs Ave. is operated by Narco Freedom, a nonprofit that provides housing for recovering addicts in treatment. Community leaders, elected officials and police have since met privately with representatives for the troubled site to quell any quality of life nuisances.

"It's run by an organization that does not care for the interest, for the public safety, and health of its residents or its community. It's an organization that only cares about making money, does not care about giving any case management even to its own clients," said Perez, a Briggs Avenue resident who routinely records Narco Freedom clients rushed to the hospital or experiencing a high after using synthetic marijuana, a lethal drug.

Narco Freedom has recently been plagued by allegations of fraud, with the company's finances showing it edging towards bankruptcy.

The nonprofit was founded by Alan Brand, who now operates it



Photo by Jasmine Gomez

THIS HALFWAY HOUSE operated by Narco Freedom has contributed to a drop in the quality of life on Briggs Avenue, says one resident.

with his two sons. The trio, and other staffers, were arrested and indicted early this year on numerous charges that include defrauding Medicaid and insurance companies, bribery and corruption.

It is alleged that treatment decisions were made based on how much money the group could recoup from Medicaid. Narco Freedom received \$40 million annually in Medicaid reimbursements. Some of this money, along with a \$13,000 monthly check Brand received as a kickback for renting from a developer who rented buildings to Narco Freedom patients, helped the Brands bankroll a lavish lifestyle of several luxury cars and mansions.

A report published by the *Daily News* stated that a bankruptcy attorney hired by Narco Freedom advised that 11 out of the 18 houses operated by the firm should be closed, which would leave almost 800 residents displaced. Perez believes the

Briggs Avenue location, should be one of the 11 homes closed.

"Everyone has the right to be rehabilitated. Everybody has the right to change their lives and they should be given the right. They send the worst of the worst to that site, the ones that are rejected from every other corner of New York City. They send them there. It's like a dumping ground. Why is it in our neighborhood?" asked Perez.

Perez and other residents have already called the problems with the building to the attention of local lawmakers, Community Board 7, and the 52nd Precinct. At a private meeting with Narco Freedom, several solutions were suggested including increased police access to the building, and the possibility of even reducing the amount of residents at that location.

For legal reasons, a representative from Narco Freedom declined to comment.

Pedestrian Island Under Way in Norwood

Crews with the DOT are in the middle of building a pedestrian island at a five-point intersection in Norwood. Crews began working on the island, set up at Perry Avenue and East Gun Hill Road, in mid-August. The area is often jam-packed during rush hour, with drivers sometimes left stuck with little

room to go.

Norwood is one of several northwest Bronx communities dubbed a Neighborhood Slow Zone, which mandates drivers go at 20 miles per hour given its heavily congested layout and proximity to schools. A cadre of neighborhood activists and lawmakers applied to designate

the neighborhood as such. The city approved their application, later installing gateway signage, speed humps and markings to ensure the message was clear. The designation also came amid Mayor Bill de Blasio's Vision Zero, a citywide initiative that brings down the speed limit to 25 miles per hour.

New York Skyscrapers and Friends Perform at Williamsbridge Oval Park



Photo by Vivian Carter

NEW YORK SKYSCRAPERS AND FRIENDS perform their interpretation of a Ray Charles standard at the Williamsbridge Oval concert (l-r): Howard Leshaw (saxophonist, co-leader), Don Albano (guitar and vocals), Jay Dryer (saxophonist-band leader), Hallie Smith (vocalist), Dorian Lake (vocalist), and Brenda Tattiano (vocalist). Not pictured: Richie Dimino (piano), Marty Con-furius (bass), and Jimmie Young (drums).

Buzz on Brewery Coming to Armory

By **WILLIAM MATHIS & DAVID CRUZ**

Buzz is brewing over the Kingsbridge National Ice Center project developers in talks with a brewery company, according to sources familiar with the talks.

The Jonas Bronck's Brewing Company, named after the eponymous founder of the Bronx, has been holding quiet talks with KNIC developers in bringing a beer company to the Armory. Two high-ranking sources from separate local government offices, confirmed the talks with the *Norwood News*.

Developers and brewers have not publicly spoken about this potential venture inside the cavern-like Armory, standing vacant for more than 20 years. Developers won the contract in 2013, and have since moved in securing financing for the nine-rink, 5,000 seat arena.

But an employee with

Butternuts Beer & Ale in Garrattsville, NY, contracted by Jonas Bronck's Beer Company to brew their beer, said the firm is mulling a move to the Bronx, but didn't specifically say where. A sales rep for Jonas Bronck's Beer Company did not return calls.

The arrival of a beer company to KNIC appears fitting, given the recreational sports-like atmosphere the arena will give off, particularly when its 5,000-seat arena is operational. It also doesn't seem to conflict with stipulations effected in the Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) between KNIC developers and community leaders.

Should the firm do business inside the Armory, it would need to adhere to local hiring, filing quarterly reports on local hiring, and ensuring it conforms to green practices, according to the CBA.

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INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By **DAVID GREENE**



This week we asked readers their thoughts on the recent outbreak of Legionnaires disease that killed 12 and sickened 121 in the southern end of the Bronx.



They have to keep doing what they're doing. Finally, I got my mother here from Peru, so of course I'm concerned for her. But our building doesn't have a water tower and it's not spread from person to person.

Donald Vallejos
Bedford Park



Yes, it made me nervous for the simple fact that this supposedly just happened after all these years. These water towers have been sitting here collecting all of these air-conditioning coolant systems. Now it has a bacteria actually killing people? And I don't think the city is doing enough either. (Mayor Bill) de Blasio seems like he's too busy trying to please everybody else, instead of taking care of what he needs to take care of.

Pauline Cousins
Soundview



Yes, I've been glued to my TV because I've been very scared and nervous because it's right here on East 149th Street and so many people are infected and you don't know who has it. You could have 50 people on the street and not know who has it. They found it at the Daughters of Jacob and that's a nursing home on East 167th Street and the Grand Concourse, and I'm still waiting to find out what causes this.

Linelle Branche
Kingsbridge Heights



I feel like they could have told us a little sooner, but you know how our government works. I feel like the state could take a little more precaution when it comes to Legionnaires disease. Maybe install some more hand sanitizers in public restrooms and try and clean them more because some people just don't care about their health and well being.

Richard Carberry
Williamsbridge



I watched it on the news and I think it was a freak thing and basically I'm not worried about it. I think it was a little outbreak, but the media blows things out of proportion. My building doesn't have a water tower. Some people died, but people even die in heat waves. I think they still have more work to do for the public's safety, but people shouldn't panic and worry.

David Moran
Van Cortlandt Park South

Editor's Note: Have an idea for an Inquiring Photographer question? Send suggestions to dcruz@norwoodnews.org.

BMCA Meeting Sept. 2

THE BEFORD MOSHOLU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION meets at 400 E. Mosholu Pkwy, So., apt. B1 (lobby floor), on Sept. 2 at 8 p.m. For more information, call (718) 367-2230.

Results Trickling in for *Norwood News* Survey

The *Norwood News* has been working round-the-clock to tally up the numbers to our summer-long survey we've asked neighbors to take. And there's still time to have your say!

Twelve questions have been asked in the survey to Norwood residents. The random, non-scientific poll has picked the brains of everyday neighbors, some attending big seasonal events such as National Night Out Against Crime. There were plenty of responses on our questionnaire, with questions that ranged from major problems happening in the Bronx to what's needed in the borough.

Initial results have been quite intriguing, and we'll certainly share that with you in our next edition on Sept. 3. But we still have some time to get your input if you haven't done so yet.

Go to <http://svy.mk/1K8daie> to fill out an online survey. The *Norwood News* will also be out there handing out paper surveys. The last day to get your survey in is Aug. 31.

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NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

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Learn about free computer and ESL classes, NYCID registration, citizenship applications, health insurance, and more, at the free Community Education & Resource Fair on Aug. 28 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. For more information, call (718) 579-4244.

Free Curb Your Dog Signs

Free "Curb Your Dog" signs are available to homeowners and building superintendents at Community Board 7's office, 229A E. 204th St., from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information or to schedule a pickup, call (718) 933-5650.

Daycare Provider Class

NYC Small Business Services is offering a free 30-hour busi-

ness growth training class in the Bronx for licensed home-based daycare providers on Saturday mornings starting in September, both in English and Spanish. Register at the Concourse House, 2751 Grand Concourse. For more information, call (718) 933-2539.

Citizen Police Academy

The 52nd Precinct seeks community members to take part in the NYPD's Citizen Police Academy this fall. The program lasts 14 weeks. For more information and to apply, call the 52nd Precinct Community Affairs Office at (718) 220-5824.

To submit items for Neighborhood Notes, email dcruz@norwoodnews.org, subject line "Neighborhood Notes."

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A New Beginning: The Merging of Two Norwood Parishes

By DAVID CRUZ
& HAYDEE CAMACHO

The faces told the tale at the Saturday Catholic Mass. Some looked apprehensive, while others showed cautious optimism. And on the first weekend of services at the newly merged St. Ann-St. Brendan Church, a move overseen by the Archdiocese of New York, Norwood had entered a new phase, a neighborhood with one less church.

Inside St. Ann-St. Brendan Church on 206th Street and Perry Avenue (formerly St. Brendan's Church), Monsignor Joachim Beaumont echoed congregants' desire that "the Lord will come to us and help us in our journey to continue developing a new parish."

The journey began late last year, when church officials announced that the Shrine Church of St. Ann would close after 88 years. Members were informed their new home would now be at St. Brendan's Church, following the Archdiocese of New York's lengthy financial review of St. Ann's Church.

The merger, a kind of streamlining by diocesan officials, capped nine months of wonder, fear and rapture for parishioners of both churches. Blending two parishes took work. Shows of solidarity were forged prior to amalgamated services, a sort of ice breaker for St. Ann's Church parishioners settling in to their parish.

For Norwood's devout, the merger represents a kind of worshipping test, with members largely complaining about the hilly, half-mile distance from the old parish to new one. It's forced some older members to reconsider attending Mass.

"I like St. Ann's," said Lucy Romero, a 13-year member of St. Ann's Church who stood near the doors of St. Ann-St. Brendan's Church, hearing Beaumont's homily penetrate past the



Photo by David Greene

IN A SYMBOLIC show of solidarity, members of St. Ann's Church parade the statue of St. Ann's to its new home at St. Brendan's Church. Last year, the Archdiocese of New York decided to merge the two parishes.

closed doors. "It's hard to be in a new church. I will see. I'm going to try to come tomorrow."

"I didn't know where to go," said former St. Ann's parishioner Grace Salvacion. "St. Ann's was five minutes from my apartment and now I have to take a bus."

The closure also signifies one less religious institution in Norwood, powered by a wave of non-Catholics who now call the neighborhood home.

"This is not a crisis of faith," said Justine Kieffell. "The Spanish masses at both parishes are packed to the gills." She also felt the distance from Bainbridge Avenue to 206th Street and Perry Avenue would be too difficult for the elderly. "It's too much for the seniors in the winter and summer. It's too far."

Michael Paul Kelly, a 30-year member of St. Brendan's, was enthusiastic about the merger, seeing it as a prac-

tical move in the midst of declining church attendance. "People today are not into religion the way my parents were. A lot of young people don't go to Mass," he said. "I think it's wonderful. You will have two sharing parishes."

Angel Torres expressed resignation over the decision to close St. Ann's Church. "It's sad because it benefitted a lot of people in the neighborhood, especially staff at Montefiore Hospital," he said. "We have to accept it now."

In an article on the closures announced last year, *The New York Times* reported some churches might be sold, but such sales were years away. The report, quoting Cardinal Timothy Dolan, stated any eventual proceeds would go towards endowments for church upkeep and educational programs.

Final Night

The beginning of combined service came days after the last day of service at St. Ann's Church, with a resounding call for unity between the two parishes.

Final Mass was held July 26 with St. Ann's Church members sitting alongside members of St. Brendan's. The night marked the end of the annual Novena of St. Ann's, a nine-day tribute to the mother of the Virgin Mary and grandmother of Jesus Christ that culminates with the Feast of St. Ann.

Hundreds of parishioners packed the pews for the religious ceremony, which capped nine days of prayer and petitioning for the infirm. But thoughts on the closure of St. Ann's Church remained on the mind of Fr.

Frank Scanlon, the nine-year pastor at St. Ann's Church, who concluded its tale as a lesson of bond and fellowship with another church.

"The whole history of this parish has been one of giving. Can you imagine for a minute that 88 years ago, the reason that this parish was formed is for today?" asked Scanlon, his hard voice carrying throughout. "To show us how to pray, to show us how to share, how to receive sacraments, to show us how to share with another community of faith in a new parish."

St. Ann's Church and St. Brendan's parishes have stood united since news of St. Ann's closure was announced. Along with bus trips and dinners, the two parishes also joined forces during this year's Good Friday processions, combining into one reenactment of the Stations of the Cross.

"We're proud of what we've accomplished," Scanlon told the *Norwood News*. "There's a sadness, but a hope."

Scanlon was joined by Fr. George Stewart, former pastor at St. Brendan's Church. Ironically, on the eve of the merger, the two pastors were reassigned to separate churches by the Archdiocese—Scanlon at St. Mary's Church in Mt. Vernon, a town in Westchester County and Stewart at Our Lady of Victory in the Claremont section of the Bronx. Diocesan officials have now welcomed Fr. Raul Miguez, in attendance at the Feast of St. Ann, to lead St. Ann-St. Brendan Church. The name is informal for now. Fr. George intends to petition the Archdiocese to officially name it St. Ann-St. Brendan Church.

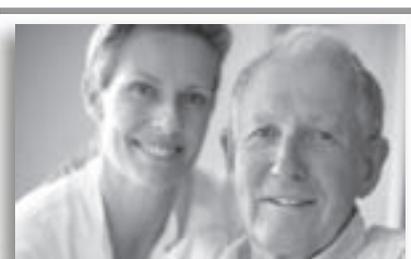
"It is our hope that the name will remain St. Ann-St. Brendan," said Stewart, adding St. Ann's name should be first given her stature as Jesus's grandmother.

On July 31, St. Ann's Church doors were locked. Exceptions for special services will be made for longtime members who request a funeral or wedding Mass to be held, though discretion is on the presiding pastor at St. Ann-St. Brendan Church, according to Scanlon. St. Ann's School, in the meantime, will remain open.

Before the final mass ended at St. Ann's Church, staffers handed out a bookmark reading, "Saying goodbye means looking forward to seeing you again." Members would later parade the statue of St. Ann to St. Brendan's Church via procession, with members rejoicing in unity.

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Number of recommended months an infant should be breastfeeding.

(Source: American Academy of Pediatrics)

Vital Stats

Celebrating Breastfeeding Awareness, CHAM Receives Proclamation

By **JASMINE GOMEZ**

A mother's breast milk can provide her newborn with the necessary vitamins, proteins, fat, and antibodies to sustain the baby's healthy growth.

As part of its committed support to promote breastfeeding among Bronx moms, the Children's Hospital at Montefiore (CHAM) received a citation for those efforts as part of Breastfeeding Awareness.

At the celebration, Judy Aschner, physician-in-chief at CHAM, and Michael I. Cohen, University Chair of Pediatrics at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, along with physicians and staff, received a proclamation from the Bronx Borough President's Office for educating moms on the benefits of breastfeeding. The celebration included giveaways such as informational pamphlets about breastfeeding and baby T-shirts that included a tongue-in-cheek message: "I eat at Mommy's."

"Breastfeeding continues to be



Photo by Jasmine Gomez

DR. JUDY ASCHNER, physician-in-chief of Children's Hospital at Montefiore (l), accepts a proclamation celebrating Breastfeeding Awareness in the Bronx from Melissa Cebollero (r), the director of Health and Human Services for the Bronx Borough President's Office.

very important in our community and we know that there are many benefits to breastfeeding, both to the baby and

to the mother, some of which include decreased risk of ear infections, respiratory tract infections, less visits to their pediatrician and to the emergency room," said Dr. Talitha Bruney, an OB/GYN at CHAM.

Bruney also dispelled some popular myths about breastfeeding, especially one in which mothers who are sick pass their illness to their newborn during breastfeeding. The practice, on the contrary, actually transfers antibodies that protect the baby from any impending infections, explained Bruney. Most illnesses cannot be transferred through breastfeeding, with one exception being HIV. If a mother does not know or is worried about transferring an illness through breastfeeding, she can consult with her doctor.

Of two common methods mothers use to feed their child—breastfeeding or baby formula—the former is the preferred method, according to Bruney.

"We're really trying to reach out to the community and have them understand that it should be a choice," said Bruney. "It should be the first option and only supplement with formula, if necessary."

In recent years, breastfeeding has dominated parenting magazines and blogs after a controversial Time magazine cover was published in 2012, featuring a mother breastfeeding her 3-year-old son. This opened the debate on what is the appropriate age for a child to stop breastfeeding. "If the mother is comfortable doing it, and the child is still comfortable taking her breast, we do not really give a time period as to when to stop," said Dr. Abie Iyare, a pediatrician at CHAM. "What we do encourage is, if possible, exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life. And we usually say we encourage breastfeeding until the child is at least one year of age."



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DAY TRIPS

Phillips Crabs Feast and Horse Shoe Casino in Baltimore, Maryland. Saturday, Aug. 29 at 7:45 a.m. from East 163rd Street and Southern Boulevard. For more information, please contact Eddie at (718) 757-5485.

See the Mass of Pope Francisco in Philadelphia on Sunday, Sept. 27 from East 163rd Street and Southern Boulevard at 6 a.m. For more information, please contact Eddie at (718) 757-5485.

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Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

EDITOR'S PICK

Silent Disco at Woodlawn

The Woodlawn Conservancy presents Lincoln Center's Silent Disco, Aug. 30 from 4 to 8 p.m. on Woodlawn Cemetery's Fairview Lawn. Events include DJs to play disco, salsa and swing music directly to individual headphones, and a salsa instructor will offer dance lessons at the start of the event. IDs are required for free headphone rental. Refreshments are available from food vendors on site. Enter at the Jerome Avenue gate. On site parking is available. For more information, call (718) 408-5625 or visit woodlawnconservancy.org.

Onstage

The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents Ivo Tirado's Latin Jazz Element Sextet, concert featuring music from Latin America, Africa and the U.S., Aug. 29 at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

Events

The Fordham Road Business Improvement District presents Movie Nights at 7:30 p.m.: Ghostbusters: Pt 1 on Aug. 21, and Pt. 2 on Aug. 22, at Bryan Park, East Fordham and East Kingsbridge roads. Bring a chair or blanket. For more information, call (718) 562-2104.

The Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse (165th Street), presents Summer Senior Luncheon, free, Aug. 26 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Guests 55 and older are invited to attend this event which includes free tours of the museum's exhibitions, and live entertainment. For more information, call (718) 681-6000 ext. 173. Reservations are required.

Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers Family Art Projects: Delicate Dragonfly Wings, to study these insects, then create some from free materials, Aug. 22 and 23 (followed by nature walk at 1 p.m.; meet at Perkins Visitor Center); and Fishy Fun, to visit goldfish in the Aquatic Garden, then make 3-D fish out of colorful paper bags, Aug. 29 and 30; both in WH House from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Grounds admission is free until noon Saturdays and Tuesdays all year. For more information and a schedule of events including tours and walks, call (718) 549-3200.

Library Events

The Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents for children: Hands-On Project: (ages 7 to 12), Hero Fan Making, Aug. 20 at 2 p.m.; film:

Aug. 25 at 2 p.m.; and The Sword in the Stone: (ages 3 to 12), presented by the Traveling Lantern Theatre Co., Aug. 28 at 2 p.m. For adults, there is film: "Pride and Prejudice," Aug. 22 at 2:30 p.m.; Internet for Beginners: Aug. 25 at 2 p.m. (in-person advanced registration required); and Library HotSpot Patron Lending Event and Community Education and Resource Fair: Aug. 28 at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., to provide low income New Yorkers with free Internet access (call for details), free computer classes at 1 p.m., and a variety of services. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit www.nypl.org.

The Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers Three Ancient Myths and My Annoying Sister: (ages 5 to 14), presented by Urban Stages, Aug. 27 at 2 p.m. Teens/young adults can enjoy film: "Seventh Son," Aug. 22 at 1:30 p.m. Adults can attend Free Computer Classes: to learn email and basic computer information, Wednesdays, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

The Jerome Park Library, 118 Eames Place (near Kingsbridge Road), offers for kids: Be a City Hero: (ages 5 to 12), free hands-on science workshop, Aug. 20 at 2 p.m.; Afternoon Arts: (ages 5 to 12), to learn about art, then create a piece, Aug. 26 at 2 p.m. and Sept. 2 at 4 p.m.; Kids Get Active Fridays: (ages 5 to 12), dance and zumba, Aug. 28 at 2 p.m.; and Sensory Friendly Music and Movement Concert: (ages 18 months to 12 years), summer reading celebration, turtle dance music; kids play instruments, Aug. 21 at 2 p.m. Teens/young adults can enjoy Art Club: to draw and paint with materials provided, Aug. 25 at 4:45 p.m. Adults can attend Computer Basics at noon: for beginners, Aug. 27 and Sept. 3. For more information, call (718) 549-5200.

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Project Renewal Building Supportive/Affordable High-Rises

(continued from page 1)

ing, creating a type of new imbalance. The trend has left many to theorize whether these types of housing sites could lower the prospect of enhanced commercial development given the low-income demographics this housing usually attracts. Many also worry Norwood/Bedford Park's gradual population boom could drain the neighborhood's infrastructure, particularly police, fire and medical services.

Details of the Plan

A copy of Project Renewal's Power-Point presentation, obtained by the *Norwood News* in advance of the CB7 meeting, shows the nonprofit's supportive clientele to be categorized as troubled homeless people whose borough origin is unclear.

Overall, a total of 213 units will be built with supportive and affordable units intermingled into each property, according to the presentation. Building One will house 132 units, 71 of which are supportive, with 61 affordable, while Building Two will hold 81 units--49 supportive and 32 affordable.

On the affordable housing side, developers are looking for renters who make from \$18,150 for individual tenants to a

maximum \$51,780 in combined income for a family of four. Those numbers align with Mayor Bill de Blasio's Housing New York initiative, where a key tenet aims to put a roof over the heads of those in extreme poverty. This further limits any housing for the middle class, according to Hill.

"They don't build housing for middle class people anymore. It's like a trickle-down effect," said Hill, "and they're going to trickle down out of New York State."

Inside amenities will include a community room and garden with eco-friendly features that range from a green roof to solar panels. A storefront will be reserved for a federally qualified health center that's open to its residents and surrounding community. But the site will not include parking, which could be problematic for CB7. In June, the Land Use/Housing Committee opposed a proposal under the Housing New York plan that would lift a parking requirement for affordable housing.

Continuing Trend

The latest addition of supportive housing represents the continuing trend of new, specialized sites for Norwood and Bedford Park, working class neighborhoods with a median household income of

\$36,048, according to U.S. Census figures. For the past 24 months, CB7 has heard a number of presentations on proposed supportive sites in the neighborhood, either built on empty lots or abandoned properties.

Indeed, in the past two years, at least eight new supportive housing sites, some with an affordable housing component, will be built, or are currently under construction within CB7's borders.

Early this year, the Doe Fund, a not-for-profit shelter provider, announced it would build an eight-story, 82-unit supportive/affordable housing building designated for HIV/AIDS sufferers on an empty lot at Webster Avenue and East 204th Street. North of the Doe Fund site, Concern for Independent Living is constructing a 115-unit supportive/affordable housing site for mentally ill patients at Webster Avenue and East Gun Hill Road. Choosing Norwood or Bedford Park for a project could be driven largely by cheaper property values relative to the rest of the city, proximity to schools and public transportation. A spokesperson for Project Renewal confirmed the neighborhood's amenities drove them to build there. It's already done so at another supportive site it opened on 204th Street

and Villa Avenue in Bedford Park. The spokesperson also projected the Jerome Avenue site will generate \$112 million in local economic activity during the first five years of opening.

Taken together, 484 new units of specialized housing will be built by 2017 within CB7's borders, adding to the 1,265 current supportive housing units, a 27 percent increase.

Project Renewal has offered services ranging from affordable housing sites to homeless shelters. It's not new to the neighborhood, having recently built an eight-story supportive housing site on Villa Avenue for formerly mentally ill homeless men. In April, lawmakers called for the closing of Project Renewal's homeless shelter site in Wakefield after its executive director, Ana Charle, was killed near the site by a former shelter resident with a history of mental illness.

The Department of Homeless Services, which provided millions of dollars to Project Renewal for the Bronx Boulevard site, would increase security in response to Charle's death. The new site is expected to include round-the-clock security.

"If something like that happens, then you know the neighborhood's up in arms," said Hill. "It should never come to that."

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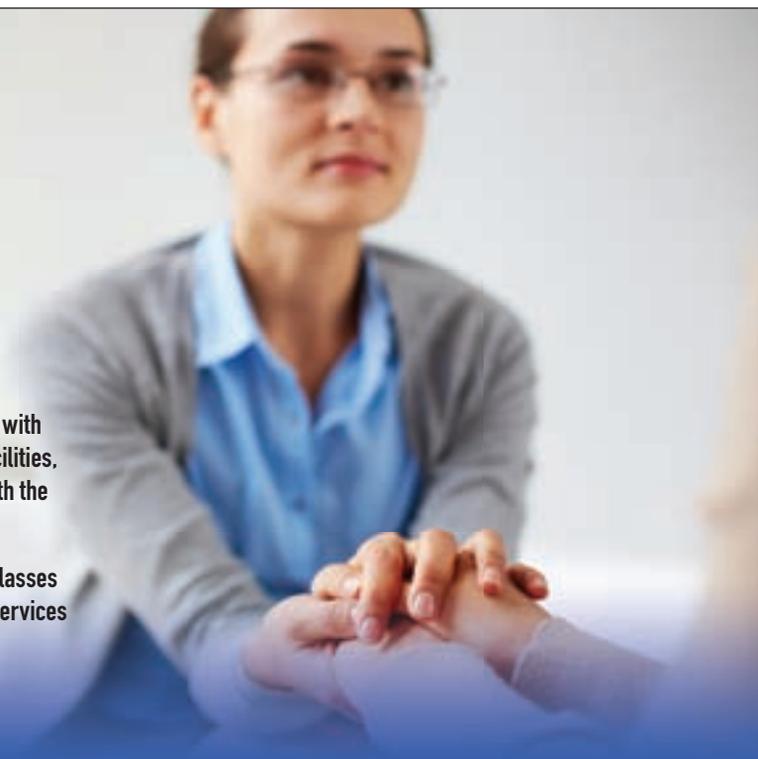
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