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HOUSING ADVISOR
Central Astoria LDC
204-1056

Can you tell me about the new regulations that DHCR just announced?

Sam, Sunnyside

On Jan. 8, 2014 DHCR announced changes to how it enforces the rent-regulation laws. The changes involved amendments to the NYC Rent Stabilization Code and the NYS Emergency Tenant Action Protection Act regulations, and minor amendments to the city and state rent-control regulations. Highlights of the changes follow:

- **Enforcement** The Tenant Protection Unit, established in 2011, is formally empowered "to investigate and prosecute" violations of the rent laws on its own initiative. The units can act without waiting for tenants to file complaints. The changes also expand the definition of harassment to include a landlord's filing false documents or making false statements about a tenant.
- **Registration** Landlords will now be required to justify amended registration statements at an administrative hearing. Failure to register the Annual Apartment Registration forms with DHCR will now result in a complete rent freeze, including a bar on collection of Major Capital Improvement (MCI) increases and the 20 percent bonus on vacant apartments.
- **Individual Apartment Improvements** Lease riders must detail the calculation of rent increases, including those for renovating individual apartments. When a new tenant signs their lease, if they request documentation explaining how the new rent was calculated within 60 days of signing, landlords must provide it. Failing to comply with these requirements can result in a finding of rent overcharge and other penalties.
- **Major Capital Improvements** Landlords will no longer be able to get an MCI rent increase for converting buildings from master metering of utilities to individual apartment metering. MCI applications will be dismissed if the building has one or more immediately hazardous violations (Class C) on record when the landlord files the MCI. However, the application can be refiled within 60 days if the violation is corrected.
- **Deregulation** The landlord is required to give the first deregulated tenant a written certified notice stating the basis for the deregulation, a rent computation, and advising the tenant that the last legal rent can be verified with DHCR.
- **Rent Overcharges, Deemed Leases and Service Complaints** will be covered in the next edition scheduled for March 5, 2014.

For more information contact the Housing Advisor at 718-204-1056

ADVERTORIAL

CB 1 Meets; Discusses Parking And Outdoor Cafes

BY RICHARD GENTILVISO

Amid dissatisfaction with the rate structure for 59 parking spaces at the HANAC George T. Douris Tower, the first hour will be reduced from \$4.00 to \$2.00 beginning March 1. But that may not be enough for Community Board 1.

"A public meter will cost \$1.00" said Board Chairperson Vinicio Donato. "I want to form a committee to meet with [HANAC] to modify and/or change some of the rates," he said at the February 18 meeting.

"[Board 1] didn't agree to build this garage with changed rates," said board member Rudy Sarchese. "It's not fair."

Board approval for the HANAC parking facility passed in February, 2011.

John Napolitano, director of Community Development for HANAC, owner of the 15-story, 184-unit senior Douris residence, completed in 2009 on the site of the former municipal parking lot at 29th Street, said valet service would also be introduced starting March 1 to accommodate more customers.

"Demand has increased [and] we're forecasting more," said Napolitano.

Opened a little more than two months ago after lengthy delays as a self-park, take your keys facility, the valet system could increase spaces for short term parking to 45 without additional charge, said a representative for Central Parking Systems, operator of the HANAC garage.

Currently, 25 of the 59 spaces are short-term with the remainder reserved for monthly parking. Rates stay at \$225 a month for cars (\$50 more for SUVs), \$7.00 for 12 hours before 10 a.m. and \$6.00 for two hours.

"The rates are comparable to other Queens garages and probably a little less," said Napolitano, adding, "We've tried to keep the short-term rates lower."

"We all felt [costs] were going to be like the municipal parking rates," said board member Antonio Meloni. "I don't feel this parking lot is doing the community any service."

"The understanding was the parking would remain a municipal parking lot," said board member Gus Prentzas.

"When the city conveyed the [municipal] parking lot to HANAC it was understood by the city that HANAC would run the parking lot," said Napolitano. "The [public hearing] process was transparent as possible."

"We are trying to mimic municipal rates [but] the onus is on HANAC," Napolitano said. "There

is no possible way we could make this float with the prior municipal rates, it's an unfortunate circumstance," he said. "We're trying to work with you, that's why we're reducing the rates."

Donato said reducing the hourly rate from \$4.00 to \$2.00 was still twice municipal metered hourly rates.

"Our understanding was that you would be competitive with meters," he said.

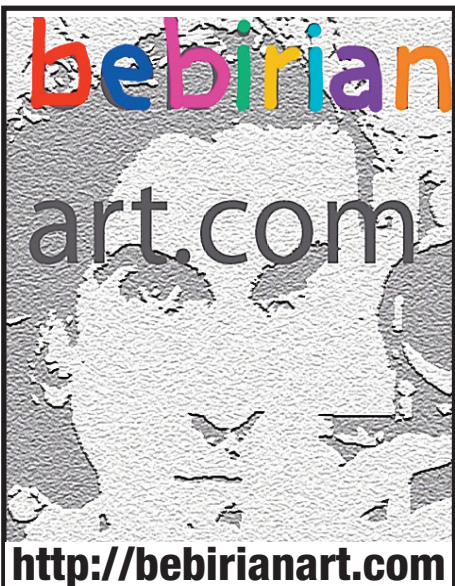
Meter rates at most municipal facilities in Queens are 25 cents for 15 minutes.

After a statement by Astoria resident Mary Witty, a special Health and Social Services committee chaired by Board Member Jean Marie D'Alleva, will meet with residents concerned about the disappearance of feral cats. Donato said the committee would draft a resolution and present it to the board next month.

In other business, unenclosed sidewalk cafes were approved for Dutch Kills Central (new – seven tables and 28 seats) at 38-40 29th Street, Applebee's (renewal – six tables and 17 seats) at 38-01 35th Avenue and Diwine (renewal – six tables and 16 seats) at 41-15 31st Avenue. A cabaret license was also approved for Melrose Ballroom at 36-08 33rd Street.

Flushing House Spring Open House Events

Flushing House will host two March Into Spring Open House events. The first Open House is on Saturday, March 22, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., the second Open House is Monday, March 24, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Experience everything that's new at New York state's largest, not-for-profit, Independent Living retirement community. Discover this innovative community that offers fun, safety, socialization, convenience and freedom of choice. Get expert answers to your questions from their management team, as you enjoy music, appetizers and refreshments. Seating is limited for the free event, so RSVP today by calling 718-762-3198, ext. 3014. There is free parking off of 38th Avenue, Flushing House Independent Living for Seniors, is located at 38-20 Bowne St., Flushing.



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Lincoln Impersonator Stuns Flushing House Audience

Robert Costello, Abraham Lincoln impersonator par excellence, stunned both guests and residents of Flushing House with his performance on February 22 that brought the martyred president back to life. His performance was arranged by Flushing House management at the behest of residents, who requested that the retirement community do something to honor Lincoln for Presidents' Day 2014.

The realistic portrayal, held in the Flushing House Rooftop Atrium, included a recounting of Lincoln's life, the Civil War, his involvement with ending slavery, and a remarkable reciting of The Gettysburg Address, which earned Costello a standing ovation. Costello actually gave two performances, one in the glass-enclosed rooftop lounge for family members and guests, the second in the ground floor game room for Flushing House residents. More than 100 people felt they were in the presence of the 16th president of the United States.

"Over the years, Robert Costello has appeared before many audiences," said Robert Salant, Flushing House director of community relations. "He looks and dresses like Lincoln, gives speeches of the martyred president, and interacts with the audience. He has won acclaim for portraying one of the most beloved presidents of the United States."

Salant explained that the performance took place because of the residents' interest in U.S. history. On Jan. 28, 2010 James Driscoll became a Flushing House resident. Driscoll, a Queens historian, and president of the Queens



Robert Costello (as Abraham Lincoln) and author and Queens historian James Driscoll at Flushing House.

Historical Society, authored *Flushing, New York: 1880-1935* (Postcard History Series), and many other popular books on history. "When Jim first moved in, he gave history talks to residents," Salant said. "Several residents recently told Jim we ought to honor Abe Lincoln, he brought this to management's attention, and the rest is just history!" Salant added.

Built in 1974, Flushing House is the largest, not-for-profit, independent living retirement community in New York state. Visit them at: www.flushinghouse.com.

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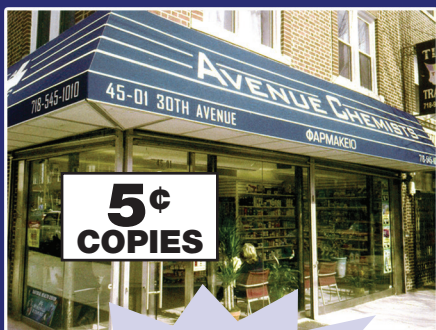
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