



Assembly Member Dick Gottfried

CommunityUpdate

Manhattan Community Board 4, April 2, 2014

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Expanding the Number of School Zones with Speed Cameras

I strongly favor allowing New York City to install as many traffic enforcement cameras (whether for red lights or speeding) as it wants. As New York City becomes more densely populated, the threat of speeding, including careless drivers in school zones, continues to put our children at risk.

Last year, New York City initiated a pilot program whereby speed-sensitive cameras were installed in 20 school speed zones. Recently, Assembly Member Silver introduced legislation ([A.9206](#)), which I am co-sponsoring, that would allow the City to increase the number of camera-eligible school speed zones to 140. The high-tech cameras will help keep our streets safer and prevent traffic-related deaths and injuries in our most vulnerable areas. Furthermore, in expanding the pilot program, the bill will yield New York-specific information on speed-camera performance, which will help law enforcement determine the most effective ways to protect our residents.

Assembly Passes Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Act

New York is home to more than 900,000 veterans, 72 percent of whom have served during periods of conflict including 88,000 who served in Afghanistan and Iraq. We are fortunate, as a nation, to have such brave men and women in our armed forces who are willing to risk their lives to protect our freedoms. It is tragic, however, that so many of them, upon returning home, experience great difficulty finding work.

In March, the Assembly and Senate passed bill A.9135/S.6865, which would develop a comprehensive plan and operational guidelines to promote service-disabled, veteran-owned business enterprises. For example, it would grant those businesses a preference in bidding for government contracts, similar to the provisions for minority- and women-owned businesses. The bill will now be delivered to the Governor for his signature.

Oversized Planned Construction on West 16 Street

The French Evangelical Church at 126-128 West 16th Street, in order to become more financially stable and make repairs on its building, sold its neighboring building at 124 West 16th Street to the Einhorn Development Group for \$4 million. The Church then sold the air rights available over the church, which would allow the developer to build an 11-story building on the 124 site in place of the current building.

This building would be drastically out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood and its mass - in the middle of the block - will undermine the character of the neighborhood, while depriving many of the surrounding residents of vital light and air.

State Senator Brad Hoylman, Councilmember Corey Johnson and I wrote to the developers asking them to reconsider and alter their plans and to work with the local community to arrive at a plan that is more contextual to the neighborhood.

Give Communities a Voice in the Casino Siting Process

Gambling casinos are allowed (under restrictions) by the state constitutional amendment that was approved by the voters last November. This month, the state's Resort Gaming Facility Location Board is scheduled to begin taking applications for four new casinos. While many believe casinos can boost local economies, they can also damage, both economically and socially, their host community and surrounding area. Given the enormous impact that a casino has on a community, it is wrong to deny a municipality the right to use local zoning or similar tools to protect itself.

My upstate colleague Assembly Member Didi Barrett and I have introduced legislation (A. 8774) that would give local communities a say in whether or not casinos can be built there. It would require that the building first pass municipal approval. Additionally, any approved casino would have to adhere to local land use and zoning laws and that construction complies with the State Environmental Quality Review Act.

Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) provides New York City youth 14 to 24 with paid summer employment for up to six weeks in July and August. Participants work in a variety of entry-level jobs including: government agencies, hospitals, summer camps, non-profits, small businesses, law firms, museums, sports enterprises, and retail stores.

The deadline to submit applications is April 25, 2014. Go to <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/jobs/syep.shtml> to learn more about SYEP.

Recycle Your Electronic Waste

You can bring all kinds of computers, monitors, printers, peripherals and more to recycle at the Lower East Side Ecology Center electronic recycling events from 10 am to 4pm, rain or shine at these locations:

- Sat., April 5: Sixth Ave. b/t Bleecker & Houston
- Sun., April 13: Amsterdam Ave. b/t W. 74th & W. 75th Sts.
- Sat., April 26: Tekserve, 119 West 23rd St.
- Sat., May 3: W. 43rd St. b/t Ninth & Tenth Aves.
- Sat., May 17: SW Corner of E. 33 St. & Second Ave.

Please visit www.lesecologycenter.org or call 212-477-4022 for more information and a complete list of what you can recycle.

Donate Blood and Help Save a Life

The American Red Cross is encouraging New Yorkers to donate blood to help rebuild blood and platelet supplies. Due to recent winter storms and freezing temperatures, hundreds of Red Cross blood drives have been cancelled, which put blood supplies at local hospitals at risk. Currently, only about five percent of eligible donors in the U.S. give blood.

Donating blood is safe and simple. The entire process takes about an hour, but the actual donation usually takes less than 16 minutes. The most in-demand blood types are O positive, O negative, A negative, and B negative -- but all blood types are needed. People who are at least 17 years of age (16 with parental consent), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in good health may be eligible to donate blood.

And you get to lie down and relax, and then you get juice and cookies!

If you are eligible, please make an appointment to donate, visit: www.redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS.

Proposed Madison Square North Historic District Expansion

In many areas of our district, developers are proposing plans that endanger our historic buildings with the prospect of demolition. The Madison Square North Historic District, which was first designated in 2001, should be extended to preserve the many unprotected historic buildings in this neighborhood. I wrote to the Landmarks Preservation Commission to support the proposed expansion that will add approximately 150 buildings to the Madison Square North Historic District.