



New York City Council Member
COREY JOHNSON



Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Dear Neighbor:

Finally! The sun is staying out longer, and the crocus and daffodils are starting to bloom in our parks and sidewalks.

It was great to see so many of you at my first town hall event last week. There were some great questions asked and I wanted to take this opportunity to share some important updates from that event, and also some updates our office has been working on.

My staff is available to answer questions and help you wherever possible and can be reached at our District Office at 212-564-7757. You can also email me anytime at district3@council.nyc.gov.

I hope to see you around the neighborhood soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of the initials 'CJ' followed by a stylized flourish.

Corey Johnson
Councilmember, 3rd District

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My First Town Hall

On Tuesday, March 25, I hosted my first town hall event as your newly elected City Council Member. It was a packed house with over 200 residents filling up the theatre at the School of Visual Arts.

Representatives from the following agencies attended our meeting: Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene, Dept. of Transportation, Dept. of Parks & Recreation, Dept. of Housing Preservation & Development, Dept. of Education, Dept. of Consumer Affairs, Dept. of Buildings, Dept. of Environmental Protection, the FDNY, NYPD's 6th and 10th Precincts, the MTA/NYCT, and ConEdison.

Topics we covered included reducing the amount of idling trucks in our neighborhood; crime and safety efforts the NYPD is conducting; bike and traffic enforcement; how to get a tree planted; what to do if your building or apartment has mold or rodents; overcrowding and co-location in our schools; the Eleventh Avenue Bus; and fire safety.

It was great to see so many people taking an active role in our community, and I look forward to hosting more community events. If you were unable to make the town hall event, but have a question; please email me at district3@council.nyc.gov.

Vision Zero

Each year, approximately 4,000 New Yorkers are seriously injured and more than 250 are killed in traffic-related crashes. Those numbers are unacceptable. The Vision Zero Action Plan is the city's foundation for ending traffic deaths and injuries on our streets.

As Chair of the Council's Committee on Health, I co-sponsored a Vision Zero Town Hall with Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and other members of the Council in March. The event provided an opportunity for residents to give their feedback, concerns, and legislative ideas on Mayor de Blasio's Vision Zero Plan.

Beginning in June, Vision Zero workshops will be held for residents to come together and identify problem locations like dangerous intersections or areas that need better street signage across the five boroughs. These workshops will be an opportunity for the community to come up with solutions that can match the realities of what's happening on the ground. To find out more, please email: Events@council.nyc.gov.

Expansion of Paid Sick Days

Getting a cold is a fact of life. If you have a family, one can never predict when a child or parent will fall ill and will need care. When this happens, people often take a day off from work. And until recently, that day would be without pay or could at worst, put the individual at risk for losing their job. Thankfully, last month, our city took steps to change that.

On March 20, I was proud to join Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, and other local elected officials at the signing of the expanded paid sick days legislation.

Starting on April 1, hundreds of thousands of additional working New Yorkers will have the right to take a paid day off to care for themselves or a sick family member. If you are a small business owner with 5 employees or more, you will be required to provide paid sick days for your employees. In addition, this legislation will help keep New York City families healthy by:

- Including manufacturing workers (who were previously excluded).
- Extending the time in which workers can file complaints.
- Expanding the list of relatives whom workers can care for with their sick time to include grandparents, grandchildren, and siblings.
- Allowing the City to proactively enforce the law.

I am proud to be a co-sponsor of this important legislation because it will keep New York City's workforce healthy and productive.

Improved Bus Service beginning in April!

There are two significant changes to the bus schedule which will improve the wait time for the M20 and M21 bus riders during the morning rush.

The proposed time change between buses on the M20 is going from 30 minutes to 20 minutes during the morning rush. And on the M21, your morning commute will be five minutes quicker, with buses arriving every 15 minutes instead of 20 minutes. These revised bus schedule changes will take effect in April 2014.

Development on West 16th Street

An 11-story building has been proposed for development at 124 and 126-128 West 16th Street over the French Evangelical Church. On March 18, I signed on to a letter with State Senator Brad Hoylman and Assembly Member Richard Gottfried to the developers at 124 and 126-128 West 16th Street to urge them to reconsider their plans for the building.

Although the project is as-of-right, we believe it is out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood. No building on the West 100 block of 16th Street, except those facing the avenues, is currently higher than six stories. This low-rise character is integral to the block's allure, and properly reflects Chelsea's low-rise character. The mass of an 11-story building in the middle of the block will severely undermine the feel of the neighborhood, while depriving many of the surrounding residents of light and air.

Manhattan West

On March 19, the City Planning Commission approved with modifications, the application by Brookfield Developers to amend the zoning test for the Manhattan West Project in the Special Hudson Yards District, located on Ninth Avenue between 31st and 33rd Streets. The application will be considered by the City Council Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises on April 23.

We are working closely with the applicant to secure the open space access and distribution of units sought by CB4 and Borough President Brewer in their recommendations.

Tragedy in East Harlem

The terrible gas explosion in East Harlem claimed the lives of eight people. Investigators found a leak in the gas main on Park Avenue adjacent to the site of explosion, but it's still not clear what ignited the spewing gas.

But we are at our best when we come together. The Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC has established a special East Harlem Building Collapse Relief fundraising effort. If you are able to help in the relief effort, visit: <https://www.nyc.gov/html/fund/html/donate/donate.shtml>

The East Harlem Relief Effort will aim to address the short and long term needs of the individuals, families and businesses stemming from the building collapse. Contributing to this effort - in any amount - is the best way for us to get help directly to those in need. My heartfelt thanks to those who can help this relief effort for our fellow New Yorkers in East Harlem/El Barrio.

What to do if you smell gas or suspect there is a gas leak:

- Leave the premises immediately and take others with you.
- Open windows before you leave
- If the odor is outdoors, get well away from where the smell is coming from.
- Do not do anything to create a spark that could cause an explosion, such as lighting a match, starting a car, turning appliances, lights, or flashlights on or off, using a telephone or cell phone, and ringing doorbells.

Once you are a safe distance away, call: 1-800-75-CONED (1-800-752-6633), National Grid customers call 1-718-643-4050

For more gas safety information, visit conEd.com/gassafety.

Eliminating Plastic Bags

Twenty pounds. That is the weight of plastic bags discarded annually per person each year in New York City. Our landfills are overflowing with plastic and if we can reduce the number of bags, we'll shrink our landfills and clean up our streets, too.

Last week I signed on to new legislation which will help reduce waste from plastic carryout bags and encourage the use of reusable shopping bags.

This new legislation is crafted around other successful models in cities like San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, and Washington, D.C., which have seen reductions in carry-out bags of between 50-90%.

The legislation requires a mandatory ten-cent per bag charge at retail outlets and grocery stores. My office has received numerous complaints about the proliferation of plastic bags that are littering our streets, and this legislation is a step in the right direction to reduce the use of plastic bags.

Hudson Guild Forum: What's Your Beef?

On Monday, April 21st I will be co-hosting an open forum with State Senator Brad Hoylman, Assembly Member Dick Gottfried, and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer to address issues that matter to you. The Neighborhood Advisory Committee and Senior Advisory Council are organizing the event.

My colleagues and I will be taking questions on housing, healthcare, education, transportation, biking, noise, traffic and more! Please come out ask questions about the community on Monday, April 21st at 7 pm at Hudson Guild Elliot Center which is at 441 West 26th Street (between 9th and 10th Avenues). Please call 212-367-2365 for more information.

The Hell's Kitchen Farm Project

The Hell's Kitchen Farm Project (HKFP) invites everyone to its Spring Kick-off Open House on Saturday, April 26th from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Metro Baptist Church rooftop, 410 West 40th Street (between 9th and 10th Avenues). Light refreshments will be provided. All the vegetables grown in the HKFP rooftop farm are donated to an on-site food pantry. Also, volunteer farmers (no experience necessary) are greatly needed on work days starting April 5th: Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Come join us!

For more information visit:
www.HellsKitchenFarmProject.org.

Storm enclosures

Spring is here, which means storm enclosures must be taken down by April 15th. If you operate a restaurant please make sure you comply with this law or you may risk being fined. You can report storm enclosures that are not in compliance with section 27.313 (c) of the buildings law provisions by calling 311.

Recycle your unwanted electronics!

Just in time for spring cleaning - unclutter your home and office by bringing your unwanted electronics to the electronic waste recycling event held on **April 26th from 10am to 4pm in front of Tekserve, at 119 W 23rd Street**. Both events will be held from **10 am to 4pm, rain or shine**.

The following working and non-working items will be accepted: computers, monitors, printers, scanners, keyboards, mice, cables, TVs, VCRs, DVD players, phones, audio/visual equipment, video games, cell phones and PDAs. There is no limit on the amount of materials can be dropped off for free from NYC residents, small businesses and not-for-profits.

Free breast health screening for uninsured

Are you uninsured and 40 years of age or over? If so, please consider making an appointment for a very important and free comprehensive clinical

breast exams and mammograms. Breast Health Screening time and events will be on **Wednesday, April 23rd and Wednesday, May 28th from 5 pm – 7 pm at Mount Sinai Queens Family Health Associates 31-60 21st Street, Astoria, NY**. These events will be offered by appointment only by calling 718-777-5766. Please ask for Anna Zabniak.

Help the environment by composting your food scraps

Every Tuesday and Thursday the NYC Compost Project Local Organics Recovery Program organizes composting from 8 am – 11 am at 23rd Street and 8th Avenue. Check out the list below of what you can and cannot compost.

Acceptable for Composting:

- All fruit and vegetable peelings and pits
- Non-greasy food scraps or leftovers
- Rice, pasta, bread, cereal, etc.
- Coffee grounds with filter, tea bags
- Hair and nails (animal or human)
- Egg and nut shells
- Cut or dried flowers, wreaths
- Houseplants and potting soil

Not Acceptable for Composting:

- Meat, chicken, and fish
- Greasy food scraps or leftovers
- Fats or oils
- Dairy items (cheese, butter, yogurt, etc.)
- Dog or cat feces, kitty litter
- Coal or charcoal
- Coconuts
- Diseased and/or insect-infested
- houseplants and potting soil

Health Committee Update:

On Thursday, March 13 the Health Committee held a six hour hearing on the Mayor's Preliminary Budget and Management Report for the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

We were pleased to hear from DOHMH Commissioner Dr. Mary Travis Bassett, outgoing HHC President Alan Aviles and Chief Medical Examiner Dr. Barbara Sampson about the vital work performed by each of their offices. Unlike in previous years, funding for each of these agencies was kept stable, allowing us to delve further into agency programs and policies rather than focusing on the restoration of funds. Mayors Bloomberg and De Blasio also added vital funding that the Council had previously placed in the budget will allow us to develop additional creative public health initiatives.

We are preparing our response to the Mayor's Budget and in May the Health Committee will hold a follow-up hearing on the revised Executive Budget.

On February 24, 2014 the City Council Health Committee held a hearing on the Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) Five Year Plan. HHC is the corporation that manages the public safety net health care system of New York City. The hearing investigated the status of HHC's restructuring plan, which was created to cut a looming \$1billion deficit by \$600 million. The hearing was nearly five hours long. While HHC is in better health than it was five years ago, challenges still lie ahead.

Introduced Legislation:

- A Local Law (Int 0051-2014) requiring the department of health and mental hygiene to issue an annual report regarding hepatitis B and hepatitis C infections.
- A Local Law (Int 0055-2014) in relation to prohibiting the sale of puppies and kittens bred in puppy and kitten mills.
- A Local Law (Int 0073-2014) updating the definition of "pet shop" within the Animal Abuse Registration Act.
- A Local Law (Int 0072-2014) requiring reporting and posting online information pertaining to mobile food vendors.
- A Resolution (Res 0050-2014) calling upon the United States Congress to pass and the President to sign into law the Puppy Uniform Protection and Safety Act (S.395/H.R.847), which would require commercial breeders who sell their puppies directly to the public, including via the Internet, to be licensed and inspected by the United States Department of Agriculture and mandate that commercial breeding facilities provide dogs with daily exercise.
- A Resolution (Res 0112-2014) calling upon the Department for the Aging to restore the congregate weekend meal program and conduct a public awareness campaign to promote congregate and home delivered meals.
- A Resolution (Res 0114-2014) calling upon the New York State Legislature pass and the Governor to sign A.8641, A.8642, and A.8700, legislation amending income eligibility determinations for the senior citizen rent increase exemption (SCRIE) and disability rent increase exemption (DRIE) programs.
- A Resolution (Res 0136-2014) calling on the New York State Assembly to pass A.3941-A, the New York State Senate to introduce and pass a companion bill, and the Governor to sign such legislation into law, which would create the Children's Weapon Accident Prevention Act.
- A Local Law (Int 0197-2014) to amend the New York City charter and the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to retaliatory personnel actions by employers and wage transparency.
- A Local Law (Int 0198-2014) to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to side guards.