

Now Showing: Revamped NYC TV

By **Pete Bowles**

STAFF WRITER

NYC TV — the revamped official television network of the City of New York — began operations at 5 a.m. yesterday, offering more live broadcasts and commercials encouraging New Yorkers to enjoy the Big Apple.

The new network — comprised of five obscure cable channels — replaces the Crosswalks Television Network, a hodgepodge of news, information and entertainment which for 11 years showed City Council and Board of Education meetings, horse races, hotline numbers and job listings.

"NYC TV is a cornerstone of my administration's efforts to provide the public with up-to-the-minute information and an up-close look at their government as it makes decisions that affect their lives," Mayor Michael Bloomberg said in launching the network.

In 1996, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani stirred up a brief flurry when he proposed running Rupert Murdoch's 24-hour Fox News Channel on the Crosswalks network. Murdoch had complained to Giuliani when Time Warner decided not to run Fox News on its New York City cable system. Time Warner blocked

the proposal in court.

Bloomberg said the new "fun and educational resource" will offer "improved government coverage" that will include his news conferences from City Hall.

In addition, the network will feature drive-time live previews of city roadways during rush hours, commercials for inexpensive and free things to do in the five boroughs and vintage documentaries from the city's Municipal Archives — such as the time Alfred Hitchcock paid a visit to then-Mayor John Lindsay.

NYC TV, a division of the city's Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications, is available to 1.8 million households in all five boroughs 24 hours a day. Its flagship channel is NYC TV 74.

It also broadcasts Off Track Betting programs on Channel 71, lease-time events on Channel 73, City University of New York programming on Channel 75 and a digital electronic bulletin board on Channel 93.

Bloomberg said the network is an important revenue source for the city. It generates about \$500,000 annually from leasing arrangements and about \$24 million from OTB programming, he said.