

On AIR



THE BRONX TALKS

ON BronxTalk AM

Host: **GARY AXELBANK**

Politics, tenant-landlord relations, changes in slip-and-fall liability for homeowners, and a possible water filtration plant are just some of the topics discussed recently on BronxTalk AM. Here are excerpts:

ASSEMBLYMAN RUBEN DIAZ, JR., 85TH A.D.:

What our party needs to do, not only in the Bronx but also in the state of New York, is realize that there's something fundamentally wrong with the Democratic Party. There's something fundamentally wrong with those who we consider our traditional friends crossing over the party line.

You don't see many Republicans coming over to the Democratic line. Instead of inflicting some kind of reprisal or reprimand to those that cross the lines, we need to have an open dialogue and ask folks, "Why is it that you're crossing lines? What is it that we're not doing, and what is it that we could do better?" I have yet to hear of a leadership meeting with state Democrats and city Democrats so that we can talk about the problems that have occurred in this last election cycle.

There was a lot of turmoil within the Democratic Party last year during the mayoral race but there was not one single meeting. It's time we all start to come together and regroup.

HON. ARLENE HAHN, BRONX HOUSING COURT:

Landlords really want to work with a lot of the tenants so they collect their rents. If a judge gets a case early enough and it hasn't had a warrant of eviction issued with the marshal sent to the door, the landlord is often willing, with a little encouragement from the court, to work with the tenant and work out a payment plan.

If they know that progress is being made and they'll ultimately get their rent, they're usually willing to cooperate. Some might be surprised to that there is a lot of rapport between landlords and tenants. They aren't all on opposite sides. They sometimes cooperate very well.

JOHN FRATTA, CB 11:

We've been getting complaints from the community about a house at 2800 Sexton Place. People were seen going in and out throughout the night. At the same time that we were trying to deal with that problem, I received a vacate order from the Department of Buildings for that house. The house had no electricity, no running water, and was really in very bad shape. I brought the order to Inspector Shea at the

49th Precinct, who was so excited because we've had a problem with the drug dealers and the users and everybody else that was in that house. He immediately dispatched a team. The police found drug materials and the four people in the house were arrested for possession of drug paraphernalia. The cops searched a car on the property and found burglary tools. The man sleeping in the car was arrested for possession of burglary tools. Eventually, the property will be taken over by the city and auctioned off or the owner will realize, "Hey, it's costing me a lot of money now. It's time to unload the building." That's what we hope will happen.

FAY MUIR, CROTON WATERSHED CLEAN AIR COALITION:

New York's water is just about the best in the world. Building a technological fix and an industrial complex is not the way to preserve the water. At this point, development that can cause pollution of the water cannot be stopped legally. If we build a filtration plant, we're asking to degrade the water. This would affect all of New York. The streams that are north of us provide water and it's important that we protect this resource.

ANNE MARIE GARTI, JEROME PARK CONSERVANCY:

The Jerome Park Conservancy and the Friends of Jerome Park Reservoir represents all of the constituents around the reservoir. If there is redistricting, we would now have to dealing with two council districts. For those of us who live at the north end of the reservoir and the northwest corner of the reservoir, all of the private homes on the other side of Sedgwick Ave. would still be in the 11th District. How would we have a voice through our representative over the fate of the reservoir? From the DEP's point of view, the intention is to put the plant at the Harlem River site and this way they only have to make a deal with one councilperson. Redistricting should not be based on a deal. One project is one project. The needs of the community that a city council person represents are much greater than a filtration plant project.

ANTHONY PEREZ CASSINO, NORTHWEST BRONX DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE:

There's a bill out there that most people aren't hearing a lot about and that is a bill to shift liability for slip-and-falls in front of somebody's home from the city to the homeowner. The homeowner bears responsibility for keeping the property in good shape and there are fines associated with that if you fail to do so.



FILE

There are two proposals out there. Mayor Bloomberg's proposal would shift the liability but would exempt one, two, and three-family homeowners. A competing bill introduced by Councilman Oliver Koppell does include one, two, and three-family homeowners. The Northwest Bronx Democratic Alliance opposes the shifting of liability. But, we really are concerned about this non-exemption for one, two, and three-family homes.

JAMES J. HOULIHAN, HOULIHAN PARNES/iCAP REALTY ADVISORS:

We're fortunate to be able say that Fordham Square is fully leased. Construction started last year when we acquired the property and it has continued. All the stores on the Fordham Road side of the building are in occupancy and open for business. This week, we will have the grand opening of the AJ Wright Store, which is the urban edition of TJ Maxx. Fordham Square has a unique combination; you have a fitness club, first-class retail, social services and you have education. And according to New York City's statistics, Fordham Road is the fourth-highest ranking retail street in the entire city, including all of Manhattan, ranked by sales per square foot. Now with Fordham Square it should continue that high ranking.

ABALENA WALDMAN, BRONX AIDS SERVICES:

The New York State Expanded Syringe Access Demonstration Project is a public health law that will be in effect until March

31, 2003. Its goal is to expand access to clean needles and syringes without a prescription. The purpose of this law is to decrease the incidence of hepatitis B and C and HIV among the general population. The preliminary evaluation does indicate that it has had a positive effect with no increase in drug use. We want to garner support from the community and also let legislators know that this is a very important and very low-cost program.

PEDRO ALICEA, VIP COMMUNITY SERVICES:

It's not just addicts who benefit from the law. If you're a diabetic and you constantly need to get syringes, this law makes it easier for you. You don't need to see a primary physician for a prescription and then to go to a pharmacist to get the needles. You can just go to the pharmacy without a prescription and get your hypodermic needles. But, we don't want our kids walking in the parks and picking up syringes that aren't properly disposed of, so this law also allows for the proper disposal of the syringes.

DR. BRUCE HURWITZ, AGING IN AMERICA: Most people underestimate seniors. Seniors do vote. They're very well informed.

They are very well-educated. It bothers me when I hear that there are equal budget cuts across the board. If you're taking a two-percent cut from parks and two-percent from seniors, it's the same two percent. That means that feeding seniors is the same thing as feeding trees.