

## PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING UPDATE

In September and October, hundreds of people came out to share their ideas on how to improve public parks, streets, schools, libraries, and public housing on the UWS using \$1 million of city capital funds.

The final projects will be up for a public vote in Spring 2015.

If you would still like to be a part of this process, contact Daniella at (212) 873-0282 x206. **Stay tuned for the announcement of the project finalists and voting locations coming in March!**

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2014 FALL NEWS BULLETIN NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER

# HELEN ROSENTHAL

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL • 250 BROADWAY • NEW YORK, NY 10007

### 6th District, Manhattan

563 Columbus Avenue  
New York, NY 10024

Tel: (212) 873-0282

[Helen@HelenRosenthal.com](mailto:Helen@HelenRosenthal.com)

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## BUILDING DEVELOPMENT ON THE UWS

### LEGISLATION: More Community Input in LPC Decisions

Helen is working on legislation to create **greater transparency and opportunity for community participation** prior to the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC)'s final rulings. Her bill would require the LPC to make all meetings with applicants for a certificate of no effect be open to the public, include an opportunity to present oral and written testimony, and

be held only after sufficient notice to the community board and elected officials of the district within which the affected property is located.

### LEGISLATION: Increased Awareness of Local Construction

Helen introduced legislation (Int. 483) that will require city agency websites that already post construction updates online to offer **free email notifications of construction updates.**

### Extending the West End Historic District to 107th Street

**Extending the West End Historic District**  
Helen is working with the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and the West End Preservation Society (WEPS) to set a date ASAP for the LPC designation vote on the Riverside-West End Historic District Extension II, which includes West End Avenue from W 94th-W 107th Streets. Helen is working to move this process forward and preserve more of the district in a timely fashion.



# 2014 FALL NEWS BULLETIN

## NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER HELEN ROSENTHAL

6<sup>TH</sup> COUNCIL DISTRICT: 563 Columbus Avenue (at the corner of 87th St.) New York, New York 10024 • (212) 873-0282

### DEAR NEIGHBOR,

As your representative in city government, I am laser focused on ensuring that the Upper West Side is connected to city resources: funding, legislation, and support from city agencies. This newsletter is a window into the work my office does to serve you.

**Traffic safety** is paramount. While I'm proud to have passed legislation to get reckless taxi drivers off of the streets, there is more to do. I recently introduced legislation with Council Member Mark Levine to conduct a study next summer on a car-free Central Park Loop, which would make cyclists and runners safer in the park and study the impact on traffic in surrounding areas. This year the Department of Transportation (DOT) redesigned West End Avenue and the intersection at 96th Street and Broadway, and I will continue to work with DOT to pinpoint dangerous intersections and how to improve them.

The need for **affordable housing** grows daily, and to make matters worse, many of our existing affordable units are at risk of becoming market-rate. My office is focused on preserving affordable housing: we are organizing tenants and fighting harassment at every turn, and we have begun a new season of free monthly housing clinics. I was thrilled to be the prime sponsor of legislation to raise the income threshold for DRIE (the Disability Rent Increase Exemption program) to \$50,000, but that change and the one for SCRIE for senior citizens only last until July 2016; I am working to eliminate this "sunset provision" and make those increases permanent. I am also working to overturn the Urstadt law and return control of the City's local rent laws to the City.

We are on the road to alleviating **public school** overcrowding by opening a new middle school, West End Secondary. I was proud to provide capital funding to every public school with a qualified project in the district this year and expense

funding for a number of after school and arts programs. I am also working to increase student voter participation with new legislation.

I am proud to provide a specialist on **senior services** in my office on Mondays from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., and I will soon introduce legislation to add hearing loops to public spaces and require accessibility notification on publicity materials for most public events. Seniors also received additional expense funding from the city to keep important community programs open.

It was inspiring to participate in the People's Climate March in September, which drew hundreds of thousands of people and focused the world's attention on what we can do to address **climate change**. This year I allocated funding for our local parks and playgrounds, and I introduced legislation to support healthy eating and divestment from fossil fuels (starting with coal).

Most importantly, City government must **serve those most in need and provide basic city services**. I provided funding for our food pantries, domestic abuse programs, and legal clinics, and I provided additional funds to clean up our streets with services from the DOE Fund.

For the Holiday season consider buying local – our small businesses need you! Thanks to a Council initiative, a mobile van called Chamber on the Go will bring a wealth of useful information for small businesses to the Upper West Side in Spring 2015!

As always, feel free to reach out for help or to share your thoughts on my website, [www.HelenRosenthal.com](http://www.HelenRosenthal.com), or in person at my district office at **563 Columbus Avenue at 87th Street**.

Happy Winter!

*Helen Rosenthal*



Helen speaks to a constituent at her Council Member on the Corner event on Sept. 18, 2014.

### STREET SAFETY

#### NEW NYC SPEED LIMIT: 25 MPH

Reminder: The New York City speed limit is now **25 mph** as of **November 7, 2014**.

#### WEST END AVENUE REDESIGN

Following safety concerns, the NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) repaved and redesigned West End Avenue in September and October of this year. We now have a reconfigured avenue that is safer for pedestrians and drivers. Final work on traffic islands in the southern section of the district will be completed in the spring.

#### LEGISLATION: CAR-FREE CENTRAL PARK LOOP STUDY

Helen introduced legislation (Int. 499) that will **close the Central Park loop drive to motor vehicle traffic between June 24, 2015 and September 25, 2015**. During that time the NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) will conduct a study on the impact on motor vehicle traffic volume on nearby roads, pedestrian traffic flow, environmental impact, and other criteria. The study would have no effect on the park's transverse roads, and vehicles operated by the Parks Department, Police Department, Fire Department, emergency services, and vendors authorized to operate in the park will still be able to use the loop.

#### REPORT RECKLESS & UNSAFE TAXI DRIVERS

**You can play an important role in making our streets safer!** The Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) will issue summonses to reckless and unsafe drivers based on citizen reports of unsafe driving. If you see a cab or limo run a red light, fail to yield to pedestrians, talk on a phone while driving, or otherwise drive in a reckless or unsafe manner, you can report them via 311 or online at [nyc.gov](http://nyc.gov). TLC lawyers will review your complaint and issue a summons if they find that the complaint is warranted. Photos / video helpful but not required.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**New York City Council Member Helen Rosenthal**  
GODDARD RIVERSIDE'S SRO LAW PROJECT and  
THE URBAN JUSTICE CENTER  
PRESENT

### FREE 2014-2015 MONTHLY HOUSING CLINICS and WORKSHOPS October 2014 - June 2015 (6:00PM-8:00PM)

#### Goddard Riverside Community Center

593 Columbus Avenue (between 88<sup>th</sup> and 89<sup>th</sup> Streets), Manhattan

On the first Wednesday of each month, the clinic will offer a presentation on a variety of topics, to be followed by a question and answer session. The funding is provided by the Housing Preservation Initiative of the New York City Council.

- October 1, 2014:** Introduction to Rent Control and Rent Stabilization, Update on Rent Laws  
**November 5, 2014:** Finding Affordable Housing, Information on Roommates & Subletting  
**December 3, 2014:** HPs, Repairs, Reduction in Services, Bedbugs & Cockroaches  
**January 7, 2015:** Harrassment  
**February 4, 2015:** City-Wide Housing Related Campaigns  
**March 4, 2015:** DHCR Overview, including MCLs and 1/40ths  
**April 1, 2015:** Housing Court 101  
**May 6, 2015:** SCRIE and DRIE  
**June 3, 2015:** Succession Rights, Preferential Rights and Non-Primary Residence

Each evening, at least one staff attorney will meet with individuals who are seeking specific legal advice. ( **Bilingue: Español** )

Sign-up sheet starting at 6pm each evening.

For questions, contact the **Urban Justice Center** at (646) 459-3017 or **Anna Gago** at [AGago@council.nyc.gov](mailto:AGago@council.nyc.gov) or (212) 873-0282 x204

### PRESERVING AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR SENIORS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

#### ↪ DRIE

Good news for people with disabilities! Helen's bill to expand DRIE (the Disability Rent Increase Exemption program) was passed by the City Council and is in effect as of July 1, 2014: **the income cap was raised to \$50,000** — equivalent to the raised income cap for seniors. Please call 311 to learn if you qualify.

#### ↪ LEGISLATION: SCRIE/DRIE Sunset Provision Resolution

In July 2014 the State Legislature and the Governor raised the income threshold for these two programs, but they included provisions that automatically repeal such increases on July 1, 2016. Helen introduced legislation (Res. 426) that calls on the New York State Legislature to **eliminate the sunset provision** from the senior citizen rent increase exemption (SCRIE) and disability rent increase exemption (DRIE) programs.

### PROTECTING TENANTS' RIGHTS

#### ↪ LEGISLATION: Tenant Blacklist Resolution

Helen introduced legislation (Res. 234) that calls upon the New York State Legislature to **seal housing court records** until a case has been decided and to permanently seal such records if the tenant prevails.

### FIGHTING SEPARATE ENTRANCES ON THE UPPER WEST SIDE

I have made it clear that I will not accept separate entrances in new developments in my district and they have no place in the city at all. I am working with the administration to close the loophole and end this discriminatory practice.

## EDUCATION & THE ARTS

### West End Secondary School for Urban Studies

The school, which will serve grades 6 - 12, is listed in the Middle School directory and helmed by Interim Acting Principal Jessica Jenkins. Thanks goes out to the Beacon Working Group, who made all of this possible and continues to work towards getting West End off to a great start.

### Funding for our Public Schools

Helen allocated over **\$3 million** in capital funds to public schools to improve school libraries, computer labs, auditoriums, gymnasiums, and more. Helen allocated an additional **\$233,500** in program funds for educational programming and arts program partnerships for local schools, including the American Museum of Natural History, the Children's Museum of Manhattan, Chess-in-the-Schools, Common Cents, the DOME Project, City Ballet residencies, and many music, theatre, and performing arts program residencies as well as the NYCHA-CUNY Scholarship Program.

### Funding for the Arts

Helen allocated **\$135,000** in program funds to the arts, including the Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation, Ballet Hispanico, Jazz at Lincoln Center, the Lucy Moses School for Music and Dance, the New York City Ballet, Symphony Space, the Young People's Chorus of New York City, and many small local theatre companies.

## PROVIDING A SAFETY NET

### FUNDING FOR FREE LEGAL SERVICES

Helen allocated **\$43,500** in expense funds to programs offering free legal services, including the Goddard Riverside SRO Law Project, Housing Conservation Coordinators (HCC), the Legal Aid Society, MFY Legal Services, and the Urban Justice Center.

### FUNDING FOR FOOD BANKS

Helen allocated **\$44,500** in expense funds to food banks, including City Harvest, Goddard Riverside, MCCNY Charities, and the West Side Campaign Against Hunger. She also worked closely with City Council leadership to increase initiative funding for food banks overall and is working with local food banks to allocate that money.

### NOTARY PUBLIC

Coming in January 2015: **FREE Notary Services** at the district office (563 Columbus Avenue at 87th Street) available every Monday-Thursday from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. and every Friday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

### LEGISLATION: Increasing Business Opportunities for Worker Co-Operatives

Helen introduced legislation (Int.423) that calls on the City to monitor the number of worker co-operatives citywide. The goal of this bill is twofold: to expand the business model of worker co-ops, which provide higher pay and better hours to workers, and to increase the opportunities of worker co-ops to bid for City contracts.



Helen with housing lawyers and tenant leaders at a Housing Clinic for NYCHA residents on Sept. 24, 2014.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

### Funding for Parks

Helen allocated over **\$1 million** in capital funds to improve Riverside Park and over **\$700,000** to improve local playgrounds including Bennerson and Wise Towers. Helen allocated an additional **\$26,500** in expense funds for programs to benefit local green spaces, including the West Side Community Garden and the Broadway Malls.

### LEGISLATION: Fossil Fuel Divestment

The fossil fuel industry has a devastating impact on our climate, land, community, and personal health, but the City nonetheless supports this industry through its five pension plans. Furthermore, this investment is by no means secure, as the devaluation of fossil fuel investments is inevitable. Therefore, Helen has submitted legislation to require the comptroller to do a feasibility study of divesting the city's pension funds from fossil fuel companies and reinvesting in fossil-free and clean energy companies.

### LEGISLATION: Meatless Mondays

A plant-based diet uses fewer resources and causes less pollution than an animal-based diet, and it can offer health benefits in the prevention and treatment of diseases such as heart disease, obesity, hypertension, and type 2 diabetes. Helen has submitted legislation proclaiming all Mondays as "Meatless Mondays" to encourage residents to consume more plant-based meals once a week.

### LEGISLATION: Rat-Proof Garbage Bins

Helen submitted legislation to require building owners who have received multiple violations for rodent infestations to use rat-proof garbage bins. The Department of Sanitation would install the bins and bill the owner for it afterwards to ensure compliance.

### Climate Change Awareness Day

Climate change is imperiling the future of our City, our nation, and our planet. In 2012 New York City contributed 47.9 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions. The first step to reduce the City's ecological footprint is to raise awareness about the dangers of greenhouse gas emissions and their role in climate change. To that end, Helen sponsored a proclamation designating September 21st as Climate Change Awareness Day in New York City.

## SENIORS

### Senior Services Social Worker in my Office

A senior services social worker from One Stop is now at the district office once a week. Patricia works on **Mondays from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**, and she can help seniors with a range of issues including healthcare, SNAP (food stamps), tenant harassment, SCRIE applications, and more.

### Funding for Senior Services

Helen allocated **\$120,000** in expense funds to senior centers, including meal programs, arts programming, and education programs. In addition, she worked with the Department of Aging to save funding for The Lincoln House Outreach NORC (naturally occurring retirement community) and JASA 76, the only provider of kosher meals on the UWS.

### LEGISLATION: Accessibility Notification for Public Events

Helen is working on legislation to require all publicity materials for certain public events to include **information about disability accessibility**. This law would apply to all public events with a capacity of 50 or more people and all public events that have received funding from the City. These events would need to include information regarding wheelchair accessibility, accessibility for those who are deaf or have hearing loss (including sign language interpretation, communication access real-time translation (CART), permanent or temporary hearing loops with receivers and headsets, and infrared or FM systems with headsets or neckloops), and a contact who can provide additional information regarding accessibility for disabled people at the event.

### LEGISLATION: Hearing Loops in Government Facilities

Helen is working on legislation that would requiring all city agencies to **install hearing loops** in 1) all new buildings and facilities, 2) all buildings and facilities undergoing renovation, and 3) all existing buildings and facilities within five years.