

CONSULTATIVE MEETINGS UPDATE

The Executive Board would like to thank those tenants who attended our recent series of consultative meetings. It is our hope that each of you came away more informed about the ongoing process. More importantly, we, as tenant representatives, became better educated about the needs of the tenancy and of the resources that exist within our building.

A number of residents offered important information that will most certainly help us in our ongoing efforts. We have asked tenants in a particular field of expertise to help us with questions concerning the distinctions between Co-Op and Condo and possible solutions to help Island House tenants use energy more efficiently.

The IHTA is grateful for the input and support of the tenancy.

CONVERSION PREFERENCE SURVEY

A preference survey will take place within the next 10 days. In a conversion proceeding the Attorney General requires a certain percentage of apartments (51%) to be purchased, and the survey will follow this guideline by requesting one response per apartment.

Your response to the survey will help the Executive Board in writing the Memorandum of Understanding that will be submitted to Sheldrake. The survey will cover:

1. Do you prefer an owner-sponsored conversion or a tenant-sponsored conversion?
2. If your answer is "tenant sponsored", what model do you prefer: Full Equity or Affordable Scaled Equity?

As an aid in our negotiations we will also ask each tenant to inform us what you are able to afford – based on a range of purchase prices and monthly costs.

This Preference Survey is *not* a binding vote. A binding vote on the final conversion will take place before the Board finalizes its negotiations with the owner.

Your participation in the preference survey is, nonetheless, invaluable.

ENGINEERING SURVEY

The Maintenance Committee of the IHTA has reviewed the initial draft of the engineering survey. Their comments and suggestions have been forwarded to Thornton Tomasetti, the engineering firm responsible for the survey. After changes are made to the study and a final report is delivered, the report will be made available on the Island House web site, we expect within the next 10 days.

The report confirmed our many concerns about the condition of the building. It will be an essential factor in our negotiations with the owner.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH SHELDRAKE

The Executive Board continues to negotiate with the Shel Drake Corporation to put together the best possible deal for the greatest number of tenants.

Sheldrake has agreed to accept a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding within the next 30 days.

This allows the Executive Board to more fully develop its strategies for helping us maintain a level of affordability when the building converts to ownership. Concurrently, we are actively pursuing several interesting financial leads that may help us to see that strategy to fruition.

R.I.O.C. MEETING

The Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) has contacted the IHTA for an initial meeting. We look forward to presenting to the members of its Board our plans to help maintain affordable housing on Roosevelt Island.

A letter stating our resolve to maintain affordable housing for the Island House community has been sent to **Judith Calogero, Commissioner of DHCR and Chairperson of R.I.O.C.** It will be made available on the web site on June 15.

BY-LAWS VOTE

The Executive Board has re-scheduled the vote on the by-laws for June 28th; at the request of Frank Farance, one of the drafters of the amended by-laws; this will allow tenants more time to consider the proposed amendments.

It is important to note that the Board engaged in this exercise as a means of improving the *existing and legally adopted by-laws*. We strongly agree that it is vital to ensure the by laws allow for maximum responsiveness and transparency. We see our responsibility as enabling a process that ensures the broad support of, hopefully, the entire tenancy so that we are quickly and effectively positioned to move ahead, together, with the very important business ahead of us.

These by-laws apply to the IHTA only as long as Island House stays as a rental property in the Mitchell-Lama program. Another set of by-laws will be drafted for the organization that will take over the building's representation after the conversion – i.e. the Housing Corporation.

AN OPEN RESPONSE TO THE “INTERNATIONAL GROUP”

We cherish the unique, integrated community we have here in Island House – multi-racial, multi-ethnic, inter-generational and international, fully-abled and less-abled and at all levels of income and wealth.

In March 2005, the board reached out to our international neighbors. We asked two floor captains affiliated with the United Nations to caucus with other U.N. residents in order for the Board to better learn about their specific needs and concerns. (We also approached senior citizens for the same reasons.)

On May 21st, the Board received a letter from the chairs of the self-titled “International Group”. It listed a series of demands and asked for us to circulate to the tenancy their opinion on the options presented by the Board at the May 10th public meeting. On May 30th, three tenants—**Ahmad Kamal, Dorothy Davis** and **Srdjan Mrkic**—approached the Board stating they were the “chosen representatives” of an “international group” composed by approximately 100 residents. No information was provided supporting their claim to represent 25% of the residents of Island House.

Mr. Kamal, Ms. Davis and Mr. Mrkic demanded that each of them be appointed to the Executive Board in order to better represent “their interests”.

When we pointed out the inequity of this approach to the interests of the tenancy as a whole—as well as its illegality in terms of the by-laws we adopted on March 7, 2005 and to the terms Ahmad Kamal himself proposed for the amended by-laws -- Mr. Kamal then “suggested” we make a “gentleman’s agreement” to circumvent these concerns.

He threatened that if the Board didn’t accept his totally unacceptable demand, then he would ensure that the vote on the by laws and a subsequent vote of confidence would go against the Board.

We believe that one of the primary charges of the Board is to represent all members and negotiate the future conversion of Island House to the optimum benefit of all residents, without favor. That is why we are so troubled by this demand for special, non-elected, appointments to the board to represent special interests.

We are concerned that it could dangerously and divisively undermine the principle of universal representation. It would furthermore likely require a violation of law by discriminating against other defined and protected groups of tenants.

We are further troubled that materials recently distributed by the chairs of the “International” or “I-Group” are both misleading and self-serving. On May 10th the Board announced a series of consultative meetings with tenants, which have proven very beneficial, which rather than having been proposed by the chairs of the “igroup”, they were in fact criticized as unnecessary in an email written on May 26.

We firmly believe that all tenants - those who would like to purchase their apartments; those who would like to “flip” their apartments; and those who would like to stay in Island House under the auspices of affordable housing - should be given the same opportunity to have their voices heard.

We believe that our responsibility must be to ensure we are responsive to every individual Island House leaseholder/resident, each of whom has their own set of personal and financial considerations. Every single tenant is entitled to the same level of access and representation to their elected board.

The Executive Board continues to welcome comments, suggestions and participation from all tenants.

Please check for updates, news and information on our web site

www.islandhouse.us

Working Together for Our Homes, Our Community.