

Queens Civic Congress sent letters urging the withdrawal of legislation to legalize advertising on sidewalk sheds. QCC Executive Vice President Patricia wrote to the legislation's sponsor, the Council Speaker and the Mayor and also shared our view with the New York Times and the New York Sun.

The text of Pat's letter to the Times follows below:

Realestate/nytimes.com

To the NY Times editor:

RE: Dismantling the Scaffolding, Oct. 21, 2007.

Revision of Local Law 11 may reduce the number of sidewalk sheds taking up public space and creating hazards for pedestrians' right of way, but Int No. 623 is waiting in the wings.

Int. No. 623, sponsored by Council Member Melinda Katz, (Forest Hills-Q) would legalize advertisements on construction sheds in commercial and manufacturing districts. At the same time, Int. No. 623 would hand builders an incentive to leave the sheds in place for months after projects are finished by producing income from these ads.

Forty years after Lady Bird Johnson launched her movement to beautify America with a drive to banish billboards from the nation's highways, the City Council should reject further "uglification" of New York City's streets.

After years of demands from preservationists and neighborhood advocates, the Buildings Department has recently begun to enforce regulations banning commercial ads from sidewalk sheds and the effects of that effort can be seen in mid-town Manhattan.

While the city might profit from selling permits for ads, other revenue sources, less damaging to New Yorker's sensibilities, remain available. In any case, the test for legalizing illegal practices should never be simply the bottom line.

The Queens Civic Congress, a coalition of 100 civic, condo, co-op, tenant and other community organizations representing every community in the borough of Queens, has advocated the withdrawal of this legislation.

Sincerely,

Patricia Dolan
Executive Vice President