

Citizens for Buildings (Department) Reform

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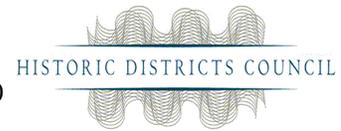
For Immediate Release: Thursday, June 12, 2008

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Queens Civic Congress



NEWS ADVISORY:

Community Groups & Electeds Demand DOB Reform

Bloomberg reforms a watered-down version of previous proposals

Queens Civic Congress, Four Borough Neighborhood Preservation Alliance, Historic Districts Council and other concerned community organizations throughout the City of New York convene **Thursday, June 12, 12:00 noon on the steps of City Hall** with elected officials including Council Members **Tony Avella, Jessica Lappin and David Weprin**, and other concerned citizens who seek to reform the NYC Department of Buildings by including community input and consultation in construction safety and apply the same vigor to the building issues that plague neighborhoods throughout the city.

"We are facing a crisis of construction safety. In the first six months of 2008 alone, we've suffered more deaths than in all of 2007. This is a record of failure," Council Member Jessica Lappin said. "In the Council I will continue to fight for meaningful reforms, including the four that I have proposed. In addition, I expect the Department of Buildings to take dramatic steps to end the culture of corruption that plagues the agency."

"With construction deaths at an all-time high, New Yorkers are not placated by crisis management," stated Four Borough Executive Director Raul Rothblatt. Queens Civic Congress President Corey Bearak stated, "There is no excuse for perpetuating illegal and unsafe construction ANYWHERE in our town."

"The threat of accident and death has turned citizens into construction experts. It is time for the City to use this expertise," added HDC Executive Director Simeon Bankoff.

The most pressing reforms include:

- *Re-inspect hazardous Stop Work Order sites.* The Department of Buildings fails to re-inspect construction sites after every hazardous violation, and fails to verify compliance. Some offenders simply pay a fine.
- *End Self-Certification (a.k.a. "Professional Certification").* The crane disasters represent a more serious lack of oversight of the construction industry. City Hall needs to stand for safety all around New York, not just at high-rise crane sites.
- *Work with the community.* City Hall needs to harness the expertise of community groups.

Please RSVP Corey Bearak at (718) 343-6779 or [Bearak@aol.com](mailto: Bearak@aol.com), Raul Rothblatt at [rrothblatt@gmail.com](mailto: rrothblatt@gmail.com) or (718) 857-3150, or Simeon Bankoff at [sbankoff@hdc.org](mailto: sbankoff@hdc.org) or (212) 614-9107.

WHO: Queens Civic Congress, Four Borough Neighborhood Preservation Alliance, Historic Districts Council and other concerned community organizations, elected officials including Council Members Tony Avella, Jessica Lappin and David Weprin,

WHAT: New Conference to reform the NYC Department of Buildings by including community input and consultation in construction safety and apply the same vigor to the building issues that plague neighborhoods throughout the city

WHEN: Thursday, June 12, 12:00 noon

WHERE: on the steps of City Hall

Editor's Note: Additional information may be found at <http://queensciviccongress.org/Media/index.php>