

**Date:** January 23, 2009

**From:** IHTA Secretary

**To:** Members

**Via:** Door Drop, Web Posting

**Subject:** Candidates Statements

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### Graham Cannon

**E-mail:** [gcannon@nyc.rr.com](mailto:gcannon@nyc.rr.com)



My wife, Pennie, and our children, Tyler and Ellie, have lived in Island House since 1998. My experience includes working as a senior adviser at the top levels of US government and politics and marketing and strategy for companies like Time Inc. I'm currently Director of Marketing and Communications for a large NGO. I have extensive experience running large and complex projects, managing teams and negotiating and implementing a broad range of contracts. This year, I've had the privilege of serving as IHTA Chair and it has turned out to be a year of substantial progress. We have been able to forge an agreement between the landlord, the tenancy and DHCR/RIOC — all the parties necessary for a successful conversion. In December, we outlined the key elements of the plan — the financial structure for buyers and the protections and projections for those who choose to continue as renters under the plan. We are still negotiating over aspects of the plan — especially funding the much needed and too long deferred capital expenses and future improvement/management of common areas. IHTA will soon need to work with DHCR / RIOC on a new, extended Ground Lease on conversion terms acceptable to both DHCR and the tenants. The ground lease is an important place to ensure our concerns and interests are preserved moving forward. After tenant review, the owner will submit the plan to the Attorney General and IHTA and the tenancy will still have a number of opportunities for input — especially important given the volatile and uncertain market conditions under which we are operating. In this important election, I ask for your vote and your support for the board members who are running. I think we have suffered this year from not having as big a board as our by-laws envisage and we're excited that we have candidates of the highest caliber, experience and enthusiasm running for the open slots at a point where new blood and energy will be especially important to achieving our goal of affordably protecting our homes. Thank you.

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### Lee Edelman

I have been involved in the effort to enable us all to buy our apartments or stay as renters at an affordable price since the beginning. From the first effort by Charles Lucido in 1996 to the last several years as an active and committed director of the IHTA board, I have developed a familiarity with all those involved and an in-depth understanding of all the issues and details that is second to none. And we are now at a **critical point**: After 12 years we have gotten the State to agree to a plan that will work for everyone. And we are **negotiating the final points** with the owners: Substantial and non-refundable repair fund contribution by the owners of \$6 million; Our control of the pool and mini-school/management space; Owner contribution of over \$7 million toward additional programs to benefit us; Limiting or eliminating any rent increase prior to the conversion and RGB based increases for renters thereafter. My comprehensive, thorough and keenly analytical approach has often uncovered details forgotten, and I have made sure, time and again, that important items were not overlooked. If you feel the continuity of this approach of familiarity, commitment, knowledge and ability is what is need, particularly at this juncture, then I will continue to do everything I possibly can to make it happen and happen right, for everyone: buyers and renters.

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### Frank Farance

**E-mail:** [frank@farance.com](mailto:frank@farance.com) (put "Island House" in Subject: line)



I am a resident of Island House since 1980. I have been active in building activities since 1995, such as the Island House Ownership Committee, the Westview/Island House Task Force, the Roosevelt Island Residents Association. I have been the Secretary for IHTA for the past 3.5 years. I have been involved in the negotiations with the owner, DHCR, ESDC, and RIOC. I've developed, collaborated, and reviewed financial analyses, such as the current finances, future post-conversion budgets, budget rent determination. I led the Engineering Survey that produced the Rand Engineering report that has been the basis for determining the capital expenditures work over the next 10 years. Prior to my election to the Board, I worked on the revision of the By-Laws, which has been essential for a fair process of governance and, more importantly, a fair representation of the tenancy in the eyes of our elected officials (whose support is essential), the owner, and DHCR. I spent much time listening to tenants' individual and collective needs. With fewer than 9 candidates, this election is uncontested, but it is important that you come out to vote on Monday and Tuesday to elect all 8 candidates. **A strong turnout helps our negotiations with the external parties because the tenancy is perceived as being actively involved.** Thank you!

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### Renato Folla



My family and I have lived in IH for 15 years, 18 on RI. I am the only director who has been on all "recent" boards, starting with the Island House Ownership Committee, back in 1996. A deal for Island House tenants to buy their apartments, with protection for renters, is very close to reality, this time. Most of you have heard it before. It's hard not to be skeptical as so much has happened before that has derailed nearly final agreements. Is history is going to repeat again? A lot has happened since the days of Sheldrake, in 2004. You may remember that the prices asked back then were truly outrageous. The IHTA has gone through some turmoil, but we ended up with a decent, imperfect, set of by-laws, and a very open organization. Someone once said I was part of the "Brazilian mafia" in the IHTA. I just laughed. They did not know I was going to hear about it. Thankfully, those days of intense paranoia are gone, but I wouldn't be surprised that some may still think that in return for "selling out" the tenants, we on the Board will get a "special deal". Believe what you will, we have remained a democratic institution open to participation by all tenants, with annual elections. The board will get expanded again this time, from the current 5 directors to 8. With fewer than 9 candidates, per our by-laws, everyone is automatically elected, even with only one vote. I am asking for your vote, again, but, most importantly, come to meetings, listen to the candidates and vote based on an informed opinion. Tenant education is hugely important. We all need to understand what is going to happen to the building as a whole and our situations individually. Whatever deal comes to fruition, you will all have to approve it, first. Make sure all your votes count. As we have seen recently, it can make a big difference.

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## Geoffrey Kerr

I have been a Director and Treasurer of IHTA for most of the last 4 years. I believe that our ongoing discussions with the owners of Island House are close to producing a proposal from them to convert our building to resident ownership on terms acceptable to most of the IHTA membership, and I believe that continuity in the negotiating team will help bring us to a successful conclusion. My professional background and skills are very applicable to the process that we are going through: strong financial analysis skills; strong accounting skills for keeping accurate books and records; considerable experience negotiating acquisitions and drawing up contracts. My professional background includes: Vice President Planning, then Chief Financial Officer of Grolier Inc., a NY Stock Exchange quoted publishing Company; Chairman of the Acquisitions Committee of that Company, in which position I structured and negotiated acquisitions, supervised the drawing up and negotiating of contracts, and due diligence; 12 years in the International Division of The Singer Company, including 5 years in Japan, the first 3 as Chief Financial Officer of the Sewing machine business in Japan, and then as General Manager of the Sewing machine business in Japan & Korea; More recently as a Financial Consultant, and investor in and manager of several start-up companies; Treasurer of IHTA for most of the last 4 years. I was born and educated in England, served in the Army for two years, and then trained as an accountant in the City of London, which instilled in me a very strong sense of honesty and integrity. Professionally I am a Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland. I have lived in Island House since my return from Japan in 1977, and raised a family here. For the last 20 years I have served my community as Scoutmaster of Boy Scouts Troop 59 (many will have bought Christmas trees from us) and currently also run a free tax preparation service for Seniors and lower income tax payers in the Senior Center. Beyond Roosevelt Island, I am also Chairman of the Finance Committee of Victoria Home for the Aged, where we supervise an Endowment fund of \$20 million.

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## Francine Lange



I moved to Island House in 2000 and still feel very fortunate to live in this community. On my first day here, my next door neighbor, Harriet Lieber, offered the use of her phone until Verizon got around to my installation request. Another neighbor, Sharon Bermon, delivered a bouquet of flowers. I was in big-city New York but felt like I'd dropped into small-town America. For me, Island House is not just a place to live "for the time being". It's my home. I want to invest in this unique neighborhood and see my neighbors gain pride of ownership or continued affordable rental. I offer you my communication skills, calm demeanor, good humor, attention to detail, ability to work with a diverse group of people, skill in translating complex information into clear documents and my commitment to my neighbors and neighborhood. My background: I am a writer and photographer and I've served as a communications professional in corporate and nonprofit organizations for more than 18 years; In the past, I served as floor captain for the Island House Tenants Association (IHTA); I've already helped with IHTA communications, including providing notes from member meetings, developing IHTA newsletters and suggesting Frequently Asked Questions for the Web site. Community involvement: Worked at the Roosevelt Island Historical Society Visitor Center, meeting and greeting tourists from around the globe; Have written about and photographed island residents and issues for our community newspaper, the Main Street WIRE; I'm a Church of the Good Shepherd member, sing in the choir and coordinate weekly coffee hour volunteers; I'm an alumna of the Toastmasters public speaking club; I garden at the Island Community Garden; Helped with Art Frenzy to mount a two-day group show on Roosevelt Island.

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## Mario Naves



My family and I have lived in Island House for fifteen years. During that time, Roosevelt Island's diverse community, beautiful surroundings and "small town" lifestyle have become an indispensable part of our lives. Roosevelt Island was developed on an optimistic and largely realized promise: Providing housing to New Yorkers who might otherwise not be able to live in and contribute to the city's life. It is a safe haven for middle-income citizens whose jobs are vital to the city's economic and social fabric. My belief in the promise of Roosevelt Island and my concern about the continuing affordability of Island House led me to become Co-Chair of the Island House Tenants Association in 2003. For two years, my fellow Board members and I explored a variety of housing options that would allow tenants to remain in their homes, whether as owners or as renters. Building upon the efforts of previous IHTA Boards, we maintained productive relationships with our political representatives and the Department for Housing and Community Development (DHCR), as well as established contact with the Community Preservation Corporation. We hired an engineering firm whose analysis of the building remains pivotal to negotiations with the owners. We met regularly with management to address maintenance problems. We organized floor captains, held fund-raisers and communicated regularly with tenants about the status of negotiations. At this critical juncture, I am eager to rejoin the IHTA to work on behalf of the tenants. I bring to the IHTA my previous experience as a former Board member, and communications skills honed by twenty years experience teaching at colleges and universities in New York and Florida and by working as a journalist for publications like *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Observer* and *Slate*.

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## Mircea Nicolescu



I have lived in Island House for the last 14 years, the longest I have lived in one place so far. For the last couple of years I tried to stay informed with the never ending Island House privatization process, and I voiced my opinions and constructive feedback (I hope) to the past boards whenever I considered something is going in the wrong direction. Sometimes my remarks were answered, sometimes ignored, so I decided to get directly involved with the fate of the building which is my home. If elected I will try to work with the other board members to the best of my abilities and achieve the goal of maintaining an affordable life style in Island House for all residents, either prospective buyers or renters. I will especially focus on providing more frequent updated information to my neighbors regarding the status of negotiations, because I know how frustrating it was for me not to have any news/information for long periods of time, even if in the background our past boards worked hard on our behalf to achieve a good deal. I also voiced my opinions in the WIRE regarding miscellaneous Roosevelt Island issues, and maybe some of you have had a chance to read them in the past years. On a personal note, I am an electronics & telecommunications engineer, and I have a wonderful son who just turned 13.

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## \*\*\* REMINDER \*\*\*

- **Annual Members Meeting: Sunday, January 25, 2-2:30 PM, Island House Community Room**
- **Meet the Candidates: Sunday, January 25, 2:30-3:30 PM, Island House Community Room**
- **Annual Elections, Monday-Tuesday, January 26-27, 12-9 PM each day, Island House Community Room**