

Island House Tenants Association, Inc.

PO Box 132, New York, NY 10044-0203

<http://islandhouse.us>

**Date:** February 27, 2006

**From:** IHTA Board

**To:** Members

**Via:** Door Drop, Web Posting

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## **DHCR: SUPPORT PLAN WITH OPPORTUNITY TO BUY OR RENT OUR HOMES AT AFFORDABLE PRICES**

Dear Neighbor:

We're copying you on a letter we sent this morning to the New York Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR).

As you may know, DHCR is the state agency responsible for the supervision, maintenance and development of affordable low and moderate-income housing in New York State. They play a very important role in protecting the interests of all tenants.

In addition to the oversight of DHCR, Roosevelt Island development is impacted by the Island's General Development Plan (GDP), which contains several important provisions relating to moderate and affordable housing on Roosevelt Island.

We're writing to DHCR at a point where the agency is reviewing how the GDP might impact our agreement to purchase our building under a tenant-sponsored non-eviction plan. We want to make sure that as they consider their role in this process they are aware, as the letter explains, of the concerns of the significant majority of building residents who believe the best way to protect the ability of several hundred moderate income, middle class tenants to continue to live on Roosevelt Island, is with a plan that will provide them with the opportunity to buy their homes, or have the kind of rent protections on the terms envisaged in the Letter of Intent.

We also believe that its very important our elected officials hear directly from you on this issue. One of the great things about our Island is that we have many vocal, activist, committed tenants who are prepared to express their concerns on a range of issues. The disadvantage is that sometimes our elected officials don't hear from the "silent majority" and respond only to those who make the most noise even if they aren't representative of most residents. We'd urge you to take a few minutes to call these elected officials at the numbers below and let them know what you think. Contact Information:

Ms. Judith A. Calogero, Commissioner DHCR Phone 866-275-3427  
Hon. David Cabrera, Deputy Commissioner, NYS DHCR 212-480-6442  
Hon. Richmond McCurnin, Assistant Commissioner, DHCR 212-480-6448  
Hon. Carolyn B. Maloney, Member of Congress 202-225-7944  
Hon. Alan G. Hevesi, Comptroller, State of New York 518-474-4015  
Hon. Eliot Spitzer, Attorney General, State of New York (212) 416-8000  
Hon. Jose M. Serrano, New York State Senator 202-225-4361  
Hon. Alexander B. Grannis, Member of Assembly (212) 860-4906  
Hon. Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor, City of New York 212-NEW-YORK  
Hon. Betsy Gotbaum, Public Advocate, City of New York (212) 669-7200  
Hon. William C. Thompson, Jr., Comptroller, City of New York 212-669-3916  
Hon. Jessica S. Lappin, Member of New York City Council (212) 535-5554  
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Manhattan Borough President (212) 873-6368  
Hon. Herbert E. Berman, President and COO, RIOC 212-832-4540  
Ms. Deborah Beck, Chair, Real Estate Committee, RIOC Board of Directors  
Mr. John Mannix, Member, Real Estate Committee, RIOC Board of Directors  
Ms. Alberteen Anderson, Member, Real Estate Committee, RIOC Board of Directors

IHTA Board [letter on back page, please turn over]

[letter to DHCR]

Dear Ms. Calogero,

As you may be aware, we have recently entered into a Letter of Intent to purchase Island House from Charles Lucido under a tenant-sponsored, non-eviction Coop/Condo conversion plan. This plan has been specifically crafted to preserve the moderate-income structure of the building with strong protections for buyers and strong protections for those who choose to continue to rent. Since the LOI envisages a completed purchase agreement by April 30<sup>th</sup>, we are currently in an opening round of discussions with RIOC on terms for extending the ground lease. We intend to soon engage in similar discussions with the ESDC around tax abatement issues. You should also be aware that our board was recently re-elected by close to 70% of our building's residents: a very strong endorsement of our strategy for preserving moderate income housing for our unique, diverse mixed income community.

We thought it important to provide you with the thinking and concerns of the majority of our tenants and, we believe, those in Rivercross and Westview (in Westview there has yet to be an election for a representative tenant board).

The overwhelming majority of Island House residents love Roosevelt Island and want to stay here. They are worried and concerned about anything that might break up our community and jeopardize their ability to remain. This being so, our first charge as their Board is to preserve that right for them.

Some years ago, many of us began this process in the belief that the best option would be the preservation of the status quo: whether as an extension of the current Mitchell Lama provisions or some other rent controlled/stabilized structure. However, given the lack of financial incentive for the owner to remain in the Mitchell-Lama program, we, the tenants, must consider ownership as both a defensive necessity and as an option that provides some key protections to moderate and lower income occupants of our building. We have gone to great lengths to structure our Letter of Intent to reflect the varying needs of our tenant body.

At this critical juncture, we would ask you to refrain from any action that could jeopardize the opportunity for hundreds of New York City families to remain in our community and for all tenants to buy or rent their apartments at an affordable cost. As you know, we are scheduled to meet with David Cabrera and Rich McCurnin to review these and other issues this Wednesday. We are also looking forward to further discussing our concerns with you.

Respectfully yours,

Dorothy Davis  
Chair IHTA Board of Directors

Cc:

Hon. David Cabrera, Deputy Commissioner, NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal  
Hon. Richmond McCurnin, Assistant Commissioner, DHCR  
Hon. Carolyn B. Maloney, Member of Congress  
Hon. Alan G. Hevesi, Comptroller, State of New York  
Hon. Eliot Spitzer, Attorney General, State of New York  
Hon. Jose M. Serrano, New York State Senator  
Hon. Alexander B. Grannis, Member of Assembly  
Hon. Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor, City of New York  
Hon. Betsy Gotbaum, Public Advocate, City of New York  
Hon. William C. Thompson, Jr., Comptroller, City of New York  
Hon. Jonathan Bing,  
Hon. Jessica S. Lappin, Member of New York City Council  
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Manhattan Borough President  
Hon. Herbert E. Berman, President and COO, RIOC  
Ms. Deborah Beck, Chair, Real Estate Committee, RIOC Board of Directors  
Mr. John Mannix, Member, Real Estate Committee, RIOC Board of Directors  
Ms. Albertine, Member, Real Estate Committee, RIOC Board of Directors  
Mr. Stuart M. Saft, Esq.