



GRAMERCY PARK BLOCK ASSOCIATION, INC.

23 Gramercy Park South, New York, NY 10003

Phone: 212-260-3875 Fax: 212-529-8355 E-mail: Arlenesharrison@yahoo.com

To: Our Neighbors on Gramercy Park
From: Arlene Harrison, President, Gramercy Park Block Association
Date: May 3, 2005
Subject: Update on Neighborhood Concerns

Many of you have contacted me in the past few weeks on a variety of topics of concern. Among the issues most mentioned are the Con Edison/Gramercy Park Hotel steam pipe excavation, the fumes and noise coming from a diesel oil truck in front of 60 Gramercy Park North, the lack of telephone service of some residents on the north side of the Park, the street light that is out near 60 Gramercy Park North, the security in the walkways surrounding the Gramercy Park Hotel construction site, and the traffic emergency situation at the intersection on Lexington Avenue and Gramercy Park North.

Although most of the calls have come from residents of 60 Gramercy Park North and One Lexington Avenue, residents from several other buildings on the north side and residents of all the buildings on the west side of the Park have recently contacted me.

Gramercy Park Hotel/Con Edison Excavation Site

During the past couple of weeks, this Gramercy Park West project has caused a great deal of concern because of the tremendous noise it creates and about the advance lack of advanced knowledge about what is going on at this site. I met with the Con Edison construction crew and learned that the Gramercy Park Hotel is installing a steam line that will provide an alternative source of fuel for their boiler system. The Hotel is changing its heating, hot-water and air conditioning to a steam-based system, which is more efficient and environmentally friendly. It is Con Edison electricity that produces the steam and installs the steam pipe. The new steam main will go from Gramercy Park South, across Gramercy Park West to Gramercy Park North. Since I felt people would want to know exactly where the excavation would be, I asked the crew manager to outline it for me. He indicated where it would be by outlining it with orange spray paint. This week, they will excavate right up onto the sidewalk in front of 60 Gramercy Park North, a few feet short of the doctor's office on the ground floor on the right side of the entrance to the building. The entire process should take a maximum of 45 days. I will be working with the Con Edison team and the New York City Department of Transportation to try to lessen the time this will take. The good news is that several buildings that now have oil-based systems will be able to tap into this new steam system. Those buildings include 60 Gramercy Park North, the Calvary Church Parish Hall and the Church itself, as well as the buildings on the south side of the Park, from 13 Gramercy Park South to 8 Gramercy Park South.

Hours of Operation at the Construction Site

The official work hours that the building permit allows at the Gramercy Park Hotel construction site is from 7 a.m. until 3 p.m. Building construction crews in New York are allowed to work on Saturdays but the work crew at this job site does not. This week, we received several calls that the construction noise began at 6:45 a.m. Some residents of One Lexington Avenue, and 45 and 48 Gramercy Park North have also complained to us that there are large trucks and a great deal of noise at the site during some nights. I will look into this and get back to you.

Fumes and Noise from a Diesel Oil Truck

Last Friday, a diesel oil truck was parked for many hours in front of 60 Gramercy Park North. Both the fumes and the noise were very disturbing to the residents. I learned that they were cleaning the boiler at the Hotel to make way for the new steam system. The Hotel management has now assured me that if anything like this should happen again, they will try to give me advance warning so that I can alert you.

Disruption of Telephone Service

Recently, there was a problem at 60 Gramercy Park North with telephone service. In at least one case, a resident had no service for five days. Verizon was called and since many telephone wires go from the street into the Gramercy Park Hotel basement first, the Verizon repair people immediately went there. They discovered that some of the wires had been wet and were not working. I have accordingly asked the hotel to contact Verizon about a plan that will protect these wires from now on.

Security in the Walkways Surrounding the Gramercy Park Hotel

I continue to work with the hotel management on improving the security in the walkways, both on Gramercy Park North and on Lexington Avenue. The Hotel assured me that they are stepping-up their security patrols, and requiring security guards to be particularly alert to trespassers, vagrants, illegal drug activity, and unsafe conditions such as broken glass, lights that are out and vandalism. I will continue to monitor this very closely and ask that you contact me if there are any problems you wish to report.

Dust From Demolition

Complaints about the dust coming in the windows on Gramercy Park North from the demolition have been frequent. It is my understanding that the demolition work on the Annex has been completed. The demolition work on the Hotel is still in progress. They have promised to try to continue watering down as much of the dust as is possible.

Defective Street lights on Gramercy Park

Since the Bishop Crook street lights were installed several years ago, many of them have been out for months at a time in one location or another on Gramercy Park. It was reported to me by a resident of 60 GPN that the street light on Gramercy Park North, between Park Avenue South and Gramercy Park West has been out for months. Since that is the only street light before you reach the one before 60 GPN, it is very dark there. In addition, there is scaffolding at that location on the Parish Hall of Calvary Church which adds to the problem. I called 311 and reported that this light was not working. I was transferred to the Department of Transportation Street Light Defect Unit, and upon giving them the exact location, I was given a service request number for future reference. The number in this case is 1005111. The policy is that DOT will inspect a defective street light within 10 days after a report is made. It can then take up to 30

days to repair a light. If anyone at 60 GPN or anywhere else wants to check on the status of this particular light, he or she should call 311 and give them the service call request number above. That is also the formula for reporting any street lights on Gramercy Park that are not working.

Traffic

I am pleased to tell you that Community Board 6 has overwhelmingly approved the pedestrian safety traffic recommendations worked on by the Gramercy Park Block Association and the Trustees of Gramercy Park to address the emergency public safety traffic situation at the intersection of Lexington Avenue and Gramercy Park North. I am attaching an article that appeared in the April 28th edition of Town & Village newspaper that will bring you up to date on this matter.

Website

If you wish to find out more about the new residential building that the Schrager team is building at 50 Gramercy Park North, you can visit their website at www.50gramercyparknorth.com.

If you have additional concerns that you would like me to address, please email me at arlenesharrison@yahoo.com. If you are not able to do so, please call me at (212) 260-3875. I am here to help you.