

CB6 reviews traffic safety at Gramercy Park

By Maciej Wroblewski

Members of Community Board Six held a meeting to address the emergency traffic safety issues at Lexington Avenue and Gramercy Park North last Friday.

The meeting, co-chaired by Fred Arcaro, Chair of CB6's Public Safety, Environmental and Human Rights Committee, and Lou Sepersky, Chair of CB6's Transportation Committee, was organized following three accidents that occurred at the location in the week of March 12, in one of which a tow-truck operator was run over.

According to the 13th Police Precinct Crime Prevention Officer Joe Abbruzzese, over the past several years there have been 55 accidents at that site, 32 of which occurred after 2002. This year alone, there have been eight accidents and five of them occurred in the month of March.

At the meeting, which was held in Baruch College, Arlene Harrison, President of the Gramercy Park Block Association and a Trustee of Gramercy Park, presented recommendations formulated by the Block Association, and the trustees, with the advice of Officer Abbruzzese, and the approval of Deputy Inspec-



Arlene Harrison and CB6's Fred Arcaro inspecting Gramercy Park's recent accident site.

tor Michael J. McEnroy, commanding officer of the 13th Precinct.

The 13th Precinct considers the traffic situation at that location to be "an extremely dangerous condition for pedestrians," and they have hand-delivered these recommendations, including extensive documentation gathered by the Block Association and the Precinct, to CB6 District Manager Toni Carlina, who immediately forwarded them to Department of Transportation Borough Commissioner Margaret Forgione.

The recommendations call for the traffic light at Lexington Avenue and East 22nd Street to be taken out of synchronization, which would cause speeding southbound traffic to stop at East 22nd

Street before continuing on to Gramercy Park North. Furthermore, a large flashing arrow directing traffic to turn west should hang from an existing traffic device at the intersection of Lexington Avenue and Gramercy Park North, and an additional "no through traffic" sign should hang from the traffic light at the intersection of Lexington Avenue and East 22nd Street.

Harrison also presented two more recommendations at the meeting, one of which had been suggested earlier by retired 13th Precinct Police Officer Scott Kimmins during a previous on-site field visit with District Manager Carlina, and representatives of the Department

of Transportation. PO Kimmins recommended that East 24th Street could be designated as an alternate "truck route" to reduce the congestion and the number of trucks that try to turn onto Gramercy Park North.

Another recommendation, one that Harrison worked on with Committee Chair Arcaro, is to add rubber "anti-fatigue" mats to slow down cars. Before such mats could be installed, however, the Department of Transportation would have to make sure that the cars going over them would not make noise and disturb local residents.

The recommendation will make their way before the CB6's full board on April 13 after the two committees review them.