

Next meeting: Mar. 13 at 8 PM



Creedmoor Civic News

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CREEDMOOR CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
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BEWARE OF UNSCRUPULOUS REAL ESTATE SOLICITATIONS

by Richard Duskiwicz. Our civic association has become aware of real estate solicitation tactics being practiced in our neighborhood that skirt laws designed to protect our communities.

New York State's Cease and Desist Law was created in 1989 to protect Queens residents from rapacious real estate agents who harassed them constantly. Bellerose homeowners openly welcomed this law, in fact, Bellerose is one of the best-represented neighborhoods on this list. Every few years, the state is required to hold hearings to determine if the list should be continued. Many homeowners and civic leaders who testified at the last hearing made it abundantly clear that this law must be renewed.

Those of us who have participated in the cease-and-desist registration, have, for the most part, been satisfied with the peace and quiet it provides. It's rare that we answer the phone at dinnertime only to find a real estate company offering to sell our homes.

There are shortcomings to this law, however. Unscrupulous companies attempt to utilize every loophole that they can uncover. Sleazy tactics such as changing the town name, and sending solicitations to a registered homeowner, are becoming more common. One company even sends out their advertisements to residents with "Queens" as the town name. Foxton's, the discount real estate company, sends out a "magazine" in its attempts to skirt this law. Sometimes mailings are sent out with a slight misspelling of the recipient's first or last name.

Many of the residents in Queens are finding that they are once again being attacked by unwanted visitors in the form of "private investors." These entrepreneurs use the same exact maneuvers that real estate brokers are now legally forbidden to use against registered homeowners. Phone calls,

mailings, and visits to your home are now becoming more and more common. What makes these lowlifes different? They aren't covered by the cease-and-desist law. They're not licensed or registered in any way by New York State, so they're free to invade your peace and quiet by ringing your doorbell and questioning if you want to sell your home.

This onslaught of harassment is now coming from within Creedmoor Civic's own boundaries. G&R Realty, which is located at 242nd St. and Braddock Ave, has agents fanning out through the Bellerose, Bellerose Manor, and Queens Village neighborhoods looking for victims. This latest attack comes in the form of "private investors" who seem to have a hard time understanding what the word "no" means. When a civic leader from another civic association was approached in his home, the visitor was told that what he was doing was probably illegal, since the resident was on the cease-and-desist list, the man suddenly took on the "I no understand the English good" ruse. This is extremely interesting, because this same man seemed to speak English well enough when he visited Lyman St. on February 26. Another of his cohorts dropped off a card at a home on 88th Ave., with a note on the back stating that he could pay a good price for her home. Since there's no "private investor" title on this card, do we assume that he's a broker working for G&R Realty? Messages were left at G&R asking for clarification, but none of the calls were returned.

This is reminiscent of an incident last year, when homeowners complained at a Creedmoor Civic meeting that G&R solicitation cards were left on front steps and in mailboxes. After multiple phone calls were made to the
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Beware (continued from Page 1, Col. 2)

phone numbers on the cards looking for an explanation, the lame excuse was made that "several men had rented desk space at the office and were not authorized to use the G&R name." Yeah, right. Will that be the excuse used this time, too?

Officials have been contacted regarding this situation. Official complaint forms will be completed and all necessary hearings will be attended.

The home you purchased is your castle. You're entitled to the quiet enjoyment of this home, free from the harassment brought on by vultures who are only interested in one thing-money. Let these characters know that you're offended by what they're doing to your neighborhood. Legitimate real estate companies and brokers respect your privacy, they know you've registered with the list for a reason.

If you've been solicited by G&R Realty, or any other real estate company, and you've registered your address with New York State's cease-and-desist list, follow up and file a complaint. It's your home, and your neighborhood at risk.

President's Message

(This column will resume next month.)

Donations Gratefully Received

Creedmoor Civic has received the following donations from residents of our Association's territory. We appreciate such generosity:

- Thomas - Lyman St
- Mirbach - 88 Ave
- Lorenzo - 90 Ave
- Cruz - 88 Ave
- Cartagena - 240 St

Dues are due for 2006. Please remit \$6.00 per family to Creedmoor Civic Assn., c/o 88-01 Lyman Street, Bellerose Manor, NY 11427. Sorry, the promised list of paid-up 2005 members will have to wait until next month.

POLS, CIVIC LEADERS CALL FOR DOB PROBE

Civic leaders from the Four Borough Neighborhood Preservation Alliance and City Council members have stepped up calls for a probe into the dysfunctional Department of Buildings. Always on the job site after a building collapse, but never around before the damage is done, and too quick to write off a complaint as "resolved" when they can't get access to a site, some have said the agency can't be fixed but no one can quite come up with an alternative. What has some people really upset is when a contractor damages a neighboring building and the Department of Buildings puts a violation on the damaged property, leaving the culprit contractor off the hook. In fact there is legislation in the works to correct this injustice, but why should such legislation even be needed?

MAKE 109 AND FEEDERS K-8 SCHOOLS

Discussions have been underway with Assembly Member Barbara Clark, and local civic leaders on a plan to make I.S. 109 a kindergarten to 8th grade school (for which it was built) and ditto for the schools that feed into 109: PS 33, 34, and 135. The time to do this is before the new PS 268 under construction on Jamaica Avenue opens. Converting schools is difficult because as each elementary school retains a grade, its catchment boundaries have to shrink, while a zone has to be created around 109. We have received some information that the impetus to make this change needs to come from the affected PTAs. Those of our members connected to the PTAs need to take the lead on this. Most new schools are now K-8s. We need this change to preserve quality neighborhood schools.

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Around the Town

🌸 Congratulations to: Emma Eberlin of the Parkside Civic Association (North Queens Village) on the occasion of her 100th Birthday. Emma has stepped aside from the civic association she founded, but still serves as a member of Community Board 13.