



LOWER EAST SIDE



WAKE UP, COMMUNITY!

Mayor Bloomberg, with the help of local politicians and so-called community organizations, is pushing racist development plans that is displacing all of us- residents, workers, and small businesses- if we do not stand up against them. Whether Bloomberg remains in office or not, if working people on the Lower East Side organize together to voice our concerns, we can hold the government accountable, and take control of our community and lives.

My Barrio

by Yolanda Donato

*This is my life, my history and my poetry
It all began where my children grew up
And went to school in the Lower East Side for a better future
At one time, it was a community of whites, blacks, hispanics, and asians
Now we are a seed that fights
For our rights and for our community
We are a culture of strength, work, hope and safety
As a community we feel
The right to continue fighting for our future and that of our people*

*Now they want to take out the seed that we have planted together
What hurts me the most
Is that everything has changed
Not for my barrio
But for this society
And they want to kick us out and separate us from our community
Our customs, our homes and our strength
From pain, sweat, and from our veins
As workers and as mothers
That raised our children
For a better education.
In my barrio, my dream is to
Arrive in my barrio
Arrive to my people and my fighting community
Of struggle and of achievement.
But we will overcome as a community
Because the power is in our people
Now in my barrio, I've found the power to show the world
That we are a tree with fruit
And we will not let our roots be lost
Because I am a warrior woman
And the same with my people
And we will unite by the same force.*

Organize Against Bloomberg's Chinatown Working Group!



On June 1, 2009 more than 100 members of NMASS and the Coalition to Protect Chinatown/LES protested at the first Chinatown Working Group Town Hall Meeting. We demanded an end to the exclusion and displacement of low-income Latinos and African Americans.



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Chinatown Working Group's Racist Plan

Last fall Bloomberg rammed through his racist East Village/Lower East Side rezoning plan with the help of so-called community groups, such as Asian Americans for Equality (AAFE) and Good Old Lower East Side (GOLES) which benefit from this plan. This plan protects the wealthy white neighborhoods by restricting the height of the buildings of the East Village while excluding Chinatown and the LES from those same protections, pushing more luxury development into our community. When we brought together thousands of residents, workers and small businesses to oppose this racist plan, Bloomberg formed the Chinatown Working Group, which AAFE leads, to divide the community and further his agenda under the guise of false democracy. Following in the footsteps of the East Village rezoning plan, the China-

town Working Group will continue to exclude the LES from its rezoning of Chinatown. The Group plans to rezone and develop Chinatown into a playground for tourists and the rich. This luxury development in Chinatown will spill over to our unprotected LES. This means even more low-income Latino, African American and Chinese residents and workers, and more small businesses, will be pushed out. At a time when the city is escalating its attacks on our community, when landlords are colluding with city agencies such as the FDNY and DOB to evict long-time residents from their homes, when NYCHA is cutting and privatizing its

services while raising rents for residents, and when low-income housing continues to disappear at an accelerating rate- it is more urgent than ever that we come together as a community and demand that the Chinatown Working Group include and work with the LES to create a rezoning plan that will genuinely protect our community from displacement. We are working people and families who've made Chinatown and LES our community. We invite all New Yorkers to join us to protect and build our city for working communities.

We demand Bloomberg's Chinatown Working Group —Stop This Racist Planning

- Stop separating Lower East Side from Chinatown.
- Stop excluding Latinos and African-Americans. Ensure equal representation for Latino, African American and Chinese low-income residents and workers in plans that affect our communities.
- Preserve and protect NYCHA and build more low-income housing.
- Downzone by lowering height limits to protect our community from high-rise developments.

What Does Bloomberg's East Village/LES Rezoning Do?

Rezoning plans say what kind of residences, buildings and businesses can exist in a community. Bloomberg's racist "East Village/LES Rezoning Plan" which passed in Fall 2008:

- protects the wealthier, white East Village community from new luxury development by restricting the building heights.
- pushes luxury development into areas where low-income people of color live—like Delancey, Pitt, Houston St., and Avenue D – which will lead to more landlords pushing out low-income tenants and trying to sell buildings.
- creates pressure for NYCHA to sell its property by pushing richer residents into the LES and raising property values.
- provides no protections for low-income housing or small businesses in Loisaida or Chinatown.



This new luxury condominium next to NMASS **replaced** a tile store and Gertel's Bakery, a 93-year old LES establishment.

NYCHA For Sale?

Some elected officials and "community groups" like GOLES which cut deals with Mayor Bloomberg are telling NYCHA residents not to be concerned about the East Village Rezoning Plan because "NYCHA is federally protected"

But, why, then are NYCHA residents in the LES seeing more evictions, higher rents, longer waiting lists, and fewer services and repairs since Bloomberg's rezoning plan passed last year? The truth:

- Over the past 15 years, the federal government has elimi-

nated public housing in major cities across the country, resulting in a total demolition of 96,200 public housing units. Many were replaced with private market-rate houses and apartments, and a shrinking number of low-income units.

- NYCHA is leaving empty an estimated 20,000 apartments for undetermined use; meanwhile, **housing authorities around the country have razed or sold off buildings for being "underoccupied."** Thousands of NYCHA units have been sold to private developers- including the Fabria

Houses on 11th St.

Bloomberg also:

- eliminated operating funds for the City's NYCHA in 2004, after State funds to NYCHA were gutted in 1998.
- raised rents for 28% of NYCHA residents under his "Targeted Rent Initiative."
- is offering residents federal Section 8 vouchers to move out of NYCHA
- is transitioning 8,400 NYCHA apartments onto Section 8 to bring in higher-income tenants into NYCHA and reduce City responsibility for NYCHA.

EVICTED BY BLOOMBERG'S AGENCIES!

- 11 Essex St. (5/27/09)
- 28 Henry St. (6/25/09)
- 18 Avenue D (Montessori Day Care Center)
- 55 & 61 Delancey St.
- 81 Bowery (11/13/08)
- 15 Catherine St. (12/16/08)
- 103 East Broadway (12/17/08)
- 51 Monroe St. (12/21/08)
- 55 East Broadway (12/22/08)
- 3 Allen St. (5/7/09)
- 20 East Broadway (6/12/09)
- 128 Hester St. (8/6/09)
- 17 Pike St.
- 32 Market St. (Nov-Dec 2008)

(a partial list)

For over a century people have lived in cramped, dangerous housing in the L.E.S. and Chinatown. Suddenly, since Bloomberg's "East Village/LES Rezoning Plan" passed, the Department of Buildings, the Fire Department, and the Police, are helping developers avoid having to go to housing court, by using building code violations as an excuse to evict hundreds of people of color with barely any notice.

ORGANIZE!

FIGHT BACK!

Evicted by Bloomberg's Department of Buildings or Fire Department? Or faced with rising rents?

Faced with eviction by NYCHA?

Waiting months or years for repairs?

**Contact the NMASS
Housing Clinic at
(212) 358-0295.**

Long-Time Neighborhood Shoe Store Squeezed Out



Sound Familiar?

Emeterio Rodriguez purchased shoes for almost 30 years at Wolners Family Shoes on Grand St. But recently he found the store closed down and a realtor's number posted outside. For the 77-year-old resident of the Vladeck Houses, the changes he is seeing in the community are taking away

pieces of the life he has lived for 60 years on the Lower East Side. Wolners closed because "it just doesn't pay anymore," the former owner, Simon Katzenberg, said. "The customer base has gone down— And, every year the rent went up."

NMASS: Who We Are

NMASS (*National Mobilization Against Sweatshops*), Lower East Side Workers Center, is a membership-based organization of working people and our families coming together to organize to take control of our lives and to have a voice where we work and where we live.

In our community on the LES, we've fought the exclusion of workers of color from jobs on NYU's construction sites and displacement effect of NYU'S developments. We also formed the Beyond Ground Zero (BGZ) coalition and:

- demanded that the government end its aid policies

that discriminated against LES/Chinatown.

- forced the government to provide air conditioners and purifiers to those affected by 9/11 citywide, and won a year of free private health insurance for all affected by the toxic fallout.

- pushed Bellevue Hospital to create the only program that treats all residents and workers of Lower Manhattan hurt by 9/11; this program has since expanded to Gouverneur and Elmhurst Hospitals.

We are still pushing Congress to recognize the 9/11 health crisis as a national health priority.

Now
we
have
to fight

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LOWER MANHATTAN
HURT BY 9/11.**

Bloomberg as he tries to destroy our communities through spending cuts, rezoning and development plans, rising rents, evictions, and other means. Join us in protecting and improving our homes and community !

NMASS (212) 358-0295

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