

# Turtle Bay News

A Publication of the Turtle Bay Association

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## Keeping the Quiet: Issue Gains Momentum

**A**s in many Manhattan neighborhoods, the noisy bar scene's impact on quality-of-life has been a Turtle Bay topic for years. But recently, the issue has come to the forefront: A neighborhood group went to court to keep a disco bar from opening on 46th Street; Assemblyman Jonathan Bing has introduced legislation to overhaul the bar licensing process; and numerous calls are being made for changes to the composition of the State Liquor Authority, the agency charged with granting liquor licenses.

While noise problems in Turtle Bay are clearly less onerous than in many Manhattan communities, neighbors, particularly along Second Avenue, remain concerned. Here is a look at some of the issues, and what is being done about them – with perspectives from residents, elected officials, police, the State Liquor Authority, and the bars themselves.

### Neighbors Go to Court

In the area around 46th Street and Second Avenue, a coalition of neighbors calling itself “Ban the Bar” has won a temporary restraining order to stop the State Liquor Authority (S.L.A.) from issuing a license to the Embassy disco bar, planned on the site of the former Hsin Yu Restaurant. The neighborhood group turned to the courts,

in filing what is called an Article 78 appeal, after the S.L.A. granted a license to the disco bar last December, despite strong opposition from Community Board 6 – which unanimously voted to oppose the bar “in the strongest terms possible” – and opposition from the Turtle Bay Association, Assemblyman Bing and other elected officials. The bar would be open until 4 a.m., a D.J. playing music for up to 100 patrons and windows opening onto 46th Street.

The neighborhood group's case is scheduled to be heard in State Supreme Court in mid-May. The TBA has filed a statement of support in the proceeding.

At the core of the residents' opposition to the Embassy is what is known as the “500-foot rule.” Under law, an applicant whose establishment falls within 500 feet of three or more entities with liquor licenses must show that being granted a license is in the “public interest.” The proposed Embassy bar was within 500 feet of *twelve* entities with liquor licenses. And contrary to being in the public interest, Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer said recently that the Embassy would be in direct “conflict” with residents' interests. Stringer, along with Assemblyman Bing, State Senator Liz Krueger and City Councilman Dan Garodnick, spoke

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One of the first signs of spring in Turtle Bay – the daffodils in the U.N. Park. This year, the park is open to the public for the first time in five years. Hours: 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (See Newsworthy Notes, page 3)

## TBA, Community Leaders Briefed on U.N. Renovation

**O**ne thing is for sure: the United Nations' aging complex of buildings is in dire need of renovation. What is not so clear is just how the big world body is going to accomplish this massive, expensive and time-consuming project, called the Capital Master Plan, which was first announced more than five years ago.

At two recent briefings sponsored jointly with the Turtle Bay Association for the TBA Board and local community leaders, U.N. Assistant Secretary General and Executive Director of the Capital Master Plan, Louis Reuter, outlined the obstacles facing the United Nations in moving its plans forward. And to illustrate the seriousness of the refurbishment needs, attendees at the meetings were given a tour of the facilities' inner workings, where exfoliating asbestos-clad pipes, antiquated switchgear and leaky rooftops were readily apparent. Built between 1948 and 1952 according to 1938 New York City building code standards, the buildings are long past due for renovation.

But obstacles remain, and so no work has yet begun. At the brief-

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## Mark Your Calendar

- **Sunday, May 7**  
Turtle Bay Street Fair  
Second Avenue from 43rd to 53rd  
212-751-5465
- **Saturday, May 13**  
Katharine Hepburn Garden Party  
1-3 p.m.  
Dag Hammarskjold Plaza  
212-969-8820; 212-751-5465
- **Wednesday, May 31**  
Children's Puppet Performance  
10:30 a.m.  
MacArthur Playground  
212-751-5465  
(See story, page 4)
- **Saturday, June 3**  
17th Precinct Street Fair  
Third Avenue from 43rd to 57th  
212-826-3228
- **Saturday, June 10**  
Outdoor Art Show  
High School of Art & Design  
10 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Dag Hammarskjold Plaza  
212-969-8820
- **Saturday, June 24**  
Empire Autorama  
Classic Cars on Display  
9 a.m.-6 p.m.  
Dag Hammarskjold Plaza  
646-932-0421
- **Last Tuesday every month**  
17th Precinct Community Council  
Open Meeting, 6 p.m.  
Sutton Place Synagogue  
225 East 51st Street  
212-826-3228  
(No meetings July, August,  
December)
- **Second Wednesday every month**  
Community Board 6  
Full Board Meeting, 7 p.m.  
NYU Medical Center  
550 First Avenue  
212-319-3750

### TBA Contacts:

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Web Site: [www.turtlebay-nyc.org](http://www.turtlebay-nyc.org)

Check our Bulletin Board:  
East side of Second Avenue,  
between 48th and 49th Streets,  
on outside wall of the supermarket.

## Waterside Nears Showdown

By BRUCE A. SILBERBLATT

The City Planning Commission held two back-to-back hearings in late March to consider the Con Edison Waterside redevelopment project. Crowds of community residents, elected officials and representatives of neighborhood groups – including the TBA – packed the big Shotenstone Center auditorium on 34th Street to voice their concerns, demanding a radical downsizing from what the developer, Sheldon Solow's East River Realty Company (ERRC), is proposing.

The hearings, called scoping hearings, are held to consider what information should be considered when the Environmental Impact Statement is written about the development.

Here is a look at the ERRC plan, the community's reaction, and a counterplan proposed by Community Board 6 that has been embraced by neighbors and elected officials alike.

### Includes Two Closed Streets

The nine-acre site runs along First Avenue from 35th to 41st Streets and includes two streets that have long been closed by Con Edison – 39th and 40th Streets between First Avenue and the FDR Drive. Currently, the land is zoned manufacturing.

ERRC proposes an office and residential

project containing a zoning floor area of 5,120,000 square feet, a 13.5 ratio to the site area and exceeding the highest in the neighborhood. It includes underground parking for 1,550 vehicles, a 57-story combined office and residential building (864 feet), and seven residential towers ranging from 40 stories (528 feet) to 67 stories (836 feet). By comparison, the Trump World Tower stands 861 feet and the U.N. Secretariat, 505 feet.

### ERRC Wants Commercial Zoning

To do this, ERRC would first, merge a one-acre lot occupied by a Con Ed substation west of one of the four parcels on the site, gaining some 400,000 zoning square feet; second, obtain an 850,000 square foot zoning floor area plaza bonus from 3.4 acres of so-called park that is planned; third, retain 39th and 40th Streets, rather than returning them to the city; and fourth, obtain 100 percent commercial zoning, even though the project is 80 percent residential and the area has had no commercial zoning previously.

Clearly, ERRC wants 100 percent commercial zoning because residential zoning would bar plaza bonuses and mandate building a "tower on base" structure, compelling far lower buildings. The only way ERRC might obtain a similar bonus is through inclusionary affordable housing, but the ERRC project calls for market-rate, luxury apartments, not affordable housing.

### No Waterfront Access

The project calls for neither a school nor adequate retail shops, even though there could be as many as 4,000 apartments in the project. And forget waterfront access: ERRC's plan ends at a 20-foot wall overlooking the FDR Drive. The project's much touted 3.4 acre park, hemmed in by tall buildings, would result in an enclave for residents, not a place for neighbors to enjoy. As for shadows, ERRC inadequately mitigates them by reshaping or re-orienting the towers.

Community Board 6 has been heavily involved for several years. Last year, it met with ERRC's architects, offering objec-

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## TBA's Cartoonist Dies

Walt McGovern, cartoonist for the Turtle Bay News for the past 15 years, died April 10. After a career as art director of the advertising agency BBDO, and then as a cartoon illustrator for corporate clients, Walt volunteered to draw cartoons for the newsletter. His cartoons not only brightened its pages, but they also carried a message that helped solidify community support. One of his first cartoons in the early 1990s took on Peter Detmold Park, which had become overrun with dogs before the dog run was built. His last cartoon, for the Fall 2005 newsletter, addressed the issue of noisy bars.

Walt is survived by three daughters and five grandchildren. He will be missed by all of Turtle Bay.

## New Condos Rising Around the ‘Bay’

**A**t least four high-rise condominium buildings are planned or under construction in the Turtle Bay community. At the corner of 46th Street and First Avenue, on the site of what is now the Anti-Defamation League Building, Macklowe Properties plans what it calls an “architecturally distinctive” condo building to reflect its prominent location. There are reports that Macklowe is in talks with the world-renowned architect Renzo Piano to design the building, located at 823 United Nations Plaza.

A spokesman for Macklowe would not discuss the planned height of the new building. But because it is being designed as a tower – not a “base and tower” – it is expected to be considerably taller than the approximately 30-story limitation on a base and tower structure. The spokesman said the building’s design is in the “very preliminary stages, but its ground floor surroundings will have a theme of greenery and landscaping to complement the neighboring Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, as well as the United Nations Park across the Avenue.”

Meanwhile, new high-rise condominiums are well underway at Second Avenue and 53rd Street, on both the southeast and southwest corners. The “ThreeTen” condo on the east side of the Avenue, also being developed by Macklowe, will be ready for occupancy in June. More than 70 percent of the 88 apartments in the 31-story building had been sold as of April, many to young couples with children who, Macklowe says, are attracted to the area by the convenience of being close to the office and yet having recreational activities nearby. Condos in the building start at \$2.2 million.

Construction of the “Veneto” condo, at 250 East 53rd Street across the street from “ThreeTen,” has just begun. The developer, Related Companies, plans a 32-story structure with 137 apartments, ranging from one- to three-bedrooms and two penthouses. Related says prices will start at approximately \$950,000, with occupancy planned for

## Plaza Decision Raises Concerns

As the Turtle Bay News went to press, the Patio – the popular café that has operated at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza for the past three years – was informed by the City Parks Department that it had lost its bid to continue operating at the site and would be replaced by the New York Milkshake Company.

The decision immediately raised concerns among community leaders. The Friends of Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, the non-profit group that maintains the Plaza and its garden, says the Patio provides the right ambience for the Plaza and has played a key role in increasing the little park’s vitality. In a meeting with Parks Department officials arranged by Assemblyman Jonathan Bing, and in a subsequent letter, the Friends’ Board asked for clarification of how the bidding process was handled.

The Parks Committee of Community Board 6 also raised questions. It asked the Department to provide information on the general process of awarding concession licenses, and says it will address how the bidding process can be made more transparent.

The Patio, owned by Hospitality Holdings, operates year-round from the small glass house on the Plaza. “We’re very committed to the beautiful Plaza location,” says Patio Manager Ken McClure. “To have to leave would be a big disappointment for us.”

The changeover to the Milkshake Company, most recently located on St. Mark’s Place, would be in late June when the current license expires.

the fall of next year.

And at 250-254 East 49th Street, the foundations for a 20-story condo are proceeding. Late last year, excavation seriously undercut and damaged adjoining buildings. So severely damaged was 915 Second Avenue, site of Thady Con’s restaurant, that it remains vacant four months later. The building at 248 East 49th Street was also damaged. The TBA will closely monitor the construction work.

## Newsorthy Notes

**Smell the Roses.** Neighbors shouldn’t miss the U.N. Park’s glorious Rose Garden when it’s at the height of its bloom in mid-June. Listed as an official public garden of the All America Rose Selections organization, it contains hundreds of varieties of roses, all labeled with signage throughout the garden’s diagonal pathway. The garden is located at the southeast corner of the park’s North Lawn.

**‘Best Deal in Town.’** An annual membership at the 54th Street Recreation Center is almost too good to pass up: \$75 for those age 54 and younger; \$10 for 55 and older; free for teens under 18. Included is use of the Center’s vast array of facilities, including its 60-foot-long pool, as well as fitness programs, and swimming, dance

and computer classes. Managed by the Parks Department, the Center is at 348 East 54th Street. Call 212-754-5411 for information.

**I ♥ Turtle Bay.** Sign up a new Turtle Bay Association member, and the TBA will send you an “I ♥ Turtle Bay” T-shirt. Just call the TBA office with the new member’s name, and you’ll receive a T-shirt as soon as the membership coupon and dues are received.

**Want to Help With Our Parks?** TBA Parks Committee Chair Marie-Louise Handal has scheduled two upcoming planning meetings for anyone interested in helping out with neighborhood parks issues: 9:30 a.m. Saturday, May 27 and June 17, at PK’s Place, 211 East 46th Street.

Marie-Louise also is looking for volunteers to work in neighborhood parks during the summer. Contact the TBA office if interested.

**A Gift for Summer Visitors.** Now that it’s walking season again, stock up on copies of “A Day in Turtle Bay,” a walking tour of the neighborhood. It is \$5 if picked up at the TBA office, or \$7, to cover postage, if mailed. Contact TBA office for details.

**Former City Councilman Dies.** Robert Dryfoos, who represented the Turtle Bay community as City Councilman in the 1980s, died recently at the age of 63. During his 11 years on the Council, he was a strong supporter of Turtle Bay causes, and was instrumental in helping the community fight to reopen the 48th Street ramp to the FDR Drive.

## TBA Board at Work

The following is a summary of issues and activities addressed at recent TBA Board meetings, as reflected in the meeting minutes. The TBA:

- is monitoring, with Community Board 6 and as part of the East Midtown Coalition for Sensible Development, plans for the Con Ed Waterside development and United Nations renovation project.
- has joined other neighborhood interests in opposing MTA's planned utility building on East 50th Street, which has now been modified.
- is closely watching neighborhood construction sites, including 250-254 East 49th Street, for safety and other concerns.
- worked to ensure re-opening of the pocket park at 240 East 47th Street, including communications to the City Department of Buildings and the building's owner. The park is scheduled to reopen shortly.
- supports community parks, including the currently planned refurbishment of Amster Pavilion in Peter Detmold Park.
- continues to work to beautify the neighborhood through the TBA Tree Program and support of the Turtle Bay Tree Fund.
- has sponsored or supported recent neighborhood events, including a Valentine Party and Dinner in February, and upcoming Turtle Bay Street Fair, Katharine Hepburn Garden Party and children's puppet performance in MacArthur Playground.
- produced a pocket guide and walking tour of Turtle Bay historical and architectural sites.

## Bike Safety Bill

State Senator Liz Krueger has introduced a bill intended to reduce the number of bicyclists on sidewalks, a potential safety issue for pedestrians. Senator Krueger says most of the bicycles are related to food delivery businesses, and so her bill would hold merchants liable for violations issued to bicyclists who are employees or subcontractors of that business, when the violations occur in the course of their work.

Last year, she also opposed a bill to legalize the use of Segway electric vehicles on sidewalks. The bill died in the Assembly.

## Summer Plantings Coming Soon

Look for red, white and pink begonias – along with some impatiens – in Turtle Bay tree beds this summer, replacing the daffodils and tulips that blossomed in spring.

“We find that begonias not only produce bright, long-lasting flowers, but they are hardy under most weather conditions,” says Bill Huxley, president of the Turtle Bay Tree Fund and manager of TBA's Tree Program.

Bill says the Doe Fund has been hired again this year to water the beds twice a week, and to remove litter three times a week. He says that in the Beekman Place area, where the local building workers are committed to watering each day, the tree beds will be planted with impatiens, a profusely flowering plant that needs a daily dose of water.



Daffodils will turn to begonias and impatiens for the summer.

Meanwhile, the Tree Fund has purchased four new tree-bed enclosures that

have been installed on First Avenue between 51st and 52nd Street. They are the same sturdy black steel tree-bed enclosures that are used by the Sutton Area Community for beds that it maintains on the Avenue north of 52nd Street. Other new tree-bed enclosures, the wrought-iron wicket and cobblestone style, have been installed along 49th Street between First and Second Avenues. And several black steel fence enclosures have been placed on 51st Street in the block between First and Second Avenues.

The Turtle Bay Tree Fund maintains the tree beds on cross streets from 48th to 51st Streets, from Third Avenue to Beekman Place. It is funded solely by private contributions, including an annual grant from the TBA. Meanwhile, the TBA's Tree Program maintains the trees and tree beds along Second Avenue from 43rd to 53rd Streets. Its funding comes from TBA membership dues and other fund raisers throughout the year.

For more information on the Tree Fund, write Turtle Bay Tree Fund, 208 East 51st Street, Apt. 238, New York, NY 10022. TBA's Tree Program can be reached by contacting the TBA directly.

## Puppets to Perform at the Playground

Turtle Bay youngsters are in for a treat on Wednesday, May 31, when puppeteers of the Swedish Marionette Theatre perform “The Princess, the Emperor and the Dove”

at MacArthur Playground, the children's park at 49th Street and the East River. The performance by the Theatre, founded in 1939, is presented by the New York City Parks Foundation and sponsored by the TBA. It will begin at 10:30 a.m. and be followed by a puppet-making workshop at 11:30.

TBA Parks Committee chair, Marie-Louise Handal, says reservations are not required for the performance, but if children are planning to attend the workshop, parents should call or e-mail the TBA office to

assure a space is available (212-751-5465; [tbaoffice@mindspring.com](mailto:tbaoffice@mindspring.com)). In case of rain, the performance will be at Holy Family Church auditorium, 315 East 47th Street.



Turtle Bay neighbor Janet Heiligman was out early in the morning for her pick of pansies at the Greenmarket.



### TBA Friends Warm a Winter's Night

An evening of dinner, dancing and good cheer warmed up an otherwise chilly February night as some 100 neighbors and friends came together for the annual TBA Valentine Party. A mid-winter tradition for 22 years, this year's party attracted many first-time guests. Held at La Maganette on 50th Street, the event was planned by Barbara Connolly and her team. Norman Curtis performed the music and Turtle Bay neighbors provided the fun.



Shown clockwise from top left: George Vellonakis, architect who designed Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, and entertainer Tina Louise; Jessica Kifer and Richard Brazzano; Natalie Michaels; Juan and Haifa Bautista (standing) and Phyllis and Irwin Simon (seated); Meryl Brodsky; Fran Walsh (left) and Adrienne Lehman; Judith Binney and City Councilman Dan Garodnick; Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer and TBA Board member Dolores Marsh; Gloria Gelfand; and Thomas LaBarbera and Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney.

**Waterside** continued from page 2  
tions and constructive suggestions – but to no avail. Now the Board has submitted a plan of its own, a 197-C plan, to the City Planning Commission. It is a realistic, reasonable and urbane counterproposal. There are significant differences between it and the ERRC design:

- Floor area and bulk: 25 to 30 percent less than the ERRC plan.
- “Tower on base” construction, not sheer towers.
- Height: 400 feet maximum, not 528-864 feet.

- 39th and 40th Streets: returned to the community.
- Use: all residential with ample retail; no commercial offices.
- Waterfront: access via 39th and 40th Street, footbridges and deck over the FDR Drive with a waterfront park from 38th to 40th Streets.
- Affordable housing: 20 percent or more.
- Parking spaces: 75 percent less than the ERRC plan.

The Community Board 6 concept is consistent with the environs, defers to the United Nations complex in terms of height, con-

tains waterfront access, imposes a much smaller infrastructure burden, and creates a vibrant Manhattan streetscape. In short, the CB6 counterproposal enhances; the ERRC plan overwhelms.

#### Public Voice Is Clear

The TBA believes it is essential that the City Planning Commission give the Community Board 6 proposal equal consideration as that of the developer. At the March hearings, it heard a loud and clear public voice, a voice demanding a project that only the Community Board 6 plan provides.

## Keeping the Quiet...

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at a Turtle Bay rally called to protest the liquor licensing process.

Indeed, it's generally agreed that the "public interest" test is too easily met by simply showing that the bar is providing jobs and entertainment, with no offsetting consideration for the over-saturation of bars in the neighborhood.

### Legislation for Change

Meanwhile, as neighbors took to the courts, Assemblyman Jonathan Bing has taken the legislative route. He has introduced a bill in Albany to require the S.L.A. to take local community boards more seriously before granting licenses to bars falling within the "500-foot rule."

His bill states that if a community board issues a resolution against granting a liquor license, as it did in the Embassy case, the resolution should be viewed as "presumptive" evidence that a license is not in the public interest, and that the S.L.A. may then only grant the license if it shows – in writing – how granting the license is indeed in the public interest.

"For too long, the S.L.A. has ignored neighborhood and community board input," Bing says, "My bill will give the community boards more power in the process."

### Calls for New York City Member

Bing has also joined State Senator Liz Krueger and other state legislators from the city in signing a letter to Governor Pataki urging him to appoint a New York City resident to fill a vacancy that opened up recently when one of the three S.L.A. commissioners resigned. The letter notes that 39 percent of liquor licenses issued by the S.L.A. are issued to establishments in New York City, yet not one of the current commissioners is from here. There hasn't been a New York City resident on the S.L.A. since 1976. The Bloomberg administration, too, is urging that the job be filled with someone familiar with the New York City area.

### Concerns in a Nutshell

So just what are the complaints all about? The 17th Precinct says that the vast majority of calls to 311 in the Turtle Bay area are complaints about noise, most of those about noise coming from the sidewalk out front of local bars. One local merchant who also

lives in an apartment on Second Avenue says, "Nobody is arguing that we shouldn't have bars, and that young people shouldn't have fun. But it seems we have too many bars in too small an area."

Neighbors say the noise starts before midnight and reaches a crescendo at 4:30 a.m., closing time for the bars, when customers are leaving the area. "Not only loud bar customers, but cars and taxis honking are very disturbing, even awakening residents in my building," says Gabrielle Morandiere. She and a group of fellow residents of Connaught Tower have formed an ad hoc "Cars and Bars Committee" to try to help.

"Community Board 6 has been very helpful," Ms. Morandiere says. But she says the most immediate relief was "self-help": She and her committee helped arrange for residents, at their own expense, to purchase sound-proof windows that were installed behind the building's originals.

### Police Meet with Bar Owners

The police point out that loud talking and gathering on the sidewalks is, of course, not a law enforcement issue. Police Officer Jim Meury of the 17th Precinct says bar owners have been very cooperative and are doing what they can to be good neighbors. The Precinct's "cabaret force" of nine officers patrols bars nightly, and the Precinct meets formally with bar owners to review issues and procedures.

For their part, bar owners point to the city smoking ban, which since it was passed three years ago, has forced smokers on to the street. "We would love to keep our customers inside our establishments," says one bar owner, "but if they want to smoke, the space out front is the only place for them to go."

### Encouraging Signs

There are some encouraging signs. Recently, the S.L.A. named its first-ever executive director, Joshua Toas, to provide more hands-on administration of the 75-year-old agency. And 17th Precinct Police were pleased to learn that earlier this year, the Chairman's position at the S.L.A. was filled with an upstate career law enforcement officer, Daniel Boyle. "That can only be helpful," says Officer Meury. "Too often in the past, we have received little or no support, nor cooperation, from the S.L.A. when we requested it in dealing with problems

with licensed premises."

Also, some big developers who are building or planning new high-rise apartment buildings in the neighborhood are known to believe that with more family-oriented, and expensive, high-rise condos, the whole character of the neighborhood will change as new businesses open up.

What seems clear is that with so much attention being paid to the issue – from legislators, police and others – the situation should improve. And in the meantime, neighbors can help by calling 311 – with specific information – when they have serious complaints about noise.

**Editor's Note:** *In a letter to TBA members earlier this year, funds were solicited to help finance a legal proceeding to reverse the S.L.A.'s granting a liquor license to the Embassy disco bar. The letter stated that if sufficient funds were collected in a timely manner, the TBA agreed to be the principal plaintiff in the proceeding; if not, contributions would be returned. While many contributions were received, the amount was not adequate to move forward and the money has been returned. The "Ban the Bar" group that has won a temporary restraining order, reported in this story, is financing the proceeding independently of the TBA.*

### Turtle Bay Association

President: William E. Curtis  
Vice Presidents: Millie Margiotta, Dolores Marsh, Bruce Silberblatt  
Treasurer: Francine Irwin  
Secretary: Barbara Connolly  
Directors: Jed Abrams, Ethel Bendove, Bunny Blei, Meryl Brodsky, Barbara Connolly, William E. Curtis, Denise Hamilton, Marie-Louise Handal, Pamela Hanlon, Olga Hoffmann, Bill Huxley, Richard Irwin, Millie Margiotta, Dolores Marsh, Patricia Q. McDougald, Francine Irwin, Michael Resnick, Carol Rinzler, Jeannie Sakol, Helen Shapiro, Bruce Silberblatt

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## PHYLLIS LUCAS GALLERY AND OLD PRINT CENTER

With a history dating back to 1928, the Phyllis Lucas Gallery and Old Print Center, located in the heart of Turtle Bay, is one of the oldest antiquarian print galleries in New York City.

The gallery has long been known for its fine collection of antique, modern and contemporary works on paper. And in recent years gallery owner Michael Lucas, son of Sidney Lucas who first opened the shop, has expanded its selection of paintings and now includes sculpture and fine art photography as well.

“First-time visitors are always struck by our wide range of works – engravings, etchings, lithography and other mediums,” Michael says. “Some date back to the 16th century, and represent just about every geographical region.” The walls of the Lucas Gallery are covered with finely framed Piranesi etchings, Currier and Ives lithographs, and silk screens by Josef Albers, all of which Michael enjoys discussing with newcomers to the gallery.

### Interesting History

In its current location – 981 Second Avenue at the corner of 52nd Street – since 1961, the gallery has an impressive history. In the 1930s and 40s, the gallery was known

not only for its original fine art but as an art publishing house specializing in French etchings under the label, “Paris Etching Society.” Michael’s father contracted with French artists for publishing editions of their work. “One of my parents’ most notable projects was a series of classic scenes



Michael Lucas holds an antique French engraving of “Diana the Huntress.”

of New York City during the first half of the 19th century,” he says. “They remain an important part of our decorative print inventory today.”

After Sidney Lucas died in the mid-1960s, Michael’s mother, Phyllis, actively carried on the business, building on the gallery’s collaboration with Salvador Dali. The gallery

was the first North American publisher of his lithographs and published 26 editions of his images. Dali became a frequent visitor and a friend of Mrs. Lucas, who died in 1995.

### Art Collectors to Home Decorators

Today, the gallery enjoys a wide diversity of clients. “We have art collectors looking for a specific artist, newly settled Turtle Bay residents in search of a 17th century world map, and sometimes a U. N. employee comes in to look for an image of Turtle Bay as a gift for a departing ambassador,” Michael says. Home decorators find the Old Print Center a good source for botanical or bird prints, and tourists who drop by might find a print of their home town.

Michael is assisted in the gallery by his wife Rachel Newman – a painter in her own right, and former editor for 20 years of “Country Living Magazine.” Both she and Michael delight in explaining the gallery’s art to new clients.

Besides its collection of fine and decorative art, the gallery is known for its custom framing, with a full range of archival, museum quality framing services.

### Contemporary Artists Exhibited

The Lucas Gallery works with a number of contemporary artists, and is currently exhibiting *pleine aire* landscapes by Maddine Insalaco and Joe Vinson, directors of Etruscan Places, a landscape painting school in Tuscany. Of particular interest to Turtle Bay residents may be the gallery’s relationship with Howard Kolsin, a watercolorist who specializes in views of Turtle Bay.

Though still officially called the Phyllis Lucas Gallery, the gallery’s canopy out front now reads Michael Lucas Gallery. “The signage is recognition of the fact that I’ve become acquainted with so many neighbors, with whom I’m on a first-name basis,” Michael says.

And for those neighbors who don’t yet know Michael and his gallery, a visit to this fascinating Turtle Bay shop is highly recommended.

*Gallery hours: Weekdays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Sat. and Sun., 2 p.m.-5 p.m.*

### Briefly in Business:

- **Blair Perrone Steakhouse**, recently opened at the southwest corner of 48th Street and Second Avenue, is a new TBA business member. Owned by Peter Luger veteran Charlie Blair and partner Joe Perrone, the steakhouse space has been designed with a handsome wooden bar in its center, side dining rooms, and a private tasting room. 212-796-8000; www.blairperrone.com.
- The owners of **Don Veitia Restaurant**, recently opened at the site of the former Captain’s Table, report that the chef and staff remain the same as under the previous management, and the popular seafood menu is similar,

with Mediterranean accents added. The restaurant offers TBA members a 10 percent discount. 860 Second Avenue. 212-697-9538.

- Turtle Bay’s neighborhood **Buttercup Bake Shop** on Second Avenue has opened its first franchise shop. Located on West 72nd Street, it too is called Buttercup Bake Shop and has all the delectable cupcakes and cakes of its Turtle Bay sister. 212-350-4144; www.buttercupbakeshop.com.
- The Web site address of the Second Avenue bistro, **La Méditerranée**, is www.lamediterranee.com. It was stated incorrectly in the last issue of Turtle Bay News.

## Turtle Bay Happenings

## Art & Culture

**German House.** Singer Inga Rumpf, Germany's "grand dame" of contemporary music, performs "An Evening with Inga Rumpf and Friends." May 23, 6 p.m. 871 United Nations Plaza. Free. Guests must RSVP to 212-610-9759 or e-mail [german-consulate-ku@nyet.net](mailto:german-consulate-ku@nyet.net). Information: [www.germany-info.org/newyork](http://www.germany-info.org/newyork); 212-610-9719.

**Roger Smith Lab Gallery.** June 22-July 1, artists' works illustrate "Kamoku," Japanese word for speaking less in order to say more. Curated by Rieko Fujinami. 501 Lexington Avenue. For more information on the gallery's frequently changing exhibits, call 212-339-2092 or visit [www.rogersmitharts.com](http://www.rogersmitharts.com).

**Summer Jazz.** Jazz on the Plaza, Citigroup Center Plaza, Lexington Avenue and 53rd Street, Thursdays at 12:30-1:45 p.m., through August. Sponsored by The Midtown Arts Common. Free. Midtown Jazz at Midday, Wednesdays at 1 p.m., St. Peter's Church, Lexington and 54th. Admission: \$5. 212-935-2200; [www.saintpeters.org](http://www.saintpeters.org).

**Art in the Park.** Second annual art show in Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, Sat., June 10. Works by artists/students of the High School of Art and Design. 212-969-8820.

**Turtle Bay Music School.** The public is invited to merit scholarship auditions in the Em Lee Concert Hall, Sunday,

June 4, at 1 p.m., and advanced certificate students before jury panels at 3:30 p.m. Free. 244 East 52nd Street. 212-753-8811; [www.tbms.org](http://www.tbms.org).

**Japan Society.** As part of the city-wide Asian Contemporary Art Week starting May 22, the Society will exhibit "Fast Futures: Asian Art Video," single channel video works by leading and emerging Asian artists, through June 18. Admission: \$5; \$3 seniors. 333 East 47th Street. 212-832-1155; [www.japansociety.org](http://www.japansociety.org).

**Trygve Lie Gallery.** "Journey Through an Inner Landscape: Four Norwegian Artists meet Henrik Ibsen." Through Sept. 3. Free. Gallery hours: Mon.-Thurs. 12-8 p.m.; Fri.-Sun. 12-5 p.m. 317 East 52nd Street. 212-319-0370; [www.trygveliegallery.com](http://www.trygveliegallery.com).

- compiled by Rita Rowan

**United Nations** continued from page 1  
ings, Mr. Reuter talked about the options available:

Currently, he said, the preferred plan calls for the Secretariat building to be renovated in four phases, with displaced staff moving to nearby Midtown offices, and a temporary two-story structure built on the U.N. Park's North Lawn to house conference facilities during the seven-year project (as reported in the Winter 2006 Turtle Bay News). Originally, it was anticipated that this plan – which would cost an estimated \$1.6 billion to be paid for with member assessments – would be approved by the General Assembly in March, with preliminary work to begin shortly thereafter. However, the plan has run into opposition from the United States, whose share of the cost is the largest: some 22 percent.

So Mr. Reuter outlined three alternative options, two of which have been eliminated. One plan called for totally vacating the Secretariat during renovation, as opposed to a phased approach, with all staff moving temporarily to rental space in Midtown offices. But this proved too expensive and raised security concerns. Another alternative was to move ahead with only some of the renovation needs, a plan that was discounted because the entire facility badly needs repair. And a third option contemplates a permanent high rise tower on the North Lawn of the United Nations to be used as

temporary "swing space" during renovation, and afterward as permanent space for U.N. staff offices now dispersed around the city. This plan would cost upwards of \$2.1 billion. Observers believe it is an unlikely scenario, and Mr. Reuter does not favor it.

### Continuing Reports

At the same time, there are continuing reports that the United Nations Development Corporation, the agency mandated by New York State to plan and finance U.N. facilities near its headquarters, is going to press forward with a plan that was stymied by the New York State Legislature last year. This option calls for the UNDC to build a permanent 35-story office building on the site of Robert Moses Playground, across 42nd Street from the U.N. It was originally intended to be "swing space" during renova-

tion and then used as permanent offices for U.N. staff once the project was complete. However, the State Legislature, which must approve any parkland conversion, failed to act on the plan during its 2005 session. Now there are recent press reports indicating that Mayor Bloomberg may push to have the plan revived in Albany.

If so, it is believed the building would not be ready in time to be used as "swing space" during renovation, but could be used later as permanent space for staff who are now located in other Midtown offices.

In addition to TBA Board members, among those attending the briefings – a session in February and another on April 7 – were State Senator Liz Krueger, Assemblywoman Sylvia Friedman, City Councilman Dan Garodnick, and Community Board 6 members.

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#### Annual Membership Dues

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