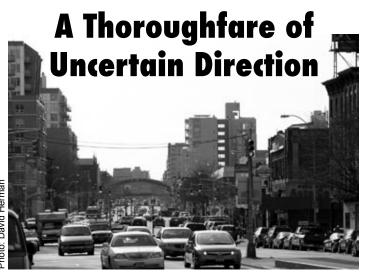
# The Park Slope Civic Council CIVIC NEWS

February 2010 Volume LXXII, No. 6

www.parkslopeciviccouncil.org

What Route Next for 4th Avenue?



# 4th Avenue feels marginal to the rest of our neighborhood

and not simply because our western boundary takes in only the east side of the street. Park Slope has a strong sense of place, meaning that it is defined as much by its appearance and character as by its geographical limits. Large swaths of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, by contrast, look like any multi-lane urban thoroughfare carrying too many cars and trucks past chain stores, fast food outlets, auto repair shops and non-descript apartment buildings.

In fairness, there is more character to 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue than is often conceded. In its northern reaches near Flatbush, and heading south toward Sunset Park, new restaurants and bars have been added to an increasingly vibrant storefront mix in intact blocks of rowhouses. Interesting gems are scattered all along the avenue, even in the stretches that look least appealing. Some of the long-established car repair shops can claim their own sense of place and should be acknowledged for their contributions to the local economy.

How much of this character will survive the coming decades, however, is very much up in the air—12 stories up, to be precise. Bluntly put,  $4^{\rm th}$  Avenue was sacrificed when Park Slope was rezoned in 2003 and South Park Slope in 2005: in exchange for restrictions in height and bulk in the interior of these neighborhoods, developers were given the right to put up 12-story buildings along more than 30 blocks of  $4^{\rm th}$  Avenue.

Put them up they did, in a flurry of demolition and construction: by the time the recession hit in 2008, 15 large projects between Warren and  $24^{\rm th}$  Streets were either completed or under way, with several more lots readied for construction. Work has slowed drastically since, and real estate blogs like Brownstoner report high vacancy

**Hard to imagine:** This postcard from around 1905 shows the grassy median once stretched along much of 4th Avenue's length. It was replaced by concrete and grating when the subway was constructed in 1910. Bob Levine offers more 4th Avenue history in his "Viewing Brooklyn" column on page 4.

rates in many of the new condo and rental units that have come on line in the last two years. Many people on and around 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue now wait to see what happens next considering a host of variables, including how much the economy recovers, whether massive development does or does not occur at the Atlantic Yards site just off the avenue's northern terminus and how the city decides to rezone the Gowanus area to the west of the avenue.

André Aoun, for one, predicts that "more building is going to happen." Aoun sells tires out of his cousin's L&B Auto Repair shop on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Carroll and President Streets. He used to have his own tire store a few doors south at the corner of Carroll, but that space is now occupied by an odd-looking high rise, 20 feet wide and 9 stories high. Before the recession hit, said Aoun, developers came by all the time making offers to buy L&B's building.

"We're here today," Aoun shrugged, "but tomorrow, who knows? In my opinion, it's only a matter of time before it's all tall buildings, all along 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. They say it's going to be another Manhattan. Big buildings, big dollars. Who's going to stop it?"

Steve Kouimanis, who has operated the Station (formerly New College)

The Future of 4th Avenue
A free, all-invited
community forum
7pm, March 4,
St. Thomas Aquinas Church Hall
4th Avenue and 9th Street

Diner at the corner of Union and  $4^{th}$  since 1984, agreed. He quoted Borough President Marty Markowitz, who famously announced a few years ago that  $4^{th}$  Avenue would become Brooklyn's Park Avenue, and said that, for him, the development has been mostly good news.

"People were running away from here when I opened up," he said. "It was all industrial and commercial back then—working people during the day then they'd go home and the junkies would move in. Nobody from Park Slope walked down the hill to 4th Avenue."

The Station Diner is now open all night on weekends, and three years ago Kouimanis replaced the restaurant's security-conscious front entrance and brick front wall with a glass door and floor-to-ceiling glass panels overlooking the R train's Union Street station.

As two young Asian women wheeling suitcases entered the diner, Kouimanis shook his head at the thought that there are three hotels See 4th Avenue, page 6



Bob Levine Collection

## Guest Editorial

# **Save Our Precious Watershed**

arly one morning in late November my radio was tuned to NPR news. A brief announcement came on about a public hearing that evening at Stuyvesant High School. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation was seeking public comment on draft regulations that would allow hydraulic fracturing in New York's Marcellus shale region.

The Marcellus shale region of New York includes our city's watershed, which comprises 1 million acres, much of it in the Catskill Mountains. The watershed provides unfiltered drinking water to more than 8 million people in New York City, and another million in Westchester, Putnam and Dutchess Counties.

At the hearing, I asked a deputy to the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation about other hearings on such a critical public matter as our *eau de vie*. He told me that only this one hearing had been scheduled. I told him that was outrageous, that I had found out about this hearing only by chance and that the public should know what is going to happen to their drinking water.

Large amounts of natural gas have been discovered in the Marcellus shale region, which stretches from New York to West Virginia. When gas is extracted from shale with hydraulic fracturing, millions of gallons of water mixed with toxic chemicals are blasted into the formation. That blast forces the release of natural gas, but also enormous amounts of toxic waste water, creating serious issues of chemical seepage into the watershed and the migration of chemicals to streams, rivers and deep wells.

The huge and intricate infrastructure of our water delivery system

could also be seriously damaged and undermined by widespread and intense drilling.

The state has no disposal plans for handling the waste water. It is not amenable to conventional treatment and must be disposed of in underground injection wells. More poison for the land.

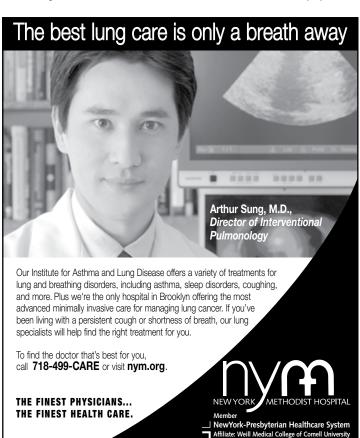
There is a sense that the state is fast-tracking the approval of drilling in the Marcellus region of the Catskills. You would hope that our government does not support the mindless mentality of "Drill baby, drill."

The west-of-Hudson watershed is still a beautiful, pristine landscape that provides us with unfiltered drinking water. Water is a precious resource bequeathed to us by the foresight and wisdom of our predecessors. Why would New York's citizens want to muck it up and then be forced to build an expensive system of filtration plants? If people think their water bills are high now, just wait and see the added costs of filtration.

Citizens must mobilize and organize for a legislative ban on all drilling in the New York watershed. They must pressure their elected representatives on the city, state and federal levels to take an active role in this effort.

A petition drive and a public hearing would be the first steps in alerting citizens to the imminent threat to the purity and quality of our water.

-Joe Ferris, Former Trustee and Former State Assemblyman The Sierra Club has assembled information about hydraulic fracturing: http://newyork.sierraclub.org/gas\_drilling.html.



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# **News & Notes for the Civic Minded**

**Support historic district expansion:** We are buoyed by recent activities by the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) indicative of progress towards expansion of the Park Slope Historic District. LPC has completed its survey of some 800 buildings in the proposed first phase of expansion, mostly along 7th Avenue and in blocks south of the current district. The data collected will determine the boundaries of the expansion area, and we will meet with LPC staff in late February to get our first look at these boundaries.

Also, LPC has notified elected officials that the survey is complete and, later this year, LPC will invite property owners within the proposed area to an informational meeting—an important step toward expansion.

Lest we become overconfident, however, only neighborhoods that demonstrate strong support from homeowners, tenants, merchants, civic organizations and other stakeholders achieve designation. Success is by no means assured.

We are asking everyone who cares about preserving Park Slope's history, architecture, small scale and sense of place to write LPC Chair Robert Tierney (1 Centre St., 9th Floor, New York, NY 10007). Tell the LPC what Park Slope means to you and ask for quick action on behalf of our neighborhood. Please send copies of your letter to our City Council Members: Brad Lander (456 5th Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11215) and Stephen Levin (114 Court St., 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201). We have posted a sample letter on the Historic District homepage on the website, or call 718-832-8227 and we will send you a copy.

The Historic District Committee is committed to continue working through however many phases it takes to extend the historic district throughout Park Slope. This process might take many years, but with organization and sustained community support, we can make Park Slope the largest historic district in New York City, bar none.

-Peter Bray, Chair, Historic District Committee

**Skating rinks, disrupted subways and a new BID** were among the items on the agenda at PSCC's monthly meeting on Feb. 4.

Andrew Inglesby, the MTA's assistant director of government and community relations, told PSCC Trustees that work is proceding according to plan on the reconstruction of the Culver Viaduct, the bridge that carries the F and G lines over the Gowanus Canal. Shuttle buses will replace local F Train service on many coming weekends (the schedule is posted on our web site) and the Smith-9th Street station will close for major renovation in 2011. Inglesby said that the MTA has just \$800,000 of the \$3.5 million needed to reopen the east entrance to the 4th Avenue F and R train station, a project strongly advocated by the Civic Council.

Inglesby described some of the cuts that will have an impact on bus and subway service in Park Slope in the MTA's efforts to bal-

#### CALENDAR

For details and additional listings, go to parkslopeciviccouncil.org.

PSCC Community Forum: 'The Future of 4th Avenue' Thursday, March 4, 7-9pm, St. Thomas Aquinas Church Hall, 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets.

### **PSCC Monthly Meeting**

Thursday, April 1, 7pm, New York Methodist Hospital Executive Dining Room

#### **Spring Civic Sweep**

Saturday, April 17, 10am-2pm. Sign up and pick up supplies in front of the Prospect Park YMCA, 9th Street

#### 51st Annual House Tour

Sunday, May 16, noon-5pm. Starting point: Poly Prep Lower School, 50 Prospect Park West at 1<sup>st</sup> Street ance its budget, saying bluntly, "We're broke." A public hearing on the cuts begins at 6pm on March 3 at the Brooklyn Museum. (For an analysis of the proposed changes by Livable Streets Committee Chair Michael Cairl, go to: http://parkslopeciviccouncil.org/index.php?section=traffic-transportation&prrid=220.)

Trustees also heard from Prospect Park Alliance President Tupper Thomas, who announced that work has begun on Lakeside, a \$70 million, 26-acre project including landscape restoration and a major new ice-skating and recreation complex. Thomas reported that two statues long absent from Grand Army Plaza—John Kennedy and Abraham Lincoln—should be back on their pedestals sometime this year. Planning is also underway for the adaptive reuse of the Calvert Vaux-designed Well House, just west of Prospect Lake, as a comfort station.

In response to a question about garbage problems attributed to grillers last summer, Thomas said, "I'm a huge believer that people have to be able to barbecue in the park. It's common to so many of our cultural communities, and it's the only public place they're allowed to do it in all of Brooklyn." She said that with drastic cuts in enforcement personnel, the park will rely instead on increased efforts to educate picnickers in proper garbage etiquette, especially in charcoal disposal.

Trustees lent their support to an effort launched recently by the Park Slope Chamber of Commerce to create a Business Improvement District on 7th Avenue. Park Slope Copy Center owner Bob Kalb pointed out that the 5th Avenue BID, launched two years ago, has a budget at least six times as large as 7th Avenue's Chamber of Commerce, where participation is voluntary and fewer than a third of merchants participate. BIDs are funded by mandatory property assessments, with the money used for sanitation, beautification, promotion, security and similar activities. A BID requires approval by at least half the participating merchants and landlords.

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# Viewing Brooklyn

# History Mirrored on 4th Avenue



n March 4, the Civic Council's annual community forum will be about (and on) 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, so I have put together a number of tidbits about the street and the surrounding area of Park Slope.

When Dutch farmers first settled near what is now 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the nearby Gowanus Creek connected several tidal ponds, from which extremely large oysters were harvested by the local Indian tribes. In 1699, Claes Arensten Vechte built a house not far from the creek and close to where its reconstructed version, the Old Stone House, now stands, midway between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues in Washington Park. The land around the house was swampy, so the surrounding streets were built up on fill when they were laid out in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The raised streets created a berm around what became Washington Park, which made it a good location for a ball field. The old Vechte house became the clubhouse for a fledgling baseball club that would come to be known as the Trolley Dodgers and then just the Dodgers. In the early 1900s, the Vechte house was torn down and its stones added to

the fill that covered what once was swampland. The Washington Park ball field eventually moved across  $4^{th}$  Avenue, and that's where the Dodgers played prior to their move to Ebbet's Field. A small section of the Washington Park wall still stands on  $3^{rd}$  Avenue behind the Con Ed complex at  $3^{rd}$  Street.

Edwin Litchfield and the backers of his Brooklyn Improvement Company converted the creek into a canal. Eventually, Litchfield owned most of the land from 1st to 9th Streets and from the canal to the top of the Slope (actually a glacial moraine), where he built Grace Hill, now known as Litchfield Villa. His office was in the building that now stands by itself at the corner of 3rd Street and 3rd Avenue. When it was built in 1872 by the Coignet Stone Company, it was part of a four-acre complex leased from Litchfield's company. Coignet, a pioneer in the use of concrete as building and decorative material, was one of numerous industries that sprang up along the canal and that supplied employment to hundreds of new immigrants. These newcomers included many Irish, driven to emigrate by the potato famine and other economic woes. The men found work in the factories along the canal and moved into housing close by, while many of the women and young girls got jobs "up the hill" as maids and nannies with the more well-to-do families moving into Park Slope's brownstones.

The industries are long gone, but the waste products they left behind created the brownfields we are coping with today throughout the Gowanus area. These pollutants include mercury, which was used in the felting process to make hats. Workers sometimes became "mad as a hatter" after prolonged exposure to mercury, which is the origin of the Mad Hatter in *Alice in Wonderland*.

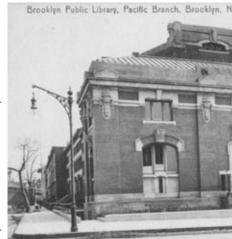
As Litchfield accumulated property, including the 150-acre Cortelyou Farm once owned by the Vechtes, he became one of Brooklyn's largest landowners. He laid out a street grid and sold off parcels to developers. Some parcels, however, he gave away to various religious denominations for houses of worship. Stories are told that he disliked Catholics and that's why their land was at the "bottom" of the slope, thus creating St. Thomas Aquinas at 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street (the site of the Civic Council forum). On the other hand, it should be noted that this location was a good one for a Catholic Church, since so many Irish Catholics worked in the factories along the Gowanus and lived nearby. (St. Saviour's, up the hill on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and serving a more affluent parish, was built later and was not part of Litchfield's donations.)

The city of Brooklyn used to end near Green-Wood Cemetery, at a time when a city ordinance didn't allow steam engines within Brooklyn's boundaries. A New Yorker headed for Coney Island could take a ferry to the foot of Atlantic Avenue or a train over the East River (Brooklyn) Bridge then catch a horse-drawn trolley through Brooklyn via 3<sup>rd</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues then up 20<sup>th</sup> Street to the Green-Wood Depot at 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. From there they could take a train straight to Coney Island on the Culver Line on what is now McDonald Avenue, the same run now made by the F Train. The horse-drawn trolleys were later replaced by electric-powered elevated lines on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues.

Fourth Avenue was a wide boulevard that ended at Flatbush Avenue. The 13<sup>th</sup> Regiment Armory stood original Holy Family Church on 13th Street near 4th Avenue across Flatbush from 1878-1891. It was torn down to make way for the new Long Island Rail Road in 1920. Its school building now houses several neigh



BROOKLYN EAGLE POST CARD, SERIES 15, No. 87. SECTION OF FOURTH AVENUE SHOWING PARK





Brooklyn Eagle Post Card, Series 60, No. 360. Public School No. 124 Fourth Avenu

Counterclockwise from above: 4th Avenue around 190 before subway construction eliminated its grassy med. Brooklyn's first Carnegie library but still awaits landmar 14th Street replaced PS 40, just up 15th Street, as the poloriginal Holy Family Church on 13th Street near 4th Avin 1920. Its school building now houses several neigh

cards from the Bob Levine Collection



SECTION IN MIDDLE OF HIGHWAY.





15, probably in Sunset Park or Bay Ridge, ian; the Pacific Library, built in 1904, was k designation; PS 124 at 4th Avenue and bulation soared in the area. Similarly, the enue, shown here in 1909, was enlarged borhood institutions.





station, which opened in 1893. It is now the site of the Atlantic Terminal Mall.

The Pacific Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library stands a block south at the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Pacific Street. It was the borough's first Carnegie library, opening in 1904. It featured the country's most modern children's section, including specially built children's furniture. The Civic Council, Community Board 6 and other civic groups have been asking for many years that the Landmarks Preservation Commission designate this building a landmark, but our wishes have not come to fruition. We hope this will change in the near future.

Further south, the changes at Holy Family Church, on 13th Street between 4th and 5th Avenues, mirror many of the changes we've seen in and around 4th Avenue. Holy Family (shown here on a 1909 postcard) was a moderate-size Roman Catholic church serving a local population. As more Irish Catholic working-class families moved into the area, a larger building was constructed on the same site. The Holy Family School was built directly behind the church, facing 14th Street. Attendance declined in recent years and the church is now affiliated with St. Thomas Aquinas. The parochial school closed its doors many years ago and now houses the Park Slope Family Neighborhood Center, an association of local agencies including the Park Slope Geriatric Day Care Center, Project Reach Youth and, since 1989, The Gallery Players.

The local public school, P.S. 40, was on 15<sup>th</sup> Street just off of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and was built some time prior to the post card shown here, which is from around 1905. It was replaced by a larger school, P.S. 124, on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue between 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets. It still stands but without its beautiful roof parapet. The Department of Education has systematically removed these parapets from many of its buildings, calling them "unwanted architectural embellishments." The Civic Council has joined other groups in protesting this policy, to no avail.

The central planted median that once ran down  $4^{\rm th}$  Avenue, at least through the numbered streets, was removed when subway construction started in 1910. This line, now the N and R, was completed in Manhattan and the Bronx in 1904. It was extended first to the Long Island Rail Road station and then on into Brooklyn. The subway led to the demise of the elevated lines on  $3^{\rm rd}$  and  $5^{\rm th}$  Avenues, improving the quality of life on those and adjacent streets. (The Civic Council has worked long and hard with the Department of Transportation to remove the last elevated structure that divides our neighborhoods, and maybe in the future the Gowanus Expressway will be replaced by an underground roadway.)

Fourth Avenue again played an important role in the quality of life of its neighbors when the Department of City Planning (DCP) tried to balance the need for more housing stock in Brooklyn with the pressure to keep the look and feel of brownstone Park Slope. DCP allowed for larger buildings along 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue while putting an end to the construction of out-of-scale buildings in the rest of Park Slope.

—Bob Levine, Trustee and PSCC Historian

What happens next on and near 4th Avenue will be the subject of the Civic Council's annual community forum, "The Future of 4th Avenue," 7pm, March 4 in St. Thomas Aquinas Church Hall.

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#### 4th Avenue, continued from Page 1

a short walk away. "I never could have imagined 25 years ago that some day tourists would be coming in here," he said. "This neighborhood is so much better now—150 percent better."

Kouimanis conceded at the same time that 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue will never become another 7<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, "not with all this traffic. Do I wish it were different? Do I wish the new buildings were better looking? Sure. But this is New York and everybody's got to live."

Two blocks south of the Station Diner, Root Hill Café co-owner Michelle Giancola was less charitable about the new buildings, even if they will eventually bring more business. Root Hill is across 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue from the narrow tower that replaced Aoun's tire shop—a building widely derided as one of the least attractive of the new highrises. Caddy-corner to Root Hill is 255 4<sup>th</sup>, a 12-story building that has been under construction—and that has closed off the sidewalk

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"They're destroying the character of what was a low-rise urban neighborhood," said Giancola. "We can't see the sky anymore. I like to see the sky."

Eighteen blocks further south, Rosalinda Rosario expressed similar views. "We have these small houses," she said, "and then they put up these humungous buildings. We all screamed

about it around here b,ut I guess our opinion doesn't count."

Rosario was offering her own opinions and also translating for her mother, Rosa Martinez, who was prepping for lunch behind the counter at J&R Restaurant at 16<sup>th</sup> Street and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Martinez has operated Puerto



At the corner of Carroll Street, a building 20 feet wide and nine stories tall.

Rican restaurants in Park Slope for some 50 years and has been at her present location since 1984, at the end of a block of two- and three-story rowhouses. Just across 16<sup>th</sup> Street, a similar row was

demolished for an 80-unit, 12-story building slowly nearing completion.

"We look so tiny by comparison," said Rosario, "and there's no view anymore. We hope it's for the best, but we see the material they're putting into all these new buildings and we can see it's not good quality."

Rosario said the avenue is in desperate need of trees and green space, and the whole neighborhood lacks affordable housing. Her mother added that many of the restaurant's long-time Hispanic customers have moved to East New York because they could no longer afford to live in the surrounding blocks.

Housing advocates criticized the Department of City Planning (DCP) for failing to leverage its 2003 gift to developers to get affordable housing included in new development along 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue—a mistake it tried to rectify when the new zoning was extended from 15<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> Streets in 2005. South of Park Slope, builders can go to the full 12 stories only if they include some affordable units. Also, developers previously got generous tax breaks, known as 421a, just for building on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, but now they must include 20 percent affordable housing to qualify.

DCP has also been criticized for allowing builders to decide whether to include street-level retail space. The result, Ben Fried wrote in Streetsblog, is that "instead of transforming 4th Avenue into Brooklyn's next great neighborhood, these new developments turn their back on the public realm, burdening the street wall with industrial vents, garage doors and curb cuts." A DCP spokesperson acknowledged in a subsequent post that "the lack of retail storefronts

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800-865-5452 in New Jersey www.brownstoneagency.com along 4th Avenue is a missed opportunity."

One resident of the Novo, one of the largest and more criticized new buildings along 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, hopes those shops and restaurants eventually come. "Look at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, which used to be a wasteland," said the woman, who asked that her name not be used, "and look at what's happening further north on 4<sup>th</sup>. There's a lot of potential for different kinds of stores around here."

In the meantime, the woman, who has children ages one and three, admitted that there is now virtually nothing to draw her or her young family to the busy thoroughfare that runs in front of her building. Instead, they go out back to play in the adjacent Washington Park, to activities at the Old Stone House or to hang out on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The woman, who said she has spent her whole life in Park Slope and moved to the Novo in July 2008, described a vibrant community inside the building. She said that it is filled with families with young children and that the gym, lounge and playroom are in constant use and the frequent site of impromptu children's parties. She also staunchly defended the Novo from its critics. "Of course our building would be out of place elsewhere in the neighborhood, but 4th Avenue is different. What was here before was much more offensive: an old warehouse for plumbing supplies. And the Novo certainly isn't as bad as some of the other buildings that have gone up."

Eric Richmond, for one, wishes that the architectural standards were higher for all the buildings that have gone up along 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and attributes their general lack of attractiveness to "old-school Brooklyn development: build to the largest size you can legally build, sell and get out. Most of the building has been done by flippers who don't care what happens to the neighborhood in the long run."

Richmond has owned the Lyceum since 1994 and has slowly transformed the historic bathhouse at the corner of  $4^{th}$  Avenue and President Street into a venue for a wide variety of offerings and events. He knows what it means to be invested in  $4^{th}$  Avenue as well

as anyone, and he's convinced the lack of such personal involvement is a major part of the problem.

"There was lots of hope initially," observed Richmond, sitting in the Lyceum's café, "but what you have is a lot of



sterile-looking buildings, big blank walls that turn their back to the Avenue. It would have been nice if builders would have been willing to take a point or two less in profit and hire decent architects, but that would have required developers with a long-term, symbiotic relationship with the neighborhood. What you got instead was a lot of speculators." Richmond noted that not all the news is bleak, pointing to the many interesting new places that have opened to the north of his building and on the side streets between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenues. He then described what, as an admitted "foolish idealist," he would like to see in a perfect world: a lane of traffic in each direction replaced by a trolley line. "Make it easy to get somewhere and 'boom,' shops, restaurants, galleries everywhere. And why not? There must be a quarter-million, maybe half-a-million people living within a mile of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. That's more than a lot of cities."

Richmond may be hoping for more sense of place than  $4^{th}$  Avenue can possibly deliver. On the other hand, the young mother who lives in the Novo pointed out that there are many, many new families calling both  $4^{th}$  Avenue and Park Slope home and who are now contributing to the life of the community. The question going forward is whether ways can be found to make the buildings they live in and the street they live on feel like part of the community, too.

-Ezra Goldstein

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### The Park Slope Civic Council

Organized as the South Brooklyn Board of Trade in 1896, PSCC is one of the oldest civic associations in Brooklyn. We identify and address quality-of-life issues important to the community; create and support projects geared to improving and protecting the neighborhood; and assist local non-profit organizations that benefit those living and working in Park Slope. Our many ongoing programs include the Halloween Parade, the Clean Streets campaign, community forums, and a holiday toy drive. Our annual House Tour raises thousands of dollars for neighborhood initiatives. All are welcome to join. To learn more, go to parkslopeciviccouncil.org.

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Greg Sutton and Candace Woodward.

A public forum on
The Future of 4th Avenue

Thursday, March 4, 7pm
St. Thomas Aquinas Church Hall
9th Street and 4th Avenue

www.parkslopeciviccouncil.org/futureof4thavenue

Civic News: Ezra Goldstein, Editor; Sheila White and Judith Lief, Copy Editors

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