

**OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC ADVOCATE**

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*CLIPS*



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## Calling for Emergency Alert Systems in Schools

By PUBLIC ADVOCATE BETSY GOTBAUM

Imagine this scenario: A gunman walks into a New York public school. What is the city's plan of action? How do we alert students, faculty and parents as quickly as possible? What tools do we already have that will help us keep children safe?

It's not hard to imagine. We've seen gunmen walk into schools in Colorado. And in Virginia. And most recently, an armed student tragically managed to wound several students and teachers in Cleveland. In light of these events, the New York public school system needs to take every step to protect school children. Parents and administrators need to have the ability to

get in touch with school children at all times, and at a moment's notice.

We have that ability. According to U.S. Cellular statistics, approximately 60 percent of teenagers own a cell phone. For many, text messaging is their preferred method of communication. And yet, cell phones have been banned by the Department of Education (DOE). If the majority of teenage students have cell phones, why aren't we using them as a tool to protect students? Why has the New York City DOE banned this potentially life-saving technology?

Across the nation, many school systems are using cell phones for emergency notification. Since last April's tragic Virginia Tech shooting, high schools and

colleges across the country have sent campus-wide text messages and emails to warn students of danger. Programs such as clearTXT and Connect-Ed have already been implemented at college campuses in Minnesota, Florida and New York. And Virginia Tech's new system of emergency notification—called "VT Alerts"—was launched last July and currently has 18,000 subscribers.

In 2005, the DOE justified its enforcement of the cell phone ban by claiming phones were a distraction; that students used them to send text messages, cheat on tests, surf the web, and take photos. In response to the ban, parents from across New York City immediately expressed their dismay because, to them, the ability to have their

children carry phones was a safety issue.

The recent near-tragedy at St. John's University in Queens validated parents' position. On Sept. 23, a student was apprehended on the university campus carrying a loaded rifle. School officials reacted quickly and ordered a campus-wide lockdown. Within a matter of minutes, they were able to inform—and protect—the 20,000 students, faculty, and personnel by deploying their new emergency notification system that included cell phone text messaging.

Emergency alert systems—via cell phone and email—could also help notify students and parents of health-related crises. On Oct. 14, a seventh-grade student who attended Intermediate School 211 in Canarsie, Brooklyn, died from the staph infection MRSA. MRSA, short for Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus, is responsible for more deaths in the United States each year than AIDS, according to new data. The strain resists antibiotics and penetrates the bloodstream, leading to fatal infections. Although the majority of fatal MRSA infections occur in hospitals, recent cases have involved students and have been spread through close proximity in school facilities like locker rooms.

After the tragic incident, city officials sent a letter home with IS 211 students explaining to parents the risk associated with the infection. However, some parents didn't hear about the tragedy until they saw it on the news. An email alert could have let parents know in a more timely and effective manner.

Across the city, Community Education Councils (CECs) have passed resolutions opposing the mayor's ban on cell phones—some as many as two or three times. This isn't an issue that is going to disappear any time soon. If anything, cell phones have ceased to be a luxury item and are becoming increasingly integrated as a life-tool for parents and children. The administration should recognize this and embrace technology in our schools in a way that does not impede learning.

We all have reservations about technology in schools. None of us wants kids to disrupt class with their cell phones. But, frankly, it is irresponsible to deny the potential value and effectiveness of cell phones in emergency situations. **CT**

*Betsy Gotbaum (D) is the public advocate of New York City.*

# DAILY NEWS

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## Whole Foods' toxic Gowanus site worries nabe

BY JOTHAM SEDERSTROM  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Thursday, November 1st 2007, 4:00 AM

A construction site on a toxic brown field slated to become home to Brooklyn's first Whole Foods Market has been wide open since last month.

Protective fencing surrounding the 2.1-acre brown field near Third St. and Third Ave. in Gowanus has been down for several weeks, angering neighbors and Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum, who called for an immediate repair Wednesday.

"Here's a contaminated site with a broken fence and kids playing in the area that shows a disregard for safety," said Gotbaum.

"While we need to take steps to invest in our neighborhoods and clean up toxic sites, we shouldn't compromise public health and safety in the process."

Neighbors have called 311 to complain about the fallen fence and to report kids rummaging inside the landmarked Stone Company Building on the site since Oct. 10, but no repairs have been made by the contractor at the project.

"We have a work site that's unsecure, and naturally that's always going to be a concern to us," said Community Board 6 District Manager Craig Hammerman, who reported the problem to Yoswein New York, Whole Foods' public relations firm.

Joe Mariano, a retiree who lives on President St., said he has twice witnessed groups of neighborhood kids walking in and out of the 135-year-old Stone Company building that is on the corner of the site. The door to the landmark is now unlocked, he said.

"I saw kids running in and out, and when I went there one of the kids looked at me and said, 'Do you own the house?' and I said, 'No,'" said Mariano, "and they looked guilty and then scuttled off. I'm scared they're going to get hurt or start a fire."

After a 2-1/2-year investigation and the ongoing cleanup, a draft report by the state Department of Environmental Conservation concluded in January that the Whole Foods parcel is no longer a "significant threat to public health or the environment."

While not all the contaminants - which include benzene, PCBs and the metal cadmium - will be completely eliminated, a cleanup plan calls for removal of two oil drums and tainted soil up to 10 feet below ground.

Whole Foods Market spokesman Fred Shank said the fence would be repaired within days.

"We were recently notified that a portion of the fence at our Brooklyn development site was down, and we immediately contacted our contractor to repair it," said Shank. "We will make sure that it is repaired as soon as possible."

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## CAN'T HARLEY WAIT: EMS REJECTS FREE MOTORCYCLES

By DAVID SEIFMAN

November 11, 2007 -- IT seems like a no-brainer: Equip the Emergency Medical Service with motorcycles to weave through the city's notorious traffic jams and cut response times to life-threatening emergencies.

But after six months of study, the FDNY still hasn't taken up an offer of eight free Harley-Davidsons secured by Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum for a six-month pilot project.

"The Fire Department thinks that using the motorcycles for EMS would be unsafe," said one source.

It's not clear why, since fire officials refuse to explain their reservations other than to say, "The proposal is still under review."

Motorcycles have shown their worth in medical emergencies in Florida and elsewhere. The Miami-Dade Fire Rescue service reported reaching critical emergencies in an average of 2.83 minutes, a 60 percent improvement, after the cycles were introduced in 2004.

Here in the city, it took ambulances an average of 5.14 minutes last month to get to the most serious calls.

Kent Aarosen, a Manhattan resident who proposed the idea to Gotbaum after seeing EMS cycles in action in London, said he's baffled by the FDNY's inaction.

"What we have in this program is reduced response times, increased patient survivability and increased access to early defibrillation" during heart attacks, he said.

Aarosen conceded that the bikes might not work in the winter, so he suggested the pilot be conducted from April through September.

If the FDNY keeps resisting, he said he might take the deal to the Port Authority or other jurisdictions.

One agency that doesn't need convincing about the value of motorcycles to get around traffic is the NYPD.

While the Fire Department considers whether to accept the Harleys, the Police Department is preparing to spend nearly \$1 million to buy a fleet of them.

Nov 11, 2007

# Queens Ledger



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## Hitting Got-Bottaum



We found these beauties from a bygone era just languishing away in a trash pile in Downtown Flushing over the weekend. They are some old campaign posters for Betsy Gotbaum's first run at public advocate, and in case you're having trouble reading it, former mayor-turned-television talking head Ed Koch believes that "Betsy is the Best!" and that's no rubbish.

Well, actually, it is rubbish now - the posters that is, not necessarily

the slogan. We're not sure who has been holding on to these for the last seven years or so, perhaps someone who worked on Betsy's campaign, or maybe one of the people holding one of those signs on what looks like the steps of City Hall. In hindsight, one of these posters probably would have spruced up the walls of our basement office, but with all of this nasty staph stuff going around, it's probably better that we left them alone.

# NY1 News

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Weather: Sunny and Chilly. High: 46

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## **Group Holds Symbolic Bake Sale To Raise Funds For Review Of Toxic School Site**

November 12, 2007

A group of parents, children, and school officials staged a pricey bake sale on the steps of City Hall Monday to raise the funds to pay for an independent environmental review of a toxic site in the Bronx where four schools are being built.

The group says the city refused to give them the \$11,000 to pay for the review, so they're trying to raise it themselves with 11 cupcakes, priced at \$1,000 each.

"It's a shame that they put a price tag on our lives," said P.S. 156 Parents Association member Sara McLaughlind. "They're building schools, which is a great thing, and we're not opposed to that. Schools are great. But if you're building schools and they're not going to live to see their future what's the sense of building schools?"

"If we're going to have a school site we have to make sure that it is 100 percent safe for our kids. There's no question about it," said [Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum](#).

The Department of Education says health and safety are its top priority and that it will continue to provide the Bronx community with reports about testing, construction and management of the site.

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# The Sun

## Civic Leaders Exit Mayoral Control Panel

By ELIZABETH GREEN  
Staff Reporter of the Sun  
November 12, 2007

Civic leaders are stepping down from a commission studying mayoral control of the city's public schools in response to concerns that the panel's creator was too critical of the Bloomberg administration's school policies.

Of nine original members, four have left the commission, including the appointed chairman, the business leader Stephen Berger, and the vice chairman, Herman Badillo, a former congressman. A former New York City schools chancellor who is now president of St. Francis College in Brooklyn, Frank Macchiarola, and Kathryn Wylde, the president and CEO of a coalition of business leaders, the Partnership for New York City, also have stepped down.

The state law that shuttered the old Board of Education and handed control of the public schools to the mayor alone will expire when Mayor Bloomberg leaves office in 2009. The approaching deadline is opening up a debate in Albany over whether to scrap the law, change it, or renew it as is. The city's public advocate, Betsy Gotbaum, appointed the commission following a request from state lawmakers.

Concern among its members began soon after the commission was announced in September — by chance the same week New York City won a national award for progress in urban school systems, the Broad Prize. Following a pattern of criticizing Mr. Bloomberg's school policies, Ms. Gotbaum put out a statement belittling the award.

Messrs. Berger, Badillo, and Macchiarola all resigned from the commission following her remarks, sources said.

Ms. Wylde said she left the commission later, after her work on a commission on traffic congestion began to pose a conflict. But she said Ms. Gotbaum's public criticisms also played a role.

"It's easy to confuse disagreement with the current administration and Department of Education with opposition to mayoral control," Ms. Wylde said. "I realized that because the commission is convened by an elected official who frequently is in a position where she feels she has to speak out on current education issues, that it's difficult to separate the work of her commission from her advocacy positions."

Ms. Wylde said she also felt uncomfortable serving on a commission headed by such an outspoken critic, as she often works closely with the Bloomberg administration on school programs.

Sources said Ms. Gotbaum's office plans to announce replacement appointments this week, including three new spots for parents. Activists have complained that parents have not played a large enough role in determining school policies, and many vocal parents have opposed changes Mr. Bloomberg has brought.

A spokesman for Ms. Gotbaum said her office had no comment on the departures. Messrs. Berger, Badillo, and Macchiarola did not answer requests for comment.

# DAILY NEWS

## Parents press PS 156 for environmental review funds

BY FRANK LOMBARDI

DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Tuesday, November 13th 2007, 4:00 AM

Using cupcakes to make their point, parents and environmental activists demanded \$11,000 from school authorities for an independent review of the environmental monitoring plan for the Mott Haven Schools Campus.

Construction is just getting underway for the four-school campus - with a combined 2,400 students - after an extensive \$30 million environmental cleanup project.

Community groups had fought the school project, saying it was being built on a "toxic site" that once housed a railroad yard and machine shops where a variety of chemicals were used for 73 years.

Contaminated soil at the site in the Concourse Village-Melrose area was removed to a depth of 12 feet in some places. Protective "caps" and barriers were placed elsewhere on the 6.4-acre tract to prevent seepage of possible contamination from adjoining properties.

Dave Palmer of New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, an adviser to community groups on the school project, said school authorities soon will release their plan for how the school site will be monitored going forward.

The plan will spell out procedures and safeguards for detecting any potential weaknesses or problems that might arise over the years.

But Palmer, and others who joined him at a press conference on the steps of City Hall on Monday, said school officials have rejected their request for \$11,000 to hire an independent consultant to review the city's monitoring plan.

"Our children are our future and we have to take care of them," said Deborah Bryant, the vice president of the Parents' Association at PS 156, which is located next to the Mott Haven Schools Campus.

Students from PS 156 displayed 11 cupcakes on a table, each with a \$1,000 price tag, to symbolize that the community will have a tough time raising the funds on its own.

Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum said that if an independent review shows the city's plan is sufficient, "we'll be the first to say so."

And Al Rodriguez, counsel to Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrión, added, "Building a \$200 million facility in the Bronx is a great thing and we applaud the city. ... We're only asking the city for \$11,000 to make sure that the long-term plan they're going to put in place to make sure nothing happens on this site is a good one."

School officials could not immediately be reached for comment, but they had previously paid \$10,000 for an independent study, arranged by Palmer's group, of the original environmental cleanup plan.



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A daily newsletter on government action of importance to business

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

## TODAY'S NEWS

### HARLEM STANDOFF

Discussions about a community benefits agreement as part of the Columbia University expansion have stalled because both sides are waiting for the other to initiate a proposal, insiders say. They must reach an agreement before the City Council's January deadline to vote on the university's rezoning application. Members of the West Harlem Local Development Corp., which represents community interests, are frustrated. One insider says they feel outdone by Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, who won concessions from Columbia, including a \$20 million housing fund. But they don't believe that Stringer's pact compensates adequately for the displacement of businesses and residents.

### ANTI-VETERAN

The State Children's Health Insurance Program, which needs 12 more votes to survive President George Bush's veto, contains little-known benefits for returning veterans. SCHIP extends medical leave to 26 from 12 weeks for families of service people and protects jobs of family members if they take a leave. The only New York House members to vote no on SCHIP are Reps. Randy Kuhl, R-Hammondsport, and Tom Reynolds, R-Buffalo, both of whom face significant Democratic opponents next year. Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum plans to speak out against the two today. "They are literally voting against New York veterans and military

### Bloomberg's Coney plan lacks political support

Mayor Mike Bloomberg's Coney Island redevelopment plan faces opposition from city and state lawmakers, sources say. Insiders were shocked when the mayor announced the plan last week without securing support from Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, state Sen. Diane Savino and City Councilman Domenic Recchia.

The mayor wants to rebuild the amusement district and create two adjacent districts with housing and retail. He needs the council to rezone the site and the Legislature to make it parkland. But local of-

ficials believe the plan unfairly freezes out developer Joe Sitt, whose \$120 million investment and grandiose proposal revived interest in the area.

Bloomberg's plan also rankles stakeholders who nurtured Coney through the down times. For example, Gargiulo's restaurant wants to build a catering hall, but the plan would block its ocean view.

Sitt and the other opponents might try to stymie the plan until a new mayor takes office in 2010. But elected officials say the administration is willing to negotiate.

families," says a Gotbaum spokeswoman.

### SPACE TO LET

Looming city and Metropolitan Transportation Authority budget deficits could help the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership's efforts to put ground-level retail operations in city and MTA buildings. The 400,000 square-foot MTA building at 370 Jay St. is primarily empty and could generate substantial revenue from ground-floor stores. The authority will renovate the building and will include ground-floor retail, but its timetable is uncertain. The Bloomberg administration has been more enthusiastic about leasing parts of the Brooklyn Municipal Building, at 210 Joralemon St., as well as the Department of Education space at 65 Court St.

### CIVIC ACTION

Henry Stern wants to increase the budget of his group, New York Civic, to do investigative work debunking inaccuracies that elected officials promulgate as facts. The former parks commissioner doesn't take a salary but maintains a small office and staff, which he would expand. His intentions are in a note inviting supporters to a Nov. 29 fundraiser with former Mayor Ed Koch. Tickets start at \$99. E-mail bison@nycivic.org.

### AT A GLANCE

**HIRED:** Councilman Leroy Comrie, D-Queens, has hired Ronya Foy as a liaison between his legislative and constituent offices, and to help implement policy initiatives.

**Comments?** [Insider@crain.com](mailto:Insider@crain.com)

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## Gotbaum: Teens Say Gangs on the Rise

According to a report released Monday by Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum, a majority of young people surveyed feel that gang activity in New York is on the up tick.

Armed with surveys, representatives from Gotbaum's office fanned out to various Summer Youth Employment Programs throughout the city in late June and early July. There, they asked teens to respond to a seven-question, face-to-face, anonymous survey about gang activity. Questions included "What is the definition of a gang?"; "Do people in your school wear gang colors, have tattoos, or wear clothing identifying them as gang members?"; and "Do you feel there are more gangs then there used to be?"

A total of 348 responses were collected, and of those 233, or two-thirds, felt that there was more gang activity then there used to be. Almost half considered gangs a problem in their neighborhood, and more than two-thirds said they noticed people wearing gang colors in their school.

The survey also asked young people what they felt should be done to keep kids out of gangs, with more after-school programs and community centers being the primary responses.

In light of the survey, Gotbaum has announced she will be holding a series of roundtable discussions with community leaders to address the issue of gangs in New York City. The first was held in Bedford-Stuyvesant this past Tuesday. - Shane Nov 19, 2007



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nypost.com

New York Post, Monday, November 19, 2007

## Students see rise in gangs

Young people in the Big Apple believe that gang activity is on the rise in their schools and communities, a new survey says.

The office of Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum surveyed 348 students over the summer and found that two-thirds of them believe that there are more gangs today than previously.

Nearly half of them considered gangs to be a problem where they live, and two-thirds of them said they noticed gang colors in their schools.

"We went to centers where kids were signing up for work, and we had young people go and interview young people," the public advocate said. "This is [after] 4½ years of hearing about an increase in signs of gang activity in schools."

Gotbaum's office will begin holding a series of discussions with students, educators and community leaders tomorrow.

*Frankie Edozien*

# DAILY NEWS

## Gangs on rise in schools - Betsy

TWO-THIRDS OF New York City teenagers say gang activity is up in their schools, and nearly half say gangs are a problem in their neighborhoods.

The disturbing new study announced yesterday by Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum suggests that gangs are more of a problem for kids than official crime statistics might indicate.

"It's time we looked for alternative ways to deal with gang violence," Gotbaum said.

Gotbaum's staff carried out the poll of 348 students last summer when they were interviewed for the city's Summer Youth Employment Program. About two-thirds of teens said they have seen gang colors or signs used in their schools. Gotbaum proposed creating a round-table panel of experts to come up with solutions.

Theresa Stoudemire, of East New York, Brooklyn, said it's about time the city took the problem seriously.

"The gangs are getting out of control," said Stoudemire, 44, whose daughter is 12 years old. "Our youth don't know there are other positive things they can do."

NOV 19, 2007

Alyssa Giachino

# NEW YORK POST

## THIS GIRL IS REALLY EXTENDING HERSELF

By CINDY ADAMS

November 19, 2007 -- WHAT'S **Paris Hilton** having for Thanksgiving? Extensions. The Beverly Hills Hotel houses His 'n' Hers hair operations. A barber for gents; a magician for ladies who arrive with thin, broken, crappy little hairs and exit with enough to smother an orangutan. Sitting quietly, sunglasses, showing little short broken-off thin mousy hairs the other day - Miss Paris. Several hours and a half-inch of 50s later - loooooonnggg locks. And all the while she was getting blond the atmosphere was losing green. Those hours she was inside, her black, chauffeured SUV Escalade waited - with the motor running.

FOOTBALL player-cum-sportscaster **Ahmad Rashad** and **Woody John son's** ex-cum-socialite, **Sale Johnson**. Different lives, different races, but very together. Dating nearly two years. And possible - just possible, could be maybe even possibly probable - that they will become Mr. And Mrs. Hybrid. Like soon. Like could be maybe extremely soon. His third, her second. I'm definitely not declaring for an unshakeable fact that the wedding might be as early as today before a surprised group invited for a simple party at La Grenouille. I'm absolutely not saying that for a set in stone fact. But I'm saying it could be. Is all I'm saying.

**ADELE Mailer** is Mrs. Norman Mailer No. 2. Married in '54, it obviously went a bit sour since he subsequently stabbed her with a penknife in 1960 and marched on to wed again. And again. And again. And again. Anyway, Adele says their daughter **Danielle Mailer** is having an art show at East Ninth Street's Bodell & Fahey Gallery through Dec. 12. She also says this daughter got her art talent from mama, while their other kid **Betsy**, now doing a novel, got her writing talent from papa.

THE annual Meals on Wheels lunch. I talked with **Betsy Gotbaum** about the tragedy of her stepdaughter-in-law Carol Anne Gotbaum, age 45, 105 pounds, who, in deep emotional distress and en route to a medical rehab, died in a Phoenix police station. Despite her fragile mental state, it has been reported she was roughed up, cuffed and left alone in a cell. "There is no closure for us," said Betsy. And might there be a lawsuit as a result? "There certainly could be, but that's up to her husband, my stepson **Noah**."



## Public Advocate Lays Out Proposals For M'ville Expansion

BY BETSY MORAIS

PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 20, 2007

Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum has developed a set of recommendations for Columbia's Manhattanville expansion project, according to a spokesperson.

The announcement comes after Community Board 9 members pressured the office's representative for months to take a stance for or against the expansion plans. In addition to reaffirming the public advocate's opposition to eminent-domain use, Gotbaum's Manhattan community liaison, Simeon Banister, laid out six points of concern regarding Columbia's relationship to the Manhattanville community.

"Community input is not a nicety, it is a necessity," Banister said.

The six points called for public access to Columbia facilities, affordable housing, adherence to environmental standards, the creation of a community-business institute, and open art space.

Banister was particularly enthusiastic about the idea of an initiative to support local business owners. He explained that, since Columbia plans to build a new business school in Manhattanville, the public advocate's office requests that the University investigate the possibility of a training program for neighborhood entrepreneurs.

The public advocate's office also presented the idea of art-exhibition space housed at Columbia's Manhattanville campus to serve the surrounding community.

At a meeting Thursday night, CB9 member Vicky Gholson questioned Banister about affordable housing, not only for Manhattanville residents, but also for Columbia students, who she believes "are being ripped off." He replied that her thoughts were "more than reasonable," and added that he and his wife, a Columbia graduate student, would be pleased to pay less for their apartment.

*Betsy Morais can be reached at [news@columbiaspectator.com](mailto:news@columbiaspectator.com).*

## City Councilman Condemns Gang-Related Clothing

BY ALIX PIANIN

PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 21, 2007

Pull up your baggy pants and take off that bandana—NYC Council Member Leroy Comrie wants to clean up “gang” fashion in New York. Comrie harshly condemned the gang-related apparel market on Monday, singling out Yankees baseball caps and the AKA Stash House clothing line as particularly troublesome.

“The sale of gang-related apparel is thriving,” Comrie said. “We live in a culture that blatantly glorifies street gangs in the name of profit.”

Comrie announced a joint hearing of the Consumer Affairs and Public Safety Committees to further investigate clothing lines that capitalize on gangster fashion. The hearing is slated for mid-December.

“They [the companies] are promoting a negative lifestyle, a gang lifestyle, and a criminal lifestyle,” Comrie said. This latest effort to combat gang violence comes several months after New Era Cap Company, Major League Baseball’s official hat manufacturer, came under fire for selling Yankees baseball caps that appeared to be decorated with Crips, Bloods, and Latin Kings gang colors and symbols. New Era pulled the hats from the market after protests at East Harlem stores, but Comrie said that they can still be found in Brooklyn, Queens, and Harlem.

Fellow Council Members Peter Vailone and Letitia James also spoke out against the selling of gang apparel, and emphasized the danger consumers have faced when unwittingly buying clothes that connect them to a particular gang. Vailone, James, and Comrie cited incidents of teenagers who were killed after being mistaken for gang members.

“It is despicable,” Vailone said. “It is ridiculous for this company to come into our city and kill our kids in search of a profit.”

“This is a dire selling of death to our children,” James said, accusing the AKA Stash House line of espousing a “prison culture.”

The announcement came on the same day as a statement from Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum’s office which announced that NYC youth gang activity is on the rise in communities and schools.

But many Harlem residents expressed doubts that eradicating gang paraphernalia would reduce gang-related violence.

“If they try to take away the way that they [the gangs] identify themselves, they’re going to identify themselves in some other way,” Harlem resident Alex Garcia said. “Gangs are everywhere.”

Fellow resident Alex Reynoso felt that the issue was ultimately unimportant. “I would worry more about my community,” Reynoso said.

Comrie said that he has been looking into legislative measures against the sale of gangster apparel, but admitted that the Constitutionally-protected right to freedom of expression is proving to be something of a roadblock.

“We don’t want to take anyone’s First Amendment away,” he said.

Garcia thought that city officials were ignoring larger issues at hand, such as Harlem’s need for better community outreach programs.

“If they’re trying to stop it [gang violence], they should take it from the root,” he said.

Alix Pianin can be reached at [news@columbiaspectator.com](mailto:news@columbiaspectator.com).

# DAILY NEWS

## DAILY NEWS

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### Boro beat: Cops prep for pontiff's visit

Friday, November 23rd 2007, 12:50 PM

**Assistant Chief Tom Purtell** and his minions at **Patrol Borough Bronx** who escaped having to deal with playoffs at Yankee Stadium are battening down the hatches and bracing for **Pope Benedict** celebrating Mass there on April 20 at the end of his four-day U.S. tour.

To settle those bar bets, **Pope John Paul II** was the last Holy Father to turn the House that Ruth Built into the House of Prayer - in 1979, with a prior visit as a cardinal in 1969. Pope Paul VI was the first papal visitor to North America and the Stadium in 1965. **The Rev. Billy Graham** made a pitch for Jesus there in 1957.

We're told Purtell's folks are dusting off the old playbooks from those events, and maybe even from Stadium shows by those near-divinities, the **Beatles** and **Rolling Stones**.

#### **Bloomberg's ace in the hole**

Mayor **Bloomberg** on his WABC radio show talking about the city paying \$7 million to break the contract with developer of the taking-forever Ferry Point Golf Course:

"It's a mess ... There was a contract entered into long before our administration ... It turns out it was a terrible contract. But that doesn't mean you go criticize the guys that did it because, for all I know, I would have done the same thing. Maybe at that time it appeared to be a great contract."

#### **Giant gala for Gorman**

It was a mob scene of almost 400 cops, clerics, city and borough pols, civic and business leaders and just plain friends showing up to help **the Rev. Richard Gorman** celebrate his 25th anniversary in the priesthood on Sunday at the Marina del Rey.

Among those giving their props: City **Controller William Thompson**, **Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum**, former **Bronx Beep Freddy Ferrer**, powerhouse lawyer "**Don't Worry Murray**" **Richman**, **Mario Biaggi**, a slew of judges and just about every current north and east Bronx elected official.

"If somebody threw a bomb into the room, the Bronx would stop," said one wag, adding - "for better or worse."

Gorman, longtime chairman of Community Board 12 in Williamsbridge-Wakefield, got his early political savvy working for then **City Councilman Steve Kaufman**. With a law degree under his cassock, he most recently has been sitting on the diocesan law tribunal.

# DAILY NEWS

## Betsy raps on music bigs

### Clean up or lose 5B in city biz, she says

MOST NEW YORK CITY retirees probably don't call each other "ho" or "b----h" or throw around the N-word with abandon — but their pension fund managers aren't as picky.

The city retirement fund invests more than \$5 billion — that's a 'b' — into an entertainment industry that Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum complains makes money by peddling violent images and degrading lyrics to children.

Gotbaum, a trustee of the fund, has a new crusade to get \$5 billion worth of attention to the issue.

In a letter she's sending out today, Gotbaum calls on 14 recording and broadcasting giants whose stock is

owned by the city to clean up their act.

"When individuals like Russell Simmons, Al Sharpton, and Oprah Winfrey speak out against offensive content in hip-hop, media executives need to be concerned," Gotbaum writes.

Her campaign caps a year of sharp criticism of rap lyrics.

In April, Sharpton led a Times Square rally to rid hip-hop of offensive lyrics, and music mogul Simmons called for a voluntary ban on "b----h," "ho" and the N-word. A few months before, the City Council symbolically banned the N-word in the city.

The public advocate stopped short of threatening to yank city investments, but that's a pressure tactic being used in a similar push in Albany.

State Sen. Antoine Thompson (D-Buffalo) has grilled industry executives on offensive lyrics, dangling the state's \$3 billion in pension investments in front of them as an incentive.

"They have suggested divestment as a possible course of action," Gotbaum says in her letter.

Gotbaum, who will be forced from office at the end of 2009 by term limits and has considered a run for mayor, could request the City Council hold

its own hearing.

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DON'T COUNT the lobbyists out yet.

Tough new limits on contributions to city campaigns are set to begin on Jan. 1, including one that caps donations from

lobbyists at \$400.

Some of the biggest names in the business are still moving toward suing in federal court to stop the change, according to one longtime lobbyist.

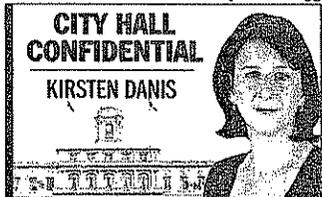
The law, passed this summer, restricts the amount of money that companies that do business with the city can give to candidates.

It was supposed to help curb influence peddling in city government. But unions — one of the biggest political forces in New York — weren't included. That may violate the First Amendment, some lawyers say.

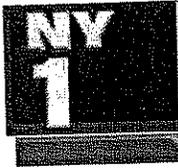
The group of lobbyists also is exploring whether to sign up a City Council member as a plaintiff.

The reforms were enthusiastically backed by Council Speaker Christine Quinn and Mayor Bloomberg, so heaven help the member who's gutsy — or tone-deaf — enough to do it.

kdanis@nydailynews.com



Nov 25, 2007



## Politics



### Gotbaum, Addressing Daughter-In-Law's Death, Calls For More Police Oversight

DIAL-A-BROAD  
SUPER-BAND

November 25, 2007

New York City public advocate Betsy Gotbaum broke her silence Sunday regarding the controversial death of her daughter-in-law.

Carol Ann Gotbaum died while in police custody in Phoenix in September.

The public advocate used Carol Ann's death as an example of how police officers need better training.

"Not only do we have a huge job to do in this city -- which is something hopefully we will be able to do -- but around the country there's something going on that is really horrible. And (I know that) in terms of my personal situation which I'm sure many of you know."

Carol Ann Gotbaum was arrested for disorderly conduct at a Phoenix airport after she was told she couldn't board a plane to Tucson, where she was headed to an alcohol treatment clinic.

Autopsies found she accidentally strangled herself while trying to get out of her handcuffs.

The Gotbaum family argues that Carol Ann should not have been left alone by police in the airport's holding room.

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# NEW YORK POST

25  
CENTS

LATE CITY FINAL

## *Sightings...*

**KARL Rove** — derisively known as “Bush’s brain” before he quit the White House — being peppered with questions from Time magazine’s **Joe Klein** as he tried to leave the Pool Room at the Four Seasons after dinner with his wife . . . PUBLIC Advocate **Betsy Gotbaum** and her husband, **Victor**, showing support for the Theater District restaurants suffering during the stagehands strike by dining at Blue Fin with defense lawyer **Murray Richman** and his wife, **Renie** . . . **AMY Sedaris**, in oversized shades and a scarf, buying a basketful of Chinese knickknacks at Pearl River on Broadway.

Nov 25, 2007

# DAILY NEWS

## Betsy Gotbaum: More alert to police misconduct, 'lack of kindness'

BY TAMER EL-GHOBASHY AND TINA MOORE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

Monday, November 26th 2007, 4:00 AM

For public advocate Betsy Gotbaum, issues of police misconduct like the shooting of Sean Bell now hit closer to home.

Gotbaum admitted Sunday she worries more about cop behavior since her daughter-in-law, Carol Anne Gotbaum, died in September while in police custody at the Phoenix International Airport.

"Something is terribly wrong," she said. "I am more sensitive to that fact."

When asked what exactly she thought was wrong, Gotbaum said, "There's a lack of kindness."

Gotbaum made the comments after the fifth and final hearing of a panel created after the Bell shooting.

The panel, the Tri-Level Legislative Task Force on Police Procedures, had its first hearing in January and includes state, city and federal elected officials.

The hearing was held on the first anniversary of the night Bell was killed in his car in a 50-shot barrage near a Queens strip club where friends had thrown him a bachelor party.

Gotbaum said she has always been concerned by allegations of police misconduct.

"I was always interested in the panel, and I was interested in the issue because I represent people who have been affected by bad police behavior," she said at the hearing.

The experience of burying a loved one, she said, "makes it very raw."

[tmoore@nydailynews.com](mailto:tmoore@nydailynews.com)

# The Sun

## Columbia Expansion Plan Gets Approval

BY Special to the Sun

November 27, 2007

URL: <http://www.nysun.com/article/67019>

The New York City Planning Commission voted yesterday to approve Columbia University's proposed 17-acre expansion in Harlem.

The commission voted for the plan 10 to 1. Irwin Cantor, appointed by the former president of Queens, Claire Schulman, abstained, citing concerns that the state could use eminent domain to secure the property in Harlem.

The single dissenting vote came from Karen Phillips, appointed by the city's public advocate, Betsy Gotbaum. She voted for the local community board's plan, which contained some differences from the Columbia proposal.

The commission's chairwoman, Amanda Burden, said yesterday that the approved plan "meets the shared objectives of addressing the needs of an institution of major importance to the city while building on the strengths of the neighborhood and providing for new investment, jobs and public open space."

## Death Takes a Holiday

On Thanksgiving eve, a community mourns alone for yet another victim of a police shooting  
by **Tom Robbins**

November 27th, 2007 5:42 PM

A week before Thanksgiving, the name Khiel Daniel Seon Coppin was entered onto one of the city's most pain-filled rosters. These are names that appear on no bronzed monument, but if they did, they might simply be headed this way: Killed in Error, Police Bullets.

These are the victims of deadly rounds that should never have been fired in the first place. They are New Yorkers felled by bullets that?regardless of any dispute over whether proper procedures were followed or if justification for deadly force existed?everyone concerned would wish to see stuffed back into the barrels of the weapons that fired them.

Would that it could be so. Would that there might be some cosmic do-over for Khiel Coppin, Sean Bell, Timothy Stansbury, Ousmane Zongo, Patrick Dorismond, Amadou Diallo, and a score of others whose names are already fading in memory.

Surely none of the officers that pulled their triggers as Coppin stood before them in the darkness on the evening of November 12 would have done so had they known the weapon he appeared to brandish was nothing more than a hairbrush.

Likewise, none of the shooters of Sean Bell on the eve of his wedding a year ago would have opened fire if they'd known he and his boisterous friends were unarmed; the cop who shot Timothy Stansbury on a Brooklyn rooftop, just two blocks from where Coppin was slain, would have holstered his weapon rather than killing a 19-year-old who held nothing more lethal than a handful of CDs.

What we are left with then are a series of tragedies, mistakes that seem to have a way of getting made over and over again: mistakes where the victims tend to be black, where the shooters are officers paid to serve and protect, and where the black community is left to do its grieving mostly alone, wondering if this time justice might be done.

Those were the questions that tore at those who walked through a cold drizzle to the Nazarene Congregational United Church of Christ in Bedford-Stuyvesant, where funeral services were held for Coppin on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. They took seats in a warm church with a red carpet and arched, stained-glass windows that reach from floor to ceiling. A choir dressed in black robes sat in a single line against the front wall, facing the congregation. Coppin's family?including his mother, Denise; his father, Walter; his stepfather, Reginald; and his eight siblings?sat in the front row.

Most of the mourners were middle-aged, and, aside from a handful of white reporters there to report on the event, all were African-Americans. A half-dozen local elected officials came to pay their respects, as did Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott, who came as a representative of Mayor Bloomberg and who happens to be black as well. Not a single white elected official felt the need to be present. The city's Public Advocate, Betsy Gotbaum, whose own daughter-in-law died a few weeks ago in police custody in Phoenix amid circumstances Gotbaum rightly questioned, was among those absent.

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## Gotbaum: Protect homeless children

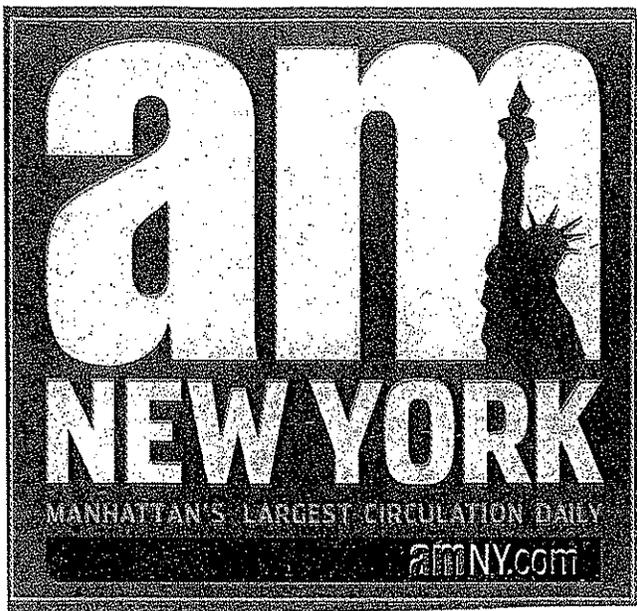
MANHATTAN. Twenty children died in city homeless shelters from 2004 through 2006, including seven deaths that were ruled homicides due to beating or abuse, according to a report released yesterday.

Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum's report also found that officials suspected the children died as a result of improper sleeping positions in seven cases. Two other children died from accidental causes and four succumbed to natural causes. Gotbaum said all the deaths involved children under the age of 5.

Gotbaum said 60 percent of the families had at least one parent with a history of child abuse or who was investigated for abuse. Only two of the 20 cases had no previous contact with the Administration for Children's Services. Gotbaum called on ACS to develop a new division to respond to report of alleged abuse inside city homeless shelters.

ACS officials said the agency has been working with the City Council for more than two years to better protect children in shelters.

METRO/JRM  
Nov 29, 2007



# Report: 20 kids died in city shelters

In a two-year span, 20 children age 5 and younger died while living with family members in a city homeless shelter, according to a report issued yesterday by Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum.

Seven of the 20 children who died between 2004 and 2006 succumbed to positional

asphyxia, caused by sleeping with others.

Another seven were ruled to be homicides. The report contained no data on 2007 deaths.

As a result of the report's findings, Gotbaum called on the city's Administration for Children's Services to devote

a special unit to the city's homeless shelters. In 2004, there were approximately 15,700 children living in city homeless shelters. By 2006, that number was down to 12,600.

"The death of any child is a tragic loss," said Eric Deutsch, a spokesman with the city's De-

partment of Homeless Services. "DHS works very closely with ACS to coordinate services, from the sharing of client-based information and staff training to the distribution of critical child-safety awareness materials to families in shelter."

— JUSTIN ROCKET SILVERMAN

NOV 29, 2007

# The Sun

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## Report: More Children Dying in Shelters

*Staff Reporter of the Sun*

Twelve children died in the city's homeless shelters in 2006, up from three in 2005, according to a report released yesterday by the city's public advocate, Betsy Gotbaum.

According to the report, 20 children died in the city's shelters between 2004 and 2006. Seven deaths were ruled homicides, two were accidental, and four were the result of natural causes. Seven deaths were the result of improper sleeping positions.

Nov 29, 07

# The New York Times

## Child Deaths In Shelters Are Rising

By LESLIE KAUFMAN

The number of children dying in the city's homeless shelters is on the rise, according to a report released yesterday by the New York City public advocate.

Twenty children died in shelters during the three-year period from 2004 to 2006, with by far the most — 12 — dying in 2006, the report said.

The city's Administration for Children's Services disputed the findings by the public advocate, Betsy Gotbaum, saying that according to its figures, 16 children died in shelters during that period.

Ms. Gotbaum said her numbers came from the state, which does its own investigations of suspicious child deaths. Calling the increase "alarming," she said she was particularly concerned because the deaths had occurred even though more than half of the families had a known history of abusing or neglecting their children and despite the fact that homeless families are commonly supervised by case workers from numerous city agencies.

"We can predict and therefore prevent these tragedies," she said. "The shelter system, where they are in the care of the city, is a good place to intervene."

Roughly one-third of the deaths were the result of child abuse, the advocate's report said. About another third of the deaths, which were ruled suspicious by investigators, according to the report, were of infants sharing a bed with a parent. The last third were the result of accidents or natural causes, Ms. Gotbaum said.

In 2004, Ms. Gotbaum released a report on deaths in the shelter system covering the previous four years. That report found that 33 children had died while their families were in shelters, including 12 in 2003.

The report led to legislation requiring that signs be posted in the shelters about the dangers of putting infants in beds with adults, where they might suffocate or be smothered. Ms. Gotbaum said that things had improved for a while after that but that deaths in the shelters were up last year because the city had become less vigilant about preventing them.

She said that she was not seeking to blame either Children's Services or the Department of Homeless Services, but that new reforms were in order. Among them, she said, the city should create a special shelter division of child-protective services and report shelter-related child welfare statics, like the percentage of abuse and neglect cases reported from within the shelter system that child welfare authorities investigated within 24 hours.

In a prepared statement, the Administration for Children's Services said that it had been working in the last two years to develop a comprehensive system for sharing data on abuse and neglect with the Department of Homeless Services and that a video on safe sleeping practices is played for families as they apply for and await placement in the shelter system.

NOV 29, 2007

EL CAMPEON DE LOS HISPANOS

# EL

# DIARIO

## 20 menores murieron en refugios

**NEW YORK/AP** — Veinte niños murieron en los refugios de la ciudad para las personas sin hogar desde el 2004 al 2006, de acuerdo a un informe hecho público ayer.

Siete de las muertes fueron calificadas de homicidios debido a palizas o abusos de acuerdo al informe emitido por la Oficina de la Defensora Pública Betsy Gotbaum.

En otros siete casos los funcionarios sospechan que los niños murieron como resultado de posiciones inadecuadas cuando dormían, incluyendo el dormir en la misma cama de un adulto. Dos murieron por causas accidentales y cuatro por causas naturales.

Todas las muertes fueron de niños menores de 5 años.

Gotbaum dijo que la mayoría de las familias cuyos hijos murieron en los refugios tenían al menos a uno de los padres con una historia de abuso infantil o que había sido investigado por abuso infantil.

Nov 29, 2007

# DAILY NEWS

## Gotbaum sounds alarm on kids' deaths

THE NUMBER of children dying in homeless shelters quadrupled last year, according to a report released yesterday by Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum.

Twelve kids died in shelters last year, up from three in 2005, and most of them had parents who had been reported for child abuse in the past, the report shows.

"It's not a huge number but it is an alarming number because it is increasing," said Gotbaum. Between 2004 and last year, 20 children died "in a suspicious manner" while living in shelters.

About a third of those deaths were homicides, a third were caused by improper sleeping positions of children and the remaining were natural causes or accidents, the report found.

In 60% of those deaths, at least one parent had a child abuse or neglect charge substantiated by the Administration for Children's Services.

Gotbaum urged ACS to create a shelter unit of caseworkers and police

investigators to pay particular attention to abuse reports of homeless children. ACS and DHS said they already coordinate together regularly and train shelter staff on child safety issues.

"The fact is, these families are in crisis and thus are more prone toward health problems, poverty, inadequate nutrition and the like," ACS said in a statement.

**Kathleen Lucadamo**

NOV 29, 2007

# NY1 News

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Nov 29, 2007  
Weather: Isolated Shower.High:53

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## **Report Shows Jump In Child Fatalities In City Homeless Shelters**

November 28, 2007

A report released by the public advocate Wednesday finds an increasing number of children are dying in homeless shelters.

Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum says the number of child deaths in shelters jumped from three in 2005 to 12 children in 2006. Out of those deaths, 85 percent were infants, and most were as a result of improper sleeping conditions.

Gotbaum is suggesting that Child Protective Services create a shelter division.

"It seems to me that it would be worth their while to maybe transfer some of the people that might be in other areas to the shelter division," said Gotbaum. "I think it would be cost effective and, frankly, to me if we could save -- as I said before -- one child from dying, it's worth it."

But the Administration for Children's Services says the report could be misleading. They say Gotbaum did not speak to them before releasing the report and the information may not be complete and accurate.

A spokesperson for the Department of Homeless Services also says they work closely with ACS, sharing client information and passing out child safety information.

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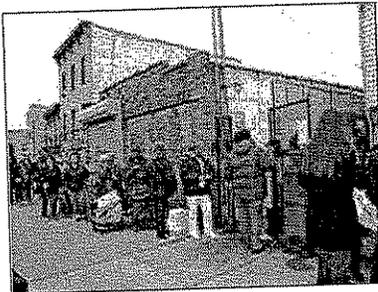
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THURSDAY NOVEMBER 29, 2007

## Survey Concludes: Queens Pantries Face High Demand

by Annmarie Fertoli, Assistant Editor  
11/29/2007

Email to a friend  Post a Comment  Printer-friendly



**(Annmarie Fertoli)** Western Queens residents wait in line outside the Center of Hope International Food Pantry in Long Island City on Wednesday.

In the midst of the holiday season, many food pantries and soup kitchens in Queens are facing more mouths to feed but less food to give to hungry clients.

According to this year's report by New York City Coalition Against Hunger, the trend is citywide — but Queens has the worst statistics.

Citywide, 20 percent of food charity organizations surveyed said they were facing increased demand. In Queens, 83 percent reported an increased demand and over 70 percent said they didn't have enough food to meet it. Many of the 54 Queens organizations surveyed also reported less funding this year.

At a press conference at the Center of Hope International Food Pantry in Long Island City, Joel Berg, the coalition's executive director, said the results of this year's survey are evidence of an economic downturn, noting that demand citywide nearly doubled between 2006 and 2007. "When economies get cold, low-income people get pneumonia," he

said.

Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum added that hunger shouldn't be a topic in the richest city in the world. "This is a government responsibility," she said. "Hunger doesn't take a holiday."

Christy Robb, director of the community outreach and food pantry program run by the Long Island City-based organization Hour Children, said her group is not always able to accommodate its clients.

Between 100 and 150 people show up at the pantry, located on 11th Street between 36th and 37th avenues on a bi-weekly basis.

Robb noted her organization is receiving less financial support, both federally and from private organizations. "The government response to the hunger crisis has been very, very bad," she said.

The Rev. Mitchell Taylor, with Center of Hope, indicated that the demand keeps going up while the supply keeps going down.

Taylor said the pantry serves nearly 200 people every week. Staffing is always a problem, as the pantry is operated by volunteers.

On Wednesday, Long Island City retiree Elizabeth Darden was waiting outside the center to pick up food for her and her grandson.

Darden thinks the pantry is always a helpful resource when her Social Security check runs out at the end of the month. "I appreciate whatever I can get," she said.

Darden has been coming to the pantry for nearly five months, and noted that she'd never seen so many people on line.

Other residents waiting to pick up some food for Thanksgiving, many of them seniors, spoke about the difficulty of making ends meet while living on fixed incomes.

Berg indicated that the good news of this year's survey is that more people are taking advantage of the federal food stamp program, and urged others to find out if they're eligible.

NYCCAH offered several recommendations in its report, including increasing federal funding for charity organizations and the food stamp program.

The coalition is also calling on all levels of government to make sure anti-poverty plans focus on education, health care, housing and increasing wages.

Mayor Bloomberg recently pledged \$1 million in city money to 500 food charity organizations. He also announced an expansion of the city's 311 system to include trained specialists to help residents with emergency hunger needs.

**FRIDAY NOVEMBER 30, 2007** Last modified: Thursday, November 29, 2007 10:28 AM CST

### **Smith Task Force holds final hearing**

BY TONIA N. CIMINO

The fifth and final Tri-level Task Force hearing on police reform convened on Sunday, November 25 - the one-year anniversary of Sean Bell's death.

Created by State Senate Minority Leader Malcolm Smith following the fatal police-involved shooting, the series of hearings were hosted throughout the five boroughs, with testimony from more than 100 individuals. Testimony was taken from experts on police procedures, civil rights advocates, and victims - among them Nicole Paultre Bell, widow of Sean Bell, and Joseph Guzman and Trent Benefield, friends of Bell who were at his bachelor party and survived the barrage of 50 bullets.

According to Smith, the purpose of the hearings is to make recommendations for possible legislative action at multiple levels of government.

"Our hope is to offer guidelines that help prevent incidents like this from ever occurring again, while guaranteeing a swift and appropriate response in the event that the system were to fail us again," said Smith.

He continued, "We must do all we can to regain the public's trust and confidence in its police force by providing answers for what exactly went wrong that tragic night in November. I am confident our series of hearings will help us come up with proposals on how to improve police procedures to avert tragedies like the Bell tragedy and too many others."

In his testimony, Guzman called for a law in Bell's name.

"We need a Sean Bell law; it's not a want, it's a need," Guzman told the panel, according to published reports. "We can't keep going through this. We can't keep letting this happen."

The Task Force includes Congressmembers Charles Rangel and Gregory Meeks; City Council Speaker Christine Quinn; Comptroller Bill Thompson; Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum; Senators Shirley Huntley and Eric Adams; Assemblymembers Vivian Cook and Ruben Diaz, Jr.

Smith said it would issue its recommendations to Mayor Michael Bloomberg and the New York Police Department in approximately a month.



November 30, 2007

## Gotbaum Returns To YouTube

PA Betsy Gotbaum, a potential '09 citywide candidate (the assumption has been mayor, but a comptroller bid rumor has been circulating of late) whose attention from politics was diverted by the tragic death of her daughter-in-law, Carol Anne, while in police custody at an Arizona airport, has returned to cyberspace with yet-another Web ad touting her accomplishments.

The latest spot focuses on Gotbaum's efforts to fight hunger and features testimonials from Eric Wilson, who praises the public advocate for helping his family obtain food stamps. (The full transcript appears after the jump).



**TRANSCRIPT** [Black title screen – "Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum"]

Eric Wilson: "The first time I met Betsy Gotbaum it was, probably, one of the darkest days of my life."

[Black title screen – "Fighting Hunger in NYC" – fades into image of Eric Wilson.]

EW: "We were in the midst of a great personal family tragedy. I had lost my sixteen year old son, suddenly and unexpectedly, and she reached out to us, in a very compassionate and human way."

[Black title screen – "How we can help" – fades into image of Liz Blaney, sitting in office.]

Liz Blaney: "When we learned of Mr. Wilson's need for food stamps, Betsy intervened on her own, with the human resources administration, to be sure that he obtained the benefit that he so deserved for himself and his family."

[Visual of Betsy Gotbaum serving food at the NYC Rescue Mission Food Pantry.]

LB: "People don't know that they're eligible, they call our office, we can direct them where to go, we can tell them what their eligibility requirements are, and we provide a range of services and a range of information and direction to people who would apply for food stamp benefits who sometimes don't know that they're entitled to them."

[Black title screen – "For help accessing city services, including food stamps, this holiday season..." – fades into black title screen – "Call the Office of the Public Advocate at 212.669.7200" ]

Betsy Gotbaum: I want to wish you all a very, very happy Thanksgiving... and come on gang, let's get to work. [Sounds of clapping.] End.