



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

## We Did It! Neighborhood Saves Our Lady of Pompeii Senior Center

BRAD HOYLMAN August 14, 2015

| ISSUE: **SENIOR CENTERS**



*After push from Greenwich Village seniors, elected officials and community leaders, Our Lady of Pompeii signs new lease with beloved senior center*

New York, NY — Following months of negotiations, Our Lady of Pompeii Church and Greenwich House signed a lease on Monday, August 10 that will allow the Caring Community Senior Center to continue operating in the church's basement.

The 3-year lease includes newly-negotiated costs for rent, utilities, and cleaning. It also allows the basement to be split in half with dividers so the church may use the space for additional purposes as they wish.

In November, Greenwich House, the 113-year old settlement house that runs the center, was advised to begin searching for alternative space in which to house the center after its lease expiration in June 2015. The church reportedly hoped to make a larger profit by renting the space to outside groups such as film production crews. Seniors, elected officials and community leaders gathered to demand that the center located in the basement of Our Lady of Pompeii Church in Greenwich Village not be evicted.

After extensive discussions between the church and Greenwich House under the oversight of Timothy Cardinal Dolan, the mutually beneficial solution finalized on Monday allows seniors to remain in their current location while ensuring the church is financially solvent.

**State Senator Brad Hoylman said:** “Our Lady of Pompeii Church has been an invaluable resource for Greenwich Village seniors for more than four decades. Under the new lease terms, both the church and the senior center can continue to thrive. I'm pleased to have worked with the Archdiocese to ensure that the negotiations stayed on track and thank them for their support of the community. This effort could not have moved forward without the tireless advocacy of the seniors who visit the center and Councilmember Margaret Chin, who was instrumental in securing additional funding in the City budget through the Department for the Aging.”

**Councilmember Margaret Chin said:** “After successfully fighting earlier this year to secure enhanced funding for seniors across the city, I am happy that a portion of these badly needed funds will be used in Greenwich Village to ensure that vital services for seniors continue to be available at Our Lady of Pompeii. Even with this victory for our seniors, the fight is far from over. As Chair of the Council’s Committee on Aging, I am committed to not only keeping our senior centers open, but to expanding the reach of the services they provide for a growing number of elder New Yorkers.”

“Renewing the lease took an effort by the entire community—legislators and neighbors, alike. This effort demonstrates why Greenwich Village is such a great neighborhood to live in,” **said Roy Leavitt, Executive Director of Greenwich House.** “I thank Senator Hoylman for his tremendous effort in moving this conversation forward.”

“I’m pleased that stakeholders were able to come together to find a sustainable solution that preserves Greenwich House Senior Center at Lady of Pompeii Church, a crucial resource for seniors in the West Village and surrounding neighborhoods for over forty years,” **said Congressman Jerrold Nadler.** “Preserving excellent senior centers like Greenwich House helps ensure everyone has access to vibrant, healthy communities and social services well into their golden years.”

“Community resources like the Greenwich House Senior Center are the key to keeping our neighborhoods vital, diverse, and supportive,” **said Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer.** “This center is used by hundreds of seniors regularly, and supporting them is a crucial mission. I thank my colleagues,

and especially Councilmember Margaret Chin, for working together to keep this center open and operating for the neighborhood's seniors.”

**State Assemblymember Deborah J. Glick said:** “I am pleased that the senior center, operated by Greenwich House in the West Village, was able to reach a lease agreement in order to stay in their space at Our Lady of Pompeii Church. The compromise reached will ensure the preservation of this long standing resource. I am thankful for the hard work of Councilmembers Margaret Chin and Corey Johnson, Congressman Jerrold Nadler, and State Senators Brad Hoylman and Daniel Squadron. Upholding our commitment to seniors is pivotal to promoting stable communities, and I am happy to see this vital program stay in the West Village.”

“This lease renewal is a great victory for the seniors of Greenwich Village,” **said Council Member Corey Johnson.** “Now we can be confident that the Senior Center at Our Lady of Pompeii Church will continue to provide the invaluable services that our seniors depend on every day. The clients of this center are the very people who made the Village one of the most vibrant communities in the world. As a city, we must enable them to live comfortably at home in their golden years, while having access to critical social services. This deal ensures that we can accomplish that goal, and I am so grateful to the stakeholders and the elected officials who worked so hard to make it happen.”

“Today's news means that Our Lady of Pompeii will continue to be a service center for residents of the Village, and I applaud all stakeholders for finding a solution that ensures our neighborhood's continued access to this center,” **said State Senator Daniel Squadron.** “Thank you to Senator Hoylman, Councilmember Chin, and my colleagues for helping ensure our local seniors continue to have access to important services at Our Lady of Pompeii.”

The senior center, located at 25 Carmine Street, has its roots in the Golden Age Club started in 1971 at the behest of the church's pastor by late parishioner Lucy Cecere. It provides 1,400 lunches monthly, as well as vital social, cultural and educational activities and access to health and social services, such as flu immunizations and legal services.

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