

VECINDARIO HOPE CARING JUSTICIA LIFE ESPERANZA SOLIDARITY DECISIONS FRIENDSHIP  
ABOGAR FAMILY HONESTY TRUTH EMPOWER NEIGHBORS HOGAR QUALITY SOLIDARIDAD  
FINANCES RECURSOS SERVICE EDUCACIÓN COMUNIDAD ORGANIZAR PROVIDING  
COMPARTIR ORGANIZE CONFIANZA NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK STRUGGLE ADVOCATE  
VECINOS RESOURCES COMMUNITY HOGAR JUSTICE CHARITY FINANZAS HOPE LUCHAR  
IMPROVE HOME SHARING EDUCACIÓN VECINDARIO HOGAR  
JUSTICIA LIFE ESPERANZA  
DECISIONS ABOGAR FRIENDSHIP  
EMPOWER NEIGHBORS  
RECURSOS SERVICE EDUCACIÓN COMUNIDAD ORGANIZAR PROVIDING COMPARTIR  
ORGANIZE CONFIANZA NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK STRUGGLE ADVOCATE VECINOS  
RESOURCES COMMUNITY HOGAR JUSTICE CHARITY FINANZAS HOPE LUCHAR IMPROVE  
HOME SHARING EDUCACIÓN VECINDARIO HOPE CARING JUSTICIA ESPERANZA SOLIDARITY  
DECISIONS FRIENDSHIP ABOGAR EMPOWER NEIGHBORS QUALITY SOLIDARIDAD  
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SHARING EDUCACIÓN VECINDARIO HOPE CARING JUSTICIA LIFE ESPERANZA SOLIDARITY  
DECISIONS FRIENDSHIP ABOGAR FAMILY HONESTY TRUTH  
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NETWORK STRUGGLE ADVOCATE VECINOS ORGANIZAR RESOURCES COMMUNITY HOGAR JUSTICE  
CHARITY FINANZAS SERVICE EDUCACIÓN COMUNIDAD ORGANIZAR PROVIDING COMPARTIR  
ORGANIZE CONFIANZA NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK STRUGGLE ADVOCATE VECINOS



neighbors  
helping  
neighbors

# 2007 ANNUAL REPORT

# DEAR FRIENDS,

Neighbors Helping Neighbors began the year with a Board retreat in January to adopt a new, more focused mission statement and lay the groundwork for a great fundraising year. Our First Annual Benefit Bash netted over \$50K for the organization, about 10 times what we have raised in previous events. Programmatically, we continued our existing programs but also responded to new challenges and opportunities.

## **The Foreclosure Crisis**

We took little joy in the large-scale, public affirmation of the advice we have been giving potential homebuyers for over ten years: buy only what you can afford and beware of adjustable rate mortgages. Relieved that our home-buying clients are not facing foreclosure, we turned our attention to those homeowners who are having problems. There are no easy solutions to the foreclosure crisis, but we do know that the earlier the intervention, the greater the options. Over the summer we began intensive outreach in Sunset Park, targeting homeowners on the blocks with the highest number of sub-prime loans. We are continuing this work in 2008, providing an alternative to scam "rescue" offers.

## **Gentrification and Displacement**

As our home neighborhood of Sunset Park continues to gentrify, we see an increase in ugly practices by landlords to remove their lower-income (mainly Latino and immigrant) tenants. Tactics include illegal rent overcharges, frivolous eviction cases, refusal to make repairs, threats to call Immigration, and verbal abuse. NHN held a press conference with our elected officials in April to highlight illegal tactics by landlords, and a spirited rally with tenants in November calling for an end to these practices.

## **Rezoning of Sunset Park**

NHN welcomed the Mayor's decision in March 2007 to rezone Sunset Park. We realized that this could spur the

development of affordable housing, but might also create an incentive for the loss of existing affordable units. Together with other local community organizations and residents, we

**"WE TOOK LITTLE JOY IN THE PUBLIC AFFIRMATION OF THE ADVICE WE HAVE BEEN GIVING POTENTIAL HOMEBUYERS FOR OVER TEN YEARS: BUY ONLY WHAT YOU CAN AFFORD AND BEWARE OF ADJUSTABLE RATE MORTGAGES."**

created the Affordable Housing Working Group to study the options. We issued our zoning recommendations in December, and continue to discuss various options with the Community Board, our elected officials, and City Planning.

Thank you very much for your support of NHN's work. We could not do it without you, and we welcome your comments, suggestions, compliments or complaints.

Cordially,



Julia Fitzgerald  
*Executive Director*



Michael Wadman  
*Board President*



## ELENA'S STORY

Elena Gonzalez\* was desperate to move – her rental in Sunset Park was too small for herself and her two teenagers. She found a \$450,000 townhouse and decided to buy it. The problem was, she could not afford it. Luckily, she heard about NHN's Homeownership Orientations, and decided she should attend one. She mentioned this to her attorney, who was also representing the seller and had been pressuring her to go through with the deal (two red flags). The attorney must have realized his deal was in danger, because he arranged to meet Elena at the NHN office to pick up her \$10,000 down payment check right before the Orientation started.

At the Orientation, Elena calculated what she could really afford (\$250,000), and then told us about her situation. We advised her to stop payment on the check and call the attorney to back out of the deal. However, when we called her the next day, she reported that the attorney was refusing to return payment and cancel the contract. When NHN's Homeownership Director Robert McCool called him, he claimed that Elena had already picked up the check – a blatant lie. Probably realizing that we were ready to report him to the New York City Bar Association, he agreed to cancel the deal.

Elena was disappointed to put off her dream of homeownership, but we convinced her to wait for the right property. A few months later she found a nice condo in Borough Park that she could safely afford.

\* Name has been changed



## 961 42<sup>ND</sup> STREET

The owner of 961 42nd Street, a 34-unit, rent-stabilized building, has long been a negligent landlord. As of January 2007 there were 192 violations on the building, 20 of which constituted an immediate threat to health or safety. He also had not bothered to issue leases or register rents with the NYS Division of Housing & Community Renewal in years.

In February, negligence was replaced by more aggressive behavior. The super started informing tenants that the building had been sold and that they would have to move out within three months. In truth, it had not been sold. Even if it had, the tenants would not have to move - tenancy rights in rent-stabilized buildings continue regardless of ownership. The super instructed some tenants not to pay rent, and refused to accept rent from others. These were particularly disingenuous actions, since non-payment of rent is grounds for eviction.

Fortunately, one of the tenants called NHN and we quickly held a tenant meeting and enlisted the help of South Brooklyn Legal Services. Together with Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez, Borough President Marty Markowitz, Community Board 7 Chair Randy Peers, and representatives from other elected officials' offices, the tenants and NHN held a press conference to shine a light on this landlord's attempt at illegal displacement. Under pressure, he has significantly mended his ways. Not only did he stop spreading misinformation, he also made important repairs to the building.



JULIA FITZGERALD SPEAKS AT THE 961 42ND STREET PRESS CONFERENCE.

**“I FOUND THE PROPERTY I WANTED TO PURCHASE, SO I SIGNED UP FOR NHN’S HOME OWNERSHIP COUNSELING SERVICES. ROBERT FOUND A MORTGAGE FOR ME (30-YEAR FIXED, OF COURSE!), HELPED WITH THE PAPERWORK, AND MADE FOLLOW-UP CALLS TO THE BANK TO ENSURE ALL THE PIECES WERE COMING TOGETHER. NHN REALLY TOOK CARE OF ME.”**

**- HOMEOWNERSHIP CLIENT GERRY C., IN HER BEAUTIFUL APARTMENT. GERRY ATTENDED NHN’S HOMEOWNERSHIP SEMINAR IN FEBRUARY, AND CLOSED ON HER NEW APARTMENT IN JUNE.**

# NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS IN SUNSET PARK



HOMEOWNERSHIP  
COUNSELOR IRENE  
TALBOTT LEADING  
A HOMEBUYING  
ORIENTATION.

**178** people attended NHH Homebuying Orientations in 2007, which were offered in both English and Spanish. Clients learned how much they could afford to buy, and basic information to prevent them from entering into a risky loan.

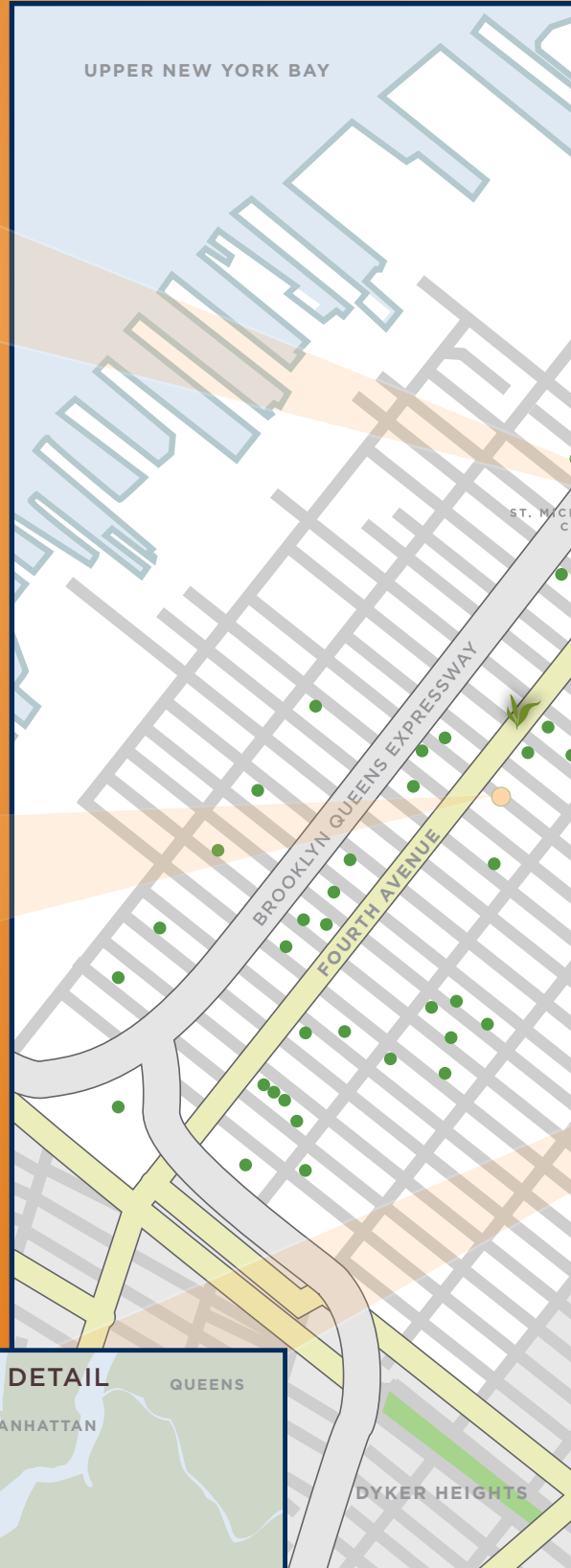


HOMEOWNERSHIP  
DIRECTOR ROBERT  
MCCOIL CONDUCTING  
FORECLOSURE  
PREVENTION OUTREACH  
IN SUNSET PARK.

In 2007, NHH distributed information about the dangers of predatory loans and refinance scams to over **500 HOUSEHOLDS** in Sunset Park census tracts identified as having large numbers of high-cost loans.



TENANT LEADER YESSID SABOGAL ADDRESSES  
961 42<sup>ND</sup> STREET PRESS CONFERENCE.



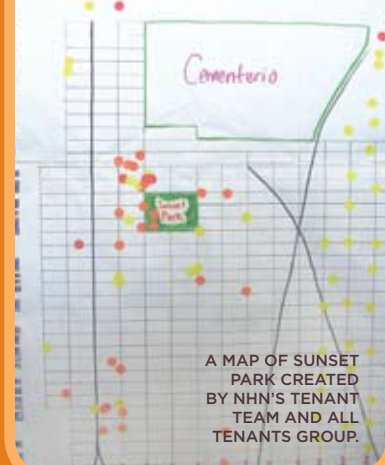
In 2007, NHN assisted

# 185

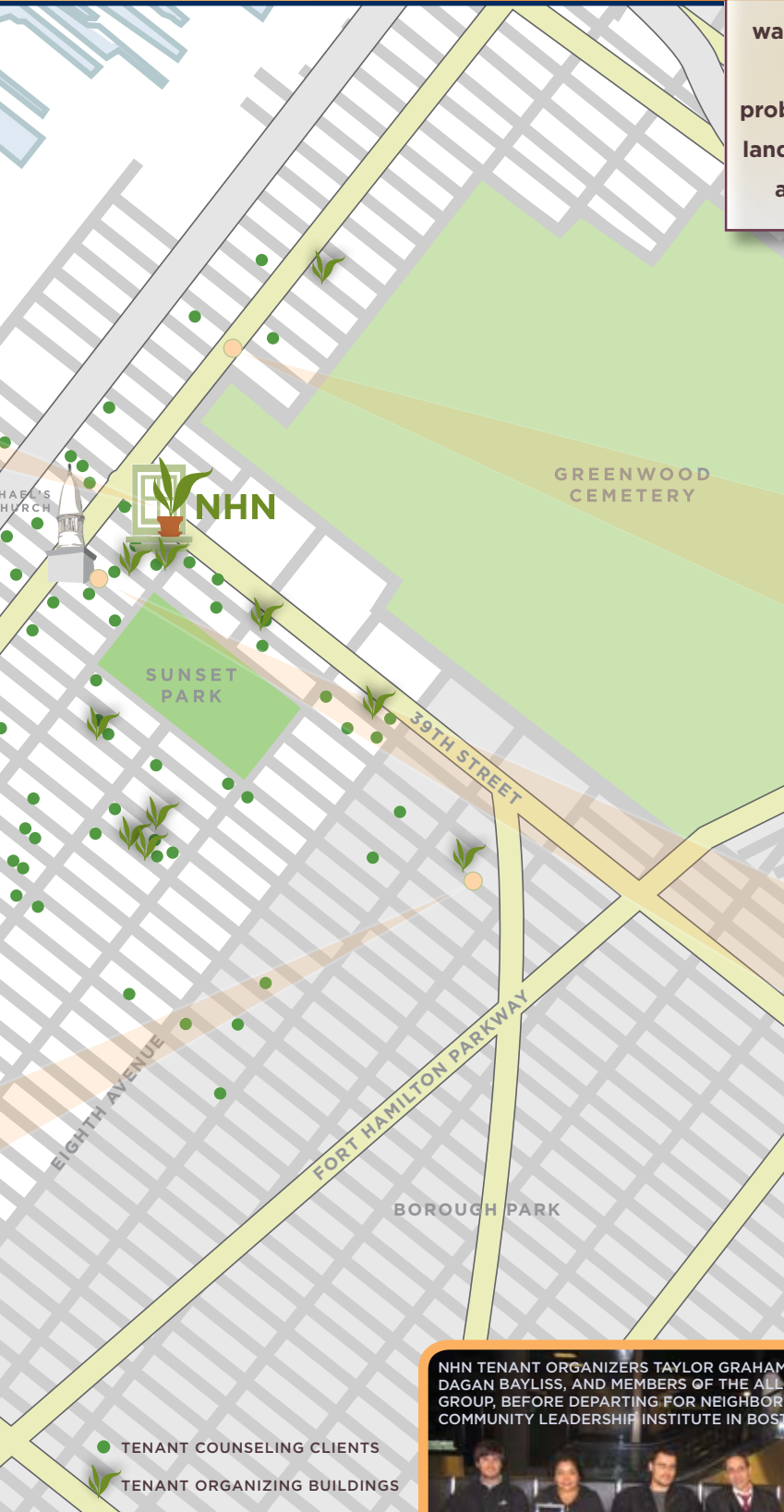
walk-in tenant clients  
facing housing  
problems, ranging from  
landlord harassment to  
apartment repair.

## OUR SUNSET PARK NUESTRO SUNSET PARK

- donde vivo yo
- lugar de importancia
- edificios antiguos, de planeamiento, etc.



A MAP OF SUNSET PARK CREATED BY NHN'S TENANT TEAM AND ALL TENANTS GROUP.



JULIA FITZGERALD BEING INTERVIEWED BY A LOCAL REPORTER DURING A RALLY OUTSIDE A SUNSET PARK ATTORNEY'S OFFICE.



TENANT ORGANIZER NICO UDU-GAMA LEADS AN ALL TENANTS GROUP DISCUSSION ON PODER AT SUNSET PARK'S COMMUNITY BOARD 7 OFFICE.

NHN TENANT ORGANIZERS TAYLOR GRAHAM & DAGAN BAYLISS, AND MEMBERS OF THE ALL TENANTS GROUP, BEFORE DEPARTING FOR NEIGHBORWORKS' COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE IN BOSTON, MA.



● TENANT COUNSELING CLIENTS  
 🌱 TENANT ORGANIZING BUILDINGS

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
 Only 5% of the homes sold in New York City in 2006 were affordable to a person earning the median income.\*

\*Statistic from NYU's State of NYC's Housing and Neighborhoods 2006, published in 2007.

# NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS' 2007 SUPPORTERS

## \$30,000 AND ABOVE

NeighborWorks America  
The New York Community Trust  
New York Mortgage Coalition  
NYC Department of Housing Preservation and  
Development  
NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal

## \$5,000 TO \$29,999

Astoria Federal Savings  
NYS Assemblymember James Brennan  
NYC Councilmember Sara M González  
HSBC  
Independence Community Foundation  
JPMorgan Chase Foundation  
Lehman Brothers  
M&T Foundation  
NYS Senator Velmanette Montgomery  
North Fork Foundation  
NYS Assemblymember Felix Ortiz  
NYS Senator Diane Savino  
US Department of Housing and Urban  
Development  
Wachovia Securities  
Washington Mutual  
Wells Fargo Foundation

## \$1,000 to \$4,999

ABN AMRO  
NYS Senator Eric Adams  
Amalgamated Bank  
Bank of America  
Barclays  
Blaylock & Company  
BNP Paribas Bank  
Amy E. Brenner and Scott Zucker  
CastleOak Securities  
Citibank  
Joi M. Corrothers  
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Hewitt Foundation  
The Hudson Companies, Inc.  
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Morgan Stanley  
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Paul Puleo  
Ramirez & Company  
Ridgewood Savings Bank  
Seibert Capital Markets  
Toussaint Capital Markets  
UBS  
US Bank  
Suzanne Waltman and Martin Friedman  
Williams Capital Group

## \$500 TO \$999

Commerce Bank  
Julia Fitzgerald and Hans van Meeuwen  
Pamela Frederick and Charles Stuard  
Lisa Gomez and John Banks  
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Michael and Monica Guerra  
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Michael Wadman and Maura Minsky  
Jeffrey Werner  
Perrin Wicks

## UP TO \$499

Susan Albrecht and Karl Klingbiel  
Jane Alpert  
The John L. and Corrinne Alpert Foundation  
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Michelle Aronowitz  
Keitha Baker  
Christopher Barber Consulting  
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Nathaniel Catanio  
Rebecca Center  
Century 21 Department Store  
Roberto Cipriano  
Shelly Cleary  
Donna Clinton  
Darren Cohen  
Katherine Collignon and Grant Pezeshki  
Sylvia Conley  
Connolly Engineering, PLLC  
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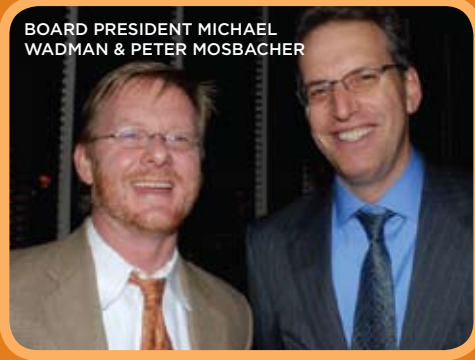
Nancy J. Lasher and Jordan S. Hamowy  
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# NHN'S FIRST ANNUAL BENEFIT BASH AT UNION HALL

Hosted by NHN's Board of Directors, NHN held its First Annual Benefit Bash at Union Hall on November 5th. Thanks so much to Union Hall, Tracy Bonham, Takka Takka, One Ring Zero, MC Eugene Mirman, and all of NHN's generous supporters who helped make our first large-scale fundraiser such a tremendous success. Special thanks to the Bash's Platinum-level sponsors: Lehman Brothers and Wachovia Securities.



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BACK ROW: TAYLOR GRAHAM, JOHN DUMEY,  
ROBERT MCCOOL, DAGAN BAYLISS, IRENE TALBOTT  
FRONT ROW: NICO UDU-GAMA, JULIA FITZGERALD,  
DENISE TORRES, NELLY ISAACSON.  
NOT PICTURED: EVALEVI LOPEZ, MARK TRESKON

THE MISSION OF NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS IS TO  
EMPOWER LOW AND MODERATE-INCOME BROOKLYN RESIDENTS  
TO SECURE QUALITY HOUSING AND BUILD ASSETS.

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