



News from the Office of Assemblymember
Brian Kavanagh



District: 237 First Avenue, Suite 407, New York, NY 10003 • Phone (212) 979-9696 • Fax (212) 979-0594
Capital: Legislative Office Building, Suite 431, Albany, NY 12248 • Phone (518) 455-5506 • Fax (518) 455-4801
Email: kavanaghb@assembly.state.ny.us

Community Newsletter – February 2013

A New Vision for the East River Waterfront



(Image: WXY Architecture + Urban Design)

Assemblymember Kavanagh and Borough President Stringer unveiled their forthcoming East River Blueway Plan on February 7th. The Plan is intended to promote greater access and recreational opportunities along the East River from the Brooklyn Bridge to East 38th Street, while also creating new infrastructure and ecological features that will protect East Side communities against flooding from the river during storms.

Kavanagh and Stringer, along with the Lower East Side Ecology Center and Community Boards 6 and 3, initiated the project in 2010, engaging a planning and design team from WXY Architecture + Urban Design, 40 community-based organizations, and every local elected official representing the four-miles of shoreline that the Plan focuses on. The planning process, funded by a grant from the New York State Department of State, included numerous public meetings and incorporated extensive community input. Stringer and Kavanagh also announced an initial allocation of \$3.5 million in capital funds to help launch the project.

For more on the project visit: www.eastriverblueway.org

Kavanagh Helps Organize “Keep NY SAFE Day”



Assemblymember Kavanagh joined One Million Moms for Gun Control to help organize “Keep NY SAFE Day” on February 12th at the State Capitol Building.

The day was an opportunity for gun safety advocates to show support for the NY SAFE Act, enacted last month with the leadership of Governor Andrew Cuomo, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, and Senate Leaders Dean Skelos, Jeff Klein, and Andrea Stewart-Cousins, and the support of members of State Legislators Against Illegal Guns (which Kavanagh co-chairs) and other advocates. The NY SAFE Act makes New York State’s gun laws the strongest in the nation.

Keep NY SAFE Day included a legislative briefing, press conference, and advocacy meetings. The day coincided with “Gun Rights Lobby Day.” While the enactment of the NY SAFE Act represents a victory for safety from gun violence and common sense, the organizers of Keep NY SAFE Day felt that it’s important that the voice of the gun lobby not be the only one that the media hear now that New York is leading the way.

Standing Together Against Gun Violence In Our Community



(Photo: Sam Spokony for The Villager)

Arlene Delgado, the mother of slain LES teen Raphael Ward, spoke at the Jan. 31 unity rally, with Borough President Scott Stringer, left, and Assemblymember Brian Kavanagh.

Assemblymember Kavanagh joined in an emotional rally against gun violence with fellow elected officials and the mother of Raphael Ward — the 16-year-old Baruch Houses resident who was shot and killed on January 4th.

At the event, Kavanagh said, “We’ve been to many of these events in our community where we’ve had to ask: Why? Why does this have to happen again and again? And part of it is that people, when they look around and believe they see danger within their community, they think, ‘I have to arm myself too. I have to get a gun. I have to be careful. I have to be ready.’”

“But we have to make sure that people understand,” he continued, “that if you’re picking up a gun, you’re only making yourself more vulnerable, you’re making other people more vulnerable, and you’re only bringing on another tragedy. We just don’t need the guns in this community.”

The powerful event was organized with Borough President Scott Stringer, Councilmembers Rosie Mendez and Margaret Chin, State Senators Daniel Squadron and Brad Hoylman, and numerous other elected officials and community residents on the Lower East Side to call for an end to gun violence. It was also led by a broad coalition of youth-based organizations, settlement houses and elected officials, began at the corner of E. 6th St. and Avenue D, and concluded near the corner of Columbia and Rivington Sts., just steps away from where the unarmed Ward was murdered.

Progress Made in the Fight for Voter-Friendly Ballots

Assemblymember Kavanagh's Voter Friendly Ballot Act was reported out of the Assembly Election Law Committee on February 12th.

The bill cleans up and simplifies New York's election ballots, which are currently confusing and difficult to read, in order to improve readability and usability.

Kavanagh's Voter Friendly Ballot Act is supported by AARP, the Brennan Center for Justice, the League of Women Voters, Common Cause, Citizens Union, NYPIRG, Usability in Civic Life, the Catskill Center for Independence, and American Institute of Graphic Arts.

Kavanagh, who has chaired the Assembly Subcommittee with oversight authority over election operations is also working this year on early voting, modernizing voter registration, and procedures The Board of Elections uses to count and report results on Election Day.



Kavanagh Joins Rep. Maloney in Hailing Disaster Aid for Bellevue

Assemblymember Kavanagh joined Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney and other local elected officials at Bellevue Hospital Center to hail the passage of badly needed federal recovery aid in the wake of Hurricane Sandy.

Kavanagh, whose district includes communities along two miles of the East River affected by the storm, as well as the Con Ed power facility and three major hospitals that were flooded including Bellevue, said, "We've all been working hard to recover and rebuild after Sandy did so much damage, and of course fully reopening Bellevue Hospital is a critical part of that effort. These funds will go a long way toward making sure that's possible and I thank Carolyn Maloney for overcoming opposition and securing this badly needed aid."

Kavanagh Joins Leadership of American Irish Legislators Society of NYS

At a meeting this month of the American Irish Legislators Society of New York State, the Society's membership unanimously elected Assemblymember Kavanagh to serve as the Society's Treasurer.

The Society, a bipartisan organization comprised of members of the State Senate and Assembly of Irish descent representing communities throughout New York State, was founded in 1973. The group promotes awareness of Irish heritage, raises money for educational and cultural programs, and fosters strong ties between the United States and Ireland.

"My father and maternal grandparents immigrated to the United States from Ireland, and my family has always taken great pride in our Irish roots, and in the contributions the Irish have made to America," said Kavanagh. "Working with the Society is a terrific opportunity for me to celebrate that heritage."

Kavanagh was born in the United States, and has held both an Irish and an American passport for many years.

Calling for Full Public Review of NYCHA's Private Development Plans

Assemblymember Brian Kavanagh and fellow city, state, and federal elected officials, joined by chairs of several Manhattan Community Boards, wrote to Mayor Michael Bloomberg and New York City Housing Authority Chair John Rhea requesting a meeting to discuss public process and transparency regarding NYCHA's proposal to develop sites on the grounds of public housing complexes as private market-rate housing. The City has suggested that such development could provide substantial income that would be used to fill huge gaps in NYCHA's budget, thereby enabling the agency to better maintain residents' homes.

The letter, sent on February 20, 2013, includes a call for greater transparency in the potential development plans and a reconsideration of the proposed timeline. At a public hearing earlier this month, Kavanagh questioned NYCHA officials including Rhea about the plan; at that time NYCHA indicated that requests for proposals (RFPs) for developers to bid on the projects were expected to be released in March. Rhea committed to Kavanagh that a full list of properties that would be the subject of RFPs would be released well before the RFPs go out, and that NYCHA would hold a public forum in each community potentially affected by the development plan where local residents would be able to hear about the plan and offer meaningful input. The letter reiterates these and other points.

Free Tax Prep Help Is Available

- **Stein Senior Center**, 204415 East 23rd Street
Telephone: 646-395-8083
Site Hours: Thursday, 9:30am-2:30pm
Income Limits: No income restrictions. *Sponsored by AARP*

- **Baruch College**, Newman Library, 151 East 25th Street
Telephone: 646-312-4600
Site Hours: Tuesday-Thursday, 12pm-7pm; Friday, 12pm-6pm; Saturday, 12:30am-5:30pm
Income Limits: Income of 49,000 or less. *Sponsored by VITA.*

- **Nazareth Housing**, 206 East 4th Street
Telephone: (646) 587-4930
Income Limits: Income of 25,000 or less. *Sponsored by The Financial Clinic and The United Way.*

Sign-Up For Community Updates!

Contact Our Office

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

Phone: 212-979-9696

General Inquiries: kavanaghb@assembly.state.ny.us

Nicole Lester Arrindell, Chief of Staff

Jenna Adams, Legislative Counsel

Anna Pycior, Community and Legislative Liaison (CB 6 & 5)

Marcela Medina, Scheduler/Community Liaison (CB 3) - bpkscheduler@gmail.com