

Word of the day

Schadenfreude: (SHAHD-n-froi-duh) noun: Enjoyment obtained from the troubles of others. Etymology: German, from Schaden (damage) + Freude (joy). MERRIAM-WEBSTER.COM

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Voices

Today's DEBATE

Do you think Lindsay Lohan's rumored lesbian relationship with Samantha Ronson is for publicity?



Jim Sperring
49, supervisor
Graniteville
"It seems like publicity. That's all it takes these days to keep that kind of career alive."



Louis Bray
23, analyst
Morris County, N.J.
"My whole thing is, who cares?"



Sarah Baker
24, development
Williamsburg
"They are probably best friends just doing their best girlfriend thing for a publicity stunt."

Community development done right



David Dysegaard Kallick
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What's the typical scenario for sizeable building projects in New York? A developer hatches a plan — without community input — for luxury stores, or condos or offices. When the plan is unveiled, local residents object. "The buildings will wreck the neighborhood," they shout. Protests ensue, contested public hearings delay the process, and before long there are questions about whether the project can go forward at all. It's a no-win situation: Projects get stopped altogether, or they wind up being purely commercial. Either way, there's little or no public benefit.

That's why urban planners are closely watching new proposals for the Kingsbridge Armory, where community groups aim to play a very different role in development. At issue are plans to turn a massive, run-down building in the West Bronx into a mix of stores, restaurants, local nonprofits and a small-business incubator. "Shops at the Armory" promises to bring out the best in the castle-like fortress by drawing people and activity into its now-deserted drill hall and lecture rooms. What's unusual is the role local residents have been able to play, helping to modify the project early on so they're not faced with a take-it-or-leave-it decision later. In 2005, a local group — the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition — started working with the union that would represent employees in the stores to form the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance (KARA). Over time, KARA brought the community together around very realistic goals, not development-stopping demands.

The vision they've laid out is both attractive and attainable. KARA wants to see public schools as part of the use of half-million-plus square foot, city-owned site. They want to see space for recreation and for community groups. And they want to make sure that the jobs created are good, unionized jobs, open to local residents — the construction work necessary to build Shops at the Armory as well as the permanent jobs for retail and building service workers.

Including space for schools in the project is something the city can do. The rest should be negotiated with The Related Company, the developer. If Related executives are smart, they will work closely with KARA. Full-fledged local support for a project like this is rare, and would speed every stage of development. The public uses would root the project in the community. And, if all sides can get it right in the Bronx, this might be the breakthrough model that smooths future development throughout the city.

David Dysegaard Kallick is senior fellow of the Fiscal Policy Institute. Metro does not endorse the opinions of the author, or any opinions expressed on its pages. Opposing viewpoints are welcome. Please send 400-word submissions to letters@metro.us

Letters

Oil prices spark reader debate

MANHATTAN. To the reader who claims the price of oil is solely the result of supply and demand, and not the party in power, I beg to differ. Anyone remember a much-maligned president, named Jimmy Carter, back in 1977? We scoffed when he asked us to turn back our thermostats, mocked him when he put solar panels on the White House and cried "fool" when he called for us to be free of foreign oil by the year 2000. What a different country and world this could have been.

SCOTT WAGENDORF

VIA E-MAIL. I'm not a Harvard educated economist, but I know if I owned an oil refinery that makes \$13 refining a barrel of oil into a barrel of gasoline, I don't have much incentive to work while the cost of my raw materials are at an all time high. Why would I lay out all that money to make the same profit? I'd just sit tight and wait, while I still have reserves of gas to sell.

JAY TROY

HARLEM. Unless you're living under a rock, you know about the rising gas prices. I have the best solution in the world. If you continue to be obedient to God by tithing 10 percent of your earnings and follow the biblical principles to financial prosperity, you will not participate in a recession. Gas could rise to \$10 a gallon and it would not affect you at all. Whether you believe it or not, it's a fact.

OMAR L. BRANCH

Bush's imaginary magic wand

MASSAPEQUA. In yet another recent embarrassing press conference, President Bush claimed he's doing the best he can during the hellish fuel crisis (among other crises) saying "If I had a magic wand, I'd wave it, make it all go away." OK, all together now: If we had a magic wand, we'd wave it and make the Bush administration all go away. What a simpleton!

HERB STARK

"If you continue to be obedient to God ... you will not participate in a recession."

Branch

The health risks of looking younger

NEW HYDE PARK. In today's society, the quest to look younger than you did at 21 has many Americans paying thousands of dollars, risking their health and even toying with death. At some point you have to ask yourself, how far are you willing to go? In the past 10 years alone Botox has been responsible for 16 deaths.

TYRA BUSIGO

Blogarithms A look at the best of the blogs

Sex, hormones and sports

Ever want to get back at those arrogant jocks you sat next to in 10th grade bio? Badjocks.com, "Where COPS meets SportsCenter," seeks out the juiciest athlete scandals and blogs about them for the whole wide world to see. • H.S. Girl Body Paint Update: Well, it took a few days but we finally have gotten to the real reason why Manatee Principal Robert Gagnon pulled two girls, Jessyca Altenbach and Monica Cummings, out of the stands last Friday night and told them to cover up or leave. Why? The pair had only body paint and bikini tops on at the football game (just like a number of their male counterparts) and Gagnon now claims he booted them to protect their modesty. No, seriously, appar-



badjocks.com
ently young ladies walking around in a crowd with bikini tops on could somehow lose them and then they would be topless and then all hell would break loose. (Another article claims a rumor spread through the stands that the girls were actually topless except for the body paint.) According to Gagnon, allowing bikinis at the game would have set the school up for other problems, like having to decide when it's too small or how to protect bikini-wearing girls as they jostle through the throngs of people who attend games.

Tracking urban living

"Ask not what you can do for your 'hood, but what your 'hood can do for you." Find out everything your neighborhood has to offer within walking distance; or get the scoop on real estate trends from across the nation. • Neighborhood Walkability Score: So you're buying a home or looking for a place to rent? There is a way now to check the walk score of that particular neighborhood. We know walking gives you all the health benefits (and pocketbook), especially these days after seeing gas prices keep pushing \$4 per gallon. The score gives you proximity to the nearest coffee



metrodhomes.typepad.com
shop, grocery, library, transit or even restaurants plus — other places the neighborhood's nearest to. It's a "cool" tool to use. All you need to do is type in your address or where your next home is going to be. The walk score goes from the lowest, zero, to 100 being the best walkable neighborhood. If the score falls under 50, that means you truly live in a 'hood where everything is reachable by driving only.

How to contact us:

E-mail your letters to letters@metro.us. Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words. Metro reserves the right to edit all letters. Please include your name and contact information.

The Metro cartoon TOBY, Robot Satan by Corey Pandolph

