

STATE OF THE BUILDING REPORT FROM CLEMENTE SOTO VELEZ
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JAN HANVIK

September 10, 2008

Hello residents, tenants, and friends of CSV,

Welcome to this new feature of CSV management and the CSV website. You may have seen the [recent announcement](#) that included my brief bio and know that with Pan American Musical Art Research Inc. I was a resident performing arts company at CSV in the 1990s until 2002, and Interim Executive Director in 2001-02. And I have produced Pan American music and dance in the theaters. So I know the building from rental and management sides.

What I'm very happy to hear from so many people is "I love this building." We can love it more if it loves us back and doesn't damage our property and make us too hot or too cold or asthmatic or frustrated. So I thought to start a bi-weekly email and website posting on the state of the building, because so much is happening. I hope to quell rumors and communicate facts and solicit feedback from you.

1. Lower Manhattan Development Corporation: They were about to pull our Community Advancement award to create a Master Plan (who fails to plan, plans to fail) because there was no Executive Director. Rather than let that happen, I met with them July 1 before my official start date. We are getting this grant; final approval happened at the LMDC board meeting September 4. Now we create a Request for Proposals to send out to bid to find the company that will help us collect information to better understand the building and to plan for our future. We will survey:

- a) physical spaces, dimensions, conditions, facilities, amenities, common and private
- b) residents as to how or whether these conditions help or hinder their art production and community involvement
- c) community groups to find out whether they are aware of CSV and if or how CSV residents can better meet community needs. Previous rejected applications focused on possible construction of a new building in the parking lot, and on community groups. This application, with the above 3 focal points – putting building residents and their conditions first – has been approved.

1. I have had meetings with NYC Department of Design and Construction's Noah Kaufman, LandAir's Leith Ter Meulen, Len Tempest, and Jon Stocker; Department of Cultural Affairs' Susan Chin and Andy Burmeister; and Foxy Management's David Baez, Shelly Fox, and Mayra Martinez. DCA provides capital funds from the City of New York. This includes funding the planned work to repair the exterior of the building - repointing masonry, replacing all windows, preventing water from entering the building, etc. DDC staff manages the design

and construction process. LandAir pulls all the elements together and acts as the Owner's representative for capital construction. Foxy provides on-site property AND financial management.

Meanwhile, it seems most interior water damage is due to a combination of the roof leaking, the gutters backing up, parapet masonry pulling away from the walls, and mortar between bricks wearing away. (ALL TENANTS, AND THEIR GUESTS, ARE REMINDED THAT ACCESS TO THE ROOF IS PROHIBITED AT ALL TIMES, TO PREVENT FURTHER DAMAGE. PLEASE RESPECT THIS HOUSE RULE.) Major exterior repairs are scheduled to start February or March 2009. (You will not be able to open windows in the summer of 2009 due to dust, noise, scaffolding, etc. Be prepared.) Immediate short-term efforts to prevent further water damage to studios includes a thorough clearing of roof gutters and drains. These strategies seem to have worked very well in our recent storms. In addition, we are seeking funding that would pay for necessary improvements to our plumbing and toilets on all floors.

You may hear or see or smell work in the basement and rear yard in the weeks ahead as DCA-funded work to reinforce steel beams at the vaults on the east side (the brick-sided basement extensions under the sidewalks.) This work is required and is another step we are taking to address the effects of deferred maintenance. We are not the only city-owned tenanted building in which residents and tenants work in difficult conditions. But we are a city-owned building that has created a functioning board and is on the way to several necessary, required and overdue projects to restore this community resource.

1. Rent relief for sub-standard conditions: This question comes up about rent abatements. Residents are paying \$1 a square foot, and less. I checked with a broker and the cheapest NYC – not just Manhattan – rent is \$15 a square foot, and that is not even available. Residents are not paying for electricity or water. And CSV is covering maintenance and security. I'm told by Foxy we don't have enough money to pay Con Ed through the winter – an ongoing problem – so we are squirreling away whatever we can to keep the heat on. (\$80,000 in boiler repairs last year should get us through one more winter before the boiler is replaced in 2009.) But any rental income withheld hurts us all. Please bear with us! In fact, our insurance broker recommends we all remember we are a "co-op" model, not a rental model. Anything we contribute to the building overall, contributes to each other.
2. Insurance: I'm told all residents were told to get their own insurance. The reason is that the massive amount of various kinds of insurance for such a massive building – 98,000 square feet now that the basement has been cleaned of debris and regulated wastes - all we could afford is a policy with a \$2500 deductible PER CLAIM. If we honored 10 claims, that would be \$25,000, money which would then not be available for light bulbs, maintenance staff, heating oil, electricity, repairs, security, etc. We can give you our insurance broker's information to write a policy for your studio, or you can search for comparative rates online.

There is more, and I hope future reports will be shorter. But I wanted you to know that management knows, cares about, respects, and is doing as much as we can to remediate conditions both internally and externally. Thank you for your patience and for your many contributions to the richness of the cultural life of Loisaida, New York City, and the world.

As always, we welcome your suggestions and reports about your needs, to 212 260 4080 x 11 (Facilities Manager Jasmine Rosario) or to me at x 12, or via the Suggestion Box outside Room 312, or via jhanvik@csvcenter.net or jrosario@csvcenter.net.

Sincerely,

Jan Hanvik, Executive Director