

## **Appendix C**

### **Brooklyn Heights Courier Article**

08/26/2005

## Blind Eye to Atlantic Yards Homeless?

By Stephen Witt

**Everybody has a price. Even Harold James, one of the four or five homeless men living in a narrow space between graffiti-laden steel doors and a chain-link fence on Pacific Street in the footprint of the proposed Atlantic Yards project. And while some condo and business owners in the area have already sold out to or are negotiating with Forest City Ratner Companies for upwards of a million dollars for their properties, James has his own price. "All I want is a job and a place to live," said James, who has lived in the location for five months. Brooklyn United for Innovative Local Development (BUILD) President James Caldwell said the homeless were the first thing he noticed while moving the organization's current office to 640 Pacific Street from 609 Vanderbilt Avenue. "What this [the homeless] says to me is people in our community need help and after talking to them, I found some want to actually get back to work and we plan on helping them," said Caldwell.**

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The narrow space between a steel doors and the chain link fence on Pacific Street where several homeless people live. Photo By Tammy Meadows

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Caldwell noted the contrast on the block, where on the south side of Pacific Street there are several large condominium developments, but on the MTA-owned north side of the street there are high weeds and trash strewn about.

Among the residents who live across the street from the homeless enclave is Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn Spokesperson Daniel Goldstein.

"How can you live right across the street from that and don't try to address it with all the meetings they [DDDB] have had," said Caldwell. "Even the local politicians ignored it. They couldn't have helped but seen it."

Goldstein was out of town, but fellow DDDB spokesperson Candice Carpenter said she had been going to Goldstein's house for over a year and noticed the homeless people there only recently.

"It's gotten much worse in last two weeks," said Carpenter, suggesting they may have been planted there to bolster Forest City Ratner Companies' claim that it is a blighted area.

City Council member Letitia James did not return phone calls at press time.

Harold James said he has been living on the street in the narrow passageway for about five months.

He said he grew up in Brooklyn and admitted to being a drug addict, but wants to clean up his act.

Harold James said he recently felt so depressed about his life he called police and told them he planned to kill himself in the MTA rail yards.

The police summoned an ambulance which took him to Woodhull Medical Center, and after waiting several hours to see a doctor, he said he was released and forced to walk back to his homeless enclave on Pacific Street from Bushwick.

Harold James said the incident upset him very much, but he is still determined to make something of himself.

James Booker, 53, who also lives behind the steel doors, said he lives on the street by choice.

Both men said they would rather live on the street than a shelter where there's more danger to becoming victimized by crime.

Caldwell, who is also President of the 77th Police Precinct Community Council said BUILD will try to help these people on Pacific Street.

"I already spoke to the precinct," he said. "First, we know they don't want to go in the system, but we will contact an oasis," he said.

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