

By considering a foray into this process, the City Council is making an error. Suggesting that a certain group (in this case seniors over the age of 62) be entitled to certain privileges and exceptions not accorded to the cooperative group as whole, the Council is discriminating, no matter how well-intended the thought may be at the moment, by labeling a certain sub-group as “different” from the rest. Further, in doing so the Council is attempting to violate one of the most important aspects of cooperative living: home rule (the very principle that the Council embraces in seeking the repeal of the Urstadt Laws!). Each of our many capable and independent Boards of Directors is duly constituted to represent and care for its particular constituency. We can and must assume that each does its job as the shareholders desire – equally caring for all members of the cooperative; if not, they will be removed from office and a new set of directors will be installed to properly decide what is fair and appropriate for the building.

The City Council should recognize the decades-old effectiveness of our cooperative system of governance and leave well enough alone! The **Association of Riverdale Cooperatives and Condominiums** strongly opposes Int. No. 751 not because it would permit certain individuals to own pets, but because in doing so, the Council will arbitrarily label and discriminate among groups of individuals and remove a certain fundamental right of each cooperative to determine its own style of living.

~Stephen J. Budihas, President

## ARC TAKES A STAND ON CURRENT STATE AND CITY PROPOSALS

We have conveyed our position on two important issues to our elected officials via the following message:

March 1, 2009

In the face of a move by the State Legislature to control rent increases and impose other restrictions on landlords and owners throughout the state, City Council Speaker Quinn stated, “by repealing the Urstadt Laws (that placed rent stabilization in the hands of the state), we can restore home rule and put authority back where it belongs – in the hands of the local legislature.” The **Association of Riverdale Cooperatives and Condominiums (ARC)** joins Ms. Quinn in supporting the concept of “home rule” and the repeal of the 1971 Urstadt Laws.

But there is irony and a strong inconsistency to the application of Ms. Quinn’s philosophy. By considering an amendment to the Administrative Code of the City of New York that would permit pets in multiple dwellings (Int. No. 751), the City Council is unwisely considering a move to intervene in the lifestyle of cooperative buildings by forcing buildings to allow the ownership of household pets by certain individuals (in this case by senior citizens).

For more than a century and a half it has been established and widely accepted that a cooperative style of living represents an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common needs through a jointly owned and democratically controlled venture. Cooperative living in New York City is based on, among others, the values of self-responsibility, equality and equity. Boards of Directors are democratically elected by members of every cooperative to not only conduct the business implicit in cooperative living, but importantly to embody those particular values and the principles of social responsibility and caring for others. Each of the more than 100 cooperative buildings in Riverdale that ARC represents (as well as the many hundreds throughout the City) has established a set of House Rules that is agreed upon and accepted by each respective group of cooperative shareholders – as provided by law. That is how cooperative living was designed, how it has been and how it should remain.