



Mt. Vernon United Tenants, Inc.

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**NEXT *MVUT* GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
TUESDAY – SEPT. 6, 2016 - 7:00 PM
MVUT OFFICE - 2 GRAMATAN AVE. - SUITE 304**

MVUT Annual Meeting

Next month *MVUT* will hold its “Annual Meeting” where we’ll review the past year’s activities, lay out plans for the upcoming year, and elect three (3) members to our Board of Directors. The Annual Meeting will be held in the *MVUT* office on Tuesday October 4, 2016. We hope to see you there.

Disabled Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) Program

As we’ve informed you, the Mount Vernon City Council adopted the *DRIE* at its August 10, 2016 meeting. However, the drafting of the ordinance was poorly done as the Council’s legislative assistant, Nkechi Nwachukwu, was on vacation that week. Accordingly, the City Council will likely adopt an improved bill at its Sept. 14, 2016 meeting. Stay tuned!

Ossining ETPA Campaign

The Public Hearing on *ETPA* held on July 20, 2016 will continue on Wednesday September 7. The real estate community is pulling out all the stops to beat the adoption of the *ETPA*. They’re spending huge amounts of money to get the word out that adopting *ETPA* will hurt Ossining taxpayers and the local economy. Of course, none of the landlords’ arguments are true, but why would that matter for them. Don’t they always cry poverty to the *Westchester Rent Guidelines Board* (WRGB) – all the way to the bank. No, the landlords don’t want to see any constraints on their naked greed, or to see tenants have real, enforceable state rights.

We’re asking tenants and supporters of fair and affordable housing to come to Ossining on Wednesday September 7. We’re enclosing a flyer from *Community Voices Heard* (CVH) for the hearing. If you’d like to go, call CVH or *MVUT*.

Statewide “Source of income” Non-Discrimination Campaign

As you know, *MVUT* initiated and led the nearly ten (10) year campaign to get the *Westchester County Board of Legislators* (W-BOL) to pass a county-wide “Source of Income” Non-Discrimination ordinance in renting. There are a number of other jurisdictions throughout New York State that have also adopted some form of

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“Source of Income” protections, e.g. New York City, Nassau and Suffolk Counties on Long Island, and a few municipalities upstate. It’s long been recognized that passage of a state law would be a big step in providing fairness in renting everywhere in New York. *ERASE Racism*, a non-profit organization based in Long Island has begun a statewide Coalition to do just that. *MVUT* has proudly signed on to this Coalition and we’re busy trying to identify and bring on new Coalition members from Westchester and from different state and regional coalitions that we already work with. We’re enclosing a copy of an *Overview* of the Coalition. If you’d like to work on this issue, please call the office.

Westchester Disabled on the Move (W-DOM) Program

Speaking of coalition work, one (1) agency we’ve long worked with on areas of mutual concern is *W-DOM*. They’ve been a reliable partner and resource for us and our members for years. Currently, we’re involved with *W-DOM* on two (2) separate and important campaigns:

- 1)
Creating a mayoral *Disabled Advisory Board* in Mount Vernon.

- 2)
Getting the Yonkers City Council and Mayor to adopt a 10% disabled subset of their 10% affordable housing allocation on new developments.

Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson

Long time *MVUT* friend and supporter, Ruth Hassell-Thompson has left her State Senate seat to become a Special Advisor for *Policy and Community Affairs* for Governor Cuomo! While we’ll miss Senator Hassell-Thompson’s legislative advocacy, we’re really excited to have her in a key policy-making position in the administration. She has been a long-time affordable housing advocate and this promotion promises to offer things for Mount Vernon as a whole and *MVUT*’s goals and objectives in particular. We’ve already met with her regarding some specific issues related to the statewide *Neighborhood Preservation Program* (NPP) (our largest funding source), and we know that we’ll be able to work with her going forward as issues arise. Congratulations Ruth on your appointment!

* We’re enclosing a copy of an August 25 *New York Times* piece of five (5) separate “rent-burdened” tenants. While these are all New York City tenants, their stories are all-too reminiscent of the kind of stories we hear every day in trying to fight evictions and keep tenants in their homes. We need more articles like this to sensitize people to the stress, pain and fear so many tenants experience on a nearly daily basis.

SUPPORT TENANTS’ RIGHTS !

SUPPORT AFFORDABLE HOUSING !!

SUPPORT *MVUT* !!!