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# THE CRAIN'S INSIDER

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A daily newsletter on government action of importance to business

Tuesday, November 27, 2007

## TODAY'S NEWS

### BROOKLYN PARK

Less than a week after activists complained to city and state officials about the lack of a president for the Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corp., one has been named. Yesterday, the Empire State Development Corp. hired Regina Myer, who will start Dec. 10. She was the senior vice president for planning and design at the Hudson Yards Development Corp. Myer fills a job vacated in March by the controversial Wendy Leventer. However, Democratic District Leader Jo Anne Simon says problems remain with progress at the park. In a letter mailed to ESDC on Nov. 20, Simon called for public discussions about the park plan, timetable for construction, limits to commercial development and park governance.

### 'UNSUSTAINABLE' PLAN

Mayor Mike Bloomberg's congestion pricing plan gets a harsh dose of reality from a transportation technology company offering to build the system. Skymeter, a Toronto firm that uses GPS to track and charge vehicles, says the E-ZPass-based system proposed by the mayor would be too complex and "prohibitively expensive" to modify, and would not ease traffic for long. Chief Executive Bern Grush concludes that the proposal—which grew from the mayor's sustainability initiative—is "unsustainable." One transportation consultant notes that among the respondents to the city's request, only Skymeter would not profit from a bloated infrastruc-

### Council balks at portrayal as water-hike villain

The Bloomberg administration is suggesting that an increase in water rates could be averted if the City Council would allow it to sell liens on properties with delinquent water fees. But Councilman Jim Gennaro, D-Queens, decries the pressure tactic and blames the Bloomberg administration for using water and sewer fees to pay for other city services.

"I wish they'd spend their energy on talking to the City Council rather than trotting out the bogeyman of this phony increase," Gennaro says.

The council is being pressured to ap-

prove a lien sale bill before Dec. 21, when the Water Board could vote on a rate hike of up to 18%. Gennaro says the bill must include safeguards because, despite some improvement in billing accuracy, "grandmothers with \$400,000 water bills" are still being told, "We'll put you on a payment plan."

Gennaro, chair of the Environmental Committee, says administration officials dislike him because he is crusading to get the city to amend a pact that compels the Water Board to pay more money to the city's general fund each year.

ture. In its response, IBM also suggested ways to streamline the system.

### MICROLENDING REPORT

The Bloomberg administration is 11 months into a study looking at how much microlending is going on in the city and how well it works, and analyzing small businesses' overall access to capital. The Economic Development Corp., the Department of Small Business Services and the mayor's Center for Economic Opportunity are working with consultants headed by New School Professor Lisa Servon. An insider says the study will conclude that microlending helps businesses get started and grow, and that it should be expanded. A completion date has not been announced.

### AT A GLANCE

**EVENT:** City Councilman David Weprin will hold a fundraiser from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Wednesday at The Kitchen, 233 Broadway. Tickets are \$500. The Esler Group is organizing the function.

**FUNDRAISER:** Evan Thies will launch his 2009 City Council campaign at 6:30 p.m. Dec. 11 at Union Hall, 702 Union St., Brooklyn. E-mail info@evanthies.com.

**MOVING ON:** Tara Martin has left her position as district director for Rep. Yvette Clarke. Clarke's office would not say whether Martin will be replaced.

**Comments?** [Insider@crain.com](mailto:Insider@crain.com)



## November is National Home Care Month

November's over soon, but their mission never ends.

The Home Care Association of New York State, the New York Association of Homes & Services for the Aging and the Healthcare Association of New York State join together in celebrating National Home Care Month and honoring our mission-driven home health care providers and dedicated home health care workers who deliver high-quality services to hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers.

