

## EDITORIAL

Urgent action needed  
on Chelsea crossing

Another day, another pedestrian mowed down by a vehicle on Manhattan's busy streets.

Unfortunately, that was the fate of 82-year-old Amelia Chimienti last week as she crossed what has arguably become one of the most dangerous intersections in Chelsea: 16th St. on the east side of Ninth Ave., across from Chelsea Market. The driver was making deliveries in a semi-truck, carrying cinderblocks and towing a cement-mixer on a large flat-bed. According to an eye-witness, he was in a hurry to make the yellow light when, moving north on Ninth Ave., he made a quick right turn and struck Chimienti, who lived a few streets away, leaving little of her corporeal structure intact.

Another eye-witness, who saw Chimienti get run over by the truck's back tires, thought the driver may not have even known he hit her, since he proceeded slowly down 16th St. and stopped mid-block to make a delivery before the eye-witness tipped police to his identity. Given the speed at which the driver was purportedly moving and the height of his cab, the eye-witness' claim seems plausible, if downright disturbing.

According to officers at the 10th Precinct, pedestrians on cross-walks have the right-of-way on New York City's streets on green or yellow lights, and when no traffic light is present. If we are to believe the eye-witness account, given the yellow light, Chimienti was squarely within her right to cross when she was killed.

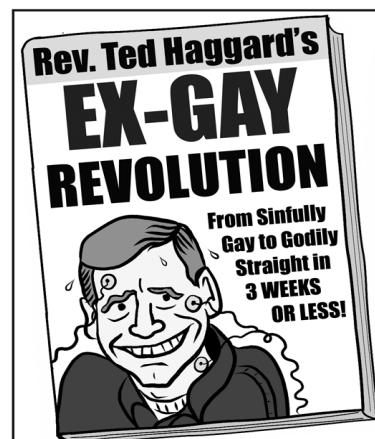
The intersection at Ninth Ave. and 16th St. (along with several nearby) has long been considered a problem by residents and community activists alike, prompting a slew of city agencies and groups to do traffic and pedestrian-safety studies of the area. These include the Departments of Transportation and City Planning, C.B. 4's Transportation Committee, the Council of Chelsea Block Associations, and the Greater Gansevoort Urban Improvement Project in concert with the Regional Plan Association.

This summer, Transportation informed C.B. 4 that it was committed to making Ninth Ave. one-way southbound through this dangerous corridor, which now features two northbound lanes between 14th and 16th Sts. — left over from when the Port Authority building loading docks were in use — and four oncoming southbound lanes north of 16th St., causing confusion for even the most perceptive pedestrians. Other issues to be examined in front of Chelsea market include crossing distances and signal timing.

Transportation, City Planning and G.G.U.I.P. are in the process of collecting and analyzing data not only for this corridor but for all of the Meatpacking District, and sections of West Chelsea where residential development is booming. Recommendations are due by the end of the summer. While we applaud their efforts, the pace of the proceedings is frustrating, considering that C.B. 4 first passed a full-board resolution asking for Ninth Ave. to become one-way southbound back in January 2005.

With the district now safely considered a destination, auto and pedestrian traffic at an all-time high, and senseless deaths like Chimienti's not likely to decrease, now is the time for action on this most urgent pedestrian-safety matter.

## MIKHAELA REID



## BEFORE EX-GAY



Next Week on the Self-Help Corner:  
Mitt Romney's From Gay-Friendly to  
Gay-Bashing in Six Years or Less!

## AFTER EX-GAY



## WIVES LOVE EX-GAY TOO:

My hubby recoils with  
SO much less disgust  
now when we make  
babies for the Lord!



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## C LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Change is inevitable

To The Editor:

It is perfectly clear that the greatest need of Manhattan residents is the development of more affordable housing. To supply that housing, it is also obvious that more and taller structures must be built.

Yet every week, Chelsea Now airs the whines and moans of readers that this or that proposed structure will violate the integrity of a block, a neighborhood or a district.

In the development of Manhattan there were doubtless cries that the destruction of the wall built to keep the English out was lamentable because it was an integral part of Manhattan's past. Likewise, there were surely complaints that the filling of the Collect Pond would deprive ducks and community wildlife of a familiar site. Finally, there were almost certainly howls when the canal, now Canal St., was paved over and obliterated.

The point is this: Change is as inevitable in Manhattan as crowds, and to fight it by trying to limit the size of buildings is conservatism of a misdirected sort. The "integrity" of E. Ninth St. or of Ninth Ave. in Chelsea is an imaginary concept akin to the belief that landlords favor rent control.

Stewart Benedict

## The audacity of Trump

To The Editor:

He is bullying his way into the west edge of Soho. The people of Soho told him outright that they don't want his 42-story building, but that doesn't matter to Trump, bully that he is. I read an article where one of his people said this project will change the landscape of Soho. Well, what if the people of Soho don't want their landscape changed? Who is he to force his will on the people of Soho — all in an effort to satisfy his insatiable ego? Here a Trump, there a Trump, everywhere a Trump! What's next, Donald — changing the name of New York City to Trump City?

Lorraine Bourie

## Pedestrian accident unnecessary

To The Editor:

Re "Woman killed by truck at dangerous Chelsea Intersection" (news article, Feb. 9):

Once again, a motorist kills a human being without penalty. An elderly woman crushed under the wheels of a truck that was hurrying to make a turn as the light turned yellow. Not only did the driver fail to use caution at a yellow light, he also failed to yield to a pedestrian.

Two moving violations, with no charges of vehicular manslaughter.

When will pedestrians have the right to safely negotiate New York City's crosswalks?

When will the sanctity of human life be honored?

Jonathan Keller

The best of us in the worst of  
times

This is about the Feb. 7 Community Board 4 public session and vote on the Brodsky Organization and G.T.S.'s applications for zoning variances. It's also about the 18 months of time and energy wasted by so many people in fighting it, and the community members who shined.

Ed Kirkland continues to be a leading hero of Chelsea and Community Board 4. Erudite, highly intelligent, articulate, patient and affable, he is inexpressibly valuable to his neighbors in Chelsea. J.D. Noland showed, as he chaired the public session last week, that his considerable wit is matched only by his wisdom — and enhanced by not a little patience. Lee Compton seemed to indicate, in his final remarks prior to the vote, that if he seemed at any time to be favoring the G.T.S. spokespeople, it may have been because he was faced with a self-appointed leader of the G.T.S. opposition who was also a C.B. 4 member who narrowly and inaccurately presented the controversy as a single-issue struggle and who never recused himself from debate or voting.

Burt Lazarin spoke well in saying that he was not going to vote for a zoning variance in the face of a landmarked district and increased pressures to price out longtime Chelsea residents, simply because G.T.S. people claimed to be nice to gay people — and that Matt Foreman's tirade published in Chelsea Now (Oct. 13, 2006) had made him "cringe" and wonder who had written it for Foreman. Millie Glaberman asked two good questions.

Ann Sewell, I suppose, based on previous acquaintance with her, showed the courage of her convictions, and I always respect people for that. However, I also respect people for using the degree of intelligence they have, and I think that she certainly has enough to not overlook the fact that G.T.S. obviously can get out of its ill-advised contract with the Brodsky Organization if and when the project fails to get city approvals. The G.T.S. spokespeople themselves have released statements that Brodsky will pay for replacing Sherrill Hall, even if the luxury-condo tower cannot be built.

Moving on to nonmembers of C.B. 4: Ms. Dorothea McElduff, a fifth-generation Chelsea resident, as always was gracious, intelligent, practical — and admirably terse in her remarks. Many other people spoke well at the Jan. 22 and Feb. 7 meetings, including a representative of Congregation Emunath Israel of 25rd St. and a young man named Rubinstein, I think, who pointed out that Matt Foreman was elected by no one and certainly did not represent him as a gay man. Claudia Dreyfuss used an old-fashioned but apt phrase at the Jan. 22 meeting, when she said that G.T.S. people were trying to "guilt-trip" opponents by claiming that they were better than any other mainstream religious people in being less racist, less sexist and less homophobic.

As a 30-year resident of Chelsea, I have grown to appreciate the generous work of many of my fellow residents who have spent countless hours as Community Board volunteers.

Cathy Casey

E-mail your letter to the editor not longer than 350 words in length, to [news@chelseanow.com](mailto:news@chelseanow.com) or fax to 212-229-2790 or mail to Chelsea Now, Letters to the Editor, 145 Sixth Ave., ground floor, NY, NY 10013. Please include phone number for confirmation purposes.