

Up Close: DeAnna D. Rieber



KATY RIEBER

Tell us about getting your block association started

Lots of talking, electronically through emails, through our newsletters and word of mouth. It's all about letting people know what is going on and that we are here for them. The association belongs to the people and everything we do has to have a direct impact on the lives of our residents. That is our guiding principal for existing. I think people see the activities that we support and facilitate in the community, giving a sense of confidence that our advocacy is substantial and backed by a strong sense of purpose and resolve to take action that will support our constituents.

What are your top 3 priorities for your street?

Safety for the elderly and the disabled (curb extensions), recycling bins and beautification of tree beds.

What does West 75th Street look like in five years, if you had your way?

Curb extensions with planters, bike racks and possibly benches for pedestrians are located along most of our intersections. Streetlight-hanging planters like Madison Avenue has are placed on our streetlights located outside larger apartment buildings. Buildings and local merchants adopt the planter and take care of the upkeep with the help of the association. Recycling bins are located at Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue. Decorative tree lighting like that at Tavern on the Green is installed near Pappardella Restaurant at Columbus and 75th Street. Every tree on the block, from Riverside Drive to Central Park West, has a proper, permanent wrought iron tree guard.

Is there common ground to be had with all your neighbors on issues like traffic and street safety?

I'm a car owner but both my husband and I believe that, in the words of Mr. Spock in StarTrek, "The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the one." We live in a communal city where pedestrians outnumber car owners. It is what makes our city so desirable.

How has working with the local community board been going?

Since I'm quoting people here, how about the words from that famous Carpenters song: "We've only just begun." □

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SINCE THE UWS STREETS Renaissance Campaign released its *Blueprint for Livable Streets*, the residents of West 75th Street have been busy meeting, planning and figuring out how to apply the plan to their corner of the UWS. Led by block association president DeAnna D. Rieber, a member of the UWS Streets Renaissance Campaign and active participant in its Leadership Group, the West 75th Street Block Association is racing forward to make their street a safer, healthier and greener place to live.

How did you get involved with the Upper West Side Streets Renaissance Campaign?

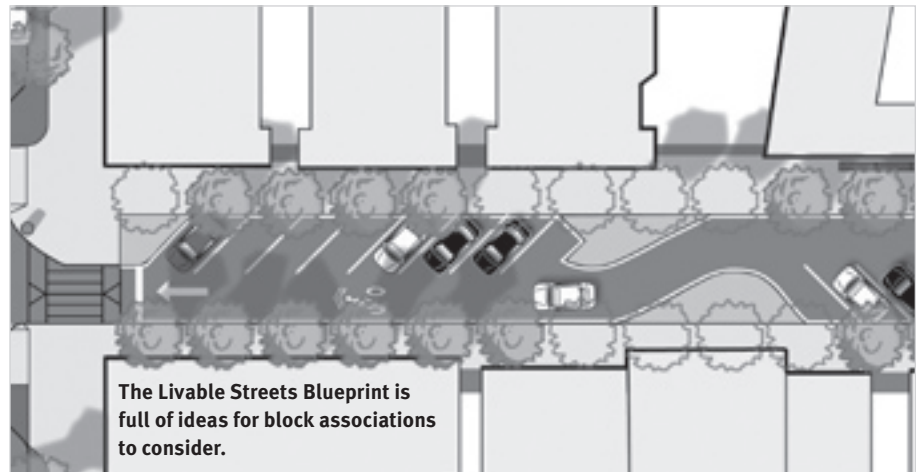
Our first involvement was when we applied for a mini grant last year for our annual Block Party.

What have you most liked about working with the Campaign?

It's smart, it's innovative, it's proactive and it is the right thing to do for our residents and visitors.

Have you had any big livable streets wins?

Every spring we engage in tree bed planting along the block. This year we have added a Block Beautification Day to our yearly schedule. Residents really appreciate our proactive approach and it motivates them to care for the work we do all summer!



The Livable Streets Blueprint is full of ideas for block associations to consider.