

NEW YORK POST

WILLIAMSBURG DEVELOPER 'VOTED' CITY'S WORST LANDLORD

By TOM TOPOUSIS



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January 24, 2007 -- About 200 tenants and housing activists held a mock convention yesterday to tag a Manhattan-based developer as the city's "most abusive landlord" for his alleged treatment of residents in a Williamsburg apartment building. Developer Adam Mermelstein, of TreeTop Development, was selected by a voice vote after impassioned nominating speeches from tenants of his building at 188 S. Third Street in Williamsburg.

The "convention" at a Greenwich Village church was attended by tenants from a dozen neighborhood associations, each of which nominated a landlord they accused of orchestrating campaigns of harassment to empty rent-stabilized apartments so that the units could be renovated and sold for large profits.

Jacqueline Hernandez, a tenant at Mermelstein's building, said she has been harassed by the owner's representatives, who she claims have been trying to chase the remaining 20 tenants out of the 41-unit building.

"They're doing heavy demolition in the building, with families with children and old people still living there," she said, claiming that there have been repeated cutoffs of heat, hot water and electricity.

Mermelstein, who is developing upscale housing in other parts of Williamsburg as well as Hoboken, N.J., denied the charges.

"One-hundred percent false in every direction These are literally lies," he said, adding that since he bought the property four months ago, he has had four workers in the building making repairs.

tom.topousis@nypost.com

Home

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