



WORKING FOR QUALITY
IN URBAN LIFE

CIVITAS presents

Taming the Newsrack Monster

Short and Long Term Solutions

Community Board 8 – Transportation Committee
April 6, 2011

CIVITAS



About CIVITAS

Since 1981, CIVITAS has worked for the improvement of neighborhood life on the Upper East Side and in East Harlem through planning studies, zoning reform, and promotion of responsible development and a sustainable urban environment.

www.civitasnyc.org

Objectives

- Educate community about newsrack violations and what can be done
- Report newsrack violations to 311
- Write letters to Council Member James Vacca and elected officials to demand oversight hearing
- Resolution from Community Boards showing support for improved legislation



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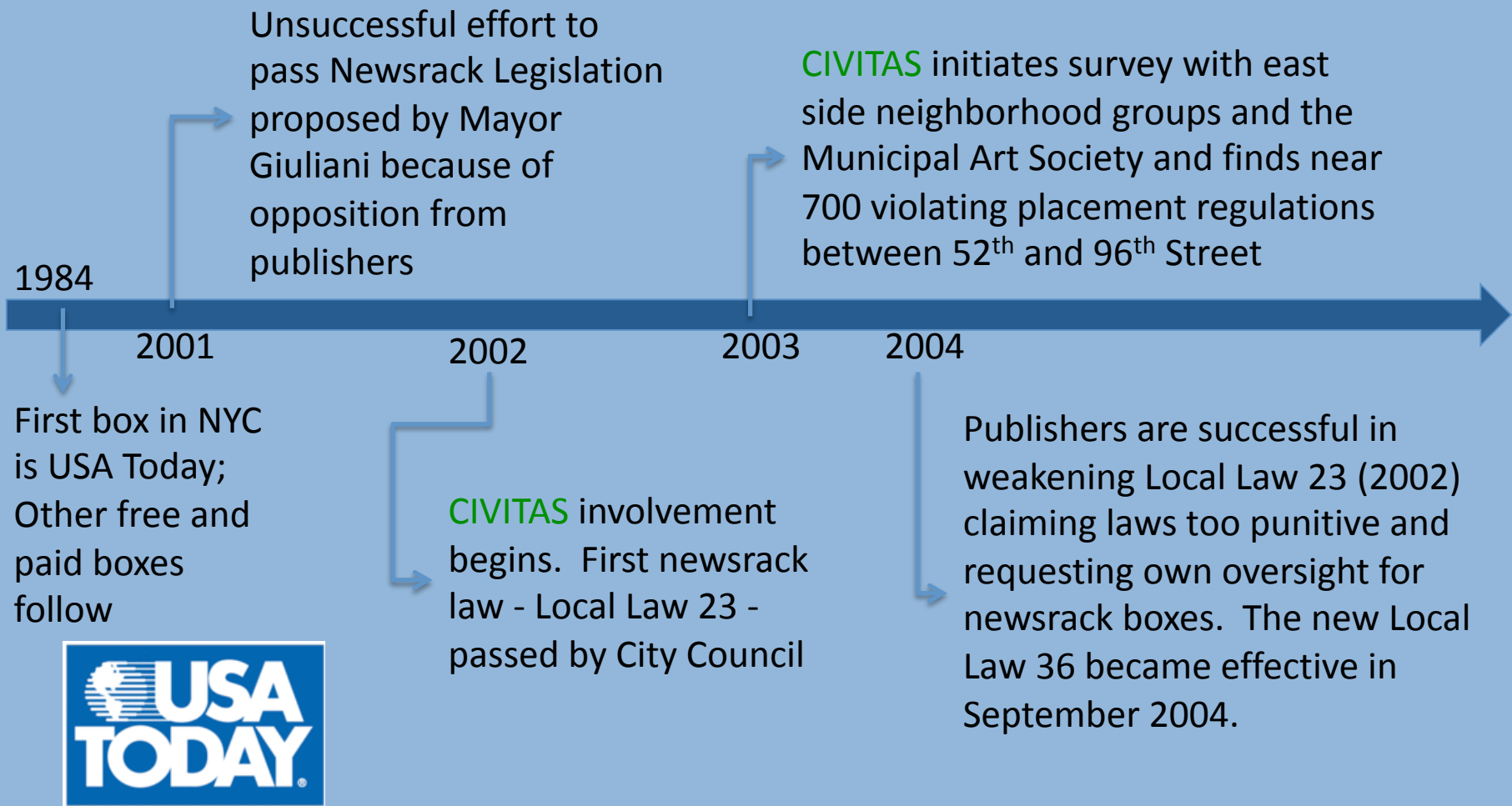
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Timeline: Early Years



Timeline: Recent Years

CIVITAS proposed amendments to 2004 newsrack law, which was proven unenforceable by DOT

2007

Municipal Arts Society
“Nasty Newsrack”
Contest exposes the deterioration and proliferation of boxes since 2004



2008

CIVITAS requests an oversight hearing from John Liu, then chair of Transportation Committee of City Council. No action taken.

Chopstick is the latest plastic newsrack box

2010

Council Member Daniel Garodnick requests oversight hearing from James Vacca, new chair of Transportation Committee of City Council

Local Laws, NYC

2002 Local Law 23	2004 Local Law 36
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Required owners to maintain newsracks free of dirt, graffiti or stickers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Amendment to local law 23Removed text requiring newsrack owners to regularly maintain newsrack conditions- only requiring a maintenance certification 3 times a yearIncreased reliance on DOT to monitor violations

Principle Violations

- Within 15 feet of any fire hydrant
- Within 5 feet of a corner
- Within any bus stop
- Within 15 feet of the entrance or exit of a subway station, including the side
- On any cellar door, grating, utility maintenance cover or other similar locations
- Containing garbage
- Broken door

Placement Violation Example:
within **15 feet** of any **fire hydrant**



Placement Violation Example:
within **15 feet** of the **entrance or exit** of a
subway station, and not against the side



Placement Violation Example: in a **bus stop**



Placement Violation Example:
on any cellar door, **grating**, utility maintenance cover or other
similar locations



Maintenance Violation Example: containing **garbage**



Maintenance Violation Example: **broken door**



Other Cities

Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, LA, Miami and San Francisco have passed laws controlling placement and maintenance of newsrack boxes



Chicago multibox

Success in New York

Business Improvement Districts around NYC have successfully incorporated cleaner multiboxes into their neighborhood streetscape



Multibox on Madison Avenue (left) and 34th Street in front of Macys (right)

Next Steps...

- RECOGNIZE and REPORT to 311
- Send a letter or email to elected officials to support an oversight hearing
- Sign the petition
- Spread the word! Build awareness and action.

Next Steps...

Recognize and Report to 311 - online

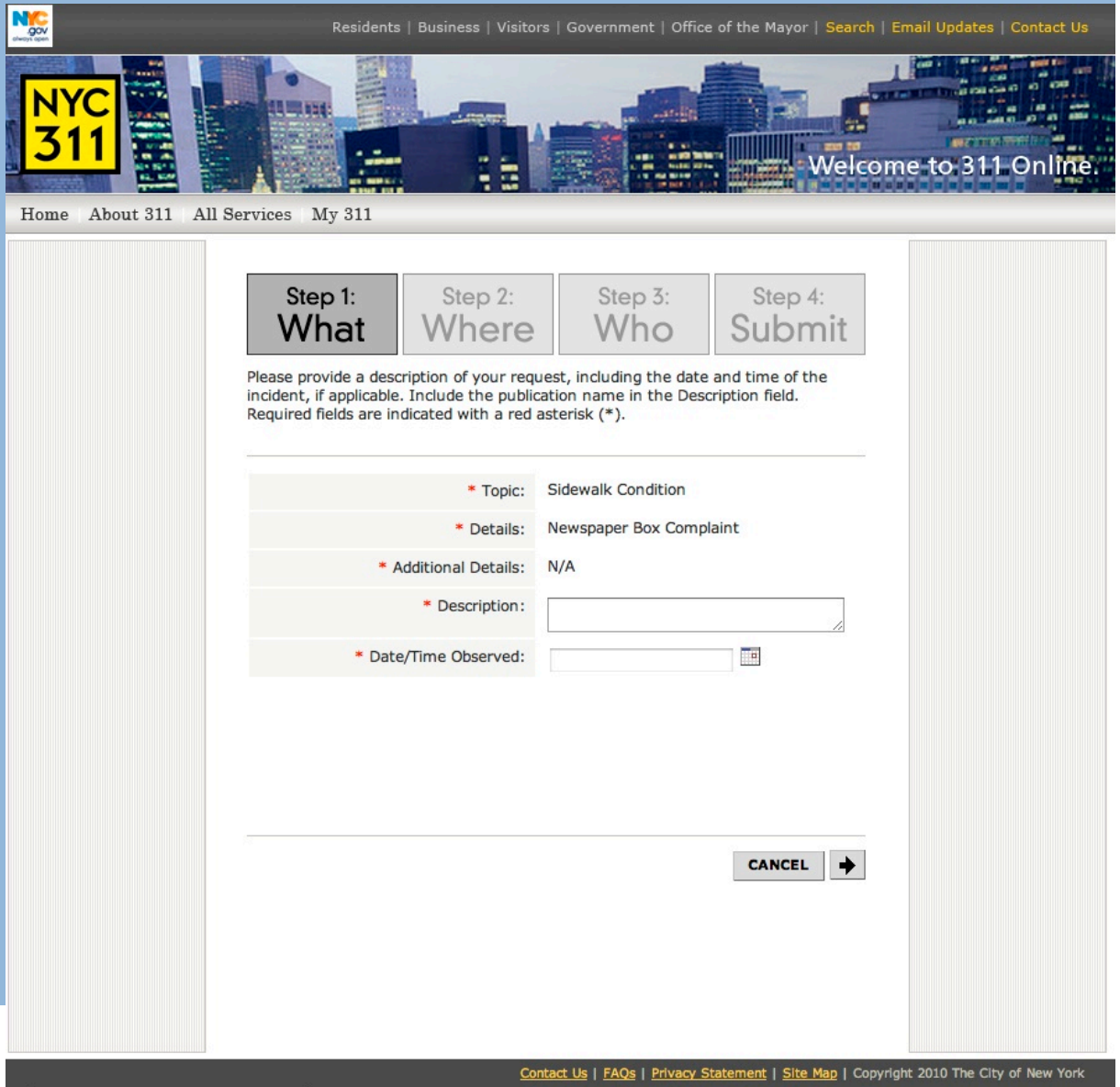
Go to:

<http://nyc.gov/apps/311/>

Click:

- 1.All Services
- 2.Transportation, Streets & Sidewalks
- 3.Sidewalks & Driveways Defects, Repairs & Construction
- 4.Newsrack Complaint
- 5.Report a Problem →

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The screenshot shows the NYC 311 online reporting interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Residents, Business, Visitors, Government, Office of the Mayor, Search, Email Updates, and Contact Us. Below this is a banner image of the NYC skyline with the 'NYC 311' logo and the text 'Welcome to 311 Online'. A secondary navigation bar includes links for Home, About 311, All Services, and My 311. The main content area features a four-step process: Step 1: What, Step 2: Where, Step 3: Who, and Step 4: Submit. Step 1 is currently active. Below the steps, there's a text prompt: 'Please provide a description of your request, including the date and time of the incident, if applicable. Include the publication name in the Description field. Required fields are indicated with a red asterisk (*).' The form fields include: * Topic: Sidewalk Condition, * Details: Newspaper Box Complaint, * Additional Details: N/A, * Description: (text input field), and * Date/Time Observed: (calendar icon). At the bottom right, there are 'CANCEL' and 'Next' buttons. The footer contains links for Contact Us, FAQs, Privacy Statement, Site Map, and a copyright notice for 2010 The City of New York.

NYC gov
311

Residents | Business | Visitors | Government | Office of the Mayor | Search | Email Updates | Contact Us

Welcome to 311 Online

Home | About 311 | All Services | My 311

Step 1: What | Step 2: Where | Step 3: Who | Step 4: Submit

Please provide a description of your request, including the date and time of the incident, if applicable. Include the publication name in the Description field. Required fields are indicated with a red asterisk (*).

* Topic: Sidewalk Condition

* Details: Newspaper Box Complaint

* Additional Details: N/A

* Description:

* Date/Time Observed:

CANCEL →

Contact Us | FAQs | Privacy Statement | Site Map | Copyright 2010 The City of New York

Next Steps...

Recognize and Report to 311 – **by phone**

- State the location, address, or intersection
- The complaint will go to the NYC Dept. of Transportation - DOT is responsible for street furniture.
- Describe the violation, i.e.:
 - 1) The boxes are in a bus stop, which is illegal.
 - 2) The A-1 Box has been on the city streets for 1 year and has never been filled.
- Make note of the confirmation number so that you can follow up.

Next Steps... Encourage **elected officials to support an oversight hearing**

Spring 2011

(Insert Date)

Hon. James Vacca
NYC Council Member
NYC Transportation Committee, Chair
250 Broadway, Suite 1749
New York, NY 10007

Dear Council Member Vacca,

We write to express our concerns about the proliferation of ill-maintained and poorly located newsracks cluttering New York City sidewalks. From Queens to Manhattan to the Bronx, this quality of life nuisance is prevalent throughout our city. We support the oversight hearing on the newsracks law that Councilmember Daniel R. Garodnick has requested, and we ask that it be scheduled immediately by the New York City Council Transportation Committee so we can start working toward the solution. We look to you, as chair of the committee, to help work toward the solution.

The appearance of newsracks has further deteriorated largely due to the Newsrack Law amendment of 2004, which removed the requirement to maintain newsracks free of dirt, graffiti or stickers. Furthermore, the New York City Department of Transportation, which regulates street furniture, has not effectively enforced newsrack regulations because of deficiencies in the current law and lack of personnel.

There is strong support from across the city for improved policies to maintain newsracks and regulate their placement. We request that you make this a priority for the Transportation Committee.

Sincerely,
(Insert your signature)


Cc.:
Hon. Michael R. Bloomberg, New York City Mayor
Hon. Christine C. Quinn, New York City Council Speaker
Hon. Daniel R. Garodnick, New York City Council Member
Hon. Jessica S. Lappin, New York City Council Member
Hon. Melissa Mark-Viverito, New York City Council Member
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Manhattan Borough President
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Sign the Petition


- An electronic petition can be found at:
www.ipetitions.com/petition/newsracks/

Newsrack Enforcement



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 Like

 11 likes. [Sign Up](#) to see what your friends like.

The Petition

Hon. James Vacca
NYC Council Member
NYC Transportation Committee, Chair
250 Broadway, Suite 1749
New York, NY 10007

Dear Council Member Vacca,

We, the undersigned, are concerned about the proliferation of ill-maintained and poorly located newsracks cluttering New York City sidewalks. From Queens to Manhattan to the Bronx, this quality of life nuisance is prevalent throughout our city. We ask that the New York City Council Transportation Committee schedule an oversight hearing on the newsrack law immediately so we can start working toward the solution.

The appearance of newsracks has further deteriorated largely due to the Newsrack Law amendment of 2004, which removed the requirement to maintain newsracks free of dirt, graffiti or stickers. Furthermore, the New York City Department of Transportation, which regulates street furniture, has not effectively enforced newsrack regulations because of deficiencies in the current law and lack of personnel.

We urge New York City Council to work toward improved policies to maintain newsracks and regulate their placement.

[Sign petition](#)

Fields marked with * are required

Name *

Email *

Comments


Sponsor

(No Sponsor Information)

Links

<http://civitasnyc.org/live/newsrack-enforcement/>

Sponsored links

Ads by Google 

[NORDSTROM - Official Site](#)
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www.nordstrom.com

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Next Steps...

Spread the word!
Build awareness and action.

Long Term Goals

- Employ people to hand out papers
- Multiboxes
- Greater indoor distribution —→ such as businesses and event spaces: banks, coffee shops, salons, grocery stores, movies theaters, cafes etc.
- Collapsible metal newsrack stands are an alternative —→





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Find more information and updates at:
www.civitasnyc.org/live/newsrack-enforcement

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