



## Victory in UES: 2 New Greenmarkets

Posted by [Glenn](#) on April 19, 2006 - 11:35pm in [The Oil Drum: Local](#)

Topic: [Demand/Consumption](#)

Tags: [oil](#), [peak oil](#) [[list all tags](#)]

Thanks to the efforts of some local activists from the [Upper Green Side](#) and the leadership of a local City Councilmember Jessica Lappin, Community Board 8 (UES) approved two new greenmarkets both PS 6 and St. Stephen's church, both on opposite ends of 82nd Ave.

This was a very proud moment for me personally. All the way back in [October](#) I started a small local campaign to bring at least one greenmarket to [my neighborhood](#). The reason I pushed this was that Greenmarkets only sell locally grown food, which helps preserve productive local agricultural land from development. Local food requires less than 25% of the fossil fuels normally required to make it to your dinner plate.

In the beginning, it seemed like a slam dunk since Greenmarkets are in almost every other neighborhood in this city, but this did take a lot work - flyer-ing, attending community meetings, collecting petition signatures, listening to lots of different points of view on where they should go, sharpening your arguments and finally standing up in front of your neighbors and convincing them to take action.

---

While Eli Zabar was in attendance, unlike [last time](#) he didn't publicly speak out against it, but I did see him sign a petition against it in the hurried last minutes before the meeting. The opposition this time came from neighbors in the adjacent buildings to PS 6 who basically feared the greenmarkets would bring more rats, bugs and create too much traffic and noise. They spoke very passionately and frankly I thought they might prevent or at least significantly delay the siting of a greenmarket there - by far the larger of the two locations under consideration.

I spoke out (even used the \$70/barrel oil crisis as my opening line!), along with a representative from the Greenmarkets operations department and a letter from the PTA president of PS 6. The community board dismissed concerns about rats as a separate issue the buildings need to sort out with the school but that it should not prevent the siting of a greenmarket there. I was elated. And frankly I plan to keep rolling on this issue, promoting the 2 new greenmarkets for this season, help enrolling people in the local CSA and finding some more locations for the greenmarkets in the UES.

Finally, here is my honor roll of people who helped make a difference in making these Greenmarkets happen:

1. Councilmember [Jessica Lappin](#) and members of her staff who not only listened to my ideas about bringing Greenmarkets to the neighborhood, but followed through with real leadership in finding a great site for a greenmarket in her district.
2. Tom Stromolo from the [Council on the Environment](#) who spoke eloquently and forthrightly about what Greenmarkets are, all the rules they have and their success in other neighborhoods.
3. The PS 6 and St. Stephen's Church community. You stepped up to the plate and offered to

4. [Damek](#), a reader of TOD who volunteered to help hand out flyers, put flyers under people's door and in general give sound advice at key moments. He wrote a [post](#) on his personal blog which I wanted to share:

I have to wonder, how the heck do other activists do what they do? How do you motivate people who support your ideas to friggin' come out and show their support?

Because that's what matters. About 10 people spoke out against greenmarkets, and 3 spoke for. And they didn't even have to speak; for everyone speaking against, there was much clapping after each speaker. But for the 3 in support, there were about 5 clappers. The difference is audible at a small community board meeting.

What I'm saying is that something this positive, this supported, the NIMBYs should be easily outnumbered. It's made me think about all the sorts of things I've heard about over the years and supported only in my mind. What good is agreeing with an idea if I don't show up at a meeting or sign a petition?

Amen. You need to become a part of your local democracy to have a voice, to make a difference and to frankly get things done. It's not enough to have opinions. Democracy requires you to show up and have your voice counted.

If we are going to make headway on preparing for peak oil, we need to become more involved in our democratic communities. You'd be surprised how much you can have an impact. I know I am.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 United States License](#).