



mt. sinai jewish center

OF CONGREGATION MT. SINAI ANSHE EMETH & EMES WOZEDEK OF
WASHINGTON HEIGHTS, INC. and CONGREGATION BETH HILLEL & BETH ISRAEL

135 Bennett Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10040 • 212 568-1900 • 212 568-2307

Dr. Mordecai Schnaidman
Rabbi

Chani Hilewitz
Administrator

14 Tammuz 5766

July 10, 2006

To Members of Mount Sinai & Residents of Washington Heights

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Karla Spier

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HONORARY TRUSTEES

Alfred Adler

* Deceased

The recently completed Washington Heights Eruv represents the realization of a dream in our synagogue and community going back many years.

The Eruv embraces a very substantial area from the west side of Broadway to the Henry Hudson Parkway, north of 181st Street and below 192nd Street. (For the exact boundaries, please acquire and consult a "Parameters of the Eruv" form which is available in the synagogue.) It offers the opportunity for mothers to go outdoors on Shabbat with their infants and young children. It enables families to socialize without a concern that perhaps something had been forgotten before the onset of Shabbat. It allows individuals to bring Seforim and other religious articles to and from Shul thus facilitating the elevation of the Shabbat Tefillah and Kriat Hatorah experience.

Credit for the actualization of the Eruv goes to Ben Sandler and James Wolfe. They undertook the initiative and consulted with others who have previously been down this road. They made plans that eventually required numerous revisions for which their deep computer knowledge was enormously helpful as they created the numerous maps and documents that were so vital at every stage of the undertaking. I made contact with Rabbi Benzion Wosner, of Monsey, an eminent rabbinic authority in Eruv matters, who was immediately enthusiastic about helping our community and personally accompanied us in our surveys of the proposed Eruv area.

Ben and James approached contractors and negotiated the arrangements with the one eventually selected for the necessary construction. They made contact with the police and political authorities whose support was vital in permitting the construction and for the halachic arrangements. They oversaw and enlisted others to help carry out the

Gerald Cohen, President; Henry Rieser, Vice President;
Sander Dulitz, Treasurer; Herman Greenberg, Financial Sec'y; Shuli Berger Zion, Recording Sec'y;
Joseph H. Hahn*, Honorary President; Walter Spier, Honorary President

July 10, 2006

substantial fund-raising that was needed to finance the project. They persevered despite setbacks and delays that might have discouraged individuals with lesser determination, and we, today, are the beneficiaries of their resolve and strength.

In undertaking the Eruv project, we knew that there would be congregations that would not accept it. We were well aware that there are Halachic authorities who are opposed to an Eruv in Manhattan, and others who would invalidate an Eruv in any metropolitan setting. However, we also knew that a majority of Halachic decisors among Acharonim would approve of our Eruv.

We respect the right of those congregations that will not utilize the Eruv. But, we believe that in constructing the Eruv we have raised the levels of oneg, which is a crucial element of the Shabbat experience, and diminished the desecration of Shabbat through prohibited carrying, which may even involve some members of other congregations who have a need for carrying medications on Shabbat.

We would hope that just as we respect the pathway of those who choose not to use the Eruv, they, in turn, will respect our acceptance. We would suggest that if a person should direct derogatory remarks upon seeing use of the Eruv, then the wisest reaction is to say something like: "I respect your view; please note that there is valid Halachic basis for mine."

We urge our membership and friends to enjoy the Eruv and to support it morally and financially. It requires regular oversight and there is, therefore, a need for ongoing support.

Let us make certain that the Eruv continues to serve us, to serve others who without perhaps being aware of it do need it, and ensure that it will be there for those who come after us.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mordecai Schnaidman".

Rabbi Mordecai Schnaidman

Do you have questions about the new Eruv?
Do you want to learn more about the details behind its construction?

The entire community is invited to
a special *shiur* on the topic of

Hilchot Eruvin
and the Washington Heights Eruv

given by

HaRav Benzion Wosner שליט"א

Av Beit Din Shevet HaLevi, Monsey
Posek of the Washington Heights Eruv

Question and Answer session will follow

Monday, July 24, 2006

8:00 PM

Congregation Mount Sinai
135 Bennett Avenue

Main Sanctuary