

West Side Group Asks For Angels

By Carol Polsky and Scott Ladd

Despite the controversy and violence that have dogged the Guardian Angels along Restaurant Row, a coalition of West Side churches, civic leaders and businesses yesterday implored the self-styled crime-fighting team to extend its patrols to the crack plagued Manhattan neighborhoods of Times Square and Hell's Kitchen.

In a meeting yesterday with Angels founder Curtis Sliwa, the Friends of Clinton South formally asked the group to begin patrols between West 34th and 42nd Streets, from Eighth to 10th Avenues. The area is considered by police to be one of the city's most crack-infested neighborhoods.

Civic and political leaders who attended the meeting conceded the request was a last resort.

"It's not the right way to do it, but we don't have any choice," said coalition member Pandalopi Andonopolo outside the Ninth Avenue Cheese Shop, which he owns. "Nobody comes here to shop any more. My business is down 50 percent, and some are down 75 percent."

The Rev. W. Eugene Bolin, pastor of the Metro Baptist Church in Clinton and a leading local activist, said the idea of Guardian Angels patrols won support only after police repeatedly said they didn't have the manpower to rout drug dealers.

Clinton, Bolin said, has been victimized as much by budgetary reductions as by crack dealers. Last fall, a police crackdown called Operation Clinton South was deemed successful, but it has been suspended because of a lack of money, Bolin said.

"What's stupid is Mayor [Edward I.] Koch was quoted as saying drug lords rule the city," Bolin said. "The next week, he's cutting the budget and the number of cops. That's stupid; that doesn't make any sense."

Civic leaders say they expect to develop citizen

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Crack Attack In Clinton

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patrols, with training and advice eventually to be provided by the Guardian Angels. The group will be given a residence and food as remuneration, Bolin said. Representatives from the Midtown South and 10th Police Precincts who attended the meeting could not be reached for comment.

For his part, Sliwa said his troops could be ready by July 4 to launch 24-hour patrols of an area some have termed "crack row," and one Sliwa labeled "a teeming beehive den of crack, cocaine and violence."

Sliwa said the Clinton patrols proposal, which still must pass a community meeting planned for Thursday at the Metro Baptist Church, would be patterned after those already in effect in Chelsea and the East Village — not along Restaurant Row, where a 16-year-old member of the Angels was critically wounded in a stabbing during the weekend while fighting alleged crack dealers.

Sliwa defended his policy of "physical intervention," particularly along Restaurant Row on West 46th Street, where the group's presence was first requested a week ago by restaurant owners concerned with escalating drug activity.

UPPER WEST SIDE / Angels To Share Success Stories

Guardian Angels leaders Curtis and Lisa Sliwa will participate in a panel discussion, "Making A Difference Against Crime," to be moderated by John Johnson of WABC-TV on Tuesday.

The discussion will be held in Pope Auditorium at Fordham University, Lincoln Center, at 7:30 p.m.

Other panelists will include David McKenzie and William Friedheim, both of the Drugs Out Committee of the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition, and Thomas Reppetto, president of the Citizens Crime Commission of New York City, a private watchdog group studying gang-related drug murders in the city.

They will talk about their successes in fighting crime.

Tickets to the discussion are \$10, or \$8 for members of the Young New Yorkers for New York, sponsor of the event.

For tickets, or for further details, call (212) 684-6767.