

# NEWS

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United States Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey  
970 Broad Street, Seventh Floor  
Newark, New Jersey 07102

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***Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney***

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***More Information?*** Call the Assistant U.S. Attorney or other contact listed below to see if more information is available.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Sept. 4, 2008

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Property Owner Accused of Bribing  
West New York Building Official

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(More)

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Michael Drewniak  
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973-645-2888

**Breaking News (NJ) <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nj/press/>**

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NEWARK – Herman Friedman, 48, of Union City, surrendered to the FBI this morning on a criminal Complaint accusing him of bribing a construction code official in West New York, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

According to the Complaint, Friedman owned a building at 235 56th St. in West New York that contained an illegal apartment on its ground floor. The building also lacked a Certificate of Occupancy, which is a legal document certifying that the building is suitable to be occupied.

The Complaint states that after a routine inspection on March 2, 2007, the Township of West New York issued a Notice of Violation instructing Friedman to remove the illegal apartment. Friedman was informed that he either had to remove the apartment or obtain a variance from the West New York Zoning Board.

On Aug. 30, 2007, Friedman met the West New York construction code official at the illegal apartment and allegedly offered to pay the official as much as \$5,000 to “put it on,” referring to permitting Friedman to utilize the illegal apartment. According to the Complaint, Friedman had attempted to conceal his activity by using hand signals to indicate the amount that he was willing to pay.

Friedman is scheduled to appear before U.S. Magistrate Judge Michael A. Shipp at the Martin Luther King, Jr. federal courthouse in Newark at 2:30 p.m. today. If convicted of the bribery charge, Friedman faces a maximum statutory prison term of 10 years and a fine of \$250,000.

According to the Complaint, Friedman paid the \$5,000 bribe on March 25, 2008, during a visit to the code official. The Complaint states that Friedman arrived at the official’s office with an envelope containing fifty \$100 bills, which the code official counted out in Friedman’s presence. The Complaint states that the meeting was audio and video recorded by the FBI.

Christie credited Special Agents of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weysan Dun.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bradley A. Harsch and Brian Howe of the Special Prosecutions Division in Newark.

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Defense Counsel: Howard B. Brownstein, Esq., Union City

