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BRONX NEW YORK

Angry tenants in squalid South Bronx building rally to demand their landlord be ousted

By **BETH STEBNER**
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Residents of 755 Jackson Ave. want Stabilis Capital, the owner of their rat-infested, violation-riddled South Bronx building, removed in favor of a city-approved administrator. (Photo courtesy UHAB)

Outraged South Bronx residents gathered Tuesday to demand relief from the deplorable squalor they've been enduring since a private equity firm took over their building.

Stabilis Capital took over the modest pre-war building at 755 Jackson Ave. in June, after the previous owner foreclosed, and residents say their living conditions have gone downhill from there.

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"I'm very angry," said Angelica Rosado, a stay-at-home mom who left public housing to move into the building last year. "The pipes are frozen and the boilers are broken."

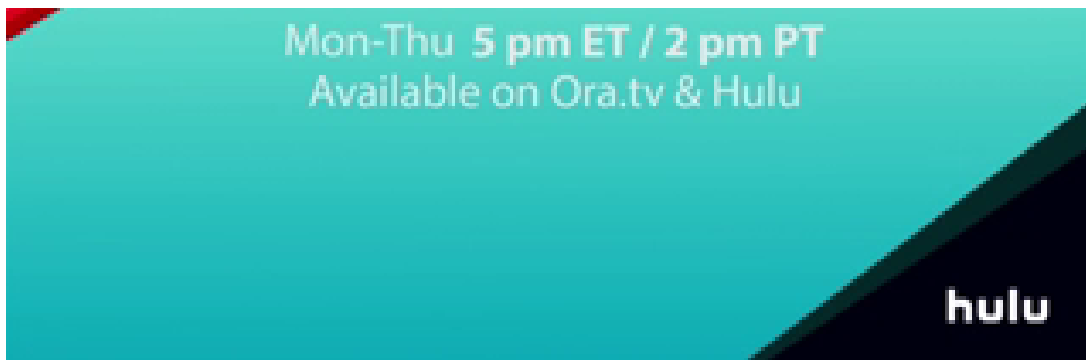
"It's depressing," she said of her living arrangements. "This is worse than the projects."

Stabilis has acquired the debt on eight distressed multifamily buildings in the city, according to the Urban Homesteading Assistance Board.

Residents of the 11-unit building — many elderly or disabled — recited a laundry list of woes, claiming they suffer from lead paint contamination, asbestos exposure, excessive water leaks and an infestation of rodents. In October, the stairwell collapsed, injuring two tenants.

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Stabilis blamed the problems on the previous owner's negligence.

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"To date, Stabilis has invested over \$90,000, fighting in court to ensure that the building is being properly maintained and making critical repairs," a spokesman told the Daily News, adding that it appointed an outside property management company, The Bessen Group, "to oversee the remaining repairs."

There are 221 open code violations for the Jackson Ave. building, the city Department of Housing Preservation

and Development said.

Residents are pushing for Stabilis to hand over the building to city-approved administrator.

"I am incredibly concerned," said Public Advocate-elect Letitia James, who showed up to offer support.

bstebner@nydailynews.com