

FOLLOWING UP

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Less Bulletproofing, But a Lingerin' Cachet

Years back, it was the best-known rent-controlled apartment in New York City. Today, its current tenant considers it "historic digs" — and still a bargain, even if no longer rent-controlled.

Throughout Edward I. Koch's tenure as mayor, from 1978 to 1989, Mr. Koch hung onto his one-bedroom Greenwich Village apartment, though the city provided free housing in the official mayoral residence at Gracie Mansion.

Mr. Koch continued living in the apartment for a short time after taking office, then moved into the Upper East Side mansion but continued to spend weekends at the apartment for a year or so, and then used the Village pad only occasionally for the rest of his mayoral days.

To accusations that he was tying up an apartment he did not need — the rent was less than \$300 a month when he was elected — Mr. Koch replied that he needed "someplace to go back to" after his City Hall run ended. But when it did end, he recalled last week, he found the old abode too small after Gracie Mansion's roominess, and he moved into a larger Village apartment, which he still occupies.

The tenant who succeeded him in the one-bedroom, Marlon Nestle, above, still lives there, and speaks of its "wonderful cachet." Moreover, "it was thrilling to be in an apartment with bulletproof windows," said Dr. Nestle, chairwoman of the department of nutrition and food studies at New York University, which owns the building, and the author of a book called "Food Politics."

But the mayoral security windows also had a downside, she said last week. The dirt that got into the air layers between the double panes could not be cleaned out, she said, and "when I could no longer see through the windows, they took them out, except for one in the terrace door, which they said was too expensive to remove."

Dr. Nestle declined to disclose her rent, but said it was more than Mr. Koch paid.

For his part, Mr. Koch had advice for Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, who continues to live in his Upper East Side town house, using Gracie Mansion for official and ceremonial functions. "If he doesn't live there, he should let his mother live there," Mr. Koch said.

The mayor's mother, Charlotte Bloomberg, 93, still lives in the house in Medford, Mass., where her son grew up. "That's her home," Mr. Bloomberg's press secretary, Edward Skyler, quoted his boss as saying.