



## WE ACT in the News ...



**Peggy M. Shepard, Executive Director**  
WE ACT for Environmental Justice

Proud Community Organizer and  
Recipient of the 2008 Jane Jacobs Medal  
for Lifetime Achievement

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## From WashingtonPost.com, September 10, 2008:

### Palin's Big Diss

*By Jonathan Capehart*



Sara Palin -- and her speech writers -- really seem to like that well-performed line from her nomination acceptance speech about how being "a small-town mayor is sort of like a community organizer, except that you have actual responsibilities." She's repeated it, with slight variations, along the campaign trail. Obviously the McCain campaign thinks it's doing what they want it to do.

But for someone who's running as a change agent, a reformer, a buster of the status quo, it's a rather dumb thing to say. And Palin's stunning ignorance of what community organizers do isn't being lost on those do-gooders with "no responsibility."

On Monday, George Campbell, Jr., was presenting the Jane Jacobs Award for lifetime leadership to Peggy Shepard, co-founder of West Harlem Environmental Action (WE ACT), when he said, "And those of you who don't think that community organizing comes with real responsibility should look at what Peggy Shepard has done in West Harlem with West Harlem residents." With a chuckle, Campbell quickly added, "That wasn't meant as a partisan remark."

But it was spot on.

Palin's snide put-down denigrates Shepard's work. When the state transportation agency wanted to locate a diesel bus depot in largely minority West Harlem, WE ACT fought back and won. Diesel exhaust has been directly linked to the high rate of asthma in Northern Manhattan. WE ACT's work in environmental justice and public health is responsible for improving the air quality of thousands of residents.

*To read the rest of the article, please go to the Web site:*

[http://voices.washingtonpost.com/postpartisan/2008/09/palins\\_big\\_diss.html](http://voices.washingtonpost.com/postpartisan/2008/09/palins_big_diss.html)