

# The Grapevine Newsletter

I heard it through the Grapevine...

## Notes from the December 12, 2023 Berkowners, Inc. Board Meeting

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Directors Attending: Board Members Walter Chadwick, Wanda Chin, Cecilia Durbin, Liz Hollander, Peggy Russell, and William Walter. Absent: Edward Leahy. Also present: Superintendent Carlos Riviera (Superintendent) and Joe Doren (Metro Management) Ms. Hollander taking minutes.

1. Meeting called to order 6:33

2. November minutes were corrected and approved

### 3. Superintendent's report (Mr. Rivera):

- 5 steam traps in the 35<sup>th</sup> Ave boiler room have been replaced.
- Window glass replacement and intercom repaired in the Treasury apartment A14 35<sup>th</sup>
- Lead bend leak unit B33 78 St was replaced by plumbers. We will schedule repairs to the unit below.
- Following units completed waterproofing by NY Contracting: A21& A22 77St, B27 78St , B37 in the 35<sup>th</sup> Ave building. A22 in 35<sup>th</sup> Ave is pending
- Performed water test for façade leak from bay window unit A22 35<sup>th</sup> Ave
- All 3 building compactors and incinerator were cleaned. 3 compactors need repairs on nose cones (have corrosion).
- All LED lighting has been completed in the basement areas. Lobby chandelier fluorescent engines have all been replaced with LED. Some other lights are still pending the resolution of some adaptation issues.
- Hard Drive for CCTV needs to be replaced. Current unit keeps causing glitches, can't view vestibule in the 35<sup>th</sup> Ave on playback mode. Building camera company was put on notice.

- Pending waterproofing issue: A64 and A54 78St -- Xinos water test done sometime last May, prior to the large rainstorm; should be sending a proposal for work that needs to be done – it may need to be filed with DOB and permits obtained.

Mr. Rivera left the meeting at 7:10pm

#### 4. **Manager's Report (Mr. Doren)**

- LL 11: has received proposals from Zaskorski and Associates to prepare plans and specifications for each building for work required under local law 11. NB These are for plans, not bids on the work, which has to be done by 2025. Other companies could be solicited for plans proposals, but Zaskorski has already drawn the building and submitted plans for inspection.
- Violation Removal - We have retained Jack Jaffa Associates, expeditors to remove DOB and ECB violations on the property at a cost of ~\$300 per violation - probably about a dozen for the three buildings, which occurred under Wavecrest's management.
- Personnel
  - Holiday bonus checks will be ready this week.

#### 5. **President's (Mr. Chadwick):**

- **Laundry Room:**

Mr. Chadwick has plans from E4P consultants and is awaiting proposals from the following contractors:

- Acer Restoration - Recommended by E4P - referral received, plans re-sent
- Healy Woodworks - Recommended by Ms. Chin. (They did the laundries in Berkeley Towers II) – no response yet
- All City Construction - Recommended by Ms. Durbin. (They did the laundry room in Fillmore Hall) – have received plans and expressed interest by phone.
- US Belfour – Recommended by Mr. Doren. General contracting.

- **Windows:** Tindel says we are looking at a spring start date.
- **New video system:** updated proposals from Accurate Intercom have been requested, but we're wary because of the window project. But they think it might work because wires exist.
- **Basement update:** Emailed with Julie Nymann – there were no drawings of basement rooms filed with the city for the building, which means the basement has no C of O status. Laundry rooms are not an issue without a C of O. Other basement projects – eg children's room/ board room renovation- will be harder.
  - Ms. Durbin remarked that it would be worthwhile to secure a basement C of O for 77<sup>th</sup> st building, eventually to restore usage of the large meeting room for full shareholder assembly, but this would be only the beginning of a long and expensive process.
- **Wavecrest update:** Our attorneys report that Wavecrest has been served a summons – they have asked their insurance carrier to defend them, and requested that we send a formal complaint to which they may formally reply; the parties could then attempt to negotiate a settlement. NS&S are currently preparing this complaint.
- **Tree at the north end of the garden** – The sidewalk contractor (not a tree expert) opined that the tree would be unstable if sidewalks were removed. We are waiting for Urban Arborist's assessment, pending their scheduled visit for other tree maintenance on January 3, to decide how to proceed.
  - Ms. Durbin suggested that whenever the sidewalk is opened for this project that an electrical line be run underneath to light the hillside plot.

## 6. Financial report (Ms. Chin):

- **2024 Budget Adoption** –Various topics discussed:
  - Plumbing costs have increased, but have been kept in check
  - Accountant wants to increase management fee [by \$1900- it's expected – will bring to 25k,] within the projected budget. We will accept the increase but ask for a two year hold.

- Fuel Oil reserves - we should keep investigating costs of keeping 10 days worth of oil, which is used for sub 20-degree temperatures.
- Cost of landscaper seems steep for indifferent service – we should look for a new, better service.
- Maintenance increase - The Board voted to approve the 3% Maintenance Rise, starting February 1, 2024, after verifying the Social Security COLA for 2024 will be 3.2%

## 7. Treasury report:

- **Total corporation reserve funds** \$5,951,446.78
- **Reserves managed by Board**, total \$5,618,066.45
- Chase Bank
  - Checking and savings balances total \$54,857.70 (a/o 11/30/23)
- HAB Bank
  - ○ \$152,699.13 (a/o 10/31/23)
- RJFS account
  - Balance a/o 11/30/23 was \$5,410,509.62 , comprised of:
    - \$183,491.12 Cash
    - \$2,000,000 CDs (8 banks)
    - \$3,275,000 USTreasuries (three, full value shown)

### During the month of November:

- \$1.8 million of USTreasuries matured, and a new \$1.7 million USTreasury bill was purchased.
- \$109,000 of reserve funds were used to pay operating expenses (plumbing) and additional deposit for windows contract.
- During the month of December, \$1,575,000 of US Treasuries will mature.
- From January to April 2024, \$2,000,000 of bank CDs will mature.
- At the end of May 2024, \$1,700,000 UST bill will mature.

- We are investing short-term and will continue to ladder maturities based on anticipated payments of the windows contract. Tindel has advised that additional payments for the windows contract are expected to commence in June 2024.
- **Reserves managed by Metro**
  - \$287,514.50 in window assessment account (a/o 10/31/23)
  - \$45,865.83 in beautification fund (a/o 10/31/23)
- **General Discussion of funding sources needed to cover windows bill:**  
Assessment? Sale of treasury units? Transfer fees? Mr. Walter asked about vetting a modified scheme for transfer fees. There has been some interest expressed in the last couple of months. Renewed plans for a town hall about transfer fees in March.

8. **Admissions committee (Ms. Russell):** A new tenant has moved into the newly renovated Treasury unit A14. B 46 has also sold.

9. **Communications committee (Ms. Durbin):**

- The password for the website was updated
- Lighting update: The seed room grow lights are working well.
- Getting help from another shareholder with professional expertise to find suitable garden path lights for reduced power consumption. Garden lighting changes are to reduce light intrusion into apartments and safely light paths.

10. **Garden Committee (Ms. Hollander):**

- Committee is happy with the renovated seed room, lights, and painting.
- Urban Arborist visit scheduled for January 3 to prune existing trees.

11. **Technology:** (Mr. Walter is researching Video intercom systems. Discussion on why to reject BUTTERFLY MX (Private contractor) – recurring annual fee, and once installed, cannot change to other software. Mr. Chadwick reported that wiring exists for a system. Mr. Doren also had some recommendations to share with Mr. Walter.

No additional business.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:39pm

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## **The Berkeley Replacement Windows Update**

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Tindel Replacement Windows, our installers, continue to assure us that we are on schedule for a late spring commencement of the installation process.

The New York City Landmarks Commission's final requirement to grant us our permit was the addition of exterior molding. This is called case molding or panning. According to Landmarks it will give the double hung windows we asked for a proper period detail.

This past month the manufacturer, Northern Windows, worked on producing shop drawings for the construction of the molding. As of this week our architect, Douglas Lister, has reviewed them and asked for some minor revisions.

Tindel Replacement Windows, our installers, is double-checking all measurements for the windows. The 3 Berkeley buildings have many different window sizes and shapes and all windows will be custom made to fit our building exactly.

We will continue to keep you all updated.

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## **FEBRUARY CHILDREN'S CIRCLE**

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**Saturday February 17, 2024**

**11 am**

**Community Room/77th Street**

All Berkeley families are welcome.

Hope to see you there.

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## **DO YOUR PART TO PREVENT PACKAGE THEFT**

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If you see a package belonging to someone on your hall, carry it up with you!

Working from home and looking for a way to get your steps in? Carry a couple packages up to neighbors' doors.

The fewer packages in one place, the less opportunity there is for theft.

Starting this month, staff will also be carrying packages up from the first floor once a day around 1 pm in hopes of reducing opportunities for theft.

*What else can you do to prevent theft?* Politely refuse to let people in when you go in or out of the building. Everyone needs a key or to be buzzed in.

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## **ANNUAL MAINTENANCE RISE**

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At the December Board meeting, the board voted on a 3% maintenance rise effective March 1, 2024. You should have received a letter from Metro Management within the last month. This rise is entirely based on inflation in operating costs that the co-op has no choice but to pay including heating, electricity and insurance. The Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), which is how much Social Security payments increase to adjust for inflation, for 2024 was 3.2%. Maintenance payments do not go towards capital improvements, only towards the day-to-day operation and upkeep of our co-op.

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## **BERKELEY ARTIST PROFILE**

*The Artist Profile is on pause and should resume in the Spring*

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# SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS

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The next Board Meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2024. The following Board meetings are March 12th, April 9th and May 14th. If you have a topic you would like to discuss with the board, please email them at [berkboard@gmail.com](mailto:berkboard@gmail.com).

**A REMINDER:** Residents are always welcome to address board meetings about anything about the co-op they feel needs addressing. Please give the board 24 hours notice that you'd like to attend, and you'll be invited to the zoom meeting starting at 6:30pm.

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Contributors to this newsletter were Walter Chadwick, Cecilia Durbin, and Peggy Russell. If you'd like to contribute content to the Berkeley Grapevine, please email [bconwayb34@gmail.com](mailto:bconwayb34@gmail.com).

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