

# The Grapevine Newsletter

I heard it through the Grapevine...

## Notes from the October 10, 2023 Berkowners, Inc. Board Meeting

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Directors attending: Walter Chadwick, Wanda Chin, Cecilia Durbin, Ed Leahy, Peggy Russell, and William Walter. Also attending: Carlos Rivera, Superintendent. Absent: Liz Hollander, Joe Doren (Metro Management).

1. Meeting called to order via Zoom at 6:35 PM
2. The minutes of the September 5 board meeting were approved, as amended. Mr. Walter announced that board minutes would be kept on the Google Drive.
3. **Superintendent's Report (Mr. Rivera):**
  - Seed room has been completed with a fresh coat of paint.
  - The staff has completed crystalizing and cleaning the 78<sup>th</sup> Street lobby Terrazzo floor.
  - Mr. Rivera and Ms. Durbin, along with Michael Sura, a licensed electrician, inspected the garden area to locate a pathway for lighting to reduce glare in ground floor apartments. Goal is to improve lighting between buildings, and possibly soften the lighting. The Garden Committee has also suggested adding lighting on the steps leading down to the pit.
  - The tunnel walkway walls and ceiling at the south end of the 78<sup>th</sup> Street building have been painted.
  - New valves were installed for B54(35). The Public Administrator will be charged for the work as soon as invoice is received and forwarded. Mr. Chadwick said he would make sure the attorneys have it so we can recoup the expense when the apartment is sold.
  - A section of the concrete floor behind the dryers in the 78<sup>th</sup> Street building laundry room must be excavated due to a broken kitchen cast iron pipe under the floor.
  - Boilers in all three buildings have been overhauled. Leaking fire tubes were plugged.
  - Need to codify procedures for staff to follow for entering apartments in emergency situations. Mr. Chadwick wants Joe Doren to work with Carlos on a policy.

- Mr. Rivera and Mr. Lister (architect) inspected three apartments with water damage after heavy rains. Mr. Walter suggested that we need to determine if we will need to remediate whenever we have a heavy rainstorm. Should be getting an estimate from Zino's Construction. Also, we'll need a second opinion.
- BuildingLink works best in buildings that have a doorman. Its most attractive feature for the Berkeley would be the work order system, and we already have a process for work orders. BuildingLink might be a somewhat better system for it, but probably not worth the expense. Ms. Chin suggested Carlos contact the superintendent at Dunnolly Gardens to learn of their experience with the software.
- Katherine Howard toured the garden with Urban Arborists for additional work. Mr. Chadwick will contact Urban Arborist.
- Mr. Rivera left the meeting at 7:35pm.

#### **4. President's Report (Mr. Chadwick):**

- We are still not getting any vendors or contractors for the laundry rooms. Ms. Chin suggested asking the engineer, EP4, for recommendations. Mr. Chadwick replied that EP4 had made one recommendation.
- Work is proceeding on A14(35) and the apartment should be ready for sale or rent by the end of October. The board needs to decide whether to try to sell the unit or rent it.
- Mr. Leahy suggested that, given the current poor sales market for one-bedroom apartments, it would make sense to rent the apartment as soon as it is ready. The board voted unanimously to rent it.
- We just got back B34(35), a treasury unit that was a long-term rental. Will need to be renovated before we make a sell/rent decision. Walls need a lot of work. Cost will likely be in the \$50K range.

#### **5. Sales Report (Ms. Russell)**

- A12 (77) was sold on 9/12/23 for \$380K
- The Admissions Committee will meet next week to consider the sale of A58 (77) and sublease of A24 (77).

#### **6. Communications (Ms. Durbin):**

- There have been no serious problems with the Laundry Schedule yet.
- Regarding the ListServe, the board discussed the need for guidelines to be easy to access. Also, there should be a set guideline for reinstating anyone who has been banned.
- LED lighting will be installed by the end of the month.

## 7. Technology (Mr. Walter):

- On Google Workspace, need to get all board members signed in.
- Every board member will have their own login.
- Also need to set up a depository for board minutes.
- We will want to gather historical documents and load them in, especially anything regarding long term projects.

## 8. Financial Report (Ms. Chin):

- Total reserves of \$6 million managed by the board.
- Chase bank balances, checking and savings, total \$69,743.13 as of 9/29/23.
- HAB Bank MMA \$152,193.76 as of 9/30/23.
- RJFS account balance of \$5,504,766.14 as of 9/29/23 composed of:
  - \$192,721.14 Cash (spread among 5 banks)
  - \$4,000,000 in CDs (16 banks)
  - \$1,325,000 in US Treasuries (three, full value shown)
  - In September, five CDs (\$250,000 each) were purchased, all maturing by 10/30/23.
  - During October, three CDs (\$750,000 total) will mature October 12-18.
  - We plan to continue investing in short term investments (30-60 day maturities) as current investments mature.
- Reserves managed by Metro:
  - \$229,448.14 in Windows Assessment Account as of 8/31/23
  - \$45,713.22 in Beautification Fund as of 8/31/23.

## 9. Windows Update (Mr. Chadwick):

- We have received notice from Tindel that they will honor the revised pricing from April 2023, a \$400,000 increase to \$4,338,235. Mr. Chadwick checked to see if we have a basis for fighting the increase. Joe Doren didn't think a 10% increase was unreasonable.
- Includes new case molding but not the fluting or woodwork, which NY Contracting can do for \$45,000.
- The board approved paying the increased price, 6-0.

## 10. Additional Business:

- Ms. Russell volunteered to print out the Pumpkin flyers for trick-or-treating on Halloween (between 6:00 PM and 8:00 PM) and distribute them.

11. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

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## Update On New Windows at the Berkeley

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The Board is very pleased to announce that on November 8, 2023 the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission granted the Berkeley a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of the windows in all 3 of our buildings.

The final piece of the plan to be accepted was the brickmold profiles, also known as casing. Brickmolding is used around the outside perimeter of the window where it meets the brick. The goal over the course of the permit process was to prove to the LPC that we could keep our double hung windows while retaining the proper character of our neo-Georgian architecture. Originally, 35-24 78<sup>th</sup> Street and 35-25 77<sup>th</sup> Street had casement windows. The Commission was very specific that the brickmold added a detail that gives the appearance to the façades of the original casement windows.

Since November 8<sup>th</sup>, our installer, Tindel Windows, has sent these new details to the manufacturer Northern Windows.

We are currently working through the administrative process of signing the change orders. Once this is done, the next steps are the final measuring, drawings and then ordering the windows. We cannot give you a timeline yet as we need to hear from the manufacturer when these steps are accomplished.

We promise to keep you all informed, as we know ourselves.

Walter and the Board



## HOLIDAY CHEER AT THE BERKELEY

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**THE BOARD INVITES YOU TO SHARE WINE AND CHEESE AND  
A CHANCE TO WISH THE STAFF A HAPPY HOLIDAYS**

**35-25 77TH ST. LOBBY**

**FRIDAY DECEMBER 15**

**6 - 8PM**

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## Update On New LED Lighting at the Berkeley

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LEDNext successfully replaced the fluorescent lighting in the basement rooms and hallways with energy efficient LED fixtures. They also added occupancy sensors to all basement areas. Lights in basement rooms (aside from laundry rooms) turn entirely off when no motion is detected for a set time. Lights in basement hallways reduce to 50% brightness when no motion is detected for a set time. The seed room, where our gardeners keep cold-sensitive plants during the winter months, now have LED lights specifically designed to keep plants healthy and a timer installed so the lights are on during "daylight hours" and off at night to mimic sunlight to both keep the plants healthy in the winter and to reduce unnecessary power consumption. The LED fixtures use less electricity than the fluorescents they replaced, and the occupancy sensors and timer should reduce the co-op's energy usage still further.

We chose to do this now to take advantage of an incentive from ConEdison that connected us with an interest-free loan for this upgrade. This loan allows us to pay off the upgrade in installments equal to the amount that we save each month with the more efficient lighting. This means that we should not notice any difference in how much the co-op is paying for electricity until we have paid off the new lights in about 18-24 months: then our energy bills should go down.

We did not replace the fluorescents or add occupancy sensors in the laundry rooms as we hope to fully renovate these rooms soon, so replacing fixtures and then replacing them again in the renovations is not a good use of resources. Please remember to always turn off the lights in the laundry room when you leave! Likewise, if you walk by the laundry room and see the lights on and no one there, please turn them off.

We hope to use the same loan incentive to replace the fluorescent dome fixtures in our residential hallways (floors 1 - 6) with LED fixtures. However, we have not yet found a fixture that we like the look and brightness of yet. We are currently waiting for a new sample fixture to arrive to see if it fits our needs. We do not plan to install occupancy sensors in the residential hallways, so these will stay on all the time, as they do now.

While reducing our energy consumption from our hallway and basement lighting is not a huge percentage of the co-op's energy consumption, every little bit helps and taking advantage of these incentives to replace aging infrastructure in our buildings will save us money down the line.

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## DECEMBER CHILDREN'S CIRCLE

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**Saturday December 16, 2023**

**11 am**

**Community Room/77th Street**

All Berkeley families are welcome.

Hope to see you there.

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## BERKELEY ARTIST PROFILE

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*The Artist Profile is on hiatus this month and will return in December.*

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## SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS

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The next Board Meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2023. The next Board meetings are January 9th, February 13th and March 12th. 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 need 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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