

# The Grapevine Newsletter

I heard it through the Grapevine...

## Notes from the January 9, 2024 Berkowners, Inc. Board Meeting

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

1. Meeting called to order 6:39

2. December minutes were corrected and approved

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

- Mr. Rivera presented a revised draft welcome letter for new residents for approval.
- Plumbers replaced a cast iron flange and reset a toilet leaking from B52 (77).
- Mr. Wilson from Belfor Property Restoration viewed all three laundry rooms.
- The ballasts for hallway ceiling lights are no longer available, despite efforts to locate an alternate vendor. Affected lights will be replaced with a simple bulb on wire until a permanent solution can be found.
- There was a break-in of the 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue building at 1:30AM on January 6. The intruder broke a pane of glass next to the door handle. The pane will be replaced with plexiglass, as will corresponding panes on the front doors of the 77<sup>th</sup> and 78<sup>th</sup> Street buildings.
- The staff thanks the board for the holiday gathering and the bonuses.
- Staff will be painting the incinerator closets in all three buildings.
- The refrigerator in A53 (35) needs a new fan motor. Temporarily using a replacement we had in storage. Mr. Doren stated Metro would search for a permanent replacement.

- We need an architect to inspect the waterproofing work done in A53 (78).
- NY Contracting will be returning to correct a workmanship issue in B33 (77).
  - Construction work for shareholders:
    - B46 (35) – painting and sanding floors
    - B65 (35) – kitchen and bathroom renovation

Mr. Rivera left the meeting at 7:30pm

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

- Notice of 3% maintenance increase effective March 1, 2024, has been mailed to all shareholders.
- Proposals from Lawless and Mangione to prepare plans and specifications for work required under Local Law 11 have been received. We will seek another bid.
- Jack Jaffa Associates (expeditors) are working on removing various violations on the property. We have completed the paperwork on several violations.
- Belfor Property Restoration has requested blueprints or drawings referenced in the bid documents.
- Staff will handle present work load until we have a suitable fill in or replacement.

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

- Laundry Room: All City will inspect all three.
- Board discussed the January 6 break-in. Mr. Doren suggested that it was an isolated event and that installation of plexiglass should be sufficient. Mr. Leahy suggested that we might want to consider stronger measures for security, such as alarm systems. Mr. Doren said he would get estimates on alarm systems. Ms. Durbin suggested the installation of a padlocked box in the lobby for packages, or at least for residents to bring packages to their floor on a volunteer basis. Mr. Doren stated he would instruct staff to bring packages up twice each day.
- Mr. Walter has established a central board minutes archive.
- New intercom system: estimated cost is \$150,000. The board decided not to pursue, given the cost and other more pressing needs.
- Mr. Chadwick and Ms. Durbin met with Julie Nymann on getting C of Os

- Current C of Os have no drawings and no mention of basements
- Next steps: Ms. Nymann will bring someone in to check if egresses from 77<sup>th</sup> Street basement would allow us to have a Children’s Room or Community Room, and if we’ll be able to obtain a permit for more than 75 people. Could be done for one building without the other two.
- Wavecrest Litigation: a letter was sent and a formal complaint was filed in mid-December.
- Tree at the north end of the garden – Union Arborists suggested that steps or a bridge should be built over the roots, as any shaving of the roots could cause the tree to become unstable.
- Mr. Chadwick recommended we form a committee to prepare a proposal on Transfer fees to be voted at the Annual Shareholders Meeting in May. Mr. Walter volunteered to chair it and asked for volunteers. Ms. Hollander and Mr Chadwick volunteered to be on the committee. The board will vote on a proposal at the February meeting, and a Town Hall will be scheduled in April to explain the proposal and answer questions.

## 6. Treasury report:

- **Total corporation reserve funds \$6,065,287**
- **Reserves managed by Board, total \$5,702,713**
  - Chase Bank  
Checking and savings balances total \$54,763 (a/o 12/31/23)
  - HAB Bank  
\$153,190 (a/o 11/30/23)
  - RJFS account  
Balance a/o 12/31/23 was \$5,494,761, composed of:
    - \$344,761 Cash
    - \$2,000,000 CDs (8 banks, full value shown)
    - \$3,150,000 US Treasuries (two, full value shown)

During the month of December, two US Treasury bills matured (total \$1,575,000) and a new \$1.45 million USTreasury bill was purchased on 12/19/23 to mature 6/13/24.

During the month of January, 2024, three bank CDs totalling \$750,000 will mature, and five bank CDs totalling \$1.25 million will mature from February to April 2024. Two USTreasuries totalling \$3.15 million will mature from May 30-June 13, 2024.

We will continue to invest short-term and ladder maturities based on anticipated payments of the windows contract, with the next payment expected around June 2024.

- **Reserves managed by Metro**
  - \$316,633 in window assessment account (a/o 11/30/23)
  - \$45,941 in beautification fund (a/o 11/30/23)
- Window Assessment Fund and Account: The separate assessment for the windows replacement project commenced April 1, 2022, for 36 months, at 27 cents per share, and was initially calculated to raise a total of about \$1 million by April 2025. This account is managed by Metro and is a separate interest bearing account at Chase. Note that these funds were not in a separate account when managed by Wavecrest, and that Metro opened this separate account in January 2023.
  - The balance a/o 11/30/23 is \$316,633.19, and based on approx \$28K collected per month, there should be a balance of approx \$765K by April 2025
  - The initial deposit paid to Tindel in February 2022 was funded mostly from Board managed reserve funds that were at Chase.
  - A proposal to invest the current balance of the windows assessment account was deferred to the finance people at Metro,

8. **Admissions committee** : Ms. Russell will have a welcoming document finalized by the February meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:15pm

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## The Berkeley Replacement Windows Update

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We are happy to report our project is now moving along nicely. We are on schedule for a late spring commencement. On February 21<sup>st</sup>, our architect, Douglas Lister, approved the last of the shop drawings by Northern Windows .

With this, Northern is able to put our windows into production. Custom die molds will be produced to extrude the shapes needed to create the trims that the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission is requiring of the Berkeley. As the trims on the windows of 34-24 78th Street and 35-25 77th Street are the same, these will be produced first, and those buildings' windows will be installed first beginning in mid-May. 77-12 35th Avenue will follow. Mr. Lister expects the entire co-op to take about 4 months to complete. They will likely start at the top floor of each building and work down, completing about 4 apartments a day. They will never start an apartment they cannot finish the same day.

Thanks everyone for their patience and updates will continue as we are informed.

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### **!IMPORTANT DATES!**

### **Proposed Transfer Fee on Shares Sold**

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The Board of Directors voted at the February meeting to place a proposal on the ballot at the Annual Shareholders' Meeting to amend the by-laws to set a transfer fee on shares sold. This requires a vote by the shareholders at the Annual Shareholders Meeting. The Board of Directors will vote on the exact language at the March board meeting. The board invites all shareholders to two Town Halls to fully explore the proposal and to answer questions prior to the Annual Shareholders meeting.

**Transfer Fee ZOOM Town Halls** (the 2 town halls will cover the same information):

Wednesday, March 27 at 8:00 pm

Tuesday, April 30 at 7:00 pm

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**!SAVE THE DATE!**

**BERKELEY ANNUAL SHAREHOLDERS MEETING**

Convening In Person

**May 21, 2024 at 6:30pm**

The Jewish Center of Jackson Heights

37-06 77th St.

A more formal announcement will come by mail soon

Please put this date in your calendar

If you will not be able to attend, please **decide to whom you will give your proxy vote!**

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**CALL FOR BERKELEY BOARD CANDIDATES**

As we did reach quorum at last year's Annual Shareholders Meeting

**3 BOARD SEATS ARE UP FOR ELECTION**

Shareholders who wish to run for the Board may submit their resumes and/or letters of intent, 1 page maximum, either by email to [berkboard@gmail.com](mailto:berkboard@gmail.com), or by post to the Board Secretary, Ed Leahy (77-12 35th Avenue Apt. B67, Jackson Heights, NY 11372).

The deadline to get on the ballot is

**Friday, March 31, 2024**

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## MARCH CHILDREN'S CIRCLE

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**Saturday March 16, 2024**

**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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When you see Lynn Cassaniti in the Berkeley garden tending to her lovely plot along the north wall, does your mind immediately turn to . . . Hannibal Lecter? No? Well, it should! Lynn, an accomplished film editor, gallerist, and resident of the Berkeley's 78<sup>th</sup> Street building, was an apprentice editor on *Silence of the Lambs* starring Anthony Hopkins and Jodie Foster and directed by Jonathan Demme. Work involved intense days-long sessions with the director and editorial crew at an upstate house Demme rented especially for post production. It also involved a hair-raising drive to deliver the sole copy of the film (on 35mm film stock, which is what people used in the pre-digital days) to an industry screening in Manhattan. Lynn went on to work on *Scent of a Woman* (starring Al Pacino), *Margot at the Wedding* (starring Nicole Kidman), and other hit movies. She currently focuses on documentary film editing, including work on *The Flea Theater: A Portrait* featuring the Theater's founders Jim Simpson and Sigourney Weaver, and *Louise Bourgeois: The Spider, The Mistress and The Tangerine*, which chronicles the long life and work of this famous artist. She also recently co-wrote and edited *An American Quilt – Stitching Together Our 9/11 Memories*, a short film documenting six families' journey from loss toward healing through making memorial quilts.

Lynn got her start in film while an MFA student at NYU Tisch School of the Arts when the aforementioned Jonathan Demme brought his project *The Uncle Vanya Show* to the program and had students work on every aspect of the production. Lynn was thrilled to be Demme's editor. This experience inspired a decades-long career in film editing,

which took her from New York to Sao Paulo and Berlin, and places in between, and to life as a pioneer loft tenant in Soho. Lynn and her late husband Bill Barvin, who worked as a film and television location manager and scout on *Law & Order* and *The Sopranos*, as well as numerous feature films, lived for many years in a converted factory space that – while it lacked heat on weekends – was in the perfect location for their film work and for Lynn’s parallel career as an assistant to Ronald Feldman, whose eponymous Soho gallery was the springboard for a series of Andy Warhol print editions including *Myths*, *Endangered Species*, *Ads* amongst others, which the gallery published and sold. Lynn helped with every aspect of running this successful gallery, and even when working in the film industry, returned from time to time to assist with special fundraising art auctions.

Growing up, Lynn spent the school year in Cold Spring Harbor, NY where her family lived so they could be close to her father’s work at Pan American Airways at JFK, and summers in Norway, where her mother was born. Lynn, who is fluent in Norwegian and French, studied at Bradford College and Antioch University. Antioch was a very free-form college, and it encouraged Lynn to experiment in various media including sculpture and painting. After graduating, she pursued additional studies in painting at the École des Beaux-Arts in Aix-en-Provence, France, eventually relocating to New York City for its thriving arts scene.

After leaving her Soho loft, Lynn relocated to Greenpoint, Brooklyn, where she had a live/work studio. But she wanted a larger apartment with more light and outdoor space, and began to explore a move to Jackson Heights where several friends lived. Lynn looked for suitable apartments for more than a year, and when an apartment became available at the Berkeley in mid 2022, she acted quickly. The garden is what sold her on living here, together with her apartment’s lovely layout and pre-war details. Her cat, Ceci, approves of the views and basks in the morning light. Lynn immediately joined the Garden Committee and started work on her plot at the base of the 35<sup>th</sup> Street building. When the weather gets warmer, look for Lynn there. Say hi! Despite her association with Hannibal Lecter, Lynn is quite friendly and won’t bite: in fact she often enjoys a plate of fava beans and a nice chianti.

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## **SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS**

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The next Board Meeting is scheduled for March 12th, 2024. The following Board meetings are 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, Judy Whiting, Ed Leahy 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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