

The Grapevine Newsletter

I heard it through the Grapevine...

Notes from the February 14, 2023 Meeting of the Board of Directors of Berkowners, Inc.

Present: Walter Chadwick, Wanda Chin, Cecilia Durbin, Liz Hollander, Peggy Russell, Zach Rosenblatt, Carlos Rivera (Superintendent), Douglas Lister (Architect), Joe Doren (Metro Management). Absent: Ed Leahy – Ms. Hollander taking minutes.

Mr. Chadwick called the meeting to order at 6:34

1. Minutes of the January meeting were approved as corrected. Ms. Chin agreed to forward them to Mr. Leahy for inclusion.

2. **Windows and Waterproofing report from Mr. Lister:**

- Mr. Lister submitted drawings Jan 17. The Landmarks Commission said they “could approve the 35th Ave building proposal” and would reply with comments, possibly small changes in 10 days. Mr. Lister reminded them after two weeks. 20 days later he still had no reply.
- Ms. Durbin urged Mr. Lister to keep pressure on them to respond promptly.
- Mr. Chadwick reported talking to a resident who has served on the Queens Community Board about the Landmarks Subcommittee, which is the next step in the approval process.
- Mr. Lister submitted drawings on 77 and 78 to them last week and will follow up this week to find out when their meeting, when they consider it, will be scheduled. Mr. Doren, Mr. Lister, and at least one Board member should be present. Mr. Lister reported that the window trim on 35th Ave, more ornate than the rest, will have to be customized and incur an upcharge, which Mr. Lister estimates at \$320K. Manufacture will take 8-10 weeks.
- The special wooden trim on 77th street, 16 windows, will have to be restored by a separate contractor, at a cost of \$80K - this is the least expensive option.
- We can expect that the work on 35th Avenue windows will start once approved, provided that doesn't incur additional cost. Not known if Tindel will charge more for starting 35th Ave separately. Mr. Doren suggested they might want to apportion the downpayment for different buildings.
- Mr. Doren asked whether, given the delay, the window installation be further stalled by cold weather. Mr. Lister said it would not.
- Mr. Lister reported that the bulk of the work with New York Contracting – is complete. Five

or six cosmetic jobs still outstanding. Several are units that have not responded since the beginning. They may yet respond.

- Mr. Doren pointed out that Local Law 11 inspections on 78th street indicate that more work will need to be done, and strongly urged holding off any remaining waterproofing work until the Local 11 recommendations are fully assessed.

Mr. Lister left the meeting at 7:27

4. **Superintendent's report:**

- Floor repairs to A41 (77) have been completed.
- Passegio plumbing finished steampipe on 78th Basement floor.
- Zeno's made repairs on 78th fire escape and also a welding repair on 35th A side.
- Liberty repaired on the 78th Street Marquee
- Building staff are refurbishing marble in the 78th street façade.
- LL 11 inspections have been completed.
- Ms. Durbin observed that residents were still depositing compost in the 78th bin area when they shouldn't – Mr. Rivera responded that the signs were there and he would attend to it.
- Mr. Chadwick asked about the payment process for the texting system with staff and management. The total cost is \$87 per year. Mr. Chadwick and Mr. Doren agreed to work out the details offline.

Mr. Rivera left the meeting at 7:42

5. **Managing Agent's Report from Mr. Doren:**

- All three LL11 Inspection Reports have been submitted to DOB all are being reviewed pending filing. 78th has been assigned a rep to review, 77th and 35th were submitted later. Once the report is accepted, we'll get a list of required repairs. Work time frame will probably be three years. Mr. Doren recommended that no further waterproofing work be done until the DOB has given us that list, so that all work can be done together.
- LL 97 Inspection Proposals: We have two and are waiting for a third. They should be ready in a week. Mr. Chadwick asked if work would be required by 2024? Answer: in the first year, the fines aren't high. Subsequent fines depend on the type of work. Mr. Chadwick asked about the current efficiency grades. Answer: Current grades were generated 8 years ago, and Metro has its own contractor for this. Ms. Durbin requested that all three bids be sent to us together so we can vote it in before the next meeting.
- We need to review the current status of Berkowners regarding filing tax protests for valuation of the building - how many years are still open and when was the last settlement? Are we expecting any?
- Mr. Chadwick expressed satisfaction with Renee Colon's work reducing excessive costs on phone lines for building.

6. Plans for Annual Shareholders' Meeting:

- The question was discussed whether the meeting should be live or virtual. Jackson Heights Community Center \$125/hour 2 hour minimum, while YES elections - virtual meeting pricing is \$8,000
- Ms. Russell received an urgent text and had to leave the meeting at 8:24, but cast a vote.
- Vote taken: Six votes for live, one for Zoom
- Meeting was set for the Second Tuesday of May - May 9 – but subsequently moved to Monday, May 15.
- Format of the meeting was discussed. Volunteers are needed to check people in. Management will tally proxies and determine quorum. Reps from our accountants Marin and Montanye will serve as election inspectors. Proxies will be emailed and printed for handing out to neighbors. Metro will send out an announcement. Candidates and resumes should be submitted to Metro by Friday March 24 so that the package can be sent out to shareholders by week of April 10
- A Meet The Candidates Night will be scheduled Wednesday April 19th, if there is a contested election
- Ms. Durbin agreed to draft a letter requesting volunteers for sign-in. Mr. Chadwick said he would confirm the venue.
- Ms. Hollander raised the question of how many seats were up for election, given that three vacancies last year were filled by appointment. It was confirmed that all the Board seats are up for election this year as we did not reach quorum at the last annual shareholders meeting..

7. Treasurer's Report from Ms. Chin.

- Financials - Reserve funds as of end of January 31:
 - TD Bank: \$250,000
 - Habib Bank Money Market: \$264,751 expires March 9, will be moved to Raymond James
 - Habib Bank CD: \$282,581 matures May 5
 - Chase Bank (as of Feb 13) combined checking and savings \$236,659
 - Raymond James (as of Jan 31) Total portfolio: \$3,779,736
 - Proceeds from treasury unit sale invested in US T bills on Feb 9, 2023, with Raymond James: \$275K
- TD Bank funds are being kept liquid for LL11 late penalties likely due mid-April
- Mr. Rosenblatt asked if we have responded to the inquiries about assessment? Ms. Durbin posted an update on the Listserve last month. Ms. Hollander will write one for the Grapevine this month.
- Treasury Units sale report from Mr. Chadwick:
 - B23 closed on 1/30

- o A 41 77th st – buyers’ mortgage commitment pending inspection confirmations
- o A 53 35th ave – a potential buyer has shown interest but no offer made yet.
- o A 14 - estimate coming for renovation
- Mr. Chadwick proposed that a debit card be obtained for Board, since both Wix and EZ text require cards. Chase charges \$45/month – high, but necessary – and Mr. Doren says it’s common. There is a possibility that the monthly fee can be waived, or reduced. The vote was taken. 5 votes in favor of the debit card.
- Website update discussion deferred for online.
- Discussion of Transfer Fee project plan: The committee agreed to postpone till next year,

8. Report on E-Bikes

- Response to resident requests for a meeting with Board to propose modifications to EBIKE policy – Board voted to plan a meeting with concerned residents.

9. Report on Boardroom/Children’s Room Renovation.

- Chairs have been found – 16, to order \$40/chair to serve need for 14.
- Asbestos and Lead inspection for the Children’s Room has been scheduled.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:17

!SAVE THE DATE!

BERKELEY ANNUAL SHAREHOLDERS MEETING

Convening In Person

Monday, May 15th at 6:30pm

The Jewish Center of Jackson Heights

37-06 77th St.

A formal announcement has been sent to all shareholders.

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!**

CALL FOR BERKELEY BOARD CANDIDATES

As we did not reach quorum at last year's Annual Shareholders Meeting

ALL 7 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, 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 24, 2023

EASTER EGG HUNT

The Easter Egg Hunt will be **Saturday April 1, 2023** at noon in the central garden.
(Snow/rain date April 2)

Bring your Easter Baskets and hunt for eggs with other Berkeley families.

After the hunt, there will be activities including a spoon race, a sack race and a Spring craft.

There is a good chance that the Easter Bunny will be there!

If you have any questions, call Peggy at 347-813-4842.

CHILDREN'S CIRCLE

April Children's Circle is scheduled for

Saturday, April 8, 2023 at 11am in the 77th Street meeting room.

All Berkeley families are invited to join us for books, songs, music, crafts and fun.

CURBSIDE COMPOSTING RESUMES ON MARCH 27th

The city will resume curbside collection of organic waste on March 27th. The brown bins we had last fall will be placed once again at the north and south gates on 77th and 78th streets.

They are for organic waste - that means any plant or yard waste, food scraps and food-soiled paper.

The city also accepts BPI approved compostable products. To be sure a product is compostable, check at <https://products.bpiworld.org/>

For more details about what goes in here's a mini video: <https://youtu.be/gF85Ktlz4mk>

Bins will be lined, so you can deposit directly, but you can discourage vermin further by containing your scraps in brown paper bags, or BPI approved compostable bags (see link above). **Just please don't use plastic.**

Collection days for our buildings are the same as before:

35th Ave and 77th St Thursday and 78th St Friday

Check the [DSNY Site](#) for more information or google DSNY Curbside Composting Queens.

ARTISTS PROFILES ON HIATUS

The Artist Profile is on break this month but will resume next month!

EZText MESSAGING SYSTEM TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED

Due to the shift from Wavecrest to Metro Management, many have probably noticed a lapse in the text blasts from Carlos alerting us all to developing maintenance and repair issues. The Board and Metro have been working to bring back this system in a way that does not lose the previously established contact list. We are optimistic that this system will be back up and running by mid-April.

If you were not on these text blasts previously and would like to be added, please email Carlos or call his office number and give your name, building, apartment number and the phone number(s) you'd like to have added. (See the last page of the Grapevine for Carlos' contact info.)

SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS

The next Board Meeting is scheduled for **April 11th, 2023**. Board Meetings in 2023 are scheduled for **May 15th (Annual Shareholder's Meeting) and June 13th**. If you have a topic you would like to discuss with the board, please email them at berkboard@gmail.com.

Contributors to this newsletter were Walter Chadwick, Cecilia Durbin, Ed Leahy, and Liz Hollander. If you'd like to contribute content to the Berkeley Grapevine, please email bconwayb34@gmail.com.

BERKELEY — IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

Carlos Rivera, Superintendent

Ph: (718) 424-0040

Emergency Ph: (646) 403-2558

Email: superberkeley@gmail.com

Milton Zavala, Assistant Superintendent

Ph: (718) 424-0040

Emergency Ph: (646) 403-5093

Email: superberkeley@gmail.com

Board Email address:

berkboard@gmail.com

Newsletter Email address:

bconwayb34@gmail.com

Berkeley Google Group/Listserv:

theberkownerscoop@googlegroups.com

Berkeley Website:

www.theberkeleycoop.com

Management Company:

Metro Management Development, Inc.

1981 Marcus Avenue, Suite C-131

Lake Success, New York 11042

Tel: (718) 706-7755 | Fax: (718) 706-7760

www.metromanagementdev.com

Joe Doren, Senior Property Manager

jdoren@metromanagementdev.com

Ph:(718) 593-8908

Renee Colon, Administrative Associate

rcolon@metromanagementdev.com

Ph: (718) 593-8922