

APRIL 2025

VOLUME 138

The Grapevine Newsletter

I heard it through the Grapevine...

Notes from the March 11, 2025 Berkowners, Inc. Board Meeting

Attendees:

Board Members Present: Walter Chadwick, Wanda Chin, Cecilia Durbin, Ed Leahy, Maxx Salat

Board Members Absent: Peggy Russell, William Walter

Also present: Superintendent Carlos Rivera, Joe Doren (Metro Management), Miles Appelman (Salomon & Appelman)

Meeting was called to order at 6:31pm

1. Miles Appelman of Salomon & Appelman guest presentation on J51 Filing

- Proposal to Board regarding the pursuit of tax credits via the NYC J51R tax incentive program, which incentivizes the rehab of old buildings
 - Window project completed before 12/31/24, therefore application needs to be filed complete by 4/30/25
- Berkeley should be able to file in time due to the condition in which the buildings are kept as long as application is put in electronically; DOB and HPD violations need to be cleared

2. Board Voted in Favor of Adopting Minutes from the February 11th, 2025 Board Meeting

3. Superintendent's Report

- Smoke detectors in all buildings inspected, functioning well
- Windows - plaster work expected to be complete by the end of next week (3/21/25)

- Window insulation for air conditioners installation underway
- Waterproofing B44, B33 77th st Suggested by Doug Lister
- Laundry Room vents were cleaned by vendor
 - Vendor will investigate problem units
- Camera replaced on 35th Ave A-side service exit
 - Additional camera needs to be repaired 78th St north gate
- Alterations
 - B22 35th Ave - chromafix painting services
 - A58 77th St - NY contracting
- Radiator air valve inspection will be scheduled for next heating season (10/1/25)

Mr. Rivera left the meeting at 7:19pm

4. Review and discussion of Salomon and Appelman contract

- Three other J51 consultants were contacted; this firm was referred by Richard Montanye
- Fee revised from 4% to 3.5% [After further negotiations, the fee was further reduced to 3%]
- Board voted in favor of retaining Saloman and Appelman, subject to attorney review of retainer agreement
 - William voted in favor by proxy through Wanda
 - Peggy voted in favor by proxy through Walter

5. Manager's Report by Mr. Doren

- Metro Management has been purchased by AKAM Associates, but will remain a separate company with David Baron as president.
 - Clients are expected to benefit through savings in insurance, energy and purchasing
- Financial
 - Open items report prepared by Tom Budija
 - Tom advises accountant audit is nearly completed
- Local Law 11
 - Zaskorski Associates has sent deposit invoice
 - Board voted in favor of sending retainer
- Basement Legalization
 - Update on site visit and conference call regarding 77th St
 - Entire basement needs certificate of occupancy

- Permit of public assembly may not be consistent with how we would ideally like to use the community room
- Notice drafted regarding illegally modified apartment
 - Will be requesting renovation violation fee on sale
- Gas Detectors
 - 111 Gas detectors ordered but deliveries are backed up; awaiting shipment

6. President's Report

- Review of inheritance of shares and occupancy concerns in cases of deceased shareholders
- ASM scheduled 5/13/25 - actively seeking candidates for Board
- Treasury Unit Sale - B34 35th Ave in contract for \$525,000
- Trusts
 - Trust owns shares, but co-op must approve successor occupant or trustee sells
 - Board voted to approve allowing trusts under the parameters of the attorneys
 - William voted in favor by proxy through Wanda
 - Peggy voted in favor by proxy through Walter

7. Treasurer's Report

- **Balances as of February 28, 2025:** total reserves \$2,758,113.30
- **Board-managed**
 - Chase - checking and savings \$50,828.24. Decreased cash from the prior month due to transfer to RJFS.
 - RJFS \$2,610,495.42, composed of \$1,651,258.02 cash in 7 banks and four (4) bank CDs (\$230-250K each). Increased cash from the prior month reflected the maturity of one \$250K bank CD and the transfer of funds from Chase which had been realized from the sale of a Treasury unit in January 2025. Cash is currently earning 1.55%. The four bank CDs mature from 4/17/25 to 11/7/25, with rates ranging from 4.15 to 4.30%.
- **Metro-managed**
 - Chase - Beautification account \$47,101.94
 - Chase - Window assessment account \$49,687.73
- The last window assessment was billed with the March 2025 maintenance. There remain additional costs related to millwork for the window

replacement project and architect fees.

- **Update on Tax Incentive Programs**

- We have submitted an application to NYS Dept of Parks and Historic Preservation for a Historic Homeownership Rehab tax credit. Application fee was \$25. The potential credit is 20% of qualified rehab expenses, approx \$900K for the window replacement project. The exterior masonry work can be added to the application.. This is a direct tax credit, not an abatement or refund.
- The Board affirmed the decision made by email to move forward with the application for the Historic Home Rehab tax credit
 - William affirmed by proxy through Wanda
 - Peggy affirmed by proxy through Walter

8. Communications Report

- Website updates reviewed by Board members
- Reviewing viability of password protection of certain information
- Target launch date after ASM

9. Berkeley Social Club plan presentation by Ed Leahy

- Berkeley Social Committee to be composed of volunteer sub-committees organizing age-appropriate activities
- Board voted to establish a Berkeley Social Committee (Ed will send wording)
 - William voted in favor by proxy through Wanda
 - Peggy voted in favor by proxy through Walter

Meeting was concluded at 9:03pm

The Berkeley Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday April 19, 2025, 11 AM

Central Garden

Bring your Easter basket and join the hunt. After the hunt, stay for games and crafts.

All Berkeley families are welcome. Looking forward to seeing you there.

!SAVE THE DATE!

BERKELEY ANNUAL SHAREHOLDERS MEETING

Convening In Person

Tuesday May 13, 2025

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!**

What to Expect at the Annual Shareholders Meeting

What will happen at the Annual Shareholders Meeting?

We will start letting people sign into the meeting at 6pm. There will be 3 tables set up (1 for each building) with a volunteer shareholder sitting at each. Find your building table and sign in. This way your shares will be counted towards quorum.

At the meeting itself, board members and others with information about the running and governance of the co-op will give reports on what has happened with the co-op in the last year and what is planned going forward.

Items that might be of particular interest:

- An update on upcoming capital projects from our President Walter Chadwick.
- Our CPAs, Marin & Montanye will be discussing our FYE 2024 financial statements
- A financial report from our treasurer, Wanda Chin
- An update on other improvements and projects at the co-op by our president, Walter Chadwick
- Hear from our property manager Joe Doren of Metro Management

This is also a forum for shareholders to respectfully discuss our shared home and investment as well as to ask questions and for clarifications and offer ideas to make our shared home better.

What is quorum and why does it matter?

To quote directly from our By-Laws:

"At all meetings of shareholders in order to constitute a quorum and to permit the transaction of any business except to adjourn a meeting, there shall be present either in person or by proxy the holders of a majority of the shares entitled to vote thereat. A majority of the shareholders present may adjourn a meeting to a subsequent day despite the absences of a quorum."

What this means is that without a majority of the shares of the co-op represented at the meeting either in person or by proxy, we cannot hold an official election or any other kind of vote.

Last year, we achieved a quorum. 4 board seats are up for election this year, and 5 people are running.

- Walter Chadwick (incumbent)
- Eric C. Koch
- Ed Leahy (incumbent)
- Max Meadows
- Timothy Paul

You will receive copies of their resumes and/or letters of intent in the mail with your proxy ballot

What if we don't achieve quorum?

If we do not achieve a quorum, we cannot hold an official meeting and cannot have an official election or any other kind of vote. The official meeting will be adjourned and the board members will continue an unofficial reading of reports. This means that all board

seats will be appointed by the previous board. It doesn't look good to potential buyers if we are not achieving quorum at our annual meetings.

I can't attend the meeting, but wish to be counted towards quorum. Who can be my proxy?

Again, to quote our by-laws:

"Each shareholder of record shall be entitled at each shareholders' meeting to one vote, in person or by proxy, for each share standing in his name on the stock book at the time of the meeting. All proxies shall be in writing but need not be acknowledged or witnessed and shall be filed with the secretary at or previous to the time of the meeting. The person named as proxy need not himself be a shareholder of the corporation. All voting shall be viva voce, except that any qualified voter may demand a ballot vote, in which case the voting shall be by ballot, and each ballot shall state the name of the shareholder voting and the number of shares by him, and in addition, the name of the proxy, if such ballot is cast by a proxy. All elections shall be determined by a plurality vote, and unless otherwise specified in these by-laws or the certificate of incorporation, the affirmative vote of a majority represented at any meeting of shareholders shall be necessary for the transaction of any item of business and shall constitute the act of the shareholders."

In short, anyone at the meeting can be your proxy. You may even choose Joe Doren, our property manager, if that's easy for you. However, if you choose Joe Doren, you must use option A or B. A Metro agent may not choose your candidates for you.

You may choose another Shareholder or a non Shareholder for options A, B or C. But that person MUST come to the meeting, inform the registrant that they are your proxy and sign in as such.

Where do I turn in my proxy ballot?

There will be proxy ballot boxes in each laundry room.

We'll take them over to the Jewish Community Center on the day of the Meeting so they can get counted. I would try to get your ballot in the box before 5pm, just to be safe.

You can also hand your proxy ballot to anyone attending the meeting.

What if I don't receive or can't find my proxy ballot?

Your proxy ballot will soon arrive in the mail in a manilla envelope from Metro Management in a packet with the official announcement of the meeting and the resumes of each of the people running for the board.

However, there is nothing specific to the particular proxy ballot that you receive. A photocopy from any of your neighbors will work equally well. Or email [Boris Drew at Metro Management](#) to request a copy.

If you're not sure you're getting mail from Metro Management, please email [Boris Drew](#), so he can help sort that out.

We really hope to see you in person at the meeting. If you can't make it or don't wish to come for any reason, PLEASE turn in our proxy ballot in the laundry room.

BERKELEY ARTIST PROFILE

Spring is here, and the Brooklyn Botanical Garden is hosting its world-renowned Cherry Blossom Festival. Lovely, you say, but what does that have to do with the Berkeley? Well, if you visit on April 23, you will not only see beautiful flowering trees, but also our neighbor, accomplished musician [Aki Yamamoto](#). He will be accompanying his wife Hitoe's dance troupe as they perform traditional works from Japan's Tokushima (formerly known as Awa) Prefecture. Aki's daughter Karin will participate. The troupe will also perform at Symphony Space in Manhattan on May 4 as part of "[Discovery Within Traditions: Kimono, Dance & Music](#)" sponsored by Japan Performing Arts, Inc. (which will include some traditional Awa music Aki has scored for jazz), and as part of [the Japan Day Parade](#) in Manhattan on May 10.

Aki, who has lived with his family in the 77th Street building since 2011, is a seasoned standup bass performer, composer and arranger who has been playing jazz and popular music for many years. He also plays guitar, and does most of his composing and arranging on piano, which he studied as a child in Japan. Aki began to concentrate on bass in high school, when he joined his school's concert band. While his initial focus was on classical music, he soon segued into popular music and began to explore jazz. He then moved to Los Angeles, where he obtained a B.A. in Music at California State University Northridge. While there he was introduced to Latin jazz, salsa and pop music, and world music in many forms. It was a very exciting time! He then earned an M.A. at

William Paterson University in New Jersey, studying with such amazing teachers as Gene Bertoncini and Jim McNeely and being exposed to the New York jazz scene. While at William Paterson, Aki composed a big band arrangement for jazz pianist Mulgrew Miller and performed with many jazz combos and pop music groups. Though he has stopped formal schooling, performing with others is his continuing music education.

Video, particularly YouTube, changed the way music is experienced and shared, and Aki was excited to become a part of it. Upon graduating from William Paterson, he got his start in visual music presentation at NTV International, a Japanese company providing media services for television, where he is now Senior Production Manager. He has also created his own content, including scoring music for short films by Bob Giraldi, a well-known film maker and video producer. One of these films featured at a recent Hamptons Film Festival. And Aki dreams of one day composing pieces for orchestras, including symphonies.

But live music performance is still Aki's passion. He is most comfortable with the bass, and because he knows it so well, he can improvise on the spot when playing jazz. His trio, [Jazz Triangle 65-77](#), will tour Japan in late May, but you can catch them at Espresso 77 on April 19 before they go. (They will also appear at Espresso 77 on June 21.) Although he creates media content, Aki firmly believes that the best way to experience music is in person, especially in small venues. In live performance, everything contributes: the room, the crowd, the acoustics, and the general vibe, and improvisation comes naturally. We should all try to hear live music more often!

Aki frequently travels to perform, but is always happy to come back to the Berkeley, a welcoming place which is truly home. He and his family appreciate our kind building staff and lovely garden, and the Children's Circle. Although she has aged out of Circle participation, daughter Karin has *not* aged out of the Easter Egg Hunt. The family is looking forward to it!

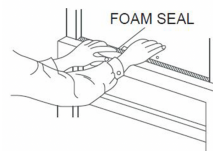
BABYSITTERS NEEDED

Berkeley parents of younger kids are looking to connect with high school and/or college students interested in babysitting. If someone in your household would be interested in babysitting for kids within the Berkeley, please reach out to Cecilia Durbin at cecilia.durbin@gmail.com.

FREE WINDOW INSULATION STILL AVAILABLE



If you do not have foam insulation between the upper and lower sashes of any window with an A/C installed, please email Carlos so he can add insulation at superberkeley@gmail.com. He will work with you to arrange installation.



GAME NIGHT HAS RETURNED!



After a long pandemic hiatus, the Berkeley Social Club is back! Our first meeting was a big success with a number of residents playing a variety of games. The next meeting is **Friday, April 25th from 7 pm – 10 pm in the Berkeley Community Room, 77th Street basement**. All adults are welcome to come and bring their favorite board or card game. And yes, we have chess players!

Our mission is to provide a welcoming venue for Berkeley residents to gather and socialize. We offer “BerkSocials” on the last Friday of every month from 7 to 10 PM.

For more information, contact Marina Pomeroy & Stacey Zaretsky at MyBerkSocial@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing you there.

BERKELEY SOCIAL COMMITTEE

At the March Board meeting, the Board voted unanimously to establish the Berkeley Social Committee for the purpose of organizing both age-appropriate and general interest social activities within the co-op. Ed Leahy volunteered to be the board's liaison.

Currently, we have Children's Circle for the little ones and Game Night for the adults, but several parents have noted the lack of anything for the ages of 4 to 17. If you would like to see something for any group within that range (or any particular interest), please e-mail Ed through Berkboard@gmail.com and volunteer to make it happen.

MAY CHILDREN'S CIRCLE

Saturday, May 17, 2025

11 AM in the 77th Street Community Room

Weather permitting, we will be planting spring flowers.



SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS

The following Board meetings will be held on May 13th (ASM), June 10th and July 8th. If you have a topic you would like to discuss with the board, please email them at 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. Meetings take place in the Community Room at 6:30 p.m.*

Contributors to this newsletter were Walter Chadwick, Cecilia Durbin, Judy Whiting, Stacey Zaretsky, and Peggy Russell. If you'd like to contribute content to the Berkeley Grapevine, please email bconwayb34@gmail.com.

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