

201 NEWS

FEBRUARY
2011

THE NEWSLETTER OF 201 WEST 16TH STREET

Reminder about Bicycles

If you store a bicycle in the basement, you must register with **Cristian Covaci**, our superintendant. After February 20, any unregistered bicycles in our basement will be removed and donated to a children's charity. The annual fee for bicycle storage in the basement will be added to your maintenance bill, so don't worry about presenting the fee when you register.

Storage Lockers

The reduction in the number of bicycles in the building along with some nipping and tucking of partitions in the basement has opened up space for 6-8 more storage lockers for rent by our residents. If you are interested, please let our super, Cristian, know what kind of locker you prefer (jumbo, full or half-size). He will add your name to the short wait list for lockers. You can contact Cristian at super@201west16.org. We hope to get these new lockers installed in the early spring.

Thank You for Your Generosity

The 201 clothing drive for Housing Works was a resounding success. A total of almost 250 pounds of gently used clothing was donated. Some pieces even had the original store tags on them. Housing Works supports people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. Their mission is to end the dual crises of homelessness and AIDS through advocacy and entrepreneurial businesses such as thrift shops that sustain their efforts.

www.201west16.org

Our new website, conceived and created by board member **Jeff Billark**, is now live.

On the site you can find information about the history of 201, links for contacts at Tudor Realty (our managing agent), and for our superintendent, **Cristian Covaci**. You can also download forms for unaccompanied overnight guests and minor apartment alterations, Open House Rules and other helpful information about 201. If you have suggestions for Jeff about the website, click the webmaster link. The site is a work in progress, with plans to add elements including photography and other archival information.

Maintenance Increases

Some of you may have missed the *New York Times* article on December 24th covering cooperatives in New York City. The article noted that maintenance increases for coops in the city would range from 3% to 15% for 2011. As we all know, the 201 maintenance increase for 2011 is 2.75%. The Board of Directors in its annual review of the budget for 2011 squeezed every line item that they had any control over to keep the budget increase as small as possible. One of the many assumptions the Board of Directors made was that this winter could not possibly be as bad as last winter. In fact, it has been a ferocious winter, setting records for snow and cold. During the coldest days so far, the building was using 350-400 gallons of fuel oil each day, translating to \$850 to \$1,200 per day to keep the building warm. This level of consumption was not anticipated in the decisions on the budget in the fall.

Tudor and the Board of Directors will monitor this budget line item carefully along with the other items comprising the budget during the year. If a mid year correction needs to be made we will give as much advance notice as possible. Of course we hope to make no adjustments; we just want to keep you up to date on factors that could affect that decision.

Unaccompanied Overnight Guests

Please take note of the regulations relating to the approval of unaccompanied overnight guests in our building. These rules are in place to protect all of our shareholders and residents. In many instances shareholders wait until a few hours before the arrival of an overnight guest before submitting the approval form. This often means that it is not possible to approve the request in time, leading to disappointment or inconvenience or both. To maintain adequate levels of security in our building and to avoid situations where guests cannot be admitted, shareholders are asked to submit request forms a few days in advance. Note that the doormen are not authorized to approve overnight guests and are instructed to refuse to do so.

Façade Project Update

Plans and specifications have been completed by TMT Restoration Architects for the 2011 version of our successful and regular façade maintenance and improvement program. Six contractors have been invited to tour the building and will develop bids and project estimates. As mentioned in an earlier edition of *201 News*, the most significant portion of the work will involve the west side of the building. However, deterioration has been noted on the east façade at floors 17, 18 and 19, in areas that have not previously been addressed by our program. These issues will also be addressed this year. Additionally, we hope to replace cracked limestone at the base of the building while we are working on the East façade. We plan to have the entire project completed before winter sets in once again, well in time to submit our Local Law 11/12 report to NYC in February 2012 as required by law.

FiOS

The installation of our building wide fiber optic wiring by Verizon is now complete. Board President **Charlie Sullivan** has finalized our contract with Verizon, allowing them access to the building and bringing us a choice of telephone, internet, and television/cable service. Within weeks you will begin to see marketing materials in the building promoting the service, and may even be greeted by a Verizon FiOS representative with information. Verizon is very interested in challenging TimeWarner for dominance in all three services and was willing to wire our building for free to enable this challenge.

Unfunded Mandates

Government often imposes mandates on co-ops that require action – and that involve costs that the government transfers to us. Here are a number of newly minted mandates that are positioned to affect the cost of keeping our building in compliance with government rules and regulations:

Façade Inspections: Previously, façade inspections could be conducted by our own engineers via high powered telescope and telephoto lenses. NYC now mandates that scaffolds be hung on all sides of a building and that top to bottom façade inspections be conducted by licensed, bonded, insured, regulated scaffolding companies and licensed architects.

Backflow Preventers: NYC has always required large buildings such as ours to have backflow preventers on the fresh water supply. We've had one for generations. This is designed to reduce the risk that any pollutants in a building water system, if present, might enter NYC water mains if water pressure falls. NYC now wants double protection to reduce this risk and has prescribed a newfangled backflow preventer to be installed this year. The process requires the use of a mechanical engineer to draw plans and file them with the city, involving permit fees, inspections, and installation costs.

Energy Audit: Mayor Bloomberg's GreeNYC program has instituted an energy audit requirement for all buildings. We must hire a licensed professional engineer to audit our energy use, and complete and file voluminous forms and data to develop a base line assessment of our energy usage. Though unsaid, this probably means that the city will gradually limit the amount of energy a building can use and charge a fee for overuse. We are responsible for the audit costs.

Fuel Change: Our building, along with every other building in NYC built before the 1980s, uses #6 fuel oil to fire our burner for hot water and heat. NYC has now set a date a few years in the future where all buildings must convert to #2 fuel oil or natural gas. #2 fuel oil is considerably more expensive than #6. This is a major undertaking, requiring the retention of mechanical engineers and boiler companies to study the most cost effective way for the building to proceed. The admirable goal is that #2 fuel oil and natural gas produce less carbon. The cost for this mandate, as usual, is to be assumed by the building. There may be some grant money available from the American Recovery and Reconstruction Act signed by President Obama to support this initiative.