

# 201 NEWS

SUMMER  
2019

THE NEWSLETTER OF 201 WEST 16TH STREET

## Welcome

**19DE – Andrew Warren and Joshua Line** Andrew is a senior account manager at Ketchum Advertising. Josh is a senior executive in charge of several cable television shows at Viacom.

**4A – Daniel Baker, MD and Chad Staral** Daniel is chief medical officer at Northwell Health/Lenox Hill. Chad is manager of the State and Local Tax Group at PWC.

## Summer Rooftop Soirée

Rain dates do happen. The original date for the garden group's early summer soiree was postponed due to showers...and was held the following day, June 26, with glorious weather and lots of good spirit. Those enjoying the views and the great evening were treated to donated snacks and refreshments – along with a multi-prize raffle that meant many guests went home with fun gifts. These get-togethers are a wonderful opportunity to get to know your neighbors while enjoying our amazing views.

## Rains

Boy did we have a rainy spring and early summer. Once again, the years of work and money we have devoted to our façade, roofs, and windows appear to be paying off. There have been no reports of leaks during this particularly rainy period. We know of some very minor locations of dampness penetrating, but not having active leaks is a new and happy result for us. Thank you to everyone for your sacrifices and patience over the years as we completed the necessary work to help keep us dry. Not bad for a building about to celebrate its 90th birthday.

## Annual Shareholders Meeting

Thunder, lightning and heavy rains did not dissuade a loyal group of shareholders from attending the Annual Meeting of Shareholders on June 18. Also joining were **Howard Lazarus** from our longtime managing agent Tudor Realty Services, our property manager **Christine Ang**, attorney **Jeff Reich** and accountant **Marvin Schwartz**. Once again we did not achieve a quorum, so the meeting was held on an informal basis. Great questions from shareholders about areas of common interest occupied most of the meeting. Since a quorum was not achieved, there was no election of board members; existing board members remain in place until the next meeting. The officers and members of the board are as follows:

<b>Charles Sullivan</b>	12B	President
<b>Ed Lewis</b>	17DE	Vice President/Treasurer
<b>Jeffrey Billark</b>	19A	Vice President/Secretary
<b>Julie Crockett</b>	5B/6B	Vice President
<b>Fred Rossetter</b>	17A	Vice President
<b>Seth Costen</b>		Time Equities Representative

## Commercial Retail Space

We've covered our retail space in these pages before, but it bears repeating. In 1979, before the building became a co-op, the previous owner entered into a 40-year 'sweetheart' lease deal for the retail space. It turned out to be a great deal for the master lease holder, but it kept us from earning maximum rates on our retail space during a period when retail rents were soaring. Of course, that lease was signed during a very different era in NYC when the economy was struggling. Many of us have been waiting anxiously for the lease to expire next year. Unfortunately, it will expire during a significant downturn in demand for retail space in the city – thanks in large part to all those packages from Amazon that arrive at 201 every day.

Two years ago, we engaged a consultant to outline options and what we could expect in terms of rental rates for our retail space. Even since that time, the demand for retail has declined further. It is very likely that the cooperative will be able to rent the space for more than what we were receiving from the master leaseholder, the open question is how long that search will take and what the final rent will be. As we consider our options, our plans will include an effort to retain the current tenant. As commercial tenants go, Williams Sonoma is fairly top drawer and our retail real estate broker has been in touch with them regularly. We will also work with our broker to try to identify another tenant or tenants, if necessary. As the date moves closer, you will be hearing more from us about how our search for a tenant is progressing.

## Our Apartment 10C

As mentioned here before, the cooperative was successful in canceling the Proprietary Lease of the previous occupant of this apartment. After a bit of fixing up, the apartment is now under contract. The sale price of the apartment will allow us to recoup 100% of our legal costs to cancel the lease as well as our clean up and repair costs. While the legal and other requirements for this action were often challenging and time consuming for the board, the co-op will be made whole again once the process is completed.

## Hausmann

A recent article in the trade paper *The Brokers Weekly* outlined one architect's view of 201 and the pleasure she had in plying her trade in our building. "Architect Virginia Tupker likened 201 to the light and airy apartment buildings of Paris that were designed by the city's master architect George-Eugène Haussmann. The hardwood floors, crown and base moldings, expansive windows and light spoke to her in a Haussmannian-Parisian way. For me it is the details of the building, the soft features, the light, ceiling heights that make good bones."

Baron Haussmann was appointed by Napoleon III to carry out a massive urban renewal of Paris. The grand boulevards lined with gracious buildings you see today are his work. Whether 201 ranks in that league, we will leave to your imagination after a glass of French wine.

## The Older Generation of Cooperatives

With all the new condos around the city, it's easy to forget that a majority of the city's housing cooperatives ("co-ops") have been around since the '80s and are in buildings that are many decades old. Like many other things that age, these buildings often need proper management and a little love.

When buildings are made of steel and brick and less durable materials such as terracotta, weather and life in NYC means that many things deteriorate and need to be restored and maintained – which can cost millions. That includes elevators, boilers, windows, sidewalks, intercoms, lights, doors, frames, roofs, water tanks, fans, and more (even board members!) Handling these needs can throw a co-op into a tailspin and create long-term financial problems. We are lucky but also not too surprised to report that 201 has weathered these storms well in recent years – thanks in large part to an aggressive focus on maintenance and addressing problems comprehensively before they become a crisis. Over the past 20+ years, your board has planned for orderly replacements/restorations in areas throughout our building – and these steps have helped us avoid higher restoration costs and helped make our building more efficient. When we replaced our windows, we helped reduce heat loss and noise. Our new boiler has saved money on fuel costs. The list goes on.

Balancing the financial needs of our building today with whatever could happen in the future is what boards are supposed to do. We take decisions related to maintenance increases, new fees and special assessments very carefully – in no small part because we have to pay them ourselves! But we recognize that in many cases what could have been a major cost and crisis for us was instead a manageable building issue because of careful planning and appropriate pre-emptive measures. This is one reason why our building has a very enviable financial position today.

All members of the board, most of whom have been in place for a long time, are continually focusing on the future and thinking about what's around the corner. We work to try to address problems early to avoid major costs later. And we work to address the ever-expanding wave of unfunded government mandates, lease expirations, employee replacements, and building security issues, always with an eye on our short- and long-term budget.