

# 201 NEWS

SPRING  
2020

T H E N E W S L E T T E R O F 2 0 1 W E S T 1 6 T H S T R E E T

## Annual Meeting Postponed

In an abundance of caution and apparently a bit of optimism, we have postponed the annual meeting until September 15th. Even if social distancing standards are relaxed by June, we doubt shareholders will want to participate in large gatherings that early in our recovery. Reminders will be sent out along with proxies and voting information in the late summer.

## Roof Deck Closed

Having a great resource like our roof deck closed is disappointing. But it is the only option in order to comply with NYS and NYC health rules regarding social distancing and due to our shortage of staff. The roof deck will remain closed until we receive appropriate guidance from the state and city and staffing is not a problem. The irrigation system has been activated and tested so our plants will only suffer from loneliness, not thirst. When work rules permit, we will arrange for the gardeners to do a spring clean-up so that our oasis in the sky will be ready and in good health when we can reopen.

## New Doorman

As you may have noticed, our afternoon doorman Hritsu Bichi has been absent lately. "Bichi" – as he is affectionately known – recently had surgery. He has a second surgery scheduled when the crush of COVID-19 patients slows down at our hospitals. On Thursdays and Fridays the new doorman is John Adams; on other days the afternoon-into-evening shift is being filled by members of our building team who are working additional hours. We do not expect Bichi back until the fall.

## COVID-19 & 201

The virus ended the longest financial expansion in the history of the United States and has changed many aspects of life as we knew it, especially in New York. We are not going to repeat the guidance and news here – it is unavoidable. We join the chorus in hoping that New York and life will get back to normal soon and encourage everyone to continue to make prudent decisions to protect yourself and your neighbors. In the meantime, patience, plenty of patience.

Once again in the face of an emergency situation our building staff has risen to the occasion. We are managing the many home deliveries of food and other necessities. We are disinfecting the elevator call buttons and floor buttons 3-5 times a day. We are mopping the lobby, vestibule, laundry room and elevator floors several times a day. We ask that all residents continue to take any steps possible to reduce risk for everyone in our building – wear masks and gloves, limit guests, try to consolidate deliveries and report any problems. We can do this.

## Our Own Retail Space

Williams Sonoma Home has closed due to the COVID retail restrictions. They have requested permission to 'board up' the store with plywood, which we have denied. We would prefer something a bit more attractive and are working with them on best options. Thinking a bit further down the calendar, will they reopen? We have our doubts. If retail is given a green light in late summer, they will only have a few months left on their lease. They have not indicated a preference to remain in our building.

Just before we felt the impact of COVID-19, we had been engaged with a class A retail tenant who was interested in taking part of the space at an attractive rent. We were just getting down to the details of how the space could be legally divided (electric, water, HVAC, life safety, egress, fire alarm, etc.) But not too surprisingly, the discussions stopped when COVID shut everything down. Retail was already facing challenges before COVID and now many are saying it will take years to recover. Nevertheless, we continue to believe that we will be able to find a tenant(s) for the space at a rent that will equal or exceed what we currently get. The process may take a bit longer than we had all hoped. We will keep you updated.

## Good-bye to Barneys, Again!

Many long timers in our building remember when we said "good-bye" to Barneys in 201 News back in 199??? For decades it was an island of chic and pricey clothes for men and then also for women. Loehman's didn't have the same cachet. And so it was exciting when we welcomed Barneys back to the neighborhood a few years ago. Of course, many of us also saw that the new Barneys was often near-empty – a victim of the decline in retail or extremely current styles that scared people away – who knows? But we are now saying "good-bye" once again – and it looks like this will be the last time. The Barneys label will still exist in other stores, but Barneys as a retailer is no more. The space is obviously very prominent in our area and so we are hopeful that it will fill with a great retailer. We will update with any news about a new tenant when available.

## **LL-11 Cycle 9**

For all residents who have lived at 201 for a few years, it probably seems like we just finished the most recent round of façade work. March 1 marked the beginning of the 9th cycle of façade inspections for our building. Based on NYC guidelines, we have four years to have the façade inspected AND have any remedial work noted in the inspection report completed and signed-off by the City.

For this inspection cycle Luke Licalzi Engineers, the same firm that handled our inspection last time, will guide us in this mandatory inspection and file the necessary form called LL-11 Cycle 9. They handled the job very professionally for us in the last cycle. We hope to have a similar good experience this time around.

NYC has very strict façade inspection and repair requirements and has further toughened the program for this cycle of inspections and work. In the last cycle we were required to make only three top-to-bottom scaffold drops to inspect the façade. This cycle we are required to conduct seven top-to-bottom scaffold drops. Longtime readers of 201 News will recall the discussion about whether we should repair or replace our lovely terra-cotta fixtures. As we suspected, repair of terra-cotta on the upper reaches of the buildings is now totally disallowed by the city in response to some hazardous risks and one event where a woman was killed by falling terra-cotta while walking through Times Square.

These requirements are a reflection of how many older, beautifully designed buildings there are in NYC and the steps necessary to keep them and passersby safe.

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