

Welcome

9G – **Randy Fields** and **Rob Geer** joined 201 from another location in Chelsea.

19B – **Lynn Wagenknecht** is a long-time resident who purchased another apartment here.

Retail update

While we have had a few calls about our remaining retail space, nothing has advanced to a serious discussion in recent months. A walk around our Chelsea neighborhood shows a lot of vacant retail space with some spots of activity including “Westville” opening up on 7th Avenue just south of us. But there are also signs of further vacancy with Chase leaving its location on 7th and 14th. Barneys was also a big loss to retail traffic in the area. While we take any inquiries seriously and pursue them actively, Covid and the economy may be working against us. We are continuing every effort to find new tenants.

Our facade

No doubt you know that our 2022 version of the required facade restoration and maintenance program is underway. Rather than bog down (or bore to death) everyone on the ins and outs of the program and the progress thus far, we will issue separate periodic bulletins on areas of concern and progress. Board President Ed Lewis is coordinating with the contractor and engineers on the project, just as he has done successfully for five or six (he can't remember) previous iterations of facade work on our 93-year-old building. Work will, as usual, start at the top of our building on the water tank and machine room brick enclosure and will work its way down.

Cost increases

Over the past several years our primary concern regarding increased costs has been New York City real estate taxes. More recently, we are seeing upward cost pressures in many other areas:

- Our newly negotiated labor agreement with Local 32BJ (which represents all of our employees), included an increase in costs for benefits and salary as well as a new \$3,000 contract signing bonus.
- We have not yet seen a request for an increase in electricity costs, but we expect one as a result of rising fuel costs and global uncertainty caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.
- Water bills are also certain to go up. The NYC Department of Environmental Protection, the agency responsible for drinking water and wastewater, has indicated it will be increasing rates by 5% this year. They had no increases in 2017, 2018 and 2021. DEP manages 7,400 miles of water distribution pipes, delivers one billion gallons of water and treats 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater every day, an extraordinary operation that most New Yorkers hardly notice.
- The costs of cleaning and other supplies necessary to keep the building in tip top shape are rising.

Despite these realities, at this stage we believe we have costs covered adequately in our 2022 budget. (As the year progresses and increased costs get entered into the accounting system, we will have a more precise assessment.) Board President Ed Lewis and Board Co-Treasurer Richard Quest are paying close attention to costs to operate our building at the high standards we work diligently to achieve.

Goodbye Cristian and Carmen

On Wednesday, May 26, a group of shareholders and residents gathered to toast the remarkable work and success of our friend and superintendent Cristian Covaci and his spouse Carmen. As most of you know, Cristian has now retired and moved to Portugal with Carmen. We may get to see him occasionally when they visit their lovely and brilliant daughter who will be living and working in New York.

During the gathering, many people shared wonderful memories with toasts and hugs. We have had a lot of positive things happen to 201 since our inception in 1985, but having the love, care, friendship, and expertise of Cristian goes in the history book as THE positive happening here in the last 30+ years - many thanks again for your great service to our building.

Smoke alarms

In the spring newsletter we unintentionally forgot to remind residents to replace smoke alarm batteries. We do this every year for all the alarms in public spaces in our building. You should definitely do this for the ones located in your apartment.

We also recently checked each stair exit door in the building to ensure that they close automatically and quietly. If you find that a door in your area does not close properly, please let our superintendent Cătălin know right away – you can contact him at super@201west16.org. It is important that these doors close properly to keep smoke and heat under control in the event of a serious fire. Also please make sure that doormats do not cause the stairway doors to jam.