

# **WESTCHESTER GARDENS OWNERS, INC. NEWSLETTER**

DECEMBER 2017

WESTCHESTER GARDENS  
OWNERS, INC.

## **2018 OPERATING BUDGET**

### **Board of Directors**

**Lou Cirillo**

**Kim A. Derbin**

**Michael Hughes**

**Trevor Victor**

**Michael Liptrot**

**Robert Orlofsky**

**Jeffrey Sommers**

### **Managing Agent**

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**Superintendent  
Dominic Totino  
914-664-2565**

At a meeting of the Westchester Gardens Board of Directors held on November 6, the 2018 Operating Budget was approved that provides for a 1% increase in the monthly maintenance charges commencing January 1, 2018.

The Board of Directors was pleased to be able to hold the increase to 1% despite substantial increases in real estate taxes, insurance and general operating expenses. This is the second year in a row that Westchester Gardens is able to contain a maintenance increase to 1%.

Shareholders may download a copy of the 2018 Operating Budget by going to [www.robertorlofsky.com](http://www.robertorlofsky.com), click on Properties, then Westchester Gardens.

## **MAJOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMPLETED**

Westchester Gardens has successfully completed the conversion of the heating and hot water system from oil to natural gas. (Dual fuel)

Since October 1 we have been operating on gas without any issues. When you have a brand new system it takes a little time to get used to the new controls. In response to shareholder comments, at the annual shareholders meeting, the heating settings have been adjusted.

If you do not have adequate heat to your apartment and need service, please contact Dominic Totino at (914) 664-2565 or the Management office at (914) 328-6962.

The conversion project of the heating system was a major capital improvement that was under study for years. The "initial project costs" were in excess of \$500,000 and that is why the Board delayed the project.

As a result and after being patient, Con Edison's pricing to bring in a new gas service came down.

The total gas conversion cost of all equipment and new gas line was \$285,000, almost half of the original estimates and paid for from the Westchester Gardens Reserve Fund.

## **SAFETY INSPECTON APARTMENT FUSE PANELS**

The insurance carrier for Westchester Gardens required that the electrical system in all apartments be inspected to insure safe operation. Any apartment that had a fuse panel, instead of a circuit breaker, received new tamper proof fuses that prohibits a resident from putting too large a fuse that could lead to overheating of the wires and a potential fire.

As shareholders renovate apartments it is a requirement to replace the fuse panel with circuit breakers.

Residents should take precaution when using any electrical device. Overloading a line with power strips is a potential problem. Make sure your apartment smoke detector is in good working order. Test your smoke detector by pressing the test button and now would be a good time to install a new battery. If you need assistance, call Dominic.

### **FIRE ESCAPE PAINTING AND RESTORATION**

All of the fire escapes were inspected, steel repairs were made as necessary and then the fire escapes were thoroughly ground down and repainted. Residents should be reminded that the Fire Department prohibits personal items, plants or any other objects to be placed on the fire escapes.

### **WINDOW AIR CONDITIONERS**

The insurance company also required Westchester Gardens to make provisions that a window air conditioner be installed in a manner that would prevent it from falling out and potentially injuring a pedestrian.

So this past year the Board approved a carpenter to install your air conditioner with a steel bar across the top that would keep the air conditioner stable even if the top window opens.

If you have not yet had your air conditioner properly installed, please contact Dominic. We can do this work during the winter and there is “no charge” to the shareholders.

### **WHAT WORK IS BEING PLANNED FOR NEXT YEAR?**

The building entrance doors and floor have been an issue. The doors are old and do not work properly. There is also a condition where the entry vestibules in most entrances are developing a bulge. The Westchester Board brought in an engineer to investigate the problem.

The results of the investigation is that after years of water seepage from outside, the steel frame work in the entry vestibules have begun to corrode thereby lifting the floor tiles.

Plans have been filed with the City of Mt. Vernon building department and we hope to move forward with the project in the spring of next year.

### **NEW SECURITY SYSTEM**

All areas of the parking lot and dumpsters have security camera coverage and have enhanced lighting that have acted as a deterrent to theft and vandalism in the parking lot.

If you **“SEE SOMETHING—SAY SOMETHING”**. If you see any suspicious individuals that do not look familiar or vehicles driving through our parking lot that don’t belong, please immediately call “911”.

Residents are also reminded not to leave any boxes, bags or valuables in your car. If you have a large item, it is best to put it in your trunk so it is not visible.

## **SHAREHOLDER APARTMENT REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE**

Shareholders are responsible for maintaining the interior of their apartments including the interior walls and floors. There has been more than one occurrence when a leak developed between apartments and the cause was poor maintenance of the bathroom interior wall or floor tile. In that situation the shareholder whose tile was in disrepair would be responsible for damage to their neighbor's bathroom.

If you accidentally overflow your sink or bathtub, the shareholder that caused the damage would be responsible. Another example is a refrigerator ice maker or a dishwasher. Ice makers and dishwashers can leak and cause damage to apartments below; again, the shareholder who owns the equipment would be responsible for any building damage. It is very important and required that all shareholders purchase and keep in force an apartment insurance policy. The insurance policy would pay for damage to your apartment and for neighbor's damage as well.

## **SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS SAVE LIVES**

It is the law in New York that requires all apartments to be equipped with a carbon monoxide and smoke detector. A carbon monoxide/smoke detector can save your life.

It is recommended that you test and replace the battery in your smoke detector now to be sure that it is working properly. We also recommend that you install a smoke detector in every bedroom of your apartment.

Kidde is a very large manufacturer of smoke/carbon monoxide detectors and their website is full of fire safety recommendations. For more information go to [www.kiddeus.com](http://www.kiddeus.com).

If you hear a smoke alarm going off in the building, please immediately call 911, and then notify Dominic and the Management Office.

## **GARBAGE DISPOSAL AND JUNK MAIL**

Please make use of ALL dumpsters when discarding garbage. Do not pile garbage on the front dumpsters or leave on the ground.

Please make use of the newly finished walks and do not walk across the lawns.

Please do not leave your junk mail on the floor in the entry, vestibule.

If all residents pitch in and follow these simple guidelines, it will help to keep our home beautiful.

## **WINTER MAINTENANCE TIPS**

- \* IF THERE IS NO HEAT FROM YOUR RADIATOR, CALL DOMINIC (914-664-2565)
- \* COVER OR REMOVE WINDOW AIR CONDITIONERS TO PREVENT DRAFTS
- \* PLEASE DO NOT POUR COOKING GREASE DOWN KITCHEN DRAINS
- \* LAUNDRY ROOM HOURS ARE 7:00 AM TO 9:30 PM
- \* PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE CLOTHES UNATTENDED IN THE MACHINES

## **ANNUAL SHAREHOLDERS MEETING**

The Westchester Gardens Annual Shareholders Meeting was held on December 4. Mr. Mark Cohen from the accounting firm of Bloom & Streit reviewed the 2016 Financial Report, 2017 financials year to date and a 2018 Operating Budget. Mr. Cohen reported that Westchester Gardens has been doing very well financially and with the recent conversion of the heating system from oil to natural gas a minimum maintenance increase of 1% was approved, by the Board for next year. Robert Orlofsky reported on the past years capital improvement projects including the conversion of the heating system from oil to gas, upgrading apartments electrical safety systems that still had fuse panels and restoration of the fire escapes. For 2018 the Board plans to move forward with repair to the building lobby floors and replacement of the entry front doors. All of the work is being paid for from the Co-ops reserve fund.

There was then an open discussion with recommendations from shareholders with regard to the building maintenance and operation from recycling to the bike room and gave feedback on the new heating system and controls.

Out of the 86 shareholder sold apartments, only 22 shareholders attended the meeting in person and the Sponsor owns 26 apartments so there was not an official quorum and an election of the board could not take place. In accordance with the by-laws if there is not a quorum at the Annual Meeting then the existing Board remains elected.

The Board would like to thank the shareholders that did attend and is hopeful that in the future more shareholders will attend and participate.

## **WESTCHESTER GARDENS 2017 SALES**

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and welcome the following new shareholders to Westchester Gardens.

- HA1 - Sharon Anne Brace
- GD2 - Dominique Beauport
- BB1 - Jerrol Washington
- FB1 - Rodney Rosembert
- KA3 - Nilmary Perez and Nick Reyes Guerrero

*Dominic Totino, Edgar Leal and Luis Leal do an outstanding job maintaining Westchester Gardens. The building is kept beautifully and we all appreciate their daily efforts, attention to maintenance issues and hard work. Plus, as always, we are proud that our Holiday Lights always shine bright and hope make your Holidays at Westchester Gardens just a little bit brighter.*

***BEST WISHES FOR A MERRY CHRISTMAS, HAPPY HANUKKAH AND A PROSPEROUS AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR!***

