

PATRICIA GARDENS OWNERS, INC. NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2021

**PATRICIA
GARDENS
OWNERS, INC.**

LOOKING BACK ON 2021 - A DIFFICULT YEAR

Board of Directors

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President**

**Eileen Chase
Vice President**

**Robert Orlofsky
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Besides the impact from the Pandemic, 2021 has been a difficult year with regard to building repairs.

Back in February there was a leak in an underground steam heating line that runs between the 1825 and 1829 Buildings. It was necessary to remove the sidewalk pavers, excavate, replace the section of pipe that was leaking and restore the area.

When designing the new courtyard, we took into consideration future maintenance of underground plumbing and the electrical systems. Stone pavers can be lifted and reinstalled so the area looks like nothing was disturbed.

Plumbing continued to be a recurring service issue with additional repairs made in the 1825 building. Patricia Gardens typically budgets \$3,000 - \$5,000 for plumbing repairs. So far in 2021 we have had over \$30,000 in plumbing repairs. Plumbing repairs trigger additional carpentry expenses required to open and close walls.

Patricia Gardens was built in the 1950's. As the original plumbing system ages, leaks can develop that can cause damage to apartments in the kitchens or bathrooms. Replumbing the building is cost prohibitive, so the best course of action is to deal with the leaks as they occur.

Fortunately, Patricia Gardens still has an adequate cash Reserve Fund that can be used for unforeseen major repairs.

PANDEMIC * OMICRON SURGE * PLEASE WEAR A MASK

Since February of 2020, when the Pandemic first began, Juan and Alex Soto have been on the front-line cleaning and sanitizing the common areas and surfaces 7 days a week for more than a year.

Just when it looked like we were coming out of the Pandemic, the Omicron variant has hit us hard. The news reports that COVID cases are surging again and people are getting sick everywhere.

New York State has implemented a new mask mandate for businesses. While we are not a business, we highly recommend that all residents wear a face mask while moving through the common areas of the building and the laundry room.

2022 OPERATING BUDGET 3% INCREASE IN THE MONTHLY MAINTENANCE CHARGES

The Patricia Gardens Board of Directors met with Bill Rank, who is an accountant from the firm of Bloom & Streit. Bill has worked with the Patricia Gardens Board for many years and is very familiar with the day-to-day operating costs and the corporation's financial needs.

Bill reported to the Board that he was projecting an operating loss for 2021 of approximately \$19,000. The projected loss is due to items that exceeded the budget forecast specifically payroll, gas heat, and building repairs.

In 2021, Patricia Gardens obtained a loan under the Federal Paycheck Protection Program in the amount of \$19,335. Once the loan is forgiven, Patricia Gardens gets to keep this money and use it to offset any operating loss for 2021 due to Pandemic related expenses.

Bill Rank recommended, and the Board has approved, adopting a 3% increase in the monthly maintenance charges commencing January 1, 2022.

There was no increase in the monthly maintenance charges in 2021. The Board has worked very hard to keep a lid on increasing maintenance charges. So, with a 3% maintenance increase in 2022, the average increase in maintenance charges has only been 1.5% for the past two years.

There are specific operating expenses that increase every year and are beyond the control of the Board of Directors. These fixed expenses include Real Estate Taxes, Payroll, Insurance, Utilities and Gas Heat.

The Board always looks for ways to improve the buildings while reducing operating costs. In 2015 the Patricia Gardens Board made the decision to convert the heating system from oil to natural gas (dual fuel). This capital improvement has had a major financial benefit to the Shareholders. Before 2015, when Patricia Gardens was operating on oil, the Co-op spent on average \$90,000 - \$100,000 to heat the building. Now almost seven years later we are budgeting \$55,000 to provide heat and hot water in 2022. The heating expense has been cut in half. If we were still operating on oil, we would need to budget \$100,000 for 2022 and the maintenance increase needed would be much higher.

FUTURE CAPITAL PROJECTS

Due to the Pandemic and many more people working from home, the Board had delayed repainting the fire escapes, primarily because this work creates a lot of grinding noise and requires covering/sealing windows in the work areas. Since the fire escapes are rusty and peeling, we can no longer delay this work and it will be scheduled for the Spring of 2022.

NEW WESTCHESTER COUNTY FAIR HOUSING LAWS

The Westchester County Board of Legislators has adopted and the Westchester County Commission of Human Rights will administer the new laws that have a direct impact on Cooperatives.

The first law now requires all Co-ops to give a written reason if an application to purchase is denied. The Westchester County Commission of Human Rights wants to protect buyers from potential discrimination that would violate the Federal Fair Housing Laws.

The second law that was recertified in April of 2021 by the Westchester County Commission of Human Rights, requires a Co-op Board to provide a “reasonable accommodation” for individuals with a disability. This includes allowing an individual who has been medically prescribed to have a dog in spite of the Co-op’s no dog policy. Any Shareholder seeking permission to have a service animal at Patricia Gardens is required to follow the Co-ops Emotional Support (ESA) policy.

QUIET ENJOYMENT OF YOUR APARTMENT

As a result of the Pandemic, all of our lives have changed. Many of us work from home either on a part-time or full-time basis.

The Patricia Gardens setting is “Communal Living”. We live above, below and to the side of our neighbors.

Normal noise can travel between apartments that includes walking around your apartment, vacuuming, playing television or music, using an exercise machine, opening and closing furniture drawers, opening and closing bedroom doors and the list goes on.

The Patricia Gardens House Rules require that after 11:00 PM, residents should take extra precautions not to make noise that could disturb their neighbors.

All residents of Patricia Gardens are entitled to the quiet enjoyment of their apartments. Please be aware and considerate of your neighbors and take steps to minimize noise transmissions between apartments.

COURTYARD AND AREA OF OPEN SPACE

Our entry courtyard continues to be our most admired asset. It is beautiful and private. Everyone who purchases at Patricia Gardens comments that when they walk into the courtyard for the first time they could not believe how beautiful, clean, and well maintained the property is. Families with children are reminded that the courtyard is not a playground area.

NO SMOKING IN COMMON AREAS

Residents are also reminded that smoking is not permitted in any of the common areas of the building that includes the hallways, laundry room and courtyard.

PLEASE BREAK DOWN YOUR BOXES

Now with the holidays upon us, the daily deliveries of cardboard boxes from Amazon, UPS and FEDEX are increasing. Please help us by retrieving your packages from the building's entrances promptly after delivery and do not leave any junk mail on the entry lobby floor.

All cardboard boxes are required to be “broken down flat” before placing them in the “Blue” dumpsters. Do not place full boxes in the “Blue” dumpsters.

Full boxes make Juan and Alex’s job much harder since they have to take all of the boxes out of the dumpsters, break them down flat, and reload the dumpsters to make room for other cardboard.

The "Red" dumpsters are for commingled items, glass, cans, plastics rinsed clean and placed in blue or clear recycle bags.

The "Green" dumpsters are for your wet household garbage that should be in sealed plastic garbage bags.

VIRTUAL SHAREHOLDERS MEETING

Since it is still not safe to meet in person, the Patricia Gardens Board of Directors will be scheduling a Webinar style meeting for the end of January. More details on the meeting to follow.

PATRICIA GARDENS SALES

In spite of the Pandemic, apartments are still being sold and we would like to congratulate and welcome the following new Shareholders to Patricia Gardens:

Camille V. Berlioz 1833-3F
Joseph and Katarzyna Fiorita 1825-2A
Patricia M. Mays 1829-1H
Alessia M. Daniele and Erick A. Leal 1829-3C

Juan Soto and Alex Soto do an outstanding job maintaining Patricia Gardens. The buildings are kept beautifully and we all appreciate their daily efforts, attention to maintenance issues and hard work.
Plus, the annual Holiday Lights shine bright for all to enjoy, and hope to make your Holidays at Patricia Gardens just a little bit brighter!

**Best wishes for a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah
and Good Health and Happiness in the New Year!**

