

WESTCHESTER GARDENS OWNERS, INC. NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2022

WESTCHESTER GARDENS
OWNERS, INC.

Dear Shareholders,

Board of Directors

Lou Cirillo
President

Vice Presidents
Trevor Victor
Rodney Rosebert
Karl Nifontoff

Michael Hughes
Treasurer

Karin Aurichio
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Shai Shustik
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On November 21, the Westchester Gardens Board reviewed in detail the 2022 Operating Budget versus the actual income and expenses year to date with Lori Lerman, from Bloom & Streit who is our accountant.

For this year, Westchester Gardens incurred a significant overrun on the gas heating expense. For 2022 we had budgeted \$124,000. The actual gas heating expense is projected to be \$176,000 that is \$52,000 over budget.

Essentially Westchester Gardens used the same amount of gas as last year. The reason for the overrun is due to Con Edison increases in utility rates.

There are other areas that are causing a budget shortfall for 2022 that include general and major repairs and a new City of Mt. Vernon Refuse Sustainability Fee of \$24,000. The new Mt. Vernon Refuse fee being imposed alone requires a 1.5% increase in the Westchester Gardens Monthly Maintenance charges for next year. The City of Mt. Vernon has announced that the new Refuse fee will permit the City to purchase badly needed new sanitation vehicles and other sanitation related initiatives.

Westchester Gardens was built in the 1930's. As the building ages, so does its original plumbing systems. There were several major plumbing leaks between apartments this year that needed repairs.

After a thorough review of all financial options, the Westchester Gardens Board of Directors adopted the 2023 Operating Budget that provides for a 3.5% increase in the monthly maintenance charges, and a separate monthly gas heat surcharge of \$1.00 per share spread over 12 months, commencing on January 1, 2023.

Gas Heat is now forecasted to be \$180,000 for 2023 that is \$40,000 more than what was budgeted for in 2022. A separate monthly surcharge, for gas heat, provides the Board with flexibility to increase, lower or eliminate the surcharge depending on our actual gas heating costs during the first half of 2023. To calculate your monthly gas heat surcharge, take the number of shares you own and divide by 12.

To show you how utility costs have climbed please take a look at this chart along with past Maintenance charge increases.

<u>Total Gas Heating Expense</u>	<u>Past Increases in the Monthly Maintenance charges</u>
2021 – 128,267	2021 - 1%
2022 – 176,000	2022 - 2%
2023 – 180,000	2023 - 3.5%

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NEWSLETTER

Between 2020 and 2022 gas heating costs have more than doubled. The Monthly Maintenance charges have increased an average of less than 2% over the last 5 years while inflation has been running 6 – 9%.

Shareholders may download a copy of the Westchester Gardens 2023 Operating Budget by going to the managing agent's website www.robortorlofsky.com

The Westchester Gardens Board and Management have been very proactive to control and reduce utility costs over the years.

***** CONVERSION OF THE HEATING SYSTEM FROM OIL TO NATURAL GAS *****

In 2017 the Board and management had the foresight and moved forward to convert our heating system from oil to natural gas. That conversion has cut our heating expenses in half. If Westchester Gardens was still operating on oil, our 2023 forecast for heat would be over \$350,000, more than double what is being forecasted for gas. Since Westchester Gardens converted to gas heat, Con Edison has put a Moratorium in New York State and buildings are no longer able to convert their heating systems from oil to gas.

***** CAPITAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS *****

Other Capital Improvements made since the gas conversion include, the milling and repaving of the parking lot, decommissioning the underground oil tank, replacement of all the building door entrances, new beautiful flagstone entrance landings and replacement of all of the basement plumbing valves on the risers. All of this work was paid for from the Westchester Gardens Reserve Fund without imposing a special assessment on the Shareholders.

For 2022/2023 Westchester Gardens is working on the complete restoration of the roof bulkheads, which are the structures at the top of each floor landing.

The brick work, the roof on the top of the bulkheads along with some of the original flashing details need replacement. There are eleven roof bulkheads. So far six have been completed and work will resume in the Spring to complete the project.

Payment for restoration of the roof bulkheads is also being paid from the Corporations Reserve Fund that currently stands at \$430,000.

***** GARBAGE AND RECYCLING *****

The Westchester Gardens Maintenance Staff, Edgar and Louis Leal work very hard to keep Westchester Gardens clean.

Unfortunately, some residents are not following the rules for disposal of their garbage and recyclables.

Residents should be reminded of the following:

1. All bagged and tied household garbage should be placed inside the dumpsters at the rear of the parking lot. **Do not leave your garbage on the ground or on top of the dumpsters. Doing so, will attract racoons, squirrels and other rodents.**
2. Recyclables that include glass, cans, bottles and plastic should be rinsed and placed in the **RED** barrels in the Laundry Room.
3. Paper, cardboard, magazines and newspapers should be placed in the **BLUE** barrels in the Laundry Room. Cardboard boxes should be left flat in the Laundry Room on the floor to the side of the recyclable barrels.
4. Never leave any garbage in the basement, at the bottom of the stairs or anywhere in the common areas of the building. Please do not leave junk mail on the floor in the entry vestibules below the mailboxes.

The garbage and recyclables are picked-up five days a week. There is no garbage pick-up on Federal Holidays.

SECURITY DOORS – DO NOT LEAVE HOOKED OPEN

The front entry doors, the door to the apartment hallways and the doors to the basement have hooks to facilitate bringing in your groceries, packages, carrying your laundry to the basement and for deliveries.

These doors are “Security Doors” and must remained closed and locked. So please after you hook a door open, make sure the door is unhooked and the door is closed.

If there is a problem with any of the doors not closing or locking properly, please call the management office.

EXTERMINATING SERVICE

The exterminator is scheduled to come to Westchester Gardens twice a month, the first and third Tuesday.

If you have any exterminating issue in your apartment and would like to have your apartment treated, please contact Dominic at (914) 664-2565 or submit a Maintenance Request on line by visiting the managing agent’s website. www.robertorlofsky.com Submitting a Maintenance request on line will assist to schedule service to your apartment.

TRIBUTE TO DIANE

Diane Totino, Dominic's wife recently passed away.

Many of us knew Diane before she took ill. Diane had an amazing, outgoing and caring personality. She always made you feel welcomed.

Diane was truly Dominic's partner when it came to the Westchester Gardens Community and treated the residents of Westchester Gardens like they were a part of her own family.

We would all like to join together to express our sincere condolences to Dominic, Kenny, Dominic Jr. and their families.

The year 2022 has been the strongest year for resale activity at Westchester Gardens ever! In spite of rising interest rates, twelve apartments were sold this year and we would like to congratulate and welcome the following new Shareholders to Westchester Gardens:

Katya Levitan
Rachel Ann Rego
Paulette Brown
Fortune Douglas
William and Karen Lindsay
Igor and Alisa Bukhvalov
Tariq Mehmood
Leomarcia Mateo
Ross and Anna Schneiderman
Julian Johnson and Lashauna Williams
Christine De Anna
Charles Emadu

Dominic Totino, Edgar and Luis Leal do an excellent job in maintaining Westchester Gardens.

The hallways are always clean, the lawns and gardens are beautiful and the annual Holiday Lights are enjoyed by all.

Best Wishes during the Holiday Season and in the coming New Year!

