



158th Street and Riverside Drive Housing Corporation
MINUTES OF THE RIVER TERRACE BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 16th, 2023 – 7:30PM

Board Members Present

L. Fowler (LF); P. Morgan-Riley (PMR); S. Wilcox (SW); K. Berry (KB); W. Cherry (WC); W. Patterson (WP)

Metro Management Present

K. Cook, Assistant Manager (KC); J. Nunez, Superintendent (JN)

Kagan Lubic Lepper Finkelstein & Gold, LLP Present

Denise C. Sagua (DS)

Board Members Absent

D. Encarnacion (DE); J. Sutton (JS); W. Coles (WCO)

Metro Management Absent

D. Masiku, Manager (DM)

The meeting of the Board of the 158th Street and Riverside Drive Housing Corporation was called to order by Mr. Fowler at 7:36pm in the Jackie Brockington Community Room with Pauline Morgan-Riley, Kevin Berry, Susan Wilcox, Walter Cherry, William Patterson, Kamilah Cook and superintendent Jose Nunez. Denise Sagua from Kagan Lubic Lepper Finkelstein & Gold, LLP was present via Zoom.

---Discussion---

Introduction & Moment of Silence – (LF) Mr. Fowler welcomed everyone attending and asked for a moment of silence in recognition of our loved ones who are ever present in our hearts, but not unable to be with us in person.

Conflict of Interest Compliance Requirements – The President introduced our corporate attorney Denise C. Sagua who reminded shareholders of a law requiring the annual reporting of all contracts in which a board member has a financial interest. All conflicts must be disclosed and if a board member has a conflict with anyone with whom the corporation is working with, it must be disclosed in advance of any decision being made and reflected in the minutes recording any votes on such contract. Board Members present received a copy of the law and reviewed and signed prior to the meeting, which will now be filed with the State. A summary report will go out to all the shareholders based on the filing. During the meeting, each board member present stated that they did not have a conflict of interest. Board members who were not present will complete the written disclosure form.

By-Laws — With Ms. Sagua present, President Fowler asked for her to provide an update on the By-Laws status. Ms. Sagua stated that the revised By-Laws went to the shareholders for a vote last year, which

sought to capture amendments passed to the Mitchell Lama Law and the private Housing Finance Law. The shareholders did vote and passed the Bylaw Amendments in November. However, By-Laws do not go into effect until they are approved by HPD, who informed us that that they had changed one of their interpretations of a new law regarding electronic voting which is now part of the Mitchell-Lama rules. With respect to that, we made minor corrections in the By-Laws, as directed by HPD, to clarify that any electronic voting that would take place at a 'unit owners meeting' would need to take place at the meeting. Folks would not be allowed to vote on a website at home, they would need to come down to the community room or wherever the election supervising company is set up and voting either on a tablet or screen there. Regular voting, by paper ballots and absentee ballots sent directly to the election company will still be permitted. All information will be distributed to the shareholders with the updated By-Laws to help clarify. Questions can be raised to management, who can direct them to the attorney's office.

Face Mask Reminder – (LF) As everyone is aware, face coverings remain optional, but are strongly encouraged. In the case of River Terrace, by the nature of our population, there are many persons who are who classified as members of vulnerable populations, and we should be considerate of that fact. Therefore, we continue to ask that individuals in public areas continue to wear face masks. We think it's a small price to pay with regard to the safety and health of our neighbors.

Reminder: It is encouraged to continue to wear a face covering while outside your apartment, and especially in the following areas:

- Waiting for and riding the elevator
- In the laundry rooms
- In the mailbox area.

Laundry Rooms – (KC) We've been able to finalize some of the issues we've experienced regarding updating the rooms to install the sprinkler system. We have passed the inspection. Along with the work that our superintended handled, we were able to ensure that the water for the sprinkler system—which is why there was work recently at the top of the driveway, to make sure that the connection was open to us for repairs in the future. Tomorrow, shareholders will see that the laundry room is open on the Southside and both rooms will be open for a few days. Work on the north side will begin on the 27th. Office Management will send a notice to cooperators, but this repair will go much faster now that we have resolved the issues in the south laundry room.

(LF) What time do we expect to open the (south side) laundry room tomorrow?

(KC) 8AM.

(PMR) If both rooms are open, are we still going to keep the later hours?

(KC) We won't have coverage for that. It will go back to the regular hours of 4 AM to 11 PM.

(WC) If everything goes well on the north side, how long will that take?

(KC) About three to four days.

Fire Safety Notice – (KC) All cooperators received the Fire Safety Notice and should respond to the survey via mail, online or on by phone. So far, only 100 people have responded. The building is required to show proof that all cooperators have been informed and are complying with safety issues. This information is especially important to for those have small children or newborns, please remember to check your windows, and have safety mechanisms installed on the stove, and more.

Ad-Hoc Committee for Wireless Antenna — (LF) Ms. Coles is absent tonight, but did share the following information:

“As to the Ad-Hoc Wireless Committee Update, the committee is presently preparing its consensus, complete with references to the materials most critical to its decision. Materials will be distributed to the board very shortly for your review. Thank you again for allowing the time to prepare this presentation, and thanks to the committee members Lazelle Williams, Julie Berman and Gloria McDuffie who have donated their time and efforts to this project.”

Advocacy Re: Development Project / Rent Increase – (SW) Susan Wilcox attended the most recent meeting and shared the following information that was also posted on Basecamp last week:

- The group debriefed the gathering that took place a couple of weeks ago (which Julie Berman attended). It was agreed the turnout was great, but that the group didn't have a plan for follow up and only one elected official showed up. Others sent a staff member.
- A couple of members dominated much of the conversation. They said Mark Levine supports the building of low-income housing at Safety City and that the luxury building “is not going to happen,” however fact checking is needed. The members said they've been working for years on a plan for low-income housing at Safety City for a 6-story building that would not block River Terrace views. (If you live about the fourth floor or above.)
- Ms. Wilcox wondered if any RT cooperators are familiar with this plan, or were included in any conversations about it? A lot of us strongly support low-income housing but question the location. Traffic on 158th St and in the back of our building won't be ideal, and the environmental impact on what is a flood zone is not known.
- Where most Alto members see the value in having the group identify what the group stands for, and what it wants to achieve and how, the above two members' want to take action. It's become apparent there was a lack of clear immediate goals for their actions.
- It could be useful to have RT cooperators attend the Alto meeting to stay informed, but it's to be seen how our goals align and if the group can become racially representative of the communities it focusses on: Harlem, Washington Heights, and Inwood.

Mr. Fowler posed the question about whether we should invite Mark Levine to meet with River Terrace. Ms. Wilcox thought it would be a good idea given his long relationship with our building.

The Club Room at River Terrace (GB) – (LF) In Mr. Sutton's absence, Mr. Fowler reported that the Speaker Event with Director/Photographer Amandla Baraka was well attended and well received. A point that was raised, and for all of us to consider, is the engagement of River Terrace's younger population. If there are people who have ideas on how to engage younger generations, please let us know. Our history at River Terrace has been about engagement from beginning to end, from young to old, and we would like to continue that tradition.

---Capital Projects Report---

Façade & Terraces – (KC) There has been a lot of movement in the last few days. Terrace glass for apartments H and I have been installed, and these terraces are now open. Work is now moving onto lines J and K lines, followed by the terraces in the courtyard area. Management will let shareholders know which lines there will be next.

(WC) I noticed today, they have completed W and X across from me.

(KC) They haven't completed it yet, as we're still waiting for those lines to pass inspection.

(WC) Regarding the J line, they normally prepare by putting the glass alongside the building. That hasn't happened yet, so I'm asking, do we have the materials to complete the job?

(LF) Yes.

(WP) Now that they've finished H and I, they can do the double scaffolding. They didn't bring the glass up yet because they didn't have the scaffolding up.

Electrical Upgrade – (LF) We have completed most of the work, however there are still speed bumps. One being a vacated apartment that has been under closure due to NYPD action, and other electrical violations from other cooperators that need to be mediated. At this point, those items need to be addressed before the project is completed, but those items are in process.

Fire Alarm System – (KC) The building went into contract with AFA for the installation of speakers in each apartment with a control system in the lobby. If there's a fire in any part of the building, the fire dept can provide instruction and evacuation procedures directly to the apartments affected. Currently, there are ongoing conversations between HPD, the contractor and the architect. Mr. Masiku will be able to provide further updates at the next board meeting.

South Community Room – (KC) The room is nearly ready to open, however we're awaiting an electrical upgrade. We have purchased new appliances that draw a lot of power. This upgrade will take another two weeks and we will let shareholders know when the room is ready for rentals. We are also discussing the rental agreement with the Board.

(WC) In terms of noise meters, is there any consideration in installing this?

(JN) We can have the security manage this.

(WC) We haven't discussed or established a decibel level and would need to make policy decision.

Renters are also aware that they need to monitor levels and keep guests inside, information that needs to be re-shared as the room opens.

(PMR) The room hasn't been rented for three years, so we don't know how much people will use the room. But we can remind shareholders that they are responsible for keeping guests inside the room and monitoring the noise.

(WC) I'm speaking from experience My family first lived in 1B and you could not carry on a conversation. It's outrageous so something needs to be considered so if it happens, we can nip it in the bud.

(LF) Again, I think it's something for us to continue to monitor to see if we need to make some policy decisions.

Intercom and Driveway Accessibility & Capital Grant – (LF) Reminder that the building is looking at the option of replacing the intercoms in each apartment with a video device so you can see who's at the door. We're also exploring options in the back of the building to make each entrance assessable for wheelchairs and shopping carts. Work related to this project is part of the Capital Grant application that has been submitted to the Manhattan Borough President's Office. We are waiting for the decision about that submission.

(WP) Is it correct that we discussed a ramp in the driveway, for accessibility?

(PMR) Yes.

(WP) And the intercom, we're replacing it?

(PMR) It would be to replace the current intercom, for which we tried last year, and we didn't get funding. It would replace the intercom with a digital camera.

Raceway Channel / Fire Alarm – (LF) Having realized that the initial approach was aesthetically unappealing according to several cooperators and did not meet the requirements for the fire channel, we are getting input from our engineer to determine what route we need to follow.

---Shareholder Q&A---

Q (via Zoom) regarding RCN issues.

A (KC) I don't know if we can speak on that, but the office is not aware of any issues, but perhaps shareholders are able to weigh in on that?

Q (via Zoom) concerning the U-Line completion.

A (KC) The U-line is next scheduled for installation of terrace railing.

(LF) With the regard to that, there are regular construction meetings, of which Mr. Masiku, Ms. Cook, Ms. Morgan-Riley, and Mr. Riley and Mr. Patterson attend. They were able to move the vendor to complete the work by April and I want to thank them for their service.

(WC) I have two concerns as the terrace glass gets completed: If glass is ever broken, will we have extra on hand? Especially since they're manufactured in China.

(PMR) Columbia.

(WC) Columbia, I'm sorry. The concern, maybe our super has experience here. Do we have extras, and is there a policy in place to investigate who is responsible for that?

(LF) Twofold. Number one, the order for additional glass was inclusive of extra material. Number two, it is incumbent upon this body to make that determination of who is responsible.

Q (Ms. Nelson) I'm curious about the hallway molding... Are we going to replace them?

A (LF) I may have not been clear, but we recognize that the current moldings do not meet our standards and we must also meet certain requirements for the fire channel. Right now, we are waiting for the engineer's recommendations on what we can install.

Q (Ms. Nelson) Many years ago, Mark Levine and the Borough President at the time, were here helping us with Safety City. Talking about what the possibilities were for that, and focusing on how it would be used for the department of sanitation. Every time you hear a new thing, I'm always surprised. Is that the only lot in New York City available for low-income housing? With any construction there it's going to be a bottleneck. I don't understand why we still have a problem about what is going to be done with Safety City.

A (LF) To your point, they have been a myriad of proposals there. I remember a proposal about a high rise as tall as River Terrace, as well as a parking garage at one time. There have been many things. Recently there has been furvert around having no vacant space anywhere, and making sure you could develop land for affordable housing. Our appreciation for quality-of-life issues is in tension with this need. There are better uses of the lot for urban planning.

(WC) With the city's goal to create 500,000 affordable housing units... how are you going to develop opposition [against Mark Levine]?

(LF) That's his hope. He's a friend of River Terrace. Reasonable people can have a conversation.

(Ms. Nelson) It's a little sad that we're going through this again and again...

(LF) I ask that we all continue to be vigilant. Rather than saying no, what do we suggest? What do we think is the prime use for that property? What's a better way to use that. We can push back and balance the conversation rather than push back and just say 'no.'

Q (unknown) I have a question about the floor of our terraces. I noticed that about 8-10 of them have been painted between the H and I line. I would like to have paint so I can paint my terrace floor.

(LF) I am not aware that there has been approval for anyone to paint the terrace floor.

(WC) They have been making repairs, but they are the same color.

(LF) It's my understanding that once they are finished, that nothing is to be done with that floor.

(KC) As some of the terraces are being repaired, they have been refinishing the terraces.

(LF) But I thought she said they are painting different colors? Are you saying you see different colors?

(unknown) No, it's the same color. I'd like them to paint mine.

(KC) As needed, some of the terraces have been refinished. But this is more than just paint – you can't go to Home Depot and get the same thing. This is to keep the longevity of the floors and for waterproofing. It's not just paint. It was applied where needed.

(LF) It was not simply cosmetic?

(KC) No.

Q (unknown) Are we going to have landscaping in the courtyard once the terraces are done? They're a mess.

(KC) We don't have a date for when the scaffolding will be removed, there will need to be inspections. I know that spring is upon us, and we will do what we can to get the courtyard looking as nice as possible.

(WC) Did we determine what flooring or covering we can put on the terrace floors?

(PMR) Mr. Masiku was having the engineer look at the tiles, and there was another set of tiles we asked them to look at.

(LF) There's a warranty regarding the terrace floors – and it's been determined that there may be certain coverings that are acceptable and what is happening now is to determine what that covering would be in keeping with the warranty. The grass rugs previously used may cause us to be in violation of that warranty.

Mr. Fowler noted that at peak we had (35) shareholders attend this meeting. This is of great concern. The active involvement of all shareholders is important to the sustaining of River Terrace. He asks attendees to extend an invitation to others who are concerned about the building to attend the next board meeting on Thursday, March 16th at 7:30pm. Memos continue to be shared with meeting information. If anyone has a question about how to connect to the meeting should contact the Management Office.

With no questions, Mr. Fowler thanked shareholders for attending and the meeting was adjourned at 8:33pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jory Sutton

Secretary | River Terrace Board of Directors

Susan Wilcox

Assistant Secretary | River Terrace Board of Directors