



“...If you’ve got a rich imagination, give it a whirl, give it a try...”  
—Frank Loesser

# The Whitehall WHIRL



3333 Henry Hudson Parkway  
Riverdale, NY 10463

AN INFORMAL NEWSLETTER FOR ALL RESIDENTS OF THE WHITEHALL  
FALL 2016 ISSUE No. 40

## Annual Meeting Wrap-Up

### **PRISAND: WHITEHALL IN BEST SHAPE FINANCIALLY IN MANY YEARS — 3 KEY REASONS WHY**



Norman Prisand

According to Norman Prisand, principal of the Whitehall's accounting firm, the building is in the healthiest financial condition it's been in for at least 10 years. Mr. Prisand offered this robust assessment as the lead-in to his presentation of the 2014-2015 financial statements at the June 15, 2016 Annual Meeting of Shareholders.

He outlined the following as the top reasons for our present financial strength:

1. **The conversion to gas heat** from heating oil in May 2014. The savings were so immediate and substantial, Mr. Prisand said, that they allowed us to pay back the entire cost of the conversion, which was funded by a 3-year shareholder assessment, in just 2 years. And the ongoing savings continue to keep our utilities expenses down.
2. **Refinancing of The Whitehall's mortgage**, which yielded more than \$7,000,000 in cash to create a cash reserve to devote to major capital projects, notably the new green roof. Moreover, the refinancing, at much lower interest rates, has substantially reduced our annual debt service costs.
3. **Signing of a long-term lease for the school annex with Bright Horizons**, the premier operator of early childhood day care facilities worldwide. Bright Horizons is paying substantially more rent for the school annex space than P.S. 24, the prior tenant. And Bright Horizons, with its global reputation, adds a definite prestige cachet to The Whitehall.

#### ***The downside: Increased real estate taxes continue***

In this rosy picture, the one negative Norman Prisand identified at the shareholders meeting is our steadily increasing real estate taxes. In the last 4 years, he pointed out, our real estate taxes have gone up by \$735,000. Significantly, our tax certiorari attorneys have had little success in getting our taxes reduced.

The 2015-2016 financial statements really tell the tale: Our actual real estate tax for 2015 was \$2,170,083; the estimate for 2016 is \$2,463,500.

*Continued on Page 2*

## **WHITEHALL RESIDENTS JOIN IN PETITION TO IMPROVE Bx10 & Bx20 MTA BUS SERVICE**

At least 50 Whitehall residents, representing about 10% of our apartments, have joined in a petition organized by a group of concerned residents of Riverdale and Spuyten Duyvil to improve and restore service on the MTA's Bx10 and Bx20 bus lines.

According to Deborah Wallace, a resident of 555 Kappock St. and co-chair of the residents group, "The MTA in 2010 reduced the schedule on the Bx20 line to weekday rush hours only, but failed to increase service along the Bx10 line to compensate. In fact," she added, "service along the Bx10 line seems to have also been reduced, with longer waits between buses during the non-rush hours."

The objective of the petition was to amass at least 1,000 resident signatures, which has been accomplished, and then seek meetings with key Riverdale elected politicians, including City Councilman Andrew Cohen, Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, and State Senator Jeff Klein, in order to enlist their support. Once that happens, Ms. Wallace told the **Whitehall Whirl**, the group would then seek an appointment with the MTA. At presstime, the group has a meeting scheduled with Councilman Cohen, and is awaiting an appointment with Assemblyman Dinowitz.

*Continued on Page 2*

## **KEY PHONE NUMBERS**

Office/Garage.....718-796-3383  
Front Desk.....718-548-7522  
Club.....718-796-2100

## JUNE SHAREHOLDERS MEETING FEATURES “BEST FINANCIALS IN 10 YEARS,” STATE OF THE BUILDING REPORT & BOARD ELECTION

*continued*

Back on the positive side, Prisand notes that the building has been running a budgeted surplus for 2015 and is projected to have an even larger surplus by the end of the current year — in part due to continuing savings on gas vs. oil heat.. Any surpluses, combined with added revenues from maintenance increases, and flip-tax income, are earmarked to go right back into our reserve fund bank account.



Jeff Moerdler

Board President Jeff Moerdler next took shareholders through the top achievements of the 2015-2016 fiscal year, in his “State of the Building” report. Here’s how he prioritized what happened during an enormously consequential year for the building:

1. Signing of a lease for the school annex with Bright Horizons, a leading early childcare center willing to pay market rent for the facility. This followed more than a year of unsuccessful attempts to have the NYC Board of Education negotiate a lease renewal for the property. Bright Horizons is now underway with an extensive reconfiguring of the 13,000 sq. ft. space, along with installation of a playground along 232nd St. for its exclusive use.
2. Refinancing of our first and second mortgages and line of credit into a new \$36 million first mortgage with Astoria Bank, at an annual interest rate of 3.75%.
3. Removal of the existing concrete pool deck, installation of new waterproofing over the entire deck, and preparation for replacement of the original concrete slab with a green roof that will be a true lifestyle enhancement for the building, and add significant value to our property.
4. Completion of new boiler feedwater condensate tanks and rebuilding of the cooling towers, to bring our air conditioning service up to optimal functionality.
5. Addition of Verizon FiOS service to our array of cable TV, broadband internet and digital phone providers, which was accomplished with very little disturbance to Whitehall residents.
6. Upgraded equipment and new machines where required in our twin laundry rooms.
7. New trees courtesy of the NYC parks department along Independence Ave., and scheduled replacement of dead trees along Henry Hudson Parkway, plus continuing installation of permanent wrought iron tree guards in tree pits.
8. Placement of newspaper recycle bins in all service elevator vestibules to minimize clutter and facilitate easy removal.
9. Continuing monitoring and any required mitigation of legionella bacteria in our cooling towers.
10. Ongoing work to reduce the humidity in the storage locker area in the basement.
11. Continuation of our popular annual holiday party in the main lobby, with plans to repeat the event during the 2016 Holiday Season.

### **Board Election Returns Incumbent Directors for Another One-Year Term**

With all five incumbent resident Directors standing for re-election via a Board Proxy, and no other nominations of shareholders in advance or from the floor, the annual election of Directors — the final piece of business during the Annual Meeting — was a foregone conclusion, and emblematic of the relative harmony that exists at The Whitehall. Elected for another one-year term were Board President Jeff Moerdler, Vice President and Secretary Len Daykin, Vice President and Treasurer Lydia Silverman, and Vice Presidents Irma Greene and Rosemary Ginty. Sponsor-appointed Directors Larry Goldberg and Derrick McMaster continue in their posts. w

## MTA BUS SERVICE PETITION

*continued*

The petitions were initially distributed at the 232nd St. MTA bus stop, where additional Whitehall residents signed to indicate their support, prompting the group to ask the Board if the petition could also be presented at the Whitehall front desk, which it subsequently was for most of the summer season.

While the Bx 10 and Bx 20 buses follow the same route along the Henry Hudson Parkway, the #10 bus route is a loop entirely within the Bronx. The #20 bus turns South at 231st. St. and Kingsbridge Ave. and then follows Broadway into Manhattan, terminating at 207th St. and Broadway. So the #10 bus can connect riders to the #1 Subway line, while the #20 offers stops in Manhattan at the Allen Hospital and can also connect riders to the “A” train at 207th St. The elimination of Bx 20 service during all but weekday rush hours means that riders do not have direct service to locations in Inwood and Washington Heights during non-rush hour weekdays.

In addition, as part of their research into local bus service, the group organizing the petition has found that MTA bus dispatchers can change bus designations on the spot, depending on traffic flows. This was observed as a Bx10 bus was changed to a Bx7 bus by a dispatcher because, the dispatcher explained, “the 7 line needs a bus,” even though 2 #7’s had just gone by. Stay tuned for updates on this story. w

FROM

*The New York Times*

METROPOLITAN DIARY

*Dear Diary,*

I went to my local drugstore on Columbus Avenue to buy a sympathy card. There were a lot of cards, but only two on the bottom shelf for sympathy, and one was for a pet.

I asked the clerk if he had other sympathy cards, because there were only two. He said he would tell the card guy.

I went back there two weeks later.

Now there were three cards — two for your pet.

— Joan Rosenfeld

# HOW “GRANDMA” MOSES MADE ME FEEL BETTER ABOUT AMERICA — and not a moment too soon!

For the last several years, Emily and I have spent the High Holidays with our daughter and grand-daughter where they live in Northern Vermont. This year, we made the 5-1/2 hour drive up to Essex Junction with anxiety and troubled hearts, thanks largely to the darkening nature of this godforsaken, never-ending, 2016 Presidential election. Unfortunately, the tenor and discourse of the campaign has spiraled downward, from the political basement, to the gutter, and more recently even lower, to the sewer.

But, to our amazement and our relief, there was something right at hand in Vermont that reawakened our sense of the goodness, decency and beauty of America, the American spirit and the greatness of our democracy. We found it in an exhibit of the greatest works of Anna Mary Robertson (Grandma) Moses at the Shelburne



Museum just south of Burlington. Moses was a woman of New York, Vermont and Massachusetts whose long life (1860-1961) spanned the Civil War, two World Wars, Korea and the beginnings of

the exploration of space. She was a self-taught artist who didn't even start painting until her mid-70s and then never stopped until the day she died. Grandma Moses

was a modernist in her largely abstract sense of perspective, use of bright colors, and borrowed materials (clippings, postcards, tracings) to populate her works. Her paintings celebrated what she termed “old-timey”, rural values and were all about the basics of American life — family, community, celebration of the seasons, the holidays, hard work. She was also totally pragmatic, often creating a painting to fit an old beat-up frame that happened to strike her fancy. As she put it, “It’s usually better to build the sty before you get the pig.”

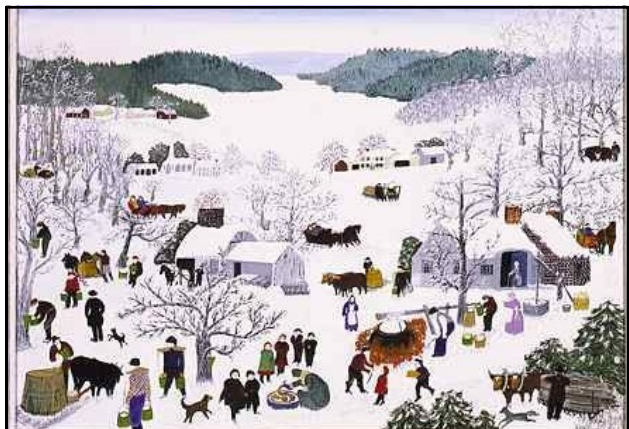
We spent several hours among the more than 60 Grandma Moses paintings in the exhibit, many on loan from the Bennington, VT museum, in the town where she lived for many years (see two examples below). And as we emerged from the exhibit into the brilliant fall colors of the Vermont countryside, we noticed that not just we, but the many other visitors to the museum all had the same look on their faces — they were smiling. I still am.

I’m hoping to share what we learned and what we saw at this exhibit with Whitehall residents in a special presentation next Spring, linking the works and legacy of three great contemporaneous American storytellers in art: Norman Rockwell, Edward Hopper, and, of course, Grandma Moses.

— Len Daykin



**“Catching the Turkey”** — Grandma Moses, 1955.. On loan from the Bennington Museum. Oil on wood. Grandma Moses’ favorite season was winter, and her favorite holiday was Thanksgiving. The boy in the center actually catching the turkey was lifted or traced by the artist from another illustration of boys playing at a family picnic.



**“Sugaring Off”** — Grandma Moses 1943. Private collection. Oil on pressed board. Typical of Grandma Moses, the entire town is busy tapping the trees for maple sap and then boiling down the combined output into the large vat in the lower center of the scene. Here too, some of the figures were recycled from other paintings.



# A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE WHITEHALL'S

Design plan for 30,000 sq. ft. space shows location of key features,

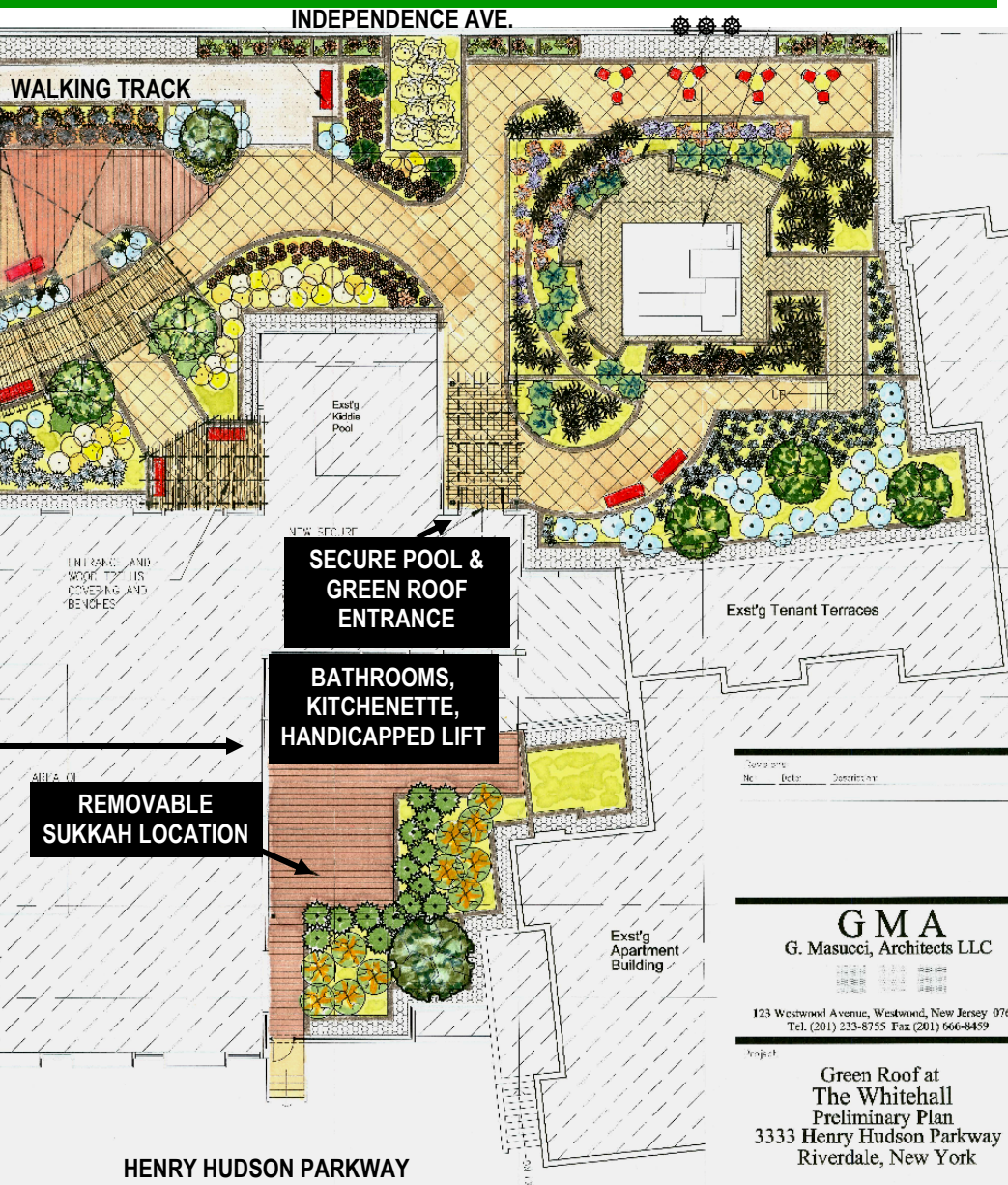


■ Many Whitehall residents will have seen this Board-approved design plan and the artist renderings on pages 6-7, at a special residents meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 3 in the ballroom, but we wanted to include all of this in this issue for those who did not get a chance to attend the meeting, or for those who simply want to have a personal copy of these visuals, and to be able to review them at leisure. The Whitehall's "green roof" is clearly one of the most ambitious projects ever launched by the building, and could significantly transform how residents utilize this important common area, as well as enhance the appeal and value of The Whitehall as a place to live. Consultants retained by The Whitehall to advise on all aspects of design and installation of the roof have indicated that this could be the largest such private property installation to date in the City of New York.



# 30,000 SQ. FT. GREEN ROOF

landscaping, entrances/exits, surfaces



■ At presstime in late October, here is where the project stands: Phase One of the project, including demolition of the cabanas and the existing concrete slab, and replacement of the waterproofing membrane, is now complete. The Board of Directors has selected a general contractor to execute the approved plan for the green roof, from among four bids received. Management is working with the selected contractor to finalize the construction contract and agree on a comprehensive time schedule, to substantially complete the job in time for the summer 2017 season.

*Continued on pages 6-7*

## COMING EVENTS!

**Saturday Nite  
At the Movies  
“Currents & Classics”  
NOVEMBER 5, 2016  
8pm in the Ballroom  
WOODY ALLEN’S LATEST...  
“CAFÉ SOCIETY”**

**Saturday, November 19, 2016  
7:30pm in the Ballroom**

**Live “Nightclub” Performance  
3 FOR THE SHOW does...  
“FRED & GINGER’s”  
GREATEST HITS —**

**Music of Cole Porter, George  
Gershwin, Irving Berlin!  
See flyer for details**

## **Bx Arts Ensemble Kid Shows**

**Sunday, Dec. 4, 2016:  
“The Emperor’s New Clothes”**

**Sunday, May 7, 2017:  
“The Princess & The Pea”**

**Shows at 1 & 2:30 pm  
In the Ballroom  
Watch for tix & pricing details**

**Annual Holiday Party  
December 2016  
In the main lobby  
Food, fun, singing,  
Holiday Spirit!**

**See flyers for date & time**

**Whitehall’s 10th Annual  
“SCHMOOZE & SCHMEAR”  
BAGEL BRUNCH!**

**Sunday, Jan. 22, 2017  
11am — 2pm in Ballroom  
Back by popular request**

**Debonair comedian &  
man about town,  
DALE GRAND!**

**Whitehall Residents Only  
Must sign up at front desk**



## ARTIST'S RENDERINGS OF THE WHITEHALL'S



**TOP:** Artist rendering view looking Southeast toward the corner of 232nd St. and Independence Ave. sweeps the eye from the south-facing pool enclosure past multiple lounge chairs, planting beds with large trees and grasses and shrubs, a fire pit with a continuous stone bench, a gazebo providing a gathering space and shaded area, and an all-new playground for different age groups in the distance. **BOTTOM:** View looking East from Independence Ave. shows the natural stone-faced multiple-tiered cascading water feature at right in the illustration, the large decked gathering area with benches and plantings in front of the waterfall, and a shade-giving pergola in the background.

## “GREEN ROOF”

■ The green roof, measuring about 30,000 sq. ft., will open in Summer 2017 as a no-cost amenity for all residents of The Whitehall, as well as continuing to be an important feature for all Whitehall Club members. But, new “key card” security doors will allow access to the pool enclosure and the Club gym on the basement level, only to Whitehall Club members.

At the same time, the installation of a 40” x 60” enclosed lift, with a 750-lb. capacity, and traveling about 14’ in elevation, will afford access to the green roof for Whitehall residents in wheelchairs or walkers, or with other disabilities that have heretofore made access to the pool deck difficult if not impossible for these residents. In addition, construction of two new bathrooms on the pool deck level, and available to all residents and Club members, will provide another convenience and accommodation to disabled residents utilizing the green roof.

An critical requirement for the green roof plan is to retain the extensive sun-deck lounging capabilities that were an important part of the original concrete slab deck, but now enhanced with extensive, well-thought-out plantings of trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers that provide spectacular vistas for the eye, not to mention a sense of peace and tranquility that stems directly from environmental spaces and sufficient shaded areas. To make the Whitehall's green roof the best it could be, the company largely responsible for designing the world-renown High Line park in Manhattan, Site Works, came on board early on as consultants to Whitehall management and the Board, working very closely with architect Genie Masucci. Site Works advised on the setup and selection of plantings and is working to develop ongoing care and maintenance programs to keep the facility in top shape for the long-term. w



**ABOVE:** View in this rendering is looking North toward the Whitehall building and shows planting beds with grasses, shrubs and large trees, several shade-providing “sails” positioned over the sun deck fronting the water feature.



© 2016, All rights reserved. The Whitehall Whirl is an independent publication issued seasonally under the auspices of the Whitehall Tenants Corp. For permission to reproduce in whole or part, please contact Len Daykin, Editor, at 718-884-2996, or email ldaykin@optonline.net. Printed in the USA by Beehive Press, 3742 Boston Rd., Bronx, NY 10469-0409.

## BOOK CLUB AT THE WHITEHALL



Looking forward to resuming meetings after the long Fall holidays season.

Generally meets the last Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm in the Club Card Room  
Check flyer posted in Health Club Lobby for date of next meeting and selected book title..

## WHITEHALL WISDOM

“Politicians and diapers have one thing in common. They should both be changed regularly, and for the same reason.”

— Mark Twain



## DINING OUT IN THE RIVERDALE AREA

### RIVERDALE K GRILL HOUSE 5693 Riverdale Ave., Riverdale, NY 10471 718-708-7940



Strictly Kosher residents who've been pining away for restaurants in Riverdale that offer "white linen" dining, reasonable prices, and the confidence of Kashruth certificates from the Va'ad HaRabonim of Riverdale can finally rejoice. We now have two — count 'em, **two** — restaurants

that fit the bill, and the first of these is the Riverdale "K" Grill House in North Riverdale, located on the street side of the Skyview Shopping Center. The second, Kai Fan Asian cuisine, will be reviewed in a later issue.

#### **Owners are immigrants from Uzbekistan**

K Grill House replaced the short-lived Greentrees restaurant at the location, and was opened a little over one year ago by an immigrant family from Uzbekistan that has done well here in the dry cleaning business but has had virtually no restaurant experience. They did, however, have the good sense to hire a skilled chef, a restaurant manager/maitre d' named Neil who is solicitous almost to the point of obsequiousness, and *Mashgiachs* including Steve Leif (who came out to answer our questions) to run the operation and make sure everything is done in accordance with dietary laws.

The restaurant has a menu filled with Middle Eastern specialties, but keyed strongly to steaks, fish, kebabs and chops. A value offering available Monday-Thursday is a 3 course lunch special for \$19.95, featuring soup, salad, and a main course or sushi special. If you're there with a group for lunch, the salad is served family style, has a great ginger dressing, and everything is really fresh and crisp. There is a Shabbat dinner special and afternoon happy hours at the extensive bar in the airy street side dining room. The interior dining room is

set up for family dining occasions, and also includes two private party rooms, with seating and special catering for up to 200 people. On Tuesday evenings, the restaurant also features a jazz combo during evening hours.

One of the hallmarks of an upscale restaurant is food presentation, and that is something that K Grill excels at. Although entrees are, as you would expect, quite large, the main courses are beautifully plated and help make the dining occasion that much more special. Another good sign — especially for a strictly Kosher restaurant — is that there is broad audience appeal. At lunch on one



**Street side dining room at Riverdale K Grill is more casual than the interior dining rooms, and features smaller tables for 2 or 4, and a fully-stocked bar along one entire wall.**

dining occasion, there were as many diners without "kipot" as there were with.

The Riverdale K Grill is open Sunday-Thursday from 11am to 11pm, on Fridays from 11 am to 5 pm, and of course is closed on Saturdays. Major credit cards are accepted, and restaurant-goers can find parking in the Skyview shopping center parking lot. The restaurant has partnered with Open Table for reservations, which are a good idea for dinner. Take-out and delivery is also available.

**W**

*Note: The Whitehall Whirl makes no representations as to the consistency and quality of food and service at restaurants we review. We take no responsibility for individual experiences.*