

Glen Oaks Village



Winter/Spring 2005

Community Newsletter

BOARD MEMBERS: Bob Friedrich, President & Chief Financial Officer; Roseann Ciaccio, Vice President & Treasurer; Carol Carucci, Secretary; Lee Feinman, Christine Bergen, Doug Vigo, Lisa Marulli, Leonard Motsinger, Wilbert Grace

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Glen Oaks Village sign at the corner of 260th Street and Union Turnpike.

Photograph by Peter SanChirico/Imagine Media Inc.

INSIDE *this* ISSUE ...

On Board
by Bob Friedrich 2-9

Dollars and "Sense"
by Randy Gunther 10

Talk Back 11-14

Profile of a Board Member
by Mildred Marshburn 15-17

Maintenance Department News
by Mildred Marshburn 18-19

Around the Neighborhood
by Drew Englot 20

Reminders and "Wow" Babies
by Mildred Marshburn 21

Advertisements 21-23

Reference Telephone List 24

Year To Date Sales History

Unit	Highest YTD Sale	GOVO Asking \$
A	\$175,000	\$179,900
B	\$209,000	\$209,900
C	\$210,000	\$229,900
D	\$286,900	\$299,900
E	\$229,900	\$269,900
F	\$169,900	\$194,900
G	\$216,900	\$269,900
H	\$290,000	\$329,900

On Board

By Bob Friedrich (GOVOnyc@aol.com)

The Glen Oaks Newsletter and this column are all about communicating to residents and shareholders alike in an open, honest and informative manner. I believe the Board of Directors of Glen Oaks Village does an excellent job at it. The action's of the Board affects us all and as a result, we seek to provide you with as much information as possible. The Newsletter and shareholder meetings help us do that in a transparent way. Based upon what I have seen at other co-ops, we do a much better job at it. We take pride in our Newsletter and spend a considerable amount of time and money putting it together. Each Newsletter is budgeted at about \$9,000 per issue and we take its publication very seriously. We communicate with shareholders and residents in a variety of ways, such as through shareholder and committee meetings, special mailings and flyers delivered to apartments. However, the newsletter is still the main vehicle to get information out to you so that you can properly assess the job we are doing, rather than basing your opinions on hearsay, the rumor mill or when a neighbor says to you, "hey, did you hear that...?" The Newsletter provides the written record and your own two eyes provide the visual record. It's one thing to read about things that are being done here but seeing it yourself, as you walk around the community, is the confirmation of the written record. Whether the improvement you read about or see is a new driveway, landscaping or the fact that you now get a scheduled maintenance appointment when in the past you did not, these are all part of the same process of community improvements. If you were at the shareholders budget meeting or read the budget report sent to all shareholders, then you saw the charts showing that our maintenance continues to be the lowest of all nearby co-ops and our reserves at \$10,000,000+, the most of all nearby co-ops. I think at that point, you need to pause and acknowledge the positive job that we are doing. That's not to say that we don't make mistakes or decisions you don't always agree with. Our mistakes have been far fewer than our successes and whether you agree or disagree with all of our decisions, it is a record of accomplishment and hard work and a resounding success story.

J51 Tax Abatement Program

Our in-house Finance Department under the leadership of Randy Gunther, Controller, continues the laborious task of preparing and submitting piles of paper to the Housing & Preservation Department (HPD) in order to qualify for the NYC J51 Tax Abatement Program. This program allows us to get a credit against our property taxes based on certain capital expenditures. In order to qualify, there needs to be no outstanding housing violations, even ones of a de minimus nature, and an audit trail of records indicating the expenditures. Generally, outside legal firms do this type of work for

substantial amounts of money, but because our co-op is not a high rise and comprises 134 buildings, the volumes of paperwork precluded any outside firm from taking on the task. Not a problem, we are probably the only co-op of our size capable of doing this ourselves. In fact, by the time you read this we will probably have qualified for almost a half million dollars of tax reduction via this program. This tax reduction is realized over a multi-year period. You can read more about this in Randy's column "Dollars & Sense" in this Newsletter.

Property Wide Landscaping

Back in December we received a phone call from a Board member of Deepdale Gardens inquiring about our landscaping. The caller stated that she had noticed our property looking much better year after year and wanted to know if we have been using an outside contractor or landscape designer. We happily told that it is our staff that maintains the property under the watchful eye of the Groundskeeping Supervisor, Drew Englot, who reports to the General Manager, Mildred Marshburn and a very pro-active Board of Directors. We also informed the caller that we have split the property into thirds and have put a "lead man" in charge of each part. In addition, we initiated a new property-wide Property Enhancement Program (P.E.P.), which started up in the autumn and will continue in the spring and fall of this year. Under this program a team of groundskeeping landscapers were put together with the sole responsibility of moving about the property section by section, planting new shrubbery, removing old and misplaced shrubbery, filling in bare areas and helping residents who agreed to maintain specific areas get a head start in their particular area or courtyard. This program has been incredibly successful and will continue at full force this year. The caller proceeded to tell us that we should be proud of the way our property looks. I know I speak for the Board and many residents when I say that we are all especially proud in the spring and summer when so many residents participate in our Green Thumb Voucher Program and are out there planting and making our property look like a canvas of watercolors.



Taking the initiative to spruce up their Little Neck Parkway courtyard, Maria Pla and Stephanie Plagainos waterseal their courtyard wishing well.

Garage Electrification Program

The balance of this column, will be devoted to the Garage Electrification Program, a major capital improvement, that is currently underway. I think the planning and decisions made by the Board regarding this program can provide some insight into the thinking and dynamics of the Board of Directors. I will do this by presenting some letters that were received concerning this issue and my responses to them. But first, let me provide some brief background. Glen Oaks Village consists of 2904 apartments and approximately 1350 garages. As you can see with so many apartments and so few garages — demand surpasses supply which manifests itself in waiting lists that can be years long. With very little garage turnover year after year and a monthly cost of \$35 for shareholders and \$60 for most of the others, it has remained a great value for our residents. Recently the Board of Directors decided to embark on a major upgrade of our garages. By an 8-1 vote the Board decided to install electric service in all garages. Although all 9 Board members were unanimously in favor of this, 1 Board member objected to the way in which it was to be paid for by implementing a temporary garage surcharge on garage occupants only. Although some garages previously had electric, this program brings all garages into code compliance and provides electrical service in a standardized installation. As a result the Board authorized a temporary (12-18 months) garage surcharge of \$25 to all garage occupants. At this time, the temporary surcharge will terminate after 14 months. It began January 1, 2005 and ends February 28, 2006, when the monthly garage fee will revert back to its pre-surcharge amount.



Like many issues that come before the Board, the decision to charge only garage occupants for this upgrade was debated at length at various Board meetings before the final decision was made. The determination to fund this capital improvement in this manner was based upon a number of factors:

- **The low monthly garage rental fee made the temporary surcharge still affordable.**
- **The low garage turnover means people hold on to garages for long periods of time, and**
- **The fact that most residents do not have garages and will not directly benefit from this particular improvement.**

Anytime a fee is raised, whether it is temporary or not, we can expect to hear from a lot of people—especially if there is a perception that it is unfair or unjust. With 1350 people occupying garages, the expectation on our part would have been a cacophony of voices via letters and emails, if indeed they felt our actions were unjustified. Generally, you tend to hear from people who are upset about actions taken by a Board, and those that are OK with it, well they generally don't voice their opinions immediately. In the case of the Garage Electrification Program and the decision to charge a \$25 temporary surcharge to garage occupants only, we heard from very few. And of those few we heard from, most were in favor of it. I read this as a ringing endorsement of this program and the way its funding was structured by the Board. Of the 16 letters we received, 9 were in favor and 7 were opposed.

Some of the opposing letters provided me with an opportunity to share with you some insights into the Board thinking and present you a picture of how decisions are made. The remaining letters regarding this issue can be read in the Glen Oaks Mailbag section of this Newsletter.

....*Letters*

FredS99 (08/21/04) writes:

I was shocked to get the notice of the \$25 dollar charge for electric to the garages. I have not needed or missed the lack of electric for some years now. I can't see how it would enhance things. I can see how it could make life more difficult for others. Now people will spend more time doing more after hour's noisy things in the garages that they couldn't do before.

The idea should have been placed for a vote before it was mandated for us to pay. People are looking to buy the co-op not the garage. I don't see how this raises property value and is a benefit for me if I should sell.

Gas is going up along with everything else and it is unfair to ask for more money. Everyone should pay for the cost. Why should someone who gets a garage some time later get a free ride? Please reconsider this project?

Dear FredS99:

I am sorry you were shocked about the \$25 surcharge for wiring all garages in Glen Oaks for electric. Since you cannot see how it would enhance things, let me give you a few examples. Currently when someone puts their car in the garage at night it is very difficult to see, especially if you are looking in the trunk to take a few things back to the apartment or if you have a couple of kids or a baby in the car. This is especially true in the winter when it gets dark very early. A simple light in the garage would make things a whole lot easier and safer. The ability to put in a garage door opener would also enhance the quality of life for many individuals and especially those that are older or who have difficulty raising the garage doors. I can go on and on, but all these examples are examples of quality of life improvements.

You say that you can only see how electric in garages would make life more difficult for others and that people would spend more time after hours in their garages doing noisy things. First let me say, for those individuals who are doing more things in their garages as a result of the electrical improvement, well then that would be a quality of life enhancement for them. In regard to your concern about noise, these matters are already covered in the House Rules and we have 24/7 security to make sure that noise violations are dealt with promptly. A resident who might be putting together a small piece of furniture would be less intrusive to most nearby residents by doing it in the garage than in their apartment or outside right in front of it.

A housing co-op with electric in garages is certainly an asset that can be touted when selling. With our aggressive Value Added Improvement policy, we have been trying to market our housing stock to those who may be considering private home ownership instead. An amenity like electric in garages is certainly a plus for us.

Finally, to your last point as to who should pay. This issue was discussed at length by the Board and clearly addressed in the letter that went out to all residents many months ago, describing the program and giving people an opportunity to comment on it. To summarize, garage turnover is low and infrequent; therefore, those who are occupying the garages, should be the ones who pay. I would also say that if someone doesn't want to pay the fee and believes it is unfair, they could give up their garage and go back on the waiting list until the surcharge has expired. In that way, they will not have paid the surcharge. However, I believe there will be very few people who will do this since the cost of garages here in Glen Oaks Village, even with the temporary surcharge, is still cheaper than at other co-ops in Queens and is still a bargain. Finally, I will remind you that the Board only a few years ago, lowered the price of garage rentals to most shareholders and has refrained from increasing the charge since then.

A Glen Oaks Owner (8/22/04) writes:

To the Board of Directors:

Recently I received the letter about Glen Oaks wanting to put electric into all of its garages. I really believe that this is one very unfair decision that the Board of Directors has made. In my opinion, I don't understand how it will cost GOVO \$360,000 to put electric into all the garages. There are some that already have electric. How do you come up with the figure of charging almost double the price that you are charging now to rent the garages? This was a very unfair decision on Glen Oaks' part and should be re-voted or we the owners that do have garages, should be given the chance to decide on an individual basis. There are other issues, such as garages that are located under apartments with water leaking from above, that can become a real fire hazard if electric is brought into these garages. I believe that we, as owners should not bare the cost of this. We do not own these garages we only rent them and therefore should not bare the cost to make them better. There are much better things to do with Glen Oaks owner's money then to spend this great amount of money on silly things like this.

Dear Glen Oaks Owner:

I am sorry that you feel this decision was unfair and silly. Although you do not understand how the cost to electrify almost 1400 garages could be \$360,000, I can assure you that the estimate was based on the lowest bid of a multi-bid solicitation process that we did for this project. Undertaking a job like this is more complicated than you might think and that is why the Board and the Maintenance Committee reviewed all components of this project and received numerous bids.

You asked, "how we came up with the figure of charging almost double the price that Residents are paying now to rent the garages?" First I would say it is simply a mathematical formula. We take the cost of the project and divide it by the number of garages. As to your point about it being almost double the price that we currently charge for a garage, that is because our monthly garage fee is already so low. We have kept it low and affordable and even reduced it for most shareholders a

few years ago and should not now be criticized because a temporary assessment to improve garages is almost equal to the already low monthly garage rental fee.

In regard to your concern about a fire hazard, I can assure you that the job is being done in accordance with all electrical and building codes and is being done by licensed electricians. If you are aware of any water leaks or other damage that affects your occupancy of a garage, I would suggest you call Maintenance and ask that a work order be prepared to correct the problem.

Finally, you say that you only rent the garages and do not own them and should not bear the cost. The Board in an 8-1 vote disagrees with your logic. In fact, because garage turnover is so low, it seems only fair and reasonable that the users should bear the burden of the cost. We will not be charging you for the electric that you use. We think this is a fair and equitable deal.

Christine C. (9/10/04) writes:

As a garage renter I am not looking forward to spending an extra \$25 a month for up to 18 months, as I do not see this as a necessity. Unfortunately, like many people I do not have an extra \$25 and will be forced to give up something in order to pay for this so that I can keep my garage. I have been an owner for 16 years and there is no doubt that all your hard work has paid off. However, adding electricity to the inside of my garage is not going to change the value of my co-op. If I were ever to sell, the garage I rent does not go with that sale. Further a person is not going to say, "I'm not moving to Glen Oaks because they don't have electricity in their garages". A person is going to move to Glen Oaks because of the community it has become over the years and not a light inside a garage. I do not see where this will improve safety and enhance the quality of life. There are lights outside that illuminate the area and I really don't see how the quality of my life is enhanced because of a light in the garage. Currently, you can get a garage door opener so electricity will not change that. My concerns are that now there will be more of a noise level since people will be using power tools. I am not looking forward to this... As always thanks for listening and keep up the good work.

Hi Christine:

The objectives of the Board of Directors has always been to improve our co-op and allow shareholders to make Value Added Improvements, while keeping maintenance and fees as low and affordable as possible. We believe our Garage Electrification Program is consistent with these objectives. Although no single reason can be cited as to why someone is willing to spend a substantial amount of money to purchase an apartment here, we are confident that it is a range of benefits that drives our prices and makes us a solid choice for potential buyers. Electricity in a garage is a benefit to anyone who has a garage and will be just one of many reasons that many people choose Glen Oaks Village as a place to live. The Board believes the temporary garage surcharge is reasonable and affordable and brings a benefit to all current and future garage occupants.

Safety is certainly enhanced by the ability to have light in a garage. It also enables folks to install garage door openers, if they choose and to utilize small power tools, a benefit to many. In communities around the country, it is unthinkable that a garage would not have electrical capabilities. We simply wish to bring our property up to these standards and do it in a way that is fair to all shareholders.

Our noise House Rules apply to garages as well as apartments and our 24/7 security should see to it that the use of noisy power tools at off hours does not happen

Diane W (09/14/04) writes:

Hi Bob.

I just have two questions / comments regarding the plan to supply electric service to the garages.

1) Since only those shareholders who rent garages will be charged for this project, does this mean that the garage is now assigned to a particular apartment in perpetuity? The reason I'm asking is that I plan to move out of state within the next few years, and at that point, will be either selling or subletting my apartment. If the garage does not go with it, I will have in effect, paid hundreds of dollars for capital improvements that do nothing to increase the value of my apartment and that are of no use to me once I move. It's kind of like being told that I have to pay to renovate my neighbor's kitchen, even though that will do nothing to increase the value of my investment!

2) If we do go forward with this project, does that mean there will be outside lighting by the garages? I really don't care about lights in the garage itself; my car doesn't need to be able to see anything, nor do my bicycles, skis, or lawn chairs! It might be nice to have outside lighting so when I come and go in the dark, I can see better. Thanks.

Hi Diane:

Garages are not assigned to anyone in perpetuity. The upgrading of garages is just one example of our property upgrade program. All of these improvements work together to make Glen Oaks Village a community in demand. You can expect to pay \$350 for this improvement. Should you leave Glen Oaks Village, you will have paid this amount towards its improvement which is no different than any other improvement made at Glen Oaks Village and paid for in part by your monthly maintenance. All improvements are paid for in this manner and will be here long after you are gone. In fact, part of your monthly maintenance goes to the Reserve account and remains there waiting to be spent on future projects, some of which may take place during your Glen Oaks residency and some after you have moved. Should the co-op be returning these funds to departing shareholders? Of course not! This is all part of the on-going process of community renewal and improvement that people participate in while they are living in this community.

As to your 2nd question about outside lighting in the garage areas, we will be improving the outside lighting in Section 1 while we are doing this project. You mention that you don't care about the lights in the garage and that your car doesn't need to see anything, nor does your bicycle, skis, etc. Perhaps you misunderstood the nature of the project. It's about you seeing these things. However, since you say you "don't care about the lights in the garage" I would simply suggest you not turn them on.

Diane W (09/15/04) writes again (1 week later)

Hi Bob:

All points well taken, and you're right; I'm not giving up my garage after being on the list for three years to get it! Thanks.

Diana B (9/26/04) writes:

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am in receipt of your notice of August 18, 2004, concerning the project to bring electricity to the garages. Please justify your decision with the relevant section or sections of the proprietary lease that allow you to pass the cost for this project to the garage occupants only. Your decision/reasoning could then put the burden on the garage occupants for any and all repairs to the garages, i.e., roofs, doors, waterproofing, etc., because "garage turnover is minimal." Also, the recent paving and drain replacement in the garage area could be the financial burden of the garage occupants.

Finally, any garage occupant who gives up their garage for whatever reason once the surcharge has been assessed or any-time thereafter, just paid for the next person to have the luxury of electricity in the garage.

My point is that it should not be the burden of the garage occupants only, but all shareholders.

Hi Diana:

The Board's decision was made after a thorough discussion of all relevant issues concerning this matter. The Board of Directors clearly has the right to make these decisions based upon the well-established 1990 NYS Court of Appeals rulings known as *Levandusky v. One Fifth Avenue Apartment Corp.* in which the business judgment rule was promulgated.

The Board indeed would have the right to pass on other garage costs to the occupants as mentioned in your email, but has chosen not to go that route. We feel that would be too much of a cost burden for garage users. The Board truly seeks to find the proper balance to keep costs and fees manageable and views the day-to-day operations of garages as a cost that should rightfully be absorbed by the co-op at large.

The process that culminated in the decision to implement a temporary garage surcharge starts with the proposition that each Board member has a fiduciary responsibility to the entire co-op. Board room decisions are made only after a full and thorough discussion of all relevant issues. Decisions require a majority vote of 9 independent Board members, volunteers who are elected by shareholders and pay the same fees and maintenance as everyone else. This process, which is not infallible, generally works well over time and results in good decisions. These decisions are not always easy to make and are debated at length at Board meetings.

The Board of Directors has always tried to keep maintenance and fees as low as possible, viewing this as another reason people choose Glen Oaks Village as a place to live and raise a family. We believe that while everyone may not support all of our decisions, we have the strong support of the community for our approach towards issues and policies that come before us.

Thanks for writing.

SBTULIP115@aol (8/15/04) writes:

As a long time resident (and garage renter) here I would like to comment on the project and its worth to residents. According to the House Rules (which I haven't seen an updated copy of in years), garages are only to be used for storage of one's car. Therefore, if outside lighting is maintained properly for safety and security reasons, what is the need for lighting in a garage?

If someone has the need or desire for an automatic garage door opener and/or lighting in their garage, let them make the arrangements with GOV and bear the cost themselves. How will this project "improve safety and enhance the quality of life"? You over estimate the caliber of the average resident here - I envision garages becoming "extra living/business space," which will inevitably create noise disturbances and other problems--especially for those of us whose apartments are over garages. Think about it, with electric, you can also have a fan and/or space heater, a fridge, a hot plate, etc - all the necessities for a third world home environment to be rented out! Surely you know about a resident renting out sleeping space in his attic! Imagine the possibilities. Take a serious look at this complex, not at the Management Office and Real Estate Office area, which are pristine and create an image that is far from accurate for the rest of the complex. With the exception of the court where the head of the Board of Director lives where all needed repairs and upgrades get priority, take a look at the REAL Glen Oaks. I look around my area and I see crumbled, pitted asphalt in our parking lot, an entry area to the lot that floods every time it rains hard, garage doors that are beat-up and of varying age and style, dumpsters that are rusted, crumbled curbs, etc - electric in the garages to upgrade the complex's appeal - PLEASE!

In my court we still have old stoops (which look even worse standing next to the few new stoops, cellar wells that are rusted and unsightly, residents who use pieces of discarded cardboard to hold their air conditioners in place, 'half dead bushes that don't get replaced, lawn areas that are nothing but weeds and dirt - the list is endless! How about sprinkler systems for our lawns as a "project" instead of "hoping" that residents want to drag out hoses and take on keeping the lawns green themselves?

Most places where "someone pays \$200,00+" have sprinkler systems plus "real gardening crews" who replace dead trees and bushes, enhance areas that need attention with new shrubs, and plant flowers. A \$20 garden voucher per unit per year, is clearly not the solution unless all residents come together with an area plan and combine these meager funds (another practice unique to GOV). This "plan" needs to be put to a vote by all who rent garages, not just by those few on the Board who undoubtedly benefit personally for their involvement.

Dear SBTULIP115:

I am not surprised you didn't include your name in your email. If I wrote an email like that without any foundation for the truth, I would also not want my name associated with it. So how does one begin to answer a letter from someone who seems so unconcerned with the facts? I guess by simply providing them so you can navigate between facts and fiction.

1- So you haven't received your House Rules. They are issued annually to residents and also made available at the Management Office. By making a minimal effort and going to the Management Office or even calling, you could have received one, if you hadn't already received one in the mail or from the owner of your unit.

2- Lighting in a garage simply helps someone see better at night inside their garage. Not everyone has a light above their garage and most people would welcome more light at night, not less.

3- You state that I overestimate the caliber of the average resident here. How presumptuous of you to paint a picture of the average resident in an image of your choosing. How do you measure the "average resident". Have you ever volunteered or been involved in any Glen Oaks community activity whereby you might have come in contact with more Glen Oaks residents than perhaps the few neighbors on both sides of your apartment? Thankfully, from my many years of experience here interacting with residents and owners alike, your letter is not indicative of the average resident.

4- Your vision of garages becoming "extra living/business space" once garages are electrified is simply not evidenced by the facts. Many garages in Glen Oaks already have electric, which had been installed "without proper authorization". These garages have not become as you called "third world homes". Instead they have become useful and safe spaces for cars and storage. These are the facts, not fiction.

5- You say, "Take a serious look at this complex, not at the Management Office and Real Estate Office courtyard, which are pristine and create an image that is far from accurate for the rest of the complex. With the exception of the court where the head of the Board of Director lives where all needed repairs and upgrades get priority, take a look at the REAL Glen Oaks".



I have taken a serious look at the community. I do it everyday. I see many areas where people take pride in their homes and help make them a wonderful place to live. I see a Capital Improvement Program in which more than \$1,000,000 per year is spent on the infrastructure of this community, making areas better, safer and prettier. Do you live in the same community as me? Your condescending attitude towards those who put a little bit of effort and elbow grease into their courtyards surely reflects on your priorities.

By the way, I am the head of the Board of Directors and don't live in a courtyard so before you start making allegations about improprieties, get your facts straight.

6- You say, "I look around my area and I see crumbled pitted asphalt in our parking lot, an entry area to the lot that floods every time it rains hard, garage doors that are beat-up and of varying age and style, dumpsters that are rusted, crumbled curbs, etc - electric in the garages to upgrade the complex's appeal - PLEASE!

Well, I look around and see 3 new driveways constructed this year alone, at a cost of \$200,000+ and 2 last year at a cost of \$300,000. I see \$30,000 spent this year alone on new drywells to alleviate flooding. I see a Dumpster Beautification Program that has enclosed dumpsters behind perma-hedge fences. I see an on-going Capital Improvement Program that repairs and rebuilds areas, in order of priority. I see new glass block basement windows and new basement doors. I see old and worn garage doors replaced regularly and peeling paint on other garage doors painted. I see a co-op-wide Front Door Painting Program in progress. I am curious about the driveway area you are talking about. It may very well be on our list for next year or perhaps should be on the list. But I couldn't tell you that, because you never provided us with your address or the driveway location. But that doesn't surprise me because the description of the driveway you provided simply doesn't exist and if it did, it was scheduled for replacement or repair.

7- Hey, you still have old stoops in your courtyard. So do a lot of others. But many hundreds of stoops have already been re-done because of our on-going Stoop Replacement Program. Our priorities are first to install new stoops where dangerous or poor quality ones exist. There is a debate currently going on at the Board whether to spend limited resources to install new brick and limestone stoops and remove albeit ugly but good condition concrete stoops. However, since 2002, when all poor quality stoops were finally replaced, we now are putting in new stoops on an "as needed basis," or "request basis," if the budget allows. Have you ever called or written the Board asking about having your stoop replaced? Of course not, it's easier to complain.

8- You say why not put in a sprinkler system rather than asking people "to drag out hoses and take on keeping the lawns green themselves". Where do you come from? You think it is an imposition to ask people to water their lawns. Do people have any responsibility to maintain their homes or is it simply someone else's job? Also, just for the record, there are tens of thousands of private homes selling well above \$200,000 in Queens without sprinkler systems and by the way, a sprinkler system in a community of 112 acres would cost over \$2M. Where should the money come from?

Well, I am going to stop here. Your letter truly did hit a nerve, but then again I am truly happy that you are not representative of the majority of people who live here in Glen Oaks Village. How do I know that, I see how proud people are of their homes and the effort they put into their gardens and courtyards. In simpler terms, I walk around the community with my eyes wide open. Perhaps you should too.

Dear Bob,

Since you are the President of the Board of Directors, I am writing to you to get the word out to the residents of Glen Oaks Village who use the Q79 bus route. I recently read an article in the New York Newsday about the MTA's proposed elimination of bus routes because of their deficit. One of the routes that they propose to eliminate is the Q79 bus route. My twelve year old daughter takes the Q79 bus to and from MS 67, and so do a lot of other students from Glen Oaks. A lot of elderly Glen Oaks residents take the Q79 to the Samuel Field YM-YWHA, and the Cross Island YMCA. Other Glen Oaks residents also take the Q79 to and from work. Losing the Q79 bus route would place a great hardship on the residents of Glen Oaks.

Please get the word out so that we don't lose the Q79 bus route.

Thanks.
Susan R.

Hi Susan:

I think your letter above will certainly help get the word out. I would suggest anyone interested in saving this bus route contact Councilman David Weprin at 718-465-8202 .



A Special Note on the Garage Electrification Program: Some individuals have expressed concern about people using noisy power tools in garages at inappropriate times and suggested that we prohibit this. I think that before we enact rules and regulations that prevent people from utilizing their garages fully, we wait and see if a problem really arises. The Board is not convinced that the use of power tools is going to be a problem. In fact, I think people who previously could not use power tools in their garage simply used them in their apartments. By moving this activity away from apartments and into garages, we may be reducing noise complaint problems. Nevertheless, if a problem does arise, we can act very quickly to amend the House Rules and put out a memo to the residents. Also, keep in mind that all residents are subject to our noise House Rules right now and these existing rules also apply to garage users. Security is available to anyone 24/7 to report someone who is making too much noise at an inappropriate hour. The current House Rules should be sufficient to insure that peace and quiet is maintained during night time and early morning hours.

As we move forward with the implementation of electrical service in our garages, we have made some significant changes that I think you will be very happy about. As part of the Program, we have decided to add a light socket adjacent to the ceiling electrical outlet. We will be installing motion detectors and light bulbs that screw into these sockets. When the garage door is opened and there is movement in the garage, the light will illuminate the entire garage area and then automatically turn off when no motion is detected for 4 minutes. This will significantly enhance the safety aspect of this program and provide lighting to all garages. Any garage that has been wired prior to this change, will be upgraded before the program is completed. These motion sensor sockets will be provided at no cost for all garages. Future replacements of motion sensor units will be available at Maintenance for a fee.

I know my On Board column was particularly long this month, but I do hope I have provided you with some useful information and some insight into the dynamics of our Board and how decisions are arrived at. Please email me with your comments or thoughts at govonyc@aol.com.

NEW EMPLOYEES

Please join us in welcoming our newest Employees!!!



Maria Fundus, (2/04)
Administrative Assistant
(718-347-2337 Ext. 114)
Alteration Agreements
Garage Rentals
Storage Units



Stephanie Ortega, (11/04)
Administrative Assistant
(718-347-2337 Ext. 113)
Rent-Stabilized Tenant
Apartments & Garages



Robert Mayer, (11/04)
Shareholder Representative
(718-347-2337 Ext. 102)
Buildings 1 to 44



Hillary DeBona, (1/05)
Maintenance Services'
Dispatcher
(718-343-8400 Ext. 121)



RANDY GUNTHER, Controller

The information was provided to the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) staff that was more accustomed to dealing with Real Estate J51 Legal Specialists, than our own Glen Oaks Village Finance Department staff.

Glen Oaks Village is spread out over 110 acres and is composed of 134 buildings. With all this real estate, we spend over one million dollars each year in capital improvements. This could be the end of the story, but it's not.

The J51 Tax Credit Program is for most Real Estate people, "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma" (W. Churchill). Decades ago, the City of New York developed the J51 program to combat urban decay. Owners of apartment complexes were given tax credits to upgrade their buildings that had deteriorated. This program continues today. To be quite honest, there is a bit of reporting to do in order to obtain a J51 tax credit. However, the payoff can be quite significant.

In 2001, we came to the conclusion that we were letting potential tax credits go while spending over one million dollars each year on capital improvements. We inquired with different real estate tax lawyers that represented owners in applying for J51 tax credits to help us. To our surprise, none showed any interest. The reason for this was three fold:

1. The total dollar amount of improvements was not large enough for them to make their customary percentage fee worthwhile.
2. The number and types of capital improvements were numerous. We had 1,100 different capital jobs and eight different classifications of work.
3. Since we are a two-story, garden apartment complex instead of a vertical apartment building, we are spread out over 19 tax block/lots instead of one. Therefore 19 separate J51 applications would have to be completed. This was the kicker!

It is often said that "ignorance is bliss" and with half of the above information being known and no tax specialist willing to take on our cause, Glen Oaks Village decided to go it alone and start our own in-house J51 Tax Program.

The work then began in the following order:

- Identifying invoices that contained capital work that was eligible for the J51 tax credit.
- Grouping work by each of 19/block lots, to enable a separate J51 application for each block/lot.
- Filling out forms, J-1, J-2, J-4, J-6, J-7A, J-7B, J-8, J-10A.2, J-10B.2, J-10C, as well as, a host of supporting documents.
- A \$100 fee was required for each application (soon to increase to \$500) as well as, a \$30 fee to search for any violations.
- After submitting the applications, a slew of additional documents were requested by the HPD, in order to process the applications.

Fortunately, most of the "J" forms are not onerous. Three years of capital improvements can be applied on one J51 application, so you can go backward in time 36 months. You have four years from the start of capital improvement work to file a J51 application. This means you can go back through three years of capital work from the current date and then you have one year from the current date to file. There is a requirement for copies of contracts, invoices and paid checks, which in our case, is about 10,000 documents. However, an independent C.P.A. can certify the accuracy with a letter in place of these documents. HPD also sent an Inspector to review all the work that was done. This was not demanding.

At Glen Oaks Village, a total \$3,000,000 of capital improvements in three years (March 1999 – January 2002) whittled down to \$1,840,000 of a nature that qualifies for J51 treatment. Of this amount HPD determined a "Certified Reasonable Cost" of close to \$450,000 for these improvements. Glen Oaks Village will then be given a real estate tax credit of 90% of this amount or \$405,000. Although this is spread out over 10.5 years, these are real tax credits. After completing the process, you file again for the next one, two or three years worth of capital improvements. Eventually each year, you should have multiple J51 tax credits--one on top of another. We anticipate for year 2012 we will have four (4) J51 tax credits from applications of 2001, 2004, 2007 and 2010. That is a huge real estate tax savings realized over time.

Residential cooperatives and apartment complexes are allowing these valuable tax credits to go out the window, due to a lack of knowledge and commitment to follow them through. Glen Oaks is now seeing the benefit of implementing this program

REAL ESTATE TAX EXEMPTIONS

In March 2005, shareholders were assessed an amount equal to the Cooperative Tax Abatement plus their STAR exemption, in lieu of a maintenance increase. This assessment applied to all Shareholders, whether they applied for and received their \$216.00 STAR exemption, or not. With this in mind, it is more important than ever to apply for the STAR exemption, if you have not already. A STAR Exemption is available for everyone who owns and occupies their unit. Senior Citizen Exemptions are available to property owners, aged 65 years or older with income below \$27,900.00 (including Social Security). The Veteran Tax Exemption provides credits to veterans or their spouse, if they have served in a war or combat zone. All exemptions are passed onto the Shareholders, dollar for dollar, with a credit on their monthly maintenance bill. Applications and information are available in the Arnold Krause Building. Take advantage of the tax credit you are entitled to.

TALK

Letters & Emails to the Board
(govonyc@aol.com)

These letters and emails are from shareholders and residents and were received after the previous Glen Oaks Newsletter was published. Where appropriate Bob Friedrich, GOVO president has responded on behalf of the board. Write or Email us at: GOVOnyc@aol.com

BACK

Dear Bob,
Hope all is well!! I received the flyer that was sent out about the electric going in to the garages and I must say I am very enthusiastic over the whole concept!!

We are now enjoying two garages with electric door openers. Take care and all the best.
Cheryl

Can I sign up to pay my maintenance electronically and if so, how.
Thanks.
Jimmy (8/22/04)

Dear Jimmy:
Sorry, currently we are unable to provide this service, although we are developing a website and perhaps down the road, this will be possible.
(BF)

Laura writes:

I think this is a great idea, but if I am paying an extra \$25.00 a month I expect no flooding or leaking in my garage as there is now. Also, how will this work? Do you come into the garage and install electrical outlets? I know people are not supposed to use garages for storage, but almost everyone does. I have wanted electric service since I have owned here 22 years. Yes, it will improve safety and I would love to come home late and use an automatic garage opener! **Thank you.**

Hi Laura:

Garage occupants will be notified a week or two before the start of installation. Each garage will have a double outlet with a switch at the inside front of the garage and another outlet in the center, near the ceiling, along with a light that will be motion activated. This outlet will be for garage door openers and the motion sensor will turn on the garage light when motion is detected and turn it off after 4 minutes of inactivity. As to your concern about flooding, please note that we have an extensive driveway multi-year rehabilitation program. Usually up to three complete driveways are rehabilitated per year according to need and cost. Other driveways that are in relatively good shape, except for a small section, are repaired concurrently with the big driveway projects. If your driveway or garage is experiencing flooding, there are a number of things that can be done to rectify the situation. If the leak is coming from the inside, you should call Maintenance and set up an appointment to have it inspected and repaired. If the driveway floods all the time (some flooding is unavoidable, especially after a very heavy downpour), we can inspect the area to determine if additional drywells are needed or the existing ones are clogged and need cleaning. If your garage is flooding, due to improper pitch of the driveway, this will be rectified when the driveway is reconstructed and pitched properly so water flows away from garages and towards catch basins. You can email me if any of these conditions exist and we will check it out. -bob friedrich-

Great decision on behalf of the board. We shall all welcome the implementing of electricity to the garages. Thank You,
Joel (9/1/04)

To: Board of Directors:
I just want to say for the record that I am all in favor of installing electricity in the garages, but before that, I would like to suggest fixing up the garages with minor repairs.
Rosemary

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a shareholder resident since Sept 2002. I put my name on the garage list when I moved in and I am currently waiting for a garage. I understand that some existing shareholders have more than one garage. Is there a reason I must wait this long for a garage, while others have more than one? Have any shareholder's received a second garage while others are still waiting for their first garage? Please advise as I enjoy living in GOVO even though I do not have a garage. I feel that the garage policy should be fair and equitable for all. I am waiting so I can purchase a better vehicle for my family. Thanks for your assistance in advance.

Alan F. (9/7/04)

Hi Alan:

The long standing policy in Glen Oaks Village has been to allow residents to have 2 garages. This policy is periodically reviewed and currently has the unanimous support of the Board of Directors. Many people who have lived here for many years have large families and have a need for 2 garages.

The long waits are due to supply and demand problems. There are approximately 1337 garages and 8000 residents. As a result, the supply of garages is insufficient to meet the demand. Many, many years ago, a number of garages had burned down in various areas and were never replaced. This reduced the available garage numbers to the present day total. Just for the record, that would never happen again under the current Board. Damaged garages would be rebuilt quickly and the thought of not doing so, is simply not an option. There have been suggestions in the past to raise the monthly garage rental fee in order to make more garages available. The Board has opposed any increase in garages since the last increase from \$25 to \$35 was initiated about 5 years ago. By the way, when that was done, shareholders were paying either \$25 or \$50 per month, depending on when they first occupied their garage. When the \$35 fee was implemented for all shareholders, it was a price decrease for most. The Board has always tried to keep Glen Oaks Village a very affordable place to live and part of that, is keeping monthly garage fees in check.

As to your last question, about shareholders receiving a second garage before someone has received a first, can only be answered by explaining how the process works. Garages are awarded to residents (shareholders & non-shareholders) based upon their place on the list. Therefore, it is conceivable that someone may receive a second garage while someone who does not have a garage is on the list. I must say this is a good point and one that has not been addressed by the Board. This issue will be brought up at the next Board meeting to see if there is any support to modify the procedure allowing someone who has no garage to jump to the top of the list, if the garage to be awarded is about to go to someone who already has one

-bob friedrich-

To: Robert Friedrich,

Bob, as I'm sitting here writing this email, the noise from the roof construction in the garage area behind my apartment is still going on. As you probably know, today is the first day of Rosh Hashanah. To me, it's unconscionable to start a project like this on a day when we take time to be with family and friends and reflect on the year gone by. Didn't anyone have a calendar when they picked the starting date? I really wish you could hear the intrusive noise. Unfortunately, by the time you receive this email, the whole thing will be a moot point. The holiday will be over, and my company will have gone. Maybe you can send the construction crew back on Yom Kippur?

Susan M (9/16/04)

Hi Susan:

Construction is scheduled in advance and is very weather related. Often, construction is postponed or delayed and re-scheduled due to previous or current weather conditions. This is what happened in your situation. A new garage roof was being installed to replace the damaged one.

Your point about scheduling is a good one and I will discuss this at the next Board meeting to insure that Maintenance does a better job scheduling noisy construction work in the future.

Thanks for writing. (BF)

Rules Enacted by the Board

Note: Since that letter was written, the Board has amended the rules pertaining to garages. Effective 10/1/04, only on-site shareholders will be permitted 2 garages. Everyone else who currently has 2 garages will be grandfathered in. This should effectively shorten the wait lists for garages. We believe the rules, as amended, are fair and equi-

Bob Q (9/26/04) writes:

...Whatever happened to the proposed dog run idea? When we moved into Glen Oaks, Miller and Miller told us two years ago, that areas had been proposed such as the old basketball court on Union Turnpike, near Little Neck Parkway. It stays locked all the time and no one uses it. A neighbor of ours suggested that she had three places listed for submission to the board, but they were turned down. Now another neighbor suggests that new residents are not allowed dogs... Could you please let us know if any of these rumors are true. Thanks

Hi Bob:

The problem with a dog run is not so much the dog run itself, but the location of it. Although I have found watching dogs playing in a dog run to be quite amusing, understandably most people do not want one behind their apartment. However, if you know of an area where the residents would not object, we would be very happy to consider it. I have no recollection of anyone submitting a list of possible sites, but simply submitting a list of sites won't cut it. The site MUST have the support of the surrounding apartment owners before the Board will consider it.

The UTP basketball court is currently used at various times and was built as part of an agreement worked out between the co-op and the rent stabilized tenants many years ago. There is no Board support to remove it and replace it with a dog run at this time.

There has been no change to our dog rules and therefore, what you have heard about dogs not being permitted in Glen Oaks Village, is simply the rumor mill at work again. (BF)

Dear GOVO,

I am interested in trying to get the feral cats around Glen Oaks spayed or neutered. I understand there used to be a program that was sponsored by GOVO, where a spay / neuter voucher was made available by Glen Oaks to give to the veterinarian performing the procedure. Does the program still exist?

Dara S (10/06/04)

Hi Dara:

The White Whiskers Program is currently not running since the founder of it moved last year. If you are interested in continuing it or running it in some other form, let me know. We may be able to provide some funding. Please put together a workable plan and I will have it reviewed. (BF)

Bob,

They came around this afternoon to take care of the leaves on 74th Avenue... only thing is I had a car wash this afternoon and now the car is covered in dust and soot as are all the cars on the block... This is not an acceptable way of getting the job done, when it gets the leaves in one big pile but covers all the cars on the block in dust and soot from the street and the leaves.

Jake (10/28/04)

Hi Jake:

I am sorry, but I completely disagree with you. Glen Oaks Village sits on 110 acres of property, most of it with large mature trees. Because of the size of the property and limitations on our manpower, we simply don't have the ability to hand pick leaves. The huge amount of leaves and the large property necessitate that the clean up move quickly and frequently. The way this is done is with blower machines. I suggest you park your car elsewhere or in the back or just wait a month to wash it again. This is really not much of a sacrifice and we should all be thankful that we don't have to rake and pick up the leaves ourselves. (BF)

Dear Bob & Co:

I am sorry I was not able to attend the Budget Shareholders Meeting due to illness. However my upstairs neighbor filled me in. All I have to say is GREAT job on all that you do for us and the co-op. As you stated, on the last page of the booklet, we may not all always agree on certain decisions, but it is done for the good of all, not some, which I hope will always be the case. I do have a suggestion. Next time a picture is taken of some improvements, can the address be listed... Anyway, I just wanted to thank all of you for the wonderful work that you do for the co-op. It takes a lot of dedication, as well as time on your parts. Thank you.

Hi Ana:

Thanks for the kind comments. I can assure you that our Board is working very hard for the best interests of the co-op. In regard to placing an address beside photos of home improvements, there are privacy considerations, but we will try to better identify such areas in the future. (BF)

Dear Bob:

My name is Kathy L. & I live at Langdale Gardens & currently serve on its Board of Directors. I spoke to you after your shareholders' meeting on 11/18/04. I hope you don't mind that I came with one of your shareholders, as I was interested in how other coops run their meetings & how we shaped up with other coops in the area. I thought you did a very comprehensive & professional job in presenting the upcoming budget year. I'm sorry I did not stand up at the mike to tell your shareholders, that from what I see, your Board is doing a great job keeping costs in line & keeping the place in great shape. As I told you, due to the same increasing costs that you are facing-fuel, taxes, water & sewer, union labor costs, we have had to increase our maintenance 8% for next year. We may look into capturing the STAR & NYC tax abatement in future years, as you have done, to offset rising costs.

Kathy (11/22/04)

Dear Bob,

In the fall issue of our Newsletter, you answered an email about security from Gail. Your response included, "security is provided... to ensure our House Rules are reasonably adhered to..." Who defines "reasonably?" Are our House Rules not provided to be followed? Why have them? To this, I ask, how many Security workers were on duty Columbus Day, October 11, 2004 and how many fines were issued to the hundreds of residents that had UNCOLLECTED garbage sitting on his/her stoop? Perhaps if more fines were collected, those of us who are law and House Rule abiding residents could keep our Star rebates. Another response rightfully chastised an angry owner, whose neighbor had the nerve to water the lawn. You explained how wonderful this was as "the grass and garden areas are common property" How is it then you continue to allow individuals to claim this "common property" for his or her individual use? I am speaking of patios, decks, bricked areas for barbeques and garbage cans, 6 foot Rubbermaid storage bins, toy chests, outside table and chairs with umbrellas etc., etc???? I cannot believe what I am seeing as I walk through the neighborhood. I still love, support and work for this community...it's just getting so darn hard. I look forward to your response.

Rita B (10/21/04)

Hi Rita:

Oy veb! The deck issue again. That's OK, the Board and you have a fundamental disagreement when it comes to decks. We see it as a Value Added Improvement and you see it as some socially sinister attempt to make Glen Oaks a less neighborly community. The Board unanimously supports the idea of decks, barbecues and people enjoying the outdoors.

Above, you write (allow me to paraphrase), that you cannot believe what you see as you walk through the community and it is becoming so darn hard to still love it, although you still do. After reading your detailed account, I can only conclude that you and I must be looking at 2 different neighborhoods or talking about 2 completely different communities. Yes, there are limited areas here where people just don't care about their courtyard, but those areas are few and far between. When I walk through Glen Oaks, especially in the summertime, I see a beautiful neighborhood where homeowners (shareholders) have been given opportunities to enhance their homes and make the community more beautiful, special and more valuable. I love walking through the backs and seeing people enjoying their decks and sitting outside enjoying the fresh air. Something they weren't doing before. I enjoy seeing some of the new back door entrances, where people have put out tables and chairs and now sit outside and enjoy what was once a vast stretch of unused greenery.

As to your comments and questions about defining reasonable, I guess it is determined by 9 free thinking individuals who live here and love Glen Oaks and meet once a month to discuss all sorts of issues, including security. These 9 Board members also serve on various committees and bring their ideas and those of the committee members, with whom they serve to the Board room table. It is here where a determination of reasonable enforcement is made. I guess we could aggressively enforce every House Rule to the Nth degree and be fining our residents who are our neighbors left and right for every conceivable violation. I sure wouldn't want to live in a community like that. Think of the anger and bitterness that would soon percolate upwards. It is not a pretty picture and I have seen communities that do this. It quickly loses its NEIGHBORHOOD characteristics and soon deteriorates into continuous squabbling and bitterness between those who run this co-op and those who live here. That is a certain recipe for disaster. Issues of enforcement and degree of aggressiveness are not easy and require a Board of Directors to find the proper balance. These decisions and the balancing act do change with times and circumstances. Our Board of Directors, I think, are an incredibly fair thinking group of individuals who talk through the issues and try to make modest accommodations and reasonable decisions. I think we succeed quite well in this endeavor and I think people, like yourself, tend to take that for granted. It would not be pleasant to live in that other type of unfriendly neighborhood.

I guess defining reasonableness and finding that balance is when the Board directs Security to sticker cars parked illegally and only tow them when they are persistent abusers of our parking rules or when they park in a dangerous manner. Sure we could have Security tow every illegally parked car; in which owners will ultimately have to pay a fine, plus a \$100 towing fee. However, we believe our approach is better and gentler and has the same effect of getting people to comply. In the end, I believe we have been correct for the most part in our judgments.

I know you love this place as much as I do and I know there will always be decisions the Board makes that you agree with and some that you don't. I believe we have made the right decisions most of the time for the majority of residents living here. Perhaps, you and I can agree on that.

-bob friedrich-

Rock and Roll JOEL writes:

Great work on the 2005 budget presentation. You also may want to offer it as a PDF file.

Dear R&R Joel:

When our website is up and running we will make parts of it available there. (BF)

Profile of a Board Member,

By Mildred Marshburn, General Manager

The creative perspective of our Board of Directors is reflected by the participation of Leonard Motsinger, fondly known as Lenny. As a teacher of religion and theatre, Lenny touches both our spiritual and aesthetic senses of life. His artistic contributions can be seen from the moment you approach the property. From the white entrance doors, to the brass lighting fixtures and kick plates on the buildings, Lenny's signature is stamped throughout the Village. Like the sun shining through the clouds or a special seasoning added to an old family recipe, his creative voice adds the finishing touches that make Glen Oaks Village a beautiful community to admire. It is my pleasure to introduce you to Lenny Motsinger.



Hi Lenny. I'm glad to have you here today. I would like to speak to you about Glen Oaks Village and how you became a resident here.

I was living in Bayside where I sold my high-rise apartment. I was looking for a more communal type of living, something with a private entrance and no elevator. That is when I came upon Glen Oaks Village and in March 1989, I purchased my apartment here.

You have been here for quite some time.

Yes, I have lived here for 16 years.

16 years--my goodness! You probably have seen a lot of changes in that time, haven't you?

Yes, a lot of changes and all for the good I must say.

What are some of the more important changes you have seen?

The biggest change is in the physical upkeep of the property. It has improved by leaps and bounds. The shrubbery, brick and limestone stoops, newly painted doors, new lights, right down to the huge entrance signs announcing 'Glen Oaks Village,' are all examples of the wonderful changes to our community. The Maintenance upkeep of the buildings is just outstanding.

How long have you been on the Board?

Six years, going on seven.

Tell me how did you get involved with the Board?

For a long time, I just lived here. Then one of the Board Members, I guess it was six or seven years ago, had a conversation with me. We started talking and I expressed my desire to improve my apartment by constructing a loft and a terrace. That is how I became involved.

At that time, did you know of anyone who had constructed a loft or had done some of the things that you wanted to do?

I knew that there were lofts in the complex, because I used to notice them while on my walks around the neighborhood. My Selling Agent at that time that I bought my home, heard there were lofts and terraces but was unsure what was required to construct them. I am not certain whether she was telling me about the possibilities to encourage me to purchase the apartment, but these types of projects definitely fascinated me. This is one of the reasons I purchased my unit. When I finally met the President, I did ask him about the possibility of constructing a loft. At that time the Board was just beginning to look into the whole idea of Value Added Improvements and the feasibility of them. They knew that people were interested in improving their homes and the positive effect it would have on the co-op. As soon as I realized it was possible, I went ahead and built a loft and shortly after that, a terrace.

I guess you can say you were one of the pioneers of the Value Added Improvements?

Lenny: I don't know if I was a pioneer, but I was certainly one of the stronger supporters of them. I believe when you make something your own in a unique way, you tend to value it more. As much as I like the uniformity of Glen Oaks, I also like the idea that people are allowed to express their individuality inside the apartments. I think that is what really makes a home, when you make it uniquely yours.

Is that how you became involved with the Board?

I think so. At the time, when the Board member approached me, I was really ready to get involved. There were a lot of things I wanted to see happen. It took me a long time to realize that the strength of Glen Oaks Village is the people working together as a community. You can't complain about things, if you are not doing anything to fix them. That is what really prompted me to join. At the time, Bob Friedrich was President, and still is today. He was very open to my ideas and what I wanted to do in my apartment. Our Newsletter featured the renovations of my unit a couple of issues ago and the response surprised me.

What was one of the things that you wanted to accomplish as a Board member?

I think the whole physical appearance of Glen Oaks Village needed updating. Years ago, although Glen Oaks had a reputation for being a nice community, people felt the Board was not overly concerned about its physical appearance. That has not been my experience. When I first moved here, a lot of shrubs in front of my place had died. I called and they replaced them immediately. I saw that there was an interest, but it didn't seem to be consistent throughout the community. Part of my reasons for joining the Board was to encourage uniform improvement throughout the community. It stands to reason, if the community is improved the

value of the individual homes improve. This is a clear example of the ‘domino effect.’ When you see the results, it is just absolutely beautiful.

It truly is and now other people, as well as other co-ops, are beginning to take notice of it. What experiences, or background, you have brought to this very progressive Board that has enabled them to continue to move forward?

I think I have always been interested in good design and good function. I remember reading an article in a magazine, where they were building a University and decided to plant grass on the grounds, instead of just allowing the contractor to install walks where he felt they should go. After students and faculty established the natural paths, concrete paths were laid. When we are redoing concrete areas, this concept is taken into consideration. It is these kinds of things that I think are really important and that interest me. I have done scenic and costume design at my job and I just love watching design shows on TV. I am a very visual kind of person, which is where my expertise lies.

What changes have you seen among the Board itself?

I have not seen that many changes since I joined the Board. The Board had already begun to move in the right direction and we have continued to grow. I mean, we really do have some heated debates, but at the end of the evenings, we leave respecting each other’s opinions. Decisions are made by a majority rule, which works very well.

What are some of the major changes that the Board has made, as a whole, that has impacted the community?

Again, I think it goes back to the Value Added Improvements. The Board really encourages people to look at different ways to improve their units and thereby improving the whole community. I think this is the biggest and the most important change. A friend of mine was looking for a co-op and was interested in moving to Glen Oaks Village. Unfortunately, we were a little out of her price range. She found another co-op but they were adamant she could not alter anything--absolutely nothing. Here, with Board approved Alteration Agreements, the sky is the limit. Why, we are even looking into allowing Dormers!

Was it difficult to establish guidelines for Value-Added-Improvements?

I think sometimes you learn more from doing. Initially, we allowed decks and terraces to be constructed of pressure-treated wood. Over time, we realized that synthetic materials were a far better choice because they require little to no maintenance by shareholders. As more and more residents installed decks and terraces, uniformity also became an issue. The Board then instituted new procedures, requiring all second floor, front terraces to be constructed of white synthetic material and all first floor front decks to be constructed of concrete, brick and limestone to blend aesthetically with our buildings. Another thing that became

apparent as time went on, was the size of the decks and terraces that residents were permitted to construct. We found out that ‘bigger was not always better.’ I think this an ongoing process and at the end, you have to look at how it affects the community as a whole.

Why does the Board insist on monitoring Value Added Improvements so closely?

Resident safety is the number one reason. The Board is also concerned that these Value Added Improvements do not compromise our buildings’ infrastructure. I remember an incident in Bayside where a newly constructed terrace collapsed during a party, because it was not legalized and constructed properly. It is those kind of things the Board must take into consideration when giving approval to construct a loft or terrace. As a result, we now require NYC Building Department legalization of all major renovation, to ensure the safety of our residents and infrastructures. It is very important for residents to realize that we are not trying to make the process difficult, but only trying to make sure these improvements will not have a negative impact on our community

What other changes are you interested in seeing for the community?

Lenny: One change I would like to encourage is for residents to take the initiative to get involved. The Board constantly feels we have to remind residents they are part of something larger than their individual homes. In other words, when they see something wrong outside of their home (i.e. debris on the lawn, a broken drainpipe, or a dead shrub) they should not feel that it is someone else’s responsibility to report it. Co-op living is a different kind of living experience. Everything that happens inside our village affects everyone. Therefore, if the dumpster area is not cleaned up, with debris blowing across a lawn, even though that lawn may not be yours, in a way it is. Residents just cannot complain to each other, they must take the time to contact the appropriate department in order to have the situation corrected. Our residents must understand that we are a community and must work together to maintain the beauty of Glen Oaks Village.

What are some of the projects that you have been instrumental in working on since you became a member of the Board?

I guess selecting a uniform color for the apartment entrance doors. When I moved here the doors throughout the Village were painted several different colors. I felt there was a lack of a color scheme. I thought it would really improve the look of the community, if all the doors were painted one color. The Board finally settled on painting all the doors white. New light fixtures, brass mail slots and kick plates completed our entranceway makeovers. This was one of the biggest projects I was involved in.

Originally, wasn’t the Board looking to replace the apartment entrance doors altogether?

As part of that process, we were looking into replacing the

wooden entrance doors with metal doors. Unfortunately, the cost was prohibitive. This caused us to reconsider our original plan to find a uniform color to paint the doors. To this day, I think we made a wonderful choice.

It just gave the entire building a face lift.

Yes, it really did and we are continuing with our building facelift by replacing the yellowed shutters and redoing the areas below the bottom-most brick, as part of our Basement Foundation Program. Next are the mailboxes.

The mailboxes?

Yes, new mailboxes will be our 'finishing touch.'

One of the things that I have noticed with the Board is that there are always projects going on. Not only are there Capital Improvement projects which deal with the infrastructure of the roads, sidewalks and driveways, there are also the building projects that go on from year to year. In speaking with you, I feel you have really enjoyed working on the ones that upgrade the 'curb appeal' of our village.

Which is one of my favorite shows...

Curb appeal, does it really help to sell units?

Lenny: I am continually amazed as to how much curb appeal factors into the prices that we are able to ask for our units. When I first moved here, I felt Glen Oaks Village was just a nice co-op in Queens. The Board and our residents now recognize that Glen Oaks is a unique community, with a great deal to offer and is in a wonderful location. It astounds me that just last week, I noticed a three-bedroom unit in the newspaper selling for over \$300,000!

What makes Glen Oaks unique?

Lenny: Fortunately, we are self managed which allows us to monitor every facet of the management of Glen Oaks Village. This gives the Board a direct hand in day-to-day decisions, especially since our Board members live on the property. Another thing that makes Glen Oaks unique is our location. We have access to the Long Island Rail Road, local and express buses, and close proximity to major thoroughfares. Generally, you can commute to New York City, Westchester or Long Island in under an hour. Low Real Estate taxes is another advantage of living in Queens--especially when you compare what our neighbors in Westchester, Nassau or Suffolk pay. With the amount of open spaces and beautiful tree-lined streets, you almost forget you are living in the City. Glen Oaks Village really is an ideal community.

Are there other primary issues the Board is facing today?

Honestly and obviously, the one thing is finance. It is one of the Board's primary concerns to keep monthly maintenance charges low so that it does not become impossible for the people who have originally started Glen Oaks to stay and live here. We, as the Board of Directors, have tried very hard to keep the expenses and the price of maintenance

affordable for our residents. I believe that sometimes, the people of the community forget our Board members also pay maintenance.

Are there other goals for Glen Oaks Village that you envision in the near future?

Lenny: Recently, the Waldbaum's shopping center was renovated, which was a welcome change for our residents. The stores along Union Turnpike need to be modernized as well. Our Glen Oaks community is upgrading, and I think it is time to encourage the shops on Union Turnpike to do the same. Community Development is something the Board has discussed, but we have not focused on it a great deal. The curb appeal of our stores is something that can help to raise the property values, of the community.

If you were trying to convince someone to move to Glen Oaks Village, what would you say to them?

Everyone that knows me, knows that I am always talking about Glen Oaks Village and what a great place it is to live. Not only has our curb appeal improved, but also I would stress the fact that the interest and involvement of our Board of Directors has made a difference in the day-to-day operations of the co-op. This has insured and upgraded the quality of Maintenance Services, which our residents both enjoy and have come to expect. Here, we have the ability to upgrade our individual units and anyone with a vision can really make their home a unique and special place for themselves and their families. There are so many things that Glen Oaks Village offers it's residents, such as the Green Thumb Program, reasonably priced garages, free recreation facilities and the use of our Community Room for private parties for a nominal fee. The list goes on and on.

If there is a message that you could send to the Residents of Glen Oaks Village, what would it be?

Lenny I would like to remind the Residents that Glen Oaks Village is a special place to live. People need to believe they are part of something bigger than the apartments they purchased. Remember, I think it is very important that people get involved in their community.

They should come to the open meetings and voice their opinions. Remember, if you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem.

Thank you very much Lenny. I enjoyed sitting with you today and listening to you reminisce about Glen Oaks Village.

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT NEWS

By Mildred Marshburn

Maintenance Services Department



Jennifer Rickenbaugh, the Manager of the Maintenance Services Department, along with the entire Glen Oaks Village Management staff welcomes Hillary DeBona, who recently joined the Maintenance Services team as a Dispatcher. Hillary took Lois LoBosco's place after Lois retired at the end of 2004.

Jennifer Rickenbaugh reports that during the month of December alone, our Dispatchers filtered over 2000 calls from Residents. For each call taken, a Dispatcher must determine the nature of the call, its priority, type a work order and coordinate the repair or inspection between the appropriate Supervisor or Maintenance mechanic and the Resident. All calls are followed up with a Supervisor's review to ensure the appropriate Department did the work completely and in a timely fashion. For example, when one of our Dispatchers receives a call reporting that a roof leak has damaged a living room ceiling, a Supervisor's inspection is immediately scheduled. After it is determined that the leak was caused by a clogged gutter, the Dispatcher then schedules someone from our Carpentry Department to clean the gutter. When this work order is again returned to Maintenance Services Department, an in-house Plasterer is scheduled to repair the inside damage, with an outside Painter later scheduled to complete the job. These are the necessary steps followed after receiving just one call about a leak. You can imagine the volume of work created by the calls each month, as 2000 calls for December represents the average number of calls our Dispatchers filter every month.

Due to the high volume of calls and walk-in requests between 8:00 and 9:00 AM, it is recommended that you contact the Maintenance Services office after 9:30 AM for non-emergency-type requests. Our Maintenance Services office is open six days a week, Monday to Friday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM and Saturdays 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. When requesting non-emergency type repairs in your home, please allow our staff enough time to schedule an appointment. Remember to be patient and courteous when speaking with Jean Luca-torto, Assistant Supervisor and our Dispatchers, Toni, Donna and Hillary, as they are there to assist you in working out whatever problems you may have.

Landscaping Department

Drew Englot, the Landscaping Supervisor and his staff are looking forward to the on-start of spring. Although this winter started out mild, January's snowfall and below-freezing temperatures more than made up for it's slow beginning. You may have noticed that rear walkways were cleared of snow faster and neater than in past years. This was due to our purchase of the new THOMAS machine, which is used solely to clear rear walks. Although they are not mowing lawns during the colder months, the Landscaping crews are still busy maintaining the appearance of our property by removing leaves and debris from lawns, window wells, stairways and rear yards. Crews also clean the driveways and basements underneath our buildings. Please remember that in case of late snowfall, your garbage will be collected as soon as front and back walks and driveways are cleared. As spring approaches, if you feel landscaping is needed in your courtyard, please contact Maintenance Services at (718) 343-8400.

Carpentry, Electrical, Plastering, and Painting Departments

Frank Portella, the Supervisor of the Carpentry, Electrical, Plastering and Painting Departments, reports that while the Carpentry crew has been busy completing the replacement of the yellowed and damaged shutters in Section II, his Electrical Department has worked closely with outside electrical contractors to upgrade the electric in our garages. To date, all garages in Section I have been upgraded with Section II scheduled to be completed by year's end. As soon as the weather permits, the Building Foundation Program will resume. This program includes the refurbishment of our buildings below the-bottom-most bricks (i.e., the replacement of basement windows and doors, crawlspace doors, stairway railings and copings, re-stucco and paint the building foundation walls, as well as, stairway railings). We will also commence the completion of our Shutter Program in Section I, where yellowed and damaged shutters will be replaced with new white ones.



Boiler and Plumbing Department

Jeff Postman, Boiler and Plumbing Supervisor, reports that since December, we have used oil as our major source of heating fuel. While using oil is usually more labor intensive than heating with gas, Jeff is proud to say our Boiler Crew handled the challenge with ease. This was primarily due to the refurbishment and preventive maintenance done by Boiler Mechanics in our 47 Boiler Rooms (housing 96 Boilers) during the spring and summer months. During the “off-season,” by adhering to the Boiler Improvement Program, it ensures that sufficient heat and hot water will be provided to all of our residents. In addition to our Boiler Crew, we have an excellent staff of Plumbers, who are well qualified to handle most of the plumbing repairs requested by the 2,904 households of Glen Oaks Village.

Alteration Agreements

Dorothy Hegmann, of Maintenance Administrative Services, reports that although the submission of Alteration Agreement Applications slowed during the November-December holiday season, the number of applications has again increased in preparation for the spring--our busiest time of year.

Even though kitchen and bathroom makeovers continue to be our most popular renovations, we have noted an increase in loft, deck and terrace applications. Shareholders often comment that constructing lofts or terraces, gives them the feeling of added spaciousness--especially when skylights and sliding doors are included in the projects.

The following is a list of guidelines to be followed when deciding what type of contractor is required for your specific renovation:

General Contractor

A General Contractor is required when constructing decks and terraces, lofts, cathedral ceilings, attic stairways, renovating kitchen and bathrooms, and for doing light plumbing or light electrical work. You may also want to consider using a General Contractor when replacing woodwork or when plastering and painting your unit.

Licensed Plumber

A licensed plumber is required when water, heat or gas lines are moved or altered from the original design of the apartment.

Licensed Electrician

A licensed electrician is required when adding an electrical line or receptacle, as well as, upgrading your unit's service from 110 amps to 220 amps.

All work being done by a Contractor must be included on the Alteration Agreement application, be approved by the Board of Directors, and pass inspection by a Maintenance Department Supervisor. Work not on the original Alteration Agreement application must be filed as an addendum and approved prior to commencing the work. Residents discovered allowing work to be done without the necessary permits, will be subject to a fine.

The Board requires Shareholders to submit Alteration Agreements for the renovation or upgrading of their units and we stress the fact that a Maintenance Supervisor must inspect all alterations. Alterations are divided into three (3) levels. Level I alterations, which are minor renovations, require one supervisory inspection. Level II and Level III alterations represent more extensive renovations, and require three (3) inspections by a Maintenance Supervisor. In addition, Shareholders are required to submit detailed plans, including contractor licensing and insurance information, sketches, a description of proposed work and a \$250.00 deposit, before the Board of Directors review and approve the application. In addition, Level III alterations require a NYC Building Department Work Permit. Once approved, the Shareholder is issued a copy of the approved Alteration Agreement with a bright green GOVO permit, to be posted in their front window until final inspection by a Maintenance Supervisor. Both supervisory staff and Security personnel closely monitor Level II and III renovations, in order to protect the integrity of our buildings, the Shareholder and neighboring units. Upon finalization of work, Shareholders are issued their deposit refund of \$200.00, along with a Completion Certificate for their file. Fifty dollars (\$50.00) is retained to offset administrative costs.

Shareholders doing full renovations of kitchens and bathrooms are now being issued dumpster permits, which enables their contractor to use Glen Oaks Village dumpsters to dispose of construction debris. These bright yellow dumpster permits are included in the approved Alteration Agreement package. It is the Shareholder's responsibility to ensure that the approved Contractor places this permit on his vehicle's dashboard, making it visible to our Security Department and supervisory personnel. Alteration Agreement applications are available in the Maintenance Services office (70-41 260th Street) and at the Arnold Krause Management office lobby (70-33 260th Street).



Around the Neighborhood

by Drew Englot

After a long cold winter, I think everyone is looking forward to spring. The days are getting longer, the temperature warmer, and the sun brighter. For all of our residents who put so much effort into making their gardens look nice, this is their favorite time of year. It is also the time of year that your Maintenance Landscaping Department has the most work to do.

The Landscaping Department has a long list of duties to perform, in order to have the property look its best throughout the summer. We will be sending crews around to clean out all the flowerbeds, remove leaves and turn over soil beds, in preparation for any planting you want to do. Our staff will also be going from block to block to repair any lawns that were damaged during snow removal. We will identify, reseed and rope off those areas while grass re-grows. In the worst areas, where foot traffic is a problem, barren areas will be sodded.

Many of the programs that have been put in place by the Board of Directors to assist the residents with their gardening will continue this year. As part of our Property Enhancement Program, shrub planting will begin and continue throughout the summer. In addition, individual requests will also be incorporated into this program. Green Thumb vouchers will again be given out, hoses and sprinklers will be available for your use, new water spigots will be installed in areas where they are deemed necessary, and we will

try to satisfy all requests for top soil and wood chips. Green Thumb signs will be distributed to those residents that do not want our staff to work in their individual areas.

In recent years, with the combined efforts of residents and our Landscaping crew, the Board's vision of transforming Glen Oaks Village into a country-like setting has become a reality. The flowers planted by the "Green Thumbers" and the shrubs and



ornamental trees planted through our P.E.P. Project, have enhanced our park-like grounds. This curb appeal, along with the well-maintained appearance of our buildings, has

made Glen Oaks Village the standard which other co-ops in our area are now measured.

In addition to the grounds keeping, the spring is also the time that our yearly Capital Improvement Program gets underway. Because of the amount of work we have completed in recent years, the focus of our program is changing. We have completed a majority of the garage roofs, stoops, clotheslines, dumpster beautifications, drywells, and driveway aprons that needed repair or replacement. We can, therefore, move some of our resources to other projects like the Building Foundation and Shutter Programs. We will continue to work on building roofs, concrete walls, driveways, and brick walls. We have a busy schedule this year, in our ongoing effort to maintain the infrastructure here at Glen Oaks Village.

Just a Reminder.....

by Mildred Marshburn

Especially during snow emergencies:

- ✓ It is imperative that you park in designated parking spots or inside your garage.
- ✓ Rear parking areas and walkways will be cleared as quickly as possible, with your cooperation.
- ✓ Calcium chloride is available free of charge from Maintenance.
- ✓ We appreciate your assistance in clearing your stoop.

WOW

BABIES

It's a Girl !!

On August 13th, 2004, Janet Trinidad and Peter Paragas became the proud parents of Caryna who weighed in at 7 lbs. 6oz. We would like to congratulate the Trinidad Paragas family on their new addition!



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