

Hillman Housing



Board of Directors Newsletter

February, 2019

Finance Meeting on March 4, 2019

We look forward to seeing you at the **Annual Hillman Finance meeting on Monday, March 4, 2019 at 7 pm** in the Orenstein Building at 15-17 Bialystoker Place (across from the C building). We invite you to join the Board and Management to review the financial results for 2018 and discuss the financial strategy of the past few years and plans for 2019 and beyond.

Luther Gulick Park Renovation to Start in March!

The NYC Parks Department has announced that work will begin on the long-delayed renovation of Luther Gulick Park in March 2019. The \$9.9 million project is expected to be completed in 2020. The Board is grateful for the efforts of the Hillman shareholders and neighbors who have been fighting for the rehabilitation of this park for nearly a decade! Cooperator David Bolotsky, a founder of the Friends of Luther Gulick Park, which spearheaded the campaign for a renewed park, credited his fellow Hillmanite volunteers Elizabeth DeGaetano, Brian Crowley, Jim Johnson and Kim Sillen for their work and advocacy. "There have been a number of fits and starts, but it looks like it's real this time," he said. Bolotsky encourages Hillmanites to stay up to date with the Friends of Luther Gulick Park on [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/friends.of.luther.gulick.park), at www.gulickpark.org, or by emailing info@gulickpark.org.

Fence Update

Maintenance completed replacing the fences on the 550 and 530 blocks, with some details to be completed this spring. The Board has elected to defer fence work on the 500 block to explore whether it can be combined with needed repairs of the curbs, stairs, and entry ramps along Willett Street and elsewhere. Unlike the other fences that were replaced, the fence along Willett Street is mounted in a concrete curb that is in poor condition. We plan to investigate how we can coordinate the fence work with the concrete work to achieve the best aesthetic and functional result at a reasonable cost. We will explore replacing the chain link fences along Broome Street between Willett and Columbia after the renovation of Luther Gulick Park is completed.

Please Report Laundry Room Issues to Hercules and Coop Village Management

Recently, a cooperator wrote to the Board about long standing issues with laundry dryer performance in the H Building. In this case, cleaning clogged dryer vents seemed to improve the performance. However, in order to make sure that we receive the best service and performance from our laundry vendor, we are asking all cooperators to not only report laundry issues to Hercules, but to also notify Coop Village Management. The Board has instructed Management to track issues with the laundry rooms and hold our vendor accountable for better performance.

Forward your Hercules service complaints to contact@coopvillage.coop or call the Management office.

Bike Room Stickers are Here

If you have a bike parking spot but still need a sticker, please stop by the office to pick one up. If you're not making use of your bike spot, consider giving it up. You will make the next person on the waiting list very happy while saving \$120 per year!

Legionella Remediation Successful - Monochloramine Treatment Ended

As of January, 2019, Hillman has ceased the addition of monochloramine to our water. The addition of this common drinking water disinfectant was required by the New York City Department of Health in late 2017 after two individuals with addresses in the same Hillman block contracted Legionnaires' disease. Those cases triggered automatic testing by the NYC Department of Health, which detected small amounts of Legionella in some branch lines. After a year of treatment, Hillman has fulfilled the requirements of the remediation plan required by the DOH. Testing conducted both by the vendor, Barclay's Water Management, and independently by our own Management detected no Legionella in the water supply, and the Board and Management are confident in the safety of our water. This change also brings considerable savings, as the cost of the treatment was approximately \$10,000 per month.

Improving Communication

From time to time the building systems we depend on for our comfort and convenience aren't there for us. Whether these disruptions are planned, like the elevator project, or unexpected, like the water outage on the 530 block last year, the Board and Management are working to mitigate their impact with improved communication that will allow shareholders to prepare and know what to expect. To that end, the Board has been working with the Management to develop a communication protocol for planned and unplanned emergencies. It is a work in progress, but our goal is that shareholders should expect communication that includes:

- A clear description of work, impact and timeframe
- Contingency plans for emergencies
- Regular update intervals, clearly stated and followed, for emergencies.

Email is the best way to be in the loop with updates, so please be sure to sign up at:

<http://coopvillage.coop/emailSignup.php>.

Security Camera Policy

In the case of an incident like a bicycle or package theft, security footage can sometimes be useful to identify the culprit. To protect the privacy of our shareholders and neighbors, Hillman does not allow shareholders to personally review security camera footage. However, shareholders can request that Management or our security vendor review footage to determine whether it provides any evidence about an incident. When the office is closed, there is always a Security Supervisor on site who can review the footage. Serious incidents should be reported to the NYPD, and in some cases an impacted shareholder may view video recordings in the presence of law enforcement. No footage is ever shared with anyone other than law enforcement except by subpoena.

All About Abatements

Most Hillman shareholders are eligible for two types of property tax exemptions that can significantly reduce your monthly maintenance charges. These are the NYC Coop/Condo Tax Abatement (aka Real Estate Abatement or RE ABATE); and STAR (or Enhanced STAR) granted by New York State. Applying for these credits and getting the money back on your maintenance statements can be a somewhat mysterious process, but it actually requires very little action on your part. Management receives many questions about these exemptions, so we've described the process for each below. Like most tax questions, these exemptions are too complex to fully account for every possible circumstance here, but the following information applies to most Hillman shareholders.

1. The Coop and Condo Tax Abatement

Shareholders for whom Hillman is the primary residence are eligible for this city property tax abatement. Hillman shareholders who own breakthroughs or adjacent apartments are eligible for the co-op abatement on up to three units. Units owned by a trust are eligible only if the unit is the primary residence of the beneficiary of the trust, trustee, or life estate holder.

Depending on whether you receive certain other tax exemptions, like those for seniors and veterans, the coop/condo abatement amounts to 17.5 percent of real estate taxes per year, which amounted to over \$1400 dollars for an average Hillman two bedroom in 2018!

- **Management automatically applies for this credit on behalf of new shareholders yearly by February 15.** The NYC Department of Finance confirms eligibility.
- The fiscal year for NYC property tax begins on July 1, and you must have purchased your apartment on or before January 5 to be eligible for the abatement for the upcoming tax year.
- That means that most cooperators will have to wait up to one year to become eligible for the abatement, and longer to actually see the credit on their maintenance bill.
- Every December, the city provides Management with a letter outlining the amount of tax abatement due to each shareholder. The abatement applies to your share of the property taxes owed *after* personal exemptions, so you may receive a smaller abatement if you are also eligible for certain tax breaks for senior citizens, veterans, or disabled New Yorkers.
- Management distributes the annual amount of Coop Abatement (together with other benefits awarded to your unit) as credit to your monthly statements in 10 installments (March through December).

2. The School Tax Relief (STAR) Credit

Shareholders who have their primary residence in Hillman and earn \$500,000 or less in annual household income are eligible for this state program that can reduce your annual maintenance bill by about \$300. Cooperators 65 or older with an income of \$86,300 or less may be eligible for the Enhanced STAR credit, worth over \$600 (both credits vary annually). The property must be the primary residence of at least one owner. Married couples owning more than one property can only receive STAR on one property.

Shareholders have to register themselves for this credit just once, after which management receives the credits and applies them to your maintenance bill automatically.

This is how it works:

- **Shareholders register for the credit at <https://www.tax.ny.gov/star/>**
- You can register to receive the credit for up to three years from the income tax filing deadline for the year that the credit covers. The credit started in 2016, so **if you are not receiving it yet, you can apply for the full amount you might have missed until April 15, 2020.**
- Management receives the funds in March, and your share is applied as monthly credits. In some cases, the state mails checks directly to owners.
- You don't have to apply for this credit again. The state automatically reviews your eligibility every year.

If you have questions about your tax abatements, please email Galina Palis at gpalis@coopvillage.coop.

Safety and Courtesy Reminders

- If you are entering or exiting with a bicycle, stroller, or other bulky items, please use the basement doors, which are accessible by ramps. This helps prevent wear and tear on our doors, and it is also better for your back!
- Unfortunately, plastic bags are not accepted for recycling by the city, so if you collect your recycling in a plastic bag, please remove it before placing the items in the blue bins. No plastic of any kind should ever go in the brown compost bins.
- Please never pay for maintenance services in your apartment with cash. You can elect to be billed for services with your monthly maintenance or with a check payable to Hillman Housing Corporation. Cash payments should only be made in the Management office.

Board of Directors

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Judy Mitrani, Vice President
Ted Greenberg, Treasurer
Elizabeth DeGaetano, Secretary

Submit Board-related issues in writing to:
Hillman Board of Directors
Cooperative Village
530 Grand Street
New York, NY 10002
or send an e-mail to
hillmanboard@gmail.com

Coop Village Management: Monday, 9am to 6pm; Tuesday – Thursday, 9am to 5pm; Friday, 8am to 4pm

530 Grand Street, New York, NY 10002 | 212-677-5858 | contact@coopvillage.coop | www.coopvillage.coop

Coop Village Maintenance: Available every day from 8 am to midnight and in an emergency.
568 Grand Street, New York, NY 10002 | 212-677-5744

Online maintenance request: Visit www.coopvillage.coop/maintenance

Hillman Security: 500 A-B-C 212-388-0273 | 530 D-E-F 212-387-9048 | 550 G-H-J 212-388-1391
Police 7th Precinct: 212-477-7311

Package Delivery: NAME / BUILDING-APARTMENT
c/o East River Maintenance, 568 Grand Street, New York, NY 10002

E-mail Notification Service: Visit www.coopvillage.coop/emailsignup to register.

View your maintenance online using the Cooperator Portal. Send your name, address, apartment number, email, and phone to portal@hillmanhousing.com to receive a PIN number and further instructions for signing up.