



HOW tourism rebounded—and lessons for Covid

CRAIN'S

NEW YORK BUSINESS

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RELIEF FUND helps survivors who are still coming down with health issues

2021 HALL of FAME

Saluting five extraordinary New Yorkers who lead in business and invest in community
PAGE 17



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Melba Wilson, Albert Bourla, Vijay Dandapani, Lorie Slutsky and Charles Phillips



Storms betray city's fragile infrastructure

Subways and roads couldn't handle the rain

BY BRIAN PASCUS

The brutal one-two punch of Henri and Ida exposed how unprepared New York City's infrastructure is for increasingly frequent extreme-weather events.

The remnants of Hurricane Ida dumped more than 7 inches of rain on the city Sept. 2, 10 days after tropical storm Henri had drenched the city with 7 inches of rain, a then-record amount, on Aug. 21 and 22. Ida shut down the subway system, flooded city streets, turned the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway into a river and killed at least 13 New Yorkers, most of whom were trapped in flooded basement apartments.

The aftermath laid bare the shortcomings that remain for the city's subway and stormwater systems in facing the climate crisis, despite more than \$6 billion in improvements following Superstorm Sandy in 2012. As of press time Friday, several train routes were still closed or suspended, and shop owners continued to clean up dam-

aged goods stored in basements.

Many of the Sandy-inspired improvements were targeted at coastal areas affected by the storm surge, whereas the type of torrential rains Ida dropped can hit anywhere. And even the coastal improvements are not likely to be sustainable, experts say. One expert said climate-proof-

\$6B
AMOUNT SPENT on upgrades to the city's sewer system after Superstorm Sandy

ing the city's water-evacuation infrastructure would cost in the hundreds of billions of dollars.

"These rain events have been called 500-year events. They are now 500-hour events," said Eddie Bautista, executive director of the New York City Environ-

mental Justice Alliance, an advocacy group. "Talk about wakeup calls."

In fact, storms such as Sandy, Henri and Ida were once thought of as once-every-thousand-year occurrences before human fossil-fuel activity began warming the planet, said Michael Mann, professor of atmospheric science at Penn State University. But additional atmospheric changes brought on by

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GOTHAM GIGS
CAROLINE'S OWNER GETS NEW YORKERS LAUGHING AGAIN **PAGE 27**



TRANSPORTATION
Preparing for self-driving cars to hit the city's streets **PAGE 3**



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Fashion Week becoming more accessible for shoppers

BY CARA EISENPRESS

On the second day of Fashion Week, Queens-born designer LaQuan Smith, known for his “3D legging” that celebrities love, plans to show his collection at the Empire State Building. Although admission to the Sept. 9 runway show is by invitation only, fashion lovers around the world can stream the event and then shop Smith’s collection online because of the Fashion Alliance, a partnership forged in the spring between a group of city designers, talent agency IMG and fintech firm Afterpay. “Designers have tested the waters with ‘see now, buy now’ technology in the past,” said Noah Kozlowski, director of global designer relations at IMG, which is leading the alliance. “Coming out of the pandemic, it’s great to have opportunities to engage with each brand and each show—which we see as a critical marketing opportunity and consumer entertainment.” That the public can shop for goods online immediately marks a momentous change for New York Fashion Week, which—despite media hype, exclusive parties and sidewalk photo shoots—has been at its core a trade show at which re-

tail buyers ordered inventory to stock during the upcoming season. But months of shows canceled during the Covid-19 pandemic have accelerated a trend already underway, in which regular consumers are able to access top designers by interacting with them on social media or placing orders on direct-to-consumer platforms. Even so, this year’s Fashion Week will consist mostly of in-person shows and presentations between Sept. 8 and 13. It is scheduled to culminate in a rescheduled, downsized Met Gala at the Costume Institute, focusing on American designers. There are 91 designers with shows this year, according to the

operating at limited capacity in similar square footage. But the smaller audience size will be offset by technology allowing far-away viewers to partake in the moment—and to shop.

The business end

That’s where IMG’s involvement comes in. The company has contracted with 11 designers for the next three years, supporting the business side of their shows. The designers are Altuzarra, Brandon Maxwell, Jason Wu, LaQuan Smith, Markarian, Monse, Prabal Gurung, Proenza Schouler, Rodarte, Sergio Hudson and Telfar. IMG’s involvement allows them to try out technological advances without having to build their own internal capability. For independent designers, participating in Fashion Week can be an expensive hurdle, involving renting space, hiring models and stylists, finding sponsors and making sure reviewers and buyers show up. A relatively small event can cost up to \$40,000. The return on investment, especially for lesser-known brands, has not always been clear. The buzz from a show can lead to

“WE ARE BEGINNING TO WITNESS LONG-OVERDUE CHANGE TOWARD INCLUSIVITY”

Council of Fashion Designers of America, down from around 500 in previous years. The presentations are following a strict safety playbook, which includes proof of vaccination for everyone involved and mask-wearing for most participants except when eating, drinking or walking the runway. Each show is



SMITH during his fashion show in February 2020

good press, a growing fan base and orders from wholesale buyers. But because designers produce their collections after the shows, the apparel is not usually available at retail for months, by which time the excitement has died down. For small designers, having the support of a massive firm such as IMG to create forms that either cost less or deliver more can be instrumental to their finding their footing in a post-pandemic New York. “We have always been a city on the cutting edge of innovation, and I commend all of the designers and production teams for their creativity,” said Rep. Carolyn Maloney, who often has advocated for the city’s fashion and garment industries. In the past Fashion Week has welcomed more than 230,000 attendees, according to a 2017 report from Maloney’s office. That trans-

lated into \$865 million in economic impact, including dollars spent at hotels, restaurants and stores. Even this year’s smaller shows can bolster the fashion industry in a city that is home to 40% of all American designers and supports 900 industry businesses generating 180,000 jobs and \$11 billion in wages, according to Maloney. Rachel Rothenberg-Saenz, one-time director of product development at Oscar de la Renta, said the feeling in the industry is celebratory, that Fashion Week has been revived and that the push toward hybrid events and technological innovation could save it in future years. “I think it’ll be interesting to see what emerges,” Rothenberg-Saenz said. “We are beginning to witness long-overdue change in fashion toward more inclusivity.” ■

REAL ESTATE

Manhattan office leasing its hottest since January 2020, but ample space remains

BY EDDIE SMALL

Companies might be delaying their return-to-office plans, but activity in the sector is still picking up as asking rents remain low and available space remains high. Office leasing increased in Manhattan in August for the fourth consecutive month, with companies taking about 2.5 million square feet of space. That made it the most active month for the borough since January 2020, before the Covid-19 pandemic upended the city’s office market, according to the latest report from Colliers. The activity was driven by a particularly strong month for Midtown, which saw its highest level of leasing volume since July 2020. The neighborhood had seven of the top 10 leases, including the top five deals of the month. Firms leased about 1.5 million square feet of office space in the neighborhood, more than double the amount they leased in August 2020. The biggest transactions last month were Crédit Agricole’s



167,000-square-foot relocation within 1301 Sixth Ave. and BDO USA taking 143,000 square feet at 200 Park Ave. In the third-largest transaction, New York University renewed about 116,000 square feet of space at 11 W. 42nd St. August activity was slower in Midtown South, where companies leased about 508,000 square feet, and downtown, where they leased about 473,000 square feet—both



decreases from July. The largest deals in Midtown South included Maven Clinic taking 46,000 square feet at 160-170 Varick St. and Tmrw expanding to 38,000 square feet at 250 Hudson St. The biggest downtown deals included Cedar Cares taking 67,000 square feet at 32 Sixth Ave. and Constellation Agency taking 48,000 square feet at 1 World Trade Center. Despite the big month in Mid-

town, the total amount of office space leased so far this year is still just barely ahead of where it was at this point in 2020: roughly 13.9 million square feet, compared with 13.7 million last year, the report says. **Lingering challenges** The sector is still dealing with low asking rents and a large amount of available office space. Manhattan’s overall availability rate did drop from 17.1% in July to 16.9% last month—the largest month-over-month decline since June 2019. But the availability rate is still much higher than the 11.8% it was a year ago, according to the report. It has increased by 68.5% since the onset of the pandemic in March 2020 and has hit roughly 90.7 million square feet. The average asking rent in Manhattan was pretty stable month over month, decreasing by 4 cents to hit \$72.68 per square foot in August. It was the lowest asking rent in the borough since 2017 and 8.5% below where it was when the pandemic started. ■

WEBCAST CALLOUT



SEPT. 23

Crain’s Best Places to Work issue, celebrating 100 standout workplaces in the city, is one of the most anticipated of the year. The Sept. 27 print edition will profile the 100 companies and offices in the city that have been deemed the best by the employees who work there. Join us Sept. 23 at 12:30 p.m. for a virtual lunch event. The celebration will feature a live unveiling of the rankings of the 2021 Best Places to Work companies, congratulatory videos and special guest speakers. **VIRTUAL EVENT** Time: 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. CrainsNewYork.com/BestPlaces2021



BUCK ENNIS

Why the 9/11 tourism playbook won't work for Covid-19

A large-scale return of visitors to the city could be hampered by ongoing health concerns

BY CARA EISENPRESS

After the attacks on New York City on Sept. 11, 2001, the Metropolitan Museum of Art closed for two days.

Then-Mayor Rudy Giuliani called for a quick return to normalcy to show that the city was undeterred by terrorism. At the mayor's request, the museum reopened after 48 hours.

Following the most acute phase of the Covid-19 crisis, in

"THIS WILL **IMPACT** THE WHOLE CITY, AT A PRECARIOUS MOMENT IN THE **BATTLE AGAINST DELTA**"

the spring of 2020, the Met again was fast to reopen, relatively speaking. It took five months until dozens of masked visitors were standing in line to see the collection, in the spirit of re-

covery and resilience.

"For all the challenges and indignities that come with living in a dense urban environment, the Met and all cultural destinations are the reasons we are all here," said Ken Weine, the museum's vice president of external affairs.

Supporting—and being supported by—the city's cultural institutions and tourist draws is certain to be as instrumental to the city's recovery now as it was after 9/11.

See **TOURISM** on page 13



MOBILEYE

TRANSPORTATION

How the city is preparing for the arrival of self-driving cars

Policies will guide autonomous vehicle testing on unpredictable streets

BY RYAN DEFFENBAUGH

In a 40-minute video posted to YouTube, dashcam footage shows a car maneuvering around double-parked trucks, closed lanes, pedestrians and an endless stream of other vehicles on a trip from Midtown Manhattan to

Queens—all while the driver keeps his hands off the wheel.

The footage, taken in July, is from a vehicle equipped with technology from Mobileye, an Intel subsidiary that is the first company to test a self-driving car on city streets. The arrival of the autonomous vehicle industry has prompted action from

the city—with Mayor Bill de Blasio's administration launching a permit process for companies testing self-driving cars.

The effort is an early step in a long road of technology advances and policy challenges that experts

See **CARS** on page 23

Medical bills for Covid testing surprise New Yorkers

BY MAYA KAUFMAN

Anil Sindhvani is on the brink of being sent to collections. That's what CareCube, an urgent care provider, told him Aug. 15, when it notified him by email of an unpaid \$125 medical bill. The charge related to a Covid-19 test he had gotten in January at CareCube's Park Slope clinic and for which his insurance carrier had denied coverage, the email said.

Sindhvani was surprised. He had never had to pay for a Covid-19 test. When he visited CareCube, he said an employee had checked his in-

ing medical visits to obtain them. The New York Attorney General's Office confirmed it is looking into the general issue of Covid testing costs but declined to elaborate.

The federal government requires insurers to cover diagnostic Covid-19 testing and the related visit without a copay, a policy that includes patients who are asymptomatic and who have had no known or suspected exposure to the virus, as well as point-of-care testing. Federal guidance issued in February said the policy applies anytime "the purpose of the testing is for individualized diagnosis or treatment of Covid-19." Testing for public health surveillance and employment purposes is not subject to the requirement.

The state Department of Financial Services says insurers may not impose copayments, coinsurance and annual deductibles for in-network diagnostic Covid-19 testing and visits to diagnose Covid-19 at an in-network provider, such as an urgent care center.

Nevertheless, insurance companies that cover New Yorkers maintain a kaleidoscope of policies. Aet-

na does not require a physician's referral to cover Covid-19 testing. Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield, which covers 4 million New Yorkers, does, said spokeswoman Alessandra Simkin. She said a clinician must deem the test medically appropriate based on a clinical assessment, even though the federal government says health plans "generally must assume" that a patient seeking a Covid-19 test reflects such an assessment.

UnitedHealthcare—Sindhvani's insurance company—said it waives cost-sharing for both in-network and out-of-network tests for members of its Medicare Advantage, exchange, individual and employer-sponsored plans. A spokesman for the insurer, which has more than 3.7 million members in New York, said tests must be ordered or reviewed by a health care professional and be used to diagnose Covid due to symptoms or potential exposure. Sindhvani is on his parent's employer-sponsored plan.

Sindhvani was not experiencing Covid symptoms when he got his test at CareCube, but he said he had just returned to New York from out of state and wanted to make sure he did not have the virus.

"It feels like I was misled," he said.

CareCube did not respond to a request for comment before press time. Sindhvani still has not paid the bill.

On the hook

Even patients with symptoms have faced testing costs. When Kate Sweeney started feeling rundown at the start of August, just after having her first social outings since the start of the pandemic, she figured she should get tested. She went to the Bushwick location of Rapid NYC, an urgent care provider that she said touted free testing. She had been there twice or three times before for testing and not had to pay.

She is now on the hook for \$245, after Rapid NYC billed her insurance \$75 for the test and \$245 for the office visit; she had asked the center not to, because she knew the visit was out of network. Rapid NYC did not respond to a request for comment.

"I can't deal with this every time I feel I should go get tested," Sweeney said.

City Councilman Mark Levine, who chairs the council's health committee, is worried the inconsistencies will dissuade New Yorkers

from getting swabbed. He said the city should expand hours at its testing sites, which are free, and open more.

"Unfortunately, Delta means that vaccination, while critical, is alone not enough," Levine said. "If people lose confidence in testing being accessible and no-cost, then it's going to be a setback to this effort."

The city Department of Health provided a statement encouraging New Yorkers to use city-run testing sites and Health + Hospitals facilities for free testing services. In a statement, the state Department of Health said public health insurance programs regulated by the agency cover diagnostic Covid-19 tests in keeping with the federal policy; it no longer runs its own testing sites but said New Yorkers can visit its website or call its Covid-19 hotline to find a nearby location. ■



ISTOCK

"I CAN'T DEAL WITH THIS EVERY TIME I FEEL I SHOULD GO GET TESTED"

insurance coverage through UnitedHealthcare and told him he should not be charged.

As the pandemic drones on, New Yorkers like Sindhvani are reporting surprise medical bills for hundreds of dollars for Covid-19 tests, despite state and federal regulations that require health plans to cover the tests and the accompany-

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WHO OWNS THE BLOCK

TESTING THE RESIDENTIAL MARKET REBOUND IN SOHO

Spring Street development is already fetching \$12,000 rents

BY C. J. HUGHES

After many dismal months, owners of rental buildings are reporting optimism as demand picks up and apartments fill again.

Testing the market's recovery, in a way, is 68-70 Spring St., a new 11-unit apartment building in SoHo expected to open this month with rents ranging from \$7,000 to \$12,000 per month.

The developer, the Zaccaro family, a longtime local landlord, did not choose this moment to come online. No. 68-70 has been in the works for four years—as opposed to the more typical year and a half—after facing lawsuits from neighbors, polluted soil and mounting debt from the Covid-19 pandemic.

“It has been a very difficult process,” said John Zaccaro Jr., principal of P. Zaccaro Co., which was founded by his grandfather Philip in 1917. “But surely, new-construction apartments are still in demand.”

Without any advertising, four of the 11 units, which have two or three bedrooms, are already spoken for, Zaccaro said.

Projects like his that were underway when Covid-19 slammed New York in March 2020 seemed to bear the biggest real-estate brunt of the pandemic. Construction stopped, supplies dried up and costs climbed. At the same time, rapacious “vulture funds” have been trying to foreclose on developments through “technical defaults,” Zaccaro said. As renters haven't paid rent, sapping building revenues and putting mortgages at risk, such defaults have become more common, he added.

“That's the game for a lot of these guys: to steal properties,” he said.

In the spring, investment firm Meadow Partners attempted to snap up the \$21 million note behind 73 Sullivan St., a nearby Zaccaro-owned rental, before the landlord bailed himself out with a \$27 million bridge loan from Emerald Creek Capital.

Similarly, at 68-70 Spring, Zaccaro took on a \$39 million bridge loan that matures in 2023 from Columbia Pacific Advisors to pay off his years-old construction loan and buy time to stabilize the development.

Manhattan-wide, there were 9,642 new lease signings in June, the highest total since 2008, according to brokerage Douglas Elliman. But the median price for new development, \$4,850 per month, was down slightly from June 2020's \$4,792, Elliman said, while the overall median in SoHo and other downtown Manhattan neighborhoods was \$3,550, a decline from \$3,909 a year ago.

“It will take several years before the economy fully comes back,” Zaccaro predicted, adding that things are already looking up from a year ago, when some of his apartment buildings were a third empty. ■



80 SPRING ST.

Spanning from Crosby Street to Broadway, this 11-story prewar commercial building is perhaps best known as the home of Balthazar, a French-style celebrity hangout from restaurateur Keith McNally that opened in 1997. The pandemic shuttered the eatery for a year starting in March 2020. Three months ago, its home, which was constructed by the George Fuller Co. in 1903 and sits on the edge of SoHo's historic district, was sold by the Heller and Propp families to a limited-liability company linked to Northwood Investors, a Denver-based firm that owns the Lotte New York Palace Hotel near Rockefeller Center, and 100 Broadway, a 24-story office tower in the Financial District. Northwood paid \$236 million for the 144,000-square-foot Beaux-Arts structure at 80 Spring while also picking up next-door 520 Broadway, another 11-story office building, from the same sellers for \$88 million, records show. Commercial values in SoHo have swooned while retailers have struggled.

76 CROSBY ST.

This 6-story, 1884 brick building, which sometimes goes by 81 Spring St., features the Bayard, a six-unit residential condominium. In recent years, it also was known as the home of Nick Denton, founder of gossip website Gawker, which was forced into bankruptcy in 2016. That year, Denton listed his second-floor apartment, which once served as Gawker's offices, for \$4.3 million, after paying \$1.9 million for it in 2004. But there do not seem to have been any takers for the loft, which has 12-foot ceilings and a 760-square-foot living room. It then went on the market as a rental that was last listed, also in 2016, at \$14,000 per month, according to StreetEasy. Gawker relaunched in July under new management.

65 SPRING ST.

This 5-story, 25-foot-wide walk-up has eight apartments, according to city records. Despite its narrow size and plain-Jane facade, the building, which has two storefronts, has attracted interest from investors. United American Land, a high-profile firm owned by the Laboz family with several SoHo properties, snapped up No. 65 in 2016 for \$14.5 million, with \$9 million in financing from Signature Bank. The seller was an LLC run by Elssy Losada, records show. New York puts its value at \$4.36 million today.

72 SPRING ST.

This 12-story, 109,000-square-foot office building, completed in 1907, is owned by Propeller Co., which purchased it in 1987 for \$8.8 million, including with a \$6 million loan, property records show. Propeller appears to be a neologism used by the Propp and Heller families in some real-estate transactions, along with Heller Properties and Relide Realty, according to records. Holdings include 15 Maiden Lane, an office building in the Financial District where the firm is headquartered. This summer the families sold two large SoHo properties including 80 Spring St. At 72 Spring, retail tenants include a Starbucks and an Amazon 4-Star store. There is at least one empty store upstairs, an 11,500-square-foot space listed with Cushman & Wakefield. Propeller declined to comment.

60 SPRING ST.

A 15-story limestone edifice with a beveled corner, this was the former East River Savings Bank, designed by Cass Gilbert in 1927. The upstairs floors of the building, also known as 225 Lafayette St., were more likely in recent decades to be occupied by writers and photographers than bankers, however. In 2005 A.I. & Boymelgreen replaced those offices with 42 condo units, from one- to three-bedrooms, plus a roof deck, in a \$65 million redevelopment. A Duane Reade pharmacy stands where tellers once cashed checks. Early last month, a two-bedroom apartment with beamed ceilings in the doorman building was listed for \$3 million. The same apartment traded for \$3.25 million in 2016.

218 LAFAYETTE ST.

Osteria Morini, a stylish Italian restaurant from chef Michael White, commands much of the attention at this modest 2-story, stucco-walled structure. But for decades, the upstairs office in the 1959 building had another high-profile tenant, P. Zaccaro Co., a privately held development firm whose second-generation head, John Zaccaro, was married to Geraldine Ferraro, the 1984 Democratic candidate for U.S. vice president. In 1985 Zaccaro pleaded guilty to altering an appraisal and overstating his net worth to win financing for a Queens property. No. 218, once owned by Weiner Machinery, was purchased by the Zaccaros in 1971 for \$21,000, records show. It's worth \$2.6 million today, according to its official valuation. P. Zaccaro is no longer based at No. 218; Osteria Morini leases the upstairs space.

68-70 SPRING ST.

At a \$630 million valuation, publisher Forbes is too small to succeed as a public company

The firm’s big idea entails travel and business-education licensing and leveraging its lists

For decades the editor of *Forbes* magazine was James Michaels, a contrarian and acerbic fellow known for attacking the copy and egos of his journalists. If a reporter turned in a wishy-washy article, he’d send it back, growling, “Just tell me if it’s a good business or bad one.”

I’ll do my best to honor Michaels’ credo in examining *Forbes’* publisher’s plan to take itself public at a \$630 million valuation.

The publisher, founded in 1917, was sold to Integrated Whale Media in 2014. Today Forbes Global Media has an audience of 150 million for its news, conferences and marketing programs. The goal is to turn 1 million into digital subscribers, according to an investor presentation.

Sounds reasonable. After all, *The Wall Street Journal* has 2.7 million digital subscribers, and the *Financial Times*, about 1 million. More

than most audiences, business-news readers will pay for valuable information.

Yet *Forbes* has just 23,000 digital subscribers at the moment, according to the investor presentation. That’s 4,000 fewer than Quartz, a business-news website that launched in 2012.

The publisher said it believes it can attract a lot more subscribers by offering the right stuff.

“Our strategy is a premium-products strategy, where data and analytics and insights about our various audience cohorts leads to the creation of a bespoke product and experiences that are targeted to those cohorts,” Chief Executive Mike Federle said recently.

In plain English, he means the plan is to turn more readers into paying customers.

That strategy has been embraced by many publishers, including Crain Communications, because

they’ve given up hope that digital advertising dollars will provide adequate revenue. The big idea in the news business today is selling subscriptions to newsletters aimed at specific audiences. *Forbes* has Deal Flow, a newsletter for \$13 per month aimed at Wall Streeters—not to be confused with the *Times’* DealBook.

One thing *Forbes* won’t do, it said, is lock the majority of its articles and other content behind a paywall.

“We believe in the ad model, and we believe it will continue to be

transforming it into a licensing company.

It’s not a new idea. *Forbes* succeeded back in the day because its ownership picked sharp editors, like Michaels, while marketing itself as a “capitalist tool” for anyone who was—or aspired to be—rich. Before publisher Malcolm Forbes died in 1990, he loved to show off his collection of Fabergé eggs, be seen partying at his French château and photographed riding his yacht.

Today the new regime sees opportunity marketing the *Forbes* name in the business-education and travel arenas. Known for its lists, *Forbes* aims to compete against Bankrate and NerdWallet ranking personal financial services. It

even plans to go up against the Robinhoods of the world with an investment app that Federle said is about “empowering everyday investors with sophisticated hedge fund and investing strategies.”



FEDERLE

AP PHOTO

Let’s wish the company well as it tries to become an indispensable tool to a new generation of capitalists. But it’s going up against some enormous competitors. Robinhood has a valuation of \$38 billion, or 60 times larger than the one sought by *Forbes*. And while *Forbes* has excellent reporters on its in-house editorial staff of 176, the Rupert Murdoch-owned *WSJ* has nearly 1,300 journalists.

It’s often said in the business pages that scale matters. Whatever *Forbes* has, it doesn’t have that. ■

LET’S WISH THE COMPANY WELL AS IT TRIES TO BECOME AN INDISPENSABLE TOOL

strong and growing into the future,” Federle said.

Transformation plans

The big idea behind *Forbes’* proposed turn as a public company is

REAL ESTATE



Rego Park could be getting residential project at site of Jewish funeral home

BY EDDIE SMALL

Rumors about the future of a Jewish funeral home in Queens have been laid to rest.

Parkside Memorial Chapel at 98-60 Queens Blvd. in Rego Park will become a 51-unit residential project spanning about 72,000 square feet, according to plans that owner David Matatov filed with the city Department of Buildings.

The mixed-use development would stand 7 stories tall and include commercial and community space, along with 15 parking spots. JFA is the architect of record.

A company linked to RB Realty

Capital purchased the building from Parkside Memorial Chapels in July for slightly less than \$11 million, property records show. The developer has filed an application to demolish the 2-story building, but the application has not been approved yet, and the demolition permit has not been issued, according to the DOB.

Parkside Memorial Chapels has multiple locations in the city, including at 1700 Coney Island Ave. in Midwood, Brooklyn, and at 114-03 Queens Blvd. in Forest Hills, Queens, according to the company’s website.

Representatives for RB Realty did

not respond to a request for comment.

City Councilwoman Karen Koslowitz told the *Queens Chronicle* in February that the project planned to replace the funeral home would be an affordable-housing development for senior citizens. Her office did not respond to a request for comment on whether that is still in the works.

Shorewood Real Estate also is planning a large residential project in Queens, at 34-20 Junction Blvd. in Jackson Heights. The company’s 125-unit project is designed to stand 6 stories tall and span roughly 227,000 square feet. ■

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STRENGTH IN CERTAINTY

EDITORIAL

U.S. Open shows that events can return if they take a common-sense approach

Last week the U.S. Open tennis tournament kicked off with fans in the stands. They were a welcome sight after last year's event barred crowds. The Open courted controversy by at first saying it would not require spectators to wear face masks or show proof of vaccination against Covid-19. But after the mayor weighed in, it recognized the fault and reversed its decision.

Despite the missteps, organizers of upcoming events can learn a lot from the Open. Nearly two years into the pandemic, we know the factors that can help mitigate the spread of Covid-19: social distancing, congregating outdoors, wearing masks and, most

know every reasonable effort is being made to keep them safe. What New York doesn't need is more cancellations. The New York International Auto Show was canceled two weeks before its scheduled Aug. 20 return date. The event typically attracts close to a million attendees, and it benefits not only vendors within the Javits Center but also the restaurants and shops nearby. And the West Indian Day Parade, for years a Labor Day staple, won't have its bright costumes and infectious drumbeats running along Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn again this year. The parade benefits the businesses up and down its route, many owned by Caribbean immigrants, as well as

THE BEST THAT BUSINESSES CAN DO IS BE VIGILANT AND TAKE STEPS TO KEEP PATRONS SAFE

important, getting vaccinated. Using these as their playbook, other large events can safely return to the calendar, albeit at outdoor venues. New Yorkers eager for a return to normalcy will happily snap up tickets, as long as they

budding entrepreneurs who sell everything from crafts to island flags to bottles of water to visitors. Although, of course, it would be tricky to require proof of vaccination at a parade and it makes sense that it would be on hold for another year, there are other events that can take advantage of New York's traditionally mild fall temperatures and move forward outdoors.



SUDAN OUYANG/UNSPLASH

People are still dying from this virus that refuses to loosen its grip on our city. And many others are still falling ill. But a number of them are individuals who are not taking precautions. The best that businesses and groups can do is be vigilant and take all the necessary steps to keep patrons safe. Will there still be outbreaks as we congregate? It's likely, but as long as crowds are made up of the vaccinated, the hope is that most

of the cases will be mild and survivable. Finding the balance between safety and openness is tricky, especially because of the Delta variant, but it's essential to getting the city's economy back up and running. Organizers shouldn't shy away from bringing back most of the marquee events that make our city great. It'll just take a little creativity and a lot of common sense. ■

OP-ED

End zoned dancing, let everybody cut footloose

BY ERIC ADAMS AND KEITH POWERS

Have you ever danced with your friends at a bar in New York City? Maybe just swayed to music at a restaurant? That might be illegal inside your favorite establishment.

New York is the capital of culture and nightlife. Yet, you wouldn't always know it from the outdated policies that have historically governed the nightlife industry.

In 2017 the city made history by repealing its Prohibition-era Cabaret Law, which made dancing illegal in most venues. Historically, the Cabaret Law served as a selective tool of enforcement against nightlife establishments, particularly businesses that were hubs for people of color and the LGBT community.

Unfortunately, under current zoning regulations, dancing is still not allowed inside popular drinking and dining venues. Bars and restaurants that are subject to the zoning regulations are unknowingly breaking the law every time a patron dances along to a favorite

song. At this critical juncture of our economic recovery, we can't afford to keep outdated regulations on the books.

Our resolution calls on the Department of City Planning to end these arbitrary, unfair regulations on our city's small establishments. For any bar or restaurant with 200 people or less, you would no longer encounter stiff penalties or face a burdensome zoning process for dancing.

The Covid-19 pandemic devastated New York City's hospitality and entertainment industries. Between June and December 2020, more than 90% of the city's restaurants, bars, nightclubs and event spaces couldn't pay their bills.

We should end the selective enforcement of a rule that few know about.

For businesses that voluntarily want to come into compliance, the city's process for changing zoning is expensive, timely and uncertain. We shouldn't be subjecting small



ISTOCK

businesses to this burdensome process just to operate normally.

Most importantly, we would be truly ending the archaic and discriminatory Cabaret Law.

Historically, dancing restrictions have had a disproportionate impact on Black, Latino and LGBT communities, whether by targeting Black jazz venues or raiding drag clubs. The Black Institute, in a 2019 report, found that 92.5% of the raids conducted by the NYPD-led Multi-Agency Response to Community Hotspot operation—the city entity tasked with enforcing dancing regulations—have occurred in neighborhoods with at least 30% minority populations.

Removing the regulations doesn't mean that your local diner would suddenly become Studio 54. The zoning resolution would still regulate the development of large nightclubs, and all establishments would still be subject to any applicable regulations, including noise, fire, security and health codes. Bars and restaurants would still require the approval of the state Liquor Authority to add patron dancing, with local community boards being able to weigh in. Ultimately, this allows for more flexibility and less enforcement while leaving room for communities to have a voice in the siting of problematic establishments.

Keeping antiquated zoning regulations around is only hurting our city and impeding our recovery. It's time we finish the job—and let New Yorkers dance. ■

Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams is the Democratic candidate for mayor. Keith Powers is a City Council member representing Central Park South, Koreatown and the Carnegie Hill.

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OF AREA BUSINESS PUBLICATIONS

City should play to its strengths in the growing health care and tech industries to speed recovery

BY PHIL FRIEDMAN
AND ED COX

New York City is at a political and economic inflection point—presenting many challenges to its post-pandemic comeback but also significant opportunities.

So far the city's recovery has been unbalanced, lagging behind those of other major U.S. cities. For New York to restore its dynamism and create an inclusive and globally competitive economy, it needs to leverage its growing sectors and ensure that all New Yorkers have the skills they need.

Much of the city's ongoing economic recovery has been concen-

and health care employment surpassed prepandemic levels as of April.

To ensure the city remains a leading global commercial center and a magnet for world-class innovation, policymakers and New York business leaders must play to the city's growing strengths in health care and technology.

Fostering partnerships

Policymakers and business leaders should foster public-private partnerships that strengthen and promote the city as a bio-innovation hub. The partnerships should develop biotech incubation centers for startups, incentivize companies whose research is

homespun to remain local and address supply-chain challenges that could slow advanc-

es. Doing so would expand the city's research capabilities and spur innovative ideas that could generate new firms and jobs.

City leaders and the business community should leverage the city's top-ranked hospitals and research centers to serve as models for addressing health care disparities. The pandemic accelerated the need for better patient care and exposed the city's health care delivery system inequities.

Improving them will require both investing in health infrastructure and attracting diverse, top

medical talent to provide high-quality care and develop cutting-edge treatments.

That includes partnering with community colleges and private training providers to expand the pipeline of skilled frontline health care workers who are representative of the communities they serve.

Policymakers and business leaders also should collaborate to develop an inclusive tech skills-building ecosystem.

Digital services jobs have driven the recent tech boom, but the rise of tech roles across all sectors of the city's economy—such as in biotech, fintech, proptech and even fashion tech—will drive future economic growth.

As in other cities, women and Black and Latino people are underrepresented in New York's tech sector. Policymakers and business and education leaders should collaborate to grow and diversify tech talent pipelines that support underrepresented groups. They should partner with high schools in underserved areas to provide teens with opportunities to gain tech and workplace skills for academic credit. They also should join forces with community colleges to develop stackable, short-term tech-training opportunities that equip individuals with market-ready skills.

Scientific method

Business and city leaders must promote and invest in New York City as an inclusive regional tech hub. Ensuring that its economy



BLOOMBERG

comes back even stronger than before relies on bolstering the city's tech sector. Leaders should leverage its potential to catch up with Silicon Valley and other top tech hubs, while advancing economic inclusion. They should create startup supports that provide more equitable access to capital and markets, for example, and develop tech innovation centers in the boroughs outside of Manhattan—which have traditionally been left behind.

Local leaders should leverage the pandemic response momentum to invest in the city's growth sectors to ensure it remains a leading global commercial center. At the same time, they should fortify the city's other economic drivers, which have been more negatively affected by the pandemic—including

real estate, leisure and hospitality, and transportation, along with the financial sector, the city's signature global brand. Strengthening them would preserve and enhance the economy's most valuable resource—talent—and avoid permanent migration.

We now have an opportunity for new thinking as business, education and political leaders refocus on creating jobs, developing and attracting a highly skilled workforce, and luring residents, workers and tourists back to ensure the city's primacy. ■

Phil Friedman is president and CEO of Computer Generated Solutions. Ed Cox is a retired partner at Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler.

WOMEN AND BLACK AND LATINO PEOPLE ARE UNDERREPRESENTED IN NEW YORK'S TECH SECTOR

trated in health care, the life sciences and the growing tech industry—three sectors that were already strengthening prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. Tech jobs have been driving employment growth for a while now.

While office and residential buildings hollowed out during the crisis, Big Tech—including Amazon, Apple, Facebook and Google—increasingly moved in, expanding office and warehouse spaces and accelerating hiring. Information and computer services have recovered 75% of job losses,

How Hochul can leverage philanthropy to tackle public health, environmental and equity issues

BY LORIE SLUTSKY

With Kathy Hochul stepping into her new role as governor, New York has a historic opportunity to lead the nation in advancing policies that expand opportunities for all, improve public health and our environment and advance equity.

As Hochul's administration begins its work, we encourage the governor to work closely with philanthropists to make our state a better place for all by tackling important issues such as education, workforce development, immigration, the climate crisis and the strengthening of our safety net.

Given the urgency of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, we at the New York Community Trust encourage the new administration to take better advantage of programs and funding that already exist—and advance measures that will spur opportunities for all.

It starts with prioritizing the disbursement of the full \$2.1 billion

allocated in the Excluded Workers Fund, which provides aid to those who lost employment during the pandemic but were ineligible for unemployment insurance and federal stimulus funds.

With the federal eviction moratorium phasing out next month, the new administration also must act quickly to fix the state's rent-relief program. Relief is available to help both renters and small-property owners—groups that are united in denouncing the bureaucratic snafus by Andrew Cuomo's administration that have left billions of dollars unspent.

Taking steps

The new governor also has an opportunity to improve our public transit system. We need frequent and reliable trains and buses to get New Yorkers safely back to work.

In turn, it's time to prioritize helping workers displaced by the pandemic—many of whom have ambition but few marketable skills. The state needs to provide access to

training and workforce development programs that prepare workers for in-demand, family-supporting careers. The money is there through the American Rescue Plan. It's up to the state to use it effectively to help workers and businesses so that we create a better environment for businesses across our state—which will have access to a stronger, better-trained workforce.

Philanthropy can be an effective partner in achieving the goals. The sector stands ready to support efforts to approach redistricting fairly and equitably and ensure that we deliver health care to those who need it.

With the pandemic still roiling New York and the future of federal funding unclear, we need to keep an eye on the hundreds of thousands of people who enrolled in Medicaid and ready a plan if they lose their eligibility. We also need to make emergency regulations regarding telehealth permanent, and we need to streamline the application process for Medicaid and ben-



HOCHUL

COURTESY OF THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

efits such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

We strongly encourage Hochul to cross the finish line and sign legislation that will protect our children by beefing up water testing for lead and ensure that our oldest neighbors get quality, affordable health care by continuing to advance the age-friendly New York

initiative.

An equitable New York is a stronger New York. Taking vital steps now would show the rest of the country what's possible when government acts to bring us together to take care of everyone. ■

Lorie Slutsky is president of the New York Community Trust.

INGRID P. LEWIS-MARTIN
Brooklyn borough president's office

INTERVIEW BY BRIAN PASCUS

With Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams expected to succeed Bill de Blasio as the next mayor, his inner circle is more important than ever. No member of his team is closer to Adams than Deputy Borough President Ingrid P. Lewis-Martin, his friend of 37 years. She has been his senior adviser at Borough Hall since 2014 and became his deputy in 2019. If Adams wins the general election, Lewis-Martin is expected to play a role in the incoming administration, though she says she is unconcerned with holding any official position. “I’m going to be Eric’s ‘ride-or-die,’” she said. “Titles do not matter. I’m going to make sure the job gets done, and he knows that.”

How did you officially start working in politics?
My husband’s mom said, “You’re really bright. Why don’t you go volunteer on my friend’s campaign, Congressman Major Owens?” So I met with him and members from his team, and he liked me. I was eventually given the title of deputy campaign manager. They showed me how you structure a campaign.

What do you do as deputy Brooklyn borough president?
During Covid-19 I worked closely with Eric in the health care field. I was making calls to our partners in China

DOSSIER

WHO SHE IS Deputy Brooklyn borough president

AGE 60

GREW UP Bedford-Stuyvesant

RESIDES “They call it Prospect Lefferts Gardens, but I call it Flatbush.”

EDUCATION Bachelor’s in criminal justice, John Jay College

BEFORE POLITICS Lewis-Martin worked as a middle school teacher at P.S. 320 for eight and a half years. One subject she taught was eighth-grade social studies.

FAMILY MATTERS She has been married to Glenn D. Martin for 35 years. They have a son, Glenn II, and a granddaughter.

FAVORITE BOOK *The Coldest Winter Ever*, by Sister Soulja. “It taught me so much that had been going on in the community,” she said. “It was an epiphany for me.”

and other parts of our city to get necessary personal protective equipment to people without it. We work with unions to help with membership and to get equity in pay. We also work with young people to expose them to government.

When did you know Adams wanted to be mayor?
We started working together in 2004, and by 2006 I knew he was serious. We held a fundraiser early on, and he said that Giuliani had an inner circle. He told all of us at the fundraiser, “You are my inner circle.”



And he said “when I am mayor” that evening. I said, “When?” He said, “You don’t understand. I’m going to be the mayor.” Eric was very monofocused. After that everything we tried to do was with the goal and intent for him to be mayor.

What should the city expect from an Adams administration?

I expect Eric to make our city an ultra-functional city. He says we thrive on dysfunctionality. There’s absolutely no reason it should take years to get a repair done in New York City Housing Authority properties. It makes no sense for the lunch our children are served in schools to be such poor quality. I can’t wait for real-time government. Eric comes from the NYPD’s Compstat model [a data-gathering system that captures crime trends], and he’s going to infuse that throughout our city.

How will he differ from Bill de Blasio? Will he be friendlier with the press?

We got elected by the people, so its not about being more or less friendly with the press. We’re going to be honest, open and upfront. I don’t want to say that’s different from de Blasio because I don’t know the dynamics of that administration.

What issues are on your radar?

We need to figure out a way to address the needs of our seniors and young people. They need to understand we care about them. I want to make sure we’re developing more people who are giving back to the community. ■

BUCK ENNIS

CRAIN’S NEW YORK BUSINESS 2021
NOTABLE
VETERAN EXECUTIVES

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2021 Notable Veteran Executives!

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SUBMIT TODAY:
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The deadline to nominate an individual for
this feature is Sept. 17, at 11:59 p.m. EST.

Finalists named for the 2021 NewYorkCIO ORBIE® Awards

With support from Crain's New York Business, NewYorkCIO will honor the CIOs who are driving innovation and transforming Greater New York's leading organizations at the upcoming NewYorkCIO of the Year® ORBIE® Awards. The Awards will take place virtually on November 19th. The finalists are below:

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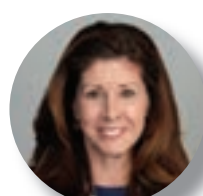
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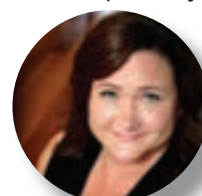
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ICON International Inc



MARY KOTCH

Core Specialty



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CRAIN'S
NEW YORK BUSINESS



JEREMY MOSS
oversees leasing
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Behind Lower Manhattan's dramatic transformation

The area has become a thriving residential and commercial community in the two decades since the attacks

BY EDDIE SMALL

Lower Manhattan infamously turned into Ground Zero 20 years ago—a literal smoking crater filled with building rubble, emergency workers and an overwhelming sense of loss that many feared would come to permanently define the neighborhood.

“There were concerns that nobody would go back into tall buildings. There were concerns that Lower Manhattan would always be seen as the site of this tragedy,” said Tom Wright, president and CEO of the Regional Plan Association and a key player in the effort to revitalize Lower Manhattan after the 9/11 attacks. “There was a lot of concern about how we would recover and come back.”

That’s not how it turned out.

Today the neighborhood is once again home to some of the country’s most famous office towers, including the tallest building in the Western Hemisphere at 1 World

Trade Center, which is about 90% leased, according to its landlord, the Durst Organization. An influx of new residential projects has helped more than double its population, which rose from about 25,000 in 2001 to 64,000 in 2019, according to the Downtown Alliance’s figures.

Some of the most recognizable names in New York real estate, in-

cluding SL Green and Macklowe Properties, are taking part in making Lower Manhattan more of a mixed-use environment, part of an astonishing transformation in the neighborhood in the past two decades that few would have predicted in the immediate aftermath of the attacks.

“If I had said to you on Sept. 12 that we would have double the

number of people living in Lower Manhattan now than we did before the attacks, nobody would have believed me,” said Jessica Lappin, president of the Downtown Alliance. “I’m not sure I would have believed myself.”

The neighborhood still faces its fair share of challenges, including a lack of affordable housing and uncertainty surrounding its famed office towers, given the surge in remote work during the pandemic. But fears that the tragic events of 9/11 would lead to a permanent exodus from the neighborhood have emphatically not come to fruition, with many observers predicting more residential projects and an eventual recovery for its office towers.

“I think, as we come out of the pandemic, the city will do very, very well, and Lower Manhattan will do very, very well,” said Carl Weisbrod, a senior adviser at HR&A Advisors

that we would have double the

TOURISM

FROM PAGE 4

But post-Covid success using the old playbook would be much harder to pull off, because of the length of the shutdowns, ongoing safety concerns and the frustrating tango between telling tourists to come and worrying that they might infect New Yorkers with the coronavirus if they do.

Patriotic tourism

In 2019 the city’s tourism ecosystem welcomed 66.6 billion visitors and indirectly supported 376,800 jobs, generating \$47 billion for the city, according to a report by Comptroller Scott Stringer. This year, because of the pandemic, visitors are expected to number 36.4 million. It is likely to be 2024 or 2025 before the numbers reach prepandemic levels, according to NYC & Company.

After 9/11, the tourism comeback was faster, led by a surge in American visitors, many eager to show their patriotism by coming to the Big Apple. In 2002 the number of tourists was almost the same as that of the previous year.

The Met was open, and the Yankees soon took the field again. Cristyne Nicholas, then chief executive at NYC & Company, said that by the time the city was planning its Columbus Day parade, she was fielding calls of support from all over the world.

“An Oregon tour operator asked, ‘If we bring a group of people, can we meet the mayor?’” Nicholas recalled. The mayor said to put them in the parade, right before the Sanitation Department.

“That turned into four planes—900 people,” she said.

It helped spark the concept of patriotic tourism, which was aided by federal dollars. Washington committed \$20 billion to the city’s recovery, allowing the funds to go to nontraditional areas, such as \$10 million for tourism—some of which the city spent on its “I Love New York” campaign.

The “Spend Your Regards to Broadway” promotion rewarded retail receipts with free theater tickets. At Christmas, a group of Italians came as part of a planned celebratory trip. Nicholas flew to Japan, which was then New York’s top-spending tourism market, to work on a plan to attract more visitors.

Because 9/11 affected mainly New York City and Washington, D.C., the world could rally around the city and feel patriotic about supporting its restaurants, hotels and arts venues, Nicholas said.

By the end of 2002, it was clear that the efforts had been successful. There were 30.2 million domestic tourists in New York that year, up from 29.4 million in 2000. By 2003 total number of visitors hit 37.8 million, surpassing 2000’s 36.2 million.

It has been tempting to follow the same playbook this year, but for every bit of forward momentum, there has been a setback, in part based on a squeamishness to encourage tourists—potential

Covid-19 carriers—to flood the city.

Although New York is certainly not the only place divided about public health policy, the back-and-forth has led to a lack of strategic cohesion.

NYC & Company, for example, used its \$30 million budget to create and place advertising that displays New York at its finest, as an unmissable destination. But it has been unable to start its European and Asian ad buy because the U.S. government has kept its borders closed to most international tourists.

The agency’s business-meetings arm campaigned to bring back events that went virtual last year. It won over Anthony Scaramucci, who is moving his SALT investor conference from Las Vegas to the Javits Center in the fall. Then two hyped Javits events, the New York International Auto Show and the Fancy Food Show, were canceled due to the pandemic.

Concerts and plays have taken place all summer, including Mayor Bill de Blasio’s rain-hampered Homecoming Concert in Central Park, and theaters are prepping for September openings indoors, at full capacity. The Broadway League, an industry group, launched its own advertising campaign targeted at regional theater lovers. But it is unclear how many cultural denizens will feel comfortable indoors and, at the same time, whether the city’s vaccine mandate and often-required indoor masks will turn off tourists from less-restricted regions.

Infection tolerance

The tension was visible as the U.S. Open tennis tournament got underway in Queens late last month. The Open, which has around an \$800 million economic impact on the city, was planned to look similar to its 2019 version, with mostly invisible safety updates, like no-touch plumbing and new air filtration. In the past the event has attracted more than 800,000 spectators.

Days before the main matches started, City Councilman Mark Levine criticized the event on Twitter for initially not barring non-vaccinated fans.

“People come from all over the nation and world for this event,” Levine wrote. “This will impact the whole city, at a precarious moment in our battle against Delta.”

The mayor then announced that the U.S. Tennis Association would have to require visitors to provide proof of vaccination. Earlier, the tennis association acknowledged that some infections were likely to happen at the large gathering, which is mostly held outdoors and which is permitting 100% crowd capacity.

“The goal is not to prevent all cases of Covid,” Dr. Brian Hainline of the U.S. Open said Aug. 25. “The goal really is to be certain that we don’t have an outbreak of Covid that’s going to be unusual or that we would regret.”

Following the change in policy, only a few fans canceled, the USTA said. ■

See **TRANSFORM** on page 15



Q&A: Addressing the lingering issues first responders face

INTERVIEW BY SHUAN SIM

Orren Barzilay, president of the labor union for the city Fire Department’s emergency medical services, Local 2507, has addressed many disasters since he joined the force in 1995, most notably the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Since then improvements have been made to the technology and equipment that allow EMS to do its job saving lives. But despite first responders being widely lauded as heroes, it took decades for EMS workers to receive health benefits tied to the tragedy, Barzilay said. Combined with the low wages still being paid to EMS workers and the difficulty in securing funding for upgrades, he worries that recruitment and retainment will continue to be issues for the agency, which more recently has been on the front lines during the pandemic.

How many 9/11 first responders remain in EMS?
There are maybe a few hundred of us. The majority have retired. Some have left or resigned for other careers.

Twenty years later, how are they feeling?
We don’t talk about it as much as we used to years ago. But there’s a lot of resentment still. It took almost 20 years for legislation to take care of us who became ill. Many of us jumped in and helped the city and others out, but when it came to the city and government helping us out when we became sick, there was no relief until recently. It grows doubts in people’s mind about jumping in to help out the next time a big disaster hits.

How has EMS changed since 9/11 in terms of disaster preparedness?
Equipment- and training-wise, there have been upgrades. Members have now been trained in hazmat materials and confined-space training, and specialized rescue paramedic teams have been formed. The city has provided new “bunker gear” with better capabilities.

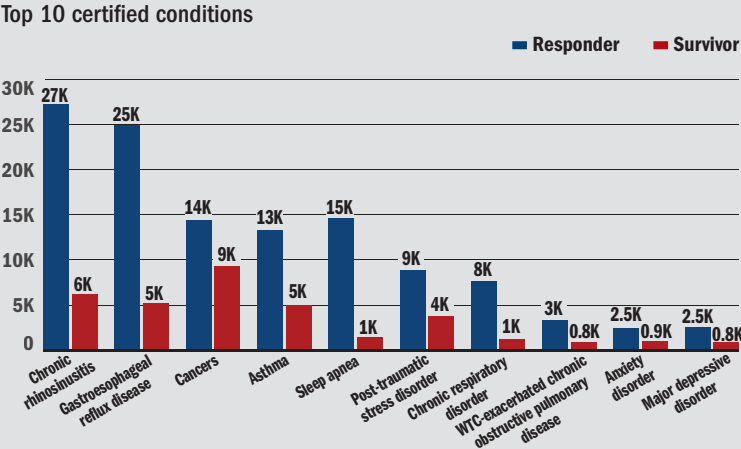
What could be better?
The equipment and technology are good, but what’s lacking is maintenance and replacement. The city is working on replacing expensive bunker gear that had been issued about 10 years ago, but that funding hasn’t been secured. Another example is our communication technology has improved, making us more interoperable with any city agency. But the repeater system [that passes on the signals] hasn’t been upgraded, and for some reason we’re still having issues communicating with dispatch. We’ve had incidences where

teams in Staten Island couldn’t communicate with dispatch. A solution would be installing more repeaters, but putting those towers up is complicated. They emit radiation, and communities don’t want those in their backyard.

Has that impeded EMS’ ability to address big crises?
Things have been better in recent years, and we’ve learned to adapt. But addressing disasters is more than just equipment. It’s about valuing first responders so that they will hold nothing back to rise to the situation. What we saw on 9/11, we’re seeing a repeat with Covid-19. Covid exemplified that we will always do our best to help our citizens, but now many who have gotten sick or have long-term illness are not compensated by worker’s compensation. EMS was the only unit allowed to go into people’s homes during Covid when everyone else was told to stand back. We only just finished our negotiations with the city on the latest contract, but our starting salary is still \$39,000—that’s still poverty wage. People are not going to want to stay with such conditions, and our resources are stretched so thin. That’ll leave us vulnerable for future crises.

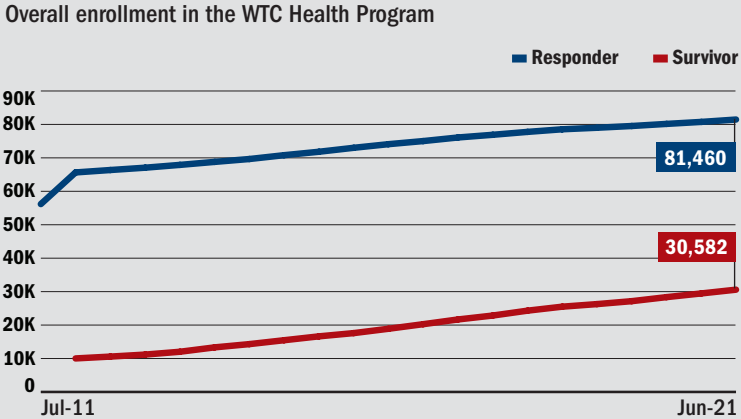
What will resolve that?
Revisiting our wages would be a good first step. But more importantly, the force needs to feel the city is listening to their needs. We would like to be acknowledged for the work we do and the risks we take, and we’re not talking about a parade. It shouldn’t have taken 20 years for the government to acknowledge the risks we took for 9/11, and I hope it doesn’t take that long for what we risked for Covid. ■

CHRONIC RHINOSINUSITIS IS THE MOST COMMON CONDITION AMONG RESPONDERS, BUT CANCER IS THE MOST COMMON FOR SURVIVORS



SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. NOTE: Individual members may have certifications in more than one category. Data as of June 30, 2021.

ENROLLMENT HAS CLIMBED TO MORE THAN 100,000, WITH AN AVERAGE OF 595 NEW MEMBERS EACH MONTH OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS



SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



For newly-sick survivors, federal health fund provides a much-needed financial lifeline

Hundreds of first responders and survivors continue to enroll each month

BY MAYA KAUFMAN

Seventeen years after the most horrific day of Chris Sorrentino's life, he started to feel the effects of the havoc it had wrought inside his body.

Months and months of "pain you couldn't believe," as the Brooklyn resident described it, later yielded a diagnosis, in June 2019, of bladder cancer linked to 9/11.

Sorrentino had been on his way to work at the New York Stock Exchange when the planes hit the Twin Towers. He was back on the trading floor one week later, when federal officials wrongly claimed the air around Ground Zero was safe to breathe.

"Even the stock exchange still had soot on the rafters," he said.

By the time he got his diagnosis, Sorrentino was uninsured and facing a major surgery. Luckily, he had another form of recourse: the World Trade Center Health Program, which provides 9/11 responders and survivors with medical monitoring and treatment for related health conditions.

Sorrentino is among more than 112,000 enrolled in the federally funded program, established under the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010 and later extended to 2090. New York City chips in 10% of the program's cost. Hundreds of first responders and survivors enroll each month, including 652 in June alone, according to federal data.

Cancer is the third-most-common condition reported by fund enrollees, after chron-

ic rhinosinusitis and gastroesophageal reflux disease. Sorrentino is one of nearly 700 who specifically contracted bladder cancer.

Sorrentino calls the program a godsend. He enrolled as soon as he received his diagnosis, a process that involved submitting employment verification and sworn affidavits from witnesses to prove his proximity to the World Trade Center at the time.

He enlisted lawyer and fellow 9/11 survivor Michael Barasch to help assemble the reams of paperwork. Several months later he was officially registered and his cancer certified as a 9/11-related condition eligible for coverage.

In August 2019 he underwent a complex surgery at NYU Langone Medical Center to take out his bladder and build him a new one cut from his intestines. The procedure was successful, but it took months and multiple hospitalizations before his pain finally subsided. Last month he celebrated two years cancer-free.

Sorrentino said he ultimately paid about \$2,600 out of pocket toward the \$400,000 in medical costs associated with his cancer treatment.

Funding shortfall

Soon other survivors may not have access to such extensive financial support. Rising medical costs and growing membership in the health program put it at risk of a funding shortfall starting in 2025, members of Congress warned last month. The program's 2015 reauthorization came with \$4.7 billion



BUCK ENNIS

through fiscal 2025 and annual baseline appropriations of \$570 million through 2090.

Barasch said the growing number of program enrollees represents just a fraction of the survivors and first responders who are eligible. An estimated 400,000 people were exposed to the disaster and its aftermath, including the toxic dust from the towers' collapse and fumes from persistent fires, one study found.

In August Rep. Carolyn Maloney, who represents portions of Manhattan's East Side and western Queens, introduced a bill

that she said would fill that funding gap. It is slated to provide about \$2.6 billion throughout the next decade.

Sorrentino said he prays every day that he does not develop another health issue related to the disaster. He knows several people who are just now getting diagnosed with 9/11-related cancers and encourages others to schedule health evaluations at one of the health program's clinical centers, even if they feel healthy.

"Don't wait for something to hit you," he said. ■

TRANSFORM

FROM PAGE 13

and former chairman of the City Planning Commission. "It was thriving before the pandemic and will once again after the pandemic."

Residential rush

Lower Manhattan had roughly 14,600 housing units at the end of 2001, according to the Downtown Alliance's figures. This nearly doubled to 27,700 by 2011 and further increased to roughly 33,200 units this year. The organization expects the neighborhood to have more than 36,000 units of housing by 2023 and beyond.

The residential boom was very much by design, said Weisbrod, who worked on efforts to reimagine Lower Manhattan as a more diverse neighborhood before and after the 9/11 attacks. The goal was to make it a place where people could work and live, and although these efforts began long before the attacks, they sped up significantly after them, he said.

One of the many firms that recently launched a residential project in the neighborhood is Lightstone Development, which is behind the luxury condo tower at 130 William St. The combination of relatively cheap land in the neighborhood sparked by the tragedies of 9/11 and Superstorm Sandy, easy access to mass transit, and a bustling restaurant scene helped pique the company's interest in the neighborhood, said Scott Avram, Lightstone's senior vice president of development.

"We saw the neighborhood quickly evol-

ing," he said. "On the economic side, the land prices were still lower in downtown Manhattan compared to other parts of the city."

The surge in residential development is unlikely to slow down soon, Weisbrod said. He does hope, however, that the types of residential projects that come to the neighborhood change a bit.

"In most places in the city, market-rate residential pencils out much better than commercial," he said. "What I think is important, and I think the one area where in rebuilding Lower Manhattan both before and after 9/11 we really missed the boat, is affordable housing."

Some partially affordable projects have started to make their way into the neighborhood. SL Green's residential development at 7 Dey St. started leasing in August, and the 209-unit project will include 63 affordable units. Silverstein Properties is likewise planning to include 1,325 apartments in its redevelopment of 5 World Trade Center, 330 of which will be affordable.

But most of the better-known residential projects to come to Lower Manhattan in recent years have been market rate. The median asking price for home sales downtown was about \$1.9 million, and the median asking rent was \$3,300 as of late August, StreetEasy reported. Both price points ranked among the highest in the city.

"In retrospect, a lot of us who worked on it wished we had been more cognizant of the

need for affordable housing. Things like [the] Mandatory Inclusionary Housing [program] didn't come along until a decade or more later," Wright said. "We just weren't as far along in recognizing the urgency and vital need to incentivize affordable housing the way we do today."

Office options

Despite the residential influx, Lower Manhattan is still best known for its commercial buildings, especially the new World Trade Center complex. Several developers cited the commercial space as a main contributor to the residential influx, as the option to walk to work and take advantage of local retail has helped draw people to the neighborhood.

"It's the new retail space that you have in Westfield and Brookfield Place, all the new restaurants in Lower Manhattan," SL Green Senior Vice President Harrison Sitomer said of Lower Manhattan's appeal as a place to live. "That's obviously one major factor."

But the pandemic has effectively neutralized many of these perks, with a short walk from the apartment to the office being replaced by an even shorter walk from the bedroom to the living room for many New Yorkers. This could make residential space even more appealing than commercial space in the neighborhood, and several office-to-residential conversions have already taken place. From 2001 to 2020, 112 office buildings span-

ning about 17.6 million square feet were converted into residential space, the Downtown Alliance found.

One of the most significant conversions is continuing at 1 Wall St., the former bank headquarters that Macklowe Properties is converting into a 56-story, 566-unit luxury condo building.

"There's still so much Class A office space, so it's not like there's going to be a shortage of office space down there," said Steve Rutter, head of New York new development at Compass, which is in charge of sales and marketing at 1 Wall St. "I think what it says is that people's lifestyles have changed. People like easier lifestyles, more accessibility, and the ability to walk to work."

In the meantime, two of the neighborhood's major office landlords, Silverstein and the Durst Organization, said their World Trade Center buildings have been holding up well amid the pandemic, with strong rent collections and increasing occupancy rates. Representatives for both firms were confident that widespread working from home would not outlast the pandemic itself, and Jeremy Moss, who oversees leasing at the World Trade Center for Silverstein, said interest in taking space at the complex has already gone up dramatically.

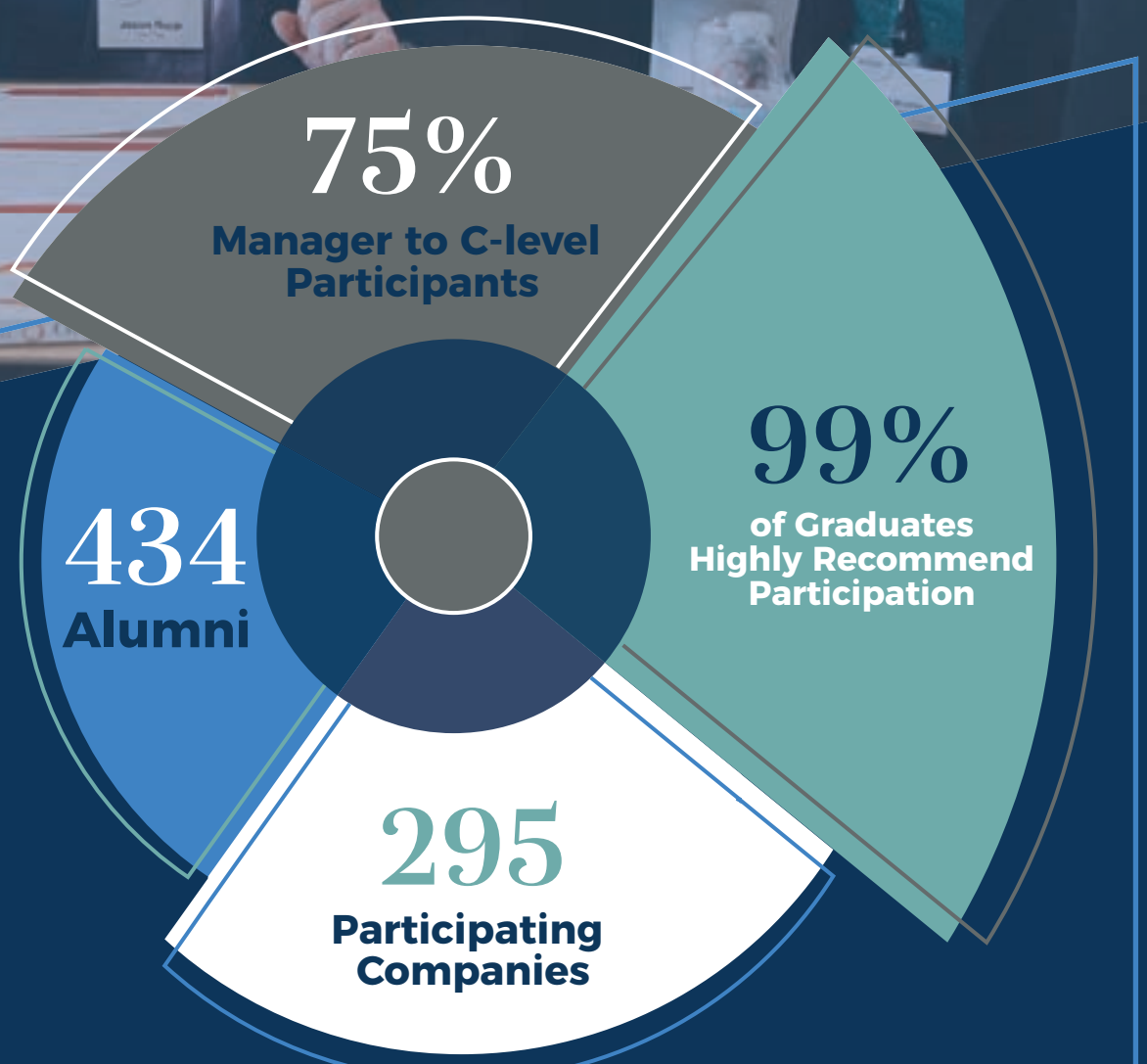
"I've had the busiest summer I can remember in a long time, and I think that's principally due to the pent-up demand," he said. "The pandemic is a temporal thing. It has a beginning, and it will ultimately have an end, and I think people who have the ability to see past it—leaders of different companies—recognize that they can't just stop planning for the future." ■

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2021 HALL *of* FAME

THIS YEAR'S INDUCTEES are leaders in the truest sense. They have struck a balance between running successful businesses while serving stakeholders and enriching the broader New York City community. They have advocated for children, boosted employment opportunities for Black residents and shepherded a vaccine against Covid-19.

BY DEBORAH NASON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BUCK ENNIS
CrainsNewYork.com/HOF2021



MELBA WILSON

Chef and owner, Melba’s Restaurant and Melba’s Catering

Melba Wilson grew up with strong female role models who made things happen, so it was natural for her to follow suit.

The chef and owner of Melba’s Restaurant, Melba’s Catering and, coming in the fall, seafood-focused Melba’s Mussels, celebrates the comfort-food traditions that her family brought from the South during the Great Migration. Her eponymous restaurant in Harlem has become an international destination, launching Wilson to fame as a nationally acclaimed television personality and author.

One of her earliest role models was her grandmother Amelia, a skilled cook and mother of nine who lived on a farm in South Carolina where Wilson, born and raised in Harlem, spent every summer growing up.

“That’s where I got to run free, pick the tomatoes off the vine, and watch my grandma transform all the ingredients into great meals,” Wilson said. “For me, that’s where farm-to-table started.”

Another childhood role model was Ophelia Devore, a pioneering Black entrepreneur who ran a top modeling and finishing school for children and adults of color. For 10 years, Wilson attended classes, helped out around the school, modeled and learned lessons about success.

“I learned the strength of putting pen to paper and manifesting what I want to achieve, along with the magic of positive thinking,” she said. “To see something go from thought to execution was powerful.”

In 1992 Wilson began working for another influential mentor, her “Auntie” Sylvia Woods, founder of Harlem’s historic Sylvia’s Restaurant. Starting as a cashier, Wilson learned the business from bottom to top.

Twelve years later, Wilson was ready to realize her own vision and founded Melba’s. The zealous saver bankrolled the restaurant herself, intentionally choosing a location in one of the worst drug-ridden blocks in Harlem. Over time the Zagat-rated eatery sparked the revitalization of the neighborhood, including a well-known restaurant row.

“I wanted to make a difference,” Wilson said. “Instead of spending money on advertising, I put those funds back into the community through philanthropy and hiring locals.” ■

“TO SEE SOMETHING GO FROM THOUGHT TO EXECUTION WAS POWERFUL”

DOSSIER

TITLE: Chef and owner, Melba’s Restaurant and Melba’s Catering

SHINING A LIGHT IN NEW YORK Wilson expressed her community-first spirit during the pandemic, with Melba’s Restaurant providing more than 200,000 free meals to neighbors in need.

As president of the NYC Hospitality Alliance, which represents more than 4,000 restaurants and nightlife establishments, Wilson extends her compassion across the city.

“Now during Covid, we serve as a lifeline, helping our members access [emergency funding],” she said. “We also serve as an important clearinghouse of information, in a time when information is constantly pivoting.”

WORDS OF WISDOM Wilson wants patrons and neighbors to understand the near and far-reaching impact of local eateries.

“Restaurants are so much more than places to eat,” she said. “We’re the first places people run to when they need gift certificates or their kids need a job.

“When a restaurant shutter its doors,” she continued, “it has an effect on a whole ecosystem, such as produce farmers, dairy farmers, truck drivers, paper goods companies, fishmongers, even insurance companies.”



ALBERT BOURLA

Chairman and chief executive, Pfizer

Life is miraculous” and “Let go of fear.”

Those were the guiding life lessons Dr. Albert Bourla, Pfizer’s chairman and CEO, learned from his parents, both Holocaust survivors.

Bourla and his parents grew up in Thessaloniki, Greece’s second-largest city, which had a centuries-old Sephardic community until the Nazis wiped out 96% of the Jewish population. His father, Moise, escaped death because he happened to be outside the ghetto as sudden preparations for deportations to Auschwitz began. His mother, Sara, was removed from a Nazi firing squad by the arrival of a ransom payment, delivered minutes before the executions took place.

“Unlike many survivors, my mom did speak about the Holocaust experience,” Bourla said, “not in terms of revenge but instead to say, ‘Despite what happened, look at this life we have.’ It gave me an optimism for life and made me believe that nothing is impossible.”

The ideals imparted by his parents energized Bourla throughout his career. He first practiced as a veterinarian. After a few years, he joined the corporate world as a technical director for Pfizer Animal Health. He quickly earned recognition for his high standards and his ability to take on challenges and deliver results. All of that led to a series of high-profile promotions in the next 25 years.

The pinnacle of his career is undoubtedly his leadership of a team that developed a Covid-19 vaccine in an unprecedented short amount of time.

Pfizer’s roots run deep in the city, Bourla said.

“As a company that was founded in New York,” he said, “we have its dynamism in our DNA.”

Pfizer’s New York-focused civic activities include funding support and colleague volunteering for 9/11 memorial activities and for the Hudson Guild, a social service agency. The company’s Multicultural Health Equity Collective supports organizations including the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health, which assists communities in central Brooklyn.

He is on the executive committee of the Partnership for New York City which, he said, supports policies that “influence the vibrancies” of the city “to attract more business” and “create better living experiences.”

Bourla has enjoyed a steady corporate climb to the top during his 28-year career. What did he do right?

“I never worried a lot about what my next job would be, but [instead] how can I do my current job the best? What keeps people back is when they start thinking about the next job too early,” he said. “Don’t do something you really don’t like to do just to get to the next job.” ■

“AS A COMPANY
FOUNDED IN
NEW YORK,
WE HAVE ITS
DYNAMISM IN
OUR DNA”

DOSSIER

TITLE Chairman and chief executive, Pfizer

SHINING A LIGHT IN NEW YORK Bourla is on the New York Forward Reopening Advisory Board, which seeks to guide the state as it emerges from the pandemic.

WORDS OF WISDOM “Set high targets. Then set them even higher. The private sector has a tendency to notice people who can do the job.”

WHAT’S NEXT? “To continue as CEO. I feel great.”



CHARLES PHILLIPS

Managing Partner, Co-founder **Recognize**

Charles Phillips was wise to heed his father, who advised him to join the military and think strategically about his career. Phillips became president of Oracle and CEO and chairman of cloud software firm Infor before landing in his current roles: managing partner of Recognize, a technology growth equity firm he helped found, and chairman of the board at the Apollo Theater.

Phillips' persevering father set a strong example. Charles Senior went from picking cotton in Oklahoma to joining the Air Force at age 16—which enabled him to further his education and eventually become a lawyer.

"He was constantly working and studying, and he passed that on to all of us [kids]. He had high standards," Phillips said of his dad. "He advised me to get tangible skills and try to do things with rules that can be measured objectively."

The younger Phillips found those "things" within the structure of the military and in the software field—where "either it's right or it's not," he said.

After attending the Air Force Academy, he served five years in the Marines, then 15 years in the Marine Forces Reserve. During his service, Phillips led and motivated thousands during deployments, honing skills that prepared him for the corner office.

He left the Marines in 1986 and, settling in New York, knew where he wanted to go.

"With all the tech we saw in the military building the internet, I saw what was coming," he said. "I knew that to monetize my knowledge, I had to aim for Wall Street."

He eventually joined Morgan Stanley's nascent technology group and achieved a high profile as an all-star investment analyst covering Oracle and other companies.

"I was a tech person who was an analyst, not a financial person who was an analyst," he said, explaining his success.

Oracle CEO Larry Ellison, impressed with Phillips' coverage, along with his extensive tech knowledge and military leadership experience, invited the analyst to become president of the company. The choice was fortuitous, as Phillips tripled Oracle's size from 2003 to 2010, acquiring 70 companies along the way.

He moved on to lead Infor from 2010 until last year. He is most proud of the firm being one of the first companies to make "an all-in bet on the cloud" and being the first software company to have an in-house design agency. ■

"I KNEW THAT TO
**MONETIZE MY
KNOWLEDGE, I
HAD TO AIM FOR
WALL STREET"**

DOSSIER

TITLE Managing partner/co-founder of Recognize, a technology growth equity fund; former president of Oracle and CEO/chairman of cloud software firm Infor

SHINING A LIGHT IN NEW YORK A leading activist improving economic opportunities for the Black community, Phillips co-chairs the Black Economic Alliance. He also helped start OneTen, a platform aiming to advance 1 million Black individuals without four-year degrees into "family-sustaining" jobs in the next 10 years.

WORD OF ADVICE Over decades of leadership, he has observed that people feel more committed once they buy into a shared mission. Paraphrasing Napoleon, Phillips says, "The job of the leader is to define reality and inspire hope."

LORIE SLUTSKY

President, New York Community Trust

Lorie Slutsky found her calling early, landing an internship with the New York Community Trust that turned into a 44-year career. She has been president of the organization since 1990 and she will retire in 2022.

The Trust administers about 3,000 individual donor funds (valued at more than \$3 billion) in accordance with donors' specifications. It also advocates for social causes. As a community foundation, it has a designated geographic focus, specifically New York City and Nassau, Suffolk and Westchester counties. The bulk of the charitable funding is in the city. The Trust's primary focus areas are poverty, justice, education, health, arts, environment, LGBTQ, the elderly, children and teens.

What has kept Slutsky's interest for so long?

"It's the work, the people," she said. "Taking charitable resources and applying them to the problems of today."

Slutsky, born in Brooklyn and raised on Long Island, can trace some of her career fortitude and tenacity to her father, who worked in New York's Garment District—commuting via public transportation—until he was 85. (He played racquetball until he was 92.)

What does she see as her legacy?

"That I ran an efficient organization," Slutsky said. "When people leave money, they want to know, 'Are they efficient and can they make a difference [with my funds]?'"

In fact, efficiency is a critical consideration, as the Trust's 60 employees process thousands of transactions each year. The organization reviews about 3,000 funding requests per year and funds approximately 500 of them. It disburses about 16,000 checks every year, ranging from \$250 to \$20 million, she said.

"The challenge of New York is that it's enormous. But our approach is hyperlocal," Slutsky said. "We get thousands of proposals every year, and we can't fund them all. But there are great ideas that come from [these proposals], from neighbors, immigrant groups, et cetera, that we learn about." ■

**"NEW YORK IS
ENORMOUS.
BUT OUR
APPROACH IS
HYPERLOCAL"**



DOSSIER

TITLE: President, the New York Community Trust

SHINING A LIGHT ON NEW YORK Slutsky has overseen the Trust as it achieved significant and wide-ranging social effects. These include helping to raise the age of criminal responsibility to 18, improving the delivery of foster care services to help foster children transition to adulthood, offering culturally sensitive neighborhood services, and providing free lunch programs in public schools.

The 97-year-old trust has spent 30 years pursuing public school finance reform, funding the Campaign for Fiscal Equity. The organization supported years of research, litigation and statewide advocacy, which helped persuade the Legislature to change the school aid formula recently to consider community need, not just property values, in funding decisions.

WORDS OF WISDOM As a longtime manager and leader, Slutsky shared some advice she received early in her career: "Not everyone can be an A player. Your job is to make B and C players better. Explain [the objective], give them a lot of room, and have faith in them."

SHE ALSO EMPHASIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY. "The lived experience of the team—whether racial, middle class, single parent, welfare—makes a difference in how each person goes out and does the work."

VIJAY DANDAPANI

President and CEO of the
Hotel Association of New York City

Vijay Dandapani’s good deeds and innovative ideas have reverberated throughout the city for nearly 30 years.

From 1993 to 2016, Dandapani was co-founder and president of Manhattan-based Apple Core Hotels. In 2017 he assumed his current position as president and CEO of the Hotel Association of New York City, representing some 300 hotels with 85,000 rooms.

One of Dandapani’s first influential ideas came during the 1990s, when Apple Core became the first city hotel to include in-house gyms, free Wi-Fi and free continental breakfast. The hotel industry followed suit, eventually adopting these extras as standard amenities.

From 2006 to 2007, he led the effort to publicize and confront the citywide problem of illegal hotels. After observing organizations buying up decrepit buildings, forcing out tenants and advertising themselves as hotels, Dandapani decided to put up a fight.

“I went to the community hearings on tenant issues and lobbied with state legislators,” he said. “This [led to] a law preventing apartment buildings from becoming illegal hotels.”

Dandapani remains upbeat as he leads the association through the pandemic.

“Human optimism always wins out over human pessimism,” he said. “Most people remember only the good things. We just want to come back to where we were.”

When the hotel industry finally comes back to life, Dandapani said, operations will be much more seamless. For example, he said, pandemic-related modifications have minimized direct contact with guests, eliminated check-in and check-out lines and provided more detailed consumer profiles, such as preferences in restaurants, gym times and the like.

Dandapani expects the city’s hotel industry to reach near normalcy in three or four years as business travel and the convention and conference industry slowly recover. He notes 24,000 rooms will come online in the next few years.

He’s confident of an eventual rebound.

“Aside from conventions, because they take years, the rest of the industry sources will return on an exponential basis in the next year,” he said. “Travel is a motivator for everyone.” ■

“HUMAN
OPTIMISM
ALWAYS
WINS OUT
OVER HUMAN
PESSIMISM”

DOSSIER

TITLE: President and CEO of the Hotel Association of New York City

SHINING A LIGHT ON NEW YORK: Dandapandi, who was on both the mayor’s Covid and the New York Forward advisory boards, took an active role when the pandemic struck. Notably, he orchestrated a swift transfer of residents of homeless shelters to hotels. The city reached out to the association, which provided a list of hotels willing to accept the residents. Using funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to house 16,000 people at 63 hotels, the association set up a system to receive the funds and administered the reimbursement to the hotels.

“We turned it around in under 72 hours, and we basically did this pro bono,” Dandapani said. “[Our] industry is a stakeholder in all aspects of the city.”

WORDS OF WISDOM: Dandapani shared some lessons learned in the pandemic.

- “Be prepared for the unexpected—keep your powder dry and have reserves available.”
- “It is really important for leaders to be visible.”
- “Look at the distant past, not the immediate past, to prognosticate for the future. You should base your budgets on 2019, not 2020.”



\$65 million taxi relief fund stalls six months on

BY BRIAN PASCUS

Six months into a \$65 million city plan to rescue struggling taxi medallion owners trying to restructure enormous debt, none of the relief money has been allocated.

Established in March, the rescue fund was supposed to help underwater taxi medallion owners renegotiate their loans with private lenders. Those eligible would get a \$29,000 grant to help them refinance.

“HAVING NO STANDARDIZED TERMS SEEMS INEFFICIENT FOR ALL INVOLVED”

Medallion owners and drivers—many of whom are immigrants with limited English-language skills—are even having trouble contacting the New York Legal Assistance Group, the nonprofit whose attorneys were tasked by the city to manage negotiations with lenders.

The relief plan “hasn’t made a material difference for our drivers,” said Bhairavi Desai, executive di-

rector of the New York Taxi Workers Alliance, a drivers group with 25,000 members. “They are looking at the fall to kick off disbursements. What have they done in five and a half months?”

The NYLAG did not respond to a request for comment. The city’s Taxi and Limousine Commission, which is overseeing the relief program and allocation of funds, said that the agency is still ironing out the details of the program.

“The procurement process for the release of the program funds is underway,” TLC Deputy Commissioner Allan Fromberg said.

Early criticism

From the beginning the plan was criticized by drivers and lenders alike, who argued \$29,000 was not enough of an individual commitment to induce lenders to lower loan balances that can reach as high as a half-million dollars.

TLC Chairwoman Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk held a call with skeptical lenders Aug. 18 to announce that the commission is now turning the \$29,000 into a one-time grant payment, according to

multiple sources on the call.

Some lenders remain hesitant about whether it’s in their best interest to participate.

“Lenders were pushing back as far as the dollar amount they were willing to commit,” said Tom O’Shea, former chief executive of Aspire Federal Credit Union, a lender with roughly 500 medallion loans on its books. “I think lenders are looking at it and saying, ‘It seems like a fairly low number, but it seems what we have to give up isn’t worth it when we start to see the city come back.’”

Lenders are more interested in participating now that the program’s structure has changed, said Matthew Daus, former TLC chairman, but they are frustrated with the diffuse structure of the grant program and the lack of uniform guidelines.

“Having no standardized terms or guidelines seems very amorphous and inefficient for all involved,” Daus said. “The less red tape, the better.”

As the TLC goes through the procurement process for the \$65 million, taxi drivers say that they are left to suffer at the hands of impatient lenders who continue to demand payment.

Syed Zain has been driving a taxi



BUCK ENNIS

in New York for 11 years. He bought into his medallion for \$566,000 in 2009 and owes \$527,000 today. Zain’s lender, OSK, served him a notice of default Aug. 13.

“They harass me. They bother me,” Zain said. “I told them, ‘I don’t have any money right now.’ I said, ‘I can start paying \$200 a week,’ but they said ‘No, we need \$34,000 right now.’”

Zain said the lender added a \$22,000 interest penalty to his \$527,000 loan and the city’s driver resource center hasn’t been able to assist him in challenging the measure.

“Nobody is trying to help us right

now,” he said. “They only offer \$20,000 to give to the lender, but they’re not sure when they are starting to give that money.”

OSK’s servicer, AmeriNat, did not respond to a request for comment.

The city’s role?

Desperate drivers are not likely to find answers at City Hall. City Council leaders appear to have no role in the allocation of funds.

“The City Council is not involved in this plan,” said a spokesperson for Speaker Corey Johnson’s office.

Mayor Bill de Blasio’s administration declined to comment about the fund disbursements. ■

CARS

FROM PAGE 4

say will be required for wide-scale adoption of autonomous vehicles.

“New York City has probably the least predictable street environment in the country,” said Sarah Kaufman, associate director of the NYU Rudin Center for Transportation Policy and Management. “Cars will have to be made ready to manage an environment with pedestrians, blocked-off roadways, construction, unloading trucks. That will require a highly intelligent vehicle.”

Permit plan

The city Department of Transportation recently held a hearing on the proposed autonomous-vehicle testing permit, which would add to an existing state certification program.

The permit has received pushback from several industry players, including the Self-Driving Coali-

“Since there is no widely accepted method for making this comparison,” Wolf said, the requirement “may discourage AV operation in the city, as companies would be unsure of how to make this certification.”

The permit also would require that companies pay \$5,000 per year, keep a human supervisor in each test car and stay within certain zones.

Some residents at the virtual hearing voiced concerns about the risk of having technology tested on city streets.

Potholes ahead

There are more than 100 active testing sites for autonomous vehicles across the country, according to federal data, including Waymo driverless taxis in the suburbs of Phoenix. But outside of tests launched in 2019 on private streets in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, autonomous vehicles have avoided the complicated streets of New York.

The city represents a crucial market for the industry’s future, however.

“The whole metro area is easily the highest-demand marketplace for taxi-based services in the U.S.,” said Adie Tomer, a senior fellow focused on metropolitan policy at the Brookings Institution. “That matters, because the first movers on self-driving vehicles will be, by all market estimates, fleet-based services.”

The permit plan marks the first of several local policy challenges that self-driving cars are likely to bring, as described by Kaufman and



MOBILEYE TEST CAR from the interior as it maneuvers through traffic in Jerusalem in 2018.

MOBILEYE

Tomer. There is the potential displacement of more than 200,000 professional drivers in the city, the privacy and storage issues concerning the huge amounts of data that self-driving cars collect, and the need to ensure autonomous vehicles do not contribute to congestion, which has been heightened by the Covid-19 pandemic.

“There are also equity questions about how we can deploy these services,” Kaufman said. “Private-sector services focus often on the most potentially profitable neighborhoods. We need to make sure a diversity of New Yorkers who want access to these services have it.”

‘Class of its own’

Mobileye, best known for developing advanced driver-assistance systems, launched its driverless test vehicle, a white Ford sedan, under

a permit from the New York state Department of Motor Vehicles. The company, purchased by Intel for \$15.3 billion in 2017, equipped the vehicle with a camera-based system that analyzes the environment surrounding the car to feed software that mimics the action of a human driver.

The technology is adapting in its early tests by picking up certain local behaviors, as Mobileye CEO Amnon Shashua said at a July event announcing the launch. That includes slowly shifting into crowded lanes and “nudging” toward pedestrians from a safe distance rather than stopping completely when one is in sight.

“Jaywalking in New York City is really a class of its own,” Shashua said.

Chen Feng, an assistant professor at the NYU Tandon School of

Engineering, said services built around driverless vehicles could come within the next decade, but there are plenty of technical challenges ahead. Closely tracking the location of vehicles can be tricky near tall buildings, for instance, as can mapping streets with constant lane closures and new obstacles.

Feng, who formerly researched autonomous driving technologies for Mitsubishi, said the earliest commercial uses could be for slower-moving vehicles with fewer technical challenges, such as those that handle package deliveries or street cleaning.

“When you talk about a larger-scale deployment, especially into crowded urban areas, there are factors to consider that go well beyond the technology and need to be discussed by society and policymakers,” Feng said. ■

PUBLIC & LEGAL NOTICES

Notice of Formation of 110 FIFTH AVENUE REALTY LLC Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 08/18/21. Office location: NY County. Princ. office of LLC: 251 W. 92nd Corp., c/o Rabina Realty, 505 Fifth Ave., 27th Fl., NY, NY 10017. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC at the addr. of its princ. office. The regd. agent of the company upon whom and at which process against the company can be served is 251 W. 92nd Corp., c/o Rabina Realty, 505 Fifth Ave., 27th Fl., NY, NY 10017. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Qualification of CrossHarbor Institutional Partners 2021 Access Advisors LLC Appl. for Auth. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 08/23/21. Office location: NY County. LLC formed in Delaware (DE) on 04/26/21. Princ. office of LLC: 200 West St., NY, NY 10282. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC at the princ. office of the LLC. DE addr. of LLC: Intertrust Corporate Services Delaware Ltd., 200 Bellevue Pkwy., Ste. 210, Wilmington, DE 19809. Cert. of Form. filed with Secy. of State, Div. of Corps., John G. Townsend Bldg., 401 Federal St., Ste. 4, Dover, DE 19901. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Qualification of CrossHarbor Institutional Partners 2021 Access LLC Appl. for Auth. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 08/23/21. Office location: NY County. LLC formed in Delaware (DE) on 04/26/21. Princ. office of LLC: 200 West St., NY, NY 10282. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC at the princ. office of the LLC. DE addr. of LLC: Corporation Service Co., 251 Little Falls Dr., Wilmington, DE 19808. Cert. of Form. filed with Secy. of State, Div. of Corps., John G. Townsend Bldg., 401 Federal St., Ste. 4, Dover, DE 19901. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of the formation of Limited Liability Company. Name: NYCR SUB-CDE 23, LLC ("LLC"). Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of the State of New York ("SS-NY") on August 10, 2021. NY office location: New York County. The SSNY has been designated as agent of the LLC upon whom the process against it may be served. The SSNY shall mail a copy of any process to: NYCR SUB-CDE 23, LLC, c/o NYCR-CDE, LLC, 99 Hudson Street, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10013. Purpose / character of LLC is to engage in any lawful act or activity.

LAURA YORKE LITERARY SERVICES, LLC, Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 08/26/2021. Office loc: NY County. SSNY has been designated as agent upon whom process against the LLC may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: The LLC, 23 East 74th Street, APT. 14ABD, NY, NY 10021. Purpose: Any Lawful Purpose.

Notice of Formation of Coastal Returns, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 08/09/21. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: Coastal Returns, LLC, c/o BFFA 1430 Broadway, Ste. 1208, NY, NY 10018. Purpose: any lawful activities.

Notice of Formation of Glam-Amor Skin LLC. Art. Of Org. filed with the SSNY on 06/18/21. Office loc: NY County. Prin. Office of LLC: 38W 32nd St, Ste. 1102, NY, NY 10001. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of any process against LLC to address of its principal office. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Notice of Formation of RYM OWNER LLC Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 05/21/21. Office location: NY County. Princ. office of LLC: 17 Henmar Dr., Closter, NJ 07624. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC at the addr. of its princ. office. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Qualification of JOY, LOVE & PEACE LLC. Authority filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 08/04/21. Office location: NY County. LLC formed in Florida (FL) on 09/02/03. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: 3595 Anchorage Way, Coconut Grove, FL 33133, Attn: Dania Da La Vega, also the address to be maintained in FL. Arts of Org. filed with the Secy. of State, R.A. Gray Bldg., 500 South Bronough St., Tallahassee, FL 32399. Purpose: any lawful activities.

Notice of Qualification of BSREP IV BROOKFIELD PNR L.P. Appl. for Auth. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 08/26/21. Office location: NY County. LP formed in Delaware (DE) on 03/18/21. Duration of LP is Perpetual. SSNY designated as agent of LP upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the L.P., Brookfield Place, 250 Vesey St., 15th Fl., NY, NY 10281-1023. Name and addr. of each general partner are available from SSNY. DE addr. of LP: Corporation Service Co., 251 Little Falls Dr., Wilmington, DE 19808-1674. Cert. of LP filed with DE Secy. of State, 401 Federal St., Dover, DE 19901. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

SCRIMALE REALTY, LLC, Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 08/02/2021. Office loc: NY County. SSNY has been designated as agent upon whom process against the LLC may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: The LLC, 745 Fifth Avenue, 5th Floor, NY, NY 10151. Purpose: Any Lawful Purpose.

Notice of Formation of 203 Flatiron Property Management, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 06/21/21. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: Registered Agents Inc., 90 State St., Ste. 700, Office 40, Albany, NY 12207. Purpose: any lawful activities.

Notice of Qualification of SCALE 4TH ASTORIA LLC. Authority filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 06/10/21. Office location: NY County. LLC formed in Delaware (DE) on 06/07/21. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: c/o National Registered Agents, Inc., 28 Liberty St., NY, NY 10005, also the registered agent upon whom process may be served. Address to be maintained in DE: c/o National Registered Agents, Inc., 1209 Orange St., Wilmington, DE 19801. Arts of Org. filed with the Secy. of State, Division of Corporations, John G. Townsend Bldg., 401 Federal St., - Ste. 4, Dover, DE 19901. Purpose: any lawful activities.

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF Harlem Biscuit Company LLC. Art. of Org. filed with the Secretary of State of NY (SSNY) on 12/18/20. Office location: NEW YORK County. SSNY designated as agent upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of process to the LLC at 235 W. 135TH STREET, 3B, New York, NY 10030. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Notice of Qualification of MAMOURA HOLDINGS (US) LLC. Authority filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 08/02/21. Office location: NY County. LLC formed in Delaware (DE) on 03/22/21. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: One Vanderbilt Ave., NY, NY 10017, Attn. General Counsel. Address to be maintained in DE: 251 Little Falls Dr., Wilmington, DE 19808. Arts of Org. filed with the Secy. of State, Division of Corporations, John G. Townsend Bldg., 401 Federal St., Ste. 4, Dover, DE 19901. Purpose: any lawful activities.

Notice of Formation of Cientifico Latino LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of NY (SSNY) on 06/14/2021. SSNY has been designated as agent upon whom process against it may be served. The Post Office address to which the SSNY shall mail a copy of any process against the LLC served upon him or her is: Cientifico Latino LLC 400 West 119th Street, Apt 5D New York, NY 10027. The LLC designates the following as its registered agent to whom to send a copy of any process to the LLC: United States Corporation Agents, Inc. 7014 13th Avenue Suite 202 Brooklyn, NY 11228. Purpose: Educational Services

Notice of Formation of 303-305 GROUP LLC Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 07/13/21. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: Pietro Martire, 155 W. 85th St., NY, NY 10024. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of WG 115 LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 06/16/21. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: WG 115 LLC c/o WG & Associates Management and Development, Inc., 1140 Broadway, Ste. 904, NY, NY 10001. Purpose: any lawful activities.

Notice of Qualification of AGILE TELEHEALTH SERVICES, LLC. Authority filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 06/15/21. Office location: NY County. LLC formed in Delaware (DE) on 06/22/20. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: C/O CORP2000 INC., 720 14th St., Sacramento, CA 95814. Address to be maintained in DE: c/o Corp2000, 838 Walker Rd., Ste. 21-2, Dover, DE 19904. Arts of Org. filed with the Secy. of State, 401 Federal St. #4, Dover, DE 19901. Purpose: any lawful activities.

Notice of Formation of PSINY Enterprises, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 06/22/21. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: 82 Soundview Dr., Port Washington, NY 11050, Attn: Adam Schaffner. Purpose: any lawful activities.

Notice of Formation of 315-317 GROUP LLC Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 07/13/21. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: Pietro Martire, 155 W. 85th St., NY, NY 10024. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

NOTICE FOR FORMATION of a limited liability company (LLC). The name of the limited liability company is NTT PROPERTIES LLC. The date of filing of the articles of organization with the Department of State was March 30, 2021. The County in New York in which the office of the company is located is New York. The Secretary of State has been designated as agent of the company upon whom process may be served, and the Secretary of State shall mail a copy of any process against the company served upon him or her to The LLC, 182 2nd Avenue, Apt 2, New York, New York 10003. The business purpose of the company is to engage in any and all business activities permitted under the laws of the State of New York.

48 W 37 ASSOCIATES LLC, Arts. of Org. filed with the SSNY on 07/01/2021. Office loc: NY County. SSNY has been designated as agent upon whom process against the LLC may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: The LLC, C/O Adams & Co. Real Estate, Inc., 411 Fifth Avenue, NY, NY 10016. Purpose: Any Lawful Purpose.

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY NAME: OTHER PARENTS LIKE ME LLC Articles of Organization were filed with the Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 06/11/2021. Office Location: New York County. SSNY has been designated as agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of any process against the LLC served upon him or her to the company at 130 Watts Street, New York, NY 10013. Principal business address: 43 County Road 635, Hampton, NJ 08827. Purpose: Any lawful acts.

Notice of Formation of RGM GP LLC Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 07/08/21. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to Philip J. Michaels, c/o Norton Rose Fulbright US LLP, 1301 Ave. of the Americas, NY, NY 10019. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice is hereby given that a license number 1337774 for a beer and wine license has been applied for by LITTLE GUILTY PLEASURES LLC., D/B/A CRISPY HEAVEN to sell beer and wine at retail in a Tavern under the Alcoholic Beverage Control law at 38 GRAND STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10013 for on premises consumption.

Notice of Formation of FINEGOLD CENTRAL PARK, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 05/10/16. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: Deborah Finegold, 10897 E. San Felipe Ave., Clovis, CA 93619. Purpose: any lawful activities.

Notice of Qualification of BSREP IV BROOKFIELD PR L.P. Appl. for Auth. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 08/26/21. Office location: NY County. LP formed in Delaware (DE) on 03/18/21. Duration of LP is Perpetual. SSNY designated as agent of LP upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the L.P., Brookfield Place, 250 Vesey St., 15th Fl., NY, NY 10281-1023. Name and addr. of each general partner are available from SSNY. DE addr. of LP: Corporation Service Co., 251 Little Falls Dr., Wilmington, DE 19808-1674. Cert. of LP filed with DE Secy. of State, 401 Federal St., Dover, DE 19901. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

To place a classified ad, contact Claudia Hippel at 312-659-0076 or email: claudia.hippel@crain.com

PUBLIC & LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF Justice, Accountability, and Security Institute, L.L.C.. Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of NY (SSNY) on June 14, 2021. Office location: NEW YORK County. SSNY has been designated as agent upon whom process against it may be served. The Post Office address to which the SSNY shall mail a copy of any process against the LLC served upon him/her is: 413 Grand Street, Apt. 1701, New York, NY 10002. The principal business address of the LLC is: 413 Grand Street, Apt. 1701, New York, NY 10002. Purpose: any lawful act or activity.

Notice of Formation of ABNER GP LLC Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 07/16/21. Office location: NY County. Princ. office of LLC: 40 E. 69th St., NY, NY 10021. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to Philip J. Michaels, c/o Norton Rose Fulbright US LLP, 1301 Ave. of the Americas, NY, NY 10019. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

NOTICE OF FORMATION of Holtzman Helfman PLLC. Articles of Org. filed with Secretary of State of NY (SSNY) on 7/19/2021. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of PLLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: 56 Bennett Avenue, 4L, New York, NY 10033. Purpose: Any lawful activity. The PLLC is to be managed by one or more managers.

Notice of formation of Limited Liability Company. Name: Breaking Ground VI LLC ("LLC"). Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of the State of New York ("SSNY") on June 16, 2021. NY office location: New York County. The SSNY has been designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. The SSNY shall mail a copy of any process to The LLC, c/o Common Ground Management Corporation, 505 Fifth Avenue, Fifth Floor, New York, New York 10018. Purpose/character of LLC is to engage in any lawful act or activity.

Notice of Qualification of ACRE SOLUTIONS L.P. Appl. for Auth. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 07/09/21. Office location: NY County. LP formed in Delaware (DE) on 04/30/21. Duration of LP is Perpetual. SSNY designated as agent of LP upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to Corporation Service Co., 80 State St., Albany, NY 12207-2543. Name and addr. of each general partner are available from SSNY. DE addr. of LP: 251 Little Falls Dr., Wilmington, DE 19808. Cert. of LP filed with DE Secy. of State, Div. of Corps., John G. Townsend Bldg., 401 Federal St., Ste. 4, Dover, DE 19901. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of Columbia Butlers, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with Secy of State of NY(SSNY) on 06/07/21. Office loc: NY County. SSNY designated as agent upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC, 625 W 57th St Apt 454 NY, NY 10019. Purpose: any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of 37A - 200 AMSTERDAM, LLC Arts. of Org. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 07/09/21. Office location: NY County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to Corporation Service Co., 80 State St., Albany, NY 12207. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Qualification of 155 WEST 11TH 9D LLC Appl. for Auth. filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 07/09/21. Office location: NY County. LLC formed in Delaware (DE) on 07/02/21. Princ. office of LLC: 820 Morris Tnpk., Ste. 301, Short Hills, NJ 07078. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to c/o Corporation Service Co., 80 State St., Albany, NY 12207-2543. DE addr. of LLC: 251 Little Falls Dr., Wilmington, DE 19808. Cert. of Form. filed with DE Secy. of State, 401 Federal St. - Ste. 4, Dover, DE 19901. Purpose: Real estate.

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY. NAME: DEFT CHARTERS LLC. Articles of Organization were filed with the Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 07/06/2021. Office location: New York County. SSNY has been designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of process to the LLC, c/o Foreht Associates, LLP, 228 East 45th Street, 17th floor, New York, NY 10017. Purpose: For any lawful purpose.

Notice of Formation of THE IMMOBILARIE GROUP LLC Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 6/11/2021. Office location: New York County. SSNY is designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to TEFONE HERRING, THE IMMOBILARIE GROUP LLC 30 W141st Street, Suite 4N, New York, NY 10037 Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

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CRAIN'S
NEW YORK BUSINESS

FLOODED

FROM PAGE 1

rising sea levels, he said, are making superstorms more likely.

The National Weather Service declared a flash-flood-emergency alert in New York City for the first time ever when Ida struck. When Henri hit, more than 3 inches of rain fell on Manhattan in an hour—an amount common for a Central American rain forest but unheard of for Central Park.

“Is New York ready for more rain? I don’t think so. Not yet,” said Thomas Abdallah, professor of sustainability management at Columbia University. “We learned a lot from Sandy, but I don’t think it’s enough, and we need to do more.”

New York City is heating up as well. In fact, the Big Apple is now considered almost tropical. The National Climate Assessment designated New York a humid, subtropical climate zone in July 2020 after it reached five consecutive summers at a subtropical temperature.

“For several days this summer New York felt like Rio de Janeiro,” said Gernot Wagner, associate professor of environmental studies at New York University.

For a city still reeling from the damage left by Ida and Henri, the prospect of annual extreme-weather events makes planning and mitigation efforts key.

After the flooding from Sandy, the City Council passed a law in

2018 creating a map showing the areas most vulnerable to flooding. The law mandated updates to a stormwater resiliency plan every four years.

The Department of Environmental Protection’s 10-year capital plan allocated \$4.6 billion for sewer improvements, including \$2 billion for a new drainage system in southeast Queens. Con Edison, the city’s electrical grid operator, invested \$1 billion to strengthen its infrastructure.

More updates are needed, scientists and transit experts say.

No parts of the city’s infrastructure network have appeared more vulnerable to superstorms than the

“THE SUBWAY IS NOT A SUBMARINE—IT’S A SHALLOW TRENCH SYSTEM”

sewerage system and subway network it opens into.

On the morning after Ida struck, 15 subway lines were either suspended or partially suspended and an additional nine were experiencing delays as a result of sewage-contaminated flooding.

“We need more capacity in the city’s storm sewerage system to deal with these flash floods,” acting MTA Chairman Janno Lieber said. “There are literally tens of thousands of ways water gets into the subway: vents, manholes, conduit

pipes. The subway is not a submarine—it’s a shallow trench system.”

New York’s sewers were designed to handle water runoff based on precipitation data from 1903 to 1951, according to a recent report from the Mayor’s Office of Climate Resiliency. Rainfall intensity has only increased since then. Between 1970 and 1999, storms with a five-year return period produced an intensity of 1.83 inches of rain per hour, according to a Cornell University study, which projects the same storms to produce 2.15 inches per hour between 2040 and 2069.

More than half of the city’s sewerage system combines sewage and rainwater, creating conditions ripe for quick clogging once powerful rainstorms arrive. Cell-phone videos posted online Sept. 2 captured waves of water pouring into subway stations, much of it mixed with sewage.

“If there’s no green spaces for water to go, no tree coverage, no tree catchments, then all of this goes into the sewers and into the subways,” said Nicole Gelinas, senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, a conservative think tank.

During the past nine years the MTA has spent \$2.6 billion on resiliency projects fortifying 3,500 subway openings across the city, according to the Regional Plan Association. That includes vents,



NO SERVICE: Days after Hurricane Ida, the subways were still hobbled.

staircases and elevators.

But climate experts noted that policymakers prioritized coastline defense over general flood protection after Sandy struck, due to the \$60 billion in destruction that mainly affected homes near the ocean.

Communities across Staten Island and the Rockaways built nearly 10 miles of new dunes. Sunset Cove Park by Jamaica Bay received protective wetlands. More flood-protection projects are underway along the Rockaways’ Atlantic shorefront and on the East Side of Manhattan. The city’s Interim Flood Protection Measures program has installed temporary de-

fenses at 50 sites, according to Phil Ortiz, Mayor Bill de Blasio’s deputy chief of staff.

“If you harden the coastline, it might help dissipate the energy from a storm surge, but flooding comes down from the skies,” Bautista said. “You need green infrastructure.”

Recent subway flooding exceeds the scope of earlier plans, infrastructure experts concede.

Ida was “an extreme rainfall event. It was not driven by any real storm surge, and it requires different solutions,” said Timon McPhearson, associate professor of urban ecology at the New School. “Superstorm Sandy would’ve been so much worse if we got the rain that we received [Wednesday] night.”

The crux of the problem, as McPhearson described it, is that cities such as New York were built using 20th-century models of urban development—which tend to pave over surfaces.

That exacerbates climate-driven problems. Paved surfaces foster hotter temperatures and make it more difficult for rainwater to drain.

If New York is serious about updating its sewerage system to handle the extreme rainfall of climate change, then it should expect to spend hundreds of billions of dollars, McPhearson estimated.

That could take decades to accomplish, he said, “given the nature of the challenge.” ■

CRAIN’S BUSINESS FORUM

Tuesday, September 14 | 4–5 p.m.

Life Sciences – Opportunities and Challenges

The life sciences industry is considered one of the most promising for economic development in New York City, having the potential to create up to 40,000 good-paying jobs. Mayor de Blasio recently announced a plan to double the city’s \$500 million investment in life sciences to \$1 billion. This panel will discuss the future of the industry and what needs to be done to realize this potential.

Featured Panelists:



Thomas J. Grech
President & Chief Executive Officer, Queens Chamber of Commerce



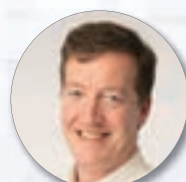
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BUCK ENNIS

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AGE “Old enough to know what’s funny and what’s not”

GREW UP Crown Heights

RESIDES Turtle Bay

EDUCATION Bachelor’s in fashion merchandising, City College and FIT

EQUALLY LOVED Hirsch says she can’t choose a favorite comedian. They’re like her kids.

BACKSTAGE PLAYER She has never done stand-up comedy herself. She prefers to be in the audience or backstage.

FAMILY LIFE She and her life partner, Andrew Fox, have two bearded collies with distinctly English names: Stella McCartney Fox and *Downton Abbey*-inspired Sybil Crawley Fox.

COMING TO THE STAGE Nick Kroll and Michelle Wolf are scheduled to perform at the 2021 New York Comedy Festival. Past headliners have included Stephen Colbert and Jenny Slate.

Bringing laughter back to New York

Owner of famed comedy club focuses on local audiences, festival’s return

BY NATALIE SACHMECHI

The roaring laughter that usually fills Caroline’s on Broadway was reduced to dead air in March 2020, when the comedy club locked down due to the pandemic.

This past April owner Caroline Hirsch was allowed to reopen, but she was treading murky waters.

The last week of May she took the plunge and opened with shows scheduled five days a week. Donnell Rawlings was the first to perform there in more than 14 months.

Most nights are sold out, Hirsch said, but she’s had to reduce the club’s capacity from around 300 to 260. Most of her guests are vaccinated, but she reserves a section for those who have not been jabbed.

Earlier this year she secured *Saturday Night Live*’s Michael Che for a residency that ran every Tuesday night through August.

Before she opened the now-fa-

mous comedy club, Hirsch worked in marketing for the Gimbels department store chain. When the company was sold, she left and decided to follow her passion for comedy. She opened a small cabaret club in Chelsea in 1982 with her friends Bob Stickney and Carl Christian. The business, named Caroline’s from the start, grew from there.

While the club was closed because of Covid restrictions, months passed without a penny coming in. Hirsch had to issue refunds to anyone who had purchased a ticket for a show that was canceled or made a deposit for a private party.

She secured a Paycheck Protection Program loan but decided not to use it because she didn’t want to owe the government money, she said.

“We were able to take from Peter and pay Paul,” she recalled of how the business survived. The owner of the building that she leases the

space from was forgiving, she added, and didn’t give her a hard time about the rent.

Luckily, most of Hirsch’s business comes from locals and her revenue isn’t dependent on the return of foreign travelers.

“People always [assume], because we’re in Times Square, that it’s about tourists,” she said. “Well, let me tell you, since Memorial Day weekend, there has not been one tourist coming in here. It’s all been New Yorkers.”

Hirsch confirms that this year’s New York Comedy Festival, an event she created, will take place in November after having been canceled last year for the first time in 17 years. It will be a week filled with comedy shows at different clubs around the city.

“The smaller venues were hit so hard,” Hirsch said. “We’re going to concentrate on making sure the smaller venues have lots of comedy going.” ■

“SINCE MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND, **THERE HAS NOT BEEN ONE TOURIST COMING IN HERE. IT’S ALL BEEN NEW YORKERS**”

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when bundled
with Internet
for 1 year**

**NO ADDED TAXES. NO HIDDEN FEES.
NO CONTRACTS.**

Offer Good Through 10/31/21

➡ Switch today and you could cut your Internet and Phone bill in half.^

CALL 866-892-7854

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**MORE SPEED° WITH
OVER 99.9% NETWORK
RELIABILITY.°**



Spectrum Business Internet includes:

200Mbps INTERNET

\$49⁹⁹
/mo. when
bundled
for 1 year*

- **FREE** Modem
- **FREE** Desktop Security
- **FREE** Email Addresses
- **FREE** Domain Name

**NO ADDED TAXES. NO HIDDEN FEES.
NO CONTRACTS.**

Offer Good Through 10/31/21

✓ **Total connectivity for
up to 4 critical devices**



**Wireless Internet Backup is now available.
Get it for only \$20/mo.⌘**

Keep your business connected—even in a power outage.
Ask for details when you call.

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MORE CONNECTIVITY. MORE WAYS TO WORK.

Spectrum Business Phone includes:

BUSINESS PHONE

\$19⁹⁹
/mo. per line
when bundled
with Internet
for 1 year**

- 35+ **FREE** advanced calling features
- **FREE** Voicemail to Email
- **FREE** 3-Way Calling
- Unlimited local and long distance calling

Plus, keep your existing phone number and equipment.

**NO ADDED TAXES. NO HIDDEN FEES.
NO CONTRACTS.**

Offer Good Through 10/31/21

➡ **Switch today and you could cut your Internet
and Phone bill in half.[^]**

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*Based on average savings with Spectrum Business promo rates vs. competitors' non-promo rates for Internet & 2 phone lines. Actual savings may vary.

Limited-time offer; subject to change. Qualified new business customers only. Must not have subscribed to applicable services w/ in the last 30 days & have no outstanding obligation to Charter. *\$49.99 Internet offer is for 12 mos when bundled w/ TV or Voice & incl. Spectrum Business Internet starting speeds. Spectrum Internet modem is req'd & included in price. □Spectrum Business Internet Gig requires Spectrum Gig capable modem. Additional Installation fees apply. Speed based on download speed on wired connection. Wireless speed may vary. Available speeds may vary by address. **\$19.99 Voice offer is for 12 mos. when bundled with Internet & incl. one business phone line w/ unlimited local & long distance w/ in the U.S., Puerto Rico, & Canada plus 2,000 long-distance minutes to Mexico. Includes phone taxes, charges and fees. Other telephone services may have corresponding taxes and rates. °Speed claim based on Internet speeds of competitors' current customers vs 200Mbps Internet starting speed from Spectrum Business. ☞Wireless Internet Backup offer requires a subscription to Spectrum Business Internet, and Static IP or Business WiFi services. Supports up to 4 devices and includes download speed up to 10 Mbps, with 8-hour battery backup. LTE modem is required & included in price. Devices connected to the LTE modem cannot receive Gig speed. Static IP and Business WiFi not supported when Wireless Internet Backup service is engaged. +Based on the most annual "Best Protection" AV-TEST awards, industry-leading advanced attacks detection capabilities confirmed by MITRE ATT&CK® evaluations, and 2020 Customers' Choice for Vulnerability Assessment in Gartner Peer Insights. \$99.9% network reliability based on average HFC Availability, Jan 2019 - Feb 2021. Visit business.spectrum.com/network-reliability for details. Services subject to all applicable service terms & conditions, which are subject to change. Services & promo. offers not avail. in all areas. Standard pricing applies after promo. period. Installation & other equipment, taxes & fees may apply. Restrictions apply. Call for details. © 2021 Charter Communications, Inc.



NO CONTRACTS, EVER. WE WORK HARD TO EARN YOUR BUSINESS EVERY DAY.

- ▶ Fast Internet speeds from 200Mbps up to 1 Gbps[□]
- ▶ No data caps or speed throttling
- ▶ Award-winning Desktop Security⁺
- ▶ Unlimited local and long distance calling
- ▶ 35+ business calling features
- ▶ 24/7/365 U.S.-based customer support



200Mbps INTERNET

\$49⁹⁹
/mo. when
bundled
for 1 year*

+

BUSINESS PHONE

\$19⁹⁹
/mo. per line
when bundled
with Internet
for 1 year**

NO ADDED TAXES. NO HIDDEN FEES.
NO CONTRACTS.

Offer Good Through 10/31/21

➡ Switch today and you could cut your Internet and Phone bill in half.[^]

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