

The Main Street WIRE

37:08

Saturday, January 7, 2017

Second Ave Subway Opens

New 63rd Street transfer improves Island access to Upper East Side.

by Nick Turner

Getting from the Island to the Upper East Side just got a little bit easier.

With Sunday's opening of the Second Avenue Subway, riders can now travel from the Roosevelt Island station to East 96th Street – without ever having to brave the elements.

The extension, which includes three gleaming new elevator-accessible stations at 72nd, 86th, and 96th Streets, has been a long time coming. The new line was first proposed in the 1920s, but the Great Depression and other

obstacles prevented it from getting built until now. The project is the subway system's biggest expansion in 50 years, according to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

It also brings a treasury of artwork to the transit system, with installations from Chuck Close, Vik Muniz, Jean Shin, and Sarah Sze.

First Train Out

The Second Avenue Subway is an extension of the Q line, which now heads north from the overhauled Lexington Avenue-63rd Street station instead of continuing east to Queens. Islanders can take the F train one stop into Manhattan, then head downstairs

See **Subway**, page 8



Murals in the 72nd Street station feature portraits of commuters.

Olympian Named New Head Coach of Marlins Swim Team

by Dana Agmon

World champion and Olympic gold medalist Roman Sludnov comes from a family of swimmers. His parents trained both him and his brother, doing such a good job that, in 2001, Sludnov became the first swimmer to break the one-minute barrier for the long course 100-meter breaststroke. From 2000 to 2012, Sludnov swam for the Russian Olympic team, bringing home eight gold medals, along with four silvers and three bronzes.

Now Sludnov is training the next generation of swimmers – right here on Roosevelt Island.

He is the new head coach for the Roosevelt Island Marlins swim team.

A New Leader

By any account, 2016 was a successful year for the Marlins. Despite ongoing renovations to the Sportspark pool which forced the team to move practices off the Island; the team won 12 silver medals; six team members are current Junior Olympics qualifiers.

“[We are] delighted to end 2016 with four-time Olympian Roman Sludnov as a new head coach,” said Marlins Board President Olga Shchuchinov. “He shares our vision and



mission to qualify more Marlins swimmers this season, and then aim for higher goals.”

Shchuchinov described Sludnov as a strong leader and a good mentor. “During this past month on the team,

See **Marlins**, page 10

More Retail Coming in 2017. But Will It Be Enough?

By Briana Warsing

Walking along Main Street, it's hard to shake the ghost-town feeling created by long stretches of empty storefronts and papered windows. Trellis and Main Street Sweets, both of which served as unofficial meeting places for both Island and

Trellis, now closed for over two years.

Hudson Related recently announced several deals to bring additional food options to the area, including a juice bar opening this spring at 503 Main Street operated by David Nasser and Jimmy Kim, the owners of

News Analysis

Wholesome Fac-off-Island groups, are both closed. Five years after outside firm Hudson Related was hired to manage Main Street's flagging retail scene and attract new businesses, the area still struggles to draw foot traffic and fill the empty storefronts. Currently, ten storefronts stand empty along the length of Main Street between Blackwell House and PS/IS 217. Some of those storefronts have been so under-occupied that a new tenant would have to do what the Urgent Care Center did in the thrift store space, put in all new utilities. While the past year was marked by the arrival of a few new tenants – including the Urgent Care Center at 520 Main Street, CDM Kids Learning Academy at 568 Main Street, and the Paul Callendrillo Gallery at 507 Main Street, it also saw the closure of the Island's much loved ice cream shop, Coach Scot's Main Street Sweets, and the stalled renovations of

The question is, will they be enough, and can they succeed?

Retail Study

Main Street's retail problem isn't a new one. Besides a few core businesses, retail has never “worked” on the Island. In October 2009, RIO, which hired Planning and Real Estate consultants Phillips Preiss Grygiel, released a 54-page Main Street Retail Study explaining what wasn't working on Main Street, namely,

See **Retail**, page 4

Briefly...

• The **RIRA Common Council seated two new members** at Wednesday's meeting: Southtown resident Paul Calendrillo and Octagon resident F. Scott Piro.

• The RI Senior Center will host **Senior Law Day**

Thursday, January 19. There will be an Island-wide meet-and-greet with 19 resource organizations (including DASH) from 10am-1pm, as well as an RSVP-only Legal and Financial Planning workshop at 1pm. Call 212-980-1888.

• **Coach Scot's Winter Ball** starts January 8 in the PS/IS

217 gym, 5:15-7pm. \$20 for 10 sessions, ages 8-12. Register at mainstreetsweets.nyc/winter_ball.html

• **Scholarship applications for Main Street Theatre & Dance Alliance's spring semester** are being accepted through January 25. Apply at mstda.org/scholarship.html.

• The Roosevelt Island Center for Community Development will begin accepting applications for their **Global Youth Collective** on January 15 (for ages 12-17), riccd.com/global-youth-collective.

• **The RI Historical Society is seeking a part-time staff member** to work in the Visitor Center. Applicants should have good knowledge of the Island and community. Must be interested in dealing with visitors, handling sales, and inventory. Contact jbird134@aol.com.

The Editorial Page

Our Promise to You

Oxford English Dictionary's Word of the Year for 2016 is *post-truth*, defined as "the condition in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief."

It is another reminder that professional, honest journalism has never been more important.

To protect the institution of journalism is to protect the very notion of truth. It requires the ability to differentiate between gossip and news. Journalists must go out and earn your trust every day, with each issue, with every story. They must be willing to put in the hours, build the relationships, talk to the people, go through the files, and attend the meetings. Journalists are tasked with helping the public understand the larger story.

Journalists must agree to an implicit compact with their readers: We will report the truth, and in doing so we will demonstrate our trustworthiness. We will be mindful that our stories can impact reputations and we will take that responsibility seriously. We will separate our editorial responsibility from the business of maintaining the viability of an independent newspaper. We will never print "advertorial" pieces; you will know when you're reading a paid piece. We will listen, corroborate, and report.

It is not a journalist's job to incite, but to inform. We will not deal in innuendo or personal attacks. To do otherwise is not journalism, it's click-bait cowardice. We want the same calm from any professional. We don't want the surgeon hyperventilating because of the risks of the operation she is about to perform. Journalists must remain measured, accurate, and objective.

You are a party to this contract as well, dear reader. Be skeptical. Insist on accuracy and accountability. Demand truth and eschew "post-truth."

So let's raise a glass to a *post-post-truth* 2017. After this past year, I think we could all use a drink.

-BW

For up-to-date info, continuing coverage, and updated listings, friend us on [facebook](#) (@MainStreetWire), follow us on [twitter](#) (@MainStreetWIRE) or go to [MainStreetWire.com](#).

To the Editor:

The Roosevelt Island Senior Association (RISA) Executive Board wishes to clarify RISA's standing regarding Public Purpose Funds reported on in the December 10 issue of *The Main Street WIRE*.

Due to the administration change in RISA through its mandated June elections, the new set of officers has, over the past five-and-a-half months, been chasing down past financial documents in order to comply with the IRS 990 Filing for 2015. Additionally, the new board has been instituting management controls through a series of board resolutions to safeguard it from unsuspected eventualities that jeopardized the position of the past RISA administration.

That said, RISA complied with the application and other requirements and, in fact, was awarded funding. However, RISA took it upon itself to officially inform RIOC that the fund allotment be deferred until all financial filing requirements are submitted.

By the time this letter reaches *The WIRE*, RISA will have filed all appropriate tax forms as required, and looks forward to presenting RIOC with additional information, as needed, to regain the allotted funding to continue its regular and new programs for the benefit of its current and growing membership. We owe a debt of gratitude to Dave Evans, the chair of the RISA Public Purpose Fund Committee, as well as its members, for their support. We look forward to continuing to prove our worth in the future.

Furthermore, the new RISA executive board wishes to distinguish itself from the previous board of directors, which had the misfortune of having to deal with misguided governance. The new executive board, together with an

Letters

To the Editor:

Parents of children born in 2012 have until January 13 to apply for kindergarten. With so many options in the City, the process can feel overwhelming. I encourage you to check out our own excellent public school right here on Roosevelt Island, PS/IS 217. In addition to strong academics, the school offers something many of its peers can't: a strong connection to the wonderful community here on the Island.

When your five-year-old joins the PS 217 school family, they benefit from the quality of life that keeps so many of us here on Roosevelt Island: easy commutes, strong friendships with Island neighbors, and a community that embraces diversity.

Letters deadline
for Jan. 21 issue:
Tue., Jan. 17, 5pm

In my seven years on the Island, I've watched PS 217 grow and develop under the leadership of Principal Mandana Beckman and the team she's brought together. The faculty works to guide our students to think critically and creatively, not only in core academic subjects and enrichments, but also in computer science and coding – content you're not likely to find in other NYC public schools.

We also have the benefit of a small community, all working together for a stronger school. It won't be long before this incoming class is learning on the school's new green roof, which is being built thanks to the efforts of so many Islanders.

PS 217 will welcome 100 kindergarteners and their families in the fall. It will be exciting and emotional – and yet another thing that endears you to this Island. Nowhere else can we have this.

Erin Olavesen
President, PS/IS 217 PTA

additional seven new board members, has been working hard to pick up the pieces, while bringing multiple skill sets to the job and being educated about best practices in managing and governing a not-for-profit organization. In the coming board meeting, on the second Tuesday in January, a new set of board policy resolutions will be on the agenda for approval and will include conflict-of-interest, transparency, and directors' liability issues.

Signaling a renewed RISA, we will soon have a website,

which is currently undergoing design and information uploads. Our email address will also shortly be active for those who wish to contact RISA directly.

We look forward to meeting the new, active, older adults in the community and having them join us with their ideas for unusual, upward, and outward-bound programming.

The RISA Executive Board:
Barbara Parker, President; Donna Chenkin, Vice President; Sherie Helstien, Secretary; Marie Luarca-Reyes, Acting Treasurer

The Main Street WIRE

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Letters Policy

The WIRE welcomes letters of interest to the Roosevelt Island community. Recommended maximum length, 350 words; longer letters will be considered if their content, in the judgment of the editors, merits the required space. All letters are subject to acceptance and editing for length and clarity. Letters submitted anonymously will not be published. Requests for a Name Withheld signature will be considered, but the writer's name and email must be provided for verification. Submit to letters@mainstreetwire.com. Alternatives: Typed copy left at 531 Main Street, addressed to Briana Warsing, *The WIRE*.

A happy and healthy New Year from the RIRA Common Council to all of our Island neighbors, family, and friends! We truly hope this past holiday season was a memorable one, filled with light, joy, and goodwill to all – and that, despite the hubbub of the season, you were afforded a small opportunity to reflect on the season. As the cold winter sun begins to settle over the City and we begin the long march toward spring, your newly elected 2017-2019 Common Council has been hard at work reconstituting its committees, forming its legislative and policy agendas, and formulating its plans for the upcoming term. Here's a quick glimpse of what your Council has been up to this holiday season.

Keep Paying It Forward

As part of this season of giving and community, RIRA conducted its second annual holiday Pay-It-Forward program. Spearheaded by Sara Metzidakis in conjunction with the RIRA Social, Cultural and Education Services Committee, which is chaired by Lynne Shinozaki, the goal of the RIRA Pay-It-Forward Committee is to provide Islanders in need with food and other basic items, especially during the holiday season.

This past December, with the help of various community and religious groups on the Island – including the Carter Burden Senior Center, Wengerd Family Farms, the Roosevelt Island Disabled Association, cash donations from various building managements and individual donors – our Island Daisies, Brownies, and Girl Scouts, as well as countless other volunteers, we were able to collect, assemble, decorate, and deliver food boxes to a number of our Island families and individuals.

We thank each and every individual who helped make this annual holiday Pay-It-Forward program a success, and we look forward to partnering with each of you again throughout this coming year to give comfort to some of our most challenged Island families, friends, and neighbors. We hope that more Island neighbors will come out to help.

Interested in volunteering or making a donation to the RIRA Pay-It-Forward program? Reach out to us at contact@riraonline.com or to either Sara Metzidakis (stm6630@gmail.com) or Lynne Shinozaki (lynnestrong@hotmail.com) for more information on how you can help this worthy cause.



Islanders deliver food as part of the Pay-It-Forward program.

Spotlight on Island Services

The RIRA Island Services Committee, chaired this term by Aaron Hamburger, reports that it expects to continue to work on major issues carried over from last term. These include: the future of Sportspark, once the renovations are completed; the new Tram elevators, which the committee now estimates will begin operation in the fall of 2017, two years behind the initial schedule; the monitoring of the commercial trash yard in Southtown; review of the ongoing design and construction of the new public library; monitoring of the operation and performance of the Urgent Care center; review of the current condition of Motorgate and the



Jeff Escobar, President
RI Residents Association
jeffrey.escobar@gmail.com

helix ramp; review of the public use of the Good Shepherd Church and Community Center; and preparation of recommendations for directional signs and wayfinding for Main Street stores at transit stations.

Interested in discussing how Island services can better meet the needs of the Roosevelt Island community? Join the Island Services Committee. Contact Chair Aaron Hamburger (ashamburger33@gmail.com) and attend the committee's next meeting on Tuesday, January 17 at 8:00 pm in the Party Room located at 455 Main Street.

Reconstituted Committees

Recently, the Common Council elected the following members as the chairs of the following committees. Remember, RIRA committees are the lifeblood of the organization, where much of the work that affects your daily life here is completed, and on which you, as a RIRA member (each and every resident is automatically a member by virtue of your residency on the Island) are eligible to serve. The Common Council congratulates each of the committee chairs, and looks forward to working closely with them this term. If you are interested in joining a committee or have an idea that you believe a committee should pursue, please be sure to either drop us a line at contact@riraonline.com, contact me directly at jeffrey.escobar@gmail.com, or reach out to the appropriate committee chair (as well as the other elected officers of RIRA):

Children, Youth and Education: Committee Co-Chairs, Anne Heskel (aheskel@gmail.com) and Adib Monsour (ri-radib@earthlink.net)

Island Services: Aaron Hamburger (ashamburger33@gmail.com)

Planning: David Lawson (lawsondd@aol.com)

Public Safety Committee: Erin Feely-Nahem (erfn315@gmail.com)

Social, Cultural and Education Services: Lynne Shinozaki (lynnestrong@hotmail.com)

See **RIRA Column**, page 9

COMING UP

– THIS WEEKEND –

Diaper drive for low-income working parents in Manhattan, **ongoing.** Bring new, sealed boxes of diapers (sizes 3, 4, 5 or 6, but especially 4 & 5) to one of Borough President Gale Brewer's offices (1 Centre St. 19th Fl. South or 431 W. 125th St. storefront) or order online: amzn.to/2gAzVo7

Applications open for 2017 Manhattan Cultural Tourism Grant, thru Mon Jan 16. Open to not-for-profit 501(c)(3) arts and cultural organizations for use in promoting their events, exhibitions or activities. Info and application: manhattanbp.nyc.gov/html/budget/cultural-tourism-grants.shtml

Registration open for Women's March on NYC, Sat Jan 21 11am-4pm starting at Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza (833 1st Av, Manhattan). Sign up to march with the RI contingent by sending contact info to: Sheila Berger Chazin, sbergerchain@gmail.com. Free and open to the public. General info: thehumanfirstsociety.org/

Applications open for Manhattan Community Board (CB8) membership, thru Fri Feb 3, 5pm. Info and application: manhattancommunityboards.wufoo.com/forms/manhattan-community-board-application-2017

Applications open for FY 2018 Capital Funding Awards, thru Tue Feb 14. Funds awarded to city entities, nonprofit organizations, and cultural organizations. Info and applications: manhattanbp.nyc.gov/html/budget/capital-funding.shtml

Registration open for Island Kids Afterschool Program for Kindergartners for 2016/17 school year (limited space available). Info: islandkids.org or islandkidsri@gmail.com.

Roosevelt Island Day Nursery open enrollment continues 8:30am-3pm daily, until classes are filled, at 4 River Rd. Info: 212-593-0750

– NEXT TWO WEEKS –

Senior Law Day, Thu Jan 19 10am-2pm, Senior Center (546 Main St.) Meet representatives from resource organizations (10am-1pm) and attend senior law workshop (1-2pm). Free and open to all. RSVP: Hallie Shapiro, shapiroh@carterburden-center.org

Island Artist Toshiko Kitano Groner exhibits in the Onishi Project, **Opening Reception Thu Jan 19** 6-8pm, Onishi Gallery, 521 W 25 St. thru Feb 1. Info: 212-695-8035 or onishiproject.com

Book discussion group, *Positivity* by Barbara Fredrickson, **Thu Jan 19** 6:30pm, library. Free.

The Main Street WIRE – Sat Jan 21. Advertising deadlines: Display, Wed Jan 11; decision date for circulars/inserts, Tue Jan 17; 6,000 copies due Thu Jan 19. Also: Feb 4, 18; Mar 4, 18; Apr 8, 22; May 6, 20. News phone, 646-741-4719. Email press releases and feature-story suggestions to briana@mainstreetwire.com. Advertising (display & classified) 917-587-3278 or msWIREads@gmail.com.

The WIRE

– FUTURE WEEKS –

Women's Protest March in NYC, Sat Jan 21. A Roosevelt Island contingent is being formed to augment the march taking place on the same day in Washington, D.C. If you (individual/leader/group) are interested, send contact info. to Sheila Berger Chazin, sbergerchain@gmail.com. Details will be provided closer to the date.

Western novels discussion group, *The Long High Noon* by Loren D. Estelman, **Tue Jan 24** 6:30pm, library. Free.

RI Day Nursery Open House for Infant/Toddler/Preschool, Thu Jan 26 8:30-9:30am. Reservation required: office@ridn.org or 212-593-0750. Also Feb 7, 8, 12. (See ad, page 9.)

Movies at the Library, *Arachnophobia* (1990, PG-13), **Thu Jan 26** 6pm. Free.

Science fiction book discussion group, *The War of the Worlds* by H.G. Wells, **Tue Feb 7** 6:30pm, library. Free.

Book discussion group, *Alexander Hamilton* by Ron Chernow, **Thu Feb 16** 6:30pm, library. Free.

Detective novels discussion group, *All Shot Up* by Chester Himes, **Tue Feb 21** 6:30pm, library. Free.

The WIRE publishes this column, exclusively, as a service to the community and does not control or censor its content.

Retail, from page 1

that Island residents did just 12% of their shopping here, that the existing retail mix on Main Street failed to capture the new market opportunities afforded by the Island's growing affluent market, and that Main Street suffered from several "design flaws" including poor retail visibility.

To ameliorate the design flaws, the study recommended removing the glass panels from the east side of Main Street, installing additional lighting and retrofitting existing lighting within the arcade, repainting exterior facades to enliven the "gloomy" feel of the arcade, installing public art in the larger spaces within the arcade, and installing signs on the exterior of each storefront.

The study also recommended bringing in a master leaseholder to handle the marketing and leasing of retail space. This was intended to allow potential tenants to avoid the red tape of working with RIO, and to put the leasing function in the hands of those with expertise in marketing commercial real estate.

Hudson Related

In 2011, RIO selected the Hudson Companies and Related Companies (HR) to manage the 33 retail spaces – a total of 100,000 square feet of leasable space – on Main Street and stimulate retail development. The two signed a 40-year Master Lease. HR pays RIO \$900,000 per year (once HR gets their original investment of improvements back, they will share the rental profits with RIO) to rent and manage the available space. When HR came in, average retail rents on Main Street were just \$9 per square foot and the vacancy rate was at 50%.

The developers set about rebranding the Island's retail area as "Shops on Main." The renovation project included repainting storefronts and installing wood ceilings in the arcade spaces, as well as installing new lighting, signage, and custom benches. Their vision was to create a welcoming and vibrant village center. They also brought in new stores, including a Subway sandwich shop in October 2012, Main Street Sweets in November 2012, Wholesome Market in May 2013, and Island Wines & Spirits at 605 Main Street in October 2014. Soon after, retail rents on Main Street rose to an average \$40 to \$50

Currently there are 31 retail spaces along Main Street. At the moment, five of them stand empty. Four others, including the former Trellis diner, have signed leases with Hudson Related but are not yet open.

per square foot. Some longtime Island businesses signed new leases with HR and began renovations pursuant to HR recommendations, including Trellis, Gristedes, RIVAA, and newly named Bread & Butter Deli (M&D Deli). However, the increased rents also resulted in new closures. The Island lost its hardware store and the thrift store, followed by the stationery store.

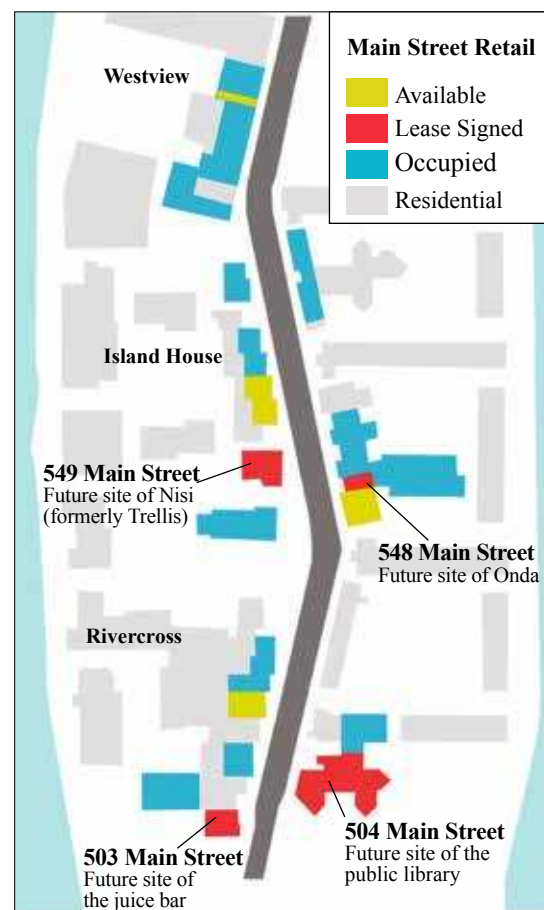
Alexandra Kaplan, associate project manager at the Hudson Companies said, "Our approach to retail on the Island always starts with the same question: how can we best serve the needs of both existing Island residents, incoming Cornell Tech campus residents, and visitors in a way that all their day-to-day needs will be met on the Island itself."

Desired Retail Tenants

Now, at the opening of 2017 – following years of renovation, marketing, and turnover – the remaining question seems to be, what sort of retail tenants will Islanders support? And can any of them draw the foot-traffic needed to finally jumpstart Main Street?

The 2009 retail study identified a list of potential businesses most appropriate for Roosevelt Island's Main Street. Listed in order of desirability, they were: Green Grocer, Ice Cream Shop, Specialty Cheese Shop, Seafood Store, Bakery, Pizzeria, Florist, Restaurant, Butcher, and a home furnishings store.

Wholesome Market soon came on the scene as the green grocer and Main Street Sweets as the Island's ice cream shop. The other recommendations are interesting because several have been attempted on the Island. We've had a seafood store and we've had a bakery. (Who else remembers getting warm bagels on weekend mornings?) Neither succeeded. There was a pizzeria, with a large seating area, and bar for many years in Wholesome Market's current location. We also had a florist, which failed to recover after a fire. Even our ice cream shop, four years after



answering the Island's call, called it quits.

As for HR's perspective, Kaplan says, "We're really focused not only on delivering core services, but providing some variety. The opening of Cornell Tech will help boost the Island's vitality by bringing in residents who will be there during the daytime. We look forward to leveraging the increased foot traffic to attract both traditional tenants as well as pop-ups like the existing Paul Calendrillo Gallery."

Perhaps the real question is whether Islanders truly know what they want, and if there is another, more effective, way to give it to them.

Coming Soon to Main Street: Leases Signed for Possible 2017 Opening

by Briana Warsing

According to Hudson Related, several new businesses are in the works for 2017:

Juice Bar

A new Mediterranean-style café and juice bar is on its way to the 2,000-square-foot space at 503 Main Street. The eatery will serve juices, smoothies, paninis, and salads made with organic fruits and vegetables, according to its owner. Prices for entrees will range between \$10 and \$12.

The café is expected to open by summer 2017. No cooking will be allowed on the premises but there will be outdoor seating. This past October, the café owners' application for a license to serve wine, beer and cider was approved. The owners, Jimmy Kim and David Nasser, also own Wholesome Market and Island Wines & Spirits.

Mexican Restaurant

Onda, which means "wave" in Spanish, is also expected to open this coming summer. Onda will be the Island's first sit-down Mexican restaurant-bar. It will occupy an approximately 2,000-square-foot storefront in the Island's retail center, at 548 Main Street, and will be operated by D&D Restaurant Group.

According to the owners, Onda's menu will consist of authentic, rustic cuisine and offer both small and large plates in a modern setting. The owners plan to apply for a liquor license. "We are excited

to help meet the desire of Roosevelt Island residents for more sit-down dining establishments and a wider diversity of food options," said Alexandra Kaplan, Associate Project Manager at The Hudson Companies, on behalf of Hudson Related Retail LLC.

Remodeled Library

The new public library is scheduled to open in late 2017 or early 2018, once its new home down the road at 504 Main Street is complete. The new branch will make use of 5,465 square feet on the ground floor. Compare that to the current library's 2,200 square feet.

"Currently, there are a lot of books, but not a lot of room for people," said Risa Honig, vice president of capital planning and construction for the New York Public Library. "[Now] we can host events or meetings." The plans reflect a space almost triple in



The Roosevelt Island branch of the public library will begin renovations on a much larger space (the floor plan is shown here) at 504 Main Street in 2017.

size and include a designated teen space; a separate, closed-off, 640-square-foot children's room; and a 670-square-foot community room that will be used for classes during the day and adult programs in the evening.

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Apartment Hunting? Island Offers Views, but Fewer Deals

by Briana Warsing

Real estate broker Oren Liberman has seen just about every corner of Roosevelt Island, from tiny studios to luxury penthouses. In the past six years, Liberman estimates that he's completed about 200 transactions, including both sales and rentals, here on the Island.

"New people who come to Roosevelt Island are shocked to find such a clean and quiet place so close to Manhattan," says Liberman. "There really is nothing else like it. Roosevelt Island has its own sanitation and is remarkably well kept, which is among the first things people notice. Also, the views are unique and amazing. If ever I have a hesitant client, I take them to Four Freedoms Park; it works every time."

Although deals can still be found on the Island, Liberman acknowledges that, in some buildings, rental prices are approaching what you'd pay elsewhere in Manhattan for comparable apartments. "They used to come to the Island to save money, now they come for a better lifestyle," Liberman says of some of his clients.

On a mid-December afternoon, Liberman offered a tour of a few of his favorite rental options currently available on the Island.



Oren Liberman of the Dressler Group LLC

The Octagon

Building: 888 Main Street
Bed/Bath: 3/2
Size: 1,315 sq ft
Advertised Rent: \$5,625

The Octagon, built in 2006, is the Island's northern-most rental building and is built on the former asylum. (The Octagon joined the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, but its survival remained in doubt for decades.) The U.S. Green Building Council awarded the Octagon LEED-Silver Certification, and it is billed as a green residential community.

Apartment 340 is a 1,315-square-foot, corner three-bedroom that goes for \$5,625. "The corner living room is really special in the Octagon," Liberman says. The rooms' floor-to-ceiling windows offer expansive views overlooking the water and Manhattan. (There are 65 three-bedrooms in the building with two different layouts, but most are corners.) Like most of the building's units, the apartment has a washer and dryer, a galley kitchen, but no terrace. (Only four river-facing penthouses feature terraces.) All of the Octagon's three-bedroom units have washers and dryers, and many of its one-bedroom, and two-bedroom apartments do as well.

The Octagon is the only building that has its own parking. Liberman says that when you apply online, you can even choose



Top: View from a corner living room. Right: Galley kitchen.



your spot. The amenities at the Octagon include a gym, two children's playrooms, express buses to the subway and Tram, monthly tenant events, heated outdoor swimming pool, and daycare.

There is also a U-shaped studio layout in the building to which Liberman is very partial. "I never see studios like that in any building," says Liberman. "It's extremely functional." At 500 square feet, it's not the building's largest studio, but the shape makes for a distinct sleeping area, living space, and either dining or office space. There are a few currently on the market for \$2,257.

Riverwalk Crossing

Building: 405 Main Street
Bed/Bath: 3/3
Size: 1,450 sq ft, plus patio
Advertised Rent: \$6,950

"I have a treat for you today," Liberman says. It is one of just five west-facing three-bedroom apartments in Riverwalk Crossing featuring the extra-large patio (28.5 by 21.6 feet) visible from the Tram. In his six years of specializing in Island real estate, this is the first time Liberman has seen one available. In fact, this one has been inhabited by the same family since the building opened seven years ago.

The apartment is as spectacular as you'd expect. It's a corner unit with three bathrooms — two are ensuite — a washer and dryer, open kitchen, and the high ceilings present in all Riverwalk Crossing penthouse apartments. On the market for \$6,950, Liberman says that if the unit were on the market in the summer months, the rent

would be closer to \$8,000 per month.

The 17-story building is solely market-rate rentals. There is a playroom (a recent addition to the building by tenant demand), a gym, roof terrace with barbecues, and a lounge. Leases can range from nine months to 24 months.

If you were interested in this apartment, Liberman says there's a wait list for three-bedrooms in the building, and offers are made by management to those on that list before they consider renting to an outsider.



Riverwalk Point

Building: 480 Main Street
Bed/Bath: 1/1
Size: 650 sq ft
Advertised Rent: \$3,400, plus amenities fee

What used to be the tot lot playground is now Riverwalk Point, the newest building on the Island. Runners on the east promenade can glimpse the building's ground floor gym and yoga room, set off from the sidewalk by a landscaped outdoor space and grill. Riverwalk Point also boasts a business center with a couple of Macs and a children's playroom. The amenities cost \$30 per person per month. There are no private terraces in this building, but there are two roof decks featuring barbecues. One can be rented for parties.

Apartment 18C is a 650-square-foot one-bedroom apartment with a window in the kitchen that frames Firefighters Field and the Ed Koch Queensboro Bridge. Like all of the apartments in the building, it has a washer and dryer. It's on the market for \$3,400. The apartments in this building are less spacious than those in its sister building, Riverwalk Crossing; the largest apartments have just two bedrooms.



The view from 18C



A few Riverwalk Crossing apartments feature large roof decks.

Manhattan Park

Building: 20 River Road
Bed/Bath: 4/2
Size: 1,400 sq ft
Advertised Rent: \$6,000

Manhattan Park is an 880-apartment complex comprised of four buildings, 10, 20, 30, and 40 River Road. (Another building, 2-4 River Road, while managed by Manhattan Park, does not have market-rate apartments.) Each building has a large roof deck with grill, and a complimentary fitness center. There's a small playground that is not attached to any of the buildings. On the property is one of the Island's two outdoor pools; and there are seasonal activities for building residents, including a pumpkin patch, holiday party, and outdoor movies.

Apartment 21C in 20 River Road is currently the most expensive apartment in Manhattan Park. This renovated 1,400-square-foot unit has been converted from a three-bedroom with dedicated dining room to a four-bedroom apartment. Unlike most Manhattan Park units, 21C has a washer and dryer in a dedicated laundry room, and mouldings throughout the apartment. It also features an impressive view of the Manhattan skyline. The rent is \$6,000 per month.

Most apartments above the fourth floor feature a small terrace. A few

apartments feature large private roof decks as well. Every first floor apartment in Manhattan Park has a backyard.

Liberman takes pride in his knowledge of the Island and its real estate. "I'm personally very familiar with every single building on Roosevelt Island," Liberman says. Despite that, he refuses to reveal his favorite building, saying, "I have a good relationship with all of them, it's like choosing between your kids."



Most units feature a terrace.

Roosevelt Landings

Building: 540 Main Street
Bed/Bath: 4/1.5
Size: 1,200 sq ft
Advertised Rent: \$4,830

Unlike the other buildings, there is no on-site leasing agency at Roosevelt Landings. You need a broker to walk you around. The 1,000-apartment complex runs along the east side of Main Street and is comprised of even-numbered buildings from 510 - 580 Main

Street. All of the buildings are connected at the fourth and seventh floors.

There are 50 garden apartments within Roosevelt Landings. Apartment B128 in 540 Main Street is one of them. The two-story, four-bedroom apartment includes one and a half baths and a garden that is so big you could fit a table, chairs, multiple kids' pools, and an actual garden in it.

Unlike the other Roosevelt Landings duplexes, which typically have a closet only at the top or bottom of the stairs where the entry is, apartment B128 features a deep closet, as well as space for a couple of scooters, a double stroller, and some bikes in the entryway. Like most units in the complex (including all two-bedrooms and larger), the apartment has an eat-in kitchen. It is priced at \$4,830. Liberman says that in summer months, the management would be asking \$6,000.

Roosevelt Landings is the only complex on the Island without a doorman, a gym, or any amenities. But it isn't without perks. In fact, in Roosevelt Landings, all utilities are included in the rent; in 2014 the building got a highly efficient energy and heat upgrade.



Roosevelt Landings garden apartment.

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Subway, from page 1

from the platform for northbound Q trains or simply cross the platform for southbound Q trains.

The Second Avenue Subway's debut on New Year's Day drew throngs of transit buffs and shutterbugs. (There was an inaugural run for the governor and other officials the day before, but January 1 was the public debut.) When the first train pulled into the southernmost of the three new stations – at 72nd Street – riders cheered. One man yelled, "Touchdown!"

The conductor promptly announced signal delays, drawing laughs from the crowd. On its first day, the shiny new Second Avenue Subway was already just like every other line.

Exploring the Stations

A subway expansion is exhilarating, in part, because it combines something new with something so familiar. The swipe of a MetroCard feels the same; the trains are no different on the inside; and Charlie Pellett's voice still warns you to stand clear of the closing doors.

And yet, suddenly there are three new dots on the subway map. It's as if you woke up one morning and found an additional bathroom in your apartment.

Also, the new stations are gorgeous.

The 72nd Street station is decorated with Muniz's beautiful and lighthearted mosaic representations of New Yorkers: a cop holding a melting popsicle, a mom holding her baby, a man chasing windswept papers from an open briefcase, a guy handing out balloons to an excited child, and dozens of other characters. The station should provide much easier access from the Island to the many medical facilities in the area.

The next stop is 86th Street, which is only a few blocks from the existing 4-5-6 station at Lexington. This station probably isn't going to open up a new area of the city to subway-riding Islanders, but the hope is that having two lines along this corridor will bring relief to one of the most congested parts of the transit system.

The new 86th Street station features works from Close, an artist famous for large-scale portraits. The giant mosaics include depictions of Philip Glass, Lou Reed, and the artist himself.

Finally, there's the 96th Street station. It's decorated with Sze's 14,000-square-foot installation, called *Blueprint for a Landscape*, which uses porcelain wall tiles to create a dizzying scene. The work shows paper, trees, and other objects seemingly caught in a windstorm.

Of the three new stations, Muniz's whimsical mosaics appeared to be the crowd favorite on Sunday. People of all ages posed against the figures, attempting to become part of the art.

All of the stations are worth a visit, even if your normal commute doesn't take you in that direction. Depending on how easily you make the connection at 63rd Street, you could get there in 10 to 15 minutes from the Island.

It's almost enough to make Roosevelt Island feel like a true part of Manhattan.



(Clockwise from top) Sze's *Blueprint for a Landscape* installation at the 96th Street station; the Second Avenue Subway adds three stations along the Upper East Side; riders on the F line can now transfer to the Q at the revamped Lexington Av/63rd Street station; *Subway Portraits* by Close at the 86th Street station.



Mosaic portraits by Muniz line the 72nd Street station's mezzanine.

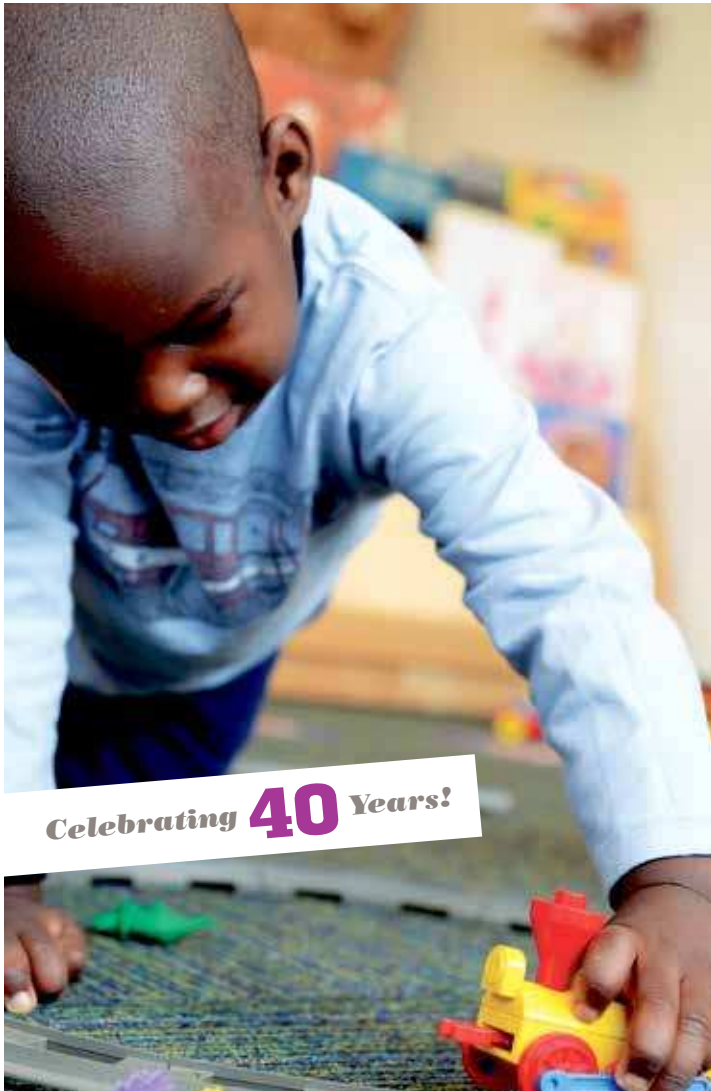
Martin Richard Atkins

February 10, 1942 - November 2, 2016

Beloved husband and father, Martin Richard Atkins, born February 10, 1942, passed away November 2, 2016. He leaves behind wife, Marilyn Atkins, son, Marc Atkins, and daughter, Kayla Atkins.

He and his family were among the first to make Roosevelt Island their home in 1976. He was an artist, designer, and illustrator. He is best remembered by Roosevelt Islanders for his table at the Farmers Market of rocks, minerals, kaleidoscopes, and Tram holiday cards.





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Wed Feb 8 6:30p-8:30p

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RIRA, from page 3

Government Relations: Joyce Short (jm_short@gmail.com)

Communications: Noah Keating (noah@keati.ng)

Legal Action: Jeffrey Escobar (jeffrey.escobar@gmail.com)

Constitution and By-Laws: Dave Evans (evansde23@hotmail.com)

Ethics: Mickey Rindler (rindlm01@yahoo.com)

We are here to serve you! And if you are interested in serving on any of the above committees or their subcommittees, do not hesitate in reaching out to each committee's respective chair.

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Interested? Drop us a line at contact@riraonline.com or contact me at jeffrey.escobar@gmail.com with any questions or concerns. This year's programming promises to be an exciting one, and we look forward to hearing from you.

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1:00 Jewelry Making

Tuesday
9:30 Forever Young (Fitness)
10:30 RIO Shopping Bus
11:30 Blood Pressure Screenings
1:00 Paint & Sculpt
(last day: Jan 10)
1:00 Ping Pong

Wednesday
9:30 Seated Yoga
10:30 Stretch & Tone
10:30 RIO Shopping Bus
1:00 Art Workshop
1:00 Bridge
1:30 Scrabble

Thursday
9:15 Bollywood Dance Fitness
(no class Jan 19)
11:00 Basic Spanish
(no class Jan 19)
1:00 Knit & Crochet
1:00 Movie
(no class Jan 19)

Friday
9:30 Forever Young (Fitness)
10:00 Computers
1:00 Art Workshop
1:00 Korean Social
1:00 Computers
1:30 Seated Yoga & Dance

Special Events
MetroCard Van – Mon Jan 9,
11 am-12:30 pm; outside the Center.
Island Veteran's Meet & Greet –
Thurs Jan 12, 3 pm.
Nutrition Talk – Fri Jan 13, 11 am-
12 pm.
Happy MLK Jr. Day, Senior Center
Closed – Mon Jan 16.
Senior Law Day – Thurs Jan 19,
Meet & Greet with 19 organizations
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546 Main Street – Info & registration: 917-951-4137

Mondays
5:15 Meditation
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6:15 Tai Chi (\$5 flat fee)

Wednesdays
6:00 Zumba
(Free; members only)

Fridays
6:00 Game Night

Special Events
Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration
– Mon Jan 16; Refer to postings in
the Center

* Note: annual RISA membership \$15

Marlins, from page 1
his professional demeanor has clearly
proven we are moving in the right
direction. Coach Roman will be instru-
mental in helping the Board achieve
a much needed period of stability in
2017 with all of us working together
with great persistence towards our
common goals – raising athletes who
are successful in and outside the pool.”

Coaching Style

Sludnov grew up in Omsk, Russia,
not far from the border with Kazakhstan.

His mother started training him when he
was four years old and he started com-
peting professionally at 14.

As a child, the four-time Olympian
says he did not have a choice as to
whether he would swim. “It was decided
from the beginning that I will be a swim-
mer,” he says. “I spent most of my time
in the pool and didn’t have a chance to
play tennis or ice hockey, even though
we had a hockey team in the city.” Slud-
nov does not bring that same point of
view to his own coaching.

Instead, Sludnov coaches
with a holistic mindset. He
says that meeting the in-
dividual needs and goals
of the swim team mem-
bers is his priority rather
than pressing them to be
Olympians despite them-
selves. He sees his role not
only in coaching the kids
in swimming and compet-
ing, but as an educator who
is responsible for teaching
them to overcome their



The Roosevelt Island Marlins swim team.

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Please see page 3 for other advertising deadlines

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Winning

However, as he matured, Sludnov
says he has learned that there is more to
competition than winning. Of his cur-
rent attitude, he says, “you approach
the problem from a different perspec-
tive and when I went to other Olympic
games I managed to enjoy it. Even
though I was just qualifying for finals,
I still had a positive experience.” It is
this positive experience and attitude
that he aspires to bring to the Roosevelt
Island Marlins swim team.

“As a coach, I want to breed an
environment where every swimmer
has the opportunity to set a goal and
accomplish it”, Sludnov says. “As a
swimmer I would have liked to have
that environment.”

challenges outside the pool as well.
“I have become a strong believer that
you have to develop the personality
in many different ways, not just as
an athlete; you have to have a college
degree; you have to learn how to be a
leader outside the pool. Not everyone
is interested in being an Olympian, but
I am sure every kid can set a challeng-
ing goal and raise confidence through
accomplishing it.”

As a swimmer, Sludnov says that
losing has been the most difficult chal-
lenge of his professional career. “It's
like some mental death,” he explains,
“In the beginning, in Sydney, I won the
bronze medal and I wanted the gold.
[Not winning gold] was a very difficult
experience for me at that time.”

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