

FMTA

Fresh Meadows Tenants Association

Since 1973!

PO Box 650122, Fresh Meadows, NY 11365-0122

QueensFMTA.org

Hello Fresh Meadows Residents

**You have two (2)
important things to do, very soon!**

**1. Vote on Election Day,
Tuesday, November 4, 2014.**

and

**2. Come to the General Meeting of the
Fresh Meadows Tenants Association,
on Thursday, November 6, 7:30 P.M.,
in the P.S. 26Q auditorium,
195-02 69th Avenue.**

**We have important issues to discuss
and surprise guest speakers.**

Fresh Meadows and the Tenants Association

The Fresh Meadows development was built starting in 1947, primarily to provide housing for returning war veterans. Originally owned by the New York Life Insurance Company, Fresh Meadows was sold to realtor Harry Helmsley in 1972. As a result of questionable actions by Helmsley, the Fresh Meadows Tenants Association (FMTA) was formed in 1973 and a complaint was filed for loss of maintenance services with the NYC Conciliation and Appeals Board (CAB), a predecessor to the NYS Homes and Community Renewal Agency (NYSHCR.org). Hearing rumors that Helmsley wanted to build on open spaces the FMTA applied to the City Planning Commission for rezoning. In 1974, rezoning was approved and the Fresh Meadows development became part of a Special Planned Community Preservation District. (This district also includes the Klein Farm, located on 73rd Avenue at 195th Street, home to an early education center.)

Between 1975 and 1982, the FMTA was able to show in court that Helmsley had diminished services to tenants, and the landlord's attempt to obtain a "hardship" increase of 24.56% was denied. Another legal action resulted in the establishment of an escrow account, to be jointly controlled by the landlord and the FMTA, for improvements to Fresh Meadows. In the next 12 years, the FMTA was involved in many other actions protecting tenants' rights, which are all described in "The Saga of Fresh Meadows." Write our PO Box, enclosing a stamped self-addressed envelope, for a copy.

Last year, the FMTA worked with City Council Member Mark Weprin to obtain an \$85,000 security camera system for the Fresh Meadows branch of the Queens Library. We also worked with State Senator Tony Avella, who was able to secure a \$200,000 federal grant to obtain a new sound system and install air conditioning for the P.S. 26Q auditorium. We have a working relationship with the Fresh Meadows Homeowners Civic Association, with whom we share many neighborhood quality-of-life concerns, and are affiliated with several other Queens and NYC tenants and civic groups.

As we have done from the inception of the FMTA, we assist members who contact us with individual problems. We want to continue all these things, but WE NEED YOU! We need innovative ideas and solutions. We need help in distributing our newsletter. We need expertise in all areas.

And we need your \$12 per year dues to continue operation. Dues are our only source of income and defray the cost for our newsletters and website, post office box, and meeting expenses. (Executive Board members are also volunteers who donate their time and professional skills.)

Please become a member-in-good standing of the FMTA by completing the form below. Bring the form and your \$12 dues to our next meeting or mail both to the FMTA, PO Box 650122, Fresh Meadows NY 11365-0122. When completing the form, we invite you to volunteer, too, by circling the areas in which you can assist.

Name(s) _____

Street address _____ Apt _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

_____ I have enclosed \$12 dues for the year ending August 31, 2015.

_____ Please contact me. I would like to volunteer for: Newsletter writing, newsletter translation, newsletter distribution, website management, construction or maintenance expertise, legal expertise.

The Committee for the Preservation of Fresh Meadows, Inc., also known as the FMTA, is a non-profit, social welfare organization, granted 501(c)(4) tax-exempt status by the IRS. FMTA dues are not tax deductible.

Bits and Pieces

Rent Stabilization Increases

The NYC Rent Guidelines Board established the following increases on lease renewals for the year October 1, 2014 thru September 30, 2015: one year lease, 1%; two year lease, 2.75%. For the year October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014 the increases were: one year lease, 4%; two year lease, 7.75%.

Affordable Rent—Will It Still Be Here?

The New York State laws that govern rent-regulated housing will expire in June 2015. If these laws are not renewed:

- The NYC City Rent Guidelines Board would no longer set rent-increase guidelines every June and there would be no limitation on the dollar amount of rent increases.
- You would lose your automatic right to renew your lease.
- You would lose your automatic right to choose between a one or two year lease.
- Evictions could take place at the discretion of the landlord.
- The NYSHCR agency would no longer be empowered to handle tenant complaints.

VOTE – Tuesday, November 4

On the Federal level, we will be voting for our representative to the House. On the State level the election is for governor, attorney general, comptroller, state senate, and state assembly member. Of the two State Senators that serve Fresh Meadows, Toby Stavisky has no opponent and Tony Avella has a Green Party opponent, Paul Gilman.

There are three referendums: revising State's redistricting procedure; permitting electronic distribution of State legislative bills; the Smart Schools Bond Act of 2014. More information on the referendums is at League of Women Voters New York State (lwvny.org).

Polls open citywide on Tuesday November 4, from 6 A.M. to 9 P.M. Fresh Meadows tenants vote at P.S. 26Q, 195-02 69th Ave.

Heating Season

Heat must be provided from October 1 thru May 31. If the outdoor temperature falls below 55 degrees between 6:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M., the temperature in your apartment must be at least 68 degrees. If the outdoor temperature falls below 40 degrees between 10:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M., the temperature must be at least 55 degrees. If you feel that your apartment is not receiving required heat, call Fresh Meadows. If no satisfaction, call 311.

Fresh Meadows Seniors Program (60+)

Christine Choi, Program Manager for Self-Help Community Services, Inc.; oversees a seniors program in the seniors center in the basement of 67-00 192nd St. The center is open weekdays from 8:30 A.M. to 4 P.M. For more information contact Rose Aniano at 718 454-6286. (Many new programs will be starting shortly.)

More Bits and Pieces

Speed Limits

On Friday, November 7, New York City streets will be 25 miles per hours unless posted. Some big streets will remain at 30 miles per hour. Other streets, particularly near schools, may have lower speed limits. Watch the posted signs! The new speed limits will be enforced by the NYPD and speed enforcement cameras. Speed limit violations are \$150 to \$600 each.

Speed Enforcement Cameras

As you exit the eastbound Long Island Expressway for Francis Lewis Boulevard, you will now encounter a speed camera on the service road, less than 150 feet from the exit. Be sure to slow down! The fine is \$50. Apparently the cameras allow a leeway of 10 mph over the speed limit (posted or not). Other area cameras include Union Turnpike, near the Padavan School campus, and Hillside Avenue, near Martin Van Buren H.S.

Free Immigration Services

Immigration Service Services are being provided at the Community Board 8 Office, 197-15 Hillside Avenue, on the 2nd and 3rd Fridays starting in November & December. These services are being funded by City Council Member Mark Weprin and facilitated by CUNY Citizenship Now. Please call ahead for an appointment at 718-264-7895.

Air Conditioners

For those who do not pay for their electricity, such as SCRIE or DRIE tenants that qualify, an air conditioner fee was included on the May rent statement. For air conditioners installed between October 1, 1985, and September 30, 2015, this year's fee \$439.52 per annum (\$36.63 per month). The fee for the year ending September 30, 2014 was \$334.70 per annum (\$27.89 per month). For those with air conditioners that were installed before October 1, 1985, the air conditioner fee increase is pegged to your lease renewal increase.

The "Holy Cow!" Playground

The "*Holy Cow!*" Playground, located on the east side of Peck Avenue, south of P.S. 179Q has closed to undergo a major renovation. The park should reopen in Spring 2015.

107th Precinct

We have a new commanding officer, Captain Paul Valegra. The next monthly meeting of the 107th Precinct Community Council is November 25 at 8:00 P.M. All are welcome.

Daylight Savings Time Ends

Set your clocks back on Sunday, November 2, at 2:00 AM to Eastern Standard Time.