



Murray Hill

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Information that may be of interest...

December 14, 2020

This information is provided by The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association. We are sharing it as a service to our members. If this notice does not interest you, please disregard it.

You can also find these weekly newsletters online in PDF (printable) format at www.murrayhillnyc.org in the News section, look for Weekly Eblasts 2020.

Please share this email with a friend, neighbor or colleague. You can sign up for these emails at www.murrayhillnyc.org, scroll down the Also Happening column.

Happy Hanukkah!

This year the Murray Hill Menorah on Park Avenue is at 34th Street. The installation of the Menorah is sponsored by Chabad Midtown and organized by The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association Patrons of Park Avenue (POPA).

Notice our new branding!

The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association is rebranding its logo and the appearance of our communications to improve our presence in digital media. The new branding was created by MHNA Trustee, Adam Padilla. Adam is the founder of BrandFire, a creative agency located just

across town at 555 8th Avenue (between 37th & 38th Street), Suite 1802, New York, NY 10018, 212-378-4235, brandfire.com, info@brandfire.com. Thank you Adam!

The MHNA is seeking a social media volunteer

The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association is seeking a computer and social media savvy volunteer to:

- Create timely social media content that advances the profile of the MHNA on social media channels
- Learn about the overall mission and programs of the MHNA and implement social media to support the MHNA
- Collaborate and brainstorm ideas with MHNA Board members and partners for social media and other relevant communication channels

We are also open to ideas for new posts or features as suggested by our volunteers. This work can be done remotely, and is estimated to take approximately 2 hours per week. If interested, please contact info@murrayhillnyc.org.

Learn more about the MHNA's social media at [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Celebrating 60 Years of The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association—Better Together!

Tell us your story! We are putting together the *Murray Hill Diary*, a place to share your Murray Hill-related stories, memories and surprising encounters that charm, surprise, and stimulate. We plan to publish your stories on a regular basis.

Send your stories to murrayhilldiary@murrayhillnyc.org. Please include when and where the incident occurred. We will not share your full name, and we will not edit your story except for spelling and punctuation. We will contact you if your story is being considered for publication.

You may send more than one story. We want to hear from you!

The *Murray Hill Diary* project is organized by The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association Preservation & Design Committee.

Holiday lights on Park Avenue



Pershing Square



Murray Hill neighbors and Councilwoman Carlina Rivera turned out for the Tree lighting on Park Avenue on December 6. This event was sponsored by The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association Patrons of Park Avenue (POPA), who also take care of the landscaping and maintenance of the Murray Hill malls on Park Avenue.



This year the Menorah on Park Avenue is at 34th Street, sponsored by Chabad Midtown and organized by The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association Patrons of Park Avenue (POPA).

For artists

Stonehenge NYC has opened applications for [Still Standing Artist Residencies](#), an initiative they've begun in response to the pandemic, which provides free housing to 20 creative artists for one year. Applications close on January 10, 2021-- submission and residency details can be found on the [Stonehenge NYC website](#). Recipients will live rent-free in a Stonehenge one-bedroom apartment, in exchange for commissions of their work, beginning in March 2021.

Open Culture Program

The New York City Council approved the creation of an [Open Culture Program](#) for the use of designated City streets for artistic and cultural events from March 1 to October 31. This bill would require the City to create an “Open Culture” program that would allow eligible art and cultural institutions or cultural venues to use approved open space for artistic or cultural events. The Mayor’s Office of Citywide Event Coordination and Management (CECM), in consultation with the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Department of Buildings (DOB), the Police Department (NYPD), the Fire Department (NYFD), and any other agency designated by the Mayor, would establish the program by March 1, 2021. There would be an application fee of \$20 for participation in the program and the DOT would be required to share a list of eligible open spaces by February 1, 2021. The program would remain in effect until October 31, 2021, with the possibility of extension, but it would expire by March 31, 2022.

NYC’s reopening

Due to the rising rate of Covid-19 infections and hospitalizations in NYC, Gov. Cuomo announced that **indoor dining will be paused**, starting on Monday, December 14. The spread of the virus is increasing rapidly throughout the city, state and country. “Living room spread” (in-home social gatherings) is a major cause of the spread of the virus. We are advised not to travel, and to avoid indoor gatherings with people who are not in our household. People in the high-risk categories are advised to stay at home and go out only for essential errands.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the vaccine from Pfizer and BioNTech for people age 16 and older, and New York’s independent COVID-19 Clinical Advisory Task Force unanimously approved the FDA vaccine panel’s decision to recommend the Pfizer vaccine. Pfizer and BioNTech did not take government money for research and development, but they did receive a \$1.95 billion contract for 100 million doses, about 25 million of which will be delivered this year. Distribution will begin soon in NYC. The vaccine, which requires 2 doses, was 95 percent effective at preventing disease in a clinical trial with tens of thousands of participants. The CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has recommended that health-care workers and nursing home residents be first in line for the vaccine, but states ultimately will have the final say on which groups get priority. The duration of the immunity after taking the vaccine is not known.

Related article: [FDA authorizes the first coronavirus vaccine, a rare moment of hope in the deadly pandemic](#)

December 12, 2020, *washingtonpost.com*, by Laurie McGinley, Carolyn Y. Johnson and Josh Dawsey

As Chair of the Committee on Hospitals, NYC Councilwoman Carlina Rivera will closely monitor plans for vaccine distribution and provide updates when available. If you have any specific questions about the COVID-19 vaccine, please reach out to our office at district2@council.nyc.gov.

New York City is in Phase 4 of the coronavirus reopening.

December 11, 2020, Gov. Cuomo announced **new metrics by which micro-cluster focus zones will be determined** to help control COVID-19 spread and protect hospital capacity. [Learn more](#).

[Travel restrictions](#).

See murrayhillnyc.org for additional COVID-19 information, including

[Reopening](#)

[Neighborhood houses of worship, museums, educational and cultural institutions](#)

[Neighborhood restaurants, food & spirits that are open for delivery & pickup](#)

[Neighborhood retail, health care \(including pets\) & services that are open](#)

and more.

[Safe protocols for the holidays](#).

In Murray Hill the rate of positive covid-19 infections has been increasing rapidly. The data below is as of December 9.

The screenshot shows a web interface for the NYC Department of Health COVID-19 tracker. At the top, there are three tabs: 'Map', 'Table' (which is selected), and 'By borough'. Below the tabs is a search bar containing '10016'. The main content is a table with the following columns: ZIP, Neighborhood, 7-day percent positive, New people positive, Median daily test rate (per 100,000), Adequate testing sample?, and Date range. The data row for ZIP 10016 shows a 7-day percent positive of 3.62% (represented by a red square), 95 new people positive, a median daily test rate of 717 (represented by a green square), and 'Yes' for adequate testing sample. The date range is December 3-December 9. A link 'About the data for this table. Get the data.' is located at the bottom right of the table.

ZIP	Neighborhood	7-day percent positive	New people positive	Median daily test rate (per 100,000)	Adequate testing sample?	Date range
10016	Kips Bay/Murray Hill/NoMad	3.62%	95	717	Yes	December 3-December 9

The above data is from the NYC Department of Health website COVID-19 tracker

www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data.page

The view is the *7-day Percent Positive and Test Rate by ZIP code* (for Zip code 10016).

New York State COVID-19 tracker forward.ny.gov/percentage-positive-results-county-dashboard.

(opinion) Find Your Place in the Vaccine Line

December 3, 2020, *nytimes.com*, by Stuart A. Thompson, Illustrations by Jorge Colombo

Take the New York Times vaccine-line-estimator to see how many people are before you in line for the vaccine.

[Editor's note: I took it and these are my results: Based on your risk profile, we believe you're in line behind 118.5 million people across the United States. When it comes to New York, we think you're

behind 7.1 million others who are at higher risk in your state. And in New York County, you're behind 616,000 others.]

[HHS Chief Sees Vaccine for All Americans by Second Quarter](#)

December 6, 2020, *bloomberg.com*, by Susan Decker

All Americans who want to get a Covid-19 vaccine should be able to do so by the second quarter of next year, Health and Human Services Alex Azar said.

Governor Cuomo Announces [Winter Plan](#) to Combat COVID-19 Surge in New York State

Five Targeted Strategies to Manage and Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19:

1. Manage Hospital Capacity to Enhance and Equalize Care
2. Increase and Balance Testing Resources and Availability
3. Keep Schools Open Safely
4. Prevent Viral Spread from Small Gatherings
5. Operationalize an Equitable and Safe Vaccination Program

Learn more at coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home.

Gov. Cuomo directed the New York State Department of Health to implement a **"surge and flex"** protocol: all hospitals must expand their bed capacity by 25 percent to further prepare hospitals for a future COVID-19 surge. Hospitals had previously been preparing plans for this action as part of New York's Winter COVID Plan. Additionally, the Governor issued a call to all retired doctors and nurses urging them to return to service if they are able to do so. A registration will be renewed at no cost for an individual who completes the questionnaire through the volunteer portal, set up by the state Department of Health. Hospitals must maintain a 90-day supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). In addition, hospital systems that have many hospitals in the system should redirect patients to other hospitals if a hospital reaches capacity.

IMPORTANT: There is still no cure for COVID-19, and it will take months to administer the vaccine(s) to enough people to have herd immunity.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19:

-
- wear face coverings when you are with people who are not in the same household
 - maintain distance (6 feet between people who are not in the same household)
 - practice good hand hygiene
 - stay home if sick (and seek care if you feel seriously ill)

Gatherings are limited to 50 people. Religious gatherings are limited to 50% of capacity. Private gatherings are not recommended, and are limited to 10 people.

The CDC advises that holiday travel and gatherings will be high risk for some people [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html).

All New Yorkers can get tested for coronavirus.

Sites run by New York State are free coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you. You can also check with your doctor, pharmacies and walk-in urgent care to find out if they do testing and if there will be charges. NYC testing sites: www1.nyc.gov/site/coronavirus/get-tested/covid-19-testing.page.

For Murray Hill/Kips Bay

Bellevue, no appointment necessary, but there may be long lines. Be sure that they set up your patient portal so that you can get your results. Test results usually come back in 1-2 days. If you don't get your results timely, call and ask to speak with a clinician; they can check your file.

Kudos!

Wattle Cafe has moved to 519 3rd Avenue (between 34th & 35th Street), 646-918-7042. wattlecafe.com. Wattle is your local cafe, serving up Australian vibes. Their mission is to make healthy food accessible. The food at Wattle is innovative and unique.

Traffic, streets & transportation

[Source: Keith Powers's email November News, November 23, 2020]

Fixing the Sinkhole on the FDR Service Road

Several weeks ago, a sinkhole opened up on the FDR Drive Service Road just north of Waterside Plaza. While the area has now been secured, closures in the area near the sinkhole have disrupted traffic patterns in the area, including M34A bus service to Waterside Plaza. City and state agencies recently concluded their investigation of the problem and determined that the sinkhole resulted from a gap in

the area underneath the roadway that had allowed water to wash out the soils securing that portion of the service road. The New York State Department of Transportation, which will be conducting the repairs to fix the problem, has obtained the required permits for repairs and is expected to begin work next week. The work is expected to take 2-3 weeks to complete. [Keith Powers's] office will continue to be in close touch with city and state agencies and local stakeholders to ensure a smooth repair process.

For businesses and nonprofits

NYC Dept. of Sanitation has released [snow guidelines for Open Restaurants](#).

How businesses and organizations can help. Businesses and organizations can donate extra food and supplies to local organizations that can then redistribute them. Details about eligible donors and recipients can be found online: For food donations visit nyc.gov/donatefood; for non-food donations, visit nyc.gov/donate.

The City is urging that employees with any exposure to the public **get tested monthly**.

The **commercial eviction/foreclosure moratorium** is now extended through January 1, 2021.

New York Forward Small Business Lease Assistance Partnership. Recognizing the economic impact of COVID-19, this program will provide small businesses and their landlords with informational resources and pro bono assistance to help both parties reach mutually-beneficial lease workout agreements. This service is available to all New York State small businesses and landlords, and participation is voluntary. Over the next year, the partnership has the capacity to serve thousands of small businesses statewide. governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-launch-new-york-forward-small-business-lease-assistance-partnership

Tax Credit and Filing Assistance for Small Businesses

covid-sb.org/resource/tax-credit-assistance. America's Small Business DC (SBDC) in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration can help you learn about Tax Credit and Filing Assistance. Get free up-to-date information on COVID-19 tax and filing requirements and benefits. For assistance, connect with a local business advisor or mentor covid-sb.org/local-assistance.

PPP Loan Forgiveness

The Small Business Administration (SBA) reminds businesses that if you received a Paycheck Protection Program loan, you may be eligible for loan forgiveness. Here are four steps to apply for loan forgiveness.

1. Contact your lender and complete the correct form
2. Compile documentation
3. Submit the forgiveness form and documentation to your lender
4. Communicate with your lender throughout the process

Learn more about loan forgiveness sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/paycheck-protection-program#section-header-5

Job opportunities, volunteering and internships

Apply to join your Community Board, the most grassroots form of local government. The Boards are pivotal in shaping their communities and work to enhance and preserve the character of the city's many unique neighborhoods. **Applications close Monday, February 1, 2021.** Application form manhattancommunityboards.wufoo.com/forms/w881xp40o7uf2h.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is still hiring temporary employees to assist with disaster relief efforts during these unprecedented times.

The positions include:

- Call Center Customer Service Representative
- Document Preparation/Legal Review/Loan Closings
- Loan Processing/Credit Analysis/Mortgage Underwriting
- Program Support

Apply today at sba.gov/page/disaster-response-jobs-sba.

Food assistance

Clients who receive **GetFoodNYC home delivery meals** can now re-enroll on the day before their last delivery day to help prevent a gap in deliveries. In the urgent scenario where a client has no food, the GetFood team can arrange a triage delivery—contact seniorfood@dsny.nyc.gov.

Upcoming events

December 14 11am

Webinar: View from the Veranda with Mario Nievera and Keith Williams

Join Steele Marcoux, Veranda Magazine editor in chief, for a lively conversation with Keith Williams and Mario Nievera of leading landscape architectural firm Nievera Williams. Together they will discuss what outdoor living means today, how open-air spaces can be used for gathering or as a much-needed escape, and what lies ahead for the future of landscape and garden design. The “View from the Veranda” series is presented in partnership with The New York Design Center, Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, and The Horticultural Society of New York. Register at us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/1016070974203/WN_T-FCZVOjTrutqhmET5HG-g.

December 15 11am–12:30pm

[Bryant Park Annual Meeting](#)

At the annual meeting of the Board of Directors and Members of the Bryant Park Corporation and Bryant Park Management Corporation participants will have the opportunity to join virtually via video conference or in person, depending on capacity. The meeting is open to the public but if you plan to attend, please RSVP by emailing Max Wycisk at mwycisk@urbanmgt.com and indicate whether you would like to attend virtually or in-person. At the meeting, Bryant Park staff will review accomplishments from 2020, discuss plans for 2021, review financial information, and the Boards will elect new directors and officers. Did you know that membership in Bryant Park Management Corporation entitles you to vote at our annual meetings? It also ensures that you automatically receive their newsletter and other important information about the District. Property owners, businesses, and residents around Bryant Park are invited to become members and work with the Bryant Park Corporation to keep the neighborhood safe, clean, and beautiful. Email mwycisk@urbanmgt.com for a Membership Registration form.

December 15 1-2:30pm

The Office of Nightlife will host a Town Hall for Hospitality Workers

Representatives from the NYC Department of Health, Test & Trace Corps, Department of Consumer and Worker Protection, Street Activity Permit Office and the Freelancers Union will discuss the latest COVID-19 health and safety information; gathering and performance regulations, labor law updates and City resources including support for food, employment, physical and mental health care, housing, unemployment insurance, rent mediation and other assistance services. Speakers: Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC), Member, Senate Committee on Banking, Housing & Urban Affairs, Rep. Suzan DelBene (D-WA), Co-chair, Women’s High-Tech Caucus, Fred Humphries, Corporate Vice President of U.S. Government Affairs, Microsoft Corporation, Amb. Ron Kirk, former U.S. Trade Representative, Janet Napolitano, former Secretary of Homeland Security; Board Member, Zoom, Jessica Rosenworcel, FCC Commissioner.

Register to Attend: <http://bit.ly/workertowncall>. Zoom link: zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dN1ohZH0R9j1t5UomJ2bhQ

December 15 6pm

Evan Osnos on Joe Biden, with Peter Osnos & Kai Bird

This event is hosted by The Leon Levy Center for Biography. President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. has been called both the luckiest man and the unluckiest. His trials have forged in him a deep empathy for others in hardship—an essential quality as he leads America toward recovery and renewal. Blending up-close journalism and broader context, Evan Osnos, winner of the National Book Award in 2014, draws on nearly a decade of reporting for *The New Yorker* to capture the characters and meaning of 2020's extraordinary presidential election. Peter Osnos began his journalism career in 1965 as an editorial assistant to investigative journalist I. F. Stone. From 1966 to 1984, Osnos worked for *The Washington Post*. Osnos was a regular commentator for National Public Radio's "Morning Edition" and co-host of "Communiqué." In 1984, he joined Random House, where he worked until 1996. In 1997, he founded PublicAffairs. He served as Publisher and CEO until 2005 and is currently the consulting editor and founder. Kai Bird, Executive Director of the Leon Levy Center for Biography, co-authored with Martin J. Sherwin the Pulitzer Prize-winning biography *American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer* (Knopf, 2005). His biography of President Jimmy Carter, *The Outlier: the Unfinished Presidency of Jimmy Carter*, will be published on May 11, 2021 by Crown Books. Register at crowdcast.io/e/evan-osnos-on-joe-biden/register

December 15 6:30pm

Virtual panel: Effects of COVID on Senior Mental Health

Hosted by Community Board 8 (covering the Upper East Side and Roosevelt Island) and Community Board 11 (covering East Harlem). Register at

docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdR14gNohm7W3fArORcMxVE0wk_GizeOZo4BSLfpBtITLercA/viewform

December 15 7pm

Webinar Introduction to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Packaging & Paper Products & What it Means for New York City

Presented by the [Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board](#). Access the Zoom us02web.zoom.us/j/83700865977 (passcode 544429).

Available for viewing until December 15 5pm

***Somi's in the absence of things* (Work-in-Progress)**

FREE. BAC offers a first look at this work-in-progress experimental short film featuring U.S.-based Rwandan singer-songwriter Somi Kakoma and music from her new live album *Holy Room*, which was just nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Jazz Vocal Album. This film is co-presented by the Baryshnikov Arts Center (BAC), Krannert Center, and ArtsEmerson, in partnership with National Black Theatre and Salon Africana. Watch at bacnyc.org/performances/performance/somi_2020. The Baryshnikov Arts Center (BAC) is located at 450 West 37th Street, 646-731-3200, info@bacnyc.org.

The New York Public Library's Virtual Holiday Open House is now live!

nypl.org/125/holiday-open-house-2020 Explore activities for children, adults, music, crafts, baking, mixology, performing arts, literature, shopping online, puzzles, photo archive, story telling, puppet show, 2020 book list and more.

December 16 1pm

Webinar: Covid-19, Tech & Economic Resilience

While the past few months have gut-punched the U.S. economy, we have also witnessed a wave of innovation. Digital technology has been embraced at a staggering rate--from telehealth to automation to new data-sharing and video communications platforms. As a new administration prepares to take charge, which technology shifts are here to stay? How can policymaking keep pace to ensure the American economy retains its competitive edge? In the first of three virtual events, The Hill will convene leaders in tech policy for a conversation about the role of technology in re-energizing the American economy. Learn more at techpolicyandresilience.splashthat.com.

December 17 5-6pm

Webinar: Low Back Rehab / Core Strengthening

Presented by SPEAR Physical Therapy. Learn about rehabilitation for your lower back and strengthening your core muscles in this informational online webinar! SPEAR Physical Therapists Kyle Veltre, PT, DPT, and Jeff Smith, PT, DPT host this webinar to provide your expert insight, and demonstrate some exercises you can do at home! Register at eventbrite.com/e/low-back-rehab-core-strengthening-online-webinar-tickets-129564044545.

December 17 8:30am

Manhattan Borough Board's monthly convening of the Borough President and all of Manhattan's Council Members and Community Board Chairs

Register at zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Ykk6u6k3RFC40-4on2Ny7Q. They will vote on two land-use items, including: The NYC Dept. of City Planning is seeking to update and make permanent the temporary 2013 Flood Resilience Zoning Text Amendment, which would promote long-term resilient design across the city's floodplains; allow buildings to adopt resiliency strategies; and provide the zoning tools to facilitate recovery after future floods. Learn more at zap.planning.nyc.gov/projects/P2017Y0045.



Recorded events

Housing Court Answers has held a variety of online webinars on topics related to housing rights and assistance during the pandemic. Go to their events website to browse and view the webinars: housingcourtanswers.org/events

Danish Woven Hearts: Nordic Holiday Craft Workshop

If you missed the online webinar, you can watch the Danish Woven Hearts Craft Workshop (flettet Julehjerte) on YouTube. The hearts can be used as Christmas Tree decorations, little baskets to hold candies, etc. youtube.com/watch?v=4o8WE3oi8Hc&feature. The printable instructions are at scandinaviahouse.org/app/uploads/2020/12/Childrens-Center-Nordic-Holiday-Craft-Instructions.pdf. This craft workshop is presented by Scandinavia House.

Kudos to Murray Hill public schools (partial listing)!

COVID-19 Report Card for [PS 116 Mary Lindley Murray](#). As of 12/11/2020, no cases were reported. Total On-site Students Enrolled + Teachers/Staff=305. Total Off-site Students Enrolled + Teachers/Staff=170.

COVID-19 Report Card for [The River School](#). As of 12/11/2020, no current cases and only one case reported since September 8. Total On-site Students Enrolled + Teachers/Staff=397. Total Off-site Students Enrolled + Teachers/Staff=106.

COVID-19 Report Card for [Murray Hill Academy](#). As of 12/11/2020, no cases were reported. Total On-site Students Enrolled + Teachers/Staff=30. Total Off-site Students Enrolled + Teachers/Staff=61.

Murray Hill in the news

[FDNY responds to reports of pedestrians struck during protest in Midtown, Manhattan](#)

December 12, 2020, abc7ny.com

MURRAY HILL, Manhattan (WABC) -- The accident happened [Friday, December 11] at the intersection of 3rd Avenue and East 39th Street just after 4 p.m. Between 40-50 protesters were in the area at the time of the accident. The demonstration had spilled out onto the street and protesters surrounded a car. The car drove into the protesters, injuring at least seven people. Their injuries are not considered serious...This does not appear to be an intentional act, according to a police official. The driver of the car was already at the intersection when protesters surrounded her car and it appears she may have accelerated out of fear. Several protesters were detained. The demonstration was in solidarity with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainees being held in a Bergen County jail.

Related article: [Driver charged with plowing through protesters in Manhattan ICE demonstration](#)

December 12, 2020, *nydailynews.com*, by Thomas Tracy

Reasons We've Loved New York [A send-off to the many places, big and small, that closed in 2020.](#)

December 7, 2020, *New York*, by The Editors, Introduction by Carl Swanson

This article was featured in One Great Story, *New York's* reading recommendation newsletter.

[Editor's note: Thanks to Laurie Sexton for bringing this article to our attention. Some of the places in Murray Hill and nearby that have closed: Lord & Taylor (1826), The Roosevelt Hotel (1924), Nat Sherman Townhouse (on 42nd Street) (1930), Clover Delicatessen (1948), Scotty's Diner (1990), Modern Pinball (2013), Hendriks (2013).]

Census

[House of Representatives Examines Census Data Anomalies and Risks to Accurate State Numbers](#)

December 7, 2020, *gothamgazette.com*, by Lauren Hakimi

The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Reform met on Thursday to discuss data-processing errors that will make it impossible for the U.S. Census Bureau to deliver accurate state population totals by the statutory deadline of December 31. Those numbers are then essential to reapportionment efforts as the Census dictates how many seats each state has in the House and are used for redistricting efforts within each state. During the hearing chaired by **Rep. Carolyn Maloney**, a Democrat representing New York's 12th Congressional District, members of Congress and expert witnesses testified to challenges they have faced in trying to obtain important documents about the Census data from the U.S. Department of Commerce. Documents obtained by the oversight committee and reporting by the New York Times indicate that the Census Bureau needs until late January or early February to complete accurate calculations...If the Bureau does not deliver the data before President-elect Joe Biden enters office on January 20, the Trump administration won't be able

to leave undocumented immigrants from the numbers it delivers to states as Trump has ordered...Oversight committee ranking member Rep. James Comer of Kentucky and other Republicans denied that the data-processing errors were significant and...called the attempt to obtain information about Census data-processing efforts part of “Democrats' conspiracy theories.”

Elections & voting

The NYC Board of Elections November 3 Certified General Election results

vote.nyc/page/election-results-summary

Embattled Board of Elections Counts on Quickly Finding Firm to Handle Ranked-Choice Voting

December 2, 2020, *thecity.nyc*, by Reuven Blau

The city's Board of Elections is looking for a company to provide software for the new ranked-choice voting system amid calls from some officials to delay the ballot changeup beyond this year's crucial mayoral election. The board issued a request for proposals Nov. 16 to find a firm with the digital know-how to tabulate votes after New Yorkers rank candidates in order of preference on their ballots. Interested companies must respond by Monday [December 7]. The deadline comes less than two months before the new system is scheduled to be used in a special election [on February 2] for a Queens City Council seat — and follows widespread criticism of the board's poor handling of mail-in ballots during the pandemic...The City Council's committee on Governmental Operations has scheduled a hearing on the topic for Dec. 11.

Schools, children & youth programs

The NYC Department of Education announced that applications opened Thursday (12/10) for children applying for a kindergarten seat next fall; the deadline to submit applications is January 19, 2021. Parents should check the [DOE website](#) for further information and sign up for update emails at schools.nyc.gov/sign-up.

There's still no word on middle and high schools admissions deadlines, and also no updates on the specialized high school admissions tests, which were originally scheduled for October 21.

Housing, homelessness & affordability

[New York City Housing Authority \(NYCHA\), Affordable Housing Groups, And Private Developers Forge \\$271M Deal To Upgrade Public Housing Throughout Manhattan](#)

December 5, 2020, newyorkyimby.com, by Sebastian Morris

NYCHA has revealed plans to renovate and repair its aging portfolio of affordable housing properties in a deal valued at \$271 million. Referred to as PACT, or Permanent Affordability Commitment Together, the consortium of public and private entities has committed to renovations on 16 individual buildings including 1,718 apartments throughout Manhattan...For all PACT transactions, the New York City Housing Development Corporation will oversee loan financing funded by taxable or tax-exempt bonds. The developments will also be included in the federal Rental Assistance Demonstration and convert to a more stable, federally funded program called Project-Based Section 8. Once the properties convert to Project-Based Section 8, NYCHA will lease the land and buildings to the development partners, who will make repairs and serve as the property manager. NYCHA will continue to own the land and buildings, administer the Section 8 subsidy and waitlist, and monitor conditions at the development. NYCHA will also ensure that the partners adhere to standards outlined in the RAD Roundtable Guiding Principles created with NYCHA residents and advocacy groups to preserve resident protections and guarantee permanent affordability...the full list of affected buildings and associated units includes: ...**344 East 28th Street – 225 apartments.**

Budget & taxes

[New York State is broke and desperately seeking tax revenues...]

Proposed New Pied-a-Terre Tax on NYC Homeowners

A new tax is under consideration by the New York State Legislature ([S.44-A/A.4540-A](#)) which would place an additional tax burden on owners of condominiums and shareholders of cooperatives who are part-time residents of New York City. This tax is likely to impact residential and commercial real estate values. Under this proposal, homes that are not used as a primary residence (referred to as a “pied-à-terre”) with an assessed value of \$300,000 or more would pay an additional tax surcharge at annual rate of between 10%-13.5% on the assessed value above \$300,000. This tax would be in addition to the increased mansion and transfer taxes that were adopted by the legislature last year. Unlike the transfer taxes, this would be a recurring annual homeowner’s tax. Recently, the NYC Homeowners Coalition was formed to fight this new tax. The coalition includes The Real Estate Board of New York, the Council of New York Cooperatives and Condominiums, labor organizations and real estate professionals. Through its website, [NYChomeowners.org](#), individuals can directly contact their State Senator and State Assembly member to share their concerns. This legislation was introduced by some of our local elected officials: Assembly members Gottfried, Epstein, Quart and Senators Hoylman, Kavanagh, Krueger.

Related article: [NYC’s biggest brokerages take on Albany](#)

December 4, 2020, *therealdeal.com*, by Erin Hudson

Douglas Elliman, the Corcoran Group and Brown Harris Stevens have formed the Coalition for Livable Neighborhoods, which will lobby lawmakers on legislation that would impact the selling and leasing of homes in the city. State Sen. Brad Hoylman's proposed pied-à-terre tax is chief among those issues...REBNY expressed support for the coalition...Last month, a separate organization called the NYC Homeowners Coalition launched. Its 600,000 members include REBNY, the New York State Building & Construction Trades Council, labor union 32BJ, the New York State Association of Realtors and the Council of New York Cooperatives & Condominiums...The New York Residential Agent Continuum, formed in 2018, also took the step of hiring its own lobbyist last year. (NYRAC is also a member of the NYC Homeowners Coalition.)

[Editor's note: If you want to weigh in on this issue you can contact the above representatives directly. Their contact information is at the bottom of this eblast.]

[NYC Drops Out Of Country's 10 Most Expensive ZIP Codes In 2020](#)

November 25, 2020, *patch.com*, by Anna Quinn

For the first time, no New York City ZIP code made it into the top 10 in Property Shark's annual study of the 100 priciest ZIP codes across the country [propertyshark.com/Real-Estate-Reports/most-expensive-zip-codes-in-the-us](https://www.propertyshark.com/Real-Estate-Reports/most-expensive-zip-codes-in-the-us), a sign that the city's real estate market felt the effects of the COVID-19 crisis "at a sharper degree" than others, according to the researchers. The drop was mainly due to two ZIP codes in TriBeCa that typically have some of the highest median home prices in the country...one ZIP coded covering Hell's Kitchen in Manhattan saw the largest price drop of any in the country.

[Editor's note: Murray Hill (zip code 10016) is not in the list of the top 100 expensive zip codes. Dropping real estate values are likely to have an impact on NYC's property assessments and property tax collections.]

[New York by the Numbers: Weekly Economic and Fiscal Outlook - No. 27](#)

December 7, 2020, by NYC Comptroller Scott M. Stringer

Table 1: Changes in New York City Employment, by Industry (the worst hit industries are shown below)

Industry	Pct. Change Feb-Oct.
Leisure and Hospitality	-44.7%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	-63.8%
Accommodation and Food Services	-40.1%

[Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer's testimony before the New York City Council in support of expanding funding for nonprofit service providers](#)

Since the pandemic, the City has relied on nonprofit service providers more than ever to deliver food to homebound seniors, host Learning Bridges sites for children, open socially distanced cooling centers and provide home care services, just to name some. Last week, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer testified before the City Council about how the City should expand, not rescind, its support of these organizations. The City has held back 40% (!) of the funding already promised to them under the Indirect Cost Rate Funding Initiative.

(opinion) [‘Hanging On’ is Not a Management Strategy](#)

December 2, 2020, *gothamgazette.com*, by Carol Kellermann & Norman Steisel

As required by the state Financial Control Act... Mayor de Blasio presented a modification of New York City’s current fiscal year budget and four-year financial plan...But this has been anything but a usual year, and a more urgent tone and more aggressive budget changes were called for and not delivered.

**Government, executive orders, legislation, rules, policies
(including pending)**

Walking While Trans law repealed

NYC Councilwoman Carlina Rivera's legislation calling on state lawmakers to repeal New York Penal Law Section 240.37, commonly known as the ‘Walking While Trans’ ban was passed by the Council on December 10, a key moment in the fight to end this decades-old law which has allowed police officers to arbitrarily single out and arrest trans New Yorkers under false pretenses of prostitution. In 2018, 91% of the people arrested under the statute were Black and Latinx, and 80% identified as women.

New York bans cancer-causing chemicals from food packaging

State Senator Brad Hoylman is proud to announce New York has banned the cancer-causing polyfluoroalkyl chemicals (PFAS) from food packaging like pizza boxes, with Governor Cuomo signing into law legislation (S.8817/A.4739-C) sponsored by Assembly Member Patricia Fahy and Sen. Hoylman.

(opinion) [Digesting a New Path Forward for Residential Composting in New York City](#)

December 1, 2020, *gothamgazette.com*, by Nancy Holt, Brandon McMurtry & Calder Orr

Advances in aerobic waste digester technology allow for small-scale machines that effectively break down organic waste using a proprietary blend of enzymes. Unlike composting, where material decays slowly under natural conditions, digestion occurs at a relatively rapid pace (24-48 hours) and low temperature (~95 °F). The process is also versatile – allowing the complete breakdown of all forms of commonly-discarded household organics, such as produce, meat, bones, fat, pet waste, yard waste, and compostable packaging/bags. Typical small-scale aerobic digesters (SADs) cost approximately \$150,000 per unit. They produce a nutrient-dense, soil-like material that is completely non-toxic – meaning that it is not subject to any regulatory controls. This output product can be used as an additive in building landscaping...Since the processed material is odorless and dehydrated, it can also be stored onsite...With additional equipment (approximately \$150,000), the high-energy content

material output can be used onsite to power a building's boiler. This can displace other building energy purchases such as fuel oil, natural gas, or electricity from the grid, while saving money in the process...Policy changes could provide new financial incentives to encourage the use of aerobic digesters in residential buildings. Some examples include tax credits for each ton of landfill waste avoided (including tipping fees, transport costs, truck wear and tear, etc.) and offsets related to avoided greenhouse gas emissions.

NYS Comptroller DiNapoli's Announcement to Transition the NYS Common Retirement Fund Portfolio to Net Zero Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 2040

Source: State Senator Liz Krueger's Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updates email of December 10, 2020 [State Senator Liz Krueger is] pleased and proud to share with you that years of ongoing discussion and working with State Comptroller DiNapoli have resulted in this truly historic plan, which goes beyond her Fossil Fuel Divestment Act, and more quickly. This is an important agreement that will benefit the Fund's bottom line, NYS retirees, and the future survival of our society. As the third largest pension fund in the U.S., this is yet another way that New York State will demonstrate leadership on climate action.

Reports

Pew Research Center survey

[Vaccines Herald Return to Offices, But Workers Don't Want to Go](#)

December 9, 2020, *bloomberg.com*, by Alexandre Tanzi

More than half of U.S. employees currently working from home say they'd like to keep their remote arrangements beyond the pandemic, according to a Pew Research Center survey released Wednesday...One-third of those surveyed said they want the option to telework at least sometimes...Most Americans won't have a choice. While almost two-thirds of workers holding a bachelor's degree or higher said their work can be done remotely, only 23% of those without that educational attainment can, according to Pew...Most who do have the choice -- especially those over 50 --said it's been easy for them to complete projects on time and stay motivated..."This persistent fear of proximity to others is likely to leave some residual demand for social distancing at workplaces and prop up demand for working from home in the coming years," the authors of the university paper wrote...Not all has been rosy for those fortunate to work remotely. Employees under 50 -- especially those with children -- reported being less able to stay motivated and on task. And almost a quarter of all workers surveyed by Pew said they're less satisfied with their jobs. One-third reported feeling less connected to their co-workers, and about one in five said they have diminished job security and opportunities for advancement.

Public service announcements

What You Can Do To Deter Package Theft



Utilizing a combination of the following tips can reduce the likelihood of thieves stealing your packages:

- ✓ Always track your shipment online.
- ✓ Choose a shipping option that requires a signature for delivery.
- ✓ Schedule packages to arrive when you are home or arrange to ship your packages to a location where a friend, relative, trusted neighbor, or building super can accept them on your behalf.
- ✓ Ship packages to your place of employment.
- ✓ Request the delivery service hold your package for pick-up at their facility.
- ✓ Utilize deliveries to retailer provided lockers or carrier provided alternate drop points where you can go to pick up your item.
- ✓ Utilize free services that track packages, redirect packages to convenient locations for pick-up, and request vacation holds.
- ✓ Some shipping companies utilize tracking services which can include features such as shipping status notifications and delivery scheduling. Check to see if these services are available in your area.

Where applicable, consider installing:

- ✓ Wi-Fi enabled cameras that provide alerts.
- ✓ Motion-sensor lighting.
- ✓ Package lock-boxes.

Report suspicious persons to the police.

NYPD Crime Prevention Division

Scams

There are an unprecedented number of coronavirus-related scams circulating.

Stay abreast of the latest Coronavirus-related scams by visiting the Federal Trade Commission's webpage [ftc.gov/coronavirus/scams](https://www.ftc.gov/coronavirus/scams). You can also subscribe to alerts.



Beware of Malicious COVID-19 Phishing

Protect yourself from identity theft and fraud during pandemic recovery.

Confirm any SBA disaster assistance emails by contacting **(800) 659-2955**, TTY **(800) 877-8339**, or **disastercustomerservice@sba.gov**.

Avoid scams and fraud, visit **sba.gov/COVIDfraudalert**

SBA U.S. Small Business Administration

[COVID-19 vaccines are in the pipeline. Scammers won't be far behind.](#)

December 8, 2020, *consumer.ftc.gov*, by Colleen Tressler, Division of Consumer and Business Education, FTC

The MHNA Discount Program

Please be prepared to show proof of membership when you ask for a discount. Full list of discounts at the links below.

[Restaurant and Food Discounts](#)

[General Discounts](#)

Our government representatives

When contacting your representative, be sure to state your address so that they know that you are a constituent. You can see the District maps and sign up for their emails on their websites.

Manhattan Community Board 5: www.cb5.org, 212-465-0907, office@cb5.org

Manhattan Community Board 6: cbsix.org, 212-319-3750, office@cbsix.org

NYC Councilwoman Carlina Rivera, Council District 2: council.nyc.gov/carlina-rivera, 212-677-1077, District2@council.nyc.gov

NYC Council Speaker, Corey Johnson, Council District 3: council.nyc.gov/district-3, 212-564-7757, SpeakerJohnson@council.nyc.gov

NYC Council Member Keith Powers, Council District 4: council.nyc.gov/keith-powers, 212-818-0580, KPowers@council.nyc.gov

Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer: manhattanbp.nyc.gov, 212-669-8300, info@manhattanbp.nyc.gov

Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, #GetHelp, The Office of the Public Advocate assists with complaints and inquiries involving government-related services and regulations. Telephone Hotline: 212-669-7250, email: GetHelp@advocate.nyc.gov

Mayor Bill de Blasio: www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor, 311, online message: <https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/mayor-contact.page>

Landmarks Preservation Commission: www1.nyc.gov/site/lpc/about/contact-us.page

NY State Senator Liz Krueger, 28th Senate District: nysenate.gov/senators/liz-krueger, 212-490-9535, lkrueger@nysenate.gov

NY State Senator Brad Hoylman, 27th Senate District: nysenate.gov/senators/brad-hoylman, 212-633-8052, hoylman@nysenate.gov

NY State Assembly Member Dan Quart, Assembly District 73, nyassembly.gov/mem/Dan-Quart, 212-605-0937, quartd@nyassembly.gov

NY State Assembly Member Harvey Epstein, Assembly District 74, nyassembly.gov/mem/Harvey-Epstein, 212-979-9696, epsteinh@nyassembly.gov

NY Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried, Assembly District 75, nyassembly.gov/mem/Richard-N-Gottfried, 212-807-7900, GottfriedR@nyassembly.gov

New York Assembly Upcoming Public hearings [And archived videos can also be accessed on this page.] nyassembly.gov/av/upcoming

New York Assembly Upcoming Public hearings calendar <https://www.nyassembly.gov/leg/?sh=hear>

Governor Andrew Cuomo, New York State, governor.ny.gov, contact page on website governor.ny.gov/content/governor-contact-form

U.S. Representative Carolyn Maloney, New York's 12th Congressional District: maloney.house.gov, 212-860-0606, website contact form: maloney.house.gov/contact-carolyn/email-me

U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer: schumer.senate.gov, 212-486-4430, website contact form: schumer.senate.gov/contact/email-chuck

U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand: gillibrand.senate.gov, 212-688-6262, website contact form: gillibrand.senate.gov/contact/email-me

U.S. President Donald Trump: whitehouse.gov/people/donald-j-trump website contact form: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact>

[Read our Privacy Statement](#)

**The MHNA
Better Together!**

If you are not a member
or your membership has lapsed
please [join/renew](#) now

Connect with The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association



And, don't forget to tag **@MHNAnc**
in your Murray Hill-inspired Instagram photos!

Visit the MHNA website murrayhillnyc.org
Contact the MHNA by email at info@murrayhillnyc.org