



**WE ARE PLEASED TO BRING YOU THIS, THE FIRST ISSUE OF THE NEW RIVERFRONT LOFTS NEWSLETTER,**

*a collection of newsworthy pieces compiled for the RFL community by the RFL community. We hope you enjoy it. Our plan is to produce the Riverfront Lofts newsletter once each quarter. If there is a topic you'd like to see covered or if you'd like to submit a piece for consideration please send those to [RiverfrontLoftsNewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:RiverfrontLoftsNewsletter@gmail.com)*

**P**RIDE IN PAWTUCKET is longstanding, thanks to many notable historical structures, but none more impressive against the sky at sunrise or sunset especially than the formidable tower of the Art Deco Pawtucket City Hall (1936) by Rhode Island architect John F. O'Malley that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is our prime and sustaining view of the eponymous Riverfront Lofts (RFL), the very origin of our renovated historic mill and the reason so many of us live here. The movements in and out of the tower by the peregrine falcons are a natural wonder. We may not have a livestreaming "peregrine falcon cam" as does nearby Providence and elsewhere in this country, thanks to the Audubon Society, but well we should. Instead, live fans of the birds nesting in the City Hall Tower abound at RFL, where the birds have also visited marveling owners on their decks just across the river from the site.

Then "City Hall tower will be replaced in major project" emerged as the 5/11/21 lead story in *The Valley Breeze* weekly newspaper, which announced an imminent "top-to-bottom reconstruction of the downtown's centerpiece architecture now in the works." To paraphrase Editor Ethan Shorey, a "facelift" was determined to be insufficient to present concerns, with the city having decided on a "full removal and replacement of the tower façade" to mitigate a long-term problem of water infiltration. Structural analysis by Robinson Green Beretta Corporation in 2012 explains the building is steel frame encased in concrete, with solid masonry exterior walls, cinderblock interior walls, and pre-cast roof panels. The Deco tower

## TOWER TALK



*Pawtucket, from "petuket" meaning waterfall in the Narragansett language, is one of only two Rhode Island cities to keep its native place name since its settlement. [...]*

*A tree grows, but cities are built. From about 1840 to 1940, block by block, brick by brick, the buildings in downtown Pawtucket were drawn by architects, calculated by engineers, financed by industrialists, and built by armies of carpenters, stonemasons, bricklayers, plasterers, electricians, plumbers, metalworkers, glassmakers, roofer, and more...*

—Pawtucket, RI Walking Tour  
Blackstone River Valley brochure, 2012

by JUDITH TOLNICK CHAMPA

extends 100 feet beyond the City Hall roof, and is carved with reliefs at the top.

The tower replacement backstory is partially reviewed in the *Breeze* thusly: A bond issue had narrowly passed with voters in 2016 to repair the tower rather than dismantle it entirely, a solution to dismantling urged by protest of the Preservation Society of Pawtucket. This 2016 plan came after a 2005-06 rehabilitation project had failed. This work sixteen years ago was based on a 2004 approved bond. The repair guarantee was for only a single year, at the eventual cost of \$4.5 million. For many years the nearly 200 foot tall tower had been sporadically repaired, until calls for its rebuilding are currently estimated at \$5. million, the amount formerly approved by the bond of 2016, with the leveraging of possible federal stimulus funds on top.

In recent years the RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission, the Pawtucket Preservation Society, Old Slater Mill Association and various city commissions have been vocal opponents to the tower's removal, in the face of past city proposals advocating for just that.

Maintaining the original fabric and architectural design of the most distinctive and marvelous architectural feature of Pawtucket City Hall during any renovation — without significant altering — should be a mandatory cultural and quality of life cause motivating and uniting all RFL residents.

# ANATOMY OF THE RFL EXECUTIVE BOARD

by IRENE LOZACH

**A** FEW MONTHS AFTER MOVING IN, once everything has begun to fall into place, you may find yourself wondering who are the people that help this building run? They are called the Executive Board!

Having lived in New York City Co-ops I understood the value of an elected representative Board in making big building wide decisions and tending to the interests of the community. I'd also scanned the Riverfront Lofts bylaws so I had confidence that the well-maintained building I'd bought into had a good Board in place. But I did not know who was on our Board, the structure of the Board or how we elect its members.

So, I did some digging and this is what I found: Our Board has 7 members; 4 officers and 3 contributing members. Each elected term lasts 3 years, and a successor term (when someone is appointed by the board to fill a vacated term) runs until the next election. Terms expire on a staggered basis across three years with 2 terms coming up this year and 3 and 2 terms expiring each of the next two years. Board elections are held at the annual meeting on the **last Tuesday of October** and if you would like to run for a position on the RFL Executive Board you can submit your name to the Board Secretary (Mary Ruby #401) at least 45 days prior to the annual meeting. For 2021 that would be by **September 10**.

A good way to test the waters and see if maybe you would like to run is to attend the meetings of our Executive Board on the first Monday of each month. Our Board President, Bobbi Binder, runs an efficient meeting a skill honed during her years in Rhode Island state government in roles including Chief of Staff to State General Treasurer, Nancy Mayer and Commissioner then Chairwoman of the State Ethics Commission.

As a rule, Board meetings don't enjoy a reputation for high entertainment value, and in the most recent meeting 25 agenda items were covered, done and dusted in about an hour and a half. It's clear that our RFL Officers put effort into

presenting well prepared and brief contributions each month. Even Linda Cohen's Treasurer's report is lightened by her uniquely poetic style of delivering the numbers.



Sadly, the attendance scale for these meetings is tilted to the side of Board Members as few RFL owners logged on. I logged on for the May meeting (only my third over my two years here) to write this piece. The other two being to present the scope of my renovation prior to moving in, and again for the well-attended December 2020 budget meeting. I came away this time, though, with the understanding that if I had made time for more of these meetings over the prior year I'd have gained a better understanding of the issues we face as a community such as the sewage ejection system, roof anchors, retaining wall, and reserve fund.

I pledge, and I hope you'll join me, to attend more Board meetings moving forward. When you do you'll get to observe your Board serving neighbors in action solving problems and looking out for the future of our community.

*Those neighbors are:*

**President Bobbi Binder** (#310) who enjoys being a member of the Handicrafts Club on College Hill in Providence • **Vice President Annie Newman** (#202) is the Director of Planning, Design and Construction at RISD and likes to knit, read and watch baseball • **Treasurer Linda Cohen** (#601) stays fit by walking each morning and enjoys taking photographs • **Secretary Mary Ruby** (#401) may retire someday and looks forward to that bringing more time to read just for the joy of it and maybe for the planning of travel or learning more about that camera nagging to be taken on nature hikes around the region • **Board Member John Catanese** (#608) moved in late in 2019 and loves baseball • **Board Member Karl Machata** (#307) serves on many committees and considers it a privilege to be able to share the display of spring bulbs he's planted in the beds leading to the RFL garage. • **Board Member Kim Myers** (#509) is a distance runner who has owned indy book stores and maintains a healthy addiction to books  
**Maybe now you'll decide to run for the board yourself.**

## NEW TO THE LOFTS

### #101 - Netti Vogel

*I have lived in Providence for almost 50 years.*

*I saw the real estate listing, and I was intrigued by the uniqueness of the loft. It looked like it would be a fun place to live. I already had some familiarity with Riverfront Lofts, and over the years, I had heard that it was a lovely condo community.*

### #206 - Robert Cartee

*I moved here from a house in Kingston, MA. I work in Boston so between the commute and everyday busyness, I never had time to properly take care of my yard so I decided a condo was a better bet. I chose this place in particular because I love the idea of repurposing old buildings, the beautiful views of the river, and who doesn't love a 15 ft ceiling and exposed brick.*

*Looking forward to meeting my new neighbors and being a part of the community.*

### #406 - David and Jennifer Block

### #411 - Rich Wiscott & Mike Yelic

*Moved from Denver because Rich was transferred to work at John & Wales University*

### #501 - Debra & Bob Gallo

*We moved from Philadelphia to be closer to our children who live in Boston. We have always loved Providence, considered houses but truly fell in love with the beauty of the building, our loft and the sense of community we immediately felt while visiting.*

### #505 - Roland Peltier & Killian Larkin

*Moved from Fort Lauderdale, FL, for Roland's new job as a Hospital Administrator*

### #510 - Samuel Klieman

## RFL SOCIAL COMMITTEE PAST – PRESENT – FUTURE

by PAMELA HUGHES

**IT WAS LATE FALL OF 2004** when people who had bought lofts here could finally get their occupancy permits, close on their units, and start to move in. The marketing slogan for Riverfront Lofts (RFL), at the time, was “Home Is Where the Art Is.” Many of the first owners were artists. There was painter Toba in #304; sculptor Linda in #605; printmaker Joan in #504; landscape designer Sylvia in #404; my late husband, Seth, who taught furniture design at RISD, and built out his wood shop in #302 while we lived in #301.

For that first condo meeting we decorated the walls of #411, which was the de facto common area of the time, with work from the new owners. There were paintings, prints, sculptures, Seth contributed furniture and I contributed a Norwegian sweater I had knit. All art was accepted, and we sat among it as we began to organize our wonderful building’s future.

Initial Committees were decided upon and formed including the financial, property, and grounds committees. The party girl in me suggested a social committee which was readily accepted.

One of the first Social Committee events was a progressive dinner party where hors d’oeuvres were offered on the 2nd and 3rd floor lofts, main courses on the 4th and 5th, and desserts on the 6th. Almost everyone who lived here then attended this event.



We also organized concerts in different units and cooking classes where local chefs cooked as we all watched, learned and then ate what had been cooked. We’ve enjoyed the concerts across the river, an olive oil and vinegar tasting event, and a fabulously well-attended pot luck in January of 2020.

Most recently the Social Committee organized a totally outdoor activity - weeding and mulching the nearby Broadway Park that was designed and planted for our neighborhood 5 years ago by Riverfront Loft owners Joan Hausrath and me. Many RFL neighbors came to pitch in and beautify our neighborhood park. Mayor Grebien even stopped by with a truck load of mulch to help keep the weeds in check.

Our Fall Social Event will be a building wide yard sale in early October in front of the main entrance. We did it once before, and it was a great event whether you were selling or buying or socializing.

***We welcome ideas for future events!***

If the pandemic taught us anything, it taught us the importance of connections and community. We need people to join our Social Committee to help us foster connections here. Please tell me you can help... [pamelaohpamela@gmail.com](mailto:pamelaohpamela@gmail.com).

COCKTAILS  
*in the*  
COURTYARD

**SUNDAY,  
JULY 18TH  
5 PM**

**VAXXED - MASKS, OPTIONAL • UNVAXXED - MASKS, PLEASE**  
BYO glasses, drinks, munchies - we're not yet quite ready for sharing.  
Cathy from R. I. Spirits is kindly creating a signature cocktail for us.  
***There will be a concert in the amphitheater across the river at 6 PM***

## RFL'S SEWAGE EJECTION SYSTEM

by KARL MACHATA

**THE SEWAGE WATER** from Riverfront Lofts (RFL) exits into a 30-foot hole under the western sidewalk along Exchange Court. The bottom of this shaft is below our connection point with the city sewers on Exchange Street. The pumps (grinder pistons) at the bottom of the shaft “lift” RFL’s sewage water up to the city sewer system. These pumps pulverize our sewage and wastewater and then speed it upward to Exchange Street.

In 2016 RFL spent about \$175,000 to install this sewage ejection system. The system’s design is a retrofit using an existing shaft and is not perfect. We have had back-flow issues on several occasions since it was installed with subsequent flooding of lower condominiums.

To date we have spent over \$90k to buy and install new pumps, refurbish used pumps, better waterproof the Sewage Ejection System (SES)

shaft, replace corroded wiring, install new railings to move the pumps up and down the shaft, etc.

The Sewage Ejection System Committee (formerly the Lift Station Committee) was formed to address these problems. This committee recommended the hiring, by the RFL Executive Board, of Mike Harrington, a sewage system development consultant, to help us navigate the technical aspects of our current system.

Our sewage problem may be solvable by digging a new, deeper shaft to house our SES though the \$500k to \$1M price tag is prohibitive and the SES Committee has determined to pursue the less costly solution of tweaking our current system to be more efficient and reliable.

Recently the SEC Committee oversaw the cleaning of the bottom of the shaft, a job that had not previously been done and will now be part of regular maintenance.

They are also researching the installation of a new digital control panel that will provide key information about how our 2 pumps are working through closer monitoring via a web based Building Maintenance System (BMS). So far we have a quote of just under \$30k for a new control panel with a BMS and the Executive Board has requested that we get a second opinion before moving forward, a process now underway.

As this process moves forward we rely on each other to keep our Sewage Ejection System functioning properly. So remember:

***ONLY water, toilet paper and human waste go into RFL toilets!***

**We require 100% compliance with ‘no water usage’ announcements** when Arden Engineering descends the 30’ deep shaft to repair or maintain our sewage ejection system.

## RFL AROUND THE CORNER —

*Did you know...*

by KAREN RAND ANDERSON

### IF YOU'RE NEW HERE AT RFL—welcome!

FYI here are a few interesting and walkable places in our immediate neighborhood. There are some truly creative businesses and people around here, doing good things.

After a year of pandemic closure Farm Fresh Rhode Island has reopened its **HARVEST KITCHEN CAFÉ** in downtown Pawtucket for take-out and dining in weekdays 10 AM-3 PM. The menu includes vegan, vegetarian and gluten free options made with locally sourced ingredients.

2 Bayley St., Pawtucket

[www.farmfreshri.org/cafe](http://www.farmfreshri.org/cafe) • 401-335-3766

**BLACKSTONE RIVER CAFÉ** opened last year and has great coffee/pastries/sandwiches and some cocktails too, along with a cozy gas fireplace and outdoor tables. Wander over Monday-Friday, 8 AM-3:30 PM, Saturday 8 AM-12 PM. Closed Sunday.

Located at 65 Blackstone Ave, in the Collette Bldg. behind Tolman High. 401-265-0960

[www.facebook.com/blackstonerivercafe](http://www.facebook.com/blackstonerivercafe)

Also over in that corner of Blackstone Ave. is **RHODE ISLAND SPIRITS** – the most awesome distillery and tasting room, producing high-end gins, vodkas, and liqueurs, made with organic botanicals. Make a reservation to visit their riverside tasting room.- they are open for tastings Fridays 4-8:30 PM, Saturdays 1-8:30 PM, and Sundays 1-6 PM.

[www.rhodeislandspirits.com](http://www.rhodeislandspirits.com) • 401-856-4111

Next door to RI Spirits at 59 Blackstone Ave. is the new home of **THE BURBAGE THEATRE COMPANY** (Amazing to have a contemporary theater company right across the street, right?). They are a non-profit, creative and dedicated company, producing award-winning theater productions, and deserve support from our community, especially at this crucial time for live entertainment.

[www.burbagetheatre.org](http://www.burbagetheatre.org) • 401-484-0355

Also in that mill complex on Blackstone Ave is the internationally-known **GLASS-BLOWING STUDIO OF TRACY GLOVER**, which produces stunningly beautiful hand-blown glass objects and lighting.

[www.tracygloverstudio.com](http://www.tracygloverstudio.com)

If you feel like a beer and taking a little hike, head over to **THE GUILD BREWERY** at 461 Main St. The tap-room is pouring top-notch local brews, there's canine-friendly outdoor seating, and plenty of room in their spacious beer hall. Tues-Thurs 4-8 PM, Fri-Sat 12-10 PM, Sun. 12-6 PM. <http://www.theguildri.com/>

### **Lots more to explore nearby...**

There will be additional mini-profiles of places of interest in Pawtucket, and further afield, in the next RFL newsletter.



## RIVERFRONT LOFTS resident profile by AMANDA CHASE

**NAOMI CHASE MYERS**, born six and a half years ago, hails from North Carolina. She and her sister were abandoned at a vet's office for not being purebred Basset Hounds and placed at a high kill shelter, so we rescued her...but she really rescued me. Facing an impending empty nest, I convinced Kim we needed a dog to take care of! While she has her few quirks: a fear of plastic bags; no fear of crossing the street as cars are coming; not a real people dog...she has been a great companion for us!

She gets us out the house and walking around town; we have met some wonderful neighbors we may not have ever gotten to know; and she loves playing with other dogs.

Hit her up for a play date anytime. She's always up for an adventure. Though not in the car, she's not a fan of rides! If you see her out and about and want to give her a treat, she will happily accept Parmesan cheese. She's a picky eater, with expensive taste.

# RIVERFRONT



# LOFTS

PAWTUCKET RI



**Mayor Donald R. Grebien**  
137 Roosevelt Avenue  
Pawtucket, RI 02860  
401-728-0500 or [www.pawtucketri.com](http://www.pawtucketri.com)



**IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY CALL 911**

<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>EXTENTION</b>	<b>DIRECTOR</b>	<b>EMAIL</b>
Accounting/Finance	Ext. 244	Joanna L'Heureux	<a href="mailto:jlheureux@pawtucketri.com">jlheureux@pawtucketri.com</a>
Boards of Canvassers	Ext. 237	Kenneth R. McGill	<a href="mailto:kmcgill@pawtucketri.com">kmcgill@pawtucketri.com</a>
City Clerk	Ext. 225	Richard J. Goldstein	<a href="mailto:rgoldstein@pawtucketri.com">rgoldstein@pawtucketri.com</a>
Collections	Ext. 344	Shaun Strobel	<a href="mailto:sstrobel@pawtucketri.com">sstrobel@pawtucketri.com</a>
Animal Shelter	401-722-4243	Renee Massie	<a href="mailto:rmassie@pawtucketpolice.com">rmassie@pawtucketpolice.com</a>
Communication/Constituent	Ext. 429	Emily Rizzo	<a href="mailto:warboleda@pawtucketri.com">warboleda@pawtucketri.com</a>
Fire Department	Ext 413 or 725-1422	Chief William J. Sisson	<a href="mailto:wsission@pawtucketfire.com">wsission@pawtucketfire.com</a>
Legal Department	Ext. 308	Frank J. Milos	<a href="mailto:fmilos@pawtucketri.com">fmilos@pawtucketri.com</a>
Leon Mathieu Senior Ctr.	401-728-7582 Ext. 509	Mary Lou Moran	<a href="mailto:mimoran@pawtucketri.com">mimoran@pawtucketri.com</a>
Library	401-725-3714	Susan L. Reed	<a href="mailto:sreed@pawtucketlibrary.org">sreed@pawtucketlibrary.org</a>
Mayor's Office	Ext. 281	Sandra Perez	<a href="mailto:sperez@pawtucketri.com">sperez@pawtucketri.com</a>
Parks & Recreation	Ext. 257	John Blais	<a href="mailto:jblais@pawtucketri.com">jblais@pawtucketri.com</a>
Personnel	Ext. 276	Sara Miranda	<a href="mailto:smiranda@pawtucketri.com">smiranda@pawtucketri.com</a>
Planning & Redevelopment	Ext. 439	Susan Mara	<a href="mailto:smara@pawtucketri.com">smara@pawtucketri.com</a>
Police	401-727-9100	Chief Tina Goncalves	<a href="mailto:tgoncalves@pawtucketpolice.com">tgoncalves@pawtucketpolice.com</a>
Probate Court	Ext. 259	Stephanie Hammond	<a href="mailto:shammond@pawtucketri.com">shammond@pawtucketri.com</a>
Public Works	Ext. 233	Rick Karsulavitch	<a href="mailto:dpw@pawtucketri.com">dpw@pawtucketri.com</a>
Sewer & Sanitation	Ext. 233	Joey Wilson	<a href="mailto:dpw@pawtucketri.com">dpw@pawtucketri.com</a>
Substance Abuse Prevention		Diane Dufresne	<a href="mailto:ddufresne@pawtucketri.com">ddufresne@pawtucketri.com</a>
Tax Assessors	Ext. 333	Robert Burns	<a href="mailto:rburns@pawtucketri.com">rburns@pawtucketri.com</a>
Water Supply Board	401-729-5000	James DeCelles	<a href="mailto:decelles@pwsb.org">decelles@pwsb.org</a>
Zoning	Ext. 347	William Viera	<a href="mailto:wveiria@pawtucketri.com">wveiria@pawtucketri.com</a>

**US CONGRESSMAN DAVID CICILLINE**

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Phone: 401-729-5600  
<https://cicilline.house.gov/contact-me/email-me>

**STATE SENATOR SANDRA CANO**

RI State Senate, District 8, Pawtucket  
Chairwoman, Senate Committee on Education  
Member, Senate Committee on Finance  
State of RI General Assembly  
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Of course, our US Senators in Washington are

**THE HONORABLE JACK REED** and **THE HONORABLE SHELDON WHITEHOUSE**