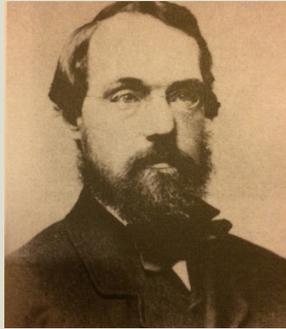


CALVERT VAUX AND CENTRAL PARK



A discussion is afoot over the board's suggestion that 336 CPW be named The Calvert, after one of the fathers of Central Park, Calvert Vaux. Who was he and what exactly did he do?

Vaux was born in London in 1825 to a surgeon who died when his son was nine, leaving the family struggling, according to Roy Rozenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmar's book *The Park and the People: A History of Central Park* (the source of this brief account). Calvert attended a private school on scholarship, apprenticed with an architect devoted to the Gothic revival and became a skilled draftsman.

In 1850, when he was 25, a series of his watercolors of continental landscapes were exhibited in a London gallery, where they caught the eye of Andrew Jackson Downing, an American who was looking for a young talent to head the new architecture department he wanted to add to his flourishing landscape gardening firm in the Hudson Valley town of Newburgh.

Vaux happily made the move to Newburgh, quickly becoming Downing's partner. When the firm's founder drowned in a steamboat accident in 1852, Vaux took over the firm.

Vaux was by all accounts an original, with a passion for his work and for the concept we now see reflected in Central Park. He didn't care so much for his era's idea of "correct taste" as he did for what he called a sense of "liberal hospitality" and the aesthetic pleasure people get from "a well-balanced irregularity."

Vaux wanted a people's park, and he suggested that the city's park board hold a competition to design one in 1857. To help him he hired Frederick Law Olmsted, a gentleman farmer and journalist whose exuberant passions had until then largely been funded by his father, a prosperous Connecticut merchant.

The two men had different strengths. Olmsted knew the terrain that would become Central Park, and had a sense of specific trees and plants. Vaux had the artistic and drafting skills that let him picture the vistas people in the park would most enjoy.

Vaux and Olmsted agreed that Central Park should be a unified work of landscape art that reflected, as Vaux wrote, Americans' "innate homage to the natural as opposed to the artificial – a preference for the works of God to the works of man."

The two split the premium for winning the design competition in 1858, and Vaux stepped back to let Olmsted run the actual construction effort. "Bossing jobs is one thing and art another," Vaux said.

Vaux's role in the design of Central Park was later underplayed by Olmsted, who despite being the junior partner in the enterprise was accorded the title architect-in-chief and park superintendent.

There is certainly a sound argument for a building with Vaux's name overlooking the park he fathered.



PRESIDENT'S POTPOURRI

Dear 336 CPW Friends and Neighbors,

By the time you read this I will have only two more meetings left as your president – November and December. I want this letter to be a bit of a summary of my personal agenda for this last year of my tenure and, in particular, a punch list of items I very much hope we can accomplish in the remaining 2-1/2 months of that tenure.

Let me start with a brief recitation of what is accomplished and in place. We are very fortunate. I'll begin with people. We have a board of ten talented, dedicated, capable, hard-working and conscientious residents. They all take their responsibilities seriously and contribute their time and efforts generously and beyond the call of duty. After December it will be nine. The Board and the co-op are well prepared for a leadership succession.

We are blessed with a competent, reliable and diligent partner as our building agent in Orsid Realty Corp. Orsid is more than just a commercial relationship. It starts with John Devall, who truly is a member of the 336 family. The rest of the organization from top (Neil Davidowitz) through senior members (Dennis DePaola and Andre Kaplan) through staff (Ariola, Andrea, etc.) are all special folks. They are always there when we need them.

Then there is our own staff – Sergio, Orlando and the rest of the "guys." Either nothing need be said about them or I lack the room and the time to say everything that should be said about them. They work tirelessly – always above the call of duty – in service of the building, our community and our families. Examples abound, but I'll cite a recent one. A young girl was home alone, and her folks were late coming home. She was apprehensive. She went to the lobby and told the "guys" she was scared. They welcomed, reassured and comforted her in safety until Mom and Dad got home. It happens all the time.

The 336 physical plant is in great shape. We are restoring the sidewalks – a task that has not been completely smooth and easy. Nevertheless, it will get done and it will be done right. We approach the next Local Law 11 review with cautious confidence that the building envelope is in good shape. Our machinery and equipment is in good repair and the staff keeps it that way economically and with mechanical expertise. Everything works and is in good repair.

Our co-operative is financially sound and healthy. Our cash reserves are comfortably in the seven-figure range. Our budgets are consistently on target. We avoid significant maintenance increases year-to-year. Expenses have remained under control thanks to careful management by the Board and the staff – especially Sergio – and thanks to some recent capital projects such as the conversion from oil to gas. Our debt financing is secure and reliably in place with a high-quality lender, a low fixed interest rate and an amortization schedule that will leave the co-op debt-free at final maturity.

The market for apartments in 336 CPW has been strong for the past few years. Sales have generated a healthy flow of transfer fees. Most important, however, when our residents want or need to sell, they have been finding a market that allows satisfactory achievement of their price and timing objectives. Some of that is due to the position and reputation of our building in the market.

So, you might ask, what could I possibly be worried about? And the answer is nothing, really. However,

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if possible, I very much want to leave everything in flawless condition. And there are a couple of things left that I would very much like to see accomplished before I leave. Herewith a brief summary in no special order of priority or importance. They are all important.

You will have seen a note from the Board on the subject of naming the building. I won't elaborate. I will simply say I think this is a good idea. I think it could add a lot of pizzazz to our building. I think over time it will add value in unquantifiable ways - and perhaps also quantifiable as well. We hope to move forward with this initiative - taking into account input and the level of consensus from the shareholders.

The Board has been discussing a program designed to rationalize and get control of the unknown future cost of window repair and replacement in the building. This is a potential liability we all share on some basis but the precise allocation among us and the precise timing of its maturation are both unknown. As such, they are likely to be arbitrary. This program will address these concerns in a logical, fair and proactive way that benefits everyone. You will be hearing more about it, but please be assured I very much hope to implement this plan before leaving - with your input and assent, of course.

Eleven years ago when a group of shareholders organized themselves and addressed certain inquiries to the then-incumbent Board, one such inquiry was "Please ask the Co-op's Agent to certify the document which constitutes the by-laws of 336 Tenants Corp." The inquiry was occasioned by the fact that there were two versions of the proprietary lease floating around. A few years after that snafu was resolved and a new Board was in place, it came to light there was a drafting error in the propriety lease of potentially enormous consequence to all shareholders. The Board asked shareholders for an amendment to correct the problem. In order to completely correct the problem, it was necessary that every shareholder approve the requested amendment. I would say that was unbelievable, except at the time I firmly believed our shareholders would respond positively to what was reasonably needed - even something as extraordinary as a 100% approval of a by-law amendment. They did. I should say you did.

Today, there is nothing especially wrong or defective with our proprietary lease such as I just described. It is just old, antiquated and often give inadequate or no guidance for routine questions and activities of the Board, the shareholders and the co-op in circumstances where it would be convenient to have it. We need an up-to-date, modernized, fully functional proprietary lease that work for those everyday situations.

Again, the Board has been discussing this for some time. I am hopeful that we can put this new, modern proprietary lease in front of you before I leave and obtain your approval to substitute it for what we presently have.

I have one final comment - at least for the moment. Over the years we have had numerous opportunities and challenges which offered the potential for division or discord among our residents and shareholders. Some were small and involved only a few shareholders - perhaps a noise or a leak or a renovation disturbance. Others were somewhat larger - e.g., lobby decorations or house rules governing dogs or fish tanks or staff performance issues. In an even larger, more general sense, given the diversity of our community that includes residents who have lived here since the 50s, the 60s, the 70s and the 80s as well as more recently arrived and younger families, financial and other considerations often create the potential for fault lines in the group. It has always been my belief that the most important quality and the most valuable feature of our community was its cohesion and its collective commitment to the group. It has also always been my personal governing principle that whatever the management issue, whatever the topic of shareholder interest, whatever the immediate challenge to our co-op, the guiding principle for resolving it must always be "keep our unity and prevent development of division or splits in the group." Let me simply say, I hope that has borne fruit and I hope that it will continue.

Happy Halloween! I look forward to our conversations this fall

With best regards,

Mike Schell

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Meet the Safts

New residents Amber and Warren Saft started off their search for a new home further afield from their apartment right across 94th Street at 350 CPW. They inspected places on Riverside Drive, West End Ave. and elsewhere, but the right place materialized next door, in the form of unit 15F. "We tried but we just love it right here," Amber says. "It's neighborhoody and pretty and we always run into people we know."

Warren and Amber are both native Southern Californians. Warren came east to attend Cornell, where he earned Bachelor and master degrees in engineering. Amber studied art history at Berkeley and then received an MBA at Columbia. "We've lived here since college, so at this point we're New Yorkers," Amber says.

Their daughter Gabbi is in the fifth grade at the Nightingale Banford School, and son Nate is a third-grader at Allen-Stevenson School. Warren works as managing director at CapRok Capital LLC. Amber is vice president at Franklin Templeton Investments.

Warren is an avid cyclist, and the family generally loves to hike and to travel, especially when it involves being outdoors. Young Nate is a big fan of NYCFC, the MLS team that plays at Yankee stadium.

The Safts are having their apartment painted and fitted with more closet space now, but hope to be all in by mid-November.

Please make them feel welcome.



✕ ✓ ✎ VOTE ON NOVEMBER 8 ✎ ✓ ✕

The polling station for residents of 336 CPW this year is PS 166 at 132 West 89th Street. It will be open from 6am to 9pm.

Musical Riches for Free

Along with the city's rich usual musical offerings, the Upper West Side is showcasing several outstanding events this week free of charge.

All week Detroit Symphony Orchestra Conductor Leonard Slatkin is holding a conductors' workshop and open rehearsals at the Manhattan School of Music, culminating in a free concert Friday evening at 7:30 at the MSM's Neidorff Karpati Hall at Broadway and W. 122nd Street.

And on Saturday evening at 7:30 there will be a free concert at Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center celebrating the 80th birthday of Steve Reich, whom Michael Tilson Thomas has called "arguably America's most important living composer." (Michael Tilson Thomas for Vanity Fair).