

# BILTMORE II CONDOMINIUM MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Volume 13 Issue 11

August 2021

## BILTMORE II CONDO

600 Biltmore Way  
Coral Gables, Florida 33134

### Board of Directors 2021

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**Admin. Asst.** ..... Elisa Burnbaum  
**Front Desk Supv.** ..... Luis Palma  
**Maint. Supv.** .....Eduardo Mustelier S.

### HOW TO REACH US

**Manager** .. manager@biltmore2.com  
**Office**..... 305-448-4765  
**Admin**..... admin@biltmore2.com  
**Concierge/Front Door**.. 305-443-7914  
**Concierge**.. Concierge@biltmore2.com  
**Maintenance**.....  
maintenance@biltmore2.com

**Association Website**.....  
<https://biltmore2condo.mycommunitysite.app>

### OFFICE HOURS

**Monday-Friday**..... 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

# august

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## CORONA VIRUS UPDATE

Dear Residents

Please be advised that masks are now required indoors at Miami-Dade County facilities for everyone regardless of their vaccination status. The CDC is recommending that everyone in areas with high COVID-19 infection rates wear masks in public indoor spaces. Masks help stop the spread of the coronavirus. The reason public health officials are calling for more mask-wearing is that there is clear evidence that though rare breakthrough, COVID-19 infections can occur in people who are fully vaccinated. The Department of Health's latest data release shows 11,000 new cases of the virus in Miami-Dade County, and the positivity rate is over 10%. If vaccinated people can get infected with the coronavirus, they can also spread it.

The Board of Directors will continue to follow CDC Guidelines. We ask that you wear a mask throughout our common areas, lobby, mailroom, card rooms, basement garage etc.

We appreciate everyone's cooperation for the wellness and safety of all Residents, Guests, Staff, Visitors and contractors at Biltmore II Condominium.

In good health, Management



## NEW RESIDENTS

Charles Haldeman and Wei-Chiang Lin

Viator Investments (M. Chamoro)

Oivind Heggli

Tony and Ana Isabel Egui



## Treasurer's Report (June 2021)

**Audit Report 2020:** The Association received the draft report issued by our auditors. According to our Auditors, the financial statements represent fairly, in all material aspects, the financial position of Biltmore II as of December 2020. There were no significant audit findings reported.

**Financial Accounting and Reporting:** As communicated earlier, we have outsourced our accounting activities to Sharma & Associates effective July 1st, 2021. The change from the old IT system to the new IT system took, unfortunately, longer than expected and the Financial Results were only available as of July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Consequently, the information shown below has not yet been fully reviewed. Should there be a material impact to the preliminary outline below, an update will be provided in the next (September newsletter issue) TREASURER'S REPORT.

**Income/Expense:** The month of June shows a net surplus of income vs. expenses of \$23,890 bringing the year-to-date income to \$ 63,730. Having a surplus is a positive sign, but keep in mind that not all expenses will be incurred on a regular monthly basis. Also, we noted from the June ledger that a few accrual items have not been processed. In addition, the recent repair of the freight elevator will result in unplanned costs of \$38,000 of which approx. 50% have already been invoiced. Also, with the renewed insurance policies we will see an insurance cost overrun of approx. \$16,000 by the end of the year. The forecast for year-end assumes that we will be starting with the EV Infrastructure Project in 2022 and not in 2021. Furthermore, the assumption is also based upon no offset by the Association's insurance company for the freight elevator repairs since we have not received any letter to do so. There are, of course, other cost elements which are below budget, but as time passes such differences will be required for future transactions as they come up. We expect at this point of time a loss of approx. (\$ 16,000).

**Collections:** Regarding the collection of Maintenance Fees and Special Assessment values, we still have some units which are late with their payments. As of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the fees outstanding amount to nearly **\$17,900** which is a reduction from last month of approx. \$6,000. Thank you to all owners who are catching up with their payments.

**Funding at the end of June:** The funds available in our operating bank accounts including petty cash are at a stable level and amount to \$605,887. As for Reserves, we have \$2,570,148 of funds available in our regular Reserve bank accounts. Regarding our Special Assessment, the funds available in our bank account amount to \$534,331 as several owners have pre-paid their special assessment.

## Infrastructure Project Update

To follow the progress of building infrastructure projects underway or planned at Biltmore II, please attend regularly scheduled Building Committee and Board of Director meetings, currently being held via Zoom calls, or read the minutes of these meetings as they are posted both on the Mailroom bulletin board and the Biltmore 2 website. This article is intended to provide a summary of most recent status.

- **ELEVATOR MODERNIZATION** – The contractor, Kone Elevator, is working on Elevator #4, the east side passenger elevator. This is a 5-month process per car. It involves replacing components inside the elevator cab, sensors on every floor, controls, the mechanical equipment in the roof-top elevator rooms, and more. Recently, the City of Coral Gables approved the permit for a crane to lift heavy equipment to the roof. This project is funded from Reserve accounts.
- **ELEVATOR CAB REFURBISHMENT** – This work of about 1 week per cab, following completion of cab modernization, involves upgrading various elements of cab interiors. Contract negotiations are in final stage. This project is funded from Reserve accounts.
- **GARAGE RESTORATION CONTRACT** – The contract with Restoration Technologies Inc. (RTI) was approved several months ago. It involves removing landscape from planters that sit on top of the basement garage roof-deck, investigating and repairing (if necessary) deck structural elements (cracks, expansion joints, post-tension cables), and then waterproofing the roof-deck. The permit application for City of CG (City) approval was submitted 3 months ago, and the City's initial departmental review of the permit application and its supporting documents just completed. RTI will submit document modifications, as requested by the City, by the end of August 2021. Final permit approval is expected in September 2021. Planning for an on-site contractor kick-off meeting has begun. This project is funded partially from Reserve accounts, but mainly from the \$3M assessment, in particular the contract with RTI.
- **NEW LANDSCAPE DESIGN** (Part of Garage Restoration Project) – RTI (see above) will remove the landscape sitting in planters on top of the roof deck. To remove trees (including palms), the City's Landscape Services Division must give its approval. To obtain approval, the Association contracted with a landscape development firm and its sub-contracted landscape architecture firm to design a new landscape for the affected planters. An inventory of all 90+ trees and palms was created - citing tree/palm condition, trunk diameter and canopy size. The City's concern is whether the changes to the landscape will increase or decrease canopy. Canopy loss must be compensated for by paying into the City's Tree Fund, which is used to plant trees elsewhere in Coral Gables to maintain the City's valu-

*Continued on page 3*

## Project Update (cont. from page 1)

able tree canopy. Fortunately, the new design plan for Biltmore II's landscape increases canopy size, so no Tree Fund payments are needed. A separate article on the landscape element of this project will be in upcoming Newsletter issues. While installing the new landscape is part of the Garage Restoration project, it involves a contract with a yet to be selected landscape developer and will be funded from Reserve accounts.

- **MAIN ENTRANCE DOORS** – The new auto opening, sliding, impact resistant front doors were approved by the BOD 7 months ago. The doors have been manufactured and await City permit approval. The delay in City permit approval is being escalated to City officials. This is funded by Reserve accounts.
- **DOMESTIC WATER PUMPS – AUTO RESTART** – Our dual water pumps are relatively new. One pump carries the full load, and it is regularly scheduled to switch to the other pump to evenly distribute wear and thus maximize their useful life. A problem occurs when FPL electric power is momentarily lost. Without power, the water pump carrying the load shuts down and even though the emergency generator has come on-line for emergency loads, such as powering the water pumps, those pumps will not restart automatically. They must be manually restarted. The delay in restarting results in pressure loss and air entering the water pipes. Residents experience an annoying interruption to normal water pressure. The problem was diagnosed as a feature that was not part of the original Programmable Logic Controller (PLC), so a new PLC was ordered and installed. This project completed in late July 2021. This project is funded from the 2021 Operating Budget.
- **ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS** – Temporarily placed on-hold by the BOD due to lack of funding in 2021. This will be addressed as part of the 2022 operating budget.
- **POOL EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT & PLUMBING REVISION** – The contracted Mechanical Electrical & Plumbing (MEP) contractor is delayed in completing specifications to revise the plumbing and is not responding to escalation attempts. The Manager will seek a new MEP contractor. Please be aware that the demand on MEP contractors has increased dramatically due in part to the Surfside disaster. This will be funded by Reserve accounts.
- **DIESEL FUEL TANK REPLACEMENT** – Specifications have been prepared by the MEP contractor, and it is engaged in a permit “dry run” with the City of CG before bidding the work. This will be funded by Reserves. In addition, the BOD approved (August 12, 2021) the leasing of a portable 500-gallon fuel tank which is expected to be installed by the end of September 2021. This unanticipated project became necessary when an inspection performed on the existing in-ground tank revealed it had reached the end of its useful life. The leased tank and initial fuel cost

will be funded from the 2021 Operating Budget.

- **GARAGE ACCESS CONTROL SYSTEM** – The new basement garage entry system, utilizing a radio frequency antenna to detect a transponder decal located on vehicle windshields and then to open the gate/arm, was approved by the BOD and recently installed. In July 2021 staff placed a transponder decal on all resident vehicles that are registered for access to the basement garage (e.g., for residents with assigned basement garage parking space assignments). A few cases were reported of failure of the new system to open the gate, and staff responded by moving the decal to a different windshield location. Probably by the end of August, Management will notify residents that the new system is being placed into full operation. At such time, FOBs and clickers will no longer open the entry gate, as the windshield decal will be the only access system. This project is funded by Reserve accounts.

*Robert Petzinger - Editor*

## A Very “Happy” Happy Hour



Biltmore II is considered a “special” residential community by its residents and the happy faces shown above are attending the Social Club's first event since the pandemic was declared early in 2020. Just socializing again makes people happy. During the evening of July 18, about 60 residents and guests enjoyed each other's company, plus refreshments and music of guitarist Carl Ferrari and the surprise piano playing of a resident's guest - Daysi Celia Almiral, a composer and pianist.



*Robert Petzinger – Editor (pictures and information provided by Social Club)*

## Salvadore Park Expansion

Significant expansion and improvements to City of Coral Gables parks are in progress or recently completed. About a half mile from Biltmore II heading west on Valencia Ave. and situated between Valencia Ave., Cordova St., Columbus Blvd. and Andalusia Ave., is one of the largest, the #1 most popular, parks in the city. Salvadore Park is best known for its large tennis court complex with evening lighting. Less well known are the children’s playground at its NW corner and open lawn space at the SW corner. Both of these areas are under either renovation (e.g., the replacement of play equipment in the playground) or expansion (now completed) of the SW corner into the city’s first inclusive play area for kids of all abilities.

The goal is to provide more adventurous play. New equipment includes a safe zip line type adventure, outdoor musical instruments that are stationary, multi-child see-saw, merry-go-round like spinner for several kids at one time, and mounds that kids can climb over or crawl through. To ensure safe play, the surface is a synthetic green grass-like material that meets ADA standards. To make this part of the park suitable for this inclusive adventurous play, new storm water drainage was added and security lighting bollards were installed. The only tree removed was a large Sea Grape to allow more sunlight. A new Gumbo Limbo tree was added. Below is a recent picture of the new inclusive adventure play area at the SW corner.



Robert Petzinger - Editor

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## BATTERY RECYCLING

“Keep Coral Gables Beautiful” has launched a new **Battery Recycling Pilot Program**. This program aligns with the City of Coral Gables goal of reducing waste that is ending up in landfills, and building a more resilient and sustainable City Beautiful. Hundreds of millions of pounds of batteries end up in the landfills in the USA each year. They do not decompose and potentially can release harmful chemicals. Batteries are made from useful resources such as zinc and cadmium, which can be recycled and recovered if disposed of properly. “Lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries are used in many products such as electronics, wireless headphones, handheld power tools, small and large appliances, electric vehicles and electrical energy storage systems. If not responsibly managed at the end of their useful life, they can cause harm to human health or the environment.” – EPA

Battery Recycling Bins (see picture) have been placed in the following locations:

- City Hall – 405 Biltmore Way: Main Entrance Area
- Police & Fire HQ: 2151 Salzedo Street: 1st Floor Lobby
- War Memorial Youth Center: 405 University Drive: Reception Area
- Public Works Department: 2800 SW 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue: Main Entrance Area



Batteries Accepted:

- Alkaline Batteries: AAA, AA, C, D
- Lithium & Lithium-Ion Batteries
- Nickel Cadmium & Nickel Metal (rechargeable)
- Silver Oxide & Silver Zinc

**Not accepted – automotive and other large batteries.**

For more information, please call 305-460-5008 or 305-569-1835.

Robert Petzinger - Editor

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## FIRE CONTROL SYSTEM INSPECTIONS

Residents should know that the sophisticated Fire Control System that protects our building and homes is being thoroughly inspected by the City of Coral Gables Fire Dept. on a regular basis. Some of these inspections are annual and others occur at multiple year intervals. Most of us are aware of the annual testing of the alarm system as representatives from Simplex Grinnell (Johnson Controls), are on site for several days sounding the alarm and must enter each unit to hear the alarm sound to verify that the in-unit speaker system is working.

Other inspections occur out of resident sight but are equally important. For example, all doors entering the resident hallways (unit entry, emergency stairwell, storage room, common laundry, utility closet, trash chute, etc.) must swing closed and latch to contain fire and smoke if necessary. Also, the small trash chute door must close and latch so if a resident pulled it open and left without closing it, that it would close and latch itself, thus preventing any fire from the chute stack or garbage room below from escaping upward into the hallways. In addition, in the two trash chute rooms in the basement, where bagged garbage plummets into a large compactor container, there is a fire safety device to block off the vertical chute stack should a fire develop in the garbage compactor. The device is called a Guillotine, as it looks a bit like the ancient French device to chop off someone's head. Our guillotine is a large heavy metal plate with sharp edge that is above the bottom of the trash chute. If fire is detected in the trash compactor, the plate is released, and it drops instantly and cuts through any garbage on its way to seal closed the chute stack thus blocking fire and smoke from entering the chute. Furthermore, the fire pump that supplies water to the sprinklers and the emergency generator, which would power the fire pump if FPL power were lost, are regularly tested.

All elements mentioned above are working effectively and all reports to the City of Coral Gables Fire Dept. are current.

*Robert Petzinger - Editor*

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## BILTMORE II REAL ESTATE REPORT

In 2019, 8 condo units sold for a total sales value of \$3,875,700 with an average price per square foot of \$344. In 2020, sales increased 75% to 14 for the full year with a total sales value of \$5,251,000 and an average price per square of \$294 – a 15% reduction from 2019. Results for 2020 were impacted significantly by the restrictions of the pandemic outbreak and the inability for brokers to show units for sale.

Through July 31, 2021, closed unit sales increased dramatically to 13 condo units (202, 204, 210, 312, 419, 507, 620, 701, 704, 804, 815, 1016, 1018). The total sales for these 13 units are \$6,123,800 with a total area of 16,870 sq. ft. This yields an average sale price/sq. ft. of \$363. This is an increase of 23% compared to 2020, and +2.6% compared to the pre-pandemic full year of 2019. Results for 2021 only 7 months of closed sales.

Unit values are affected by many factors, such as condition at time of sale, height (floor) in the building, mortgage rates, etc.

NOTE: Data for this article was obtained from MLS listings and [www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com) for closed sale data. In addition, one unit was sold and closed in a private sale transaction.

*Robert Petzinger, Editor*

## LARGE TRASH DISPOSAL

The picture below is one of several large iron/steel trash disposal containers located to the right side of the basement garage EXIT gate. They are used by staff and residents to discard household and building maintenance trash items that are too large for the small trash containers located near the recyclable containers in the basement garage. Items placed in these containers are incinerated with the residue headed to a landfill. **DO NOT PLACE RECYCLABLE ITEMS OR HAZARDOUS ITEMS IN THESE CONTAINERS!**

Robert Petzinger - Editor



## AROUND TOWN

### MIAMI SPICE RESTAURANT MONTHS - AUG. 1 – SEP 30

Miami Spice Restaurant Months showcase the best of Greater Miami's diverse cuisine and world-renowned chefs, featuring three-course meals at top eateries for just \$28 for lunch/brunch and \$42 for dinner. The list of participating restaurants is shown on website <https://www.miamiandbeaches.com/offers/temptations/miami-spice-months>.

### Cycle Day Is Back:

Get ready to tour our City Beautiful from the seat of your bicycle on Saturday, September 18. A variety of themed family tours will be offered starting at 9 a.m. for \$10 per participant and tour. Tours take approximately two hours and require an advanced ticket purchase for ages 5 and up. Safety lesson and goodie bag included.

- Tour 1 – Coral Rocks at 9 a.m.
- Tour 2 – Gables Kids Passport at 10:00 a.m. (includes kids' bike rodeo & 1-hour tour for children ages 5+)
- Tour 3 – Merrick's Treasures at 11:30 a.m.
- Tour 4 – Cool Canopies at 12:30 p.m.

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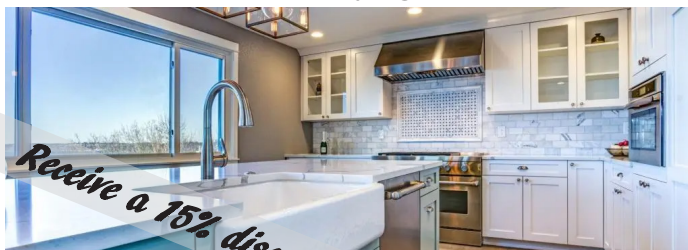
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