

## **The Role of Management and Emergency Problems**

We do not employ onsite maintenance who can respond immediately to problems on our property, nor do we line up outside contractors to stand ready for their cue to appear and do their work. When notified of an emergency, our management company tries to contact the appropriate contractor. Appropriate here includes the contractor's skill set, not only in plumbing or masonry or windows, but knowledge and skills required for historic buildings. Attempting to contact a contractor may mean leaving a message, which may not have a timely response, then there is the decision of whether to wait for response or to try another contractor. (Making this decision also involves consideration of working with this contractor in the future. We can't afford to spoil our ongoing relationship with a good contractor over one job.) A second contractor may need to be pursued, perhaps a third. There is also consideration of work hours. This process to locate a contractor is done while, perhaps, incidents at management's other properties are equally or even more pressing.

The result of the contractor search may mean that the contractor who arrives is not management's first choice. The result may mean a contractor arrives later than any of us would wish. Management always follows up to determine additional needed action. Additional needed action is almost always required, especially in the case of an emergency. Sometimes additional action can occur even when the resident or owner is not contacted at the time. Management can and does rely on the original construction drawings (1882-83) as well as the original condominium conversion drawings (1991), the 2009 Envelope Study and its subsequent specifications, and the in-depth practical experience of working closely with all major maintenance projects here since 2008. The focus of management is to get the needed work done. This is how they spend their time.

Management doesn't take time from this pursuit to provide continuous updates by email or phone to the aggrieved resident or owner. While the resident or owner may wonder what, if anything, management is doing to address their problem, the board and management make our first priority to get the needed work done. That stated, still there is communication. When information needs to be communicated, management communicates. And

when synchronization is needed, i.e., a worker needs to be allowed in at a certain time, of course management communicates that.

The aggrieved resident or owner and their intimates can be anxious and think that repairs aren't quick enough. Sometimes there is thinking that maybe they haven't pushed the right buttons, perhaps if others were contacted the right buttons would get pushed and everything would get solved sooner. Unfortunately, the usual result of such blitz-like action, while it may work in football, in this situation it results in the loss of efficiency and further delays in accomplishing the goal of getting the needed work done. Sometimes there is thinking that if they make more noise (as in the "squeaky wheel"), they will get the attention and service they desire. But such noise obscures careful thought and fact finding, and creates a situation where we are being pressured into what may be arbitrary and capricious decisions to favor one owner at the expense of all others. The executive board is committed to serving the needs of all owners within our limited finances and with understanding of the reality presented by our 1882 building. The result of such squeaky wheel action is almost always a loss of efficiency and further delays in accomplishing the goal of getting the needed work done, whatever and wherever that might be.

Once emergency work is done and the state of emergency no longer exists, any further work is attended to as any other maintenance job on the maintenance agenda.

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