



## **Thomaston Building offering tenants complimentary business skills and networking club named 8at8**

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Nearly 90 years after it was constructed at 8 Bond St. in the downtown area, the Thomaston Building offers something new this year - complimentary membership for all tenants in a business skills and networking club called 8at8.

The 8at8 club debuted Jan. 28th with an 8 a.m. breakfast meeting featuring a "Breakthrough Sales Strategies" presentation to be followed by tenant self-introductions and networking. The event was held at Elaine's Asian Bistro, a restaurant and meeting spot in the building's lobby.

While tenant groups at large commercial facilities and industrial parks are not unusual, most are started by tenants. 8at8 - the name refers to the brick office building's street address and the club's meeting start time - is the exception. It's the brainchild of Patrick Silberstein, president of the 8 Bond Street Corp. which owns the building.

According to Silberstein, the club will help tenants make valuable business connections as well as absorb useful skills, starting with sharpening their sales techniques.

"Being a tenant at 8 Bond means being part of the general business community downtown, and also being part of the business eco-system in this building," said Silberstein, who has owned and operated the historic property in downtown Great Neck since 1981. "This building is filled with creative entrepreneurs and professionals who connect and discover they can help each other do business.

"The more successful the tenants, the more successful the building," he said. "Anything I can do to give them an edge, I will."

Currently at 85% occupancy, the building's major vacancy is the 3,000 s/f retail space fronting Bond St. Potentially dividable into two spaces, the unit was previously occupied by La Rotonda restaurant.

A handsome four-story Georgian Revival-style brick mews, the Thomaston Building was designed by James O'Connor and constructed in 1926 for the WR Grace Company, the shipping and industrial conglomerate whose family ownership socialized with Long Island's Jazz Age aristocracy. F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote "The Great Gatsby" in a cottage not far away. Later the building housed the world headquarters for Grace Real Estate and, later still, Great Neck Village Plaza Hall.

Today the Thomaston Building shelters 20 companies. Two retail/restaurant spaces front Bond Street. The second and third floors house software and web design firms, a niche candy manufacturer, law practices, a Chinese import business and a luxury hair salon. A start-up web developer occupies the basement. Thanks to a unique zoning designation, three top-floor flex units provide live/work space. The Great Neck Long Island Railroad station serving Manhattan and Long Island's North Shore is within a minute's walk. Multiple bus routes serve the village.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Thomaston Building is also a designated

local historical landmark in New York State and the Village of Great Neck Plaza. Architectural amenities include a cross-gabled slate roof, period showroom windows and a wood belt course with dentil molding above the first story. Decorative tiles imported from France, wall murals painted by Hugo Alex Rivas, and the landlord's historic flag collection adds to the charm. A thorough restoration/modernization effort undertaken in 2007 preserved the building's architectural and design legacy while updating its infrastructure with fiber-optic wiring, tenant-controlled HVAC, usable double pane windows, LED lighting and modern bathrooms and kitchenettes.

"It's evident why tenants gravitate towards Great Neck and this prestigious gem of a building," says Al Cappellino, a financial advisor based in Nassau County who visits friends in the building. "The building is kept like a five-star hotel and the mix of tenants truly serves the community."

He said, "The charm of the Thomaston Building transcends from generation to generation."

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