

Wheelwright Cluster Board Meeting Minutes for 5/10/18

- Attendees:
 - Jessica Joyner (President);
 - Genelle McDonald (Vice President);
 - Jill Jenkins (Secretary);
 - Kristina Myers (Director);
 - Michael Pendleton (Director);
 - Easton Warner (Treasurer);
 - Spencer Cristensen (Resident);
 - Robert Mowbray (Resident); and
 - Several additional resident owners attended the pre-board meeting that occurred at the tot lot.

Off-Leash Dog Area Discussion at Tot Lot

- Genelle made a presentation about the off-leash dog area and Mike acknowledged her hard work before opening the idea for general discussion.
- Attended by about a dozen resident owners who actively participated in the discussion of whether an off-leash dog area was desirable for the community and, if so, where it ought to be located. Among the points raised were:
 - Location
 - Mulched area in upper cluster – Some expressed a preference for this area because at least in this case noise problems would be shared across multiple residents, rather than concentrated on a few (more on noise below). Also, having it easily accessible to multiple homes has value as well. As it is already being used by dogs regularly, it was suggested that the noise may not be a significant additional burden.
 - Near sledding hill – People were generally concerned with how many people outside the community access this area. Also concerned that it might impinge on the sledding use.
 - Tot lot – While there were a couple of people who agreed that there are not many children who use it, this was not the general consensus. It was also noted that its use comes in waves, as one generation ages out. So, even if it were not being used during a particular year, this could change the following year. And it is apparent that some people are using it now. A few residents stated that if the tot lot area were used for the dog area, the tot lot should be moved elsewhere.
 - There was some side discussion about possibly improving the tot lot to make it more functional for children across a wider age span.
 - Next to tot lot – Some thought that it would be a good location, but that perhaps a couple of trees might need to be removed. Others thought that there was insufficient room. Still others were concerned about noise (more on that below).

- Area between 2233 and 2231 near the south end of the Cluster towards the Reston paths – It is very sloped and has heavy trees. It also has the benefit of being further off the path and less accessible to non-residents.
 - We also discussed the possibility of closing off the Cluster a bit from non-residents.
 - General
 - Concerns about potential conflicts with dogs off leash (aggressive dogs, etc.) – Attendees were referred to the list of rules and prohibitions cleared with the Cluster’s attorney, which would make the owner responsible for the behavior of their pet. It would be individual residents policing.
 - Concerns about non-residents accessing the lot – Discussed a fence with a lock to restrict access to residents.
 - Noise – There was quite a bit of concern about noise, particularly from residents in units that might be next to suggested locations for the dog area. There was also concern about how that noise might affect other residential areas as well, however, including the potential for lawsuits if the noise impinged on them. Several people noted the problems that have arisen with the Wiehle dog park that has apparently become overly noisy, possibly in part because it is the only place to go in the area.
 - Concerns about upkeep – As with possible conflicts with aggressive dogs, this would primarily be individual resident policing.
 - Appeal of off-leash dog area
 - Several expressed general support for an off-leash dog area, although all were concerned with the location and other potential problems (as noted above).

Resident Business

- Started the regular meeting with new business presented by Spencer Cristensen who left the meeting following the conclusion of that business.
- Spencer and his wife recently sold their house. Three to four months ago they replaced their front door and window. They looked at the Cluster documents for guidance about the door and only found guidance about the color, which the Reston Association (RA) has determined to be OK. However, RA has now pointed them to a 1996 document with a photo that he (and the rest of the Cluster residents) are apparently supposed to be aware of, to show that the door they installed is not approved by RA. RA wants it removed and replaced with an approved door per the 1996 guidance document.
- Spencer had a Design Review Application that he needed signed by the Board for his appeal to the RA, which the Board signed.
- We discussed concerns about there being documents that resident owners were apparently supposed to abide by that are not currently part of the Cluster packet that new residents receive, as well as the fact that those document are not yet available electronically through RA (only by going down in person and copying them).
- Spencer suggested that RA should verbally specify the requirements of the door, rather than relying solely on a picture.

- The Board also discussed a community survey to explore interest in getting a door like Spencer’s approved by RA.
- The Board also discussed the consequences of not replacing the door, even if it is required by RA. They could pass that burden on to the seller, but the seller would need to replace the door within 6 months.
 - **Addendum:**
 - Jessica approached RA about possibly adding this door (or potentially another door) to the options available to the Cluster. RA responded with a list of the requirements that would be needed to the submission, as well as an application form.
 - At Spencer’s request, Mike and Genelle attended the RA Design Review Application hearing on 6/5.
 - Genelle summarized the hearing as follows—The DRB rejected the application for the new door, on several grounds:
 1. It is a Shaker-style door, which is inconsistent with the architecture of the community;
 2. There are muntins (divider pieces) in both the window and the sidelite, which are not consistent with the single pane sidelite at the rest of the homes; and
 3. The muntins and trim are white, which is inconsistent with the brown trim throughout the cluster.
 - Genelle also noted that the DRB did not take exception to the new sidelite being narrower than those original with the homes. She suggested that if and when we submit an application for other door options, we focus on getting approval for the current standard sidelite width. Replacing the windows in kind means custom size, which is expensive.

April Meeting Minutes

- Minutes approved at board meeting on 6/28/18.

Off-Leash Dog Area Redux

- The Board briefly went over the pre-board meeting tot lot discussion.
- The Board noted the importance of complete transparency with the larger Cluster community as the idea of an off-leash dog area continues to develop.
- Discussed the possibility of a timed lock that could limit access to certain hours. Jessica to investigate.
 - **Addendum:**
 - There doesn't seem to be a time release outdoor padlock that isn't Bluetooth enabled (i.e., you need 1 Bluetooth connection to open it). Jessica will continue to investigate.
- There was some hope expressed that those who really want an off-leash dog area would value it sufficiently that they would not abuse it, if only to ensure that it was not removed.

- Kristian approached RA about possibly setting up an off-leash dog area in our area that is *not* on Cluster property. They gave her a contact for further investigation and the Board agreed that this avenue should be considered as well. Kristina to follow up with RA.
- Jessica to survey areas by path to see if there is space.

Tree Work

- We discussed Chip the arborist from Tree60 that has been working with the Cluster. Jessica stated that she feels like Chip is a long-term partner in the care of trees on Wheelwright property. She also feels that he is conservative in his approach.
- Robert Mowbray who is interested in how Tree60 will be addressing the pin oak tree (at 2216) that has been dropping sap on trees. He noted that it has always dropped sap (i.e., this is not a recent thing) and so is uncertain whether the treatment will be effective. The feeling was that we will have to wait and see how the tree does.
- The work will be performed on the 17th and the notification has gone out.
 - **Addendum:**
 - Work on pin oak tree completed on 5/21.
- The Board discussed possibly moving the assigned parking spaces to somewhere that would not be affected by falling sap and making those spaces for visitors, but there was not much enthusiasm for that.
- Chip from Tree60 plans to do another walkthrough in a few months to see what (if anything) needs to be done next.
- We may need to add mulch or something at the entrance to help the red tree. The magnolia tree is not looking good and the hemlock is back.

Erosion Work

- The schedule is pending, as Sunrise Landscaping works to fit us into their schedule. Kristian thinks that they will have the gravel by the end of the week and possibly be done by the end of the month.
 - **Addendum:**
 - The work started on 6/26.

Cluster Furniture

- Jessica sent the application to RA, but they needed additional details on each option and wanted us to pick one.
- Genelle asked us to revisit the question of why we were considering purchasing Cluster furniture, so the Board discussed whether we ought to leave the furniture that is already in the upper Cluster as-is or purchase new furniture for both the upper and lower Clusters.
- The Board decided to leave as-is for now. Concern was expressed that the area might become cluttered once again and Genelle agreed to keep an eye on that.
- Kristina suggested bringing the option of Cluster furniture at the annual meeting.
- Jessica suggested adding a question to any survey the Board sends out that asks residents about this issue.

Cluster Cleanup - Debrief

- Easton wants receipts.
- Kristina has noticed that children are walking into the new plantings at the front of the Cluster (under the sign) and has suggested getting some fencing to prevent this.
- The Board discussed trying to do some additional planting before the next Cluster cleanup.
 - Genelle is willing to do some pachysandra cuttings that we can put in water and then replant. That way, we can propagate our own instead of buying more.
 - There was some discussion between the Board and Robert about what is on the current RA invasive species list. Jessica to investigate.
 - **Addendum:**
 - Jessica found nothing on pachysandra as an invasive species for Fairfax county or Virginia.

Concrete Work

- Genelle is still working on this.
 - **Addendum:**
 - The concrete work walkthrough occurred on 6/8.
 - Genelle provided quotes for the Cluster work. The quote for all the Cluster work identified comes to just under \$8,500. Quotes for work on resident property is also available.

Social Committee

- Next meeting on 5/17 at Sarah's house.
- Brief discussion of the fall yard sale and why the spring yard sale might not have been as successful as we had hoped.

Video Surveillance Signs

- Mike took on the responsibility of getting the signs. We want them for the entrance to the community and the pad near Nate's house. We discussed the desired size and height. Mike will investigate and send us some options.
 - **Addendum:**
 - Mike sent some options to the Board for consideration.

Landscaping

- Need to get clarification on our current contract and explore possible landscaping options to improve the look of the Cluster.
- Kristina provided some proposed additions to our current contract, but the Board was unclear which we might already be paying for and which were partial or complete additions.
- Genelle and Kristina will meet with our American Lawn Brothers (ALB) for a walkthrough and follow-up discussion.
 - **Addendum:**
 - The walkthrough with American Lawn Brothers occurred on 5/22. Kristina provided detailed photos and information to the rest of the Board with

additional input from Genelle. Mike participated in part of the walkthrough as well. Topics discussed included:

- Grass cutting issue – Different crews handle the main Cluster mowing and the resident mowing. By the time the second crew arrived, it was too wet to mow. When he sent out another crew to handle it later on, they did not have the correct equipment (i.e., not for private lawns). The two incidents combined resulted in the excessive delay and lawn growth. We expressed the need for better communication going forward and he agreed to attempt to do better in that regard.
 - Problem with sidewalk weeds and weeds in the mulch areas – Some of that is the frequency which we have ALB perform their weeding services. For about an extra \$800/year, we can have them maintain the sidewalks and mulch areas every 2 weeks instead of once a month. This will likely have a much improved effect on the overall look of our community. Kristina and Genelle thought that it might be worth spending the extra money.
 - Identified an area of Cluster property that is sometimes neglected because it is mistaken for resident property. ALB will start addressing this.
 - Identified several problem areas in the community where additional plantings, re-seeding, changing from grass to mulch, or other possible options ought to be considered.
 - Identified an area near the bus path that has not been weeded properly. ALB will start addressing this.
 - Ricky suggested addressing the patchy area in the lower cluster by applying herbicide to get rid of unwanted growth and reseeded in September.
 - The group liked areas of mulch base with various shrubs and think we ought to consider that approach for problem grassy areas.
 - Discussed where Cluster property ends relative to Olde Crafts and Ricky will relate to his crews.
 - Upper Cluster island needs re-mulching. Ricky can provide the mulch for one of our Cluster cleanups.
 - Some shrubs to the left of the Wheelwright entrance are not doing well, could trim down or replace.
- Kristina has asked for specific quotes based on the problem areas identified in pictures from the walkthrough.
 - Kristina provided a document with the proposed additional services that ALB could provide to the Cluster for the Board to review prior to the next meeting.
 - Kristina and Easton have been jointly looking at the current contract and the proposed contract, as well as the prices quoted/paid.

Miscellaneous

- Following up on a discussion that occurred during the off-leash dog area meeting at the tot lot, the Board discussed possible ways to block or discourage non-resident access to the Cluster, including moving logs to block the path. The Board did note that a new sign is needed to replace the old one.
- Genelle suggested getting a private property sign for the entrance to the bus path.
- Dog waste and trash on Olde Crafts Road next to our development. We had been exploring adding a trash can and a “no dumping” sign and seeing if RA would police it. RA came back and if we put up, we would have to police it ourselves. We determined that it probably is not worth the investment.
- ESI has now become Waste Management due to a merger.

Financials

- Went over financials.
- Easton noted that someone needs to tell State Farm if the Board members change.
- The taxes have been completed.
- 2228 and 2237 are both under contract.
 - **Addendum:**
 - Easton noticed a couple of items on the most recent ESI bill that were inconsistent with earlier bills. Additional investigation got two charges removed from the bill, saving the Cluster approximately \$135.

Website

- **Addendum:**
 - Easton received a bill from our website host that was larger than expected and raised potential questions about its legitimacy. We checked with the last Secretary (who maintained the website for his input). Jill investigated with the web host and the bill is legitimate and actually does comport with the cost estimates that the last Secretary told Jill to expect when the bill came due this summer. The higher than expected cost is due to the contract term being for three years. Jill spoke with the company and got an estimate for one year, and (presumably) two years would be an option as well. The cost per year does increase the shorter the contract term is, however.
 - Easton was unable to find some of the changes that were part of the paid billing info on the web host site and is still looking into this. Jill sent as much information as she could find to assist in this.
 - The Board agreed to consider our options at the next meeting, given that the bill is not due until mid-July. In essence, it is a tradeoff between lower per year cost and time locked into the contract. So, if the Board feels that we want the option to be able to change companies, a shorter contract at a higher per year cost may make more sense. On the other hand, if we feel like we are comfortable with our current site and provider and unlikely to change, a longer contract at a lower per year cost may make more sense.

Definition of a Resident

- Still no reply from Cluster attorney; Jessica following up on a regular basis.

- **Addendum:**
 - Jessica received a response and it will be discussed at the next Board meeting.

Next Board Meeting

- It will be held at Kristina's (2226) at 7pm on June 28th.