

## Wheelwright Cluster Board Meeting Minutes for 10/4/18

- Attendees:
  - Jessica Joyner (President);
  - Kristina Myers (Vice President);
  - Jill Jenkins (Secretary);
  - Michael Pendleton (Director);
  - Easton Warner (Treasurer);
  - Kerry Wingell (Director); and
  - Sarah Keally (Resident).

### August Meeting Minutes

- Minutes approved at Board meeting on 10/4/18.

### Tree Work

- Chip did another walkthrough. He reviewed the tree in front of 2243 and said it was very healthy, but went into fall a bit earlier than the others. The Board asked the resident to monitor it and to take pictures if they think it is getting unhealthy to expedite review, as the tree is on Cluster property.
- Chip was most concerned with the trees behind 2226 and considered them a bigger concern than those behind Easton's property, which he believes will be all right for a couple more years. He recommends that the trees behind 2226 be taken care of next year. He believes that they will cost \$5,000 or a little more.
- Steve Weissman requested that the Board consider several other trees that he considers eyesores for removal. Jessica requested that he take pictures of specific trees so that she could send them directly to Chip, as it was not always clear whether they were considering the same tree.
- The Board revisited the problem of removing the tree that was taken down in August from behind Steve's residence (as well as the other affected residents). Kristina had taken the initiative to try to give away the tree as firewood on line, but found that after some initial interest, the contacts disappeared when she asked them to come and take a look.
  - Easton suggested asking Chip if he knows anyone who would be willing to cut it up and take it away for firewood. Or just cut it up. We could probably give it away if we could get it cut up. Jessica agreed that she would start by talking to Chip and Kristina will take it from there if needed.
- The Board again agreed that, given the amount that has been spent this year on trees above and beyond what was originally budgeted, no further expenses in that area will be incurred by the Board except in the case of safety hazards which will be dealt with promptly.
- The Board discussed preparing a presentation for the annual meeting on the tree work performed this year, covering what we did and why, as well as the unusual weather conditions throughout the region this summer and how that affected otherwise healthy trees. We discussed potentially having Chip give a presentation as well.
- Kerry requested that we add his tree to the general maintenance list (see deferred items for 2019 below).

- In general, any resident concerned about a community tree (whether for safety or maintenance), they are encouraged to take a picture and contact the Board with that information so that we can have our arborist evaluate the tree and incorporating it into our tree maintenance plan.
  - **Addendum:**
    - Mike texted an article about taking a comprehensive approach to tree health and the role that mulching can take. He noted that the kind of mulching we typically do is more for aesthetics and suggested that we talk to Chip about how we can improve our own efforts, saving us money and reducing risk at the same time.

### **Erosion Work**

- The next phase of the erosion work has been postponed until early 2019.
- Kristina is going to start preparing the Reston Association (RA) application for Phase 2 now so that it is ready to submit in January.

### **Concrete Work**

- The concrete work done on the path near 2231, while it seems to have prevented pooling on the path, seems to have created pooling in 2231's yard that may have only begun to show during the recent heavier rain. So, it doesn't seem to have really fixed the drainage issue. It may be necessary to do something like a trench alongside 2231's house with a grate along the top.
  - **Addendum:**
    - Jessica asked Paulo (the contractor who did the concrete work) to stop by to review and they were trying to coordinate a good time.

### **Landscaping**

- Kristina went over the landscapers that she has met with.
  - BladeRunners are very good. They work for a lot of communities like ours and are well regarded. There were some complaints about snowplowing related to the blizzard of several years ago, but they discussed that openly with Kristina and it was quite a while ago, a rather extreme circumstance, changes have been made since that time, and the complaints have not recurred. Their bid was very reasonable (approximately \$18,000, about the same as our current service). We could spend a little more as we have discussed to get our community landscaping back on track.
  - All companies have the option to do individual lawns as well.
  - Professional Grounds seemed like they would do a decent job as well.
  - She liked that Environmental Enhancements seemed to focus on all the little details during their walkthrough, although she had not yet received their bid.
  - BladeRunners and Environmental Enhancements both noted the weed problem that we currently have and that it will take quite a while to fix.
- We want to get new landscaping/snow removal contracts nailed down before the first snow, because we need to give American Lawn Brothers (ALB) 30-day notice.
- Kerry noted that ALB did replace the divots that they had been removing from his lawn and put down seed (although he did mention that he was on the Board).

- The Board briefly discussed the possibility of having the landscapers handle some of the smaller tree trimming work.
  - **Addendum:**
    - All of the bids are in and have been sent around, as well as placed into a neat spreadsheet for review. The Board will vote on a landscaping and snow removal company (not necessarily the same one) at the next Board meeting.

### **Architectural Shingles**

- The Board discussed the rejected RA application to use architectural shingles and unanimously agreed to support adding them to our standard. While they are more expensive up front, they last longer and are therefore less expensive over time. Jessica (and then Kristina) agreed to take point on resubmitting the application and updating the resident whose application was originally rejected about the status.
  - **Addendum:**
    - Mike prepared the revised form signed it and got it signed by Kristina as well and delivered it to Jessica. Jessica just needs to sign it as President and fill out the description with the design guidelines language change.

### **Financials**

- Prior to going over the financials, the Board discussed the proposed budget for 2019.
  - We agreed to leave in parking lot sealing, but to put the amount as \$0. Basically, this is a place holder to remind us that we need to do the job in 2020. We didn't like the job last time.
  - We will need to do in new grind and mill in 2025 and an increase in dues will likely be needed for that.
  - We agreed to leave in concrete work for next year.
  - Snow removal also needs to remain in the budget.
  - **Addendum:**
    - Easton reworked the budget based on Board input and the budget, as-written leaves the Cluster \$2671.00 in the RED at the end of 2019. The budget does not take into account any increases in expenses (grounds maintenance will probably increase a lot, maybe trash pickup as well, plus other unanticipated expenses such as falling trees and concrete work), so costs may actually be higher than are predicted right now. Easton notes that the added expenses result in about \$10 per quarter per residence. To make sure that all debts are covered, he presumes that the quarterly dues would have to be increased by at least \$20 per quarter, maybe more.
- Went over financials.
  - **Addendum:**
    - Waste Management increased their fees on two items without authorization or notice and Easton is taking the initiative to straighten this out with them. However, this has been a recurring problem with them.

### **Annual Meeting**

- It would typically be held on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, but Mike cannot make that. We agreed to hold it on Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup>. Jessica will submit the request.
- Items to be discussed at the Board meeting are listed under **Items Deferred to Annual Meeting** below. More detail on the discussion of a presentation on the tree budget can be found above under **Tree Work**.
- The Board also discussed the need to increase dues. We have issues of service quality going down and costs going up (our landscaping supplier is a good example of that). Also, we know that in the next 6 years we are going to need to repave the parking lot and that is going to be a substantial cost.
- The Board discussed giving people some notice and having at least two increases, so that it would be incremental, allowing people to better prepare themselves and make adjustments. We also want to be able to present something to the residents at the annual meeting.
- Also some concern on the other side of implementing over too long a period and winding up with insufficient funds, which could happen if future Board members take a shorter-term approach, rather than looking at the resources needed over a longer time frame.
- To cover the cost of repaving the parking lot without going into the Cluster's savings, we need to make \$100,000 in the next 5 years or approximately a \$75 a quarter.
- Kerry is going to work with Easton to plot out some options for possible increases. One possibility discussed was two \$30 increases, raising the quarterly dues to \$300 with a one quarter delay between the first and second increase.
  - **Addendum:**
    - Easton did some additional research and the Cluster dues have changed very little since 2008 when they were \$200 per quarter (no record of how far back they were at that level). There was a one-time \$40 charge in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2011. Then they increased to \$220 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2013 and to the current \$240 level in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2013. So, they has been no change in the last 5 years and little change in the last decade.
- Jessica is considering putting together a flier prior to the annual meeting advertising the topics that will be covered to the community.
- Three positions will open up at the annual meeting.

### **Mosquito Control**

- Mike looking into this and it is pretty pricy. The best solution is for people need to clean their gutters or install really good gutter guards that are appropriate for the kind of leaves, etc. that we typically get into our gutters.
  - **Addendum:**
    - Mike got a quote from Pest Now for \$450 per application, which they guarantee for 30 days. We would need to decide how often we want to apply it each year to come up with a budget number. They did not have a suggested number.
    - Mike suggested something like 4 treatments around, say, May 1, June 15, August 1 and September 15 (4 applications = \$1,800). Although he suggests waiting to see if we notice a difference after the first application before committing to the others.

- Mike suggested notifying residents that we are considering this issue and getting feedback before proceeding. Jessica is going to add it to the survey she is developing.

### **Little Free Library**

- There is some interest among Board members in setting one up.
- Jessica was thinking of to the right of the Wheelwright sign in the front as a location.
- Mike was thinking that between the upper and lower clusters would be a good idea and everyone agreed with that idea.
- Jessica is going to put together a Survey Monkey on this and a few other things. We had already agreed to raise it at the annual meeting to gauge interest.

### **Cluster Cleanup**

- The Board discussed activities for the Cluster cleanup.
  - Re-chipping the tot lot and upper cluster island.
    - There is free mulch available from the county. We could possibly rent a truck and get that.
  - Clear parking spaces.
  - Dig a trench for erosion control.
  - Put up the video surveillance signs that have been purchased.
  - We agreed to not repaint any of the parking spaces at this time as we have enough to do.
- Kristina is going to take care of purchasing the food. We agreed to up the budget to \$600.
- Sarah agreed to do the sign for us again.
  - **Addendum:**
    - The Cluster cleanup took place on Saturday, October 20<sup>th</sup>. It was a great success! Lots of our neighbors came out to help:
      - Mulch the upper cluster island;
      - Put up video surveillance signs;
      - Clean leaves from portions of the upper cluster parking lot (around the island); and
      - Planting flowers, etc. in area next to Genelle's residence.
    - The Cluster sign was stolen the day before the Cluster cleanup (although the base was left behind). Mike took the initiative to find a couple of options online and the Board expects to vote on one to purchase at the next meeting.

### **Next Board Meeting**

- It will be held at Jill's (2254) at 7pm on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **Items Deferred to Annual Meeting**

1. New front door options.
2. Little Free Library – drop off a book, take a book.
3. Off-leash dog area.
4. Potential increase in dues.

5. Tree presentation – what did and why, include discussion of the broader D.C. area, and possibly a talk from Chip.

#### **Items Deferred to 2019**

1. Tree maintenance list (general tree trimming, etc.):
  - Branch touching Steve’s house. Currently planned for spring 2019.
  - Trees around Easton’s property (will eventually be a safety hazard and so are discussed below as well, but not as a separate item). Currently planned for spring 2019. In Chip’s latest walkthrough, he noted that Easton’s trees could probably wait a couple of years and so we could possibly revisit this date.
  - Move tree that was felled in August in 2019, possibly by offering it as free firewood (if we can arrange to get it cut).
  - Additional trees suggested by Steve via email to the Board.
  - Kerry’s tree
2. Tree Hazard list
  - Trees behind 2226 need to be taken care of in 2019; Chip estimates that it will cost approximately \$5,000 or a little more. Easton’s trees can be postponed possibly for a couple of years, although it will eventually become a safety concern where some of the other tree work is more discretionary. Given the Board’s limited resources and the wide range of demands on those resources, we will probably need to continue to allocate our tree budget carefully in 2019.
3. Phase 2 of the erosion project is currently planned for March of 2019.
4. Potential increase in dues.

#### **Items Deferred to 2020**

1. Parking lot sealing.

#### **Items Deferred to 2025**

1. Parking lot grind and mill.