

COUNTRYSIDE PROPRIETARY
GROUNDS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
July 20, 2022

1) CALL TO ORDER

- a) Meeting Called to Order via remote attendance at 7:02 PM.
- b) Attendees: Penny Francke (Chair), Diane Blunt (Welbourne), Terri Hess (Foxfield), Pamela McGraw (Oakridge), Ron McNulty (Morven), Barbara O'Connor (Belmont), Mike Stracka (PMP), Chris Codino (Advantage Landscape), Frank Murphy (Advantage Landscape)

Absent: Jim Krips (Rokeby), Timothy Shamble (Oatlands)
Guests: Fredrik Wallin, Welbourne; Dora Ramirez, and Gerry D'Onofrio, Morven Woods

2) COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATION

- a) Approval of the meeting agenda with these changes: Item 7C deferred to a later meeting; Item 3B to include a tree replacement. Motion made by Terry, seconded by Barb; unanimously approved.
- b) Committee confirmed prior e-vote of approval of June Meeting Minutes. Motion made by Ron, seconded by Pamela; approved unanimously.

3) RESIDENT & GUEST PARTICIPATION

- a) The Committee discussed a March 2020 decision to reassign parking spaces in Morven to accommodate the request of a disabled resident. The property owner affected by the reassignment was notified by both e-mail and USPS letter in March 2020, but he is now protesting the reassignment. The protesting resident was not present at this Grounds meeting. The reassignment of the parking space does need to be approved by the Board of Directors. Ron motioned to reconfirm the Grounds Committee's March 2020 "Action out of Meeting" and leave the parking spaces as they are today (i.e., with the reassignment to accommodate the disabled resident's request), and to forward the decision to the BOD for its confirmation; Barb seconded the motion. Approved unanimously.
- b) Ms. Ramirez and Mr. D'Onofrio of Morven Woods requested that the Grounds Committee consider planting trees in the common area behind their townhouse. They have made multiple requests over a number of years for new trees to replace diseased white pines that were removed. Juniper bushes have since filled in the area to some extent, but the residents are requesting new tree(s). Their request has been recorded by the Committee and will be considered when the budget allows for the planting of additional trees.
- c) Fredrik Wallin is asking the Grounds Committee to look into the enforcement of parking policies on townhouse streets. He approached the BOD about this earlier this year, and was told that the new towing company will patrol more frequently, but Fredrik is not convinced this is happening, as he sees commercial vehicles violating the policy on a regular basis. Penny reminded everyone that we must enforce the policies currently on the books—i.e., in Resolutions 233 and 234—which stipulate that a vehicle must be stickered with a warning notice before it is towed. Fredrik requests that PMP patrol the neighborhoods more frequently to sticker vehicles in violation of the Resolutions, and to follow up with the towing company. In addition, the Grounds Committee will be reviewing Resolutions 233 and 234 and revising where necessary to suggest a more consistent and fair parking policy for parking of all vehicles on townhouse streets. Pamela requested that Committee members suggest the specific language they'd like to see in the revised Resolutions. Penny reminded the Committee to also review Resolution 125, which outlines the procedures for revising Resolutions.

Given the meeting's time constraints, further discussion on the revision of the parking Resolutions was deferred to a future meeting.

Fredrik also asked the Grounds Committee and PMP to ensure foliage is trimmed on CountrySide Blvd near the school to improve visibility for motorists.

4) POND ISSUES

- a) The Committee reviewed the current AEC pond inspection reports. Water is getting warmer but looks relatively clear. The health of the pond seems to be improving under AEC's care. The Committee has asked Mike to obtain a quote for a fountain aerator to increase the oxygen level (currently at the low end of acceptable). John Geiger (Oakridge resident) had reported that the Loudoun County crew who did pond work earlier this year were good.
- b) The Committee reviewed the previous recommendations of the Pond Subcommittee. The Committee has asked Mike to obtain a quote for a fountain aerator to increase the oxygen level (currently at the low end of acceptable). As part of a possible grant program (see later discussion), Pamela and Barbera will develop a proposed planting scheme with native plants.

5) ADVANTAGE ITEMS

a) Landscape Services

- i) Since the monthly reports and issues spreadsheets were distributed on the day of the GC meeting, Penny asked the Committee to review those documents and send any comments or questions to Mike. Penny also requested that the spreadsheet of items/issues have an index or reference number added for tracking purposes, and that individuals referenced in the issue descriptions be referred to by name (to avoid having to guess who is meant by "you" or "I"). Committee members to e-mail Mike with suggestions on areas that need to be re/over seeded come Fall.
- ii) Pamela moved to accept the Advantage proposal for \$3,456 to plant the **Panola XP Blotch Mix** for the fall entrance annuals; Barb seconded the proposal. Approved unanimously.
- iii) Committee reviewed and discussed the Advantage weekly meeting report summary.
- iv) Consideration of options to repair the annuals that were damaged at the Algonkian eastern entrance monument (From Cascades) they appear to be eaten by deer but trying to make a comeback. Recommend netting.
- v) Discussion of the installation of the three remaining Red Buckeye trees at the Belmont easement, behind the tunnel loop. Buckeye trees delayed in TN. Plan to install in the Fall. Still in a greenhouse, not in a truck.
- vi) The Committee discussed the edging of grass strips adjacent to sidewalks in light of resident complaints. The contract with Advantage specifies that "Mechanical edging of all sidewalks, curbs and pipe stems adjacent to common areas, shall be performed with every other mowing during the growing season." In spite of what previous vendors may have done, the grass edge that is on a resident's property—even if it abuts the sidewalk—is the resident's responsibility to mow, and is not covered by the landscaping contract. Frank Murphy of Advantage explained that Advantage had recently received a warning letter from an attorney (at a different HOA/contract) warning them against edging the homeowner's side of the sidewalk, so he has advised his crews to follow the exact wording in the contract. We will have to educate our residents about what is, and is not, covered by the contract, and inform them that we are checking to make sure Advantage is performing according to that contract.

The Committee also discussed how the common area between two townhouses should be presumed to be covered under the contract and should be mowed regularly; if an area is in question, it needs to be investigated and added to Mike's "map" of areas requiring mowing, if warranted.

vii) The Committee reviewed Mike's photo with his estimated location of the VDOT easement at the western CountrySide entrance sign, and discussed options for remediating the plantings there. Terry asked if we could get a defined edge around the plantings, but Chris warned that given the slope, the edge can get washed out with run-off. Committee asked Advantage to come back to us with suggested/recommended designs for that sign location, perhaps considering some of the elements that make the hillside plantings on the opposite side of Algonkian (where the forsythias are) so attractive and robust. We had expected a proposal from Advantage this month, but Advantage was unaware of that. In future, Mike will make sure to send a copy of the meeting minutes to Chris. Penny also asked Advantage to keep in mind that CountrySide is subject to Loudoun County's 1972 Zoning Ordinance, for any proposals Advantage may generate. Ron noted that the Committee would like to receive any proposed design plans for this location in advance of our meeting, so the committee has plenty of time to review.

b) Tree Services

- i) Two regular tree service days were completed this period.
- ii) Three storm damage tree service day were completed this period (Pending final cleanup from the 7/12 storms)
- iii) The current tree services list was reviewed.

6) PMP REPORT

a) Common Area Ground Maintenance Items

- i) Staff replaced or repaired two sections of damaged split rail fencing this period, three damaged fire lane posts and one six-by-six street signpost.
- ii) PMP has issued service tickets with Comcast (1001502316792094), Verizon (WO# VAC804EEZ6) and Dominion VA Power (WO# 332-058-67) requesting they address the worst of the concerns noted.
 - (1) The letter to Verizon with our list of concerns has been finalized and is ready for Dave Barrie's signature. Plan is to send the letter both via e-mail and USPS.
 - (2) PMP is still working with Jim to clarify and confirm possible actions with Dominion Power.
 - (3) PMP is still working to get a POC for Comcast concerns; Mike says he should have a contact name next week (i.e., by 7/29). To date, all urgent issues have been addressed directly via service tickets.

b) Accident-Related Items

- i) None this period.

c) 2022 Budget Proforma was reviewed. Pamela asked if the questions on the trash contract had been resolved; Mike said "it is and it will be". To address ongoing questions like this, Mike volunteered to start sending out the Proforma as an Excel spreadsheet (vs the PDF version) showing the comments and notes. Penny asked Mike to be sure that all of the details on the trash contract, including increased landfill tipping fees and fuel surcharges, are reflected in the Proforma AND in

the budget actuals to be used in the upcoming October budget sessions. Mike confirmed that the \$27K showing under GL code 6154 as an April actual expense is from 2021 and will be recoded by PMP Accounting.

- d) 2022 Project List was reviewed.
 - i) Committee discussed the pilot 20' section of 21A stone placed by PMP on the easement trail in Belmont. The pilot section looks good, so the Committee asked Mike to proceed with plans to extend it to the paved trail along Algonkian, near the tunnel entrance. Mike will price this out for approval at next meeting and plan to install before or soon after start of school. Barb asked Mike to do what he could to address a muddy section of the trail in a wooded area near the pilot section.

7) OLD BUSINESS

- a) The Committee discussed the bid responses for the street, sidewalk, curb & gutter and trail repairs for 2022. While the quoted prices are significantly higher than the amounts budgeted in the Reserve Study, a closer comparison of the "Street Repairs" line item showed it to be very close to the Reserve estimate. Mike will provide a revised spreadsheet to Penny with further explanations on the "optional recommended services" in the bids, along with a more detailed analysis of the bids' comparison to the Reserve Study line items. Penny asked Mike to be sure that the revised spreadsheet has the correct inflationary cost escalations, as well. Mike presented details from NVM on the fuel surcharge, but the numbers and notations were confusing, and Mike was asked to get clarification from NVM. However, in order to avoid further delays that might threaten the project timeline, the Committee assumed a maximum fuel surcharge not to exceed \$7500, for the purposes of moving the motion forward. Pamela made a motion to award the paving contract to NVM for a cost NTE \$326,000 (including a maximum \$7500 fuel surcharge), contingent upon NVM's agreement to the maximum fuel surcharge; Ron seconded. Approved unanimously. Mike says all bid background/details will be in the Grounds Google Drive folder.
- b) Discussion of the member suggestions regarding townhouse parking and enforcement of Resolutions 233 and 234 (see discussion under Resident and Guest Participation).

8) NEW BUSINESS

- a) The Committee reviewed the report from the VCE LC Master Gardener Tree Stewards, as well as the recommendations made by Committee members on how to address the cedar trees at the intersection of Spotswood and Bentwood roads in Foxfield. Many thanks to Terri, Barb, and Pamela who prepared an extensive summary complete with sketches and diagrams! While there was some discussion about how many trees should be removed in total, the Committee agrees with the Tree Stewards that many of the trees are declining and need to be addressed. As this is a significant undertaking, it may need to be done in stages over a couple of years. Terri will work on developing a prioritized list for Mike, so he and Advantage can estimate how many tree service days will be required. Work could be done in December; Committee to review again when the prioritized list is available, and it's closer to the planned tree service days.
- b) Pamela presented information on a grant program offered under the Virginia Trees for Clean Water Program. Pamela has offered to develop a plan for plantings around the pond (possibly incorporating native trees and shrubs, ferns, milkweed, etc.), and to work on the grant application.

There's a very tight timeline, as the application is due August 25th. The background information suggests that matching funds are recommended but not required and can include in-kind and volunteer hours. Penny will seek Board approval to be the signatory on the grant application. The Committee agreed to commit up to \$5,000 of Additional Landscaping budget (GL 6127) to this effort. Terri is interested in helping, as well.

9) INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- a) PMP worked with our pest control vendor to address another Bald-Faced Hornet nest in a tree on Haxall Court.
- b) In light of current inflationary pressures, the Board of Directors has decided to limit 2023 resident budget project suggestions to only those items that are category 4 ("REQUIRED - Items based on legal obligations or responsibilities and/or public safety considerations") items, with NAC input to the BoD.
- c) Penny informed the Committee of CRC's intent to host a "Trunk or Treat" event in place of Boo Fest in October; they are asking each standing committee to volunteer their time and a vehicle; decorations and candy would be provided by CRC. Event is tentatively scheduled for October 22nd from 1-3PM (might be shortened to 1-2).
- d) The Grounds Committee will adopt a time limit for resident participation, with each resident asked to limit his/her address to the Committee to 5 minutes (including discussion). Mike will include a notification of this limit to residents when sending out the meeting dial-in information.
- e) Mike will prepare a "Tree Request List" of new plantings requested by residents for comparison to budget funds; to be discussed at our next meeting. Mike will also continue to separately track trees removed due to storm damage, so we can account for those against budgeted funds.

10) ADJOURN

- a) Diane motioned to adjourn; Pamela seconded. Approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 10:26PM.
- b) Next regular meeting is scheduled to be held remotely at **7:00 PM on Wednesday, August 17, 2022.**