

Thatchmont Board Meeting – Apr. 4, 2005

Trustees: Neil Golden, Karin Hobman, Arthur Mattuck, Martha Recht, Richard Yurko.

Absent: Ellen Frank, Deborah Lindeman, Larry Sawyer (Mgmt.)

Treasurer's Report

It's too early in the year to make meaningful predictions as to where we will end up vs. the budget for the year. The principal uncertainties are oil and snow-removal; it was a cold and snowy winter.

Oil expenses were \$35K by the end of March. This leaves \$17K in the budget to take us through mid-May, when the heat stops (except for hot water), and the mid-Sept. - Dec. period. Weather and price are the variables.

The annual choice in August is between a floating-price contract, where you pay market-price each time you buy oil, or a capped-price contract (\$1.45 last August) where you pay market-price up to a maximum of \$1.45, plus a fixed per-gallon surcharge to pay for the price insurance.

Larry has one contract for all the properties he manages, which gives the benefit of buying power; the trustees approve this. This season it was a floating-price contract.

The estimate for this season is that we would have spent about the same for either contract. Our average price for oil was \$1.38. The current price (as of early April) was \$1.65; this makes the capped-price contract seem the better choice, but not after the fixed insurance surcharge is taken into account, since we would have been paying this surcharge throughout the larger part of the season when the price was below \$1.45.

Snow-removal is probably already over budget (not all the bills had come in by early April); however April has been kind, and the bills for any December snow-removal will be rendered in January and belong to the 2006 budget.

Given the above, and the currently rising oil prices, which are supposed to remain high throughout the summer, it seems unlikely that the current 10% **oil surcharge** in our condo fee can be lowered during this year; if oil continues to rise, it probably will have to stay in place next year or even be increased.

Old Business

1. **Heating.** The adjustments made to the heating cycles seem to be successful; expenses have been lowered by 6-7% and complaints have disappeared. Several brief cycles of day-time heating have been added; heating is based on external temperature, rather than on two indoor thermostats – the ones tried out proved defective, and their placement was problematical. This will be reviewed again next season.

2. **Dumpster.** The new dumpster (Atlantic Waste Removal) is the same size as the old one (10 cu. yds.), but easier to load. The waste-removal truck has been leaving the top open, but our cleaning company RCM has been asked to keep it closed. It has been moved back to the high end of the parking lot to reduce the rodent problem at 15 Thatcher (which continues).

3. **Painting.** A quote will be obtained for the remainder of the job from last-year's painting company (side and parking-lot windows; non-apartment basement windows), and trustees will vote by e-mail on the quote; the painting should be done in May/June.. Unit-owners and Larry should inspect last summer's painting to see how well it is holding up. Owners that have replacement windows that no longer require storm windows should let Larry know so they can be removed during painting.

4. **RCM cleaner** is currently Victor's son; Victor has gone back to Guatemala. He works 20 hours/week, but the job is rated at 15. An effort will be made to use the extra five hours; examples are given below (regular policing of grounds, leaf-removal). Other suggestions are welcome – let Larry or a trustee know if you have any..

New Business

1. **Parking lot.** The snow removal has torn up patches of paving, which need to be replaced. The worst spots have been marked in orange. Larry will get a quote. There is also a lot of sand, which the snow-removal contractor who put it down has offered to remove at no charge.
2. **Illegal parking** in our lot by contractors for Amory St. condo projects. Statements will be sent out to the offending condominiums.
3. **Landscaping - Thatcher.** As an experiment, leaves will be left under some of the yews as a natural mulch. Some shrub replacement will be needed.
4. **25 Thatcher #4** (Hossein Farmanfarmaian) has been sold; the trustees voted by e-mail not to exercise Thatchmont's right-of-first-refusal (i.e., to buy the unit ourselves).
5. **19 Thatcher #5** kitchen renovation plans were approved.
6. Some **lights** in the lobbies and parking lot have been on at peculiar hours; their timing has been corrected.
7. **Street parking** for blockbuster concerts at the new BU facility on Comm. Ave. has so far not gotten out of hand.
8. **Noise** from the BHA project on Egmont St. continues as a problem. When it is objectionable, unit-owners should call:
Brookline Housing Authority: 617-232-2265 and
BHA Liaison Police Officer: 617-730-2222
This is important—without a telephone log of prior complaints, no action can be taken against repeating offenders (in the past, some have been expelled from the Project).
9. **Egmont Apartment and Parking** The Egmont basement apartment will be vacant as of Sept. 1. In addition, there are available parking spaces. Unit-owners are asked to post the announcement to area listings (universities, principally):
Apartment for rent, newly renovated, available Sept 1.
North Brookline, convenient to BU, Coolidge Corner, Amory Park
2 Bedroom, 1 Bath, Kitchen with dishwasher, disposal, microwave
Hardwood floors in bedrooms, carpeted hallways and living room
Parking available
\$1,600/month; no fee; includes heat and hot water
Contact: L. Sawyer at 617-254-3100
10. **Next meeting:** June 7, 25 Thatcher #6 (Hobman).

Arthur Mattuck
Recording Secretary

(Note: These minutes have gone through a first revision, but not a final approval. They are being distributed now to avoid further delay (e.g., see notice below). If further corrections are required, they will be noted in the June minutes.

Reminder: Hazardous Waste Collection Day — Sunday May. 1 9:00-2:00

This is at the DPW Transfer Station in S. Brookline, 815 Newton St. (follow signs from Hammond St.) You should have received an announcement with details; it can also be found on the Brookline Town website.