

## Thatchmont Board Meeting – June 28, 2005

Trustees: Ellen Frank, Neil Golden, Karin Hobman, Arthur Mattuck, Martha Recht, Richard Yurko.  
Management: Larry Sawyer      Unit-owner: Paul Tempest      Absent: Deborah Lindeman

### Treasurer's Report

The Jan-May 2005 report of Income and Expenditures (Budget vs. Actual) was presented and will be posted on our web site. There was nothing too unusual to discuss; the treasurer called attention to:

**Snow-removal** expenses are complete for the year: about 12K, or 20% over budget.

**Oil expenses** through the end of May were 39K, or 75% of the budget. This item accounts for about 1/4 of our ordinary (i.e., non-capital) expenses.

As anyone who has filled their gas tank in the last couple of weeks knows, the price of oil continues to rise. As promised at the last annual meeting, the trustees revisited the 10% Special Assessment for oil in effect for this year, and concluded that it would have to stay in place for the remainder of the year; in the light of looming expenses (see below) it is likely to remain for next year as well, and we can consider ourselves lucky if it does not have to be raised.

**Budget predictions.** Outside of the price of oil, the principal uncertainty is the income from the Egmont St. basement apartment, which will be vacant Sept. 1 (see below). Rich's prediction was that at year's end we would be between 0 and 10% over budget, and the contribution to our reserves might be around 30K, depending.

**Five-Year Plan.** Ellen Frank presented an update of our five-year plan for capital expenditures. It will be posted to our internet site. There are large uncertainties, principally stemming from the parking-lot problem (see below): how to finance it (reserves or special assessment), and when this will be needed.

### Old Business

1. **Painting.** The trustees approved by e-mail a contract of 15K with Modern Painting for the parking-lot and side windows, which is currently approaching completion.

At the meeting another .5K was approved for the 12 back doors.

A quote will be obtained for painting the non-apartment basement windows on Thatcher St.; the corresponding windows on Egmont St. have wood sills in poor condition, which have to be taken care of first, either by replacement, or aluminum covering. Advice and quotes will be obtained.

2. **Egmont Apartment and Parking.** The Egmont basement apartment will be vacant as of Sept. 1. It has been posted on the internet to Craig's List and has been shown a few times; the renovated interior is attractive and makes it a good value, but the unattractive back entrance is a stumbling-block.

Unit-owners are once again asked to post the announcement to area listings they have access to.

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

3. **Parking lot.** The sand was cleaned off by two men working two days.

Resurfacing the lot is the biggest capital expense looming. The current surface is blacktop over the original concrete surface; cracking and shifting of the concrete foundation cracks the blacktop above, leaving it vulnerable to further damage from the snow removal trucks.

A simple resurfacing would currently cost around 50K, but not solve the underlying concrete problem.

Removing and replacing the concrete by fill, with a layer of crushed rock below the blacktop resurface would cost considerably more. Disinterested advice is needed; Rich Yurko offered to contact a company he knows that can conduct tests and offer it.

4. **Landscaping.** Thatcher plantings: a PJM rhododendron at 25 and a yew for the hole in the hedge between 15 and 19.

Egmont: a fall-blooming althea and a yew at 26.

5. **Fall party.** The date has been changed to Saturday, Sept. 17, and as an experiment it will be held indoors in one of the units.

6. **RCM cleaner.** To get a handle on his duties and the hours needed to perform them, a schedule of days, hours, and duties will be drawn up. Items mentioned were brass doorplates, and a daily walk-through of the landscaping (street plantings and tree-lawns) and the parking lot, removing trash tossed there (paper, plastic) as well as gardening wastes (pruned branches and removed weeds).

### **New Business**

1. **Insurance.** The buildings will be reassessed by the Insurance Co. to see if current replacement costs are still realistic. (This could impact the five-year plan.)

2. **Setting priorities.** A list will be prepared of non-automatic repair and maintenance items, with a view to setting up a schedule for these. Within the next couple of weeks, the trustees will conduct an inspection of the common areas to compile the list.

Advice from unit-owners will be sought at the annual meeting. Meanwhile, unit-owners can make their own suggestions via e-mail to: trustees@thatchmont.org, or by speaking to their building trustee.

3. **Gas fireplace.** A top-floor unit-owner requested permission to install a gas fireplace, to be vented through the roof with both air intake and exhaust flues. At present we have only one (grandfathered) working fireplace of any type. After some discussion, the trustees decided there were potential problems regarding its long-term maintenance and its establishing a precedent; the permission was not granted.

4. **Satellite roof TV-dishes.** There are several currently on the roofs, all one way or another in violation of our by-laws. Unit-owners are reminded that these require:

- (i) prior request to the trustees for permission to install
- (ii) professional installation
- (iii) no visibility from the front of the buildings.

5. **RCN cable.** To offer RCN service for Thatchmont, the company needs to run a third aerial cable (at no charge) between the Egmont and Thatcher buildings, alongside the Verizon and Comcast cables now there. RCN offers phone, cable, and high-speed internet; reports about it vary from enthusiastic to highly negative. However, this is an individual decision, and the trustees approved, feeling that increased competition among suppliers is desirable.

6. **Real-estate signs.** These have in the past been routinely put up by brokers on our property, often for months. Many condominiums do not permit them. One recently punctured our underground watering system. After discussion about how much they were actually needed, the aesthetics, and the dangers, the trustees voted 4-2 (Rich and Neil dissenting) to amend the by-laws and ban them at Thatchmont, effective immediately, except for non-staked Open House signs placed for a day.

7. **Next meeting.** Tues. Sept. 13, 15 Thatcher #6 (Recht).

Arthur Mattuck  
Recording Secretary