

Thatchmont Board Meeting – Tues. Dec.13, 2005

Trustees: Anna and Daniel Blankshtein, Neil Golden, Arthur Mattuck, Victor Samarov, Martha Recht, Paul Tempest Management: Larry Sawyer Absent: Victor Frank

Elections

Trustee replacement. Anna Blankshtein had been elected trustee at the annual meeting; she resigned at the beginning of this meeting in favor of Daniel Blankshtein, who was then elected by the trustees as her replacement for the remainder of the two-year term.

Added 12/27: Since the meeting, there has been a recurrence of the problems which originally led to Anna's serving as the official trustee (with Daniel as *eminence grise*), but were afterwards thought to be over; as a result Daniel is cutting back on his activities, and is not able to serve either as official or shadow trustee. The Board is seeking a replacement for him, from 26 Egmont if possible.

Election of Officers. The following were elected:

President: Neil Golden (continuing)
Treasurer: Paul Tempest (replacing Rich Yurko)
Recording Secretary: Arthur Mattuck (continuing)

Financial Report

Larry presented the essentially complete 2005 report, and the final version of the 2006 budget. These will be posted to the website.

2005 report:

- * oil, water, and insurance accounted for well over half our expenses;
- * cleaning, snow-removal, and management brought this up to over 3/4.
- * waste disposal: after switching companies we are now paying 1/3 less
- * reserves: in effect about 15K will be transferred at year's end to reserves, increasing them to 55K

2006 budget: The noteworthy items are:

* heating oil: budget increased from 52K (2005) to 80K (2006). Current price is \$2.00/gallon. Fixing our price ("locking in") costs us 25c/gallon for insurance, (plus the gain or loss from the wholesale price movement); this is not planned for now, but remains a possibility.

* insurance: budget increase from 23.5K to 30K, because of the revaluation of our property to "actual replacement cost"

* reserve: 2006 contribution budgeted at 40K to help pay for capital expenses (the parking lot has to be treated separately because of the expense).

Old Business

1. Masonry repairs. The 8K worth of masonry repairs to the parking-lot outside stairwells was to have been done in late November, but it has had to be postponed (perhaps until early spring) because of the excessive rain and unseasonably cold weather.

The 15K year-end budget-surplus transfer to reserves does not include this 8K, which is being set aside for the repairs.

2. Parking lot progress report. An architect with parking-lot experience was hired to conduct tests and make a proposal. The test borings proved unnecessary, since he was able to obtain the original plans dating from the 1920's. The estimated cost of replacing the underlying concrete by sand is only 12K – this would provide a solid foundation for the black-top resurfacing.

Still to be considered: Brookline current code requirements for drainage; possible redesign of the spaces, which would have to take into account the need for year-round trash removal and winter snow-plowing.

New Business

1. Remodeling at 14 Egmont #5 Paul Tempest (*qua* unit-owner) presented renovation plans, which were approved after discussion.

From the Association's viewpoint, the significant items were placement of a central-air-conditioning

unit and a skylight on the roof, and enlarging the kitchen area by moving a structural wall by 5 feet (adding a beam support), and increasing to 100-amp service.

For the roof there is precedent; moving structural walls requires care but is routine. Questions were raised as to whether routine approval of 100-amp service can continue indefinitely, since the total service to each of the 6 entries is only 200 amps; will we be looking down the road at brown-outs during summer heat waves? For now, 100-amp represents capacity, not actual use, as far as we know; we hope that inter-unit electricity wars are not in our future – some forbearance may be required to avoid them.

2. Fines. To keep up with inflation and attract the attention of unit-owners, the trustees raised the maximum fine for infractions of our rules, regulations, and by-laws from \$50 to \$100/offense/day.

3. Rental apartment. A trustee raised the issue of whether one of the rental apartments (currently housing six) was in compliance with Brookline housing regulations, which limits the number of unrelated tenants. These will have to be looked into – both the regulation, and the relatedness.

4. Thatchmont.org Stefan Deibel created and hosted our site and was webmaster, but has now moved away. Neil Golden's son-in-law will be taking over the hosting and webmastership – our thanks. Information about the mailing list is at

http://thatchmont.org/mailman/listinfo/thatchmont-owners_thatchmont.org

E-mail Business

Since meetings are roughly every two months, some of the trustees' business has to be conducted by e-mail during the interims. This new section of the minutes will deal with those items which need to be officially recorded, or are felt to be of interest to unit-owners.

1. Roof decks and other usage of common areas. As a result of questions raised about a roof-deck by a prospective buyer, and investigation by management, the following policies hold or are affirmed:

a) Equipment placed in common areas by permission of the trustees (this includes roof decks) is the responsibility of the unit-owner(s) who paid and got permission for it, insofar as repair, maintenance, replacement, and/or disposition is concerned. When the unit is sold, this responsibility passes on to the new unit-owners.

b) Since the equipment has been placed in the common area by approval of the trustees, and other unit-owners with access to it (for roofs: sharing the same back staircase; for basements: in the same building) can use it, the Association's master insurance policy provides liability coverage.

2. Storms. The design of replacement storm windows by Harvey Tru-Channel was approved for a unit.

3. Absentee unit-owners. Troubles over many years with the now-departed tenant of a rented-out unit led the trustees to reaffirm the policy that absentee owners can and will be fined for infractions of the by-laws by their tenants. A letter was sent to the owner in question (who is currently seeking another tenant) reminding him of this policy.

Next meeting. Thursday, Feb. 16; unit TBA.

Arthur Mattuck

Reminders

1. Cars and trucks parked in the center lane must have an ID plainly visible giving the number of the unit being visited or where work is being done, the name of the unit owner, and a telephone number contact. Otherwise they are subject to towing.

2. Center-lane and tandem parking are not permitted when snow is predicted or falling, as they interfere with snow-removal. Cars are subject to towing, and the unit-owner for the parking space is subject to fines.

3. When snow is predicted, cars should be parked with their rears lined up with those of the other cars, so everyone can get his car out without a lot of extra shoveling.

4. To conserve space, cardboard cartons should be collapsed before being placed in the dumpster; plastic jugs should be stepped on before being placed in the recycling bin.