

Thatchmont Board Meeting – Sept. 12, 2011

Trustees: Neil Golden, Arthur Mattuck, Mona Mowafi, Mike Springer, Nick Yoder
G&G Mgt.: Sheryl Sarkis Absent: Rosemary Trainor, (Andrew Liteplo)

Elections

Two trustees resigned and moved from Thatchmont: Lifei Guo in July (14 Egmont), and Abe Recht in June (at large; 15 Thatcher). The trustees announced this in July, and waited the required 30-day period for any unit-owner actions, before electing new trustees. At this meeting, Andrew Liteplo (14 Egmont #5) and Nick Yoder (at large; 20 Egmont #6) were unanimously elected to fill the respective remaining terms of the above. (Andrew was abroad that week, but had agreed to serve.)

Financial Report (Sheryl)

Expenses and percentages of budget items used are generally normal for this time of year. The exception is **oil**, which is projected to be 18K over budget by the end of the year, if prices keep rising as expected. Our **reserves** currently stand at \$184,000.

Five-year plan and related items (Mike)

The purpose of the plan is to smooth out our expenditures – i.e., avoid special assessments – by building up our reserves and anticipating major projects insofar as possible. Sheryl pointed out that a history of special assessments (even relatively small ones) means unpredictability, and can therefore be a reason for banks to not refinance or to decline mortgages, making it harder to sell units.

1. Mike projects our reserves will be at the end of this year 10K behind what the 5-year plan calls for, due to the three early half-roof replacements (see below).

2. At the annual meeting last year, an increase in condo fees of 12% a year for three years (2011-2013) was forecast, in order to build up the reserves sufficiently. (The 12% includes 3% for inflation.) The first increase took effect this year; the trustees decided to keep the second increase at 12% for 2012, even though the price of oil is expected to rise and increase our operating budget more than 3%. The figure for the year after (2013) will be set after monitoring where the reserves stand at year's end and what expenses are looming.

New and Old Business

1. **Half-roof replacements** It was expected to replace the three remaining tar-and-gravel half-roofs (14 #5,6 and 20 Egmont #5) over the next five years. However, during the summer renovation of 20#5, removal of a ceiling showed the roof was leaking, which had not been suspected.

The roof was temporarily patched to permit renovations to continue, but it was decided to replace that half-roof now, and to do the other two at the same time, both to get a volume discount and because it was clear we could not rely on the absence of visible leaks to tell us the two remaining half-roofs were still in good condition.

Bids were received from three companies for the three half-roof replacements; the trustees unanimously voted to accept the low bid of 63K from Hickey; we will have a 40 year guarantee on the rubber membranes, insulation will be increased to 2" to improve comfort and save on heating oil costs, and the penthouses will be reclad, with new doors, skylight, and flashing; gravel will be removed, but the tar retained. The work should be completed by early-to-mid-October.

2. The **parking lot** has been having problems, due to the heavy center parking by contractors and men working on the several simultaneous renovations. Most unit owners cannot tandem-park, and sometimes cannot even single-park; a needed replacement of the dumpster was very difficult. The trustees discussed this at length; there will be an amendment to the by-laws whose main points will be:

a) Unit-owners planning long-term renovations must notify their contractors that only two weeks of center parking will be permitted; after that they will have to rent a space, or get a temporary permit from Brookline for street parking.

b) All center-parked cars, trucks, etc. must contain a card on the dashboard clearly visible through the window with contact information cell phone, unit being worked on, etc., so as to allow immediate

emergency removal. The unit-owner is responsible for informing the contractor of this. Violators will be warned and towed.

c) A dashed line will be painted to mark the center line that the single (not double!) line of center cars parallel to our buildings must straddle.

3. **Roof deck cooking** was discussed in early summer by e-mail and at this meeting, and the fire department was consulted. An amendment to the by-laws will be made; beyond the required boilerplate, the main points will be:

a) No open flame cooking or deep frying is permitted.

b) For other types of cooking, electric appliances are permitted (grills, broilers, etc.) but there must be a protective sheet underneath the appliance to guarantee no hot spatters can reach the roof membrane.

c) A responsible adult must be continuously present on the deck whenever the appliance is in use

d) There must be an approved working fire extinguisher on the deck nearby.

4. **Landscaping** was briefly discussed, principally the condition of the yew hedges on Egmont (covering part of the sidewalk – illegal in Brookline), and on Thatcher (many unrecovered from the winter snow-plowing). The Egmont yews were subsequently cut back; the bad Thatcher yews will be deep-root-fed next spring and more replaced if they do not respond adequately.

5. **Basement rental apartments.** Monthly rent will be raised by 150 on the Thatcher apartment; the Egmont apartment was rented as of Sept. 1. Renovations have been made for about 10K to the Thatcher apartment as planned (see the May minutes).

The **basement cleanout** took place in early May; abandoned bicycles were tagged and removed several weeks later. (One external bicycle remains at 14 Egmont, locked to the railing for over a year and rusting.)

Asbestos removal and ceiling insulation for the basement of 15 Thatcher was completed.

6. The **new heating controls and air valves** were installed during the summer; they are currently in use for the first time. Unit-owners should report any heating problems so adjustments can be made. They should be more responsive to changes in outside temperature and have better cycling patterns than the old controls, but unit-owners still have to watch their window closures, provide weatherstripping for leaky windows, and tend to their radiators. (E-mail advice has been sent to unit-owners.)

7. Permission for a number of **renovations** were given; some of these are still ongoing.

8. The **basement entrances** floor painting was postponed to this fall due to the renovations.

9. The problem with **building permits** for the renovations completed at 20 Egmont #3 has not been resolved, and is still under discussion.

10. A **fall social** took place on Sunday Sept. 11 in Knyvet Park from 3:30-7 PM, organized by Mona Mowafi. The weather cooperated, pizzas, and potluck snacks were provided, and attendance was good, with a lot of little kids playing around for several hours. Thanks, Mona.

11. **Annual meeting** Tues. Nov. 1 6:30-8:30 Coolidge Corner Library (on Pleasant St., near Beacon)

Arthur Mattuck
Recording Secretary

New Unit Owners: (former owners are in parentheses)

26 Egmont #3 Jay S. Kim

20 Egmont #4 (Pearl) Urbain DeWinter

14 Egmont #6 (Guo) Aaron and Susan Gilman

25 Thatcher #3 (Samarov) John Dixon and Rachel Slater

19 Thatcher #6 (Christensen) Alec and Katherine Holliday

15 Thatcher #6 (Recht) Suvranu and Kristin Ganguli