

## Thatchmont Trustees Meeting – Jan. 14, 2013

Present: Neil Golden, Jennifer Havlicek, Andrew Liteplo, Arthur Mattuck, Stuart Rubinow.  
Absent: Mike Springer, Nick Yoder; Sheryl Sarkis, Mgmt.(ill)

**Elections:** The three current office-holders were re-elected to continue in their present positions for 2013:  
President: Neil Golden      Treasurer: Mike Springer      Recording Sec'y: Arthur Mattuck.

### Old and New Business

Since Mike and Sheryl were not present, the current status of our finances and five-year plan were deferred to the next meeting, or to e-mail correspondence if any earlier questions arise.

The rest of the brief meeting was devoted to the following three issues; the first two old, the third new.

**1.** The **masonry loan** that the Association took out on behalf of some of the unit-owners several years ago to pay for **Part I of our masonry project** will be reviewed to see if the Associations fixed monthly repayments should be adjusted to take account of many early repayments of the loan by new unit owners. No new money is involved, just a possible readjustment to avoid future cash flow problems for the Association.

An inspection last fall by Tom Heger did not show any urgency about starting Part II of the masonry repair – we will wait for leaks to show up in what is considered to be the most vulnerable part of our brick walls: the parking-lot side of the Thatcher St. building, since it is the side most exposed to the nor'easters.

**2.** The two-building **Amory St. Condominium** ending at Thatcher St. has not yet signed the parking-lot agreement we prepared for them; they have hired a lawyer to review it. Our position is legally solid and resolution firm; we cannot tolerate a repetition of the parking violations a few years down the line when newer Amory unit-owners move in, ignorant of the rules.

For now, the situation is *de facto* partially resolved: there is no tandem-parking in the first three spaces starting from Thatcher St. (the non-Hummer car in the first space now rents a space in our lot), and tandem-parking in the subsequent spaces stays (mostly) inside the line described in the agreement (to be painted).

Recently there has been no end-tandem parking in the third Amory building, a different condominium adjacent to Egmont St. We will pursue a similar agreement with them when the agreement above is signed.

**3.** The possibility of **converting to natural gas heat** briefly described in the November minutes will be a major preoccupation in the immediate future, since it offers the greatest chance for lowering our expenses. We are proceeding with G&G help in three stages:

a) A preliminary study by National Grid (the gas supplier) to see if there is enough gas suppliable by the current street gaslines to heat our units and our hot water;

A subsequent determination by them if it is in their financial interest as the sole local supplier to install the new pipes that would be needed.

b) Talking by us with Supreme, a mechanical installer (furnaces) recommended by G&G, to compare the costs and advantages of converting our present oil burners to gas, vs. installing new gas burners.

Considerations are that our present burners are at least twenty years old, perhaps somewhat older. The average life of a furnace is estimated at 20-30 years, though they can last longer.

Another consideration is that installing new gas furnaces would allow us to get undersize ones which would burn for longer periods of time. At present, our oil burners are on only 15% of the time, which produces heat only in short and infrequent spurts, since it takes time to boil water for steam. Smaller burners which were on longer might give us better control and more even heat over the time period..

Approximately 40% of our heating bill is to heat hot water. This needs to be considered in comparing our burner options.

A further consideration is that gas pricing is different if we commit completely to gas, or maintain a dual system which can burn either oil or gas depending on price. In addition, there are current controversies over possible ground water pollution from fracking, a main hope for plentiful and cheap gas in the future, and the construction of the huge new pipe lines needed for gas and for oil from the northern oil deposits.

c) After getting what facts and estimates we can, there will have to be some time for rumination, questions, seeking opinions from disinterested sources. Optimistic predictions are that we might be able to save about 50% on our annual heating expenses in the long run, after the large initial expenses of conversion.

**4. Next meeting** In about two months; TBA.

Arthur Mattuck  
Recording Secretary