

## Thatchmont Trustees Meeting – Sept. 17, 2013

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

**Financial:** Our **Reserves** now stand at about 332K, with about 30K to be routinely added by year's end, and very roughly 110K to be subtracted (100K for gas conversion, 11K for masonry work on the columns, see below).

The **5-year plan** estimates the savings by using gas should enable payback of the conversion to the reserves within 2-3 years– the reserves are being built up for the next phase of the major masonry project and other capital expenditures, to avoid special assessments.

First pass at the **2014 budget** will be made by Sheryl, with subsequent discussion and revision by e-mail. The Trustees are looking for a budget with only inflationary increases or less in the condo fees, if possible. Whatever is produced may have to be revised in the light of the 5-year plan once the final costs of conversion and related expenses are known.

The two basement apartments are continuing with the same tenants, at a small increase in rent, but still below market value for this neighborhood in Brookline since we have good tenants.

### Old and New Business

1. The project of **converting to natural gas heat** continues to move forward, though it will take still several weeks to finish up – at the meeting, the estimate was 10 days, but minor glitches keep showing up: hot water storage tanks that won't quite fit through rusty basement doors and code changes required to the planned external venting. These produce delays and small extra expenses.

The oil tanks are low, and at the meeting we hoped to avoid further oil purchases (unused oil costs us to remove), but the delays mean we will need another 100 gallons for each of the two tanks to avoid running out over the next few weeks while the conversion is being completed.

During August and early September, National Grid brought the gas into the building and restored the street and sidewalk, with some attempt at the landscaping, which we have completed; the chimney lining work was done over the past week. There is still installing the gas burners and the hot water storage tanks.

2. The state government offers partial subsidies for **energy-efficiency** work. In our case, that would be insulating the hot-water pipes, and maintenance work on the steam traps which separate the steam going out to the radiators from the condensed water running back to the boilers through the same pipes. This will be looked into.

3. The masonry people estimating the **cracks in the columns** at the front entrances are recommending repairs to the roof membranes and flashing on the six porticos over the columns, as possible sources of leaks entering the columns and causing the cracks. At 1.5K/portico, this would add 9K to the 11K estimate for just the columns. The trustees voted to ask Tom Heger, our consultant for the big masonry project of a few years ago, for an independent opinion before deciding.

4. The **14 Egmont basement** is overflowing with apparently discarded material and needs cleanout; some of the other basements are starting to show similar trouble. All of them will be inspected, and notice given to unit-owners of a **basement cleanout date**. All material in the basement common areas will be disposed of, except for the following: bicycles in general, and individual items specifically authorized by the Trustees before the clean-out date – to avoid removal, all of these must be tagged with the owner's name and unit.

5. The third **Thatchmont annual picnic** in Knyvet Park being organized by Stu Rubinow is on Sat. Sept. 28 at 4PM. Votes by unit-owners on pot-luck vs. pizza were evenly split; the trustees decided to try this time pizza, salads, and drinks from two local suppliers, with the Association subsidizing the proceedings; any additional potluck from unit-owners is very welcome, however. Rain date is Sunday.

(over →)

6. A recent **Egmont no-hot-water** problem following a turn-off for the chimney-lining project was traced to a faulty pressure-relief valve on the hot-water heater. It was replaced by temporarily using the valve on the new hot-water heater waiting to be installed.
7. The 25 Thatcher **inner lobby carpet** needs cleaning; another lobby carpet seems to have been permanently damaged, apparently by attempts to use spot removers to remove stains caused by workmen. All of the inner lobby carpets are relatively new. They will be inspected, and cleaned if possible and needed.
8. Proposal by a trustee for Association to purchase desktop-type 6-7 compartment **wooden file holders**, to be placed on inner-lobby radiators or tables for holding non-first-class mail. These would replace the painted amateur wooden holders in some of the inner lobbies. The trustees will consider this, but should see the design first.
9. Some of the **Thatcher St. basement doors to the parking lot** were judged difficult to open from the inside; pull handles have been installed to assist the opening; a similar 14 Egmont basement door has had the closer adjusted.
10. The **annual meeting** will be Tuesday Nov. 19 at 6:30 in the Coolidge Corner Library (on Prospect St., near Beacon St.) The trustees will meet at 6:00 to formally approve the 2014 budget.

Arthur Mattuck  
Recording Secretary