

LANDMARK MEWS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MINUTES

Board Meeting April 6, 2005

The March LMCA Board Meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Board President Lou Wagner at the home of Carole Trimble. Members present: Virginia Addison, Simon Bennett, Suzann Evinger, Eve Holtzman and Bruce Wood. Officers/Committee Members present: Roger Casalengo, Bill Evinger, Karen Kovach, Estella Laguna, Marty McDonald and Carole Trimble. Others present: Nancy Bauer, Linda Carter, Shirlee Conley, Chris Dale, Bill Evans, Leslie Knaup and Robert Ridgely.

1. Minutes of the March 2, 2005, meeting were approved as amended after Suzann Evinger objected to the wording of a reported discussion of landscaping issues on Masefield Court. President Wagner suggested that the paragraph be removed from the minutes. Suzann moved that the paragraph be stricken and Bruce Wood seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

2. Financial Report See report filed with minutes.

Treasurer Marty McDonald distributed a revised year-end audit report reflecting a fund transfer of \$1,699 from unrestricted to restricted reserves to bring the restricted reserve fund to a balance of \$44,400, the total dollars accumulated in 2004 from the \$25 homeowner fee increase earmarked for major capital improvements to streets, curbs, sidewalks and the perimeter wall within the next five years. A note regarding the transfer was added to the "Notes to Financial Statements" section of the audit report.

Marty reported on the status of the LMCA investment fund with Vanguard. According to Marty, LMCA has received a dividend and/or a capital gain every month since the board approved a \$10,000 investment with Vanguard in January. The dividends and capital gains have been rolled over into additional shares in the fund, increasing the total number of shares held in the fund. However, the overall value of the portfolio has declined to \$9,957.17 as of March 31. Marty expressed the viewpoint that LMCA will not lose money with this investment over the long-term; Simon Bennett concurred with that opinion. He recommended that the board stay on course with its plans to continue periodic investments of funds with Vanguard since such a strategy tends to even out increases and decreases in stock and bond prices over the long-term. Following this discussion, the board approved Marty's recommendation to move another \$10,000 into a Vanguard account.

Marty also reported that Pineridge Landscaping increased the cost of the monthly contract for landscaping services as of April 1. The fee increase covers the cost of additional plantings introduced last year in the Manchester Way area. In 2004, Pineridge billed separately for these plantings, but is proposing this year to roll the cost into the monthly maintenance fee thus spreading the expense out over the rest of the year. Marty will adjust the budget appropriately to cover the monthly fee increase.

The treasurer paid out \$250 to Decks by Dave for a new external gate providing access from Masefield Court to Stevenson Avenue.

On a separate issue, Marty recommended that LMCA join the Community Associations Institute (CAI), a national organization that provides advice and tools that assist homeowner associations in maintaining good management. According to Marty, LMCA formerly belonged to the association, but the membership was allowed to lapse. His investigation led him to believe that membership in the CAI would be of great benefit to LMCA. Among the tools offered by the association that Marty thought would be useful for LMCA were bookkeeping software for self-managed homeowner associations, brochures explaining reserve funds and how to conduct a reserve study, software to update reserve studies annually and a listing of locally-based engineering firms qualified to conduct reserve studies. Marty said he had already downloaded a trial version of the bookkeeping software to experiment with for a month and thought it might be a better match for LMCA's accounting needs than the Quick Books software he is currently using. The board concurred with Marty's recommendation that membership in the association would be beneficial for LMCA and instructed him to join CAI for an annual membership fee of \$195.

3. Property Manager Report

Following instructions from the board at the March meeting, Roger Casalengo reported that there are six Bradford Pear trees remaining on homeowners' property in breezeways that all homeowners want removed and replaced at association expense as were all other Bradford Pear trees. Roger estimated that the total cost of the project – removal of the trees and stumps and replacement with other trees – would be about \$4,000. He anticipated being able to save a little on cost by using a tree that must be replaced behind the Knaups' house on Chaucer View Circle to replace the Bradford Pear tree behind the Sharp's house, also on Chaucer View Circle.

Lou directed Roger to check with Tyson Tree Service about the possibility of offering homeowners a special price on trimming Bradford Pear trees located on front and side lawns. Roger said he would also check with homeowners to see how many would be interested in such a group arrangement.

Other projects on which Roger reported included the following.

- The repair work on the light on Masefield Court has been completed at a cost of \$600. Roger found an electrician willing to moonlight at a rate of \$35 per hour plus expenses.
- Street sweeping to clean up sand and debris left from winter is scheduled for the week of April 25 and estimated to cost about \$1,000.
- Pineridge is scheduled to begin mowing in April and will edge and mulch yards.
- Annually, the 39 zones and 400 sprinkler heads of Landmark Mews' irrigation system are reconfigured by Fountainhead to achieve maximum efficiency. This year, Roger plans to turn off the berm sprinklers to see if that irrigation is exacerbating the drainage problem behind the houses on Chaucer View Circle.

Recommendations made by Roger for additional property maintenance included the following.

- Power washing, staining and removing weeds around fences on the backside of Landmark Mews. Bruce Wood moved that the work be approved at a budget of \$3,000. Virginia Addison seconded the motion. The board approved the motion unanimously. Lou instructed Roger to try to bring the project in under budget if possible.
- Replacing plantings along Stevenson Avenue. The work would be done simultaneously with planned landscaping on Masefield Court. Lou asked for an estimated cost for the work by the next meeting.

Other property maintenance issues discussed included the following.

- Leslie Knaup reported that a pop-up drain in the breezeway between Chaucer Lane and Chaucer View Circle had frozen during the winter and caused the Knaups' sump pump motor to burn out.
- Lou reported that the main external water line to one home had broken, causing a continuous water leak that resulted in an astronomical bill. Roger responded that homeowners could purchase insurance for utility repair and replacement from Dominion Products and Services, Inc., an affiliate of Dominion Virginia Power, for \$3.25 per month.
- Lou also reported some homeowner problems with water draining into sump pumps from the exterior of the home and said the association needs to find out where external drainage pipes are located.
- According to Lou, some homeowners still are not replacing the black plastic pressure valves on water pipes that can cause serious flooding problems if the valve breaks.

4. Covenants Report

Committee Co-Chairman Bill Evinger said that no date for the spring inspections has yet been set. The committee has been waiting for the board to approve the updated architectural standards. He anticipated that a date for the inspections will be announced at the May board meeting. He is not expecting the inspections to identify extensive repair and maintenance issues because the 2004 inspection was so thorough.

Bill also announced the committee's intention to hand-deliver hard copies of the updated architectural standards once the board has approved them. Nancy Bauer asked about e-mailing the standards. Bill responded that the committee did not have e-mail addresses for all homeowners.

5. Revised Architectural Standards

Bruce Wood then led a discussion about the updated architectural standards. Issues discussed included the following.

- Approval process – The Covenants Committee had revised the architectural standards to indicate that “prior approval” by the committee was required before any modifications to any home could be undertaken. Bruce said that this phraseology was counter to the Declaration of Covenants that expressly permits approval to be deemed if no action has

been taken within 60 days of the time the homeowner submits a request, reserving 30 days for the committee to act and 60 days for the board. Changing the Declaration would require a two-thirds vote of all homeowners. Therefore, Bruce recommended that the updated standards be revised to remain consistent with the provisions of the Declaration. Suzann Evinger moved that language from the Declaration be inserted in the last paragraph of “The Process” section of the updated standards to clarify the fact that homeowners do retain the right to proceed with modifications if the Covenants Committee and the board have not acted within 60 days of receiving a request (with the board and the committee receiving the request simultaneously). Eve Holtzman seconded the motion. The board approved it unanimously.

- Levying fines when neighbors refuse to sign notification forms – The Covenants Committee recommended a \$50 fine for a neighbor who refuses to sign another neighbor’s request for modification form. Bruce recommended that this provision be dropped from the updated standards. He suggested that the goal should be to keep the approval process moving forward on the assumption that the form is a means of notifying neighbors of a homeowner’s intention to proceed with a modification. Once the committee has ascertained that a neighbor has refused to sign a form or has not been responsive to another neighbor’s requests for a signature, the committee can deem the form signed at that date. A neighbor will still retain the right to affirmatively object to any modification he or she opposes, but, in lieu of such an objection, an assumption of a signature will keep the approval process moving forward. Virginia Addison moved that fines for refusing to sign architectural modification forms be deleted from the updated standards. Bruce seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with Bruce voting by proxy for Dan Ferezan.
- Paint palettes – In response to a query by Bruce, the Covenants Committee reported that there has been no change in the approved color palettes for exterior trim. The approved palettes are going to be posted on the new web site to make it easier for homeowners to comply with existing standards.
- Satellite dishes – Considerable discussion was devoted to the question of mounting satellite dishes on shared privacy fences and what happens if a neighbor who agreed to allow a dish to be mounted on the shared fence moves and the new homeowner objects. Ultimately, upon the recommendation of Virginia Addison, the board agreed that mounting satellite dishes on shared privacy fences should be discouraged in favor of placing the dishes on free standing poles. In addition, the board directed the issue be explored again by the special committee working to modernize the architectural standards.
- Decks – The question of how decks can be treated – whether they can be “stained” or “painted” and with what colors and materials – also sparked animated discussion. Ultimately, the board determined that the updated standards providing for upper level decks to be treated with a natural or redwood-colored stain and no standards governing treatment of lower decks was the best course to follow at this time. Again, the board directed that the issue be explored by the special committee working to modernize the architectural standards.

Leslie Knaup suggested that LMCA coordinate an arrangement with a contractor to power wash and stain decks at a discounted price for homeowners, thus saving

homeowners some money and giving the association some control over the color and type of product used to stain decks. The board directed the property manager to pursue the possibility.

At the conclusion of this discussion, Simon Bennett moved that the revised architectural standards be approved as amended. Bruce seconded the motion. The board approved the motion unanimously.

6. Web Site Demonstration

Estella Laguna, with the assistance of Robert Ridgely, demonstrated the new LMCA web site. Sections featured on the home page are “About Landmark Mews,” “Location” with a link to Map Quest, “Floorplans” and “Residents Only.” A “What’s New” column on the home page will alert residents to new information posted on the “Residents Only” page.

To access the “Residents Only” page, homeowners will have to register a user name and password. Estella will maintain the list of user names and passwords so that reminders can be provided to any homeowner who forgets his or her password. Passwords and user names will be disabled when a homeowner moves.

Information posted on the “Residents Only” page will include contact information for board members and committees, dates and locations of board meetings, board meeting minutes, treasurer’s reports, key documents that can be downloaded in pdf format, committee reports, a homeowners directory, and social and community news. One new section still under development is an “In the Neighborhood” feature that will welcome new residents, provide homeowner repair and maintenance tips and news alerts, and list contractor referrals.

The board directed Estella to launch the new web site immediately. The old one will be discontinued. Lou directed that the minutes record that the board applauded the wonderful work Estella did on the web site.

7. Zoning Committee Report

Annie Foster submitted a written Zoning Committee report. Action has slowed on proposals to redevelop the Landmark Mall site while issues concerning recent mergers/acquisitions involving two other property holders are resolved. No response has yet been received to a letter to Supervisor Penny Gross with questions regarding the potential traffic impact of redevelopment of Landmark Mall. Vice Mayor Del Pepper told Annie that crews would be sent to clean up roadside trash near CompUSA and the detention center.

Simon moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:20 p.m. Virginia seconded the motion.

The next meeting will be at the home of Karen Kovach.

Respectfully submitted,

Carole Trimble
LMCA Secretary