

ELANDMARK MEWS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Board Meeting

May 13, 2015

6271 Masefield Ct

7:00 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance

Jerry Putman (President)
Noreen Hagerty-Ford (VP)
Charles Cureton
Chris Dale
Bill Gaffney
Joel Kaplan
Vicky Gaston

HOA Staff in Attendance

Roger Casalengo (Property Manager)
Jason Short (Secretary)

Homeowners in Attendance

Simon Bennett
Tim & Annie Foster
Linda Carter

Call to Order

Noting the presence of a quorum, Jerry Putman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
Charles Cureton seconded this.

Approval of the Agenda

“I move to approve the May agenda”.
(Jerry Putman, Charles Cureton, **Approved 7-0**)

Approval of Minutes

“I move to approve the April minutes as presented”.
(Jerry Putman, Bill Gaffney, **Approved 7-0**)

Covenants Report

Jerry presented the Covenants Report in Loren’s absence. The spring inspections have gone remarkably well. In terms of homeowners’ property, the community is in the best shape ever. With regard to a few repeat problems, the board may need to take stronger action than in previous years. Loren will bring a list of items to the next board meeting. Loren has also updated all the homeowners’ information on the Landmark Mews Homeowner Roster.

Loren reports a couple of new requests. Lot 120 requested new windows, approved. Lot 184, remove tree, in review. Lot 84, paint and landscaping, approved.

Loren is also working with former Chair (Bill Evinger) to close out the old email account.

Treasurer's Report

Chris reported back on the finalized \$200,340 cash transfer from Washington First Bank with an interest rate of 0.25% to two CDs: \$150,000 2-year CD at 1.1% and \$50,000 1-year CD at 0.9%. LMCA will earn guaranteed sum of \$3,768 on these two CDs versus approximately \$500, depending on market fluctuations, from the savings account. If anyone has questions regarding the standard Terms & Conditions, please see Chris Dale.

Chris also presented an update on current 1st Quarter LMCA expenditures. The 2015 budget allowed for \$68,215 in expenses. However, current expenses total \$73,476 for an overrun of \$5,261. This follows a 2-year trend on overruns in the LMCA budget. Jerry reiterated his comments from previous board meetings that most of these overruns are due to unforeseen expenses such as unusually high snowfall expenses and attorney fees associated with the pending home foreclosure. He also noted that most if not all attorney fees should be recouped as part of the foreclosure deal. Despite these unforeseen expenses, Chris reminded the board they need to be fiscally conscious when making future expenditure decisions.

Finally, Chris relayed to the board that Goldklang is ready to start the 2014 audit.

Vicky raised several questions/comments regarding Valley Crest costs.

1. Did we budget [in contract] for Valley Crest to maintain new Stevenson Ave landscaping?

ANSWER: No. It was not budgeted nor written into the contract because at the time the contract was written, we did not know what the costs would be. Valley Crest couldn't give us an estimate on landscaping that wasn't installed.

2. What is current year-to-date snow removal cost?

ANSWER: \$11,280 (LMCA has budgeted \$11,000 for 2015).

3. Vicky suggested that we take a closer look at previous year weather data and compare it against what we were charged by Valley Crest. She also suggested tracking trends in snow removal costs so that we can better predict our expenses for future budgets. Vicky questioned why we paid less in 2012 when we (seemingly) had greater snowfall amounts than 2015.

RESPONSE: Jerry suggested it could be in the way we are billed. One large snowfall could cost less than several little snowfalls due to the number of trips/man-hours/supplies needed per visit.

4. Vicky noted that Chris reported an overrun of roughly \$5,000 however, the slides she presented don't add up to this amount. Why?

ANSWER: Chris only referenced a couple of the big expenses. The March financial report lists all the overrun expenses. Please see Chris if you would like a detailed list of expenses/overruns.

Vice President's Report

Noreen presented several topics for discussion.

1. **Contractor Signage** – After an email discussion, it was decided that the board doesn't need to specifically address contractor signage issues in the Covenants and/or Property Manager contracts. Additionally, Jerry stated that all the rules we try to enforce are based on the LMCA Architectural Standards. He noted there are no rules regarding contractor signage in the Architectural Standards. However, as Noreen pointed out, there are rules on this matter in the Homeowner Handbook: *"No signs, other than standard signs customarily associated with house rental or sale may be displayed to public view on any lot or common area."* A brief discussion followed regarding Homeowner Handbook vs. Architectural Standards. Charles noted that the handbook is the founding document and as such, supersedes the Architectural Standards. Jerry asked for board member input before calling for a vote. Noreen suggests that we add an addendum to the Architectural Standards (as per Homeowner Handbook) that states, *"No signs, other than standard signs customarily associated with house rental or sale may be displayed to public view on any lot or common area."*
2. **Real Estate Signage Open Houses** – Similar to the discussion of contractor signage, real estate agents are posting open house signs on homeowner lots and common areas. Occasionally these signs are left behind after the open house has ended. After some discussion and based on the signage rule in the Homeowner Handbook, the board agreed to continue to allow these signs to be posted. However, the signs need to be removed by the agent after the open house has ended. This will be enforced by the property manager with 24 hours. Jerry suggests that we add an addendum to the Architectural Standards that states, *"Open house signs shall be removed after an open house is completed. Any violations will be enforced by the property manager."*
3. **Manchester Way Entry/Exit Traffic** – Noreen reports that a potentially dangerous condition exists where Manchester Way exits onto Stevenson Avenue. Because there isn't a stop or yield sign, drivers tend to exit the community without yielding right of way to Stevenson Ave traffic. Upon further investigation, Noreen found all the other entry/exit points around the community are marked with street signs. The question was raised as to whether LMCA is deficient and/or negligent in this area. The board agreed that the Property Manager (Roger) should investigate putting a stop sign at Manchester Way. In the interim, a note will be drafted for the Mews News urging residents to exercise care when exiting Manchester Way.
4. **Yard Sales Feedback** – Noreen reported that the Social Chair received no interest from the committee members in taking the lead on a community yard sale. At this time there are no plans for a community yard sale.
5. **Covenants Chair/Secretary/Property Manager Contracts** – After the last board meeting, the board members had an email discussion and agreed that the contracts for the Covenants Chair, Secretary, and Property Manager are fine as written; however, the board member also agreed that the contracts should be reviewed annually before the start of the new fiscal year and/or before future audits.

Property Manager's Report

Roger presented several topics for discussion.

1. **Lighting** - LMCA is converting our current ballast driven pole lights to high energy replacement bulbs. By doing so, the expensive lights and pole ballast, which are increasingly difficult to purchase as a discontinued item, are being replaced with a direct connect high energy bulbs. LMCA currently has three remaining pole ballasts. As each ballast fails, the pole will be retrofitted to accept the new bulb. The new bulbs do not sacrifice on light output or safety and offer a huge cost savings to the community. In addition, future maintenance fees will be reduced. Jerry noted that some of these ballasts have already been fixed without pre approval from the board due to safety concerns. The total cost was around \$840.
2. **Street Maintenance** - LMCA has contracted with Pro-Pave to perform necessary street maintenance. Pro-Pave was one of four contractors to bid the job and were selected based on low cost (approx. \$25,000) and best value. Scope of work will include crack seal, seal coat, striping, and curb staining. This will include stencilling address numbers on the curb in front of each home. Additional logistical information e.g., dates of proposed work, street detours, etc. will be provided as soon as details are resolved. Roger and Jerry to meet with Mike from Pro-Pave to work out the details and get scheduled as soon as possible.
3. **New Resident Welcoming** - LMCA continues to welcome new owners/renters. Each are provided with a bottle of wine, flowers, useful and helpful information to make their transition easier. In addition, Roger is also able to pass out the Architectural Standards, parking decals and collect contact info for the new residents. A member of the Social Committee assisted Roger with this task. After a brief discussion, it was decided that the Property Manager will continue to be the main point of contact for this task so that it doesn't fall through the cracks. Our three newest families are: Eric and Patricia Hughes on Chaucer Lane, Josh and Jessica Haines on Brampton Court, and Ben and Christina Koudelka on Masefield Court.
4. **Curb House Numbering** – Roger presented an option/recommendation to the board to forego stencilling house numbers on the curbs. In his opinion, the numbers are an added expense and tend to fade quickly and lose functionality. He said it would also make refreshing the curbs with stain much easier. Tim Foster mentioned the board chose not to stencil the house numbers in the past and met with huge backlash from the community members. A question was raised as to whether this would present a problem to emergency services. Jerry agreed to follow up with emergency services and get their input for future determination of stencilling. Jerry polled each of the board members for their thoughts/suggestions on the matter. A majority of the members agreed that the house numbers presented enough value to the community to warrant redoing them. Based on their input and time constraints with the contractor, the board agrees to move forward with the Pro-Pave contract as written to include house number stencilling on the curb.

President's Report

Jerry reported that the community has its first request for solar panels from a homeowner on Chaucer Lane. Jerry relayed to the homeowner that they may only be installed on the rear of the house and must be in compliance with all architectural standards.

Next, Jerry updated the board on the status of the pending foreclosure action. It took a lot of time and effort to sort through all the trustees and trust agreements. However, one person has been identified as the rightful owner of the trust. The attorney for the trust has also been identified. This attorney has been contacted and notified of the amount of money owed to LMCA. This money will either be recouped from the owner or from auction. Jerry also relayed to LMCA Attorney that some provision must be made for continuing expenses such as HOA dues and property maintenance until a new owner is established. Jerry will keep the board apprised of any new information.

Other Business

Tim Foster presented an update on the Stevenson Ave VDOT Project. In short, it's done! VDOT has completed the Stevenson Avenue sound wall project – and, with it, the 27-mile I-95 HOT Lane construction project. With acceptance of Fluor's contract work, LMCA has assumed operation/maintenance responsibility for the Stevenson Avenue landscape area and for the irrigation system VDOT installed for us at VDOT expense.

Unbeknownst to us, VDOT landscape inspectors had inspected and accepted Fluor's landscape plantings two months ago. The terms of the VDOT/Fluor contract, with our prior knowledge, included no landscape warranty. This was the trade-off for getting VDOT approval for the irrigation system; having VDOT pay for the irrigation system; getting all the good soil that came with the soil cell system that VDOT installed to isolate the irrigation system from wall structure; and having the landscape area planted and growing two years earlier than if VDOT waited until I-95 project completion and landscaped the area, without irrigation, as is normal VDOT practice.

Since some of the plantings did not survive the past two months, LMCA arranged a walk-through with the VDOT Project Manager, LMCA President Jerry Putman, LMCA Property Manager Roger Casalengo, and the Fosters. During this walk-through, which took place 12 May, VDOT flagged the dead plantings (pink flagging); those with signs of life are expected to survive and were not flagged. The VDOT Project Manager seemed reasonably confident that he would be able to persuade Fluor to replace the flagged items – probably within the next two weeks – notwithstanding prior VDOT landscape acceptance.

Our landscape contractor, Valley Crest, expects to have the VDOT irrigation system up and running within the next couple weeks. It has taken much longer than expected to get VDOT permission for LMCA to move the Stevenson Avenue area irrigation controller/back-flow protection next to the existing LMCA controller. For LMCA, the payoff is substantial: hidden from view; better protection from vandalism; operational convenience; and lessening the cost of under-street boring by almost \$5,000. The introduction of irrigation in the near future should be a shot in the arm for the new plantings.

VDOT's contractor has patched and repaired the dings in the wall. Separate from the I-95 construction project, VDOT has scheduled milling and repaving of Stevenson Avenue for this summer; Supervisor Penny Gross is following this. In addition, VDOT/LMCA confirmed today to Supervisor Gross that all construction work along Stevenson Avenue has been completed and that she can close the loop with the other section of VDOT to arrange for installation of "No Parking" signs along the I-395 side of Stevenson Avenue – from Stultz Road to Stevenson Avenue cul-de-sac. The no parking signs should help protect us from Alexandria parkers, discourage automobile intrusion into the landscape area, and enhance safety.

Questions/Comments

- Noreen presented a question from a homeowner regarding the color of the steel columns in the sound wall. The homeowner wanted to know if there was any way to paint them to match the color of the brick. After a lengthy discussion, the board agreed that we should be grateful for all the added work VDOT has done at our request and not burn any bridges by asking for additional items.
- Joel asked if there was any progress on the issue of commercial vehicles parking on Landmark Mews Drive. Jerry made contact with police department. They were amenable to following up with our request but at this time not much progress has been made.

Board Decisions

“Should the board uphold the rules regarding signage as outlined in the Homeowner Handbook?” Jerry Putman

(Approved 6, Abstain 1 – Vicky Gaston)

“I move that the board continue to allow signage as it relates to a home sale; however, it needs to be removed at the conclusion of the open house session and that sign removal be enforced by the property manager within 24hrs.” Charles Cureton

(Approved 6, Abstain 1 – Vicky Gaston)

“I move that the property manager investigate putting a stop sign at the Manchester Way/Stevenson Ave intersection.” Jerry Putman

(Approved 7, Against 0)

“I move that the board accept the contracts for Covenants Chair, Property Manager, and Secretary as written with the caveat that they be reviewed annually before the start of the new fiscal year.” Jerry Putman / Bill Gaffney

(Approved 7, Against 0)

“I move that the board move forward with the Pro-Pave contract as written to include house number stencilling on the curb.” Charles Cureton / Bill Gaffney

(Approved 5, Abstain 2 – Vicky Gaston, Noreen Hagarty-Ford)

Next Meeting(s)

June:

7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 10th, 2015

At the home of Charles Cureton, 6303 Chaucer View Circle

July:

7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 8th, 2015

At the home of Joel Kaplan, 6309 Chaucer View Circle

August:

7:00 p.m on Wednesday, August 12th, 2015

At the home of Bill Gaffney, 6317 Manchester Way

September:

7:00 p.m on Wednesday, September 9th, 2015

At the home of Roger Casalengo, 6325 Manchester Way

Adjournment

The Board agreed by **Unanimous Consent** to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Jason Short
Secretary