

**Annual Meeting of the Wetherstone Homeowners Association
(WFOA)
14 June 2005**

The Annual Meeting of the WFOA was held at the Sligo Middle School on 14 June 2004, called to order at 7:10 p.m. The following members of the Board of Directors (BOD) were in attendance: President Gary Yeck (GY), Vice President Harriette Steine (HS), Treasurer Alberto Ninio (AN), Secretary Scott Christiansen (SC), and Travis Smith (TS). HS also serves as the Grounds Committee Chair. Barry Steine (BS), Architectural Care Committee Chair and Kwame Yiadom (KY) of Abaris Realty were also in attendance. An attendance list was prepared by Abaris Realty. The following members of the Association were in attendance: Ruth Schutt-Aine of 10961, James Coles of 10955, Megan Adamson of 10939, Karen Robinson of 10935, Reshma Patel of 10929, Sue Kernan of 10927, Jon Hitchings of 10915, Helen Pollack of 10911, Alan Goodman of 10907, S. & A. Christiansen of 10905, Marlene Berlin of 10903, Michael Sommer of 10901, Mary Sanders of 10928, Gyula & Ildiko of 10930, Valerie Freeland of 10934, and Hal & Mary Hubachek of 10944.

Roll Call: The next item of business was to determine if the necessary quorum (20%) of homeowners was present, including proxies. It was determined that 19 residents and 1 proxy were present, well above the necessary quorum.

Proof of Notice of Meeting: Abaris Realty distributed notices.

Reading of Minutes of the Previous Annual Meeting: Reading of the minutes was waived.

Report of the President: Deferred to the end of the meeting.

Report of the Treasurer: We have a sound budget, reserves are adequate, but the main problem faced by WFOA today is that we do not have an adequate budget for operating expenses. It is the experience of the BOD that by the time we cover normal expenses for lawn care, snow removal and the inevitable emergency, such as this year's problem with the retaining wall, that we have consumed all or more of the annual operating budget, leaving no money for additional projects. We will discuss how to address the priority and costing of specific new projects in the New Business portion of the meeting.

Abaris Realty, Inc. reported that we have over \$127,000 in member's equity within our WFOA account, the majority of which is attributed to the reserve fund for replacement of major items like our private road – Rocky Mount Way (RMW).

As a result of the recent expenditures incurred to repair the retaining wall and the fact that we haven't had a reserve study for over three years, Abaris solicited a proposal from Miller Dodson for an update to provide results to the community in time for the annual meeting. The BOD received the update and Miller Dodson concluded that the amount of funding in the reserve was adequate.

Reports of Committees

Grounds Committee: Harriet Steine thanked the homeowners for making the effort to take care of their properties and keeping the community looking good. If there are problems that homeowners identify, please bring these issues to the attention of the Grounds Committee as they have experienced most of these issues before and can usually help to provide a solution, such as tree

trimming or removal – on or off Wetherstone property – or tree replacement in event of storm damages or diseases. Lori Christensen (10925) requested that the trees to the east of the fire lane be trimmed.

Architecture Care Committee (ACC): Seventeen letters were prepared and distributed to homeowners who should give attention to railings, discolored concrete steps, and deteriorating fascia boards. About half of the homeowners who received letters took the time to reply. In some cases their queries are being examined and evaluated by ACC for action. The new homeowner from 10927 RMW mentioned that she did not receive a welcome packet that details the rules and regulations, original paint colors and a homeowner's directory. She went on to mention that there were maintenance problems with 10927 RMW that required attention, which might have been addressed by having a lien on the home to provide an incentive for the seller to repair the problems prior to sale. BOD recognized that a more systematic approach should be put in place (which will also be touched upon in New Business).

Appointment of Inspector of Election: Eric Mandel volunteered to be the inspector.

Nomination of Directors from the Floor: No nominations were received in the mail. Alan Goodman (10907) and Lori Christensen (10925) were nominated from the floor.

Election of Members of the Board of Directors: Gary Yeck and Travis Smith were re-elected. As both individuals are incumbent members of the BOD, there will be no changes in the positions they hold at the present time.

Unfinished Business: This year's dumpster delivery needed to be rescheduled for Friday 24 June through Monday morning 27 June 2005 because of a late delivery to the wrong location on the first attempt.

While we were on the subject of the dumpster, several homeowners brought up the issue of neglected-looking items in need of disposal in the rear of the neighbor's yard on the southeast corner of our community. Lori Christensen (10925) agreed to notify the neighbors that they could use our dumpster and WHOA could round up the necessary labor to help cart away the items in question. To support the ultimate goal of removing the items, the management company will request the county to determine whether any codes are being violated. Other homeowners identified the value of a vegetation barrier that would provide a visual barrier to block the view.

Several homeowners also reported on unauthorized passage, loitering, and unwanted pick-ups and drop-offs occurring at the end of RMW. A suggestion was made to erect a private drive or no outlet sign to decrease traffic into our community, such as the one at the entrance of the adjacent community. Homeowners were encouraged to report transgressions to the police, which would trigger a more regular patrolling of our street.

New Business: Prior to the Annual Meeting, WHOA BOD distributed a proposal that homeowners discuss a list high priority projects or improvements that could be addressed, provided that there is a majority opinion of the homeowners that support that action be taken.

The BOD distributed a letter with estimated costs for several items:

- a. *New set of mail boxes (\$5,000) – discussion: one homeowner wrote to say that s/he thought this estimate was too high. The Treasurer provided background to explain that one ex-resident of WHOA had thoroughly researched the issue; hence, we feel this is a*

credible estimate of costs. If a new model is selected it should be approved by the U.S. Postal Service. The overall conclusion was that the mailboxes are still functional and would be too expensive to replace.

- b. *Building a new playground (\$6,000) and/or erecting a gazebo in the open space before the curve (\$4,000) and/or installing a bench in the open space at the eastern end of the development (\$1,000)* – discussion: the three issues were grouped because they represented ramifications of the same idea; however, there was not a majority of support from homeowners and the proponents acknowledged that it would be expensive given our limited budget. Some of the comments were (a) the park is nearby, (b) the children grow up quickly, and (c) the previous Tot-Lot was not used, and (d) installing playground/gazebo/benches would create additional recurrent maintenance costs.
- c. *Cleaning of the rip-rap every two years (\$2,000)* – discussion: this is more of a notice than a need for a consensus as WHOA is obliged to keep the rip-rap open and unclogged by vegetation according to Montgomery County.

Additional ideas from the Annual Meeting or last WHOA BOD meeting

- d. *Solve the problem of erosion after the heavy rain* – discussion: Water drains from behind the retaining wall in an easterly direction until it reaches the end of the wall where it then drains down into the WHOA parking lot. A solution might be to re-landscape the area to allow drainage to continue flowing east toward Sligo Creek Park.
- e. *Solve the drainage problem on the eastern lot line of Wetherstone* – discussion: If we solve the problem mentioned in the item immediately above it would exacerbate the poor drainage conditions behind units 10901 through 10907. Some kind of ditching might route waters more effectively towards the rip-rap.
- f. *Street sweeping*: A suggestion in the last BOD meeting was made to include regular street sweeping, or blowing, as a part of the lawn maintenance contract, owing to the soil that ends up on the street after almost every rain. We used to think of this as a yearly event to clean up the sand distributed during winter but there is now a good argument to consider this as a recurrent need.
- g. *Repair of the degraded concrete aprons between sidewalk and street*: This issue was raised in the last BOD meeting but was not discussed at the Annual Meeting.
- h. *Other repairs*: (1) Pothole in entrance way needs fixing; (2) painting of reserved parking labels was poorly done so the paint is peeling; (3) potential interest in replacing decks with synthetic material. If this was a longer lasting alternative that looked similar to the existing wood we could update the covenants to allow this change.
- i. *Montgomery County responsibility for the storm water facility* – discussion: due to slow action on the part of Montgomery County this issue has dragged on for several years. Due to the passage of time, the storm water drainage system has accumulated more sediment and the County wants us to clean it out again. In addition they want us to choose their preferred contractor. At the insistence of the BOD, our management company is shopping for a better price than the preferred contractor's \$4,000 bid. Homeowners should be aware that we are obliged to act on this issue – funds are already allocated and we are keen to pass responsibility to the County.

- j. *WHOA website* – discussion: this issue had the most widespread support and interest from the community. Ideas mentioned for posting on the site (including many items that used to be touched upon in the newsletter that is now defunct): (1) WHOA rules, regulations and covenants; (2) original paint manufacturer colors for all units; (3) minutes of the BOD and Annual Meetings; (4) tips on frequently occurring repairs or equipment failures (leaky shower stalls or baths leading to caved-in ceilings, defective sprinkler heads, warnings that refrigerators and hot water tanks are reaching their expiration date); (5) electronic notice board about activities that would allow for collective bargaining if more people joined together (e.g. consolidated bids for house painting or deck washing); (6) notes on the positive performance of contractors, plumbers, painters, carpenters, etc. Karen Robinson (10936) volunteered to compile and keep this information updated); and (7) a location map and directions to tell your friends how to get to Wetherstone. It was agreed that Hal Hubachek (10944), Eric Mandel (10911) and Scott Christiansen (10905) form a task force to study and report to the next BOD meeting concerning the design, hosting, maintenance and expense of the proposed website.
- k. *Need for a directory update* – discussion: WHOA had a Communications Committee as late as 2003 but it has become inactive. Individual initiative is needed to redo the last version of the directory and to update it periodically. BOD will explore the possibility of reactivating the Communications committee and ask Abaris Realty for basic homeowner information to update the directory.
- l. *Raccoon control*: discussion – Dave Leckrone and Marlene Berlin (10903) reported that raccoons are living under their back deck. One homeowner commented that undisciplined handling of our garbage and trash attracts animals from the nearby woods; therefore, everyone should use approved containers to make the area less attractive for raccoons, rats, feral cats and other critters.
- m. *BOD and Annual Meeting Announcements*: It was recommended by Megan Adamson (10939) that we continue to announce the board meetings by putting a sign on the mailboxes.

The above list gives the BOD more than enough issues to digest over the next few months, which will require some distillation and prioritization. If the short-listed items are deemed important and costs exceed the operations budget, we will discuss payment options, which could include the regular 5% fee increases and/or a one-time assessment as options to pay for these improvements and repairs.

President's Report: WHOA BOD President Gary Yeck thanked those present for their support and their high turn out at this year's Annual Meeting – which was probably a new attendance record.

Next Meeting of the WHOA BOD: The next meeting will be scheduled at 7 p.m. on Tuesday 23 August at the Steine residence (10932).

BOD email addresses: GY (gyeck@fs.fed.us), AN (aninio@worldbank.org), HS (hbsteine@aol.com), SC (sac@ars.usda.gov); TS (tsmith@totalwine.com) and KY (kwame@mris.com).

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Initials</u>	<u>Date</u>
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