

Cross Keys Condominium #1  
Board Meeting Minutes  
March 6, 2019

Board members present: Sharon Nathanson Gail Mandell, Marge Ford, Bonnie Rhodes, Michael Hill, Sarah Taylor. Diana Schulin, Not Present. Rosalie Parker was present from Thornhill Properties.

Sharon welcomed everyone and introduced two new Board members Bonnie Rhodes and Marge Ford. She also introduced Neal Borden, President of Roland Mews who was present to hear the presentation on the storm water report.

Sharon introduced consultants Kelly Lindow, a civil engineer, and Jean Mellott, a landscape architect, who went through the storm water plan they had produced under a contract for the Association.

Lindow explained the reasons for Condo 1's problems: record rainfall, steep slopes, poor draining soils, conventional landscape maintenance has outcomes that not good at draining water and deer overgrazing leads to bare soils

Mellott went through programmatic responses to problems: re-establishing dense understory under trees with plants that deer don't eat; planting meadow plants on sunny hillsides that will not be mowed and soak up more water than turf while being better for birds and pollinators. Their deep root systems will break up clay and make it more absorbent. The growth will be four to six feet, with mowed paths.

A change in maintenance practices -- less frequent mowing, more variety in turf plants including clover -- would improve drainage and also save money. A question was asked about dog walking. Mown paths or a designated dog-walking area were suggested as solutions.

Mellott also pointed out that rain barrels collecting water off roofs can supply un-chlorinated water for outdoor plantings while reducing runoff.

Lindow outlined the report's construction solutions: berms to redirect water into swales; bioswales or dry stream beds that redirect water so it travels more slowly in a defined channel and is soaked up by water-loving plants; rain gardens near existing storm drains that slow water and filter it as it drains.

Berms are somewhat expensive but among top priorities as they effect homeowners. There are grant opportunities to help with some costs.

In answering questions, the consultants said they were aware of a rotting railroad tie retaining wall that has drainage problems; suggested test areas for reduced mowing this summer to see how it is received; explained that specific costs are not identified because the Board needs to come up with a plan for implementation of the program. (Note: The complete report will be placed on the website shortly. One may also contact a board member to get a copy.)

In the absence of Diana Schulin, the Landscape Committee report was given by Frank Spector (attached). He emphasized two takeaways – residents concerned about care of their plantings by landscape workers should communicate with Rosalie instead of confronting the crew and

she will work with the company to deal with requests; and to make sure all use approval forms (on the Condo #1 website) to get approval for any plantings in common areas. Residents may not plant in the common areas unless approval is obtained. An e-blast will be sent shortly outlining the proper procedure to follow in this case. The complete report is attached.

The Minutes of September 5, 2018 Board meeting were approved.

Gail Mandell gave the Treasurer's report. As of January 31, 2019, Condo I has total assets of \$457,155, \$78,159 in checking, \$378,998 in replacement reserves. In January, income was \$50,726 and expenses \$37,305 with a net income of \$13,421. Roof replacement costs, paid in February, will significantly reduce the reserve figure.

Rosalie went over the costs of roof replacements and explained that bill was paid by liquidating two CDs in the reserve fund.

In the Management Report, Rosalie Parker said Chris Colman, an outside building consultant engineer, had been hired and has completed his visual inspection of the outside of the roofs. Though the report is still in process; it appears that many roofs are in fair condition, though the reason so many failed is not clear at this point.

Next week he is to do a more detailed examination of five roofs both inside and outside the units including the two under tarps. Phase 2 of his report will be a plan and cost estimate for moving forward on the roofs. In answer to a question, Rosalie said five consultants were contacted for the roof inspection contract and three bids were submitted, one withdrawn. Sharon said there will be a community meeting on the roof situation when the report is final.

In other matters, Rosalie said window washing will take place in April and gutter cleaning is being scheduled. Duct cleaning including dryer vents will be available for owners at a reduced rate. This is an owner responsibility. She said all should check their HVAC systems in the spring with special attention to condensation lines and reminded residents that condominium dues are due on the first of the month with late fees charged after the 15<sup>th</sup>. There were questions about problems with trash collection that Rosalie said she is working on.

In the CKMC Report, Sharon Nathanson said the committee approved an amendment last week fixing percentages of contributions by its members. The figure was in line with the Association's approved budget. There were no updates on the state of vacant properties in the Village Center.

Comments from home owners included both complaints about and praise for current snow removal procedures – including the necessity of plowing for small snowfalls, the noise of early morning plowing, and damage to streets and curbs, as well as a resident saying, "They've done a great job." Rosalie said these were the first complaints she had heard and explained that even in small snowstorms there is a need to treat sidewalks which can get slippery. "It's tough to please everybody with snow removal," she said.

Noting the recent meeting with Sharon Middleton at the Clubhouse, a resident said, “It is important to get the City involved” in ensuring the viability of the Village Center.

Sharon announced contracts that have been signed: Chapel Valley for Landscape Services, \$34,920; Colman Consulting \$19,300 for Engineering Consulting Services related to the roofs; \$30,015 for our master insurance policy (approximately a 3% increase over last year).

The next full Board meeting will be June 5 in the Clubhouse at 6:30 pm.  
The meeting was adjourned. Michael Hill, Secretary

### **Condo 1 Landscape Committee Report – March 6, 2019**

Report by Diana Schulin (Presented by Frank Spector)

Committee Members: Diana Schulin, Helen Walters, Marge Ford, Margaret Galambos, Frank Spector, Warren Anderson.

The Landscape Committee met in late January to discuss priorities and issues facing Condo 1 this year. Discussion included:

- the importance of tree replacements and removal,
- communications issues with the landscape company,
- leaf clean up and expectations,
- sharing more information on the website with the community,
- enforcement of standards for common areas, and
- overall vision for Condo 1 landscaping.

### **Plantings List for Common Areas**

A special thanks to Helen Walters (a master gardener), who compiled a list of suggested plantings for those owners who are interested in doing their own planting in common areas, in front of their units. The list takes into consideration a number of key factors to get the best results when selecting plants. We’ll be sending an email blast later this month with the list as well as a reminder of the process to follow—please remember that approval by the Landscape Committee is required prior to planting. The list will also be posted on the Condo 1 website.

### **New Landscape Contractor**

The Committee met with the new Landscape Contractor, Chapel Valley, on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, to walk the property and discuss priorities and concerns. John French is our property manager and will work closely with Rosalie Parker, Diana Schulin, and the Landscape Committee to handle routine issues. This includes:

- turf management;
- bed care and weed control;

- pruning of shrubs/trees (up to 10 feet) and ground covers; and,
- plant health care services.

As in the past, community members are requested to send any issues and requests to Rosalie (email is the best) and not to interrupt the crews that are working on the grounds.

Specific issues discussed with Chapel Valley included:

- Better Communications about scheduled work
- Advanced notice of pruning and coordination on what needs to be pruned
- Leaf clean up and expectations
- Less lawn mowing to enable more water absorption
- Use of organic pesticides/fungicides/herbicides and no use of grass fertilizers, per our plans with BlueWater Baltimore and CityScape

### **Trees**

The Committee will have a spring walk through with A&A trees to identify any problems and needs. Again, please send any issues you may want addressed to Rosalie.

Also, we are working with TreeBaltimore, a non-profit organization that can supply a limited number of free trees for planting on the property. Plans are underway to coordinate with A&A tree to identify which types of trees are needed and where. Plantings will take place in the September/October timeframe. We're estimating 10 trees or less to be donated by TreeBaltimore, as these will need to be taken care of by community volunteers.

### **CityScape & BlueWater Baltimore Plans**

The Committee is working with Sharon Nathanson to implement some of the key priorities of the stormwater assessment plan from CityScape and BWB, as you heard about earlier at this meeting. Our involvement will include helping to draft grant proposals to get funding for plantings and other projects as well as supporting and monitoring the implementation of the CityScape plan.

### **Community Request – Watering for New Plantings**

In order to realize the goals of our landscape plans we need volunteers from the community to help with watering some of the new plantings. Please touch base with any of the members of the board or the landscape committee if you are able to help.