

NEW MARK COMMONS HOMES ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, March 10, 2018

New Mark Commons Clubhouse, 7:30 p.m.

FINAL Approved 3-11-19

Attendees

Board Members: Alex Belida, John Daroff, Alex Manolatos, Kathleen Moran, David Schwartzman, Ellen Stein, Magnus Turesson.

Abaris Community Management: Shireen Ambush, Michelle Barber, Tom Kunjoo, Mimi li, Sylvia Moreno, Sammi Lai, Gerri Roberts, and Kwame Yiadom. *Absent but introduced:* Henry Leung.

Staff: Kirsten Hall taking minutes.

1. Call to Order

John Daroff called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m.

- A. **Proof of notice of meeting:** Notice was presented by John Daroff.
- B. **Proof of quorum:** Attendance did not permit a quorum. Raj Gupta moved to waive the election quorum requirement; seconded by John Hansman; carried by voice acclamation.
- C. **Minutes of 2017 Annual Meeting:** John Hansman moved to accept the 2017 Annual Minutes; seconded by James Nations; carried by voice acclamation.

2. Guest Speaker: Shireen Ambush, MPA, PCAM, CPM

Shireen gave some history of her time with NMC and of Abaris as an organization, emphasizing that Abaris works as a family and is the highest rated property management firm in the DC area. She introduced staff working with NMC: Mimi Li, Admin. Asst. and ACC guru; Michelle Barber, Head Admin. Asst.; Henry Leung (not present), Manager in Training; Tom Kunjoo, CPA and Chief Financial Officer; Sylvia Moreno, Receptionist; Sammi Lai, Accounts Receivable Director; Gerri Roberts, Accounts Payable Director. Tom, Gerri and Sammi were recognized for running the accounting department so well. Vice President Kwame Yiadom was introduced. Nick Hegedus has left Abaris.

A. What Abaris does:

- Hub of the wheel for communications, dues collections, etc.
- Provides guidance to the Board regarding policies and procedures, engineering projects
- Provides legal advice
- Takes care of taxes, insurance
- Monitor services and vendor performance
- Brings relationships with service providers: banks, vendors

B. What Abaris expects of the Board (Shireen said NMC has a fantastic Board):

- Understand rules and laws that affect the community
- Establish and enforce uniform policies and procedures
- Operate under business judgment rule [presumption that in making a business decision, the directors of a corporation acted on an informed basis, in good faith and in the honest belief that the action taken was in the best interests of the company]
- Avoid conflicts of interest
- Don't micromanage professionals
- Serve time on the Board and actively participate
- Prioritize projects and tasks
- Show respect to fellow board members and community members
- Be informed and ready to make decisions at board meetings
- Announce meetings in advance, open to all
- Conduct open transparent meetings
- Board members must pay dues and follow rules; are held to a higher standard

C. Role of committees: Committee volunteers are easiest to enlist when they complain about an issue they care about, and become a solution to the problem.

- Share the workload of the Board
- Disseminate information to the community
- Provide a training ground for future board members

D. Notes of thanks: Shireen thanked Pat Reber for the article about her in the newsletter. She thanked all who have reached out to her. Special thanks to David Schwartzman, John Daroff, Ellen Stein, Jim Denny and Kirsten Hall.

E. Project updates:

1. CSG Engineering will perform an aerial topography survey of erosion and drainage problem areas to develop a drainage correction plan. Abaris negotiated a reduction in the survey cost. The survey will be completed in a few weeks and then plans will be made for erosion control.
2. Replacing failing retaining walls: Western and smaller wall in area of 100 block will need replacement, at approximately \$250,000.
3. Washington Gas: Abaris requested that they review their records to identify original underground gas lines and develop a plan to replace them before they leak.
4. Pool painting and lighting: Lower level of pool repainted for the season and lighting installed. Pool perimeter timbers installed.
5. 800 block retaining wall: Work has begun on replacement, to be completed soon.
6. Asphalt: CSG will evaluate bids obtained for asphalt replacement and repair; projects are evaluated in conjunction with erosion repairs.
7. Towing: A towing contract with Henry's Towing is being executed and signs will be installed.
8. Fencing by the playground was installed.

9. The staircase and eroding wall near the parking lot was repaired and filled in.
10. Landscaping: Abaris is soliciting proposals for a master plan for landscaping and priority areas have been identified.
11. Loan: Abaris is soliciting loan offers from commercial banks to fund these projects. Many projects need to be completed ASAP because erosion issues cannot be put off.
12. Words of advice from Steve Landsman: Many words of advice were shared, including: "We are caring for the place people call home," and "Property management is the art of getting things done through others."

3. Reports from the Board

- A. **Presidents Report – John Daroff:** NMC needs a loan; many capital projects must be urgently completed. The Board is looking at how to make dues affordable for everyone. Governing documents updates didn't happen this year due to the management transition and capital projects. Documents updates will begin in 2018, with formation of a committee to make recommendations to the Board.
- B. **Treasurer's Report – David Schwartzman:** Abaris has taken over NMC assets and Tom Kunjoo and the Abaris Accounting Department have helped. NMC has \$195,000 in operating; \$601,000 in reserves as of February 28; this is on track as compared to previous years. An audit will be performed this spring.
- C. **Committee Reports**
 1. **Architectural Control Committee (ACC) - Alex Belida:** ACC has updated regulations and worked on enforcement; is drafting new guidance regarding doors, solar panels and more; clarified rules on how violations are treated; conducted inspections of all homes in cooperation with Community Enhancement, discovering many homes not in compliance. Homeowners are being notified and are advised to check ACC guidelines and submit an application to the ACC for any planned work. Homeowners are advised not to duplicate a neighbor's mistakes. ACC continues to process applications as speedily as possible and works with homeowners to carry out desired work in a compliant way. ACC has reached a procedure for working with Abaris. ACC members: John Hansman (Chair), Rita Molyneux, Chris Holdsworth, and Alex Belida.
 2. **Communications Committee (CC) –** Members are Bill Holdsworth, Lori Newman, Pat Reber, and David Schwartzman (Chair), with Kirsten Hall as Communications Assistant. Website: All NMC governing documents are publicly accessible without a login. Current events are posted on the front page. Newsletters: email CC or use the form on the website to receive the digital newsletter.
 3. **Community Enhancement Committee (CEC) – Magnus Tureson:** In June 2017 a second inspection of NMC showed improvement and fewer letters of correction needed; correction letters were sent by email. Magnus is the lone committee member and encourages others to join so other tasks can be completed. Raj Gupta has helped with sending emails. Another inspection is planned in 2018. *Responding to a question from the floor:* The CE has no enforcement power of its own, but Architectural violations can be enforced by the ACC and CE works with the City of Rockville to enforce code

violations. General property maintenance requires homeowner cooperation and assistance from the city.

4. **Landscape Committee (LC)** – Ellen Stein: Active members are Cathy Berman, Chris Chiappa, Teresa Dalhman, Ellen Stein (Chair) and Beth Williamson, with Jim Denny as consultant. The LC mission and policy statement is posted on the NMC website. In 2017 LC had two successful cleanups with families joining. The next cleanup will be held April 21, rain date April 28, with Beth and Chris chairing the cleanup. LC planted daffodils at the lake steps; is seeking the help of a professional designer to develop a master plan that will unify the landscape with a mid-century modern theme. Several areas need to be handled soon, in cooperation with erosion projects. The LC meets first Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. at 7 Cumbernauld Ct.
5. **Pool Committee** - Kathleen Moran: Committee members are Nancy Wood (Chair); Joe Jordan, Peggy Metzger, Stephanie Bloom, Jim Denny, and Kathleen Moran. The PC interviewed pool management companies with some help from Abaris for recommendations; reviewed pool party rules and is revising existing pool rules. PC received 135 responses to a pool use survey; research continues on the possibility of early morning swims and a food truck. Swim team is vibrant; over 100 swimmers last year. Non-resident members: 38 non-resident pool memberships are offered annually, about 10% of pool use. Previous members are invited back first and there is a wait list. Thank you to Jim Denny for safe and fun summer in 2017.
6. **Social/50th Anniversary** - Alex Manolatos: This is a one-person new committee; new members re needed. Alex recognized the committees and residents who worked on social events:
 - 50th Anniversary: Margaret Chao, Sandra Clark, Natalie Gora, Rhonda Gordon, Madeline and Raj Gupta, John Hansman, Arthur Katz, Rose and Steve Krasnow, Alexandra Manolatos, Sima Osdoby, Pat Reber, Judy Rudolph, and David Sloan.
 - Many of these members also worked on the Board Open House (cocktail party) and Historic Register project.
 - The *Community Memoir*, distributed to all households, was a collaboration of Pat Reber, Judy Rudolph, David Sloane, and Arthur Katz.
 - The 50th Anniversary Video was made possible largely by David Sloan.
 - International Dinner: Mary Ziomek (Chair), Karen Boychyn, Alex Manolatos, Natalie Gora, Pat Reber, Kamal Goraya, and Raj and Madeline Gupta.

4. Recognition from the Board

The Board recognized the work by various ad-hoc committees:

50th Anniversary, National Register of Historic Places, International Dinner, Election Committee, Administrator Search & Negotiation Task Force, and Parking Task Force

5. Appointment of Inspectors of Election

John Daroff moved to appoint Raj Gupta and John Hansman; seconded by Alex Belida; carried by voice acclamation.

6. Certificates of Recognition

The Board awarded the certificates to:

- Pat Reber: Reporter for the Board and events
- David Sloan and his Sister-in-Law Judy: Film for 50th Anniversary, *A History of New Mark Commons*
- Margaret Chao: 50th Anniversary Committee Chair

Other certificates we awarded to: Sandra Clark, Natalie Gora, Rhonda Gordon, Madeline and Raj Gupta, John Hansman, Arthur Katz, Steve and Rose Krasnow, Alex Manolatos, Sima Osdoby, Judy Rudolph, Jim Denny

7. Open Forum

- A. **Joe Jordan:** What is the process for getting people on the governing documents task force?

Board response: The Board is looking for six or seven members, both old and new residents from a variety of perspectives, to be part of the task force. The documents revision process could take up to two years due to need for legal review and a two-thirds vote of the community.

- B. **Ron Tipton:** Thanked the Board and Abaris for progress made in the community. Thanked Jim for his efforts as Administrator. Noted that CSG vehicles were driving over berm and leaving tracks; contractors were rude when asked not to park on grass.
- C. **Karen Boychen:** Asked if cracked concrete driveways have to be corrected, and status of concrete piggyback list. There was some discussion about driveway materials and responsibility of owner or city for certain areas.

Shireen Ambush, responding: When a vendor is chosen for concrete projects residents will have a chance to resubmit a request to join the piggyback list. New driveways require an ACC application; check the AC guidelines or ask the ACC.

- D. **Hans Schierling:** Asked if the community keeps hard copies of governing documents.

Board response: Copies are on the website, public. Abaris also has copies. All minutes are on the website. Archival minutes, drawings, and other documents from the pre-digital age are archived on the NMC property. Minutes from the electronic age are not kept in hard copy.

8. Election of Directors

Ballots were counted. Ellen Stein and John Daroff were re-elected with 41 votes each.

9. Door Prizes

Mary and Debbie Nathanson (Radburn) won \$50 gift certificates to Clydes.

10. Business: None

11. Adjournment

David Schwartzman moved to adjourn; seconded by Toni Schierling; carried by voice acclamation. Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.