

NEW MARK COMMONS HOMES ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, May 4, 2023

7:00 p.m.

Minutes Taken by Kaitlyn Ambush

Attendees

Board Members: Alex Belida, Kathleen Moran, Lisa Halvorson, Joe Jordan, Samuel Scheib, Karin Boychyn, and Tim Petros

Abaris Community Management: Shireen Ambush and Kaitlyn Ambush

Homeowners: Pat Reber, Debbie Mesmer, Saven Wilkins, Couroche Kalantary

Call to Order

Kathleen Moran called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Community Forum 1 and Board Response

Debbie Mesmer requested an update on the lake perimeter fence repairs.

Board Response

Kathleen Moran thanked Debbie for her comments and requested an update from Abaris on the fence repair. Shireen Ambush noted that Abaris will obtain quotes to replace the fence with chain link versus synthetic wood.

Agenda and Prior Meeting Minutes

Board Meeting Agenda 5-4-23: Kathleen Moran suggested the addition of the proposal from S&P Tree Care for tree removal in the 100 block of New Mark Esplanade under the Landscape Committee Report. Kathleen also requested the additions of the master insurance policy renewal and the AW Landscapes proposal for the retaining wall at the Maryland Avenue tunnel under Old/New Business. Alex Belida made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Samuel Schieb and carried unanimously.

Board Meeting Minutes 4-6-23: Joe Jordan noted that he sent an email noting two (2) resolutions were made after the brief executive session held regarding the Special Meeting, and inquired what exactly the second resolution was. Kathleen Moran commented that her notes only reflected one motion was made. Alex Belida concurred with Kathleen. Karin Boychyn made a motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Alex Belida and carried with the following vote count: For – Karin Boychyn, Alex Belida, Kathleen Moran, Samuel Scheib, Lisa Halverson, Tim Petros; Against – Joe Jordan.

2. Committee Reports

Architectural Control Committee (ACC) –

Tim Petros noted there were no significant updates to report from the ACC. Tim commented that Cou Kalantary developed an online ACC application, which will be sent to the Board for review and approval at the next Board Meeting.

Communications Committee –

Pat Reber presented the report on behalf of the Communications Committee, which is an attachment to the minutes. Pat Reber noted the \$1,000 grant from the City of Rockville was received and inquired if the Committee could use the grant money as funding for the gallery poster system. The total cost to obtain the initial items to install the gallery system on two walls would be \$397.21. Karin Boychyn made a motion to approve the \$400 payments towards the permanent gallery system. The motion was seconded by Alex Belida and carried unanimously. Rocio Crumley requested the website allow for committees to communicate with each other through the website. Pat Reber confirmed that any committee can provide information to the Communications Committee for posting on the website. However, scanned documents cannot be posted on the website. The documents must be in WORD or PDF format.

Landscape Committee –

Saven Wilkins thanked Pat Reber for the Communication Committee's effort to enhance communication efforts throughout the community. Saven noted that Community Enhancement Day was a huge success as 9 trees were planted, the community-wide clean-up was performed, and donuts and coffee were served for the first time since the pandemic.

The Board discussed the proposal from S&P Tree Care for the shared proposal for tree pruning behind 862 New Mark Esplanade, as the expenses are shared, and the homeowner is responsible for \$425. The HOA would be responsible for \$1,475 for the trees on HOA property. Karin Boychyn made a motion to approve the full proposal from S&P Tree Care for \$1,900. The motion was seconded by Lisa Halverson and carried with the following vote: For – Karin Boychyn, Lisa Halverson, Kathleen Moran, Samuel Scheib, Tim Petros; Against – Joe Jordan and Alex Belida.

The Board discussed the proposals received for the white pine tree removal between 218-228 New Mark Esplanade. Kathleen Moran inquired if Prestige Tree Experts will have a crane being used during the tree removal process and expressed her concerns with carrying the wood over the homes. Joe Jordan made a motion to approve the proposal from Prestige Tree Experts for \$9,500 for the removal of the white pine trees. The motion was seconded by Karin Boychyn and carried with the following vote: For – Joe Jordan, Alex Belida, Karin Boychyn, Tim Petros, Samuel Scheib, Lisa Halverson; Against – Kathleen Moran.

The Board discussed the City of Rockville street trees on Farsta Court and the Landscape Committee's recommendation to support the yellowwood tree as recommended by the City of Rockville. Lisa Halverson made a motion to support the recommendation from the Landscape Committee for yellowwood trees. The motion was seconded by Alex Belida and carried unanimously.

The Board discussed the dead tree branch behind 154 New Mark Esplanade for \$625 and the removal of pin oaks behind 164-166 New Mark Esplanade for \$1,500. Karin Boychyn made a motion to approve \$625 and \$1,500 for the removal of the dead tree branch and the pin oaks. The motion was seconded by Samuel Scheib

and carried with the following vote: For – Karin Boychyn, Samuel Scheib, Lisa Halverson, Tim Petros, Kathleen Moran; Against – Joe Jordan and Alex Belida.

The Board discussed the proposal from AW Landscapes for \$1,600 for ground restoration near 300 New Mark Esplanade and noted the approval was already provided at the last Board Meeting.

Pool Committee –

Samuel Scheib reported the Pool Committee did not meet. However, the committee inquired of the status of the diving board. Abaris will obtain cost options from Pool Personnel to either replace or remove the dive stand entirely. The Board agreed to authorize Abaris Realty to take care of whatever is necessary to assist the pool with passing inspection in time for pool opening day.

Welcome/Social Committee –

Karin Boychyn commented that homes continue to be bought and sold throughout the community. Karin thanked Madeline Gupta for distributing the welcome packet to new owners and noted the Social Committee has created a survey for the next newsletter to generate ideas for future social events. Currently, yoga classes, movie night, and a yard sale are some events that have been planned.

3. Treasurer's Report

Karin Boychyn reported that the Association has \$1.1 million in the bank, with money still owed on the loan, and the Association is currently over budget on tree care. discussed the completed transfer from operating contingency to UME, per the 2022 audit recommendation, and noted that \$50,000 was spent on capital improvement projects thus far. The new walls and tennis court bottom rails are great additions, and the retaining wall should be added to the next reserve study.

Management Report

The Board discussed the request for a trash reminder notice, as well as the suggestion to install a dog park/run and agreed not to take any action at this time.

The Board discussed ETC's assessment of the retaining walls and agreed to schedule a virtual meeting with the Board and ETC to understand the engineer's report and the types of walls and installation.

4. Old/New Business

- a. The Board discussed progress on the vote for the upcoming Special Meeting to amend the HOA Governing Documents. Abaris will provide the Board with an updated vote count, as well as an interactive spreadsheet that will be shared with all Board members to update as votes are cast and received. Abaris will also provide the Board with 200 additional envelopes and proxies to reach the required vote count.
- b. The Board discussed the 2023-2024 master insurance renewal package with HMS Insurance for \$1,275. Joe Jordan made a motion to approve the renewal of the master insurance policy with HMS Insurance. The motion was seconded by Lisa Halverson and carried unanimously.
- c. The Board discussed the proposal from AW Landscapes to repair the retaining wall at the Maryland Avenue tunnel with segmental block for \$9,800. Karin Boychyn made a motion to approve the

proposal from AW Landscapes for \$9,800 for segmental block. The motion was seconded by Alex Belida. Joe Jordan urged the Board to seek a second opinion as stone changes the look of the community when changed from wood. Kathleen Moran noted that the Board received multiple bids and AW Landscape's proposal is always the low bid. Segmental block has a life span of 50 years opposed to wood with a life span of 20 years. The vote carried with the following count: For – Karin Boychyn, Alex Belida, Lisa Halverson, Tim Petros, Kathleen Moran, Samuel Scheib; Against – Joe Jordan.

5. Community Forum 2

Debbie Mesmer noted her appreciation for Karin Boychyn's earlier suggestion to gather cost options for the dam fence replacement. Debbie inquired why the fence installation has to wait until the dam work is completed and if we can obtain bids now for the replacement of the fence. Debbie also commented that a solid fence cannot be seen through and should be as tall as possible.

Saven Wilkins urged the Board to continue their efforts to address the fence at the lake dam.

6. Board Response to Community Forum 2

Karin Boychyn thanked Debbie and Saven for their comments and noted that the Board's hands are tied as the Board Members share the community's frustration however, the Board does not want to install a fence or pathway only to have it damaged or removed by the dam/dredging equipment and construction.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Samuel Scheib moved to adjourn the regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Karin Boychyn and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Attachment #1: Communication’s Committee Report

Communications Committee Report 5/4/23

We are happy to report that the City of Rockville has sent our \$1,000 grant money to Abaris. We are committed to spending this money before December 31.

As a reminder, the budget that was approved by the city calls for us to spend money on frames, plastic boxes for files, mailing tubes for the large documents, and \$200 for two Crape Myrtle Trees to commemorate our 55th anniversary, 5-6 feet tall.

Proposed Budget for NMC Archive Project-	Unit	Unit Cost	Total
Purchase frames for the posters for Club House Display -Historic Pictures	4	\$ 40.00	\$ 160.00
Archive plastic boxes for historic files	3	\$ 20.00	\$ 60.00
3 inch x 36 inch, Mailing Tubes with Caps (10 Pack)	10	\$ 58.00	\$ 580.00
Crape Myrtle Tree to commemoorate 55th Anniversary 5-6ft tall	2	\$ 100.00	\$ 200.00
	Total		\$ 1,000.00

We hope there is some flexibility in how we spend the grant. We will have to submit receipts for everything. At the time we applied for the grant, we thought we had an inexpensive adhesive system for hanging the framed posters. As you know, that system failed.

Tonight, we are asking for the Board to **approve \$397.21** for a gallery-type Display system that will enable us to hang about eight of the dozen or more posters on two clubhouse walls – the adjoining walls at the opposite end of where we usually enter the Clubhouse meeting room.

We have attached the analysis that Bill Holdworth drew up about this system. Four of us visited Glenview Mansion, where the Walker system is in use, and we agreed this is a good system. Morris Kaplan and Jim Denny have looked at the details about this system and are ready to volunteer to install the system on the walls. This will require drilling a few holes into the cement block wall to install a horizontal rod. Once the rod is installed, no other wall fixtures are needed. We can get rods that are colored white to make it less obtrusive.



This is what the system looks like at Glenview. Jim and Morris would decide where the rod must be installed to hang the posters

We explored an alternative system called STAS. Their website is difficult to figure out costs, and we were unable to get a response from the one place in Montgomery County that STAS said has their system installed. So we were unable to look at the system. The two systems are however very similar. The committee agreed we would not want to install a system that we were unable to see first hand in use.

Unfortunately, most of the frames we bought previously for about \$300 all told were destroyed when they fell from the wall. We will need to purchase new frames. Our grant budget only allows for \$160 for new frames. We will not be able to decide on new frames until we get the gallery system installed so we can buy appropriate frame fixtures for hanging. We will need to come back to the Board for that purchase, or perhaps we can convince the city that we need the \$580 set aside for tubes in order to purchase frames. We will keep you posted.

On other communication matters, the committee received a request from the Landscape Committee to have access to the Website and to create a news feed and or a list serve for the community. We have responded with a reminder about our policy to not share access to the website, community directory, calendar or email list with other committees or any other parties. Access is limited to a handful of people, including Kirsten Hall, Bill Holdsworth, and Abaris' communications guy, Greg Lobring. This is to protect the Board from liability and residents from finding untoward things there. We also must maintain vigilance over repeated hacking attempts.

Similarly, we are not able to offer a list serve where many voices could be heard, as we lack the time and ability to moderate discussion and the Board would be liable for any incidents that occur on it. Those conversations are best held on NextDoor.

These guiding principles have been approved by the Board since the website's inception in about 2016.

We offered to post committee news in the Community News section on the website and to create categories for committees, as we have for 50th anniversary, erosion issues, etc. They show up on the right side of the page when you click on a news story.

Typically, stories that appear in Community News also get put out in a broadcast to the whole community, linked on NextDoor, and may appear in the newsletter. We don't have a way to subscribe to a newsfeed for Community News.

We also outlined a way that anyone in NMC can connect their own digital calendar to the website calendar. Committees can submit calendar entries with a blurb that you can call up by clicking on the calendar date.

One more thing – Abaris documents always come to us as scanned documents, which means none of the links work for us. The PDF should be generated directly from the Word File. The links will then work and document will look better.