

**Forest Glen Station Homeowner's Association**  
**Executive Board Meeting**  
**November 17, 2008**

**I. Call to Order.** The Board Meeting was called to order by the President, Allen Feuer, at 7:31 P.M. The meeting scheduled for November 10 did not achieve a quorum so the meeting was rescheduled for this date. The meeting was held at the home of Board Member Doug Keeton.

**Other Members Present:** Marc Weinberger, Vice President; Chuck Ehrlich, Treasurer; Francis O'Donnell, Secretary; and Doug Keeton.

**Others Present:** Susan Morris, Joe Hubbard, Rodney Rudd, Birgit Mitchell, and Vincent Hughes. (On November 10, when the Board did not have a quorum, residents who did come to the meeting place were Sadia Malin, Carmen Jenkins, Arlene Jenkins, and Venus Daye. Diann Waters of CMI had also been present.)

**II. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting.** The Board approved the minutes from the Executive Board Meeting of October 27, 2008 with one minor change.

**III. Officer/Committee Reports.**

**A. Treasurer / Budget and Finance Committee.** Mr. Ehrlich, the Treasurer, reviewed the monthly report from CMI. The snow removal reserve has been moved to a separate, distinct category. Although the Board had approved the contract for the lawyer on retainer, the \$2,400 retainer fee is not yet reflected in the report. A proposal for a pest control contract is mentioned as having been received.

A few residents' assessments are in arrears to a minor degree. Spending in a few areas was more than the amount budgeted: Site and building maintenance; Consultant fees; Electricity. Expenditures for snow removal in 2008 are still about \$8,000 under the amount budgeted. The discussion about the HOA funds in bank accounts included the comment that the increase in FDIC insurance to \$250,000 for bank accounts will be in effect for one year (2009).

**B. Covenants Committee.** The Chair, Ms. Mitchell, reported. The Committee approved a request from 9824 Darcy Forest Drive for a flapper to cover a kitchen vent. The Committee had sent a letter to residents on Clark Ct. about a refrigerator stored outside and it has been removed. The Committee asked that the Landscaping and Grounds Committee develop a list of recommendations about flowers and shrubs that are recommended as suitable for residents to plant in their yards. The list would serve as a notice to owners about what is appropriate to plant, so that they can avoid invasive plants. Such a list would avoid the need for residents to seek approvals from the Committee.

Mr. Ehrlich commented that he had reviewed the draft guide to owners to make sure that the amounts of assessments were correctly shown. He also said that he will attempt to get the new attorney on retainer to review the guide via email. This would be the first opportunity to utilize the attorney's services. Ms. Mitchell said that she would send a copy of the final version to Mr. Ehrlich to share with the attorney.

**C. Parking and Safety Committee.** Mr. Rudd, the Chair, reported. The Committee last met a few weeks ago and discussed parking issues. As a result he has put together a new parking policy that he will circulate to Committee members. The draft would propose significant changes for certain homeowners. It would guarantee 2 parking spaces for each home without a garage, as is already the case for homes on Clark Court. Such a change would decrease the number of unreserved spaces on Darcy Green Place and Darcy Green Court to 13. There would no longer be preferential treatment for those whose homes already have garages. The location of reserved spots may be open to further discussion. Board sentiment was in favor of reserved spaces on the street for the homes without garages that face Darcy Green Court. The Chair also proposed that there be time limits on the HOA-issued parking permits so that they will have to be renewed periodically. These proposed changes necessitate a review of the contents of the covenants and may require legal review as well.

The President noted that the budget does not cover the costs of painting reserved parking space markers or of new parking stickers. As noted above, the Chair is working on the proposed plan.

**D. Landscaping and Grounds Committee.** The Board reviewed the text describing the email consideration of the bids for replacement planting. CMI had already received a charge for the work to remove trees. The board approved the following two paragraphs that describe the events that took place after the last Board meeting.

Following Board discussion at the meeting of October 27, Mr. Hughes sought and got a proposal from Meadows Farms to compare to the previous proposal from Bhenke's. Total bid from Meadows Farms was \$1,436 compared to the bid of \$1,300 from Bhenke's. The Board discussed these competing bids via email in the interval before the November 10 meeting. In an attempt to keep the total costs within budget, the Board decided via email vote to accept the bid from Bhenke's but to omit the replacement of the pine tree near the pond, resulting in a savings of \$300. The total costs should then be right around the budget allocation of \$2,000.

Mr. Hughes also reported that the tree trimming and removal was scheduled with Adirondack Tree Experts for Friday, November 7 and that CMI had already sent them a check for deposit.

**E. Social Committee.** The President noted that the Halloween parade was successful and was attended by nearly 50 children. He noted for the record the Board's thanks to the principal organizers, Melissa Feuer, Jacelyn McKelvey, and Sharon Montes.

**IV. Open Forum.** Ms. Mitchell asked whether speedbumps could be installed on Darcy Forest Drive, Kimball Place, and Clark Place in order to slow commuter traffic and prevent accidents related to speeding. The possible use of speed cameras was also raised for discussion. The President noted that the county transportation department would be willing to come out and survey the streets. Mr. Rudd was given information about points-of-contact with the county. Mr. Keeton again raised the issue of parking with respect to HOA permits. The HOA permits now do not have expiration dates and do not show the address of the residents to whom they were issued. He suggested that permits should be renewed either annually or every two years, as is required for the country permits.

## **V. Old Business.**

**A. Trash Can at Tot Lot.** Ms. Waters (CMI) had reportedly gotten clarification last week about the HOA's interests and said that she would report back with possible costs.

**B. Review of Landscaping and Snow Removal Contracts.** Mr. Hughes had reviewed them and had made suggestions. Input from residents was about snow removal from the lot behind Darcy Green Place. The residents asked that the contractor plow the empty parking spots when there are no cars there. Other comments were that the HOA should require better compliance with contracts. A&W's activity reports are skimpy and are often not signed. Some residents have complained that yard care is not satisfactory. It was noted that the contract calls for \$3,061/month for 10 months, totaling \$30,610 for year. Mr. Hughes' suggestions were as follows:

Snow removal: 1) Removal should begin within 4 hours of snow stopping and for accumulations of 2 inches or more. 2) Plowed snow must not block access to any home. 3) Snow removal should include the parking lot behind Darcy Green Place, including unoccupied parking spaces.

Landscaping: 1) During the spring cleaning and mulching activities, the mulch around trees should be formed into the shape of a bowl to retain water near the tree. 2) The Tot Lot should have the wood carpet applied in early spring time.

The Board agreed with these recommendations to modify the proposed contract for next year.

There was discussion about how to monitor the performance in accordance with the contract. Better monitoring may make a difference. Landscaping is more difficult to monitor than snow removal. In the past,

Board members had found 6 other companies that perform similar services. A change in such contracting may have to be deferred to next year.

With respect to Potomac Disposal, whose contract expires on January 1, 2009, the Board has not received a new proposal. The President said he would ask CMI about this.

**C. Review of New Tree Proposal.** See paragraph III.D. (above), including the 2 indented paragraphs.

**D. Parking Issues.** One more issue, in addition to those in III.C. (above), dealt with a report of a white pickup truck with South Carolina plates that has been parked in the alley behind the condominium units for at least 2 weeks. With respect to the 2 parked cars (a Probe and a Honda) on Darcy Green Place, Mr. Rudd had put stickers on the cars and they were subsequently moved. The Honda had had a flat tire but it has been fixed.

**E. Verizon Fios Update.** Mr. Hubbard reported that Verizon said that the fiberoptic cable is on backorder from the manufacturer. Installation is not likely before 2009.

**F. Quote from Robert's Pest Control.** The proposal from the company seemed expensive. The President suggested dealing with pest control needs on a case by case basis. Mr. Ehrlich suggested seeking proposals from other pest control companies. The Board decided not to initiate a contract with Roberts and to obtain such services on a case by case basis. Discussion also mentioned the recent fox sightings in the community.

**G. Railroad Crossing.** The former President, Catherine Bocskor, had volunteered to testify before a December 11 meeting of a legislative committee about a proposal to make the nearby railroad crossing a quiet zone using automated enforcement systems. The Board concurred with the President's proposal to request Ms. Bocskor to forward her testimony for the Board to review. Additional comment was made that a restaurant will open near the crossing by the end of year.

## **VI. New Business**

**A. 2009 Budget.** Mr. Ehrlich led a discussion of the draft budget for 2009. The Committee had met twice in shaping the budget and the Board had discussed an earlier version at a previous meeting. The most significant issues were:

1) Funding the recommendations from the reserve study. The HOA had not been saving enough for reserves. The reserve study presented two different methods of calculating the needed savings. The Committee's approach was to split the difference between the lower and higher amounts. As a result, the HOA contributions to the reserves will jump from \$14,219 in 2008 to \$27,500 in 2009. This new number does not reflect probable inflationary increases in the future. New reserve studies may be necessary in the future (e.g., every 4 years).

2) The next biggest item is for legal expenses (\$5,500, which is \$3,500 more for legal expenses than in 2008) that reflect the retainer for Mr. Schild, possible fees for turnover of the pond to the county (up to \$5,000), Centex turnover of the common property to the HOA (\$1,500), and a possible study of land ownership. The Committee decided to fund Mr. Schild to facilitate the pond turnover. Part of the costs can be funded by taking \$5,000 from the reserve fund for the storm water pond (balance is \$7,600). There will also be contributions to the pond reserve as part of the \$27,500.

3) Move \$3,000 from the general operating fund into the income part of the budget. This will offset some of the increases in assessments. The general operating fund has been growing due to surpluses in past years. Auditors recommend that the fund should be 15% of annual budget, but it has grown to 20%.

4) The amount budgeted for snow removal has been decreased from \$11,000 to \$7,000. If the HOA incurs any snow removal expenses greater than budgeted, funds from the snow removal reserve can be used. There should be about 3 to 4 thousand dollars in the reserve by the end of this year.

5) The budget for electricity remains at \$550 to cover bills for street lights.

6) The budget for tree maintenance was reduced from \$3,000 to \$2,000.

7) \$500 was budgeted for pest control (exterminator) services for services as may be needed.

- 8) The landscaping budget was increased slightly at the Committee's request.
- 9) Budget for site maintenance was increased from \$500 to \$2,000, in anticipation of costs for painting for parking, neighborhood cleanup projects (hauling), and possible cleanup needed after acts of vandalism.
- 10) The budget for the transition reserve study was reduced from \$1,600 to \$1, as a budget place holder for future years, since the study was just done in 2008.

The net impact of these changes is to increase monthly assessments as follows:

	<u>2008 Assessment</u>	<u>2009 Assessment (proposed)</u>	
Town Homes	\$71.72	\$80.09	(11.7% increase)
Single Family Homes	\$44.66	\$52.86	(18.4% increase)

The increase is larger for the single family homes (\$12.18) than for the town homes (\$8.37) because the town homes benefit more from the reduction in the budget for snow removal.

Mr. Keeton moved that the Board approve the proposed 2009 budget and the Board passed the motion by unanimous vote.

Subsequent discussion covered informing CMI, asking CMI to put the budget in the right format, and reviewing the CMI product before the budget is sent out to the general membership of the HOA. The President said that he would draft a letter to the general membership to explain the budget in anticipation of the general membership meeting in January, when the community will vote to approve the 2009 budget.

**B. Date for Annual Meeting.** January 12, 2009.

**VII. Next Meetings**

Monday, December 8, 2008

Monday, January 12, 2009

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Francis L. O'Donnell, Secretary