

Northampton Lathrop Residents' Association

Council Meeting

September 1, 2015

The President, Carol Neubert, called the meeting to order. She introduced Ann Hartman, the new Lane Representative from Cranberry Lane.

President's Remarks

After asking for a moment of silence, Carol introduced the question, "What constitutes physical boundaries in our community?" The Council proceeded to do a small group exercise under Carol's leadership which used examples of potential "boundary disputes" to examine this question. Subsequent discussion yielded a suggestion that ways other than roads be developed to facilitate walking on the campus. Some felt that isolation was more worrisome than boundaries, and a questionnaire seeking to identify people who would appreciate a "buddy call" each morning was suggested to meet this need. Carol responded that personal boundaries were on the agenda for the next meeting of the Council. There was some discussion about whether the issue of physical boundaries should be addressed in the Handbook revision currently underway. That subject too will be on next month's agenda, as we review a preliminary draft of the Resident Handbook.

By-Laws Revision

Because several committee members had to leave early, the Committee on By-Law Revision presented its report (scheduled under Old Business) for Council action prior to submission of the revision to the Association at large. The suggested revisions were accepted as presented, with two exceptions. These were: Section 11, paragraph 2 of the By-Laws: (deletions underlined; new material in [] brackets)

Lane Representatives elections shall be completed [chosen by lane residents,] and the results reported to the Secretary no later than April 1 of each year.

and: Section 16: Appropriations of up to \$100 may be approved by the signature of the President and one other officer. Otherwise, appropriations of up to \$250 shall require approval by the Council. In the case of expenditures for providing entertainment or activities [programs] of the Association, the President [or Treasurer] may approve expenditures of up to \$250, [submitted on a reimbursement form]. Appropriations greater than \$250 shall require a two-thirds vote of the Council and subsequent ratification by the Association.

These two reworked sections will be submitted to the October meeting of the Council for approval.

Minutes

The minutes of the Association meeting of August 5 were accepted as corrected.

Treasurer's Report

Bev Bowman's Treasurer's report, appended to these minutes, noted a donation of \$5305 from the Lathrop Community Fund, giving us a balance of \$7996.66. She will try to find alternative CD's to invest some of the new money, seeking a better return.

Program Committee

Carol announced that Audrey Bozzo has stepped up to the plate and agreed to chair the committee. Audrey announced a party for 90 year-old residents in October. Other activities can be found on the calendar. David Morrissey has agreed to organize the monthly movies to be shown on the first Sunday afternoon of each month. The wine and cheese party last Friday was a success, and was attended not only by new residents, but by prospective ones as well.

Management Report

Thom presented the stunning current occupancy statistics (to be found in his report, appended). Both campuses expect 100% occupancy of town homes by October. The Inn, currently at 68% occupancy, is predicted to reach 74% by the end of the year. He thanked residents who have willingly opened their homes to prospective residents. He discussed the progress on the Master Plan in some detail. He also urged residents to attend the annual picnic and anniversary celebration on September 16 at the Garden House in Look Park, for which transportation will be provided. On October 15, Sean Kelly, new Kendal CEO, will visit Lathrop and will try to meet as many people as possible.

Mike Strycharz said that fall maintenance will consist of fall mowing, spreading lime and planting mums. Questioned about annual furnace maintenance, Mike said that gas furnaces are clean and do not require annual maintenance, but if problems are reported, they will be acted on.

Lane Reports

Carol commented that there are increasing problems using the Meeting House. Too many are using the rooms. She reminded people to sign up in the office for meetings, and to check availability there before scheduling anything. We should try to meet in places other than the library.

She described the meeting on the Master Plan scheduled for Sept. 2 as a joint council meeting, and wondered if we might benefit from some interaction with the Easthampton Council. She suggested that we try to get to know our Easthampton counterparts at the luncheon prior to the meeting.

She hoped that we all saw the Gazette editorial, which made us look good.

Michael Schwartz, Dogwood Lane Rep, presented a series of questions from Dogwood resident Lloyd Fark registering his disapproval of the master planning process. Michael felt it is important to get these concerns out in the open and to keep communication clear. Fark's questions, and Thom's responses were as follows:

1. What are the architects' fees? \$30,000 for Master Planning phase; \$160,000 for Phases 2 and 3. \$190,000 total.
2. Who is going to pay these fees? How will this affect our 2016 resident fees? A generous bequest in 2014 will be used to cover these fees. There will be no effect on residents' fees.
3. What are the benefits to current residents? This is the reason for the current Master Plan meetings – to ascertain what residents would find beneficial in the future.
4. Who is pushing this project? No one, really. In 2012, Lathrop developed a Strategic Plan. An Operational Master Plan is needed to implement that plan. That is what we are working on now, rather than have the 2012 effort sit on a shelf gathering dust.
5. If the project proceeds, how will the \$26 million be financed? By bonds and fundraising; there may be grant options as well. The \$26 million is an assumption, not a solid figure, by the way. It was used as a ball park number in preparing information for the architects' selection process. Actual costs can be calculated as we get nearer to decisions about if and what we want to build.

Carol remarked that we cannot stay stagnant and be vital. We need to be progressive as we plan for the future.

Bob Comerford, Hawthorn Lane Rep, asked if there could be a special time with the architects for Lane Reps to express their thoughts about the plan. Thom suggested that for now we surrender ourselves to the architects' process and predicted that there will be plenty of room for resident opinion. Bob was concerned that, with declining population, we not overbuild. Several new assisted living facilities in the area were also cited.

Bill Wallace, Goldenchain Lane Rep, asked what a strategic plan was; Thom described the 2012 Lathrop Strategic Plan as the basis for our current effort. Laura Cranshaw, Butternut Lane Rep, reported concern among her residents that if the new property were to be developed, access must be carefully planned. A road behind Butternut townhomes would be unacceptable.

Michael Schwartz questioned the use of the Lathrop van for attending concerts, etc. for free, describing it as a subsidy paid for by all of us. Use of the van for entertainment should be paid for by those using it. Thom noted that a Transportation Committee is planned for 2016 to address issues like this one. Ann Hartman registered opposition to a fee for van rides. Transportation should be available as a service without charge. Further, a \$15 fee for delivery of meals in Northampton is prohibitive. Bill Wallace

reinforced this opinion. Carol noted that there is a file of menus of restaurants who deliver in the mailing room.

Judy Buhner questioned the use of guest parking spaces. This topic will be included in the Handbook revisions.

The next meeting of the Council will be on October 7 at 10:00. Draft material for the Handbook revision will be reviewed.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Davis, Secretary

CORRECTION PAGE 3, PARAGRAPH 2, QUESTIONS 1. and 2.

What are the architects fees? The initial architects fees are \$30,000 and total architects fees are \$105,000. The total fees for master planning that have been allocated include other professionals for an additional \$55,000; thus totaling \$160,000.

Who is going to pay these fees? We have \$190,000 remaining from two bequests and that is how the master plan is being funded