

NORTHAMPTON COUNCIL MEETING
6 June 2018

Page 1 of 7

Council members attending

Dave Morrissey, President
Helen Engeseth, Vice President
Dale LaBonte, Treasurer & Crabapple representative
Arlene Jennings, Secretary
Bob Buhner, Aspen
Cynthia Nyary, Butternut¹
Shelia Lyford, Dogwood
Marlisa Parker, Firethorn
Bob Comerford, Hawthorne

Council members not attending

Jack Hjelt, Goldenchain (Arlene Jennings substituted.)

Staff attending

Frank Sansom, Director of Finance
Rob Olmsted, Director of Wellness & Care Coordination
Mike Strycharz, Director of Facilities
Suzie Dickson Moyer, Director of Sales and Marketing

Visitors

Peggy Middleton, Firethorn
Fran Volkman, Crabapple, as representative for the Property Committee
Hans van Heyst, as representative for the Landscaping Committee

Moment of Silence. President Dave Morrissey called the regular monthly meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. with a moment of silence.

Comings & Goings. Sally Chaffe and Stan Maron have left Butternut Lane. Telle Zoller has moved permanently to the Inn. Janet Price has returned to Linda Manor. New residents are Joan Borgos and Philip Eck at 69 Hawthorne, Joan Bernardini at 59 Firethorn, and Elly Rumelt at 64 Goldenchain. Rowena and Gary Roodman will arrive at 25 Crabapple 28 June, and Marlisa's sister Edie Denney will move to 6 Aspen on 31 July.

¹ Cynthia Nyary will be the new lane rep for Butternut at council meetings, and Bette Labier will be the lane rep for activities on the lane.

NORTHAMPTON COUNCIL MEETING
6 June 2018

Page 2 of 7

Marketing Report. Suzie Dickson Moyer reported a great deal of interest and activity for sales with good movement also to the Inn from the townhomes. She noted that *Smithsonian Magazine* has proven an excellent source for prospective buyers. Lathrop Communities have a significant advantage in the market because of the renovation program for new residents. It is exceptional in the industry, as are our rate of sales and our long waiting list.

Looking for a Northampton office for the sales team, the conference room in the Meeting House is the preferred location being at the hub of activity on campus. Suzie will have regular Tuesday office hours here. Frank Sansom will also have office hours here one day a week.

Problems to solve with the space reconfiguration are finding other accessible storage space for yoga gear and creating meeting space in the "Blue House" to protect the library for its designated purpose.

Shouts Outs. Dave reported that trail improvements are complete thanks to twelve Lathrop volunteers, Broadbrook Coalition volunteers, and a Kendal grant. The volunteers carried lumber for building the bridge, assisted in building a retaining wall, hauled and laid down rock dust, and painted a new bench. Dave will be sending a final report to Kendal shortly. We now need to create a sign indicating the trail route and crediting our funding source.

Bob Buhner was appreciated for his organization and hosting around the triple crown events.

Thanks to Mike Strycharz for facilitating the new tv and sound system in the Gathering Room.

The Butterfly Garden now has a team of volunteers assisted by a Smith student whom we pay. There is a need for additional sign-ups for watering.

The most recent issue of *The Noreaster* featured the needlework projects of Northampton residents Peg Rasmussen, Carol Neubert, Sheila Lyford, and Jane Bowne.

Minutes. The minutes of the 2 May 2018 Association Meeting were approved as presented.

NORTHAMPTON COUNCIL MEETING
6 June 2018

Page 3 of 7

Shelia Lyford suggested that minutes going forward should list those attending. Arlene Jennings proposed also that future minutes be provided to council members who attended the meeting for corrections before distribution to the full association membership. All minutes will be distributed by email except for the few residents unable to receive email. The council concurred with these process changes.

Treasurer's Report. Dale LaBonte presented a new format for the report which was accepted by the council. When the signature changes were made at the bank it was no longer possible to open an interest bearing personal account, so we now have a free business account with two debit cards for the president and treasurer.

Dale proposed that we consider adopting a process for applying for funds from the Association for projects, on the model of the one in place in Easthampton. Bob Buhner questioned the need. Dave will consult with Jim Dowell, President of the Easthampton Residents Association to clarify understanding of their system.

Management Report. Frank Sansom reported on contributions to the Lathrop Community Fund. \$21,000 have been donated to date, suggesting we will reach the \$30,000 goal. \$3,125 has been specifically earmarked for the Northampton Association.

Revenue exceeds budget, thanks in significant part to the strong occupancy at the Inn. At year end revenue over budget will flow to the cash account to continue to build the reserve. This is the first year that cash flow from payments exceeds budget. Lathrop has 97-98% occupied and sold, the best occupancy in the Kendal system.

Landscaping is the largest single item of the \$5,000,000 annual operating expenses for the two campuses, with \$250,000 to \$300,000 paid to Spring Valley for snow removal and landscaping.

Landscaping Study: Finished--Now What?

Paradise City Landscape Design have completed their initial contract, and Hans has received their drawings on paper and on a thumb drive. Mike Strycharz will need additional thumb drives. The paper files will be available in a binder in the seating area at the Meeting House for residents to review.

To date we have paid Paradise City \$6,200 for design. There is a new contract for twenty hours for planning the palette for each lane. That will enable individual lanes to take action on their own if they wish rather than wait for Lathrop. The cost of

**NORTHAMPTON COUNCIL MEETING
6 June 2018**

Page 4 of 7

consulting with the designers will be \$150/hour. If the lanes do proceed before Lathrop is in a position to do the work, the lane residents will bear the cost.

Individual residents can also contact the designers if they want to do work in their back yards at their own expense. In that case it will be necessary to inform Mike Strycharz of planning to ensure mowing will not be impeded.

The initial work proposed to be done on campus by Lathrop is the removal of trees and roots and then replacement along Shallowbrook from the entrance to the turning into Butternut Lane. The cost for Paradise to do the work will be \$30,000-\$32,500. Mike Strycharz finds having only one bid insufficient for such a large budget and intends to get two more bids but has a concern that the plans do not give sufficient information. For example, except for trees, size of plants is not indicated in the drawings, and that will affect cost.

Dale LaBonte raised a concern about follow up care. Hans stated that the designs include plants that are drought resistant. Shelia Lyford emphasized the importance of watering when plants are newly placed. Cynthia Nyary expressed a concern about satisfying and managing a diversity of preferences among residents.

Creation of a more pleasing landscape along Shallowbrook and allowing privacy for Butternut residents is high priority for Sales and Marketing. Additionally, some trees on Shallowbrook by Butternut present safety issues for homes.

Hans raised a question about improving the landscaping around the entrance to the Meeting House at a cost of \$2,600-\$3,400 and asked if the Association would contribute to that cost.

Mike will be putting our current landscaping contract out for bids again since it has been three years since the last selection. He points out that maintenance of what the designers propose is not now covered by the landscaping contract. He can add additional work to the contract proposal but notes that we need to clarify what residents are willing to spend money on, e.g., more frequent pruning. It is recognized that the design firm would most likely do better work but at increased cost over larger firms such as Spring Valley or Gleason.

Process issues also arose. Dale pointed out that there has been no general discussion in the community with the full Landscaping Committee to understand what the consensus is for the new plans. Bob Buhner asked if we should not start from understanding available funds and then prioritizing short and long-term goals.

NORTHAMPTON COUNCIL MEETING
6 June 2018

Page 5 of 7

Mike Strycharz said we need agreement on the proposal and have no process for accepting or rejecting parts of the proposal. He needs a more detailed plan to get three bids from the designers, Spring Valley, and one other firm. He expects he could not achieve that before the end of the summer but noted that autumn is a better time for planting. Helen Engeseth asked who the final decision maker is. Frank Sansom explained that from now until September there will be work going on to prepare the capital budget and he needs feedback on what to include, short and long term, with respect to landscaping. The Finance Committee will provide input, and the board, at the October meeting, will make the final decision. (Lathrop's fiscal year runs from January through December.)

Hans hopes the ad hoc Landscape Committee will remain active. Members of the committee are Hans Van Heyst, Chair; Dennie Brandt, Judy Bruder; Bob Comerford; Jack Hjelt; David Morrissey; Alex Neubert; Peg Rasmussen; Hans Van Heyst; and Pamela White from the residents and Thom Wright and Mike Strycharz from the staff. Others are welcome.

Finally; Shelia Lyford, who has lived at Lathrop for ten years, expressed her concern about the deterioration of our landscape, particularly since last year. Mike Strycharz cited one challenge—that much of the property is on a ledge, and there is a need to build up the loam.

To conclude the discussion, Dave reiterated that the palettes will be available in the seating area at the Meeting House, feedback is requested, and there will be a forum to ensure consensus about work to be done.

Bears. The landscaping issue was followed by a conversation on concerns about bears. It was noted that the City of Northampton prohibits feeding wildlife.

[Specifically, the city code, article III, Chapter 128-20B(1) states "No person shall intentionally or knowingly feed, use, place, provide, give, expose, deposit, scatter, distribute, leave or store any refuse, food product, pet food, or other material or nutritive substance on any premises in a manner which would constitute a lure, attraction, or enticement of wildlife on property within the City of Northampton. Feed that is deposited by natural vegetation or found solely as a result of normal agricultural or gardening practices, as well as standing crops planted and left standing as wildlife food plots that may be used by wild animals, is not considered feeding for the purposes of these regulations and is allowed....

**NORTHAMPTON COUNCIL MEETING
6 June 2018**

Page 6 of 7

This section shall not be interpreted so as to prohibit bird feeders, provided that if a bird feeder is determined to be the feeding source of wildlife feeding, public safety threats, the bird feeder and seed debris are removed within 48 hours.”]

Judith Bruder was praised for her excellent article on bears in *The Lamp Post* for June 2 – 8.

Follow Up/Status of Previous Business

Shallowbrook Drive/Bridge Road intersection improvements. Two crosswalks will be painted on Shallowbrook, one at the Dogwood entrance and one at the Meeting House. The parking lot markings will be repainted. There may be new curb cuts to accommodate sidewalk access. A new center line will be painted on Shallowbrook.

Landscaping upgrades: irrigation system/lawns. Repairs to the irrigation system are underway so that all parts will be functional. Those that are now working will be on soon. There will be a water source behind 13 Butternut that will provide water for the garden plots. Residents who need assistance with landscaping around their homes should place work orders for Gareth at WorxHub.

Guest suite at “Blue House.” Thom Wright and Mike Strycharz will meet with an architect to plan the guest suite. The design will determine how the rest of the building can be used.

Upgrade of sound and video system in Gathering Room. The voice activation component of the sound system has not yet been installed.

New Business

Review of Lathrop Policy on Private Caregivers: Rob Olmsted recently distributed the current policy to residents. It was developed some time ago in response to a problematic situation to protect the community and individuals from risk. Rob commented that, as written, the policy is not understood, is probably not enforceable, and is not enforced. It is generally viewed as rigid, too prescriptive, and one way. He described best practice as using organizations that train their care givers, pay them well, and carry liability insurance, considering applicable laws and safety considerations. Rob maintains a short list of agencies. Marlisa offered that it

NORTHAMPTON COUNCIL MEETING
6 June 2018

Page 7 of 7

would be useful to have the list. She asked whether residents should be required to tell Rob when hiring a caregiver while acknowledging that the Lathrop care coordinator should participate in the process of home health care.

Rob asked how we want him to work. He plans to form a committee for both campuses to consider policy. Dave, Cynthia Nyary, and Marlisa volunteered.

Property Committee Presentation (Fran Volkman)

The committee is developing a new landscaping policy and seeks input from all sides. They hope for a process that is inclusive and transparent, but not unwieldy. The conversation is not to be about operations but about principles, e.g., native vs. alien, what residents do vs. what Lathrop does. They have prepared a draft policy and now need a working group to meet 1) to discuss and propose edits and 2) with that input to prepare the final policy. They need a range of different views.

Current members are Hans Van Heyst, Jim Dowell, Karen Clark, and Fran Volkman. They ask for two names from each campus plus two alternates by 15 June. The working group will meet in late June.

Preventive Maintenance Program and Lane Questions

As lunch was being set up in the Gathering Room, the meeting closed at 12:15 leaving no time for the discussion of a preventive maintenance program or comments from the lanes.

Next Council Meeting. Wednesday 11 July 2018 at 10:00

Next Association Meeting. Wednesday 1 August 2018 at 10:00, catering by Butternut at 9:30