

NORTHAMPTON COUNCIL MEETING
October 3, 2018

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Council members attending

Dave Morrissey, President
Helen Engeseth, Vice President
Dale LaBonte, Treasurer & Crabapple representative
Arlene Jennings, Secretary & standing in for Jack Hjelt, Goldenchain
Bob Buhner, Aspen
Cynthia Nyary, Butternut
Shelia Lyford, Dogwood
Marlisa Parker, Firethorn
Bob Comerford, Hawthorn

Council members not attending

Jack Hjelt, Goldenchain

Staff attending

Thom Wright, Executive Director
Suzie Dickson Moyer, Director of Sales & Marketing
Rob Olmsted, Director of Wellness & Care Coordination
Mike Strycharz, Director of Facilities
Sarah Gauger, Resident Services Coordinator & Executive Assistant

Visitors

Rowena Roodman

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

Following our pause for quiet, Cynthia Nyary expressed her appreciation for her Lathrop friends and neighbors who have been so helpful since Don died six months ago. She described her experience now as a stage of learning to be alone.

Comings & Goings. Jean Miller moved into 60 Goldenchain on September 26. Caroline Arnold has transferred to the Inn. Norma Duncan has moved to Westfield. Judy Stearns is home with a caregiver.

Sadly, our joyful Jane Bowne died on September 29.

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Nancy Nowak will move into 14 Butternut on December 6. Susan Bastek will move into 43 Dogwood on December 10. 8 Butternut is being prepared for a new resident. 31 Crabapple and 72 Hawthorn have prospective buyers.

Shout-outs. Mike Strycharz was recognized for progress on the new landscaping, outfitting Hawthorn with a generator until electrical repairs are complete, and phone line repairs. Appreciation for the landscaping was also expressed for Maggie Leonard from Paradise City Landscape Design. Stage 1 of the new planting along Butternut and Firethorn will be complete by October 10. All appreciated the autumn installations around the lane signs by River Valley Landscaping. Thanks to Gary Roodman for the start of the new season of English Country Dancing. To Sarah and Bonnie for our delightful Autumn Wine and Cheese party. And to the many residents working on the Budget, Landscaping Policy, Lawn Care, and Work Out committees.

Minutes. The minutes were accepted as corrected and will be redistributed to residents and staff.

Treasurer's Report.

Free Business Checking

September beginning balance	\$11,520.78
Transactions	4
Income	0
Expenses	\$3,153.73
Balance	\$8,367.05

15 Month "Bump Up" CD

September 2018	Amount
Interest	\$5.82
Balance	5,098.02

The expenses were for the new Meeting House tv, the Butterfly Garden, and Association socials.

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Workout Workgroup Report. Dale LaBonte, chair, and others from the committee have visited the Northampton Senior Center, Smith College, and Cooley Dickinson Physical Therapy Center in Hadley. Among their learnings for Lathrop are a need for higher ceilings in the exercise area, fewer pieces of carefully selected equipment, and the importance of training as well as equipment.

Bob Buhner pointed out that the exercise room has a drop ceiling. Mike Strycharz will check the installation to see if it can be restructured for more headroom. Short term, one possibility for a higher ceiling in the exercise space is to switch the exercise room with the pool and ping pong room. Rob expects to hire a staff person who can provide training.

The committee will develop a prioritized plan. An anonymous donor has offered to help with creating what is needed.

Procedures for Expenditures of Association Funds. Dale also reported that Carol Neubert asked to restore more detail to the process. Dale therefore suggests following the Easthampton model.

Approval for an expenditure under \$250 comes from the Council, for over \$250 from the Association. Residents who participate in groups with generally recognized membership such as the community garden, the dog park, the knitting group, and the new fitness group may propose projects that benefit their activities. An individual or a lane may make a request for funds with lane approval.

Projects and activities should address one or more of these interests: 1) building community among residents, including cultural, fitness, and informative interactions, 2) encouraging interactions between residents and outside communities, 3) protection of the environment and the natural landscape and increasing resident interaction with nature.

Helen Engeseth asked how long the criterion had been \$250 and whether it might appropriately be higher. After discussion the Council's decision was to leave it at \$250 for now.

Management Report. Current **occupancy** (sold and occupied) is 98% overall, Northampton 100%, Easthampton 97%, and the Inn 96%.

Kendal's finance team is testing **Master Plan C** assumptions for pricing 32 new townhomes and 17 memory support apartments in Easthampton. The

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Task Force is developing the financing plan with the goal of avoiding Bond Anticipation Notes (BANs), which carry requirements for reserves and interest fees. Frank Sansom has met with a local bank to determine their qualifications to consider a plan for short-term and long-term financing. This will likely include an appraisal of Lathrop property assets. The financial projections and plan of finance will be analyzed by the Task Force prior to recommendation to the Board on October 30. If/once approved by the Board, funds will be allocated to reengage the professionals to develop schematics and land use approval plans, including the acreage Lathrop needs to commit to conservation for Easthampton.

Frank Sansom is working with a new Resident Advisory Committee to review the goals and assumptions for the **FY 2019 budget**. Recommendations from the Resident Advisory committee will be shared with the Finance Committee for review and for final recommendations to the Board on October 30 for approval. An overview of the 2019 budget and monthly fee increase will be shared at a meeting on October 31 at 9:00 a.m.

Lawn Care Options Work Group: Status Report. Marlisa Parker reported that the committee has been renamed to express its ultimate goal. It is now the Eliminate All Toxins Committee (EAT).

The primary goal is to eliminate the application of all toxins on our campus landscapes. An additional intention is to reduce the amount of lawn coverage overall where appropriate. An early step could be the elimination of toxins in the backyards of residents. Present activity is fact checking, research, and resident education.

Dale has met with a Northampton Department of Public Works (DPW) manager who, while originally opposed, was pleasantly surprised by the results of conversion to organic process done at the request of the mayor. Dale was able to visually verify that Florence Fields look "gorgeous." Dale is waiting to learn about DPW's costs in going organic.

Thom reported he has not found any Kendal property to be managed completely by the use of organic products. He has reports from four Kendal communities at various stages of assessing conversion to organic management. Chicago Kendal's report on their efforts was encouraging.

More clarity is needed on how consensus was reached for the seasonal fertilizer schedules and procedures for advisories to residents. The committee

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has requested that failsafe procedures be established given the recent application of the herbicide Q4 without alerting residents in advance. The Manage Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) manual in our Library also needs to be updated.

To keep residents informed of the committee's findings there will be articles in the *Lamp Post*. There will also be a survey of residents for feedback. The committee will continue to liaise with the Landscaping and Property Committees.

FOLLOW UP/STATUS OF PREVIOUS BUSINESS

Guest Suite at Blue House and Upgrade of Remainder of Blue House First Floor. The creation of a guest suite is challenged by city building codes. Mike Strycharz reports "no good news." A bathroom has to meet ADA requirements, so it must be larger than the current bathroom. Access to the rest of the house must be blocked from the guest suite. One city inspector suggests the house is "an abandoned building." The city inspection process has to date prevented doing any work. Next week there will be yet another meeting with one of Northampton's seven building inspectors.

Revised Landscaping Policy. The ad hoc committee has finished its work and distributed the text for Council members to review. Notes are to be sent to Dave Morrissey by October 10. Here for review by all interested residents is the text of the policy:

OVERVIEW

The Lathrop Community occupies two distinct ecological niches. The Northampton campus is suburban, consisting of 35 acres with woods on three sides. The Easthampton campus is essentially rural, 177 acres including fields, wetlands, and wooded areas. While the two locations differ in their landscape features, residents share a common commitment to beautiful, safe, and hospitable spaces for individual and community enjoyment. We are committed to stewardship of our land and to fostering a healthy ecology where birds and wildlife – and their food sources – flourish in a sustainable environment.

This policy addresses Lathrop's *developed* landscapes, which include lawns, privacy screenings, general plantings, and townhome landscaping. Our campuses also include significant amounts of *non-developed* spaces, which are overseen by the Land Conservation Committee.

LANDSCAPING PRINCIPLES

Lathrop policies for developed landscapes are based upon the following four principles:

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1. campus-wide coherence
2. resident choice
3. plants that best support native ecosystems
4. low maintenance

Over time, we seek to decrease the amount of land in lawns and to move gradually but steadily toward a more sustainable environment, increasing the use of native plants and thereby encouraging birds, pollinators, and a myriad array of butterflies, moths, and other insects. Likewise, we intend our landscape decisions to be based on the best current science.

CAMPUS-WIDE COHERENCE

Lathrop provides, manages, and maintains the overall landscaping of its campuses to preserve a uniform level of attractiveness and to meet the principles listed above. The foundation plantings installed by Lathrop in the front of homes are of sufficient size, quantity, and spacing to be attractive alone. They are selected to project a "sense of place", to emphasize plants that support local ecosystems, to require minimal maintenance, and to thrive in the particular location in which they are planted. This structure also provides continuity over time as townhomes change occupants. Residents need take no action to be assured that Lathrop will manage these gardens.

RESIDENT ENHANCEMENT

Within the Lathrop structure and principles, residents may make additions to the gardens in front of their homes by adding small shrubs, perennials, and annuals. Residents must consult the Facilities Department before removing Lathrop plant materials.

Residents also may plant on the sides and rear of their homes and patios. Any substantial plantings in these areas must be approved in advance by the Facilities Department; if not, they may be removed at the resident's expense. Residents are responsible for locating underground utilities before digging.

Residents may find ideas and advice about their gardens from several sources. There are binders in the Meeting House and the Inn offering lists of recommended plants, nurseries, gardeners who may be hired, and plants to be avoided.

Residents may also seek assistance from the Gardening Subcommittee of the Land Conservation Committee at no charge, or Northampton's landscape architect for a fee. Contact information is included in the binders.

Those who choose to enhance their own gardens are responsible for maintaining them. They should obtain an "*I Do My Own Gardening*" sign from the main desk. If a garden is not maintained to Lathrop standards, Lathrop will work with the resident either to locate a private gardener to be hired by the resident or to restore the garden to Lathrop's standard and resume its maintenance.

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy is implemented by Lathrop's Management in regular consultation with the Residents' Councils, the Property Committee, and the Land Conservation Committee."

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Sign Ups for Insulation & A/C Covers. Residents interested in upgrading their insulation have met with the installer. More interest was expressed this year than last. Eleven residents have requested a/c covers.

Remaining 2018 Landscaping Upgrades. There will be more tree trimming, removal of nuisance trees, and clearing of roots. Mike will announce the specific dates, most likely in late October and early November. Residents whose homes are affected by tree removals have been informed.

NEW BUSINESS

New Lane Landscape Design. Lathrop will fund individual lane meetings with the designers. Dave will get dates from Maggie and contact the lane reps. Meetings will most likely take place in late October and early November. Lane reps should share the enlarged drawings with their residents before those meetings. Timing of planting privacy screens between lanes is not yet known. This work will also be funded by Lathrop.

Revised Activity Reservation Forms. Residents can collect the draft of the forms from Sarah. Residents who use Meeting House rooms for personal activities are not expected to make donations to Lathrop for the use.

DISCUSSION

Calendar. A request to keep the monthly calendar corrected and up-to-date on the Lathrop residents' website (<http://lathropres.org/>) will be considered.

Preventive Maintenance. Several questions were raised. Mike said gas burns clean and there is no need for annual inspection. Dale asked about the schedule for replacing alarm batteries. Mike said gutters will be cleaned this fall, also that dryer vents will be cleaned, but the timing of necessary intervals has not been established. Lathrop does not have a plan of where the gas lines lie, but the gas company does.

Communication. There has been no progress on investigating the use of robocalls to inform residents of last-minute updates.

LANE REPS: QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Arlene Jennings described a recent incident with a bear. A subsequent conversation on North Neighbors has indicated some agreement with a recommendation for not feeding birds, either by feeders in winter or by

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hummingbird feeders in summer. Bears have become such frequent visitors to our campus they do pose a threat both to residents and to their own safety.

Northampton **City code prohibits feeding of wildlife**, and the council points out that compliance with the Northampton City ordinance is required.

Chapter 128, Article III; Feeding of wildlife prohibited.
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.

To read the pertinent code in full go to: <https://ecode360.com/16141186>.

Bob Buhner requested Council approval for up to \$250 for construction of **deer discouragement devices** along the fence of the community gardens. The structure would be built by Bob and Warren Hammack. Council approved the request.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

October 17, 2018 at 12:00 p. m.,
Panini Palooza Luncheon

October 26, 2018 at 4:00 p. m.,
Halloween Cocktail Party

NEXT ASSOCIATION MEETING

November 7, 2018 at 10:00 a. m.
Catering by Crabapple, 9:30 a. m.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, December 4, 2018 at
10:00 a.m.