

The House Special



Volume 27 Issue 8

Skylines House

August 2007



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President, Norman Baker

The Board of Directors met on Wednesday, July 25, 2007. The Board approved two specific action items. First, the specifications developed by our Consultant Engineer to obtain contractor bids to implement the garage structural repairs identified during a recent inspection. Second, an additional chloride/sodium infiltration test of the garage decks to assist in making a determination whether or not to seal the decks and also to assist with future analysis of the condition of the decks. Additional information can be found in the reports of the Financial Management Committee (FMC) and the Physical Plant and Operations Committee (PPOC) elsewhere in this issue.

During the course of the meeting, the Board also approved:

recommendations of the Covenants and Election Committees pertaining to (a) retention, for future elections, of two procedures implemented during the 2007 election and (b) possible ways to increase notary services in the week preceding future elections (see Covenants Committee report in this issue for greater detail);

the procurement of four, 4-sided, picnic tables and two, six-foot benches to enhance the usability and enjoyment of the garden deck on the far side of the pool;

and, a modest, relatively temporary, landscape planting in the center of the front circle (after the new pavers are completely installed in early August) while a PPOC subcommittee pursues a more formal, permanent landscape design for that area.

As in past years, there will not be any Committee meetings nor a Board of Directors meeting in August 2007. The Board will next convene on Wednesday, September 26th. You will note in the FMC report that two sub-committees (Reserves and Operations) will be meeting to begin development of the Association's 2008 budget. I offer my, and the entire Board's, thanks to the loyal, hard-working, volunteers working on this project.

Due to the limited Association events in August, this issue does not contain a monthly calendar. You will, however, find a summary of August activities elsewhere in this issue.

Everyone continue to have a safe and enjoyable summer. See you in the Fall.



Management

General Manager, Gusbey Silva

East Building North & South Façade Restoration

The work on tiers 12, 14 & 15 will be completed during the first week of August 2007. The brick installation is currently being performed on tier 11. The work on this tier will be completed by the middle of September. The flashing installation currently being done on tiers 01 & 16 will be completed by the end of August. Work on this tier is estimated for completion by the end of October 2007.

The final completion date for Phase IV is estimated for the end of October 2007, weather permitting. All the form boards installed above the windows during this 4th and last phase of the facade repair project will be removed in October.

Circle Renovation

The plants were removed from the circle by the Association's landscaper on Thursday, July 5, 2007. The circle landscaping restoration is scheduled for the middle of August after the installation of the pavers is completed.

The demolition of the concrete in place on the north half of the circle started on Monday, July 9th. The replacement of the sidewalk, curb and gutters on that side of the circle was completed the following week as scheduled.

After the first half of the concrete drive was removed, the Association's Consultant Engineer was able to complete additional tests to the subgrade which reflected voids and settlement that had not been detected two years ago when the original tests were done. The findings resulting in a change of the specification for the base needed for the pavers installation from an additional 7" of compacted stone to 3" inches of compacted stoned plus the installation of a 4" thick reinforced concrete slab. The concrete base installation was completed during the third week of July after Board approval. The pavers installation started on Monday, July 23rd and it will be completed by the end of July. The work on the second half of the circle will start the first week of August 2007.

The completion of this project is estimated for the middle of August 2007, weather permitting.

Asphalt Resealing

Immediately after the circle renovation is completed the asphalt of all driveways and parking lots of both buildings will be resealed and re-striped. All cars must be removed or will be subject to towing at the owners risk and expense, during the asphalt resealing.

Management has secured parking for one night after the parking lines are re-striped at the parking garage of the Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria Campus, which is located behind Skyline House. Notices will be posted at least two weeks in advance.

Recycling Bins

It has been brought up to Management by several residents and staff members that some of our residents are not following the new recycling procedures in effect since March 31, 2007. Everyone should be aware, the previous procedure of separating newspapers and placing them on the shelves formerly installed on the walls of both buildings loading docks, is no longer in place due to a new county law that allows commingling of certain recyclable items including newspaper, cardboard, junk mail, and glass, plastic and metal food and beverage containers. In order to comply with the new rule the shelves previously designated for newspaper were removed and the number of recycling bins was increased from six to ten in each building.

Unfortunately some of our residents are placing regular trash into the recycling bins. This not only contaminates the recyclable goods, which voids the effort made and the expense incurred on the recycling pick up, but also generates a bad odor and attracts flies into the loading dock areas used by many residents. Please also take into consideration that all recycled food and beverage containers should be rinsed before you place them in the recycling bins.

There are a total of 10 bins in each building. In the East, all ten are located in the loading dock area. In the West, there are 6 containers in the former recycling room and four outside of it, in the main loading dock area. Please use any of the empty containers instead of continuing to place

your bags of recyclable goods on top of already full bins. Please lift the lid of the container in order to place your recyclables inside the bin instead of placing them on the floor. Please be considerate of your fellow residents and staff members.

Unit Window Pane Replacement Project

Management has obtained a proposal from American Screen & Glass Co. for the replacement of the window panes. The charge for one living room glass pane is \$395.00, the charge for one bedroom; den, or dining room glass pane is \$375.00, plus tax. These prices are based on a minimum group order for 20 glass panes to be replaced. A deposit of \$100.00 per pane is required at the time the company takes the measurements in your unit. The balance is due upon installation. Notices have been posted and signup sheets are at the front desk.

Residential Unit Doors

All residential unit doors were painted 5 years ago during the months of September and October 2002. This task is scheduled to be done every five years in order to keep our residential corridors in the best shape possible. All unit doors in the West building will be painted during the month of October. All unit doors in the East building will be painted during the month of November. One entire floor will be completed per day. Notices will be posted at least two weeks in advance.



INFO FROM THE ENGINEER

Chief Engineer, Greg Grimm

Corridor Air Conditioning

A few years ago, when the rooftop condensing units for the corridors were replaced, the contractor who installed the new units installed low ambient cutoff switches – which prevent condensing (cooling) unit operation when the outdoor temperature is below 78°F. This method keeps the evaporator (indoor cooling coil) from freezing. Freezing could damage or burn out compressors, cause low or no air flow into the corridors (if the coil is frozen, air cannot pass through it), and higher electricity consumption (because the compressor and fan motors are working harder to do their jobs).

Heat Pump Tips

(Editors note: Heat Pump is the technical name for what is commonly referred to as the air conditioner and heater equipment in your unit.)

Set and keep your thermostat at one temperature. Constant adjusting will cause higher utility costs for you.

If your thermostat is a setback type, limit the setbacks to twice a day. Don't setback the thermostat more than five to ten degrees.

In cooling, try not to set the thermostat below 70 degrees. Besides higher utility costs, this could cause the cooling coil to freeze and cause condensation inside your unit.

Check air filters monthly. Clean or replace as needed. **This one item is the most common cause of failure.**

Place a water alarm in your utility closet to alert you if there is a water leak. These are available in the Management Office. This could save your new carpet or hardwood floor from severe damage.

The indoor condensate drain should be flushed in the spring before using the air conditioning. This is extremely important since the unit is in your living area, and above other residents living areas. In addition, you should use a drain pan treatment package (and change it every spring), to help stop algae and bacteria from growing, which clogs up the drain and causes units to leak.

Last, but not least, we suggest you have preventative maintenance performed on your heat pump. It is best to do have this done just before cooling season but in any case, it should be done once a year. This one single thing you can do, will save you money, and help insure you year round comfort. In-Unit Maintenance can perform this service

cheaper than most contractors. It includes flushing the indoor condensate drain, cleaning the cooling coil, placing the drain pan treatment packet, checking the Freon level and pressure, and adjusting the system for peak operation.



COVENANTS

Chair, Joe Livingston

The Covenants Committee met on July 18th. In addition to the agenda item, we considered one other matter brought to our attention.

Per the agenda, the Committee reviewed the Election Committee's report and recommendations on the 2007 election for members of the Board of Directors. The committee accepted the Election Committee's report with thanks, and concurred in and recommended the Board approve the following:

that we adopt on a permanent basis, the procedure of sending a single election package to resident and nonresident owners;

that Ms. Debbie Ribis, Budget Analyst and Independent Vote Administrator, be retained to continue to provide counting services for our elections;

that at least one other staff member be licensed to act as a notary, in addition to the Manager and Deputy Manager;

that Management explore offering notary services during limited evening/weekend hours during the week preceding the Annual Meeting.

The other matter considered was the status of a number of alleged violations of Rule 22B of the Association's Rules and Regulations. Approximately 26 alleged violations had been identified and all but one had been resolved. A notice of hearing would be sent to that resident.

Finally, Management asked that the Committee place on its agenda for its next meeting, a review of Rule 18 (c) (2) to consider recommending to the Board that the authority granted by that rule be revoked.

The next meeting will be September 19th, at 7:00 p. m. in the West Card Room.



FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Chair, Wynfred Joshua

The Financial Management Committee (FMC) met on July 19, 2007. Total income for the month of June was \$294,285 with expenditures of \$182,683. Total income less expenditures amounted to \$111,602. The monthly Reserve Contribution was \$98,331, leaving net income before taxes of \$13,271.

FMC members unanimously endorsed the request of the Recreation Committee and the PPOC recommendation to the Board to purchase 5 tables and 2 benches for the garage roof garden for some \$3,000. After the successful Memorial Day affair, it was clear that additional seating in the garden was needed. FMC members strongly support the condo-wide social events because these activities make a condo different from a rental building and help to create a community spirit. The FMC recommended that funds from the replacement reserves be used for the purchase this year, but that the actual funding for the garden furniture is done in the 2008 budget as recreational items.

The FMC discussed at some length the \$25,683 emergency funding for reinforcing the circular driveway. During the work on the driveway it turned out that buried debris from the original construction of Skyline House had weakened the surface of the driveway. Our consulting engineer recommended laying down a concrete base before installing the pavers, thereby triggering the additional emergency funding. To alleviate the financial impact of surprises, the FMC recommended that to the extent this does not yet exist, we establish records of problems we encounter in working with the various components of

the condominium. Such records could help with estimating the scope and price of future projects involving a particular component. The FMC also recommended that Management make available to the FMC and, if it so desires, the Board, the total final cost, including those for the consulting engineer, at the completion of a project.

As is customary, the FMC will not meet in August. Instead, our sub-committees will be working on next year's budget. The Subcommittee on the Reserve Budget will meet on August 7th at 7:00 p.m. and the Subcommittee on the Operations Budget will meet on August 8th at 7:00 p.m. The total budget will be discussed at the next meeting of the FMC scheduled for Monday, September 17th. We welcome all interested owners.



PHYSICAL PLANT & OPERATIONS

Acting Chair, Al Lambert

On July 12, 2007 the Physical Plant and Operations Committee (PPOC) met at 7:00 p.m. to review a draft Project Manual and Specifications which will be the source documents used by contractors to submit bids for the repair and maintenance of the Parking Garage. Committee members and visitors participated in a discussion related to timelines, materials and the displacement of cars during the project. Changes to the specifications were added to ensure the selected contractor would be held accountable should the project not be completed in the designated timeframe. Thereafter, the committee voted to recommend approval of the specifications as amended to the Board.

The second agenda item was a discussion on the merits of conducting a chloride test of the garage deck to determine the level of salt penetration. Salt is introduced into the garage via vehicles in the winter when roads are salted for icing. It seeps into the concrete and when combined with oxygen and water from rain and oxygen, salt corrosion occurs. The committee voted to recommend to the Board a chloride test is performed to determine the degree of salt penetration. Follow-up maintenance procedures will be determined based upon the results of the test.

The final topic of discussion was a planned project to offer residents an opportunity to replace selected window panes in their units. Management is completing administrative details on the process of ordering and payment is to be undertaken. More to follow.

Everyone is encouraged to periodically attend meetings to surface issues or obtain answers to inquires on building facilities. The next meeting of the PPOC is scheduled for Thursday, September 13th.



SECURITY, FIRE, & SAFETY

Chair, Robert De Mayo

The Security, Fire and Safety Committee (SF&SC) met on Wednesday, July 11th at 7:00 p.m. in the Skyline House West Card Room. Committee members present were Mr. De Mayo, Chairperson, Mr. Lambert and Ms. Ruiz. Management was represented by Ms. Haight.

Mr. De Mayo reminded all to check for the latest CRIME WATCH bulletin which is posted in our lobbies every 2 weeks. The latest one has an item which underscores the need for an active Neighborhood Watch group.

Security, Fire and Safety Incident Report:

(1) Mr. De Mayo handed out copies of his latest CRIME WATCH bulletin which underscored a report from Arlington Police cautioning about a burglar who "piggybacked" into apartment buildings in the Clarendon and Ballston areas. "Piggybacking" is when an unauthorized person (e.g., a criminal) scoots unchallenged into a secure building behind a resident who is using a key, fob or card to open a secure door. At least 30 apartment burglaries were attributed to one criminal using this method

to gain entry. Mr. De Mayo urged all to be wary of loiterers outside our doors who might be attempting to “piggyback” inside.

(2) Management Security/Safety Incidents Report: A watchful resident reiterated a report given to the Management Office of a driver speeding within our garage without headlights. Management confirmed action had been taken. On July 4th, a resident reported a boisterous group of teenagers – possibly invited by one resident teenager – attempting to gain access to the West Building rooftop at about 6 P.M. to hang out. They were noted by Security and moved out of the area.

Our Security Force:

The golf cart used by our Security Force was removed by the previous security company. A new cart has been ordered and should arrive soon; residents should note that our Security Force is authorized to patrol our grounds and garage periodically using this golf cart instead of walking. Please be courteous to them when you notice them and give them a big Hello!

Signage:

Traffic Control and other Signage on our grounds: Mr. Lambert raised the issue of perhaps *too much* signage at our driveway that drivers need to read in a few seconds as they swing in. So many signs – Towing, speed limit, no parking, arrows, etc, and really faded, hard to read signs – perhaps need to be replaced or reevaluated from both effectiveness and an esthetics viewpoint, especially in light of our repaving the traffic circle. Another resident raised a concern on the effectiveness of the “Pull Up” sign painted on the ground at the exit door of our garage. At least one person asked “how do I make the door go up?” possibly underscoring the need for a more effective exit instruction sign.

Yield vs. Stop sign Follow Up:

(1) Mr. De Mayo stated that the SF&SC had discussed this issue (i.e., the YIELD sign on the west side of the West building where it curves west to east and meets the South George Mason Street entrance/exit was covered by a large bush and could not be seen from an exiting auto; it poses an immediate personal safety issue since pedestrians walking west on that side of the roadway are also totally hidden by our landscaping) and still is of the opinion that, at the least, the YIELD sign needs to be moved where it is more visible. Management will follow up.

(2) Resident and committee discussion ensued: The existing YIELD sign may not be reasonably effective (i.e., visible) to deter exiting drivers in moving vehicles to be alert for pedestrians walking to and from our guest parking on that roadway to or from the Main Lobby, or crossing from the street sidewalk towards the Main Lobby, or from the West building roadway towards the street sidewalk. Rumble strips, one speed bump with/without ground hash markings, painted hash markings to define a pedestrian 3’ walkway along the curbing, or stepping stones on the grass next to the curbing are topics that need to be explored and evaluated. In addition, use of STOP signs versus YIELD signs need more discussion. These will be open topics at future meetings, headed toward a final recommendation to the Board. The issue remains: pedestrian safety for our residents and guests.

Smoke Detector Issue Follow Up:

(1) Management reported that our Fire Marshall did not have a preference on the type of smoke detector to be used in our condos here at Skyline House. His only caution was to ensure that batteries are current if that type of model is used. A short discussion ensued on the Fire Department’s “Batteries for Life” program – that is free replacement batteries from the Fire Department on a periodic basis. Management will call to check if this program is still viable. If not, Mr. De Mayo suggested perhaps we either sell or give away replacement batteries for smoke detectors during any in-house maintenance or on a periodic basis; Management will evaluate this suggestion. Since no particular smoke detector was recommended, the SF&SC will research for some that are commercially available and make a recommendation for resident purchase in an upcoming issue of The House Special.

(2) On that same note, an independent company visits Skyline House once a year to recharge our fire extinguishers. A committee member suggested that perhaps this same company would either sell fire extinguishers to our residents and/or recharge them during their annual visit. Management will call them to follow up with some fact-finding.

South George Mason Drive – Parking Update:

Mr. De Mayo continues to follow up in frequent e-mail and telephone contact with the Fairfax Police Department, our Community Police Officer (SPO Carolyn Kinney), and the county Traffic/Parking Enforcement supervisor on both junk cars and long-term storage of cars in front of our condominium. Tickets have been issued to violators and cars towed. The SF&SC will continue to monitor the situation. Again, county parking laws state that all vehicles on county or state roads must adhere to two important regulations: Vehicles must possess/display a current license tag with dates and VIN clearly visible. This is especially true for out-of-state vehicles; next, Vehicles on the street may be parked in the same spot for a maximum of ten (10) days; then they must be moved or they will be found in violation and ticketed/fined. If not moved four (4) days after the parking ticket, they will be towed (\$110 est. fine plus towing fees).

The Committee's next meeting will be Wednesday, September 12th. Please join us.



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Coordinator, Judith York

On Tuesday, August 7th, there will be a 2-hour celebration (7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.) of the Neighborhood Watch Program in our Skyline House lobby and the circle out front. This is in conjunction with the **National Night Out** event that same evening. **National Night Out** is an annual event during which neighborhood watch volunteers and residents throughout the nation come out of their homes and gather together to show a unified front against crime in our neighborhoods. Please come out and show your support for our program and its volunteers. Your presence is all that is needed to show we are all united against crime in our community.

In Fairfax County, neighborhood watch programs work with their police departments to fight crime and keep residents aware of criminal activity in their neighborhood. Fairfax County has 8 district police stations (Fair Oaks, Franconia, Mason, McLean, Mount Vernon, Reston, Sully, and West Springfield). Our local police station is the Mason District Station, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003 (phone 703-922-0889). Community police officers looking after Skyline House are Officers Chip Conner and Courtney Thibault. Officer Thibault is the liaison with the neighborhood watch groups in Fairfax County and is conscientious about sending up-to-date information on crime activity in our area. She can be reached at work on 703-256-8035, ext. 2256 or courtney.thibault@fairfaxcounty.gov. I file the information that Officer Thibault sends to me in the green binder entitled "Neighborhood Watch," which is kept at the front desk for all residents, staff and security guards to read.

The next meetings at Mason District Police Station are:

August 7	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.	National Night Out Front Lobby Area (light refreshments served)
September 4	6:30 p.m.	Neighborhood Watch Coordinators
	7:00 p.m.	Neighborhood Watch Training
	7:30 p.m.	Citizen Advisory Council (CAC)

The Neighborhood Watch Program is becoming more prominent in the fight against terrorism. Please join us on Tuesday, August 7th when we are also having a recruitment drive to replenish our own Skyline House volunteer pool. Skyline House needs residents to volunteer one hour a week to walk the grounds and buildings (or just the buildings). One hour of your time each week is a small price to pay for the safety of our neighborhood and of our country in these days of increasing terrorism.

If anyone in Skyline House would like to become a Neighborhood Watch volunteer, please give me a call at 703-671-2267 and I'll be happy to explain our neighborhood watch program to you. The Neighborhood Watch Program needs more volunteers and I will be happy to take a "walk-around" with you to explain both the program and the areas we patrol. Thank you. Judith York.

GOOD NEIGHBORS

Good Neighbors will assist residents in need of temporary help due to illness or emergency.

AUGUST GOOD NEIGHBORS

NORMA ANDERSON 703-931-0850

JUDITH YORK 703-671-2267

Good Neighbors always welcomes new members to assist those in need. If you are interested in serving your neighbors, please call Coordinator Toska Prather or Ernest Loyola. Their contact information is listed in the newsletter directory.



RECREATION

Co-Chairs, Betty Turner and Nadyne McKelvey

Thank Goodness Its Friday (TGIF) adult socials are held the first Friday of each month and are FREE to attend. They keep getting better and better as the months go by. Last month was no exception. At least two new residents made friends and scheduled a get-together with fellow neighbors as a result of attending. **The NEXT TGIF will be 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Friday, August 3rd and (weather permitting) is scheduled to be held in the lovely picnic area just beyond the pool.** In case of rain the event will be moved indoors to the West Party Room. Come see for yourself what it's all about, bring your own refreshments and some food to share and get acquainted with your neighbors.

A new "WELCOME WAGON" packet has been put together and will be given out to new owners who move into Skyline House.

We are looking forward to some interesting events in the coming months, so please keep an eye on the bulletin boards and The House Special Newsletter. Our email is recreationcommittee@yahoo.com and we welcome your ideas and comments. We are especially looking for one or two parents to coordinate events for children. If you feel that you can help us out in this area, please call Betty and/or Nadyne (our numbers can be found in the Newsletter Directory). We have a wonderful facility with many amenities that are not being used to their fullest. We would like to have a billiards tournament, the chili cook-off, a ladies only event as well as other activities. You're never too OLD or too YOUNG for recreation. We need your help to create an atmosphere of fun and excitement here at SKYLINE HOUSE.



AUGUST 2007 ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

Friday, August 3rd – “Thank Goodness It’s Friday” Gathering 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Note, weather permitting, this function will be held on the garden deck near the swimming pool. (in case of rain, it will be moved to the west penthouse party room). All are welcome. Bring your own refreshment and a favorite appetizer or other food to share. There will be a 50/50 raffle (\$1.00 per ticket). Proceeds will help support future Recreation Committee sponsored activities.

Tuesday, August 7th – National Night Out 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. (front lobby area).

Come out and show your support for our Neighborhood Watch program. Your presence is all that is needed to show we are united against crime in our community. Refreshments served (see Neighborhood Watch report in this issue for additional details).

Mondays in August – Skyline House Library open 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. (E. Penthouse)



SKYLINE HOUSE DIRECTORY

(www.shuoa.org)



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THE HOUSE SPECIAL welcomes brief comments from its readers. Limit your letters to 250 words or less and include your name and unit number. The Association Board reserves the right to refuse incorrect or inappropriate statements. Information for THE HOUSE SPECIAL may be sent by e-mail to the Editor, dropped off at the Management office or the front desk attention EDITOR.

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