

The House Special



Volume 32 Issues 3

Skyline House

March 2012



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President, Maria Elena Schacknies

Al Lambert was unable to attend the February 22nd Board meeting, and I regret that he could not hear me say thank you, Al, for your contributions as a Board member, for concurrently serving as PPOC Chair until last September and then this year as the Acting Chair of the Covenants Committee. Al deserves our immense gratitude for all his efforts on behalf of the Association. Al is also a non-voting member of the PPOC and a hardworking member of the Garden Club.

I am pleased to announce Elayne Haymes as the new Chair of the Covenants Committee. Elayne is a psychotherapist by training, and a member of the PPOC and the Garden Club. We thank Elayne for her contributions and wish her much success in her new role.

March 13th is Meet the Candidates Night. We have five candidates for three seats on the Skyline House Board of Directors. Election Day is March 27th. The election packet was mailed on February 23th. For an election to be successful, we must have a quorum (25% of Unit Owners), which makes it crucial for Unit Owners to vote.

In my last report, I mentioned that the March newsletter would explain five proposed changes to the Skyline House By-Laws, the process for voting on these proposals, and why is important to vote. Unfortunately, we must defer this until the April newsletter. The delay is due to our efforts to make sure that we have exhaustively explored the details and implications of the proposals. We must “get it right” the first time. We also want to make sure we have found the clearest possible way to explain some issues that are unavoidably complicated. All Unit Owners should

fully understand what they are voting for, and why, by the time the voting takes place. To achieve this goal, we will use every possible informational approach. The newsletter is one of the means of communication, but there will be others ways to get the word out. Mortgage holders also have to vote, so Management will be sending Unit Owners a survey which will include, among other questions, the names and addresses of their mortgage holders. Therefore, it will be awhile before the date is set for the meeting to vote on the amendments to the By-Laws.

On a very different note, I want to point out what makes Skyline House stand out:

- We have been self-managed for the past 30 years
- We have adequate reserves
- Most of our staff is long-term; many of them have been with us for more than 30 years
- Our buildings are very well maintained
- We have a large percentage of long-term Unit Owners
- We are a truly multicultural community
- We have a Covenants Committee, a Physical Plant and Operations Committee, a Finance Management Committee, a Community Relations Committee, a Security, Safety and Neighborhood Watch Committee, a Good Neighbors Committee and a Garden Club. (We would like to expand the broad scope of resident participation even farther by re-instituting the Recreation Committee as soon as possible; volunteers are needed and will be most welcome.)
- We are the best condo in Northern Virginia because our Unit Owners are committed to keeping our property well managed and maintained without resorting to special assessments. (With the passage of proposed amendments to the By-Laws, we will be able to focus more efficiently and effectively on improvements to make the living experience at Skyline House even better.)

Skyline House Unit Owners' Association is seeking residents with professional skills and abilities who are willing to advise in their area(s) of expertise on a pro bono basis. Willing participants please identify yourself along with your area(s) of expertise to the Management Office. Your expertise is needed and greatly appreciated. A hearty thanks to those who have already responded.



Administrative Assistant, Rochelle Cunningham

Please help us welcome Ms. Rochelle Cunningham to Skyline House! She was hired as the new Administrative Assistant, and she started work on February 21, 2012. Rochelle has over 10 years' experience in the Property Management field which includes conducting inspections, scheduling projects with contractors, inventory management, accounts receivable, and customer service.



MANAGEMENT

General Manager, Michelle Brown Slaughter

Garage Structural Repairs

The proposal for Whitlock Dalrymple Poston & Associates (WDP) to oversee the parking garage structural repair project is in the process of being revised. It should include additional weekly site visits from the supervisor and an engineer. As requested by the Physical Plant and Operations Committee, it will also be revised so that all work is proposed to be done in 2012 instead of extending it over three years (from 2012 to 2016). Concentrating the work in a single year will ensure that only one contractor does the job from start to finish. The three-year arrangement could have resulted in the work being performed by three different contractors.

Balcony Railing Repairs

The contractor is scheduled began construction mobilization the week of February 21st in preparation for the balcony railing repairs in the East Building. All owners and residents were notified to remove all items from their balconies, including window screens, furniture, and satellite dishes. A canopy will be installed as a walkway from the loading dock exit area to the garage and parking lots. For the safety of everyone, the loading dock parking area will be restricted while construction is in progress. Also for safety reasons, the contractor has identified 13 parking spaces (101 thru 113) as being in the construction zone. For the duration of the project, the affected Unit Owners and residents have been reassigned temporary spaces that are either in the guest parking or are being paid for by the Association.

Replacement of Balcony Window Panels and Exterior Balcony Outlet Covers

The window panels, outlet cover, and vent were all reviewed by Physical Plant and Operations Committee members. The only component awaiting approval was the wire mesh for the vent cover, to keep out birds and/or small animals. The sample product has not yet arrived. But the illustration of the end cap with bird screen indicates that it is a wire mesh with ½” squares made from galvanized aluminum. It was suggested that additional labor cost be deducted from the balcony units that have dummy panels and no working vents.

Patio Repairs (unit #T14E)

Choice Restoration still needs to remove coating that is loose and bubbled, and to re-coat the surface. The contractor is waiting for the manufacturer’s representative to review the patio before work commences. We want to insure that it is completed in accordance with the manufacturer’s recommendation. Final payment is pending satisfactory completion and acceptance of the work.

Penthouse Repairs

The touch-up coating work and coating application over completed repair areas of the penthouse façade, East and West cooling towers, and metal coping areas along east and west elevation walls, have been completed. Final payment of \$19, 810 will be made in February.

Elevator Repairs

Avery Elevator is scheduled to work on the passenger elevator buttons first, then the management control software system, and finally, the two hydraulic garage elevators. Approval

will also be needed to select the interior panels and flooring for the garage elevators. As work is scheduled and/or an interruption of service occurs, Management will post notices in advance whenever possible.

Status of Chief Engineer

Greg's hand is healing very well, and he's feeling much better. He began physical therapy sessions and has some mobile function of his hand. He thanks everyone for their cards, cookies, and overall well wishes. He will return to work on March 5 in a supervisory capacity only. He has not been released to do any physical work (lifting, etc.) for the next three months.

A few reminders:

1. Please notify the Management Office as soon as you have a change in family members, renters, and/or your mortgage/lender.
2. The West Party Room will not be available for rental until March 30th and then, only on weekends, thereafter. It will be available on weekdays to residents in the East Building who wish to escape the noise of the balcony construction. The East Party Room will be closed during the balcony construction.
3. The Garage will be power-washed the week of April 17 through April 20, 2012. Residents will be asked to move their cars as each level is scheduled. If your parking space is not used during the day, we ask that you volunteer your space for that day only.

DUE TO CONSTRUCTION..... PLEASE:

Please provide the Management Office with a minimum of 48 hours advance notice for move-ins, move-outs and/or deliveries.

Do not park in the loading dock areas more than 30 minutes total. Towing will be enforced by the Front Desk Staff, at the owner's risk and expense!!!!

FOR YOUR SAFETY, DO NOT WALK IN THE EAST LOADING DOCK PARKING LOT AREA, WHICH IS CURRENTLY A CONSTRUCTION AREA. USE THE CANOPY WALKWAY AT ALL TIMES.



PHYSICAL PLANT & OPERATIONS

Chair, Gary Akin

The committee met on February 9, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Card Room. The following items were discussed and/or recommended for further action:

- The PPOC recommended approval of the Whitlock Dalrymple Poston & Associates, P.C. (WDP) Parking Garage Repair Design Proposal, after reviewing information provided by the General Manager clarifying the ambiguities identified in their proposal during the PPOC's review at its January 2012 meeting. Also, the PPOC recommends that the Financial Management Committee determine if there are cost benefits to the Skyline House Unit Owners Association of having all of the garage repairs completed in the same year instead of having "only one third of existing defective patches . . . fixed this year (2012) and the remaining work . . . done in 2014 and 2016."
- Smislova, Kehnemui & Associates, P.A., Consulting Structural Engineers, presented a proposal to provide engineering services related to the preparation of project specifications for repairs to exterior façade leaks at Skyline House, affecting twelve units reporting leaks. The PPOC approved a motion to table this proposal until further research into these repairs (based on the results and locations of previous exterior façade repairs) can be completed. The PPOC Chairman anticipates this project will be taken up again during its April 2012 meeting.
- After completing the PPOC assessment of replacing the remaining façade panels (other than the balcony panels), the committee recommended that the replacement (overlay new panels) of the façade panels be deferred until 2014 with a Request for Proposals in 2013 that address façade panels, window frames, and where appropriate, louvers. The committee also recommended employing a consulting engineer in 2013 to review, revise, and update any existing specifications, taking into account documented observations from the PPOC's February 6, 2012 "Walk-About." Absent existing specifications, the consulting engineer would develop them. Deferring this project would allow the Association to receive an additional two years' investment income from the budgeted cost of work for this project. It would also provide a great opportunity to query vendors on new options and/or technologies to resurface panels and window frames. Thereafter, the project could continue in 2014 or slip to 2015.

The committee members are in the process of researching and developing a proposal for the replacement of the thirteen (13) watt light bulbs used throughout Skyline House common areas with a lower-wattage bulb that the committee believes would significantly lower the monthly cost of electricity for these areas. The proposal is planned for presentation at the April PPOC meeting.

The committee also acted on Board Member Charley Roberts's recommendation that it survey Skyline House rooftop antennas for the purpose of removing the non-functional ones. A proposal and recommendation will be presented at the April 2012 PPOC meeting.

Come join us at future PPOC meetings. Some of the upcoming items/projects we will be involved with are: West Building entrance door, exercise room relocation/improvements, and energy audit study to identify ways/means to decrease cost of common-area electricity.

PPOC Walk-About

6 February 2012

Focus: Skyline House (East and West Buildings) Façade Panels

- All the building façade panels seem to have aged uniformly. That is, no building front or rear looks any better or worse than the others do.
- A small number of panels have isolated blotches (unknown cause) primarily at the lower unit levels. This could have been caused by the scaffolding during repair of the brick façade, or the panels being manufactured with defects or not meeting specifications.
- The new balcony railings are the focus of one's eyes when observing the building, and adding the balcony panels will further attract attention. Only those who stand and gaze at the façade will begin to notice minor discrepancies such as blotches, scars, fading, color disfigurement, and so forth.
- When the façade panels have to be replaced, the window frame will look excessively old and worn in contrast. In several instances, the window frames appear to have more cosmetic deterioration than the façade panels.
- I seem to recall that there are louvers, either adjacent to a window or separate, which have also faded and will have the same negative appearance when compared to the new façade panels.
- Caulking is required underneath the walkway leading from the garage to the East Building.
- Weather stripping needs repair in a few panels (observed on East Building only).
- On the interior of the building, primarily on the ground level, the metal heater covers mounted on the wall near exit doors should be sanded and repainted. I hope not the same color and latex paint used to paint the walls and electrical outlets.
- In front of the East Building where the French drain was installed there is a bed of rocks with scattered bricks. The bricks need to be removed.
- In front of the East Building, there are the equivalent of railroad ties embedded in the ground to control water flow and erosion. These show extensive deterioration.
- In front of the East Building (maybe the fourth unit from the lobby near a large electrical power metal box by the retaining wall), a balcony has an electrical two-bulb socket with one bulb missing and the other having a typical lamp light bulb. Other similar units have floodlights.



FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Chair, Wynfred Joshua

The Financial Management Committee met on Monday, February 21, 2012. For the month of January total income was \$336,723 with expenditures of \$213,391. Total income less expenditures amounted to \$123,332. The monthly Reserve Contribution was \$116,214, leaving a modest surplus of \$7,118 before taxes.

With only one month in the new budget year the FMC found few items of concern in the Financial Statements. Utilities were the usual culprits that exceeded the budget. The overruns in the electricity and water and sewage accounts, however, were largely due to rate increases rather than greater usage. The security services were some \$2,200 over budget, reflecting additional services during the holidays and extra guard duty at night during malfunctioning of the garage entrance door.

As of the end of January, 26 owners were past due with their assessments for a total of \$49,837. This included 11 owners who owed \$41,506 for more than two months. Our attorney is handling the collection. Attorney efforts to recover these funds help to explain our relatively high legal costs.

One hundred and twenty-seven apartments, or 23%, were rented. The rest, or 430 units, were occupied by the owners except for a few apartments that were left vacant because the owners were not prepared to sell them at this time.

The FMC Committee recommended approval of the Whitlock Dalrymple Poston & Associates Parking Garage Repair Design Proposal for an amount not to exceed \$38,000. This is up to roughly \$6,000 for additional inspection visits. It was our understanding that the revised proposal would provide for additional weekly random inspection visits from the supervisor and an engineer. The FMC recommended that these random visits be linked to major milestones of the project. The FMC also supported completing the project in one phase in 2012 rather than spread the work out over three phases from 2012 to 2016.

The FMC noted that the Board needed to authorize payment to Hi-Rise Windows of \$244,800 for the balcony window panels that will be installed this year. This is for the Window Panel Remediation project we approved last year.

The FMC will be meeting next month on the third Monday, March 19. We urge Skyline House residents to attend and share their advice with us.



SECURITY, SAFETY AND NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Chair, Robert J. "Bob" De Mayo

The SS&NWC met on both January 11th and February 15th at 7 p.m.. in the Skyline House West Card Room. All members were present or had an excused absence. The three main agenda items discussed were the proposed Skyline House Emergency Action Plan (EAP), a review and revision of the Charter for the committee, and a recommendation to the Board for a revision to House Rules on traffic flow in the garage. All other agenda items--The Management Office Incident Report, Security Officer Update, & Neighborhood Watch Reports--were fairly routine in nature.

Copies of the Fairfax County EAP that were researched, downloaded and printed by the Chairman were handed out and discussed. This EAP will be used as a framework by the

committee since it is an official, multi-county-wide guide previously researched by experts, explained in detail on the Fairfax County webpage, and approved for action by regional Northern Virginia local governments. The main sections of this plan talk to the most probable natural or man-made disasters that will need to be addressed by Skyline House in our own EAP. These are: Hurricane and Earthquake; Radiological Attack (i.e., a “dirty bomb”); and Chemical Attack/Nerve Gas Attack. The webpage also lists items needed to shelter in-place in one’s condo or elsewhere in case of a disaster. It also includes a written template for a “personal family plan” to be prepared well before a disaster strikes.

The EAP was discussed at length by the committee. Then each disaster was delegated to a member of the committee to edit and prepare a draft. The draft will be further edited by me and submitted to the Management Office for a *final* rough draft to be reviewed by the Board off-line for further suggestions and direction. Our goal is 10 pages, preferably less, double-sided with graphic illustrations (if possible). Suggestions were made to include parts of the plan as inserts in copies of our House Special. At our next committee meeting we will invite our Building Engineers and Management Office representative to discuss ways and means, and pros and cons, in order to execute a “Sheltering In-Place” for a large group of residents here in case of a hurricane, or one of the man-made disasters outlined in the Fairfax County EAP. The committee will then explore their ideas and suggestions and invite further comment from residents and/or direction from the Board.

The SS&NWC Charter was reviewed by the committee, suggestions were made and discussed, and the Charter was redrafted with both recommended changes and minor edits.

The issue of traffic flow in the garage was brought to a conclusion with a written recommendation to the Board to revise Association Rules & Regulations, Rule 18.E. This recommendation responds to concerns raised by Unit Owners. The previous Chair of the Covenants Committee had advised that final traffic flow mandates should be incorporated into the Rules and Regulations in order to provide the full authority needed to enforce such mandates. If and when accepted by the Board, the new system will be fully explained, and an implementation date will be announced. The recommended traffic flow system would require painting information on the garage surfaces, and adding signs.



COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Chair, Janice L. Hill

The Community Relations Committee met on Thursday, February 16, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Card Room with 13 residents attending the meeting. Pike Transit Initiative officials were invited to provide a project briefing to the residents. The briefing included an overview of the project, its current status and schedule, cost information, and a detailed discussion of the draft alternatives analysis and environmental assessment that were recently submitted to the Federal Transit Administration.

The alternatives presented were: no build; enhanced bus service; articulated bus service or streetcar build. Estimated costs and potential environmental effects were provided for each alternative.

The next major step will be spring 2012 public meetings on the project. Participation by Skyline House residents in these public meetings is strongly encouraged.

To see the presentation, go to the Initiative's website, www.piketransit.com and view Community Group Presentation.

After the briefing and a reminder of next Committee meeting, on March 15, 2012, the third Thursday of the month, the meeting ended.

MAGAZINES KINDLY REQUESTED

Thank you very much to the Skyline residents who have been faithfully donating their magazines via the collection box located at the Front Desk. Your contributions are routinely distributed to Alexandria Hospital and other medical facilities such as Chemotherapy and Dialysis Units and Cardiology and Specialized Medicine waiting rooms. Your donated magazines provide much needed distraction for patients awaiting or going through difficult medical procedures and help to break up some very long hours for family members and friends accompanying and visiting those patients.

Please remember to donate your current (please no old/outdated) magazines to the Front Desk. If you have any questions regarding this much appreciated program, please call Marilyn Baker at 703-671-6759.

GOOD NEIGHBORS

Good Neighbors assist residents in need of temporary help due to illness or emergency. Services provided are typically short-term and in the local area. For example, picking up mail or prescriptions or making small grocery purchases. Anyone experiencing a medical emergency should call 911 immediately.

MARCH

MARILYN SILVER 703-256-0775

JUDITH YORK 703-671-2267

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

A CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS HAS RE-INSTITUTED A COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE (CRC). JANICE HILL CHAIRS THE COMMITTEE, WHICH ENSURES THAT SKYLINE HOUSE HAS A VOICE IN COMMUNITY MATTERS AFFECTING US ALL.

PEOPLE INTERERESTED IN SERVING ON THIS COMMITTEE SHOULD PLEASE EXPRESS THEIR INTEREST TO:

JANICE HILL AT

Janicelh21@gmail.com or 703-415-1537

What follows is a working draft of a Charter for the re-instituted Committee

Skyline House Unit Owners' Association

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Charter

The purpose of the Community Relations Committee (CRC) is to establish and maintain relationships with the community at large and to advise the Board on issues of potential interest to the Association. The CRC will assist the Board in keeping current with external affairs that might have an impact on the Association and its members.

Specific CRC responsibilities include:

Serve as an information channel to the Board and residents on issues that may affect the community at large and Skyline House residents as members of this community, including issues such as zoning, public transportation, revitalization and construction.

Establish cooperative relationships with other community associations, public service organizations and interest groups to identify opportunities for joint action benefitting Skyline House Unit Owners and residents as well as the larger community and, with the approval of the Board of Directors, send Skyline House representatives to public hearings and meetings and review and report findings which may affect the Association.



SKYLINE HOUSE CALENDAR

MARCH 2012 (WWW.SHUOA.ORG)



| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|--|--|---|--|--------|----------|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. East Penthouse | 6 | 7 | 8 Physical Plant and Operations Committee 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. East Penthouse | 13 Meet the Candidates Night 7:00 p.m. W. Party Room | 14 Security, Safety & Neighborhood Watch Comm. 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room | 15 Community Relations Committee 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 Financial Management Committee 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. East Penthouse | 20 | 21 Covenants Committee 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. East Penthouse | 27 Annual Meeting/ Election Night 6:30PM W. Party Room | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
| GOOD NEIGHBORS: Marilyn Silver (703) 256-0775 and Judith York (703) 671-2267 | | | | | | |

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