

Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 11, 2020

Present: Andrea, Claudia, Charlie, Deb, Frona, Joe, Nancy, Shirin

Review of Community Work Day & Associated Projects: The Fairlington Meadows Board and the B & G Committee recognized the contributions of many people in making the October 2020 workday and associated projects successful, most especially Andrea, Barbara and Gavin. The sundial commemorating the life of long-time Fairlington Meadows community and B& G committee member Victor Slabinski was installed next to the pool, and a great deal of work was done in planting new grasses, relocating a tree and rosebushes, and cleaning up. Neighbors even pitched in spontaneously. It was proposed that we continue the practice, scheduling a community workday perhaps twice a year (April and October, perhaps.)

Maintenance/Ongoing Work Update: The committee reviewed several requests and issues that had been identified by residents, primarily concerning tree maintenance (Court 9, between Courts 5 & 6) and grading/water pooling issues (Court 3, between Courts 8 & 9, near 4100 S. Stafford), plus shrub issue/question in Courts 9 and 13. Resolution of some of these will require consultation with the landscaper. In addition, an Arlington County tree expert contacted Claudia about a fungal infection in the photinia on Quaker Lane, something noticed by a passerby. Resolving the issue will require the landscaper to prune out the diseased portions and remove any fallen leaves to avoid the spread. Claudia will also inform the Fairlington Mews committee so that they can undertake similar actions on their photinia.

Per Nancy, the landscaper has a long list of things he's working on, and we want him to finish what he's got on that list before he starts with new things—in addition, the planting must take place within a certain window of time, but grading and work of that nature can continue on into the colder months.

With the transition of chairs, a need for integrated recordkeeping has become apparent. Claudia is planning to spend some time over Christmas integrating the landscaping “to do” list with the budget information (bids and invoices) so that we have a document where we can see at a glance where we stand with the budget, see what has been done and what still needs to occur. Right now, we have all that information but in separate pieces, which makes it harder to keep track of.

Arlington County Tree Canopy Program: Charlie has volunteered to prepare an application to Arlington County for a tree (preferably an American Beech or Willow Oak) to be planted in Court 14 where the Sweetgum whip had been planted and died. Both of those grow both tall and wide, and that is one of the few spaces that could accommodate a large tree. In this program, Arlington County will provide a larger young tree and will also do the planting.

Fairlington Gardeners: Claudia and Shirin attended the all-Fairlington Gardeners quarterly meeting, in which discussion focused on best practices for fully native community gardens (i.e., specific varieties of plants or particular maintenance strategies) and on mapping out the

community native, pollinator and rain gardens so that all of the HOAs could use them as resources.

Plans for 2021-22 Planting Season and Landscaping Rejuvenation: When the committee was reorganized in fall 2019, members focused on several principles that should guide the committee in its future work, namely transparency and communication, environmentally friendly practices, updating the aesthetics, and the desirability of a more planned and proactive approach to landscape rejuvenation, etc. In 2020, these ideas were applied as much as was feasible in the context of also negotiating a new landscaping contract and starting new recordkeeping

With the planned rejuvenation of the courts slated for priority for 2021 (Courts 2, 5, 6, 9 and 14), the committee has an opportunity to further develop a process for soliciting feedback from and providing notice to residents about the landscaping work. Claudia asked committee members to contemplate possible approaches to this for discussion at the December 2020 meeting.

Next Meeting: December 9th, 2020