

FAIRLINGTON MEADOWS
BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, September 13, 2023
7:00–9:12 pm

MEMBERS PRESENT

Charles Monfort, Chair
Claudia
Kristen K.
Cynthia P.
Michele M.
Margaret R.
Dominic P.
Gavin H.
Gina M.
Ed H.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Donald Spamer

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

John Rosenberg, Minutes Services
Carlos Rios, Lancaster Landscaping

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Monfort called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda, and it was adopted by unanimous consent.

PRUNING DISCUSSION

Carlos Rios of Lancaster Landscaping spoke about how the pruning needs vary across the entirety of the Fairlington complex and that a comprehensive, agreed-upon plan for pruning is now in place. A dedicated Lancaster professional, already familiar with the property, will be given precise instructions on pruning needs. No more shearing will be conducted except for certain azaleas that are covering windows or obstructing walkways. Mr. Rios suggests pruning hydrangeas at different times. He also addressed the herbicide application process.

Charles M. underscored that a singular Lancaster crew would focus on the Meadows's specific requirements.

Claudia inquired about Lancaster's practice when it comes to identifying pruning needs and if they inquire first of the Meadows before moving forward with the work. Mr. Rios responded in the affirmative.

Cynthia P. spoke of the prevalence of downed limbs and branches and the practice of mowers not picking them up prior to mowing, hence running them over with their equipment and producing even more chips. She also addressed mulch being displaced by blowers.

Margaret R. talked about the restoration of ground cover. She underscored the importance of informing people about what applications are being applied and their potential toxicity, especially to that underlying the mulch. She stated that because products are labeled as "organic," does not necessarily mean that they are not toxic. Charles M. requested Mr. Rios to provide a list of the herbicides that Landcaster applies. Charles M. also said that he would use the list provided and write an article about it for the newsletter.

A request was made to conduct a fall mulching. Charles M. said this is in the contract.

Donald S. asked how often weeding occurs. Mr. Rios said that it is ongoing.

BUILDING ISSUES

1. Doorbell Policy

Charles M. outlined a change to the bylaws brought about by modern doorbell technologies. Charles M. and Cynthia P. drafted a policy in the wake of the July meeting, in which there was consensus regarding a preference for wireless doorbells and the importance of setting standards. The policy recommendation spells out the requirements on such matters as location and color, noting that the issue of wireless doorbells does not have to be taken first to the Board. Suggestions are also made concerning wire doorbells in that the wires associated with them are directed through mortar as opposed to brick. Nor should the doorbells be mounted into the brick via screws. Additionally, doorbell varieties that are needed to meet ADA requirements must go through the Board.

Cynthia P. stated that the only holes that needed to be made were to mount the doorbell or to run a wire. She expressed concern with the possible deterioration of mortar given any drilling and suggested inquiring of mortar repair professionals about placing holes in mortar versus brick; though, she also recommends moving the policy forward to the Board as drafted.

Cynthia P. referred committee members to a link concerning Virginia Condominium & Homeowners' Association laws as they apply to security cameras and doorbells. It is important that no devices can capture audio. Charles M. expressed the opinion that the Meadows' Board should consult an attorney on these matters.

Discussion ensued regarding Board decisions where ADA matters come into play and the importance of deferring to the attorney.

MOTION: Cynthia P. **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the doorbell policy draft language being submitted to the board for consideration as is and recommends that the attorney review it for legal and privacy ramifications. It was **SECONDED** by Charles M. and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

2. Bench Repairs

Charles M. said the Board suggested that the B&G Committee look at four benches, as insurance adjusters had made certain observations about them. Two benches are in good shape. One needs a board replacement, in addition to painting, while another needs all of its boards replaced. The Meadows' maintenance professional suggested repairing in-kind. Charles M. concurs with this approach and will recommend it to the Board for approval.

LANDSCAPING ISSUES

1. Updates

a. Quaker Lane Watering

Inquiries have been made of the County as to when they will replace dead plants along Quaker Lane. Once known, arrangements could then be made to water the plants, given that they are difficult to reach. The County gave a vague response as to the timing, saying winter or spring.

b. Traffic Circle Watering

Ed Hilz was commended for his follow-up with the County. Sprinkler heads have been identified on the island, though they are broken, and parts have been ordered.

c. Stormwater Activities

Margaret R. outlined the ongoing efforts to reduce stormwater taxes via certain activities that need to be accomplished. The week of November 6 was given as an option to hold one such activity. A threshold of 30 participants is required for this session. This will be publicized in TownSq and the Messenger. Margaret R. has supplies on hand, and residents and family members are encouraged to participate in the storm drain labeling.

Margaret R. stated that two additional activities are needed to secure the tax credits. She will coordinate with Charles M. on scheduling. A litter pick-up along Quaker Lane and a stream pick-up are two such possibilities.

Charles M. noted the credit that will be given for the tree plantings that have been conducted. January 15 is the deadline by which these activities must have been conducted and materials submitted.

d. Landscaping Implementation

Charles M. reiterated that the tentative date for work beginning in Courts 1 and 3 is September 19, weather permitting.

2. Issues for Decision

a. Court 7 Landscaping Plan and Proposal

Charles M. said the proposal had just come in. A landscaping walk was completed, out of which three changes have been identified.

- A cypress in front of 4303 is planned for removal, while the court residents wish to keep it. Charles M. questions its removal.
- Resident of 4209 is concerned about spirea plants holding up to snowfall. An alternative plant, dwarf mountain laurel, was suggested, and Charles M. concurs.
- A blue spruce at 4215 is planned to remain, though the residents want it removed as its eventual height will be problematically high.

Charles M. read a list of 12 comments submitted by Margaret R.

MOTION: Charles M. **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the Court 7 landscaping plan, noting that both the plan and proposal will undergo certain changes. It was **SECONDED** by Margaret R. and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

b. Landscaping Guidelines 2.0

Charles M. reiterated the revised landscaping guidelines were discussed in August and that what is being changed are the guidelines that state that various grassy areas must be taken out and that evaluations should be made on a case-by-case basis via the B&G Committee.

Charles M. also noted a bullet concerning existing plantings that needed to be rewritten for greater clarity and consistency.

OPEN FORUM

Claudia talked about guidance that had been given to Lancaster in the past, much of which will be addressed in the new plan. She has a checklist of things to repair. Claudia also wants to discuss mosquito spray and is concerned that residents may be spraying in inappropriate places. She asks if the Board should or could enact greater restrictions on spraying.

Cynthia P. asked how the bird boxes are working out, but Charles M. said that it is too soon to tell, as they will need to be opened in the winter. She also talked about two witch-hazel plants that are dying and what might be done to rescue them or replace them.

Michelle M. asked about communicating via TownSq about owners turning on their spigots to enable watering. She also spoke of unsightly dog waste pick-up signs and their locations.

Margaret R. spoke of the new picnic table umbrellas are appreciated (next time blue or green should be considered as they would match the pool umbrellas or the landscaping) and stressed the importance downspout extenders being made more aesthetically appealing. She also raised the issue of e-scooters/e-bikes, and a discussion ensued regarding their undesirable presence and introduced the issue at the next board meeting of what to do about them. Margaret R. also expressed dissatisfaction with the aesthetics of the EV charging station electrical panels and suggested surrounding the electrical panels with evergreens, as has been done elsewhere. A complaint was raised regarding leftover and unsightly concrete/construction dirt from the installation of the EV electrical panels.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Charles M. **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the July 2023 minutes with updated changes. It was **SECONDED** by Margaret R. and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

MOTION: Charles M. **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the August 2023 minutes with updated changes. It was **SECONDED** by Margaret R. and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no other business, the meeting adjourned at 9:12 pm.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 4, 2023
7:00–8:30 pm

Respectfully submitted by Minutes Services.

