

**Cambridge Courts Condominium Board of Directors Meeting  
10/22/08**

Action items underlined, motions in **bold**.

**I. Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 6:35pm

**II. Quorum Count**

Board Members present: Lorraine Bailey (2703, #102), Vice President; Jon Fisher (2811 #101B), Secretary; Anna Santos de Dios, Treasurer (2403 #202); and Jeff Bridges, Property Manager.

**III. Owners Forum**

Christine Smythe, 2607 #102: (1) Someone is putting out tuna fish and milk by 2805, and it's getting disgusting. **RESPONSE:** This is not only gross, but will attract rats. Jeff will alert the porter to remove this whenever he sees it, and will add a notice in the newsletter that people shouldn't be feeding wild animals.

Anna Santos de Dios, 2403 #202: (1) She noticed we have a sign by the spigot that's been shut off indicating that water is for CC residents only. Can we have this removed? **RESPONSE:** Yes, Jeff will have the porter take it down. (2) Paint drippings are still there in the vestibule of 2403. **RESPONSE:** Porter will look into it. (3) Screen is still missing in 2403. **RESPONSE:** We are out of screens now, so it can't be replaced without ordering more (or if people order new ones we can ask them to leave the old ones with us).

Lorraine Bailey, 2703, #102: (1) She is passing on info on behalf of her neighbor (Suzanne Evans 2703 #202) who has been working with Strategic windows. She was told that they would be delivered but someone else would have to install them. However, she found out recently that they have not even been manufactured. **RESPONSE:** Since we've already taken Strategic off the list there's not much else we can do. They appear to be going out of business (or perhaps are already gone), as their only address we have has been locked up, and they are not answering phones (Jeff has made multiple attempts to contact them). Rather than entirely reprinting the handbook, Jeff will send out the updated page with the list of contractors to all residents, and ask legal counsel for appropriate wording to define what "approved" means in this context. Suzanne showed up near the end of the meeting to provide an update; she was asked by Strategic to pay the window manufacturer additional money to pay for them (after being told earlier that they were paid in full). The window manufacturer confirmed that the windows were never ordered, and that they no longer do business with Strategic. She is owed about \$1,647 from Strategic (from a check which has been cashed), and requested that the Cambridge Courts attorney intercede on her behalf at the community association's expense. The board indicated that our own legal counsel has advised us not to get involved in disputes between residents and contractors, but that the county offers

consumer protection services which may be available for free. Jeff will ask our legal counsel for her opinion on this issue. She requested that we make it much more clear that the “approved” list of contractors means that they are simply contractors that in the past have done work that conforms with our specifications, NOT that the board endorses their work, and NOT that residents can’t hire other contractors if they get approval for it. The board simply wishes to have a reoccurrence of the problem from a few years ago where an owner installed windows from Home Depot without approval which didn’t match, and then had to be replaced. Finally, she said that Vitex is the window manufacturer that would have made the windows, and we may be able to find other installers that work with them. Lorraine volunteered to call several window companies and try to find more vendors willing to match our windows. Jeff will recommend a few companies to try, and some more to avoid.

#### **IV. Minutes from the Previous Meeting**

**Motion was made (Jon) and seconded (Anna) to approve the minutes of the 9/24/08 meeting. PASSED.**

#### **V. Reports from Officers**

Treasurer: (1) On the 1<sup>st</sup> page of the financial report, it looks like we had \$0 budgeted for water and sewer. Jeff indicated that this is because the bills come quarterly, so we try to estimate which month the bill will come in. (2) We are again over budget on plumbing expenses, which is not a surprise, but something we need to keep an eye on. (3) We have \$0 listed for reserve under the budget, this is because the IRS requires us to report any money paid out of reserves but we don’t specifically budget money to come out of the reserve each month.

#### **VI. Report from Committees**

Landscape:

(1) The Arborist has completed the work approved at the last meeting, and Bladerunners has completed most of it. Bladerunners also indicated that they can’t trim all shrubs down below windows under our current contract, and we would need to pay them extra to get this. Christine reported that the yews planted in the 2400 courtyard are too close together, and that on the parking lot side of 2600 there was no soil amendment at 2603 and 2605 (like adding sand or silt to make it more porous). Jeff noted that they may have planted that way to try and match what we have on the other side without a ton of time for it to grow together. Jon will contact Bladerunners about the work at 2603 and 2605.

(2) Christine has a proposal from Cravens Nursery, offering plants at a 20% discount and with a 1 year guarantee, for a total of roughly \$5,560.22. **Motion was made (Jon) and seconded (Lorraine) to accept a proposal from Cravens Nursery for a variety of landscaping improvements for a cost not to exceed \$6,000, and to be implemented immediately. PASSED.** Christine will work with Cravens to get this work done.

(3) Jeff will pick up a few extra hoses, since the ones in 2400 aren’t long enough and the end has been cut off of one so you can’t screw them together.

#### **VII. Management Report**

**Tax returns:** We have 2007 tax returns from the auditors, we are receiving credits from both state (\$1,712) and federal (\$3,183) to be applied to 2008 taxes.

**Audit:** We have our audit for 2007 available now, and it needs approval from the board to be finalized.

**Door at 2605:** Our welder was able to fabricate a new door, it just needs to be primed and painted.

**Mailboxes:** Trashmasters cannot duplicate the mailboxes that we have now. The postal service is pushing us to go with cluster boxes, where we would no longer get mail delivered to each building, but to a central location instead. We could ask for an exception to the regulations that prevent us from replacing them with a different style than we currently have, but the result could be the postmaster deciding instead to make us get cluster boxes. The board decided that given that concern, we're best off just fixing the mailboxes as needed rather than allowing the possibility of ending up with something much worse.

**Roof replacements:** RCLA submitted a contract to provide construction administration/oversight for the roof replacements, for a cost not to exceed \$7,285 (it would be based on actual hours worked, so could be less). Jeff indicated that this would ensure that the work is being done to specifications, and that if there was a problem that we could be sure that the work was done properly so that we could collect on a warranty. For example, we have had problems with the 2411 roof which is under warranty, and RCLA has helped ensure that we get the contractors to repair it at their expense. Since the combined expense is still less than the next lowest bidder, the board agreed it was worth the expense. **Motion was made (Lorraine) and seconded (Anna) to accept the proposal from RCLA to provide construction administration for a cost not to exceed \$7,285. PASSED.**

**Grounds maintenance:** Jeff asked several companies for bids, and polled other property managers at ProCAM to get their opinions on which ones had been problem-free. The two that rose to the top were Denchfield Landscaping and Shenandoah Landscape Services, and their costs are also very competitive. Jeff indicated that Denchfield is a smaller company and may be able to work with us to identify which plants could still look good with a more natural look and which need to be sheared properly. The board decided that Denchfield seems like a better fit, but that it would be ideal for some board members and landscape committee members to meet with him first. Jon will contact Kurt Denchfield (the owner) at [kurt@dlandscaping.com](mailto:kurt@dlandscaping.com) to set up a visit, and let the board and landscape committee know when we will be meeting.

**Solar Water Heaters:** Jeff received a bid from Always Thinking Green to install solar water heaters on the property at a total cost of \$230,072 (with some small tax credits available from the federal government). Jon sent two other companies to get bids from to Jeff, as this cost was higher than expected. Jon will contact Arlington County to see if Arlington may be close to offering a property tax exemption as other counties in Virginia is doing, and if this kind of installation might qualify as a "commercial" installation that would be eligible for a higher federal credit. We also need to determine both how long the system is expected to last and what percentage of our gas bill we can expect to save.

## VIII. Business Items

1. Review of action items from last month (see ActionItems080924revised.doc for details)

## **IX. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12pm