

Clark Avenue Condo Association

2019 Annual Meeting - Trustee Meeting Minutes

Date: December 9, 2019 (this was rescheduled from 12/2/2019 due to a major snow storm)

Location: Northampton Community Music Center, 139 South Street, Northampton MA

Meeting Called to order – 6:02 pm

Trustees present: Andrea, Benson, Jared, Amy

Owners present: Steve, Pat, Kevin, Stephanie (arrives 6:20), Felix (arrives 6:25), Janet (arrives 7:15).

Trustees and Owners present via a proxy: Amelia, Andy, Nancy

Attendance (including proxies) as a % of ownership: 70.96%

Kendrick Property Management present: Donna, Bob

Review of 2018 annual meeting minutes, reviewed by owners and approved (these were previously approved electronically in January 2019).

Financials

Review and discussion of 2019 Income and Expense Report. There was a large payment (~\$26,000) made in January 2019 for fire restoration work. Basement beam support work (~\$22,000) was done in October.

Due to major snow storm, gutter cleaning was not done when scheduled. With icy conditions now present on the roof, this will be done in the Spring.

We had a surplus of about \$5,000 this year. Donna would like approval to move this into reserves. This could be taken back out of reserves if needed in the coming year/s. Unanimous approval for this.

Discussion of proposed 2020 budget. There is a large insurance increase next year (~66%) due to a fire related insurance surcharge. This is expected to last 3 years. If we have no more claims in the next 3 years we can hopefully re-enter the standard insurance market and reduce this expense.

Donna also suggests an increase in legal fees for next year related to clarification of phase 1 (51 Clark Avenue) phase 2 (53 Clark Avenue) relationship. Right now, phase 1 and phase 2

share an insurance policy, but both phases have no say over maintenance, structural repairs, etc... on either phase. Donna spoke to legal and clarified that phase 1 is responsible for a percentage of insurance, trash/recycling, snow removal and parking lot maintenance. Beyond that, maintenance / repair of each phase is the sole responsibility of that phase. Amy has concerns about condo associations separating because phase 1 would no longer be bound by our shared rules and regulations. Donna says that phase 1 can choose to separate from the association at any time. We expect Phase 2 and phase 1 attorneys will be in communication about this topic in 2020. There is support for having some money in the budget to address this if needed.

Second legal issue, there is a disparity between deed and mailing address for almost all the units. This has created some confusion and problems when selling or purchasing a unit. Donna asks whether we would like to do an amendment to the bylaws that would change deed address to match mailing address. We would need an amendment to condo docs specifying which mailing address is which deed number. Benson asks if we can get a quote from legal on costs, with the idea that if it is not too much it would be good to move forward. But if it is too expensive, we would likely put this idea aside, for the time being, to focus on other work. There is general agreement that it would be nice to eliminate the disparity as long as it is not too expensive. Owners and trustees support looking into the cost, Donna will get a quote.

New Business

CO / Smoke Detectors

When the building insurance changed Bob did an inspection as part of the insurance inspection paperwork. Bob discovered a natural gas line in the basement of 51 Clark Ave and there are holes in the basement that connect 51 and 53 Clark Ave. Because there is gas in the building and there is an air connection, we will need to have CO detectors in the halls and units. Bob will be doing a walkthrough with the fire department on December 10 to determine what might be needed for smoke detectors and fire extinguishers. The fire department will give us their requirements in writing. Felix asks if it might be cheaper and easier to seal off the air connection between the two buildings. Bob says that in his initial inspection his thought was that the hole locations and porous brick would make this difficult. But he will look into this more.

Mold testing of basement and dehumidification

At the September 2019 trustee meeting several owners raised concerns regarding mold and dehumidification of the basement. The trustees previously set aside about \$4,000 in the 2020 budget to go towards mold testing, remediation, and basement dehumidification. KPM is working with a contractor that will be checking mold levels in basement and common halls. Steve suggests light could help reduce mold in the basement as mold doesn't grow well in light. Steve had successful experience using light in the basement of another condo complex and says that with lights being very efficient now, this might be a good option to employ. Stephanie says that the mold also likes damp areas so if we can control the humidity in the basement we can stunt the growth that way too. Some discussion on the current dehumidifiers and making

sure the water is being taken outside of the basement. Jared asks if the contractor KPM is working with has expertise in just mold testing or also in drafting remediation plans. Bob says they do, and they will draft a report of what they find. Bob also says KPM would like to move towards a more integrated and efficient dehumidification system in the basement. Addressing basement mold / humidity is on the project list for 2020 and trustees will decide how to move forward once we have the test results back and the report.

Decks

Jared raises a concern Amelia had emailed regarding deck floor boards rotting and safety related to failure of wood boards/supports of the decks. Pat and Kevin also say their boards need to be replaced. Pat, Benson, and several other owners are interested in switching to Trex-type durable floor boards. A point of clarification is raised regarding deck ownership, and which parts are owned by individual unit owners and which are owned by the association. Donna said there is verbal from legal that the common deck supports are condo responsibility, but the boards and railings are owners. Donna will get this formalized with legal, so ownership is clear as we discuss decks in 2020. Pat volunteers to look into trex options and will coordinate with trustees/KPM as we may be able to get a better price for those who want to do deck work if several units opt in.

Budget and Capital Improvements Discussion and Voting

Insurance Fee Raise (Fire Related)

Discussion of condo fee versus special assessment for tackling insurance fee raise in 2020 budget. Legal said that phase 1 is responsible for insurance when done as a condo fee raise, but not special assessment. There is a proposal to raise condo fees 14% to cover insurance fee raise and the general budget. Benson makes a motion to approve condo fee raise. Kevin seconds. Unanimous approval.

Roof and Exterior Painting

Discussion of replacing roof, painting, and timeline for paying for it. Donna presents the budget for this work: \$55,000 total (\$35,000 for roof and \$20,000 for painting). The roof has shown signs of failure with water damage in 3 units this past year. Exterior painting is past due. Amy and several owners comment that the painting is peeling in spots and water may be getting into the building where caulking or paint have failed. KPM strongly recommends starting with the roof and working your way down the building so that new work that is done at lower levels is not damaged by water getting behind it due to a faulty roof. There is general agreement that both projects need to be done at some point and delaying them may create more expensive problems from unseen damage. Jared suggests we may also want to look into vinyl siding. He states we did this on D entry, instead of painting there. It may be more expensive in the short term, but it won't ever need to be painted again. There is some interest in this and general agreement that it is worth getting a quote. Discussion of timeline for work. Via a show of hands, the majority of owners present support doing the work over 1 year. Steve, Kevin, and Felix say that a bit more time would be better. Felix proposes 18 or 24 months. Benson suggests we

could do 18 month with a payment plan, starting February 1. Steve says the longer timeframe would be good since we aren't certain about the vinyl. Jared says if vinyl is roughly the same cost as painting we could consider it, if it is a few thousand more we could use some reserves to cover the difference, but if it is much more we would likely not do it. Bob says one advantage with Vinyl is it doesn't need to be done in warm weather so if we decide to go with that the longer time frame would be ok, because work could be done next winter/early spring. Discussion of payment methods. Owners could do lump sum, quarterly, or monthly. Amy says that if the 18 month timeline presents a significant challenge to an owner or two they could approach the board and we'd be open to working out a longer payment plan and using some reserve money to cover the shortfall, while having their payments go back into the reserves. The assessment for owners ranges from about \$2,700 to \$3,700. Steve says this is not as bad as past special assessments where owners needed to come up with significantly more money in a year. There is support among trustees to work with individual owners on a longer payment plan, if the assessment creates too significant a hardship for them. Motion to approve \$55,000 special assessment, starting February 1, 2020 and lasting 18 months. Unanimously approved by a show of hands. The roof will be prioritized as the first project, painting will be second as the money is available.

Election of Trustees

Donna asks if anyone is interested in serving as a trustee. Kevin is interested, but says he would like some more experience at the condo. The current slate is willing to serve again. Steve moves to elect the current slate, second. Unanimous approval of current trustees (Amy, Andrea, Amelia, Benson, Jared).

Adjournment and Next Meetings

Meeting adjourned at 7:37

Next Meeting

Monday April 6, 2020, 5:30 pm, location: unit 9 (Jared and Stephanie's)