

**Chatham Hills Subdivision Board**  
**May 9, 2022**  
**Meeting Minutes (Zoom Meeting)**

Attendees: David Ryall, Chuck Fehl, Danielle Adams, Curt Martin, Sheena Mathai, John Weigel, Lilly Ryall, Bob Layne, Therese Nagi, Ronda Harris

Absent: Jon Carter, Jonathan Brown

**Minutes – (Jonathan Brown)**

John Weigel made a motion to accept the April minutes, Curt Martin seconded, the motion passed.

**Treasurer - Danielle Adams**

Danielle submitted monthly expenditures and income for April 2022.

**Newsletter/Website - Sheena Mathai**

The newsletter will be out this week.

**Dues and Directory- Curt Martin**

There are 14 lots left unpaid, 12 with only current year due, 1 with current year and 2021, and 1 with a 2018. One special assessment

**Safety - John Weigel**

April 30 incident on Vicary, 2 ATVs involved. Owner of motorcycle was removing motorcycle and he was intoxicated. Concealed weapon and intoxicated and went to jail.

**Social - Lilly Ryall**

The sub wide annual Garage Sale is to be held June 2, 3, & 4. Flyer will go out with newsletter this week. Ads will be placed in local newspaper.

**Deeds and Restrictions - Ronda**

Letters went to

Lot 228 – regarding oversized vehicles in driveways

Lot 130 – regarding utility trailer

Lot 3 – regarding commercial landscape trailer

Called Jeff Bodell, no return calls from Lot 228, Lot 130, Lot 3 or Bodell

**Entranceways - Chuck Fehl**

Davey Tree came to view about 25 trees in medians and cul de sacs for deep root feeding done the last week of April. Water will go on Monday, May 16. Annuals will go in afterwards. Second application of weeding treatment will occur in two weeks. On Smithfield entranceway, old pillars and beams are looking to be in poor condition. Looking for suggestions on what to do with them.

**Parks and Commons - Bob Layne/Jon Carter**

Updating Jon's last month's board report on this project, we received a 3<sup>rd</sup> quote and are third prepared to make our recommendation.

Trying to find landscaping companies who had been able to keep a crew healthy during the pandemic was very scarce, but we continued to talk with companies until we had three companies that would submit quotes. These companies include: **Wasmer Brothers Landscaping (WBL), Ophelia Landscaping (OL) and Serene Landscaping Group (SLG) out of Plymouth**. We have done business with WBL who have provided our mowing services the last three years and earlier this year signed another three-year contract through 2024 for these services. They have held their contracted pricing for this year even in light of escalating gas prices and rising inflation. Ophelia Landscaping has been working with Chuck on maintaining the entrance ways. SLG was identified as a firm that was seen very often doing landscaping work around Plymouth. I contacted and worked with their general manager who had been with them for 12 years. They are diversified as other landscaping companies with snow removal, landscaping and mowing large areas. I learned that much of their business is with condominium complexes.

Two of the bids were in the same “range”. WBL bid was \$13,727 , SLG’s bid was \$15,515. (OL) was the lowest bid at approximately \$7,700. We have no estimates any of the three companies of timing when they could schedule this project if their company was awarded the bid. This apparently is a common practice to not committing until a contract is signed. All of the companies in many trades are booked up with commitments.

Recommendation: Jon and I both recommend that we vote to approve the contracted services of Wasmer Brothers Landscaping. They are a known entity and they are our contracted supplier for the mowing services for the years of 2022-24. Jon has worked well with Tim Wasmer through weather and COVID 19 pandemic challenges.

SLG is an unknown entity from the standpoint of working with us before. I am impressed with their general manager’s experience and the positive reviews that they customers have documented, but I cannot endorse a premium cost without prior experience.

When Jon and I met with Brett Ophilia of (OL) walked the project and discussed in detail, we asked how they had started out this year from a employer standpoint. He responded it has been tough and it is still difficult to hire individuals in this “environment”. I recall that he was having to perform duties that would typically be handled by his employees, but he had to jump in and take care of his customer’s needs. I am afraid this project could be a moving target as far as execution is concerned. I am also concerned that he may have underestimated the amount of work involved.

**Item #2 –Updated and Recommendation on Jon Carter’s proposed project to establish 2022’s “commons mowing boundaries”**

I am pleased to announce that Matt submitted a quote to Jon and me on May 1 that included the following deliverables:

1. Cut around park, setting new mowing boundary edge **\$150**
2. Trim total of 1,000 linear feet of vegetation (mostly limbs) that he can reach without the use of a step ladder at \$.60/ft.; spoils will be pushed into the adjacent woods (our current practice) **\$600**

3. Move a pile of branches near the utility bridge in Park #1 (east of Brittany Hill) plus removing low limbs throughout the parks, as well as removing broken limbs **\$100**

**Grand total : \$850**

Quote includes: 2 laborers, use of gas-powered hedge trimmers, chainsaw, and zero turn riding mower.

Recommendation: We approve the quote for the stated services and approve Matt to execute this project at his earliest convenience, based on weather and existing bookings.

Bob made a motion to approve the quote submitted by Matt. Seconded by Jon Weigel. Yes votes – 8  
No votes – 0 Dave and Lilly sustained

### **Item #3 - Potential property line error or misplacement of existing section of park pathway**

Since last month's board meeting a letter came into the web site from Doug Carr, homeowner living on Saxony near the Smithfield park entrance on Smithfield between the Lots 142 and 195. He had some recommendations about the width of the pathway was asking for us to widen the path. It turns out that Doug nor his wife attended the annual meeting, but he did understand we were making upgrades to the commons. I responded to his question and outlined what is to come over the next two years.

I have noted in my many treks down that pathway that the east side edge of the path is extremely close to the circular drive of Lot 195. I proceeded to pull up the 2021 Oakland County aerial map of the subdivision. What I discovered was about 10' from the start of the path to mark approximately in the middle of the path around 8-10' beyond the back fence running parallel to the footprint of the house.

It ran a bell from 2019 when I was working with Bob Heinle and the issue with two huge pine trees that were dead and we were going to be cutting them down. There was a third pine tree that was closer to their home and I was using my plat map with my measuring wheel to determine if the tree was on their property or the commons. At some point during this process, Bob mentioned that someone had put a stake out at the corner of his neighbor's and his back property lines. He also mentioned there were markings on the pathway that were apparently indicating the other back corner of his neighbor's property. I never saw the owners of that property during my walk throughs with the companies bidding on the trees being removed, stumps ground and spoils hauled away.

This caused me to question what impact this would have on our future improvements to the pathways. Jon, Therese and I and Chuck on another occasion have noted that the pathway that you would assume should be in or near the middle of the 20' easement is to the eastern part of the easement. My concern is that the correct positioning of the pathway in the easement may require landscaping changes to the Rasico's landscaping along their driveway that may require a retaining wall to be constructed.

**Recommendation:** I believe this situation needs clarification. We may need to determine if a surveyors should be summoned to revalidate these critical reference points. We probably discuss with both homeowners to see if they have any property documents for their home purchase to assist in this research. I believe that we may also need to review with Harold Sartor of Sartor Asphalt Paving to see

what his thoughts are on removal of the applicable portion of the pathway and what it will take for the deconstruction and reconstruction costs may be in 2023. I am assuming he would rather add this project to the existing project plans for next year. This may need to be reviewed with the owners at the annual meeting if the costs required us to possibly have to increase the special assessment slated for 2023. As Chuck and I were discussing, it may be an annual meeting vote to see if option of removing that section of pathway from the park and relandscape back to turf.

#### **Item #4 Update on quote for “refreshing” the East Playground**

This project is a carryover from last year and will involve the leveling the surface of the east playground, replacing specific damaged or very faded plastic playground borders, and resetting the borders to align them in straight rows and set them at approximately the same height around the whole perimeter, repurpose the pea gravel to provide a “cushion” between the dirt and grass berm that surrounds the parameter and the repositioned plastic borders, install new playground mulch to an estimated depth of 6” throughout the playground. Lastly, the wooden playscape is going to be lightly sanded and prepped for 2 new coats of stain. This segment of the project will be handled internally with potential for college aged skilled help at a recommended rate of \$20/hour.

Jon and I have spoken with two landscape contractors: Landscaping Consultants (CL) and Serene Landscaping Group (SLG). We did not get a quote last year after reviewing the site with Brett Ophilia of (CL). I mentioned that to Brett when Jon and I walked the commons with Brett on the landscaping reseeded after the 2021 July storm and subsequent tire ruts at several park entrances.

SLG came back with a quote to install the playground mulch for **\$8525**. This would include the purchase of 75 cubic yards of playground mulch, and require 4-5 deliveries from the supplier. The mulch would then have to be moved from the point of delivery near park entrances to the playground and spread.

The current retail price per cubic yard for playground mulch from Eagle Landscaping & Supply in Southfield is \$31. Let’s assume that a licensed landscape company gets a 15% discount on their purchases. This would equate to \$26.35 per cu. yard. Total mulch cost for 75 cu. yards would be **\$1976.25**. Assume 5 deliveries at \$50/trip = **\$250**. Netting out the materials cost and delivery leaves **\$7848.75** for labor costs. I think that is too expensive.

I am suggesting that we consider ask Matt’s Lawn Care to assemble a crew of his friends to: 1) handle the weed issue (probably multiple sprayed – on applications of a non-toxic “concoction” to kill off the weeds, 2) remove and reset the damaged and faded plastic playground borders, 3) move all the pea stone to the area between the repositioned borders and the adjacent earth berm, 4) assist me in sanding and staining the wooden playscape.

I also believe we purchase the required playground mulch and have it delivered and we rent the applicable equipment (ex. tractor with frontend loader & a dump trailer) to transport the mulch from the drop off point at a park entrance to the playground. I also think we should put out a call for homeowner volunteers to help spread the mulch. We should provide water for hydration and pizza lunch with pop before the second half of the task.

Your thoughts and suggestions

#### **Item #5 – Update on Footbridge Project**

Chuck was provided the names of 3 landscaping construction companies that wanted to bid on the project. All 3 were interested in bidding but 2 were booked for the 2022 season and would not be available. Fortunately, the third business owner, Thad LaPlatte was interested and came out on did a walkthrough of the 6 bridges and also reviewed the model that I had built. I was able to discuss at length the pros and cons of various aspects of the existing and model bridge. Some of the “improvements” to the historical and model included: 1) replacement of wooden balusters and replace with tensioned horizontal or vertical tensioned 1/8” coated stainless cables, 2) utilizing a steel post base at the base of the steel I beam instead of using a cantilevered approach with wooden diagonal braces, 3) review the use of ¼” steel powder coated “fencing” that has a structural “squarish” pattern that meets code with vertical and horizontal intersections being machine welded versus “stamped wire twist”, 5) using an imported hardwood that is used for floors in truck and equipment trailers.

#### **Engineering concern:**

Thad’s visual assessment of the I beam bridges’ substructure was positive. However, when he inspected the 50’ diagonally-braced “truss – beam” bridge. He was concerned with a repair to joint between the bottom of vertical member and end of a diagonal brace that was at the end of the bridge. Chuck and Jon notified me that the welded horizontal steel piece to connect these this joint from causing the stability of the bridge to remain rigid.

Bike path in the woods needs to be addressed in newsletter. The bike paths are destroying the woods and safety issues arise. Newsletter article will go out.

#### **New Business**

None

Bob Layne made a motion to adjourn, Chuck Fehl seconded @ 9:17pm

Respectfully submitted,

*Lillian Ryall*

Next Meeting: Monday, July 11 at 7:00 p.m.