

HALP Executive Committee

Meeting of 08/16/2023

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: (laurelparkec@gmail.com): Presiding Officer and President: Ruth Anne Lundeberg (presidentlaurelpark@gmail.com), Clerk: Aaron Bissell (clerklaurelpark@gmail.com); At Large: Wilfred Morin (atlarge1lp@gmail.com), At Large: Lauren Anderson (atlarge2lp@gmail.com), Financial Officer: Kathy Murri (treasurerlaurelpark@gmail.com), Vice President: Andrew Lehman (vplarelpark@gmail.com), Property Chair: Peter Russell (propertycommitteelp@gmail.com).

ABSENT: Lauren Anderson

HOMEOWNERS: Sheila Rhodes-Dow, Margaret Bowrys, Laura Wallis, Joni Sexauer, Tryna Hope, Zayeet, Amanda Nash, Theo Schall

GUESTS:

HOMEOWNER MATTERS:

1. **Unit #80 proposes cutting of healthy trees for demolition purposes:**
 - a. Original plan approved by the EC was to deconstruct the top half of the house by hand. So, if they cannot obtain smaller equipment to avoid cutting down these healthy trees then, they could deconstruct the entire house by hand. If they are granted permission to cut down these healthy trees, they should be required to grind the tree stumps away; and, they should replant or pay for the replanting of trees designated by the Laurel Park Property Committee of a species that can withstand climate change.
 - b. TJ Shields has seemed to have changed demolition companies. Homeowners are concerned that he as the re-developer requires Hilltown Demolition or anyone he is in business with to correct their behavior to be professional and respectful while working here.
 - c. New demolition company hopes to use smaller equipment that wouldn't require cutting down trees. The EC is still waiting to hear what their formal proposal for the tree will be.
 - d. Ruth Anne has talked to the owner of #80 about both issues. He will instruct his workers not to park in handicap parking spaces.
 - e. **Motion: Table discussion while waiting for further proposal on trees from homeowner. PASSED.**

VOTES BY EMAIL:

1. Approval of Minutes for July EC Meeting and August 2nd Septic Hearing. **PASSED.**
2. Approval of Mini Split system at unit #88. **PASSED.**

REPORTS:

1. **PRESIDENT** (Ruth Anne Lundeberg)
 - a. See New and Old Business.
2. **VICE PRESIDENT** (Andrew Lehman)
 - a. Property transfers.
 - i. Unit #77
 - ii. Unit #16
 - iii. Unit #37

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- iv. All units have closed.
- v. HALP needs to be clearer about how \$75 transfer fees are handled. Fee could be included in closing documents or at orientation. Might best be handled by the buyer and seller attorneys.

3. PROPERTY COMMITTEE (Peter Russell)

- a. [See linked report](#)
- b. Additional info on drainage issues: numerous runoff problems have been created by recent rain storms and now require attention.
- c. Additional info on tree replacement: Trees in community garden area seem to be growing well.
 - i. Late autumn would be a good time to replant them in their permanent locations.
 - ii. There are criteria for permanent relocations. We need to think about both what we need and what would be best for the new trees.
- d. Additional info on knotweed treatment: Thus far, knotweed treatment has seemed to be effective.
- e. Additional info on bat boxes: Perhaps homeowners could be polled on where bat boxes should go.
- f. Additional info on consolidated utilities map: EC is still trying to decide when to have the consolidated utilities map completed. Health Department would likely be willing to let us put it off until next year.

4. FINANCE OFFICER (Kathy Murri)

- a. [See linked report](#)
- b. Income is almost exactly what is expected for time of year.
 - i. We are earning interest for CDs, but it has not yet been reported to us by the bank.
- c. Overall spending is a little low at the moment.
- d. Electricity is still running high.
- e. Propane is currently a little high because of recent deliveries.
- f. HALP will need to adjust utilities for next year's budget to compensate for increasing rates.
- g. Over 30 days late payments are currently \$720.
- h. Question about whether SU and LPA have received their stipends yet. Usually they have requested it; so far they haven't this year. The EC can request that Pancione send those payments.

5. CLERK (Aaron Bissell)

- a. No Report

6. AT-LARGE 1 (Wilfred Morin)

- a. Regarding installation of Electric Vehicle charger(s) for homeowner use.
 - i. Our electrician is currently in contact with National Grid to research feasibility and give us quotes for installations in two locations.
 - 1. Location A is in front of the red barn with the Makers' Space.
 - 2. Location B is in the parking lot across from the playground. This would be the most central location.
 - ii. The project cost after MassEVIP incentive will be less than \$20K and probably closer to \$15K
 - iii. The next steps are:
 - 1. Receiving the quote from the Electrician and, if greater than (\$12K?), get two more quotes.
 - 2. Get permission from homeownership.
 - 3. Purchase and installation.

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- iv. The rough timeline is by the end of 2023.
 - v. Mostly still waiting for quotes. Hope is to have project ready to present at Annual Meeting.
- 7. AT-LARGE 2** (Lauren Anderson)
- a. No report
- 8. PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE**
- a. Disposal of existing plastic structure removed climbing structure for young children. The playhouse replaced the imaginative play element, but not climbing.
 - i. Here are three options:
 - 1. [Climbing Dome with Slide](#) **\$350**
 - 2. [Naturally Playful Woodland Climber](#) **\$320**
 - 3. [Lifetime 60-inch climbing dome \(earth tone\)](#) **\$299**
 - ii. Structures will need to be properly spaced to ensure safe fall zones.
 - b. Installed the safety bars on the swings.
 - c. Still some spots that need to be painted on the swingset.
 - d. Will propose an annual maintenance plan.
 - i. Create a line item in 2024 and future budgets.
 - e. Proposal: Approve purchase of one of the options with appropriate safety footprint.
 - f. Discussion tabled until Lauren gets back. Voting may take place by email between meetings.
- 9. PROPERTY MANAGER** (Michael Pancione, Tricia Pancione)
- a. Paving: Scheduled for October 9th.
 - b. Dining hall repair: Work has begun.
 - c. Multi-year cost projections submitted.
- 10. LIBRARY COMMITTEE** (Tryna Hope, Erin Nelson, Patti McManamy, Liz Duffy Adams)
- a. No Report.
- 11. NOMINATING COMMITTEE** (Laura Wallis, Andrew Lehman, Kandy Littrell)
- a. Tasks already completed.
 - i. Flyers and information has been delivered to all units and posted on the bulletin board.
 - b. Future Efforts.
 - i. Meeting again on Friday.
 - c. Seeking homeowners to run for:
 - i. Clerk: No nominees yet.
 - ii. One Property Committee member: Have two nominees.
 - iii. Finance Officer: No nominees yet.
 - iv. If others want to run for VP or at-large we will accept their nomination.
 - v. Three Nominating Committee members.
 - d. Important for homeowners to know that the EC members all work together and aid each other regardless of position.
 - e. There is also a two month transition period where new members can work with outgoing members to ease into the job.
 - f. Potential nominees are welcome to contact current EC members if they have questions.
 - g. If any homeowner has a suggestion for a nominee, they can contact the Nominating Committee as well.

OLD BUSINESS:

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1. Creating a Multi-year Plan for expenditures and income.

- a. The EC, Property Committee, and Pancione are creating a plan spanning the next 10 years, which is expected to be completed soon. Idea is to spread out expenses over a known timeline.
- b. Michael Pancione has submitted estimated costs for painting, roofing.
 - i. There are no major painting or roofing projects needed in the next 5-10 years.
 - ii. Post office porch needs washing, sealing, and anti-slip treatment, asap.
 - iii. Chapel roof needs small repair.
 - iv. Normal Hall Porch Roof should be replaced soon.

2. Energy retrofitting common buildings.

- a. Mass Save has done assessments on Normal Hall and the post office building, including the two rental units.
 - i. The EC has not approved any work so far - still in phase of getting quotes.
 - ii. There is some urgency if we want to take advantage of the rebates. Since rebates are renewed annually, it can be unpredictable how long they will last.
- b. All insulation/winterization will be paid for by Mass Save.
 - i. Walls, ceilings, floors, attics in normal hall and post office building will receive blown in insulation.
 - ii. Sealing up gaps.
 - iii. Need to build a new ceiling in the EC office to contain insulation. HALP will pay for that.
- c. Awaiting a Mass Save appointed electrician to verify that old knob-and-tube wiring is not live. This will be paid directly by Mass Save.
- d. If knob and tube wiring is live, HALP pays for its removal/replacement.
 - i. Knob and tube wiring is no longer considered safe and should be replaced if still in use. This would likely be expensive.
- e. Seeking quotes for replacing propane furnaces with heat pumps, and replacing propane water heaters with heat pump water heaters.
 - i. There will be significant rebates for the heat pumps. Exact figures will be determined by the choice of equipment which is based on our needs. An HVAC contractor will be able to provide exact figures. Heat pumps also provide central air conditioning.
 1. HALP is under the residential plan with Mass Save. This is how it works:
 - a. HALP gets a \$500 incentive for weatherization, even though it's free for us.
 - b. Mass Save rebates on units are \$1250 per ton—(units are classified by ton. 1 ton=12,000btu). Here's a rough estimate for Normal Hall:
 - i. 1800 square feet
 - ii. \$5,000 projected rebate for 4 ton unit which is 48,000 btu.
 - iii. [see sample unit](#).
 - iv. Because there is already ductwork, the unit and its installation will cost significantly less than ductless.

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- v. It is recommended to keep the propane heat as well. The propane will kick in when necessary to keep energy costs as low as possible. It will need a heat pump integration system, which allows the heat to switch seamlessly between heat pump and furnace as needed at a cost-\$200-\$800.
 - vi. Heat pump works down to below zero but costs more to run than propane when temps are extremely low.
 - vii. At least one propane heater (the one in the EC office) has reached the end of its lifespan and needs replacement. The new one will be much more efficient.
- ii. Can choose from the list of Mass Save approved contractors.
 - 1. All are bonded, insured independent contractors.
 - a. Mass Save rebates go directly to them, HALP pays the difference.
 - b. There are 77 of these in the surrounding area.
 - c. Boulangers will come inspect and give quotes.
 - d. HALP should seek at least 2 more quotes.
- f. In sum, here are just a few of the compelling reasons to switch to electric heat pumps.
 - i. Will provide efficient central heat and air conditioning.
 - ii. Will significantly reduce carbon footprint.
 - iii. The combination of increased insulation and heat pump will raise efficiency.
 - iv. Current equipment is old and will soon need replacement.
 - v. Current equipment is inefficient and cost prohibitive to use.
 - vi. Initial cost will be low because of current incentives.
 - vii. There will be 0% 7-year financing for the difference between our costs and Mass Save's contributions. HALP can factor that into our long-range budget.
 - viii. Comfortable climate control year round.
 - ix. Creates meeting and activities spaces for homeowners: classes, groups, celebrations, coffee hours, committee meetings, clubs, performances and more.
 - x. Major benefits to homeowners' quality of life and wellbeing through providing spaces that foster connection, learning, entertainment, arts and more year-round.
 - xi. A safe, climate controlled space for storing and working with our archival documents by using the space behind the library as an archive room.
 - xii. **Motion: Approve winterization with cost covered by Mass Save. HALP will be paying for new ceiling in EC Office and potential expenses related to old knob and tube wiring.**
 - 1. Discussion: Wait for electricians examination of wiring and get an estimate in writing. Voting on approval of winterization may take place by email in between meetings.
 - 2. **Tabled until written estimates are available.**
- 3. **Improve ecological practices on grounds.**
 - a. President (Ruth Anne) will create an Ad-Hoc committee that will:
 - i. Research best practices

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- ii. Generate projects to support these
 - iii. Create cost/benefit analyses
 - iv. Create proposals
 - 1. Get quotes from contractors as needed
 - v. Present proposals to the EC for voting.
 - vi. Implement projects as stated in the approved proposals.
 - vii. Report (via one or more representatives) to the EC at monthly meetings, and as needed in between.
 - viii. Provide information to the EC and Property Committee to assist decisions that impact the natural environment.
- b. Structure:
- i. Open to all interested homeowners, including members of other committees.
 - ii. Not required to seek Property Committee approval prior to submitting a proposal to the EC, but should check with the Property Officer to rule out possible logistical conflicts or duplications.
 - iii. Work cooperatively with, but not under, the Property Officer and Management Company.
 - iv. Significant changes during a project will require a re-submission and approval by the EC.
 - v. Committee is self-governing. Members can elect officers if they choose to.
 - vi. Committee can create its own mission statement.
 - vii. One-year term commitment. There is no term limit.
- c. Have already received some interest from homeowners.
- i. Need some people to formally join the committee.
 - ii. Need homeowner buy in to help. EC doesn't have enough resources on its own.
- d. Question of how the new ecological committee would affect the Property Committee.
- i. Could Property Committee do the work proposed for the new Committee?
 - ii. There are more people interested than there are slots on the Property Committee.
 - 1. Perhaps more spaces could be added to the Property Committee instead of creating a new committee.
 - a. Bylaws changes would be required.
 - iii. There does seem to be some overlap between the proposed committee and the Property Committee.
 - iv. Property Committee could be disbanded to make way for the proposed committee.
 - 1. Bylaw changes would be required.
 - v. Perhaps homeowners who are interested could put together a proposal for the EC to approve.
 - vi. Could do a trial run for a year.
- e. Need a way to gauge who's interested and who would actually show up to work on a potential new committee.
- f. Some people in attendance expressed support for increasing size of Property Committee.
- g. No actions taken yet.
- 4. Proposal to repurpose HALP office to a multi-use space available to all homeowners.**
- a. The ad-hoc committee to implement this project.
 - i. Erin Nelson
 - ii. Sandra Hanig
 - iii. Joni Sexauer
 - b. Mass Save will fund new insulation.

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- c. Current drop-ceiling will be replaced to make space for added insulation.
 - d. Erin is spearheading the efforts to clear the room.
 - e. Social Union materials will go to Dining Hall.
 - f. EC materials in the office will go to the storage room in the Post Office, behind the Library.
- 5. Time to prepare for the Budget and Bylaws meeting and the Annual Meeting.**
- a. Should meetings be in person or on Zoom?
 - i. There are still concerns about covid.
 - ii. It seems like there has been better attendance when the meeting is on Zoom.
 - iii. **Motion: Hold the two fall meetings on Zoom. PASSED.**

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. Potential Bylaw Changes.**
 - a. Changes to Signed/Notarized Page.
 - b. Currently accepting suggestions for changes from both homeowners and committee members.
- 2. Sheila Rhodes-Dow Art Installation.**
 - a. Sheila has been named as LPA's new artist in residence.
 - b. Small structures Located on trails only.
 - i. [See attached map.](#)
 - c. Small structures located on the trail.
 - d. Using natural materials sourced nearby.
 - e. Will not obstruct the trails.
 - f. Sheila is aware of endangered plants nearby.
 - g. No cost HALP.
 - h. Sponsored by LPA.
 - i. **Motion: Approve Shelia's proposal. PASSED.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- 1. Motion: Enter Executive Session. PASSED.**
- 2. Motion: Leave Executive Session. PASSED.**
- 3. Discussion took place, but no voting was required.**

Meeting Adjourned. 8:20 pm.

Next Meeting September 20th, 2023 at 6:15 pm via Zoom. ([Link to September's draft agenda](#))