

O . . . Fairlington Arbor MEMO

October 1999

BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, October 26 at 7:00 PM in the South Fairlington Community Center. All homeowners and renters are welcome. To place an item on the agenda, please call David Pollard, facilities manager, at least ten days in advance.

GENERAL INFO

Trash Pickup: Monday - Saturday except Federal holidays. Put securely tied bags out between 7:00 and 8:00 AM on the day of the pickup.

Large Items: Call David Pollard to arrange for pickup.

Recycling: Receptacles for mixed glass, plastics (*HDPE 1 & 2 only*), and cans (aluminum and steel) are put out on Tuesdays and collected on Wednesdays. Newspapers (securely tied or bagged in paper, not plastic) and broken down corrugated cardboard may be left beside the receptacles.

Mixed paper (junk mail, office paper, envelopes, etc.), catalogs, and magazines are accepted at the Arlington Country Recycling Center, Four Mile Run at Columbia Pike.

Homeowners Approve Budget

At the Annual Budget Meeting on Thursday, September 23, a 94% majority of homeowners approved the budget for the upcoming fiscal year. We thank **Christine and Geoff Thomas** for their usual excellent catering job. The winner of the free condo fee-free month is **Mary Pearson** of 3476 B-2 S. Utah Street.

Board Considers Options For Onsite Office Facilities

The present onsite management facilities, housed in a section of the poolhouse, are for various reasons, no longer adequate. The facility was originally intended for storage and for carrying out minor repairs. The Arbor now owns more equipment than can be stored onsite and needs to store more materials because we are carrying out repairs and maintenance onsite that other villages contract out—thereby saving money. The space issue is compounded by the fact that the

maintenance facility, although inadequately ventilated and insulated and very dusty, now also houses a small administrative office with the Association's files, computer, and other office equipment and supplies. For space and health reasons, an alternative is needed that would provide office space and kitchen/lunchroom and bathroom facilities for onsite employees.

EXTEND THE POOLHOUSE This option is not workable since the location doesn't allow for building out at ground level and the foundation will not support adding a second floor. It would be necessary to demolish the existing building and rebuild from the ground up.

CUSTOM BUILD A FACILITY. This option would give us complete control to design exactly what we need, but there are obvious drawbacks:

- **Cost.** New construction, to be in keeping with the Fairlington look, would be brick with a slate roof. With the help of the Finance Committee, estimated costs were solicited from a number of contractors for architectural drawings and bids, County sewer connection, foundation, framing, brick structure, slate roof, electrical system, roughed-in plumbing, air conditioning, and interior walls. The conservative estimate for the minimum practical space was \$152,000, *not including* general contractor fees, basic interior equipment/appliances and finishing, or costs to demolish any existing structure should that be necessary.
- **Environmental Impact.** New building would take from our open common area and construction would be a major inconvenience to owners of nearby units and to the community in general. The most suitable location for the building is near the emergency entrance to the pool. This would entail dismantling and relocating the Tot Lot at additional expense and disruption.

BUY AN EXISTING BUILDING. In the past month, the Board learned that a suitably sized unit, ideally located, was to be put up for sale. Since it is fairly common practice for condominium associations to use a unit as a management office, the Board decided to explore this option and determined that there would be a number of advantages:

- It would provide significantly more space at a lower cost than custom building and there would

- be no construction inconvenience.
- It would provide the required space, ready-made, for an office, plus a room for Board and Committee meetings and community events, and up-to-standard facilities for our employees.
- It would be an investment in an asset that would appreciate.
- Common open land would not be compromised.
- The existing maintenance building could be used exclusively for the storage and repair work for which it was originally intended.

In looking at the cost-benefit aspects of purchase, the Board considered the operating expenses. Based on past electricity bills, it's estimated that it would be cheaper to heat and cool the unit (which will be used primarily during the daytime) than it is to heat and cool the maintenance building to a level suitable for human habitation. The Board recognized that the Association would lose the income from the condominium fees. However, when weighed against the higher cost of new construction and the disruption it would cause, this was judged to be an acceptable additional operating expense. Insurance and real estate taxes would be an expense whether we built or purchased an existing unit.

The purchase of the unit appeared to the Board to be the most cost-effective and least environmentally invasive solution. However, the Board did not vote before presenting the information to homeowners and before additional information was in place.

Two days before the Annual Budget Meeting, the Board got word from the County zoning authorities that it would be legally possible for the Association to buy a unit for use as an onsite management headquarters. This made the Budget Meeting the ideal place to present the opportunity to homeowners.

A number of homeowners expressed support for the option favored by the Board. Some had reservations and there were numerous questions, the answers to many of which are included in the preceding information. Some homeowners felt they should have been informed of the discussions earlier. The Board explained that the purchase opportunity had surfaced with certainty only within the last month and the Board did not feel that it was useful to call a town meeting before having some concrete information in hand and before it was certain that this was even a legally viable option.

Board Votes

After considering homeowner input at the Budget Meeting, gathering more numbers, and ascertaining that it had the support of the Finance Committee, the Board voted that purchase of the unit was the solution that is in the all-round best interests of the community. The Board is now consulting with legal and financial advisors and consolidating information. No contract negotiations have been entered into and if data still to be submitted to the Board do not support the decision to purchase, the Board will not pursue it.

The Board will continue to keep homeowners informed through the newsletter and, when necessary, special memos. In addition, homeowners and residents are encouraged to attend the monthly Board meetings where all matters of importance to the community are discussed.

Historic District Volunteer Recognition and Party: Saturday October 30 from 2 PM to 4 PM in the North Fairlington Community Center.
Everyone welcome!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President - Judith Greig 931-6415
Treasurer - Tom McQuillan 578-4869
VP Buildings - Gus Wescott 931-7433
VP Community Affairs - Desiree Di Mauro 379-5377
VP Grounds - Jincy Boerner 845-5531

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Finance - Sandy Hodapp 379-6860

Grounds - Open

ARBOR STAFF

Facilities Manager - David Pollard 671-1575
Emergency Calls (after hours) 799-2959
 or 827-1500

CFM Community Manager

Mike Maloney 827-1500, ext.41

NEWSLETTER

Editor - Judith Greig voice: 931-6415
 fax: 931-0065

USEFUL INFO

A-1 Towing 416-0710
Abandoned Vehicles (voicemail) 358-4144
Animal Warden 931-9241
Arlington County Police 558-2222
Virginia Power (power out) 934-9660
Water Management 370-9151
Fairlington Historic District www.fairlington.org