Unapproved Minutes October 2014

These are the unapproved minutes of the October 29, 2014 monthly meeting of the Walden Woods Conservancy Board of Directors to be presented at a future meeting of the Board of Directors for approval.

1. Call to order: the meeting was called to order by Board VP Brian Onessimo at 7:01 o’clock p.m., and was taken over by Board President Dale Herrick at 7:15 p.m. Directors present were:, Kevin MacIlvane, Joe Palladino, Susan Raupach, Andrew Lattimer(Treasurer) arrived at 8:30 PM, Cori-Lynn Webber(Secretary), Brian Onessimo (Vice President) Glenn Brand, Adele Clark, and new member Kathaleen Tracy. Directors Debra Denker, Michael Coffey(who is being replaced at this meeting and going forward by vote of the Council, by Kathaleen Tracy), and Diane Bernier were absent. Mr. Chris Kohnle of Elite Property Management, LLC was also present.

2. Approval of Minutes of Preceding Meeting: the minutes for the October 1, 2014 (September) monthly, as well as October 8 2014 special meeting minutes of the Board of Directors meetings previously published on the Conservancy website and presented to this meeting of the Board for Acceptance were reviewed and the following changes were proposed:

Regarding October 1, 2014: there were none

Director MacIlvane made a **motion** seconded by Director Clark to: Accept the minutes as presented.

**Motion passed** 7 to 0.

Sec.’s note: it was pointed out after the meeting that the October 1, 2014 meeting minutes do not state that they are actually the September 2014 Board of Directors meeting minutes. They have been corrected to reflect as follows: “These are the unapproved minutes of the September 2014 meeting; held October 1, 2014…”

There were no proposed changes to the special meeting minutes.

Director MacIlvane made a **motion** seconded by Director Clark to Accept the minutes as presented.

**Motion passed:** 5-0-3 with Directors Raupach, Tracy, and Palladino abstaining.

3. Financial/Treasurer’s Report: A **motion** was made by Director Webber, seconded by Director Onessimo to table to Treas.’s report until the arrival of Director Lattimer. **Motion Passed** 8-0.

4. Property Manager’s Report:

(a) Mr. Kohnle indicated that he has done his regular walks through and has listed the problems that they are dealing with in his inspection reports.

(b) Rhodora water issue: The Property Manager reported that this project is just about done, there are a few pending things to be completed. The engineer will be out soon to review and approve the project. Once the report is okayed with a punch list of items that have not yet been completed including replacement of trees and decking paint, Mr. Connolly will follow-up with CWD on the cost.

Draft budget:

(c) Mr. Kohnle explained that these have been updated with the most current financials available through September 2014. He took questions on the budget. Changes were mostly made to the Conservancy budget though the councils have made some small changes to their budgets as well. Mr. Kohnle informed the Board that we must finalize this budget in November 2014. Director Webber asked Mr. Kohnle if he had any concerns regarding the numbers in the budget. He pointed out that the Duplexes and Townhomes had large water bills which were not adequately budgeted for. He believes the councils are now attempting to deal with that issue in the current budget and will make appropriate adjustments. He believes the Village Ridge and Conservancy budgets are fine.

There were some questions regarding catch basins in the Village which are being addressed between the Village reps and the property manager

Director Webber asked that Mr. Kohnle add the explanations to each item back into the finalize budget to be presented to the Board at the November 2014 meeting and to the unit owners for a vote. It was agreed that he would do so. Director Webber asked that that be emailed to all of the Board members as soon as it was completed so that it can be forwarded to the unit owners for any questions prior to the November meeting. The version presented to the Board in its Board package did not include the explanations for the numbers. The property manager will meet with each of the councils to tweak the numbers in the council budgets prior to finalizing numbers.

Director MacIlvane explained that he can present the numbers for the Village to the property manager and assured the Board that the Village has had discussions about its water bills with its unit owners at its meetings. He had a question regarding the landscaping contracts wanting to know whether we can bind both the duplex and townhome as well is the Conservancy Village and Ridge contracts together. Director Herrick explained that the Duplexes and Townhomes still have two years left on their current contract with Russo. Director Herrick agreed that he will meet with Russo to talk about getting those proposals done. Director MacIlvane wants to ensure that a bulk deal of everything is at least part of the discussion going forward. He also inquired as to the timing of the final proposals. Property manager explained that he and the Board President Director Herrick will meet with Russo in two weeks and will have an answer for the Board of Directors at its November meeting. He will assure that the proposals provided to the Board regarding the new contracts are apples to apples so that each contractor has been bidding the same criteria. He will add the entire community proposal from Russo into the discussion.

Directors MacIlvane and Herrick did discuss the intangibles the community receives from Russo as its current provider. Any questions which the Duplexes and Townhomes unit owners might have regarding the landscaping contract for their councils can be asked of Russo’s representative at the November Council meeting.

(D) tree quotes: property manager reported that he received a quote from Evergreen and has solicited one from G’s friendly however that quote has still not been received.

The quote from Evergreen for the same work came in lower than that of Ray’s tree service, as such the property manager recommends with the Board except evergreens quote. Director MacIlvane pointed out that the Village has been very pleased with the work Evergreen has been doing in its counsel.

Director Herrick made a **motion** seconded by Director Palladino “That the Board approve hiring Evergreen to perform the trees work previously described in past minutes.” The **motion passed** 7-1-1; with Director Onessimo abstaining and Director Webber voting no.

(e) Items per reserve study: the property manager reported that it’s going to take 2 to 3 days to complete the cabana roofs jobs and that the Mason is nearly finished with repairing the walls near the pool. These projects were reserved and scheduled to be done in this calendar year.

(f) ISO New England: the property manager reported that he spoke with Erin Johnson at ISO regarding setting up a meeting. Directors MacIlvane, Raupach, Brand, and Herrick will attend this meeting with the property manager. Mr. Johnson and another representative from ISO will also attend. Once a date and time has been received from ISO the property manager will communicate with the committee members. Director MacIlvane again pointed out that the committee needs a plan with a spokesperson to direct the conversation and propose a solution. The property manager is still gathering the information needed. Any information that is relevant should be forwarded to the property manager and the committee will determine who will be at spokesperson at the meeting.

(g) Landscaping snow removal bids 2015: was already discussed above. The property manager will have the quotes ready for discussion at the November Board of Directors meeting.

5. Unit Owner’s forum: *Secretary’s note: due to repeated comments and requests that full names not be published, the secretary is trying initials and council as a format going forward.*

IO M Village: unit owner got help with her leaves from Mark at Russo and she is very grateful to him for his assistance.

Susan R Townhomes: some unit owners have not gotten the letter forwarded with in the Duplexes and townhome counsel’s regarding bathroom issues. She will get the names she is aware of to Mr. Kohnle, so he can resent letters to those units.

6. Unfinished Business

a. Council Boundaries: the property manager explained that he is waiting for answers to questions posed by the unit owners at the special boundaries meeting. There were some elaborations that were requested at that time. He will provide those clarifications when received.

Director MacIlvane; asked when we sit down to discuss this we need to understand what the questions are. He sees the theme of the questions as relatively limited but feels that the Board has an obligation to take the homeowners through the changes in the proposals being discussed. He pointed out that Director Lattimer at the last meeting had requested a list of the Council changes and agreed that that should be provided so that the Board can reache a consensus on everything. He feels that this Board should resolve the long-standing issues that people have emotional ties to, by putting actual facts on the table, so that a decision can be made.

Director Onessimo; feels that the Board needs a general consensus before it decides to move forward on either of the proposals. He informed the Board that the Ridge passed plan A under what he now feels were false pretenses. He stated that the Ridge was led to believe that it was heading toward an A-3 map that was fair to all the Councils, and based only upon the changes voted on, all other items were to stay in the Councils. The Ridge voted, in his opinion as the one who voted, on something completely different than what plan A has evolved to be now.

Director Herrick; noted that in his opinion plan A was passed in September 2012 and that it bogged down so Plan B was initially proposed. He acknowledges that people want a list of expenses and what is shifting in and out of councils and the Conservancy, he said we should come up with a list and tweak that list. He does not believe that Plan B should pass.

Director Palladino: feels that the Board needs to move forward with this boundary issue finally reaching a conclusion. He believes someone needs to own each of the proposals and be there to advocate going forward.

Director Tracy: feels it doesn’t matter what passed What does matter is the Board and the unit owners need to know what the items are that are moving in and out of the councils and the Conservancy. We should have a plan A financial implications document and a plan B financial implications document in her opinion, so that when this item is voted on the voting board members understand exactly what they are voting on.

Director MacIlvane: feels these questions are clear to him at least in the Village: the first tree closest to any home in the Village is in the Council, the trees behind that are the Conservancy. For example between Pierce and Ivy Lane is Conservancy. He believes Woodmoor should present a position statement on what they would like done that is concise and sets out its position.

Director Webber: At the time of the September 2012 meeting, one Woodmoor representative voted for the Plan as it was presented back then and one against, both of its representatives requested documentation of the costs of any of these changes before moving forward.  That information to date has not been provided. Woodmoor, like the Ridge, has buyer’s remorse for its one vote.  Director Webber feels that the plan A that the Board is looking at now bears little, if any, resemblance to the vote taken in September 2012. She believes that the Ridge and Woodmoor are not being treated appropriately in this plan and that the plan flies in the face of the concept basis for this community, which she and many others in this community bought intoand relied upon when they did. Director Webber voiced her council’s concern that the Board’s potential actions, on this topic, could be detrimental to property values for at the least, the 54 lot homes and the 33 Ridge homes.   Director Webber noted that this version of Plan A, fundamentally changes the nature of the property interest purchased by those homeowners turning what was essentially a pool and tennis court membership into a full condominium.  She pointed out that since the founding of Walden Woods, the governing documents have made it clear that Woodmoor is not required to present a budget or make payments outside of the Conservancy fee that all unit owners are responsible for, for common areas. Woodmoor was planned to be treated, and over the years since 1990, has been treated differently than the other Councils. This was the concept Woodmoor owners bought into. In spite of this, Woodmoor residents have repeatedly expressed their willingness to compromise, but only if these issues can, once and for all be resolved. Woodmoors’ compromise this time would be an additional set fee tacked onto the Conservancy budget for its council, per Plan B.

Director MacIlvane made a **motion**, seconded by Director Webber that “the property manager will pull together the facts pricing for plan a and Plan B to present to the Board of Directors and ultimately the homeowners at the January 2015 meeting.” The **motion passed** unanimously, 9 to 0.

The discussion on the motion had mostly occurred before. Director Raupach wanted to know how property manager is to understand what belongs where? Basically the answered given is that is his job to know what is coming in and what is going out of the councils and Conservancy. The property manager can do a walk-through with Directors Palladino and MacIlvane in order to put these numbers together. Director Webber also asked to be included in this meeting. The original motion did not included timeframe, the timeframe was determined by consensus of the Board in the motion amend.

b. Director MacIlvane brought up the question on the addition on Primrose. He had previously requested that the property manager inspect the property to determine whether or not it is in compliance with the fence line there previously. The property manager indicated that he has inspected the property and that he will follow-up with Director MacIlvane on that issue. Director Palladino believes that the property owner can put the fence back up to show where it was.

7. New Business:

(a) Director Herrick talked about a concern the welcome committee has that the new homeowners who are being visited are getting noncompliance letters right off the bat from either the standards committee Orly. He feels that the Board in the community in general should avoid sending compliance letters initially to new residents of the community. It makes the community seem unwelcoming. He also believes that some of the noncompliance letters are being sent out by someone other than Elite. He believes that all compliance letter should come from Elite and nowhere else. Director Raupach believes she was responsible for some of these letters. She believes that she has resolved that issue and explained to the Board that she personally apologize to those homeowners who received letters that did not come from Elite. Director brand agrees that the Board should uniformly have you delete delete deliver all notices regarding any issues we have with the unit owners. He did mention that there was a past practice of Board of Directors members putting stickers on cars which did not go well. Director Clark also agrees.

3. Director Lattimer appeared after the environmental committee report was given. He reported that the Conservancy’s payables are currently more than the cash on hand although the Conservancy is doing very well at this point. The water bills came in very high which explains the net numbers reported below. The budget of some of the councils will not cover the amount payable because of the water bills. He believes the councils will be making adjustments to next year’s budget to try and correct this going forward and address whether or not each Council needs to replenish the reserves that will need to be used to cover the unexpected expenditure.

Year to date the Conservancy current net income is $11,395.03

The Village current year net income is $2236.41

The Ridge current year net loss is ($865.71 (

The Duplex current year net loss is ($30,872.95)

The Townhome current year net loss is ($14,329.81)

8. Committee Reports

a. Environmental committee: report was given by Director Brand. The committee met and worked on the yellow trail pruning, trash removal, spillway inspection. Big Walden Pond is much clearer than it was in the summer which indicates that the new carp added are helping. The committee found there’s a lot less trash on the trails now, people seem to be taking more responsibility and better care. Homeowners are asked to please dispose of trash at home, not on the trails. The committee is proud at how good the trails look and excited by the higher usage they are seeing on the trails.

b. Communications: Peter DeBisschop was not able to attend the meeting Director Webber read his report into the record the committee has met and is addressing it email privacy policy. That policy will be presented to the Board when completed. The call has gone out for fourth-quarter newsletter articles.

c. Meeting House: Peter DeBisschop’s report was read into the record by Director Webber. There are for rentals upcoming in November. One to date in December. The aluminum cladding of the dormer windows on the roof was completed at a cost of $900 versus the $1500 originally estimated. The fire sprinkler system has been tested.

d. Social committee: Stephanie McKinney was not present and no report was given to a Board member. The social committee report will be taken next month.

e. Welcome: Ruth Johnson was unable to attend the meeting Alana Herrick gave the report. The committee has sent for new welcome letters, has made six visits and has seven additional visits to make. The committee has a new member, Regina Sanchez who is from the Ridge Council. She is a welcome addition to the committee.

f. Standards: the new chair of the committee Patty Murray said that her committee is now working on its mission statement in on streamlining the process for AAI’s. She confirmed that the next meeting was Tuesday, November 11 but stated that the committee will be looking at new date for the meetings based upon the availability of current members. Director Webber asked that the committee consider sending out notice through the communications committee of its meeting so that homeowners can attend. Patty said that she would consider that a discuss it with her committee.

g. Garden: Director Bernier was not present and no report was given.

h. Document: Peter DeBisschop’s report was read into the record by Director Webber. The special meeting of the Board went through the declaration document. Suggested changes made at that meeting are being typed into the new draft. The committee will schedule another meeting with the Board after the first of the year to go over bylaws and rules. The documents committee (Peter) examined the typical resale package to see exactly what is in the package. He wanted to be sure that all three documents are included especially the rules adopted posted to the website but not yet published. There has been a suggestion that some procedural things in the declaration of the bylaws might be moved to the rules, since the rules are so much easier to modify.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 by Motion of Director Webber, and seconded by Director Onessimo. The motion passed unanimously. 10-0

Respectfully Submitted.

Cori-Lynn S. Webber

Secretary