

Walden Woods Community News

March 2015

Village Council Tries Something New

For the past several years the Village Council has met the third Wednesday of each month. This year the 2015 Village Board is trying something new. January, February, March, May, and July will be “virtual meetings.” Village residents will receive an update each of these months either by email or US mail if they do not have email. A special email address has been set up for an Owner’s Forum. The access information will be provided to those who care to submit information via the Owner’s Forum email address.

January’s report focused on Village objectives for 2015. The largest project is redoing the brick walkways in front of Village homes. We started that work two years ago and it will likely take two or three more years.

February’s report was the first “Village Annual Report.” A history of fees and expenditures was compiled back to 2006. The report included the Conservancy as well as the Village Council.

In-person meetings are scheduled for April, June, August, September, and October. These will be held on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM at the Meeting House. The September meeting will be the Annual Meeting of Village Unit Owners at which time elections will be held for the 2016 Village Board. The timing will provide for a three month transition for new members.

The December meeting will be the Annual Meeting of Unit Owners for all of Walden Woods.

Spring Fling!

Reminder: The Great Egg Hunt is set for March 28th. It may be a Snow Shoe Rabbit that hides the eggs. The Bunny will be sending additional details.

The Community Garden

Given all the snow that’s still on the ground, it is difficult to start thinking about a garden, but there are ways to brighten up your day and start a garden plan.

This spring the Walden Woods Community Garden will be offering plots for \$20. Each plot is about 8 feet by 18 feet. We usually have a meeting in April to organize for the coming season and collect fees.

We have a wonderful time in the garden as we weed, plant and water. It is a relaxing way to get back to nature and reap the benefits of healthy food. It is also a great way to teach your children about the origin of their food. We are organic farmers – no pesticides please.

Last year all plots were filled! It was a beautiful sight! We hope you will join us with a plot this year. Don’t know much about gardening? There are many Walden Woods residents who are experienced gardeners willing to help novice gardeners.

Please email Diane Bernier at dmsbernier@gmail.com with your name and phone number to reserve a plot.

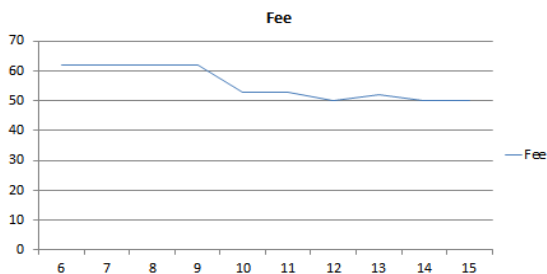
Spring is coming soon, really!

Duplex Still Needs Representation

The Duplex Council still needs a Director. The Declaration calls for the council to have three representatives. Presently Diane Bernier and Kathleen Tracy are serving. Duplex is the only council with a vacancy. While it may not sound like a big deal, duplex is giving up a third of its voting power. That could affect several important decisions from the amount of your fees to how your money is spent. Please contact chris@epmlc.com if you are willing to fill the vacancy.

A History of the Conservancy Fees

Despite inflation and rising prices, the fees we pay to the Walden Woods Conservancy have consistently declined over the years as the following graph shows. The y axis is dollars and the x axis represents the years 2006 through 2015.



Conservancy Board Will Walk in the Spring

There are a number of proposed council boundaries under consideration by the Conservancy Board. This spring the Board will schedule a walk-around to compare the proposals "in the field" rather than simply look at lines on a map. The date will be announced. Please do not be alarmed if you see a group of people meandering along behind your home.

Updating the Documents

The Conservancy Board is currently reviewing the proposed update to the Rules Document. The draft of the By-Laws Document will be ready in April. Work on the Declaration is progressing, but that will be held up until the proposal on the boundaries is reviewed and agreed upon by the Board.

Remember that preparing the drafts is only the first in a series of steps required to update the documents. All unit owners will receive a copy of the drafts. There is a mandatory period of Notice and Comment for all three documents. The Declaration and the By-Law amendments will require a 2/3 affirmative vote by the Unit Owners in order to be ratified.

Renting Your Unit

Reminder: There are restrictions on the rental of all homes in Walden Woods. The Conservancy Board has approved a fine of \$250.00 to be imposed on unit owners who violate the procedures and rules for renting. In addition, a \$50.00 per week fine may apply for each week that the renter does not supply the lease details to Elite. Renting restrictions apply to all five councils. See the Declaration.

Capital Expenditures

A consulting firm was hired three years ago to estimate the maintenance and replacement needs of Walden Woods over a 30 year period. The firm studied the Common Elements of both the Conservancy and four of the five councils. The Woodmoor Council does not have any Common elements within its lot units.

The Reserve Study is the basis for the Rolling Five Year Plan for the Conservancy and each of the four

councils. That Five Year Plan must be reviewed each year as some of the expenditures will be required sooner than planned and some can be postponed. In addition, some of the items in the Reserve Study may never be required while there will be expenditures that we never anticipated. In truth, the Rolling Five Year Plan and the resulting revision of the Reserve Study are much more important than the annual operating budget.

Our property values are not drastically impacted by being over spent or under spent by a few percentage points in a given year. Our property values do depend heavily on how Walden Woods is managed and maintained over the long run.

Board of Directors and Committee Chairs

Duplex

Diane Bernier
Kathleen Tracy, Conservancy Treasurer
Vacancy

Ridge

Brian Onessimo, Conservancy Vice-President

Townhome

Adele Clark
Glenn Brand
Sue Raupach

Village

Joe Palladino
Pat Tanner
Peter DeBisschop

Woodmoor

Andrew Lattimer, Conservancy President
Cori-Lynn Webber

Committee Chairs

Welcome - Ruth Johnson
Environmental - Glenn Brand
Social & Rec - Stephanie McKinney
Meeting House - Peter DeBisschop
Communications - Peter DeBisschop

Standards - Patricia Murray
Garden - Diane Bernier
Documents – Cori-Lynn Webber, Board Liaison

Volunteer Needed

The Conservancy Board is looking for a volunteer to take minutes at the monthly Conservancy meetings. How about it? Contact waldenwoodsct@gmail.com

One Way Roads

Please remember that Knollwood, the entrance to On the Knoll, is a one way entrance. It is not an exit. Knollwood North and South are one way to their exits on Walden Meadow.

Summer Will Be Here Soon

When the pool is open and the sweltering heat seems oppressive, let us not soon forget the frigid winter of 2015.



The Beauty of Walden Woods



Some of you may have been lucky enough to see one of the few red foxes that inhabit our woodlands and fields here in Walden Woods. The Environmental Committee has been keeping track of our precious wildlife here to ensure that they have a safe haven to live and raise their young. Currently, from our studies, we estimate our red fox population here at Walden Woods to include one male red fox and also one grey fox which is similar but smaller and more "cat-like." There may be several others that use Walden Woods as a gateway to other local woodland areas but we do have a resident red fox living here that is healthy and active.

Predominately, the grey fox is much more territorial and will push the red fox out of its territory. What residents should understand is that these creatures are night hunters and you may catch a glimpse of one during the wee hours of the morning if you are lucky. The red fox poses no immediate danger to humans unless you see them in the daytime and they appear sick which would include staggering, unusual behavior, or sleeping on the grass in the middle of the day. This may indicate that it is sick and you should stay clear of it.

There's little chance that this will happen and we recommend that all pet owners keep their pets on a leash at all times while on the property including the trail network in Walden Woods. This is for the safety of your pet and other residents who may be walking the trails as well. Remember to pick up after your dog in all areas of Walden Woods including the trail network.

Winter is an excellent time to see these wonderful colorful creatures when snow blankets the landscape and they stand out with a white, snowy background. Never feed or leave out food scraps as this will encourage them to come back and most always ends up a tragedy for them. They have plenty of food to survive here in Walden Woods and surrounding areas and when times are tough, they will eat many plant buds and berries which is part of their regular diet.

A fox is believed to be a very intelligent and clever animal. 37 species are referred to as foxes, but only 12 species actually belong to the *Vulpes* genus of 'true foxes'. Every fox belongs to the canine family, and they are ranked as the smallest of all canines. However, they have some characteristics different from other canines.

Walden Woods is a beautiful place!

A "Thank you" from the Walden Woods Communications Committee to our editor, Medina Jett.