

Tollgate Association 2011 Annual Meeting

Date and Time: November 13th, 2011 at 5:00pm

Location: 102 Tollgate Way (Melhelm residence)

1. Jim Hogle, the President of the Association, began the meeting thanking the Melhems for hosting the meeting and by introducing the board members and the heads of the neighborhood committees. Attendance was taken and it was confirmed that 21 of 29 homeowners were present or represented by proxy, more than sufficient to conduct the meeting.
2. Committee Reports:
 - Landscape – Marie Murray, head of the Landscape Committee, introduced the other members of the committee and reviewed the Landscape Committee's activities this year. The more extreme seasons in recent years, with harsh winters and hot-dry summers, continue to be hard on trees, shrubs and grass in the neighborhood. About \$3,000 worth of plantings were carried out this year, including replacing a number of aging plants. Emphasis was placed on the areas around #101 to improve the overall impression of visitors to Tollgate. Homeowners were reminded to water trees and plants around their homes to help the community keep our plants healthy and plant replacement costs down.
 - Tree – Bob Donaldson, the head of the Tree Committee, then presented the Tree situation in the neighborhood. This year the Association spent \$5,225 on tree removal, \$1,200 on pruning, and \$3,346 on new plantings. A number of trees are coming to the end of their life cycle. A major effort was made to replace the Austrian Pines at #101 with American Hollies. Several other sick or aged trees were removed/replaced, including a Zelcovia at #107, a Purple Plum near the gazebo, and some white pines behind #125. Guidelines on tree removal are on the Tollgate Website: <http://tollgateway.org/documents/documents.htm>. The committee is always reluctant to remove trees – sometimes though removing a tree is necessary for safety if limbs present a danger of falling, or if the tree's decline is rapid and irreversible.
 - Architecture – Garry Sauner, head of the Architecture Committee, introduced other members of the committee and covered policies within the community. Architecture guidelines are posted on the Tollgate Website: <http://tollgateway.org/arch/arch.htm>. Homeowners are asked to use the form found on our tollgateway.org site, "Requesting Permission for Exterior Home Improvement," prior to performing maintenance on exteriors of the home.

- Maintenance - Garry Sauner, head of the Maintenance Committee, discussed maintenance issues. He noted the effort to power wash the brick walls outside of #100 and #101 and also the removal of tree branches that were overhanging outside the property line on Broad Street. He pointed out the need in the near future to repaint the wrought iron fence along Broad Street, which suffered from salt spray over the past eight winters. This is, so far, an unbudgeted maintenance item (see Treasurer's Report.) Special thanks of the Association went to Garry for his success in getting the City to redo the sidewalk in front of Tollgate!
- Social – Wynne Hogle summarized the year's social events, with special thanks to Cindy and Bob Donaldson for hosting the Spring Social and to the various helpers who made the Autumn social a success. Janet Powell was named as a new committee member. More members are desired – ideally from a family with younger children to ensure the Committee considers all family needs. If you wish to volunteer, contact Wynne. The Holiday party will be held on December 11th from 5 to 7:30 PM at Chuck Connors' #133. More information will be forthcoming.

3. Treasurer's Report:

- The full details of the current and projected budgets are available on-line at: <http://tollgateway.org/budget/budget.htm>
- The Tollgate Treasurer, Bob Donaldson, first distributed a preliminary draft of the Tollgate Asset Inventory. A copy is available on-line at: <http://tollgateway.org/documents/documents.htm> under 'other documents.' He explained that the Board is trying to lay out a long term Asset Management Plan for Tollgate assets, rather than repair and replace on an ad hoc basis as in the past. The project is still under way, but he noted that, on average, the Association is spending about \$5,000 annually on various unbudgeted items. This tends to be around \$3,000 in excess of annual budgeting with the difference being drawn from the reserves. Another purpose of the project is to clarify what items are the responsibilities of individual home owners, such as the brick walls around the various back yards, vs. the common responsibility, such as the brick walls facing Broad Street. There are also new documents on the website, copied from the City, which clearly show where individual property lines and common areas are located. See: <http://tollgateway.org/documents/documents.htm> under Other Documents.
- The Tollgate Treasurer, Bob Donaldson, handed out an enumeration of expenses to all attendees and reviewed the past year's expenditures. Then he reviewed the expenses accumulated into categories and compared those to 2011 budgeted amounts - to enable attendees to review the over-and-under amounts in all

categories. Expenses in budget categories came in pretty close to anticipated. At the end of the year, the Association's net worth will be a little over \$13,000.

- Proposed Budget for 2012: Bob reviewed the 2012 estimated budget - anticipating that it will come in at \$40,615 (almost the same as this year.) In the budget proposed, the 2012 homeowner's association dues will remain the same as 2011 level - \$1400 per year - payable in full on or before 31 January 2011. It was noted that the assessment has remained unchanged for six years. Several questions were raised by homeowners and addressed by board members or committee heads whether the assessment should be raised to cover long-term maintenance requirements and financial reserve requirements. The issue was deferred until the inventory and Asset Management Plan can be completed, though there was an understanding that the assessment is likely to rise in the future. The budget (and dues level) for 2012 were unanimously approved.

4. Old Business

There was a discussion of flooding issues in Tollgate. Several Association members attended the Falls Church City public meeting on the issue. Compared with other areas of the City, Tollgate is in pretty good shape. Nonetheless, three houses have been or potentially could be impacted by flooding in Falls Church as a whole. The City infrastructure has been over-stressed by the more extreme weather of the past decade. The Association storm water system, which is owned by the Association, is affected by the City back-up. The Board has discussed the problem with the affected owners.

- There was a discussion of the proposal for a Tollgate Sign, with the sense of the Association being that the committee should work up some alternatives and present them to the Association in the future. The primary goal will be to clearly identify Tollgate to potential visitors who otherwise can easily miss the small street sign. The 'Wren's Way' sign was suggested as a model. There are concerns about cost vs. aesthetics.

5. New Business

- Election of Board Members – Bon Donaldson will come off the board at the end of the year after his three year tenure. Rob Ochsendorf was nominated to the Tollgate Board to replace Bob. He was elected by acclamation of those present and will serve for three years. (Note: Rob subsequently indicated that he would be unable to serve on the board and a replacement will be identified by the Board.)
- The Association expressed its special thanks to Bob Donaldson for pursuing the issue of electrical supply and continuity so assiduously. While Dominion Virginia

Power insists that no action was necessary or taken, the significantly improved electrical supply in the past year stands in marked contrast to past problems!

6. Upcoming Events

- The community is invited to join the Tollgate Board in decorating the gazebo at the front entrance of the neighborhood with garland, lights and wreathes at 10 am on Saturday, December 3.
- The Holiday Party will be on December 11th at #133 from 5 to 8:00 PM as a potluck. All residents are encouraged to participate.

The meeting concluded at 7:30pm.