

## Delaware Pointe HOA Board Meeting Notes

**Date: 7/2/2024**

Board Members (✓ - indicating members present at meeting):

- **Elected Members:**
  - President- Bethann Buddenbaum ✓
  - Treasurer- Valerie Thompson ✓
  - Secretary- Josh Smith ✓
- **Additional Appointed Members:**
  - Architectural Lead- Joe Hetzer ✓
  - Vice President- Teia Stapleton
  - Events/ Decorations committee
    - Molly Gallamore ✓
    - Lisa Hetzer
    - Fiona Rees ✓
- Guests Present- Lori Fox ✓

### Points of Discussion

- 1) Expenditures voted upon and approved by voting board members via email prior to today's meeting.
  - a) Neighborhood website
  - b) Ice Cream Social
- 2) **Vibrancy Grant**- DP awarded \$15k grant (with \$3k DP contribution) for a total of \$18k.
  - a) 4 proposed projects on grant application
    - i) Landscaping at front entrance
    - ii) Tree trimming
    - iii) Playground
    - iv) Pond hardscaping (pergola and fence)
  - b) Community engagement survey
    - i) For a full summary of responses please see Addendum A, which follows the July HOA Board meeting notes.
    - ii) Most respondents placed the pergola/fence as the lowest priority and recommended community volunteers to get this done.
    - iii) A majority of the respondents did not see the need for a complete overhaul of the front landscaping but did portray that the overall aesthetic of the neighborhood entrance is still important.
    - iv) Majority of respondents did believe that tree trimming was necessary (some even noted the liability the neighborhood faces if this is not done).

- v) Majority of respondents felt that the park is in need of work. Some question whether we should repair or replace. Many voiced that this is a huge draw to our neighborhood and also discussed that our neighborhood has an increasing number of children and this is only likely to continue to increase.
  
- c) Points of interest regarding the vibrancy grant
  - i) We have been in discussion with the City of Fishers and they did determine that we ARE able to change the previously proposed projects without forfeiting the money that we have been awarded. We just need to come up with new proposals explaining our decision in reallocating the money.
  - ii) We do need to determine how the \$\$\$ is handled. Do the invoices for the work go directly to the city? Are we receiving a check? Do we get reimbursed?
  
- d) **Landscaping** - Board Discussion
  - i) The quote that was provided with the original grant proposal was for \$27k total
  - ii) The plans attached to the quote contained many non-native plants (per Grant guidelines all plants must be from the native).
  - iii) Per the quote- in order for any of the plants to be warrantied they would have to be watered for 30 minutes twice daily for the first 6-8 weeks.
    - (1) This is not feasible as there is not a water source at the entrance due to the existing sprinkler system being detached.
  - iv) Landscaping around the guardshack is thought to pose the biggest issue
    - (1) Safety concerns as drivers are unable to get clear visual of the intersection making it dangerous for pedestrians on both the north and south crossings in relation to the guard house.
    - (2) Discussed that the dogwood trees that are there are in good shape. Recommendation is for much of the remainder of the landscaping to be removed from this space to clean it up, provide visibility and highlight the guard shack as a visual feature. We can then reevaluate new landscaping to go into this area.
  - v) Summary of Board Discussion - the board determined that the proposed quote is not a viable option at this time secondary to the above concerns. Plan is to reevaluate the landscaping with the mentality of salvaging what we can of the existing landscape (removing those things posing a danger to the community) and then possibly “filling in the gaps”. Given that we do not have a water source at the front entrance a “total overhaul” does not seem to be a good use of finances.

**e) Tree Trimming - Board Discussion**

- i) Not only do many of the trees need to be trimmed, as to not impede pedestrians on the sidewalk, but also there are some trees that need more substantial trimming and some that likely will need to be taken down completely (specifically on the west side of DP where our property lines up with Delaware Crossing).  
(1) Discussed the liability of not properly maintaining the trees
- ii) Summary of Board Discussion- the board believes this to be of extreme importance given the liability that the trees pose if not properly maintained. We are in the process of obtaining multiple bids to determine the cost of completing this project. The plan would be to hopefully have this completed over the winter (as it is easier without the foliage on the trees AND often is cheaper as there is much less demand for tree trimming services.) Board members will also work to cut back sidewalk overhang and we will seek to have a community volunteer day for additional support.

**f) Pergola and fence removal at the pond - Board Discussion**

- i) Fence definitely needs to come down as it is rotten
- ii) Discussion regarding keeping/ replacing the pergola or possibly removing it.
- iii) Summary of Board discussion- based on community input, removing the pergola and fence at the pond was the lowest of priorities. We do know for sure that the bushes that are growing into the pergola need to be at least trimmed if not removed. Doing this will allow us to determine how much of the existing pergola structure is salvageable. Board unanimously agrees that any work that is done here can be done by volunteers in an effort to save money and increase community involvement. There was also discussion of other possible ways to utilize this space such as: possibly replacing the pergola, adding additional picnic tables, adding benches, hammocks?

**g) Playground Updates- Board Discussion**

- i) This seems to be of high priority for the majority of the neighborhood
- ii) Ultimately is a great draw to the neighborhood for prospective families.
- iii) In regard to questions of repairing vs replacing- repairing is not feasible. This structure leans significantly to one side, has multiple places where the wood is rotting significantly, safety handles unable to be securely attached to the wood, etc.
- iv) This play set was just placed in 2020 for approximately \$5,500. This was the second time that this was replaced within the past 10 years (the play set that is currently there was basically the same as its predecessor- neither of which were commercial grade and neither of which lasted for very long.)

- v) The majority of those who contributed to the community engagement survey recommended going with more of a commercial playset to help prevent us from having to continually maintain and/or replace the park set every few years.
- vi) Discussed that there are many more children in the neighborhood than there has been for quite some time and that many of these children are young (meaning that they will hopefully live in this neighborhood for the foreseeable future)
- vii) Summary of Board discussion- The board believes the playground to be a vital part of this neighborhood and ultimately recommends that the majority of the funds awarded to us within the Vibrancy Grant go to replacing the park. The plan would be to move away from residential equipment in favor of more commercial grade equipment. The board believes that this will allow this park to withstand the high volume of children that the neighborhood currently houses for hopefully many years to come. It is not felt to be a good use of our finances to continually replace the equipment every 4-5 years spending upwards of \$5000 each time. Options including multiple separate pieces of equipment (slide, swingset, seesaw, etc) vs another large “jungle gym” sort of set.

VIBRANCY GRANT SUMMARY- (up for further discussion at the upcoming community meeting)

- The HOA Board has discussed the above possible projects and determined that the top prioritization of these projects are 1) tree trimming 2) playground 3) front landscaping and 4) pergola/ fence. The Board plans to obtain bids for the tree trimming to see just how much this will really cost given that this is not only an aesthetic issue but also poses a liability to the neighborhood. Once we are able to determine how much this will cost the board would then look into replacing the existing park with more commercial grade equipment with the majority of the remaining funds from the vibrancy grant. We are also going to be getting NEW quotes regarding the front landscaping- mainly the removal of all (except for the dogwood trees) of the foliage surrounding the guard shack as well possibly “filling in some areas as needed”. We do not believe that an overhaul of the front landscaping is necessary nor do we believe it to be financially responsible at this time given the inability to supply water to the plants.

### 3) Floodlights

- a) The flood lights at the front of the entrance were vandalized.
- b) Awaiting quote from electrician for repair of these lights
- c) Also awaiting information from the insurance agent regarding whether or not these would be covered under our current policy AND the possible implications on our premiums moving forward if we were to move forward with the claim.

- d) Consideration is being given to cameras at the front, but the benefits would need to outweigh the costs.

4) **Finance Review**- Lead by Treasurer Valerie Thompson

- a) At first glance there appears to be a discrepancy of \$500 in what has been collected vs what has been owed. Treasurer to complete an audit to see where this missing \$500 may be coming from.
- b) The HOA is awaiting receipt of a check from the community's legal representative, which is for an outstanding balance of a member's previously unpaid HOA dues (approximate amount of \$8200).
  - i) Of note- lawyer fees will be taken out of this payment, so the exact amount of check is TBD.
- c) Over the past 3 years, we have pulled out of reserves 2 of the 3 years. If we truly follow the budget for 2024, we will only have a \$120 surplus.
  - i) There is concern that if we continue to do this then dues may have to be increased. This is by ALL MEANS the last resort and the Board plans to do all that it can to prevent dues from having to increase for the foreseeable future.
    - (1) Board is looking at the budget to see if there are any areas that we could save money such as getting bids for things such as mowing, fertilization, etc.

5) **Gatehouse Update**

- a) Work is completed to repair the guardhouse after it was hit by a car earlier this year.
- b) The payments received by HOA from the insurance company is short approximately \$400 and the insurance company is aware of this and will be wiring us this money soon.

6) **Late Fee Assessment and Review**

- a) 2 homes have not yet paid their dues
- b) Statements with the last late fee went out this morning. Have a 15 day grace period. If no payment is received by the end of this grace period, then we will need to involve the HOA lawyers to procure this owed amount.

**BOARD ACTION ITEMS: HAVE BIDS COLLECTED IN TIME FOR NEXT MONTHS MEETING 8/1/24**

- Obtain bids for tree trimming - Joe, Bethann, and Molly in the process of obtaining some currently.
- Obtain bids for lawn maintenance for 2025-

- We are going to locate the “master map” to provide to companies providing us with bids (plan to include the current company to see if an adjustment can be made).
- Discussion was had regarding specifically if the number of mows and sessions of fertilization are actually necessary (the grass is contracted to be mowed 28 times annually and fertilized 6 times annually)
  - Each mow - \$280
  - Each fertilization- \$618
- Plan is to obtain bids that match the work that we currently pay for so that we can directly compare the cost if we kept the “schedule” of everything completely the same. Then we can decide whether or not to change the number of times the grass is mowed and fertilized based on cost.
- The neighborhood insurance is up for renewal in the next few months. Plan to get additional bids for this. Also in conversation with our current insurance provider to discuss whether or not we should make a claim for the flood lights and also discussing increasing the deductible to see what we could save in premiums (current deductible is \$250 and we are looking into increasing this to \$500).
- Joe has graciously volunteered to walk the neighborhood and trim any tree branches that are currently encroaching on the sidewalk. #whataguy

Date of next board meeting: 8/1/24

## **ADDENDUM A**

### **SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY REGARDING VIBRANCY GRANT**

#### **Landscaping Project:**

Med	18
Low	12
High	9

30%	4
70%	3
60%	3
100%	2
10%	2
50%	2
20%	2
80%	1
40%	1
90%	1
<b>Average</b>	<b>50.14%</b>

#### Comments:

can we do with volunteers?
I don't personally understand what needs to be done. I think the landscaping overall looks good.
I feel that the front landscaping looks fine. There are other areas that could use the money and attention.
Is the entrance to the neighborhood. Hundreds of cars and people see it daily, so it should be the priority.
Landscaping looks good, just trim bushes, trees, and plant seasonal flowers
No irrigation up front. for any plants to be warrantied, the contract says they have to be watered twice a day.
Removal of plantings around guard shack is a must for many reasons. First reason in particular is safety and secondly visual appeal.
The purpose of the grant is to improve the landscape aesthetics of neighborhoods from the street. This is aligned with the requirements established by the city.

#### **Tree Trimming Project:**

Med	12
High	9

Low	2
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10%	9
20%	4
30%	3
40%	2
50%	1
60%	1
100%	1
<b>Average</b>	<b>26%</b>

Comments:

as long as it includes the tress along the road that leads to Delaware crossing
I assume these are the trees down the side walk that goes out and along the road between us and the other neighborhood? If so, it would also be great to do a bit of landscaping over there. It does not look very nice.
Need to remove a lot of dead debris and trees
Priority should be given to dead trees and low branches
The low hanging branches on our HOA property along Delaware Pkwy. are an eyesore and align with the aesthetic improvements that are intended for this grant.
The trees along Delaware Parkway are overgrown and need to be trimmed.

**Removing Structures:**

Low	15
Med	3
High	5

10%	12
20%	1
30%	1
70%	2
100%	1
<b>Average</b>	<b>24%</b>

Comments:



What will go in its place?
This can be accomplished by neighborhood volunteers.
possible neighbors can take it down?
I'd rather see what we have replaced than removed
I volunteer to help to do this to save money
I think we can do this ourself and align it with the neighborhood dumpster.
I think the pergola and fence add visual interest and was hoping they could be repaired and painted.
I think neighbors can remove the structures ourselves at no cost.
Have volunteers remove the structure and fence.
Have neighbors pitch in to remove structures
Cant this be done by members of the neighborhood?
Can be done by volunteers

**Playground:**

High	14
Med	2
Low	7

10%	5
30%	4
20%	3
80%	2
40%	1
50%	1
60%	1
90%	1
100%	1
<b>Average</b>	<b>38%</b>

Comments:

I feel that we should buy industrial grade equipment. The type of playground that we currently have will not last long so we should not get one like that. I also think it would be cool to have additional areas in our neighborhood for play/activities. At the front on the way to the pond there is so much room. We could have hammocks or a natural play area or something else that would be fun and look nice.
I think that this is going to be the smartest way to use these funds and the best way for us to invest in our neighborhood and the families that live here.
I would like to see this moved back to basic commercial playground equipment. Slide, swing, seesaw, ect.

I would recommend getting something commercial grade so it will last longer. Maybe keep what we have and add something
I'd repair instead of replace.
Important with the kid population growing in our neighborhood
My kids really enjoyed this equipment when they were younger and I don't know why it's needs to be replaced. Perhaps a new top cover would be sufficient. The landscaping, however, needs to be trimmed and new plants/shrubs added. My son and I would be willing to help with this.
Playground equipment appears to be fixed
Purchase something higher grade than residential so we do not have to replace every 3-4 years.
Repairs can be made through our general fund. I advocated for replacement only if we received the maximum grant. We did not.
The entire thing has rotten wood and screws sticking out. This should be prioritized for the safety of the kids.
Would like electricity to be added to park as well