

Aspen Grove Estates Homeowners Association Annual Meeting
April 28, 2013, 4:00 p.m.
Basketball Court

Present: Mark Miller, Laura Rench, Susan Rench, Eunju Park, Gary and Laurie Ames, Bruce Anderson, Stephanie and Shane Day, Jeff Swanson, Clifton Renberg, Christina and Matt Barzare, Ruth and Jason Cantera, Anoop Kumar, Reggie Jackson, Susan Nelson, and Paul Iverson.

President, Laura Rench, called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Proof of Notice: The meeting notice letter, including agenda, and proposed budget were mailed to all homeowners two weeks prior to the meeting.

Unfinished Business: Mark Miller introduced Patrick See, the City of Kenmore consulting Arborist. Patrick indicated the issue of concern is the community trees. Different trees grow differently. 10 to 15 years is the usual time trees begin to endanger streets, driveways and sidewalks. The number of trees in a development needs to follow city, state and federal guidelines. The trees on 75th Avenue N.E. can probably go 10 more years before causing damage. One inch of root width means 2 inches above the ground. Roots can be pruned 25% a year to save the tree; however, Patrick cautioned us if we do that to have very open communication with all involved. Once a tree is pruned it puts out growth where it is not common. It is not true that pruning roots will result in wider roots.

He has three trees to recommend considering height and drought tolerance. We should choose trees with branches starting at 6 feet. Jeff indicated one of the trees on the list is the same as the present ones. Patrick stated that some of the new trees may not be as aggressive growing as ours. He recommends planting new trees at a depth of 24 inches so they will not grow as fast. We should choose trees based on what they will look like all year, not just when they bloom. The Snowbell tree, which he recommends, does well in our environment, has a limited fragrance, is slower growing than the current maples and does not require a lot of maintenance. He advised us NOT to get a tree guarantee since it would double the price. The tree's life span is shortened by root space available.

Patrick clarified the difference between a certified arborist and a landscaper – a certified arborist is held by ethic rules by the ISA, and a landscaper does not need to follow any guidelines. Jeff asked if the new trees are planted in the same holes. Patrick indicated he would grind the stump and use a mini excavator so no roots over 3 inches remain. When our community began, street trees were considered “throw away” trees due to different rules at the time. Now, due to the City, State and Federal governments controlling planting, trees have to be planted based on the PLAT Map design, 40 feet apart.

Clif asked if we can do this project in phases. Patrick indicated this is a question for the designers. Reggie asked if we can change the Plat design. Patrick indicated the City changes very few designs. The canopy requirements cannot be changed because a certain number of caliper inches per feet of land are required. The idea is cost prohibitive – up to \$2800.00 for 2 trees.

Patrick stated he, personally, is not concerned about phases. There could be a slight price break due to the two trees already cut (without permission) by two homeowners. Christina brought up the subject of trees in the back of the development. Will the City have a problem with those missing because most or all of them died? The developer left without his bond. Mark noted the developer did claim the bond in June, 2011. Patrick indicated those trees do not affect the street or storm drains. Susan Nelson asked if the downed trees could be used as chips for our tot lot. Patrick stated those trees would go to the Northshore School District and that there are guidelines for using the chips for playgrounds.

Gary asked if we could begin the project now, but it requires consistent watering. October would be ideal according to Patrick. Eunju asked how long before the trees are dangerous. Patrick indicated he had no idea. None are ready to fall, but some roots could invade plumbing, streets, sidewalks and driveways. They would

probably not endanger house foundations for another 10 years. Bruce expressed concern we were not informed of all this in 2002 and 2003. Now these kinds of issues are in the deeds and owners must sign off on them. Patrick was thanked by our group and will, most likely, be our chosen contractor by the Tree Advisory Group.

Bruce indicated we have two options for tree replacement. (1) Replace all the trees at once or (2) replace some now, some next year. Eleven trees are at risk trees; however, we only have funds to replace seven at this time, then the remainder in 2014. We will need to have a special assessment. The assessment has to be granted at a special meeting with special requirements. One requirement is the work must be done in the year of the assessment. We could do the future fence project with raised dues and a special assessment next year of approximately \$225.00 to \$365.00.

Clif presented another bid, indicating 5 or 6 trees were at risk now. The TAG will cooperate with the arborists and publish up to date information on the HOA website. It was noted that homeowners need to have a choice of trees chosen, and that they will be responsible for restoration of their property.

New Business: Fence – the fence surrounding the community is in need of pressure washing and re-staining. Stephanie did some thorough research and indicated stain has a 5 year life span. The fence was last stained in 2007. The outside fence is owned by the HOA and the HOA is required to maintain it. Potentially, we could wait 1 to 2 years, but the price will go up. The top boards need to be repaired to keep water from coming down into the fence. Stephanie presented 3 bids. The walkway fences need structural repair, but could still be stained.

The tree project requires a dues increase this year to \$273.00 and \$364.00 in 2014. The tree project is expected to cost around \$11,500.00. We could lower dues in 2015 unless another project is suggested. The Board recommends the tree project with two phases over the fence project. Jeff talked about an economical phase of 3 years, but the arborist indicated that length of time would not be aesthetic.

Laura reminded homeowners to be cautious when driving in our street. With the good weather approaching, kids and pets need to be supervised by adults when/if they play in the street. As a reminder, your pets must be licensed and leashed in the City of Kenmore.

Susan Nelson reported she wanted us to have a BBQ this summer. Everyone seemed to agree. She will have the date published on the HOA website (aspengrovehomes.com).

Stephanie and TAG were thanked for their incredibly time consuming work on the two main projects. They felt it was a learning experience.

Minutes: Clif moved and Shane seconded that the 2012 minutes be approved. The motion carried.

Election of Officers: Stephanie will step down from her position as Member at Large. Bruce moved and Stephanie seconded that Susan Nelson be a Member at Large. The motion carried.

Budget: Due to the costs involved and the effect on dues, a vote was held regarding the two projects. Vote 1 – do you wish to have the tree project over the fence project and Vote 2 – do you wish the tree project to go forward in two phases as previously discussed? The vote was yes to both questions. Dues were recommended to be \$273.00 for 2013 and \$364.00 for 2014. There will likely be a special assessment in 2014. Susan Nelson moved and Bruce seconded the motion for those dues. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Rench, Secretary