

December 19 meeting:

INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Mary Gray introduced the Grounds Committee "Team" which included three new members recently appointed by the HOA Board and Board Liaison Courtenay Delfin.

Mary Gray, Chair

Jane Brown

Paula Connors

Don Ellwanger

Joanne Massoni

Bill Newbill – not present

Theresa McCrackin – on Zoom

Bill Newbill – not present

Nepenthe staff: Nicole and Trevon

Attending on zoom: Karen Lowry,

VISION

The Chair outlined issues and challenges and asked for input and discussion from the committee including

- Grounds Committee's limited budget in light of recent HOA budget challenges
- Tracking homeowner requests, communication with homeowners, and tracking/managing implementation of the Grounds contracts.

The Committee discussed and voted to recommend to the Board the following:

- Consultant contract with Garth Ruffner to assist the Committee in forming recommendations consistent with Design Guidelines adopted by the Board in 2022. This proposal is awaiting Board approval.
- Establish a voluntary cooperative Supplemental Planting program which would expedite low impact homeowner requests by allowing homeowners to enhance the appearance of the commons area around their home. This proposal is awaiting Board approval.
- The bulk of the homeowner requests later on this agenda suggest the need for a ground cover initiative as well as a turf replenishment initiative, which would rely on assistance from Garth Ruffner.
- Trees are a major asset in Nepenthe. Chair suggests an inventory of most critical trees to be proactive in managing and saving trees. This proposal is awaiting Board approval.
- Establishing a "quiet week" by changing the "mow and blow" schedule to every other week, as opposed to every week. This would also save funds, that could be used for other, more critical needs.

CURRENT SERVICE REQUESTS

The committee reviewed 38 pending homeowner requests. A summary of the requests and committee members' recommendations can be viewed in the new "Nepenthe Service Request Tracker" initiated by Nicole Marks.

Most of the requests and ultimate recommendations can be grouped into the following categories:

- 6 Turf and ground cover remediation/Maintenance
- 8 Irrigation/ground cover/Maintenance
- 9 Deferral pending consultant guidance
- 7 Close out/No action required
- 1 Initiate Action (crepe myrtle)
- 3 Recommend Board approval of cost proposals (amended)
- 2 Miscellaneous

There was overlap in some categories, and almost all were suggested as candidates for consultant guidance.

OBSERVATIONS

- Maintenance: Many of the requests resulted from ongoing maintenance issues (rather than the need for new spending) to fix a problem that could have been avoided through proactive maintenance.
- Turf and ground cover replenishment is a recurring issue requiring a "Turf Remediation Initiative" that would target maintenance and remediation to areas of significant degradation. An important component would be identifying and correcting causes such as poor drainage, suitability of turf location. The Committee suggested creation of a master work order of all affected properties rather than a case-by-case approach.
- Communications: Some requests were simply related to the need for explanations about what happened in the common area around their property and why.
- Landscape replenishment due to siding project: Some requests involve correcting or fixing landscape remediation due to the siding project. This mostly affects Zone 4 on Dunbarton. It highlights the need for clarification of the source of funds to address these issues. If it is related to the siding project, then it seems appropriate to fund it from that budget rather than the primary landscape budget.

GROVE TREE REPORTS

Reviewed and approved two tree evaluations by Grove's Paul DuBois recommending NOT to remove trees where "there was no visible sign of disease or decay."