



## WHCA Council Regular Meeting Minutes

April 15, 2015

Pursuant to notice, a special meeting of the Washington House Condominium Association was held on Wednesday, April 15, 2015, at 7 p.m., in the Washington House Community Room. Present were Council President Paul Roberts, Vice President Karen Hornor, Secretary Susan Swan, and At-large Members Michael Chajes and Len Sawyer. A total of 33 Association members and residents, representing 26 residential units, attended as observers. Attending at the invitation of Council were Brad Carrillo and Lorraine Brady of Aspen Property Management and Jim Nowland and Nate Rohrer of Nowland Associates.

The President called the meeting to order at approximately 7 p.m. and welcomed the owners in attendance as well as new owner Mitch Wilborn (Unit 309). Mr. Roberts noted that there are new tenant residents in Units 301 (Pat Marks) and 309 (Morgan Block and Rachel Biblo).

### Approval of Minutes

The President called for a motion to approve the minutes from the WHCA Council Special Meeting on November 24, 2014. Ms. Hornor so moved, Mr. Sawyer seconded, and the minutes were approved on a unanimous voice vote of the Council.

### Old Business

**Budget savings:** Ms. Hornor acknowledged the successful efforts of Aspen Property Manager Lorraine Brady in cutting maintenance costs at Washington House and negotiating lower rates for services.

**Trash/recycling:** Ms. Hornor reviewed the requirements for disposing of recyclables and trash:

- All boxes, large or small, must be broken down before recycling.
- Do not place bulky boxes in recycling bins, because they fill up quickly; be considerate.
- Never place recyclables on the floor; if the bin is full, try on another day.
- Items too large for the bins and trash bags too big for the chute must be placed in the appropriate receptacles inside the Compactor Room in the lower-level garage.

**Freezing pipes:** Mr. Carrillo explained that new heat tape installed by Aspen in early 2014 functioned well, but heat tape originally installed in the garage failed, leading to further freezing and leaking pipes last winter; all heat tape has now been replaced. He also reviewed options for dealing with the freezing of the entrance gate.

**Noncompliance with rental requirements:** Ms. Swan noted that the City and the WH Code require significant documentation when owners wish to rent their units, and that getting owners to comply has been difficult, requiring either that Council members spend a great deal of time on enforcement or that the Association pays to Aspen do it. She suggested that the Council research and discuss the mean by which fines may be imposed for noncompliance, just as they are for nonpayment of condo fees.

## **Building Remediation Committee Updates**

Mr. Carrillo provided highlights of recent building defects work:

- After soliciting and vetting competitive proposals from a number of construction management companies, the Council hired Nowland Associates, of Newark, to manage the construction project. Nowland is working with our architect, Tevebaugh Associates, as well as the Council and Aspen, to determine the scope, cost, sequencing, and schedule for the project.
- After soliciting and vetting competitive proposals from a number of building envelope specialists, the Council hired TBS Services of Haddon Heights, NJ, to serve as a consultant to the project. TBS will provide specialized advice on how best to repair and replace the failing exterior; it will act as a third-party inspector to ensure quality control; and it will observe and identify existing defects for legal purposes.

Committee member Bruce Chase reported that compliance with the special assessment for building defects has been excellent, and he thanked owners for their cooperation. He noted that Aspen is providing to the Council and the committee monthly reports on both regular and defect-related finances.

Committee member Warren Pratt summarized recent developments in the Association's lawsuit against the developer and other parties, as follows:

- The six defendants have filed appearances in the Delaware Superior Court.
- One defendant, Avalon Associates, has filed a response to the complaint.
- Two defendants, David N. Sills IV and Daystar Sills, Inc., have filed motions to dismiss the case.
- Two more responses are expected shortly.
- The Association's lawyers are preparing responses to the filings.
- A hearing on the motions to dismiss will take place on July 23, 2015, and a ruling by the judge could come after Labor Day.

## **Committee/Liaison Reports**

Security Liaison Michael Chajes reported that vandalism at Washington House has decreased following the hiring of a security guard and that Council is vetting proposals to replace the building's security cameras.

Community Liaison John Hornor reported on the results of the recent Newark City Council election and said that he will contact our newly reelected council person, Todd Ruckle, to set up a meeting with owners and residents to acquaint him with Washington House.

Handbook Committee Chair Pamela Bobbs reported that she has produced an update to the Handbook which is being reviewed by the Council and will be posted upon approval.

## **Election of Officers**

Mr. Carrillo presided over the annual election of WHCA officers. He explained that WHCA President Paul Roberts was stepping down from his position and that Council member Michael Chajes had agreed to serve as president. He also explained that WHCA Treasurer Vandana Singh was unable to serve due to illness and that former WHCA President and Treasurer Bruce Chase, who had been overseeing finances in her absence, had agreed to serve as Treasurer. He noted that Vice President Karen Hornor and Secretary Susan Swan had agreed to continue in their positions.

Ms. Hornor made a motion to elect the following slate of officers:

President, Michael Chajes

Vice President, Karen Hornor

Treasurer, Bruce Chase

Secretary, Susan Swan

The motion was seconded by Mr. Sawyer and was approved by a unanimous voice vote of the Council members.

## **Open Discussion**

Responding to owners questions, Mr. Carrillo noted the following:

- In an emergency, firefighters needing access to a unit will use a key provided by a Council member only if time permits; if the unit is accessed with a key, it will be re-locked afterward.
- Aspen will maintain a list of vendors who have provided proof of insurance for work contracted with individual owners, so that owners needing to hire someone can select from the existing vendor list if they prefer.
- Owners should have their dryer vents cleaned regularly; it is unit owners' responsibility to arrange the servicing.
- Hillside has offered a discount to WH owners for their annual HVAC servicing and inspection; the amount of the discount depends on the number of owners who sign up; at the suggestion of a unit owner, Aspen also will contact ServiceMark to see whether it will offer a discount; information will be provided to owners via email soon.

Following a motion to adjourn by Ms. Hornor, seconded by Mr. Sawyer, Mr. Roberts adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:40 p.m.

Submitted by Susan Swan.

**Minutes approved by email vote of Council 5.19.2015**