



**AT TAFT HILL**

**Summerfield at Taft Hill (SATH) Condominium Trust  
Annual Meeting  
Minutes of Meeting (MoMs)  
April 10, 2021**

**1. Introduction and Verification of Quorum – Pat Stephan**

The Annual Meeting, held at Valley Chapel in Uxbridge, was called to order at 9:32 am by Board of Trustees Chairperson, Pat Stephan. A quorum of Owners (79.86% beneficial interest) was present in person or by proxy. The Board of Trustees introduced themselves as Pat Stephan (Chair), Marsha Bourgeois (Vice-Chair), Cecile Gaigals (Member-at-Large), Paul Balutis (Treasurer) and Randy Fields (Secretary).

**2. Safety/Comfort Comments - COVID Precautions/Exits/Bathrooms – Pat Stephan**

**3. Business Activities of 2020 – Pat Stephan**

- a. The Trustees continued to monitor development and construction work at Forest Glen, the new condo community on Spring Hill Drive that branches off Taft Hill Drive - East. We stayed abreast of the work of the Town Conservation Committee as it monitored the developer's compliance with the relevant requirements. One significant issue requiring attention was deterioration of the culvert for the stream on our property that bisects Forest Glen, resulting in damage to the stream bed.
- b. The Strategic Planning Committee led by Bob Howard continued to study issues related to the long- range care of our infrastructure and reserves funding.
- c. Due to continuing concern over speeding in our neighborhood, speed humps were used throughout the year outside of snow season. Additional options for speed control were explored.
- d. Due to the pandemic, the Trustees started holding meetings using Zoom videoconferencing. Additional Covid-19 precautions were taken for the mail room. Residents have been extremely cooperative and courteous throughout this period.
- e. Maintenance of trees, including ornamental trees in LCE and Common Areas as well as in natural wooded areas continues to be an ongoing project. The Board again engaged an arborist to evaluate the health of trees throughout the neighborhood and some trees were subsequently removed while others were trimmed to remove branches that could cause potential damage if they were to fall.

New ornamental trees were purchased by the Beautification Committee to replace dead and damaged trees and the new trees were professionally planted.

- f. The Beautification Committee led by Vicki Small continues to be very active in maintaining the appearance of the community through their work with plantings and mulch beds in common areas. One major project was the clearing and planting of various dwarf bushes that will add color and seasonal blossoms at the common area adjacent to 59 Taft Hill Lane. This project was undertaken in order to beautify the hillside and prevent erosion. Vicki recognized the members of the Beautification Committee (Nancy Contursi, Michelle Choiniere, Cecile Gaigals, Debbie O'Byck, Pat Simounet, Beth Zersky, Anne Hayes, Martha McManus, Martha Neal, and Ann Fields) and thanked them for their hard work this past year. Anyone interested in joining this fun-loving group should contact Vicki Small.
- g. An Encroachment Committee led by Randy Fields did significant work to remove brush and clean up the periphery of natural areas in our community. Members of the team are Bill Freer, Richard Olsen, Tony Lombardo, Jack Crawford, Paul Cnossen, Rod Girard, Joe Tosches, Pat Stephan, and Bruce Borax.
- h. All catch basins and sewer and manhole covers in the streets were inspected and repaired as needed as part of a capital infrastructure maintenance program. Significant damage was found in some of the catch basins and these repairs will prevent early damage to the asphalt streets.
- i. Three detention ponds serving our stormwater system were cleared of brush, putting us in compliance with state requirements for maintenance of the stormwater management system.
- j. A streetlamp on Taft Hill Drive near the mail room was completely damaged by a large truck traveling through our development. The damage was covered by our insurance policy, less the deductible.
- k. Fire hydrants were flushed. No repairs were required. Bill Freer, our Grounds Committee Chairman, solicited bids and saved \$2,800 on the fire hydrants contract.
- l. An additional wooden rail fence was installed at the West entrance of Taft Hill Lane to lower risks for pedestrians and vehicles at the culvert that runs along and under the street.
- m. Trustees unanimously approved a motion to hire a law firm (MEEB) to oppose construction of a truck stop/filling station/market/donut shop proposed for the plots adjacent to our property at 486 and 502 Douglas Street. The portion of monthly condo fees that would normally go into capital reserves were redirected into the operating account for the last six months of the year. The purpose was to fund legal costs without having a special assessment to residents.
- n. A committee was formed and led by Bob Contursi to help the Trustees gather information and attend Uxbridge Board meetings in opposition to the 486 and 502 Douglas Street truck stop project. Members are Lavonne Seifert, Paul Balutis, Pat Stephan, Pat Simounet, Beth and Frank Zersky, Jack Crawford, Claudia and Vinnie Cataldo, Bill Freer, and Randy Fields. Thank you to all who wrote letters and attended the zoom meetings to support our efforts.

- o. The Trustees and many residents followed closely the progress of Campanelli Construction in seeking a construction permit for a warehouse for Amazon at 512 Douglas Street. The Summerfield group along with the town manager were successful in getting Campanelli to donate \$40,000 to Uxbridge, which is being used to offset the costs for extending a sidewalk up to the Amazon driveway. Many residents expressed concerns about environmental and noise pollution. Residents also addressed increased truck traffic at the Routes 146/16 interchange and the need for an eastbound left hand turn lane at the Amazon entrance.
- p. The Trustees invited Police Chief Marc Montminy to a monthly meeting to discuss Police Department support for our community.
- q. Many residents spent countless hours as volunteers supporting the community in many ways. These include established Summerfield committees, ad hoc committees for grounds work, attendance at town meetings on matters of importance to our community and for research on various topics. We should all thank those who have been involved.

#### **4. Business Activities until March 2021 – Pat Stephan**

- a. Many more decisions are to be made regarding the appeal of the permits for the truck stop/filling station/market/donut shop. These include legal strategy discussions. Considering the likely permitting of a rebuilt Shell station on Lackey Dam Road of a similar design, the Douglas Street station makes even less sense now.
- b. Residents should be aware of significant road construction and traffic this year at the Amazon warehouse entrance at 512 Douglas Street. We'll see the left-hand turn lane on eastbound traffic. Campanelli Construction will also eventually install traffic circles on both sides of Rt. 146 on Rt. 16 when certain traffic levels trigger the need for the traffic circles.
- c. A petition was signed by residents and presented to Uxbridge for rezoning a major portion of the property in Summerfield from Agricultural to Residential C. Several residents attended a Finance Committee meeting in support of the petition and an important Planning Board meeting will be held on April 14. Randy Fields explained the importance of supporting this at the Uxbridge Spring Town meeting on Saturday, May 15 at the McCloskey School. You will be hearing more about this in the near future, but please mark your calendars to attend; **WE WILL NEED YOUR VOTE!**
- d. Presuming no more snowfall, the association will have spent \$55,800 out of a budget of \$60,000. Owners have been asked to report any damage from snow removal to Bill Freer or the Trustees.
- e. Spring cleanup is nearly completed by our contractor.
- f. Bill Freer has developed an emergency plan related to potential water and sewer issues in our development.

- g. The Strategic Planning Committee led by Bob Howard is in the final stage of analyzing deficiencies in our infrastructure left over from the transition from the developer. Members of the committee are Paul Balutis, Bill Freer, and Randy Fields (and sometimes Pat Stephan).
- h. A discussion with owners at the annual meeting will address options to control speeding, including potential investments in technology for traffic calming.
- i. Bill Freer will write a new RFP for snow removal. We will again go for a 3-year contract.
- j. Residents have been notified about coyote and bobcat sightings in our community and are urged to take proper precautions.
- k. Residents have taken the initiative to address mail issues with Post Office management.
- l. While the Activities Committee was sidelined by COVID this year, we hope we will be able to resume some activities later this year.

## **5. Financial Report – Paul Balutis**

- a. In 2020, the Summerfield at Taft Hill financial reports include profit and loss statements and balance sheets for the Condominium Association and for the Capital Reserves separately.
- b. For fiscal year 2020, the Condo Association had Operating Income of \$290,340 and Operating Expenses of \$296,062.
- c. The Capital Reserves funds had a balance of \$565,928.81 at the end of 2020 of which \$541,994.26 was in certificates of deposit and \$23,934.55 was in cash.
- d. Interest income for the same period was \$7525.00. Reserve income was \$62145.45.
- e. Reserve expenses for fencing, storm basins rebuild, light pole and well pump repairs amounted to \$58,892.45 in total.
- f. Legal expenses of \$32,647.55 were paid from the Operating Account in 2020 and \$7,769.50 in fiscal year 2021 to date with respect to the Filling Station appeal for a total of \$40,041.05.
- g. The 2021 budget for Operating funds was given to residents in early December 2020. In brief, the Operating Income and Expenses for the Association in 2021 are budgeted at \$290,640. Please contact the Trustees at [summerfieldbot@gmail.com](mailto:summerfieldbot@gmail.com) if you would like to have a copy by email or drop a request note in the green box in the mail room.

## **6. Election of Trustees**

- a. Since there were three candidates and three vacancies, Randy Fields moved that the candidates be elected by acclamation and Vinnie Cataldo seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimous.

## 7. Discussions

- a. Dave Whitehead expressed concern about the size of the rotary that Campanelli will build on Route 16 at the intersection with Route 146. He pointed to the rotary in Millbury as being too small for tractor trailer trucks to negotiate. MassDOT is regulating the size of the rotary and has specified that it will be larger than the one in Millbury to accommodate the trucks.
- b. A surveyor is currently marking 40 feet on both sides of Douglas Street for new sidewalks to be built on one or both sides from where the sidewalk ends in Town to the entrance ramp to Route 146.
- c. Amazon is expected to pay over \$700,000 per year in taxes to Uxbridge and the gas station (using Cumberland Farms as the example) will contribute about \$20,000.
- d. Joe Marchand stated that Amazon will not own all trucks coming to 515 Douglas Street and the trucks will need places to wait until their appointed entrance time. This could create the same issue as the BJ's warehouse at Exit 1 on Route 146. Joe proposed "NO JAKE BRAKE" signs on the exits to Route 146 to reduce noise.
- e. Joe is on the water/sewer advisory board and warned us that rates would be increasing, and we need to participate in Town meetings to make our voices hear!
- f. Bill Freer reviewed his research about a proposal to install a flagpole at the Mail Building. Based on the installation and maintenance costs, the Trustees voted unanimously not to install a flagpole and there was no discussion.
- g. Pat Stephan reviewed the police department data on speed measurements on Taft Hill Lane East and West showing that less than 1% of the cars were exceeding 40 mph and 79% were under 20 mph. While continuing to search for other ways to slow down speeding motorists, the Trustees will continue to use the speed humps this summer.
- h. Vinnie Cataldo suggested installing permanent, long speed humps to slow down cars. These would cost about \$2,000 each and would not damage snowplows. Approximately half of the Residents present thought the Trustees should continue to investigate methods of speed control.
- i. Harry Triantafellow made a strong case for Residents not blowing their horns at other Residents.
- j. Dan Hicks asked about installing a stop sign at Spring Hill Drive (Forest Glen) and Taft Hill Lane East. This will be discussed with Forest Glen.
- k. Bill Freer reiterated our snow/ice removal policy and indicated he would investigate methods of handling icy storms in the new contract to be negotiated this year. Vinnie Cataldo made suggestions to help this plan.
- l. New Residents were recognized and welcomed:
  - i. Marilyn Tesell at 5 Summerfield Drive
  - ii. Linda and Bill Durgin at 36 Taft Hill Lane
  - iii. Trish and Richard Cucchi at 17 Andrews Drive

## 8. Questions/Comments to the Board of Trustees regarding Association matters

- a. Michelle Tebo questioned the transfer of money from the water/sewer enterprise fund to the Uxbridge General Fund at the next Town Meeting. Joe Marchand stated that some of that transfer was to pay for activities by Town employees for supporting the enterprise (such as billing/collecting, etc.). Joe also pointed out that all Town voters decide what will be done with enterprise money, but only the water/sewer users pay for it.
- b. The Town is flushing sewer lines, but Bill Freer stated that it will not be in our portion of Town.
- c. Pat Stephan, Chairman of the Uxbridge Town Charter Review Committee, stated that the committee was recommending a separate Water/Sewer Commission replace the Selectmen as administrators of the enterprise.

- d. Vinnie Cataldo suggest we replace all of our lights with LED's. This was done 2 years ago.
- e. Dave Whitehead is interested in installing solar panels on his roof. This would require changing the Master Deed. Vinnie Cataldo expressed concern about the appearance of the panels detracting from the neighborhood.
- f. Randy Fields mentioned that Residents could reduce their property taxes by as much as \$1,000 per year by applying for the Tax Work-off Program at the Senior Center. If accepted, applicants would need to complete about 80 hours of service to the Town to receive the abatement.
- g. Norm Blood indicated that he had appealed to the Town to reduce his taxes and received a \$250 rebate.
- h. Vinnie Cataldo thanked the Trustees for their work.

## **9. Adjournment**

Lou Cianciulli moved, and Vinnie Cataldo seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. Majority of attendees approved to adjourn the 2021 SATH Annual Meeting at 11:32 am.