

# Cole Mill Townes Homeowners Association Board Meeting

## Meeting Minutes

Meeting Conducted on Zoom 4-8-2021

Present: Bruce Lewis, Sharon Terry, Angie Padget, Helen Gordon

### **Consideration of clarifying the policy regarding who's responsible (the HOA or the homeowner) for the decks and privacy fences in CMT.**

The HOA is responsible for numerous high-cost items in CMT, including roofs, exterior painting, streets, concrete, and underground utility lines, in addition to lesser cost items, such as exterior trim, awnings, and porch railings. The HOA has never explicitly budgeted for the replacement of these items. Consequently, when it came time to replace the first of these major items, the roofs, the HOA found itself woefully underfunded. Once the roofs have been replaced, based on the current 3-year plan which includes increased dues, additional funds will still need to be collected through HOA dues in order to responsibly address future needs, such as those mentioned above. Since CMT consists of only 23 units, and dues are our only source of revenue, dues will necessarily need to remain what some might consider high. One way to hold down the dues is to reduce the number of items for which the HOA must pay.

Whether the HOA is responsible for the decks and privacy fences throughout CMT is an open question. The treatment of decks/fences has been inconsistent. Many homeowners (roughly three-quarters) have borne the cost of repair and painting their own deck/fence, while other homeowners have not. Some decks/fences have not been painted for years, if at all, and as a result are falling into disrepair. In some cases the HOA has paid for minor repairs. Decks/fences are not generally visible from the street and, therefore, have little effect on the public appearance of CMT. To replace and maintain all of the decks/fences throughout CMT would be costly, approaching the cost of the roof replacements. An estimate is that annual dues would need to increase by approximately \$50 per month to fund the cost of deck/fence maintenance and replacement.

Based on the factors noted above (ambiguity of HOA responsibility, inconsistency in the prior treatment of decks/fences, minimal effect on the CMT public appearance, and especially the cost to maintain and replace the decks/fences), it was proposed that the HOA Board clarify the current ambiguous policy on decks/fences, as follows: going forward, ***the HOA will accept no responsibility (repair, power washing, painting, replacement) for CMT decks and privacy fences.*** One caveat: because of the noted ambiguity and inconsistency, the HOA will undertake a one-time basic repair to any deck/fence (i.e., replacement of severely rotted/damaged boards as determined by the HOA) where the need is obvious now. From that point forward, repair, pressure washing, painting, and replacement of decks and privacy fences will be the responsibility of the individual homeowner.

***The Board unanimously approved this proposed clarification concerning decks and fences.***

**Consideration of clarifying the policy regarding who's responsible (the HOA or the homeowner) for the exterior doors in CMT.**

While the Covenants refers to painting and external surfaces, it is unclear about the responsibility for major repair and replacement of exterior doors. It *is clear* that the HOA is not responsible for glass surfaces; approximately 75% of the rear doors are glass windows.

It was proposed that the HOA Board clarify the current ambiguous policy on exterior doors, as follows: ***the HOA explicitly declines all responsibility for major repair and replacement of exterior doors.*** However, due to the fact that the Covenants indicates that the HOA is responsible for painting exterior surfaces, **the HOA will assume responsibility for painting the outside of the front and rear doors on all units, when a major painting project is undertaken.** Homeowners will assume the responsibility for repair and replacement of their own exterior doors.

***The Board unanimously approved this proposed clarification concerning exterior doors.***

**The status of budget for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2021 was discussed.** Bruce indicated that our operating expenditures for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the fiscal year (January – December) were generally in line with the budget. However, the cost of pine straw has gone up; our expenditure here exceeded the budgeted amount by approximately \$1,000.