

Cole Mill Townes Homeowners Association Annual Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Commenced at 7pm on 12/3/2025 in the Meeting Room at the Mt. Bethel Church

Present: Dennis & Triss Porter (204), Valinda Hicks (1001), Jamie Beasley (301), Sharon Terry (302), Nick Wagner (601), Michael Murray (1003), Jai Bradford & Linda Maynard (304), Katie Huber (803), Phyllis Dalton (404), Cherie Wilson (401), Jim Alrutz (1002), Tedd Wimperis & Bianca Lupan (1102), Chris McLeod (1103), Bruce Lewis (1101), with proxies from Daryl Teddy (201), Shelia Yearby (801), Maryann Younger (403), Carlie Bickers (303)

Welcome – Bruce Lewis, HOA President

Quorum

- Bruce: 7 homeowners constitute a quorum; we reached a quorum with 13 homeowners & 4 proxies

Budgets

- 2025 budget was sent out in early October (the expenditures for the 2025 budget, shown on the last page, have now been updated through 11/30/2025); in addition to the regular operating expenses, the 2025 budget funded the following items called for in the strategic plan for this year:
 - Wood repair, pressure wash buildings, and paint wood trim and siding
 - Awnings
 - Grounds renovation project
 - Landscaping
 - ✓ Tree/bushes trimming and removal
 - ✓ New plants
 - Hardscape
 - ✓ Concrete repair
 - ✓ Brick pavers
 - ✓ Rocks (entrance pothole & 1102 HVAC drain)
 - Planter beds
 - ✓ Shrink the beds: less pine straw & more grass
 - ✓ Install stone block border on the steepest portion of the berm banks
 - Pressure wash horizontal hard surfaces (after leaves have fallen)
 - Reserve study (commissioned in July 2025; completed in September 2025)
- 2026 budget was included with the 2025 budget sent out in early October (last page)
 - Dues for 2026: \$380/month - \$5 (1.33%) increase → due to inflation in Operating budget
 - Adjustments to lines in the Operating budget
 - Pressure wash every two years
 - Larger budget allocation for trees/bushes trimming
 - Capital maintenance budget - preventive maintenance on the streets
 - Fill cracks in asphalt
 - Coat streets
 - Reserve study was used to determine items & allocations for capital maintenance expenses

Strategic Plan

- The strategic plan will be finished at the end of 2025
 - It will be updated one last time and posted to the CMT web page
 - The reserve study, which will be updated every 4 years, will take its place
 - Jamie Beasley asked who decided to do preventive maintenance on the streets
 - Bruce responded that it was called for in the reserve study, which was sent out to all homeowners in September and posted on the CMT web page
 - Jamie then asked who conducted the reserve study
 - Bruce responded that it was done by the professional engineering firm we hired, as was discussed in last year's annual HOA meeting and included in the strategic plan

Landscape Maintenance Provider

- We dismissed our landscaper, Chris Sherron, effective October 30th, due to his unsatisfactory service
 - Dennis Porter noted that Chris' service was good when he first started here but had severely deteriorated since
 - Triss Porter asked Bruce to enumerate the tasks that Chris was doing that were unacceptable which led to his dismissal; Bruce's responses:
 - Not regularly, or in a timely fashion, spraying for weeds & grass in the planter beds and hard surfaces
 - Not regularly, or in a timely fashion, picking up sticks & downed tree branches, including not regularly picking up piles of sticks collected by homeowners because they had not been picked up in a timely fashion by Chris
 - Not doing a good job of trimming bushes (left ragged & uneven), as well as not doing a good job of cleaning up the resultant clippings
 - Not trimming some bushes at all in his regular service, then charging us for trimming them because they were now too large
 - Not tucking pine straw under the bushes after it was spread; spreading it in large clumps, thereby wasting pine straw which is very expensive and provided by Chris
 - Blowing leaves into the planter beds
 - Very slow to put in new plants that we commissioned from him
 - Bruce noted that many homeowners told him that it seemed Chris' crew's main objective when they came in here was to get out as fast as possible, thereby resulting in a sub-par job
- Our new landscape maintenance provider is Lawn Vets, owned by Shaun Claughton
 - The selection group, Board members Bruce & Valinda and Landscape Advisory Committee members Triss & Daryl, felt that that Shaun was the best vendor of the 7 we interviewed
 - Shaun readily agreed to the contract that Bruce drew up, which included correcting all of the deficiencies that we experienced with Chris Sherron; in fact, Shaun said he welcomed it
 - Shaun's price is very close to what we were paying Chris Sherron
 - Shaun has been on the job since November 1
 - We have already received several complements about Shaun, on both his work and the attitude & friendliness of his workers

Policies

- Bruce announced the formulation of a new policy relating to the installation of solar panels on the roofs of CMT units: in compliance with the state statute, they will be allowed
 - This new policy statement is posted on the CMT web page
- Bruce reminded homeowners of the Architecture Control policy (Article V of the Covenants), the purpose of which is to maintain a consistent and attractive appearance throughout CMT
 - This policy states that all exterior changes “shall [be] submitted to and approved in writing as to harmony of external design and location in relation to surrounding structures and topography by the . . . Board”
 - In addition, the Landscaping policy in the CMT Policies and Procedures document (adopted July 2003) further expands this policy by clarifying that “the Board has the right to remove . . . any unauthorized changes to the grounds that an Owner refuses to correct . . . the cost of the removal . . . will be billed to the individual unit Owner”
 - Both of these documents are available on the CMT web page
 - Bruce noted that the Board has decided not to apply these policies to the grounds at the rear of units, which are not visible from the streets
 - Dennis Porter recounted an application of this policy to two metal sculptures that had been placed in the front of unit 203 a few years ago; Dennis notified Bruce & Arnold, citing the Architecture Control policy, and these unauthorized sculptures were removed
 - At this point, Sherie Wilson complained that Bruce had told her she needs to pay for plants to screen the bathtub at the side of her unit.
 - Bruce responded that he had received a complaint that this bathtub, which is clearly visible from Culpepper, was not in keeping with the aesthetic of the CMT grounds, per the Architecture Control policy; he pursued this complaint by first asking Sherie if she had received the required approval for this bathtub at some point in the past, she indicated that she had not; Bruce then suggested that, instead of having the bathtub removed, Sherie could follow the established CMT precedent of planting bushes to screen the conspicuousness of the bathtub from the street, which has been done recently for HVAC units visible from the street elsewhere in CMT – Bruce noted that these owners had readily agreed to the recommended plants and bore the cost of purchasing & installing the screening plants, as Bruce was asking Cherie to do; Bruce suggested a Ligustrum bush be planted to obscure the view of the bathtub; this recommendation was shortly thereafter changed to a Holly bush to match the plants screening Sherie’s HVAC equipment which is in close proximity to the bathtub on the same side of her unit
 - Cherie indicated that she did not want to do this, but said she had two Hydrangea plants she could put there; Bruce pointed out that Hydrangeas drop their leaves in the Fall/Winter and, thus, defeat the purpose of a screen to hide the bathtub, because they would not provide screening for nearly half of the year; Bruce suggested that Cherie comply with the policy by making a request to the Board to allow the bathtub

- Bruce reminded homeowners of the Pets policy (CMT Policies and Procedures document, posted on the CMT web page), the purpose of which is provide requirements for pet owners in CMT
 - The CMT Pets policy is in synch with the Durham County Pet statute, and specifically requires CMT pet owners to comply with the county’s regulations with respect to management and control of pets
 - The CMT Pets policy affirms that “any pet running loose shall be considered a stray . . . when it is off the property of its owner and not under restraint”; this is a reiteration of the Durham County pet nuisance ordinance, which is subject to disciplinary sanctions by the county
 - The CMT Pets policy explicitly states that “this provision also applies to cats”
 - The CMT Pets policy further stipulates that the CMT Board “shall have the right to order any person whose pet is a nuisance and who does not comply with the [CMT Pets policy] rules to remove such pet from the premises”
 - At this point, Cherie Wilson asked to address the meeting concerning her cat, which she did for the next 15 uninterrupted minutes; reading from a prepared statement and emails, her principal points were:
 - She grew up with animals and she loved her cat, whom she called Gabby Wilson
 - She acknowledged that Gabby, while spending most of its time on her front porch, did also roam around the CMT neighborhood
 - She read two emails from Bruce & recounted a conversation with him; in each of these exchanges he called her attention to the Durham County ordinances on pets & asked her to comply with them, else he would report her to Durham County Animal Control (*which he did after the third of these exchanges and more sightings of her cat roaming the neighborhood*)
 - She (*erroneously*) claimed that the Durham County pet ordinances did not apply to cats
 - She noted that she had been visited three times by Animal Control officers (*who formally warned her she was acting contrary to the Durham County pet nuisance ordinance*); after the third visit she was fined \$50 for this violation by Animal Control
 - She concluded by asking Bruce to show humanity toward her cat and let it live out the remainder of its life in peace
 - Bruce noted that she, not her cat, was the clear violator of the Durham County pet nuisance ordinance, and the CMT policy, as was obvious from the three warnings & \$50 fine she received from Durham County Animal Control
 - Nevertheless, post-warnings, she was still letting her cat roam the CMT neighborhood
 - In addition to Bruce, other neighbors had observed her cat on their property since she had received the official warnings
 - Chris McLeod told Cherie that she did not appreciate her hijacking the meeting to air her personal grievances, particularly since she was the one in the wrong
 - Cherie responded that she had not hijacked the meeting

- Before Cherie could continue, Nick Wagner suggested that the meeting had now gone on longer than expected & that we should now move on to the next agenda item
- Jamie Beasly proposed that the Board set up an online portal to facilitate complaints
 - Nick Wagner noted that this could be done via Google Docs
 - Bruce said that the new Board would look into this in January
- Linda Maynard asked where the responses to complaints reside
 - Bruce indicated that the complainant received a written copy of the response to their complaint via email and that he also kept a copy
 - Linda suggested that this distributed approach could lead to problems in the future when units changed hands and/or a new HOA president took over
 - Bruce agreed and said he would check to see if Arnold would provide an archive for such communications

Election of Board for 2026

- The covenants require 3-7 members on the Board
- Valinda is resigning at the end of this year
- Nick Wagner and Tedd Wimperis have agreed to join the Board
- Bruce proposed the slate of Nick, Tedd, and Bruce as the Board commencing in January 2026
 - The attendees, with two dissenters (Cherie and Jamie), approved the election of this slate

Other Business

- Phyllis Dalton commended Bruce for his service to CMT as HOA president
 - Bruce then received an ovation from most of those in attendance

The Meeting Was Adjourned at Approximately 8:30pm

Cole Mill Townes 2025 & 2026 Budgets

	<i>2025 Actual</i>	2025 Budget	2026 Budget
INCOME	Monthly Dues:	\$375	\$380
HOA Dues		103,500	104,880
Other Income		0	0
TOTAL INCOME		103,500	104,880
OPERATING EXPENSE	<i>Expenditures To 11/30/2025</i>		
Maintenance	367	12,200	6,500
Termite / Pest Control	3,000	1,100	1,100
Lawn Maintenance	20,965	24,000	25,000
Snow / Ice Removal	0	800	800
Tree Removal / Trimming	2,350	3,000	3,500
Pine Straw / Mulch	5,748	5,800	6,000
Insurance	963	875	1,100
Management	4,400	4,800	4,800
Electricity	1,389	1,500	1,600
Water / Storm Water	885	965	1,075
Legal / Accounting	625	625	700
Pressure Washing	0	2,200	3,225
Reserve Study	3,300	3,630	
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE	43,992	61,495	55,400
CAPTIAL MAINTENANCE			
Awnings	7,333	10,080	
Building Repair, Paint & Pressure Wash	48,545	3,200	
Grounds Renovation			
Asphalt Paving Crack Fill & Seal Coat			4,615
Asphalt Paving Full-Depth Repairs			6,500
Reserve	15,000	28,725	38,365
TOTAL CAPTIAL MAINTENANCE	70,878	42,005	49,480
TOTAL ANNUAL BUDGET		103,500	104,880

Dues Components in 2026		
Operating Expense	\$201	52.82%
Capital Maintenance	\$179	47.18%
Monthly Dues:	\$380	