

RETREAT LANDOWNERS' ASSOCIATION
Special Board of Directors Meeting
January 25, 2008, 6 pm
Mark Lee's Residence – 1204 Copper Hill Road

Board members present: Mark Lee, Dick Boggs, Tommy Dunavan, Graham Fowler, Mike Frederick, Rob Squire

RLA members present: Peggy and Vern Burch, Rebecca Lorenz, Don Martin, Victoria and Guy McCoy, John Nolan, Duke Sumonia

The meeting agenda was adopted.

Board president Mark Lee provided copies of his three plans to fund the road budget. All figures include \$100 for the GHAVFD:

- Plan A: Freeze non-road-use [Dunraven Glade] assessments at \$350 per year and assess road-use members from \$0 to \$112 more, depending on whether the additional-fund goal is \$0, \$5K, \$10K, \$15K, \$20K or \$25K per year.
- Plan B: Lower non-road-use assessments to \$162 per year and raise road-use assessments to \$393 to \$531, depending on the funding goal.
- Plan C: Lower non-road-use assessments to \$250 per year and raise road-use assessments to \$373 to \$510, depending on the funding goal.

Rob Squire reported the results of the Outreach Committee meeting held January 20, 2008, at Jan Ricker's residence: He suggested a compromise of reducing non-road-users' assessments to \$190 per year; Dunraven Glade representatives Joanne Persichetti and Danny Perugini suggested non-road-users' assessments be reduced to \$150.

Mark Lee said a \$20,000 increase would be needed to pay for such road improvements as two miles of resurfacing, at \$10,000 per mile. At that rate, it would take five years to resurface all 10 miles of Retreat roads.

Dick Boggs moved to table discussion until the cost of other projects, such as water tanks and pine-beetle control, could be assessed.

The motion was not seconded, and discussion continued.

Mr. Boggs asked if the state would assess pine-beetle damage.

Peggy Burch, Environmental Control Committee chair, and Graham Fowler said the state had not allotted sufficient funds for that. Ms. Burch said the process was to determine which trees had been attacked in the fall of 2007 and to remove them before July 2008 in order to protect undamaged trees in 2009 and beyond.

Mr. Fowler said The Retreat had worked to eradicate pine beetles 25-30 years ago, including hiring a plane to spray beetle-killing chemicals, and that the 25- to 30-year cycle was definitely beginning again. Ms. Burch said spraying by plane was overkill, since trees only need to be sprayed from the ground up to about 30 feet.

Mr. Lee said the RLA has been overspending an average of \$5,000 a year for about five years, having to pay for all labor, and the price of gas increasing from \$1.15 to \$3 a gallon. A five-year plan that was passed six or seven years ago can no longer be adhered to.

Mr. Squire said the board represents not only the majority of RLA members [the 80% who do not live on Dunraven Glade Road] but *all* RLA members.

Mr. Boggs suggested the board plan exactly what should be done—roads, water tanks, pine-beetle control—and what those things will cost before deciding what increase should be presented for a vote.

Mr. Fowler suggested trying something different: charging assessments per lot and giving those owners one vote per lot.

Duke Sumonia said there were about 270 lots and 220 owners, not enough difference to bring in sufficient money to solve the problem.

Victoria McCoy suggested giving something, such as pine-beetle control, to DRG residents.

Guy McCoy said a reduction for DRG might be a unifying factor and asked if a federal or state grant could be requested to protect our trees.

Ms. Burch said she was not aware of grants for pine-beetle control, only for fire mitigation.

Rebecca Lorenz asked if Mr. Boggs was aware that the GHAVFD was trying to get rid of an old 2000-gallon water truck. She suggested it should be given to The Retreat, which could use it to spray for pine beetles. Mr. Boggs said he would look into it.

Ms. Lorenz also said “porta-tanks” can be rented inexpensively; they can catch 2000-3000 gallons of rain water. Mr. Fowler said it’s against the law to collect rain water.

Mr. Lee and Mr. Fowler said the DRG assessment should not be lowered. Mr. Lee said a \$20,000 increase would allow a reserve to start building up again.

Mr. Sumonia said Dunraven Glade residents researched the possibility of paving their road 15 years ago. The county would have charged \$15,000 at that time. DRG asked The Retreat to pay for the paving; The Retreat refused.

He also said he got the ISO [insurance] rating lowered; that installing water tanks would not reduce insurance rates; and that his insurance agent stated that rates depend on the mileage of a residence from the fire station. He suggested the board check into that.

Mr. Sumonia also suggested the board have a couple of town hall meetings to get support for the increase.

Mr. Fowler said that, if fixing Dunraven Glade Road helps the rest of The Retreat’s property values, then fixing the other roads would help Dunraven Glade’s property values.

Mr. Fowler then moved to adopt Plan A, but at the \$10,000-level increase rather than \$20,000. Non-road-use members’ assessments would be frozen at \$250 per year [+ fire department donation]; road-use members would pay \$45 more per year [\$295 + fire department donation].

Mr. Squire said he believed the Dunraven Glade residents would not go for that.

The board voted 5-1 for Graham Fowler’s motion; Mr. Squire, on behalf of Dunraven Glade residents, voted against it.

Mr. Lee said he liked Mr. Sumonia’s idea of Town Hall meetings, and the board should set up one or two.

Mr. Fowler suggested board members call RLA members and persuade them to vote for the assessment increase. Mr. Squire said a mailing would be better.

RLA member John Nolan described how his house on Elkridge Drive had been vandalized two days earlier, TV, stereo, medicines stolen, drawers emptied, oil and dirt tracked in.

He had a security system installed today. He described the company—Montronics [spelling?—the system and the cost. He believes his house had been checked out for some time by two men in a late-model dual-wheel white diesel pickup, until they determined the place was unoccupied Mondays to Thursdays. Ms. Burch asked if there was any relation to last year's burglaries in The Retreat. Mr. Nolan said that was not known yet, and that fingerprints may determine if the same people were involved. He also said his alarm system produces no false alarms. Mr. Squire said the county charges an escalating fee (\$50, \$100, \$150) for each false alarm after the first one.

Mr. Lee said the 2008 Winter Pot Luck would be held on Saturday, February 23. Karen Lee suggested people bring games to play.

—Submitted by Victoria D. McCoy
February 17, 2008