



# DUNBARTON PINES



## Homeowner Association Newsletter June 2020

### President's Message

Fred Schlemmer

On behalf of the Board, I would like to express our sincere hopes that you and your family have been relatively unaffected by the Coronavirus outbreak. We would also like to thank first responders and all others who have had a direct part in responding to the impact of the virus and in keeping us safe.

Your board has continued improvements to the main commons pathways (see my separate article below). It seems our focus could not have been better timed – we understand many of our residents have taken advantage of the paths and walkways during their stay-at-home time. We have also been made aware that the increased traffic has resulted in many hikers straying off the main path and intruding into the yards of some commons area owners. For those of you taking advantage of the commons areas, please be aware of property boundaries.

We have updated our budget and find ourselves tight for the remainder of the year. We allocated some additional funds to address the need to better define some commons pathways which puts us in a potential need to draw from reserves by year end. That said, the Board is committed to managing our budget and will target a break even for the year (see Karen's financial report).

### Annual Dues Remain at \$170 for 2020/2021 Year

Karen Harris

Our expenses this year have limited our planned contribution to reserves. We anticipate many of these costs will carryover next year as we continue commons area improvements. We have tightened our budget with Begonia Brothers this year and will be doing the same for our other contractors. As a result, we do not plan a dues increase for the 2020/2021 year. That said, we are in the third and final year of our contract with Begonia Brothers and it is unclear what impact the Coronavirus will have on their and other contractors' future costs.

### Board Nominees for 2021

Rod Harris

Your current Board members have agreed to run for the Board for the upcoming 2020/2021 year. Fred Schlemmer proposes to continue his role as President of the Board. In response to last year's annual meeting, Fred created the Commons Area Strategy Group, resulting in recommendations for improving the main commons area which have been acted upon by the Board. Andy proposes to continue his role as V.P. Landscaping, having overseen improvements to the main commons over the past year. Karen has volunteered to continue as Treasurer, after successfully managing the migration to the new TOPS software this year. Finally, Rod has agreed to run for Secretary in the coming year – preparing the newsletters and documenting the events of the Association. If you are interested in participating in a Board position or activities, please send us an email at [dunbartonpines@outlook.com](mailto:dunbartonpines@outlook.com)

## DUNBARTON PINES Homeowners' Association

The Dunbarton Pines Homeowners' Association (DPHA) is a non-profit corporation created in 1979 and composed of 341 homes governed by the Declaration of Covenants, Agreements and Restrictions (1979) and Bylaws (1980). These documents are available on our website:

<http://www.dunbartonpinesofnovi.com>

The Association has the duty and responsibility to maintain the open spaces, retention ponds, common areas and entry way monuments for the benefit of the subdivision and the members of the Association. Annual dues are \$170 payable September 1<sup>st</sup>.

### DPHA board members:

**Fred Schlemmer, President.** Fred is in his first year as President and fourth year on the Board.

**Andy Randall, V.P. Landscaping.** Andy has participated on the Board for some 12 years and is responsible for landscaping maintenance and improvements.

**Karen Harris, Treasurer.** Karen continues her fourth year on the Board as Treasurer.

**Rod Harris, Secretary.** Rod assumes the role of Secretary after having been President for the last three years.

**Deepa Elangainathan, Webmaster**

Please send all correspondence to:  
[dunbartonpines@outlook.com](mailto:dunbartonpines@outlook.com)

## Landscaping Maintenance and Improvements

Andy Randall

As we reported in the last newsletter, this year we have performed major cleanup in the main commons woods – widening the north/south pathway, rerouting the eastern end of the East/West pathway and creating a path for foot traffic entering the commons from the south. Our contractor has yet to put wood chips down on the commons wood paths.

We recently placed a tree block at the East Entrance to more clearly delineate the entryway and to guide hikers

to the center path of that entrance. We also performed some additional cleanup of brush and debris in the same area.

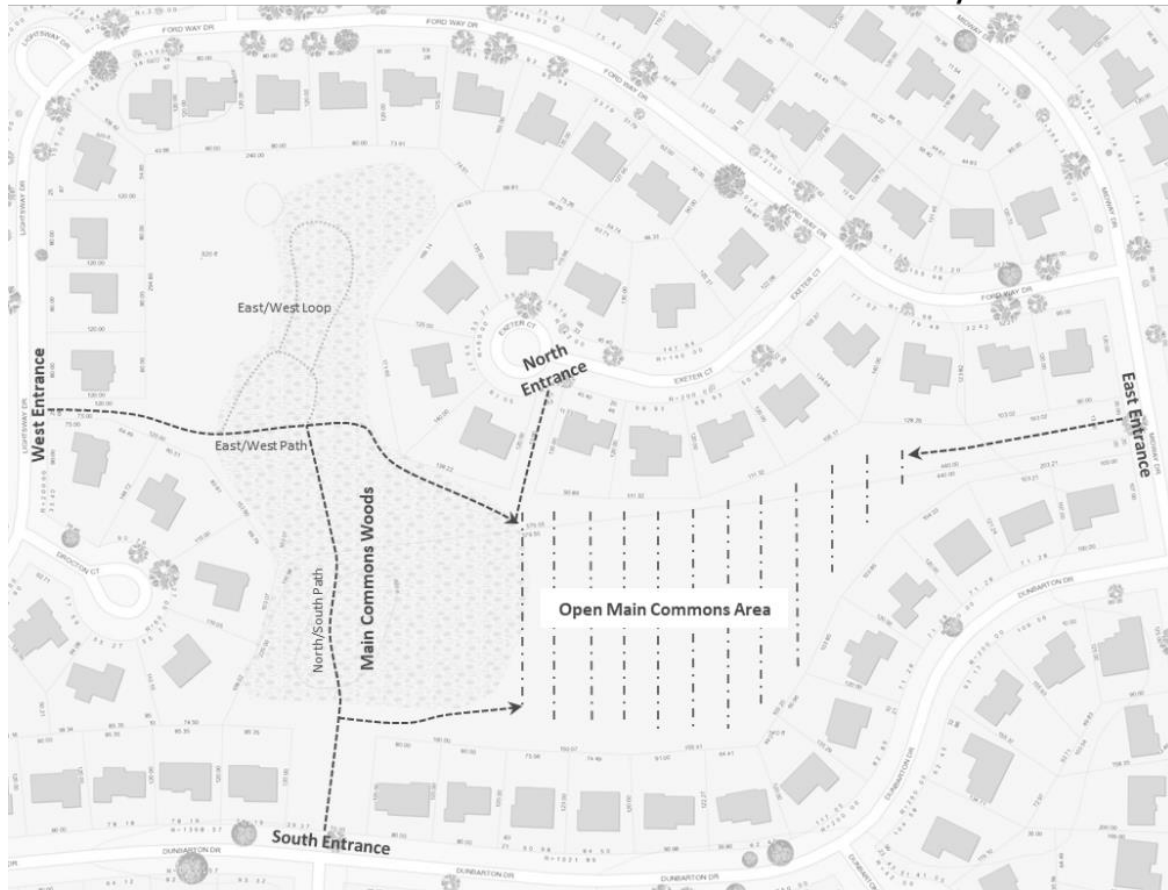
Based upon main commons homeowner feedback, we added additional mowings during the June growth period and expanded the area to be mowed. We added a fall tree trimming and cleanup in the main commons – activities which commons area homeowners advised us they have recently been performing.

## Main Commons Area Update

Fred Schlemmer

It seems that the work on the main commons area was timely. In the wake of the stay-at-home orders, many homeowners found themselves taking a break “near home” by walking the paths in the main commons woods and experiencing the main commons open areas. We found, however, that the east entrance into and out of the main commons was initially not well marked. This caused many hikers to stray nearer to home boundaries than intended. We have since marked all the entryways with dark green markers and upgraded the path from the east entrance into the main commons to make it more visible. In the future, we hope hikers respect the lot boundaries of homeowners bordering the main commons – including all entrances to the main commons.

### Main Commons Area Entrances and Pathways



**Treasurer’s Report**

Karen Harris

Dues have been collected from 336 homeowners for the current calendar year. Five homeowners are in arrears, with two of those past due multiple years. We will be placing liens on those two homes once collection restrictions related to the Coronavirus have been lifted. *If you are behind in your dues payment, please contact me to discuss payment options.*

Our actual landscaping costs are anticipated to be higher than normal due to our focus on Commons Area improvements. We have incurred pathway cleanup expenses for the woods and entryways and for plantings that more clearly define commons area pathways. We have also increased the landscaping budget to include additional mowings during the peak growing season and branch and leaf pickup for the commons areas.

We will be working hard to offset these increases in landscaping by carefully monitoring our remaining budgeted expenses to lessen the forecasted draw from reserves. For example, we will be pushing to the 2021 budget year the recommendations of the Commons Area Strategy Group for park benches and additional pathway work.

On a more positive note, we have had a high number of real estate transactions

since January – welcoming 12 new families into the subdivision. If you are new to the subdivision and have not yet registered on the Owner’s Portal, please send us an email at [dunbartonpines@outlook.com](mailto:dunbartonpines@outlook.com)

Our TOPS [ONE] system has met the needs of many homeowners for additional payment options other than a hand-written check. We have found many past due homeowners have taken advantage of the payment flexibility to clear their accounts. We hope the attraction of electronic payments will only increase over time.

<b>Dunbarton Pines Homeowners' Association</b>			
<b>Income Statement</b>			
As of 5/31/2020			
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	
	<b>YTD</b>	<b>Full Year</b>	<b>Variance</b>
<b>Income</b>			
6010 Dues and Other Receipts	\$57,290	\$57,970	(\$680)
6200 Interest Income	105	0	105
	57,395	57,970	(\$575)
<b>Expense</b>			
7010 Landscaping	\$14,775	\$49,810	\$35,035
8010 Fees and Insurance	1,116	4,400	3,284
8020 Water	0	2,400	2,400
8030 Electric	600	1,200	600
8040 Communications	941	3,118	2,177
8050 Enterprise Software	1,855	4,452	2,597
	\$19,287	\$65,380	\$46,093
<b>Net Dues less Expenses</b>	\$38,108	(\$7,410)	\$45,518
<b>Projected Change in Reserves 2020</b>		(\$7,410)	
Reserves end of 2019		16,895	
<b>Projected Reserves end of 2020</b>		\$9,485	
Cash on hand End of Year 2019	\$72,825		
Less: Dues received for 2020 Year	55,930		
Reserves as of 1/1/2020	\$16,895		

**Trailer and Boat Restrictions**

Karen Harris

We know – you have been cooped up inside all spring and it is time to get out! Please remember as you prepare for your summer activities that parking of boats and trailers within the subdivision is prohibited! Our Declaration, Article VI – Use and Occupancy Restrictions and Covenants, Section 8: Temporary Structures and Vehicles states: No house trailer, commercial vehicles, bus or truck, boat trailer, boat, camping vehicle or trailer or motorcycle may be parked on or stored on any Lot in the subdivision unless stored fully enclosed within an attached garage or similar structure. City of Novi Ordinances separately restrict loading and unloading of such vehicles to 72 hours and does not allow parking of same on streets near residences.

**Reminder: City of Novi Trash Collection**

Andy Randall

Trash bins must be stored in an enclosed building or within the rear yard of your property!

## TOPS [ONE] Association Software

Rod Harris

This spring we were able to send out two broadcast email messages to all homeowners with email addresses on file. That would have been extremely difficult in the past! If you did not receive the broadcast email, it is likely we either have a bad email address or do not have any email address on file. To be included in future emails, please send an email to [dunbartonpines@outlook.com](mailto:dunbartonpines@outlook.com) along with your name and address (or lot number) and we will be sure to get you on our system. We are targeting sending all communications via email within the next year – and will require your email to do so. Our software provides a web portal for owners to maintain their contact information (phone numbers, email addresses), setup or process payments for annual dues, and access documents related to the subdivision and City of Novi.

## Push or Pull? Payment options with TOPS [ONE]

Karen Harris

In August we will once again invoice homeowners for their annual dues. If you are registered on the Owner's Portal and have elected ACH Pull, there is nothing more you need to do. You will be notified of a pending charge a week in advance, then the dues will be automatically deducted from your checking account free of charge (or charged to your credit card if you selected that choice, at an additional cost). You need to be registered BEFORE the pull is initiated for this to take effect. At present, 22 homeowners have autopay enabled, while an additional 5 have PUSH payment methods on file. Using the payment facility of TOPS [ONE] saves the Association processing costs!

One of the reasons we selected our new Association software was for the flexibility it provided homeowners in paying their annual dues. The new software uses a third-party payment provider (Zego, formerly PayLease) that accepts multiple forms of payment – ACH, Debit or Credit. In addition, the software provides for two approaches for making your payment: Push or Pull. **The Push method** provides for the homeowner to determine the method, amount and timing of the payment. Once the annuals due charge has been assessed, a homeowner can "Pay Now" entering ACH, Credit or Debit card information to make payment. This method has a fee associated with it, presented at the time of payment (currently \$2.95 for ACH or 3.5% or \$5.95 for credit card).

**The Pull method** provides for homeowners to set up a payment method in advance, which can be ACH or Credit Card. An ACH payment is free, while a credit card payment has a fee associated with it (3.5% of dues amount). The Pull method provides for the Association to charge dues at a time selected by the Association (last week of August). Only one Pull is made by the Association to collect annual dues. An email notification is sent prior to initiating the Pull to ensure enough funds are available in the designated account. A homeowner needs to be registered for the Pull payment method BEFORE we initiate the Pull. Otherwise the homeowner's account will not be included in the Pull batch. Registration after the fact will NOT result in payment. The homeowner instead will need to initiate payment either using the Push method or submit a check for payment.

## TOPS [ONE] Homeowner Portal Registration and Payment Usage

Karen Harris

We now have 131 homeowners registered on the Owner's Portal. To date we have sent invitations to 158 homeowners who have yet to respond. We have no email address for 52 homeowners. If you have not yet received an invitation to register on the Owner's portal, please let us know at [dunbartonpines@outlook.com](mailto:dunbartonpines@outlook.com). At the end of June, we will send another invitation to unregistered homeowners that has an email address on file. We hope that this encourages homeowners to register and be able to take advantage of our many different payment options for our annual dues. We anticipate annual dues mailing to go out in early August of this year.

## Landscaping Services in the Subdivision

Fred Schlemmer

Sticks-n-Stuff, operated by a subdivision resident, Tyler Rauhe, is looking for landscaping work. 248-444-9232.