

VILLAGE GREEN

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

Monthly Highlights



Celebrating
Village Green's Kids

Board of Directors April Meeting News

By Ethan Markowitz, Board Secretary

After six homeowner comments, the Board considered 10 business items, nine Design Review Committee recommendations, and reports.

Actions included:

Audit Report... approved the 2016 Audit Report prepared by independent auditor Creighton Tevlin, CPA.

Landscape Contract... approved a new landscape maintenance contract with Greencrew Landcare Inc. See article this page for more information.

Dawn Redwoods... Approved a letter to Lambert Giessinger of the Office of Historic Resources stating that the Board has determined that the five Dawn Redwood trees planted in Court 9 in late 2014 were inappropriate and should not have been approved, and that future tree plantings will be reviewed more carefully to ensure that they are consistent with our historic landscape. Giessinger had requested a board response following a complaint about the trees filed by a former owner.

Escrow Letter and Unit Modification Application and Review Process...

Approved the distribution of previously approved revised documents to owners and realtors who represent Village Green properties. □

New Landscape Maintenance Contract Approved

By Lucy Fried

In June, a new company, Greencrew Landcare Inc., is expected to assume responsibility for maintaining Village Green's landscape. They will replace Trugreen LandCare (formerly known as TruGreen), which has had the job since 2006.

Why did the board decide to change companies, and why did they choose Greencrew? The answers are complicated yet can be boiled down to the opinion of a majority of directors that Greencrew offers the best possibility of delivering the best maintenance we can get for the price the Association is willing to pay.

Here is some history. TruGreen started in 2006 at \$28,500 and received increases to \$30,235 in 2008, where the price held until late 2011. At that time, the company was sold to a private equity firm, and Village Green decided to put the contract out to bid. TruGreen won the contract at \$24,000., and the rate did not change again for four years.

During those years, residents and Landscape Committee activists became more and more dissatisfied with the company's performance (while the company was absorbing cost increases without an increase in fees). When LandCare informed the Association in October 2015 that their rates would rise, first to \$28,000, and then.... *Continued on page 4*

Earth Day Work Day

Photo by Tamorah Thomas

This hardy band of Villagers started their Earth Day Saturday celebration by spreading mulch around the base of sixty-eight (68!) young trees throughout the Green to help them conserve soil moisture as summer approaches. With the help of a LandCare employee, and using mulch donated by nearby C&S Nursery, they used wheelbarrows, buckets, shovels, and elbow grease to get the job done. Thank you, Tree Committee, for the reminder that it *does* take a Village....



MANAGER'S REPORT

By **Sherri Giles, Operations Manager**

April was another busy month for management. In addition to the usual "customer service" provided by the office, projects included:



- **Readying** a new landscape maintenance contract for Board approval;
- **Starting** the process of putting the Association's insurance out to bid.
- **Launching** this year's carpentry repairs and painting of 10 residential buildings;
- **Meeting** with residents and launching the first phase of the 13-building interior water re-piping, patching, and painting project for this year. The buildings are 7, 9, 10, 11, 23, 24, 39, 49, 50, 51, 52, 66, and 74;
- **Meeting** with DWP representatives regarding installation of Level II Electric Vehicle Charging Stations at VG;
- **Continuing** investigation on the adaptability of various digital work order systems to our specific needs;
- **Providing** documents for the auditor, and more.

More about the Building Re-piping

Village Green has 96 buildings. Over the last several years, the rust-prone original galvanized steel interior water pipes have been replaced by copper pipes (the industry standard)

in 69 buildings. 27 buildings remain to be re-piped, including all the "Ace DuroFlow" buildings. This essential work is made possible by the Special Assessment.

Here is the copper re-piping schedule *for all the remaining buildings*, as set by board and management in 2011 and recently refined by management:

- 2017 - 2018: 13 buildings, including 6 Ace DuroFlow buildings (\$587,000 budgeted for this);
- 2018: 5 buildings, all Ace DuroFlow buildings;
- 2019: 4 buildings, all Ace DuroFlow buildings;
- 2020: 5 buildings, all Ace DuroFlow buildings. □

Reminder to all residents:

The most effective way to make management aware of a problem- and get action - is to fill out a work order. If you see an unsafe situation, or a dirty trash area, or a rodent, or a broken water pipe, etc., please fill out a work order immediately. We collect and address work orders every day from all the laundry rooms and the office. Thank you.

SAFETY ON THE GREEN

Public Security Report

March 21 - April 17, 2017

Edited by Jordan Deglise Moore

Note: Security officers are instructed to document and notify management of all incidents.

Mar 31 BROKEN TREE BRANCHES. Court 4, 8:51 am.

LandCare workers reported and cleaned up two fallen tree branches.

Apr 4 VANDALISM TO VEHICLE. Court 1, between 1:00 and 2:00 am. An officer discovered a resident's vehicle with the back window shattered.

Apr 6 PARKING ENFORCEMENT DISPUTE. Court 14, 2:51 am. A patrol officer attempting to place a parking citation on a vehicle became involved in a dispute with the resident. Public Security management and the resident later met and reached a resolution.

Apr 12 NOISE COMPLAINT. Court 9, 6:20 am. An officer investigating a complaint about a resident repeatedly slamming her doors found the resident irate, rude, and defensive.

Apr 16 POWER OUTAGE. Village Green, 1:10 am.

An officer reported a power outage affecting the property and nearby street and traffic lights. No other problems were reported during this time. Power was restored about 5:00 am.

Apr 17 VERBAL ALTERCATION. Court 8, 8:15 am.

A neighbor entered the management office to make a written complaint regarding a previously reported incident with a neighbor. A photo copy was provided to management. □

May Foot Beats

Monday, 4/13, 7 pm: Meet at Court 4 entrance, walk Village Green east section.

Thursday, 5/18, 11 am: Meet at Rodeo/ Hauser corner, walk VG west section.

Friday, 5/26, 7 pm: Meet at Clubhouse, walk Village Green central section.

Wednesday, 5/31, 9 am: Meet at Court 15/16 breezeway, walk Village Green east section.

Thursday, 6/8, 7 pm: Meet at Court 10 entry, walk Village Green west section. □



Design Review Committee Announces Two Important Initiatives

By Susan Di Giulio, DRC Chair

Revised Owner Unit Modification Application and Review Process Guide

Very soon, Village Green owners and prospective owners will have a new document to help them plan for any kind of work they anticipate for their units. The revised "Village Green Owner Unit Modification Application and Review Process Guide" is a clear, five page document that explains exactly what kind of review process is required for various kinds of work. It also tells owners exactly what kind of documentation they will need and gives a timeline for submittal.

This guide has been vetted by the board and is in the final stages of revision. It will soon be distributed by the office whenever modification applications are requested, and

it will be available at any time on line. Examples of proper documentation will also be available on line.

Greening the Green

The DRC announces the formation of a new sub-committee focusing on sustainable solutions and improvements for common area, infrastructure, and individual units. The sub-committee will look at available technologies and whatever utility and government funding programs can be leveraged by the VG and owners. If you have interest and/or expertise in these areas, please join us for a brief kick off at 8:30 pm, Monday June 5, following our regular committee meeting. You can also email Susan Di Giulio at smdigiulio@gmail.com. □



Roundup Loses a Round

By Lucy Fried

Thinking of using Roundup to get rid of the weeds in your patio? You might want to think again.

While it is an effective weed killer, several countries have banned Roundup because it has been found to be cancer-causing by many scientists and environmentalists, including the highly-regarded French-based International Agency for Research on Cancer.

The EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) has not restricted Roundup's use in the U.S. However, starting next year, California will require Monsanto, Roundup's manufacturer, to label it a possible cancer threat. (Monsanto is a U.S. based multinational agrochemical and agricultural biotechnology company.)

Monsanto had challenged California's right to require the label. They argued that it was illegal for California to use recommendations from an international organization; that Roundup poses no risk to people; and that warnings would drive away customers. However, in March, Fresno Superior Court Judge Kristi Culver Kapetan, in a final ruling, dismissed Monsanto's challenge, saying none of the company's objections were viable. Monsanto is appealing the ruling. □

Note: This article was compiled from information in a 3/15/17 Los Angeles Times reprint of an Associated Press article containing information from the Fresno Bee and a 4/27/17 L.A. Times article.

Upcoming Events

Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, May 23, 7:00pm, Clubhouse.
Homeowner comments begin promptly at 7:00 pm.



Fandango with Cambalache

Sunday, May 28, 3:00-5:00pm, Main Green. (Memorial Day weekend) Sponsor: Cultural Affairs Committee.

Native Plants in Small Spaces and Containers

Saturday, June 3, 10:00am, Clubhouse. Wish you could spruce up your patio without having to work too hard? Get ideas and tips from the Theodore Payne Society's Steven Gerrischer. Sponsor: Landscape Committee.



Drinks on the Green

Sunday, June 3, 4:00-7:00 pm.
Co-Sponsor: Cultural Affairs Committee.



10th Annual Village Green Yard Sale

Saturday, June 17, 8:00am-3:00pm

Email villagegreennyardsale@gmail.com for more information!

Co-Sponsor: Cultural Affairs Committee.

Early Summer Jazz Concert with Susie Hansen Latin Jazz

Sunday, June 25, 4:00-7:00pm, Main Green.
Sponsor: Cultural Affairs Committee ☐

"Landscape"

Continued from page 1...

...to \$32,000, directors reacted strongly and decided it was time for a new contract and perhaps a new company. Ironically, the new contract will cost the same as LandCare's current cost - \$32,000 per month.

Village Green's Landscape Challenges

What convinced directors to accept a \$32,000 fee after all?

In the course of a thorough dissection of our old contract and Scope and Specifications, followed by a comprehensive bidding process, Village Green's Board of Directors, management, and Landscape Committee learned a great deal about maintenance companies' labor policies and practices and about our landscape, its needs, and the unusual maintenance challenges it poses.

Few, if any, private landscapes present the challenges our does. It is larger, older, and includes more diverse plantings. It contains hundreds of shrubs past their prime or requiring too-frequent attention because of having been sheared into unnatural shapes for decades. While most owners have automated their irrigation systems, ours is still hand-controlled and inefficient with old, rusty galvanized pipes that do not reach many areas of our lawns and shrub beds. To control weeds, we rely entirely on labor-intensive hand weeding while most use some sort of herbicide. And while most employ well-established practices such as mulching, periodic lawn de-thatching, and soil aeration, we have not.

The bidding process brought interest from seven companies large and small. Some offered Cadillac care at Cadillac prices, while others promised magical results from exceptional workers with pared down crews and rates. Landscape Committee members visited at least 16 sites maintained by five of the companies, including LandCare, and agreed that in comparison, maintenance here was below average.

The bidders were toured, interviewed, and interviewed again, and finally the Board-appointed ad hoc committee of two directors, a longtime landscape activist, and management personnel reached a consensus to invite two finalists to make a presentation to the board, following which, the board chose Greencrew.

Please welcome the new company in June and let us all hope they will bring a new energy to our landscape maintenance challenges. ☐



Easter Egg Hunt photos by
Melanee Newkirk & Lindsey Barr