

MINUTES of the PRESTWICK HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION
March 6, 2008

Final draft to be approved at the April meeting.

Present: Jim Nolting, Paul Koreman, Bill Matevich, Janice Werner, Sue Bloomfield, Tom Barz, Rich Misorowski, Lynn Grever, Rachel Gilmore (Recording Secretary) and Kevin Burns from the Frankfort Township Assessor's Office

Absent: John Mackowiak, Dan Smith

The January 2008 minutes were approved.

Kevin Burns presented information from the Assessor's Office regarding tax caps and the valuation process for homes, particularly in regards to the sale of the EJ&E tracks which run through Prestwick. He explained that currently there is a tax cap of 5% or the CPI, whichever is less. This limits what taxing bodies can levy. Every year in December each taxing body figures out how much they need to fund their budget and levy accordingly within the tax cap. Kevin noted that there was a 7% tax cap allowed by the legislature in a 3-year bill, but it was only utilized by Cook County.

Kevin explained that the valuation of homes could drop but that the tax rate could still go up because the taxing bodies would levy according to what they need in their budgets, as long as they were within the cap.

The question was raised about Prestwick homes already being devalued simply because of the proposal to buy the EJ&E tracks. Kevin said they haven't noted any trends yet and that actually home values are holding their own in the Township, as evidenced by his report that he prepared for the meeting. It showed that the average sales price in July 2006 was \$374,611 but that in July 2007 it was \$391,488, which was a 4.5% increase in average sales price.

He also showed a 2007 year to date number that gave the following figures: 2006 median sales price -- \$340,000 / 2007 median sales price -- \$382,000. However, in both the monthly and year to date examples, total sales were down by 20% in July alone and 15% year to date. It was not clear if the year to date numbers were for January through July 2007 year to date or January to December 2007 year to date. The numbers also reflected Frankfort Township as a whole, not just the Village of Frankfort.

Kevin clarified that in order to reassess (Prestwick) homes to show devaluation of property because of the railroad sale, they would need to be able to quantify what's happening. They can't quantify anything without several years of studies showing specifically how the increase in rail traffic and its resulting problems have devalued property. He gave the example of Sportsmen's Park converting from a horse track to a race track and people asking for reassessments because of new traffic/noise/quality of life issues but what the assessor found was that home values around the park actually increased and at a faster rate than homes in nearby

neighborhoods. However, Rich noted that Barrington has a projection that their home values have already decreased by 20% just because of the proposed sale.

Kevin stated that he lives in Sandalwood and that he started the web site www.stopthelincolnwaywhistle.com to raise awareness and get dialogue going about the sale. However, it is his opinion, based on his research and efforts, that nothing is going to stop this sale from going through. However, there are things that can be done to gain concessions. He feels the primary issue right now is safety, not only with first responders time and ability to deal with emergency situations on either side of the tracks but also the hazmat issues. There are 36 communities along the EJ&E who would need to be able to handle hazmat disasters. They are currently unprepared to do so. Kevin noted that CN handles a lot of hazmat transportation and has already stated that the number of hazmat cars traveling on the EJ&E will increase dramatically. He also noted that a nuclear power plant just closed in Lake County, and it's his belief that CN will be transporting spent nuclear fuel rods along these tracks.

He said that there is nothing the Assessor's Office can do officially to help fight the sale and that it needs to be fought at a regional level so that no single community gets stigmatized.

Kevin stated that one thing that may give our south section a little leverage is that a portion of the EJ&E tracks goes through Park Forest-owned property and Park Forest would have to approve the sale to CN. That ownership may win a few concessions; otherwise, Kevin felt that any mediation of crossings or noise/safety issues would be done up north where there are more influential political leaders, unless our local communities start making more noise as a whole.

Rich made an official request to Kevin/the Assessor's Office to reassess the value of Prestwick homes and lower the tax bills based on the proposed sale of the EJ&E tracks.

The January minutes were approved.

ENTRANCES

1. Address Stones

After visiting Galassi and learning that the \$1100/stone does not include installation, Paul prepared a proposal stating that he can use the same limestone stones and have them engraved and installed for a total cost of \$7,223. Paul will buy direct from Galassi's source and use Joliet limestone which has a higher iron content so the stones look browner. This will match what is in the beds already. Maurice Moore Memorials will do the engraving and put a little black in the etching to highlight the words. Paul will guarantee the stones for 5 years. He will also prepare wooden mock-ups that can be put in the beds first to see how they look.

The mock-ups can go in after March 15 when his crews start. The stones will take about a month to engrave so they can be installed in mid to late April.

Jim noted that there is \$33,000 in checking/savings, plus PHA will get \$3,000 from the Village to put toward the project.

Lynn moved and Bill seconded to award Paul the contract and to begin work. All were in favor.

2. Maintenance Agreement for Beds

Paul prepared a proposal for the entrance beds and noted that he has received the contract to do the Prestwick Drive entrance bed from PCC. He will put in annuals and mums and upkeep all 5 entrances. However, he noted that last year he took quite a loss on the work he performed. His proposal reflects the true cost of approximately \$9,000. The PHA Board agreed that they have researched maintenance contracts in the past few years and that Paul's price is fair.

Rich moved and Sue seconded to award Paul the maintenance contract. All were in favor.

ARC

Tom reported that Tim Kazmierczak applied for deck plan approval on behalf of the Kristoffs at 819 Highland. There are possible drainage concerns. PHA approved the plans, stipulating that run off water cannot go onto neighboring property. There will be a \$25 plan review charge.

GOVERNMENTAL

1. EJ&E Sale

Discussion continued on the CN RR issue in view of Kevin Burns' presentation. Jim asked the board members to decide if they wanted to continue the fight at the micro level (locally) or at the macro level (regionally) or some combination thereof. The following was decided:

- ACTION ITEM: Jim will call Jerry Ducay and get the most recent update in terms of what the Village is doing to fight CN.
- ACTION ITEM: PHA will rally homeowners to attend the next open meeting held by the Village (TBA in March) and ahead of time will give Jim Holland a list of points PHA would like addressed that evening

2. BETA

Bill reported that the selection takes place in May. He will keep PHA posted.

3. Earth Day

Bill reported that April 26 is Earth Day in the Village.

- ACTION ITEM: Bill will send an email to Jim with the details, and Jim will distribute to the email list looking for volunteers from PHA.
- ACTION ITEM: Sue will give the info to Travis to put on the web site.

SOCIAL

Discussion was held on the PCC Jimmy Buffett party to be held Saturday, July 5. Tom reported that PCC would like to do fireworks that night and is asking PHA to support that financially. The Board agreed to contribute the \$1600 budgeted for Social, as well as an additional \$900 to

fund the minimum \$2500 contribution requested by the Club. They will also solicit donations from PHA members.

- ACTION ITEM: Tom will let the Club know that PHA will contribute at a minimum \$2500 to fund the fireworks. PHA will also solicit donations through a letter and likely be able to give the Club additional funds.
- ACTION ITEM: Tom will ask the Club if PHA can offer tickets to its members to the Jimmy Buffett party like it does for the Oktoberfest, even though not all are Club members.
- ACTION ITEM: The PHA Board will send out a letter soliciting donations for the fireworks.

MEMBERSHIP

1. Membership Directory

Tom reported that Jan from Repro did die recently. Carmen is able to still do the directory printing; however, a new Prestwick resident has approached Tom about printing the directory for free if he can have a full page ad.

Rachel noted that one advantage to the process this year is that the ads are all set up already. Ad layout was a huge headache last year with businesses submitting illegible, low resolution copy that Jan had to spend a lot of time on to look presentable. PHA does not have that original artwork anymore. This year advertisers were given the option to simply renew their ad. If you switch printers, you may have to recontact all the renewals and have them send new artwork and lay out all new ads.

The possibility was raised of offering to buy the ad layout from Repro. Tom said he was not sure if the new resident was willing to lay out and print or simply print the directory. He is meeting with the guy during the third week of March and will let the board know.

Rachel reported that she only has 18 ad commitments. Of that 18, 11 are renewals from last year's 48 advertisers. Tom reported that he has an additional 10 in his office.

- ACTION ITEM: Rachel will call Sue to get a list of the renewals that Tom has.
- ACTION ITEM: Rachel will send a reminder letter to last year's advertisers about the deadline.

2. Map in Directory

After discussion, it was decided that instead of a map, the board would like to see a cross reference section by street/address/homeowner name so you know who your neighbors are. This may increase the total cost, but it was felt that it would be more useful than a map.

3. PHA Membership Card

The board agreed that it would like the back page to feature a tear out card that identifies people as PHA members. Possibly this card could also be used for the Sherwin Williams Neighbor to Neighbor program or Alsip's discount/rebate program.

4. Sherwin Williams Neighbor to Neighbor Program

This program has been offered to PHA by the Frankfort Sherwin Williams store. It features a 15% discount off all paint products at the Frankfort location, as well as 3% back as a rebate to PHA from all member sales in a year. Lynn noted that Alsip has a similar program

- ACTION ITEM: Jim will call Alsip and see if PHA can participate in the rebate program.

5. SIAM Card

Tom reported that Cindy Heath would like to work with PHA to increase sales of the SIAM card in Prestwick. Options might include putting a sales display in Tom's office or at PCC during Oktoberfest. Another thought might be to increase the PHA membership cost by \$20 and give everyone a SIAM card as a perk.

- ACTION ITEM: Rachel will put a blurb in the fall newsletter promoting SIAM. FYI: Rachel checked and she did include a promo blurb for SIAM in the 07 Fall newsletter.

6. Annual Dues Letter

Dues are due by March 15. A second mailing will go out April 1 with a final due date of April 15.

- ACTION ITEM: Jim will get a copy of the letter from Repro, update it and return it to them for the mailing.
- ACTION ITEM: Tom will get mailing labels to Repro.

SECURITY

No report.

WEB SITE

Rachel said that she will get the December and January minutes, as well as the most recent newsletter to Travis for the web site.

FINANCIAL

No report.

NEWSLETTER

The next newsletter will be mailed in May. It will include the following:

- Property upkeep reminder as related to Covenants (Jim)
- Buffett party info
- Fireworks donation request

BETA info if available
CNRR update
Taxing body oversight info (if available)

NEW BUSINESS

1. Homeowners Consortium

Rich suggested using economic impact issues to get people to join PHA. He would like to see PHA host an open meeting to explain people's real estate tax bills and have taxing bodies justify their expenditures and levies. He would like to see a homeowners consortium created as an oversight group like CUB (Citizens Utility Board) to educate consumers about their tax bills. The board asked Rich to think about how to implement this.

The next meeting will be Thursday, April 17, at 7 p.m. at the Club. Then the meeting will be at Jim's house.

Respectfully submitted,
Rachel Gilmore
Recording Secretary