



LAKE PLACE

NEWS!

Fall 2008

LAKE PLACE CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Committee

Helen Oster, *President*
Mary Principe, *Vice President*
Bill Barry, *Treasurer*
Sara Weir, *Secretary*

Board Members

Bob Dibuono
Nancy Imperato; Radames Lamenza
Don Burch

COMMITTEES

Long-Term Planning

Nancy Imperato

Rules

Mary Principe

Buildings and Grounds

Radames Lamenza, Bob Dibuono,

Recreational Facilities

Mary Principe

Communications

Sara Weir

Beautification

Mary Principe, Arlene Haynes

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

IMAGINEERS, LLC

249 West Street
Seymour, CT 06483
203-312-1183, Fax: 203-463-3299
Claudia Ainsworth,
Property Manager
cainsworth@imagineersllc.com
Bob Croke
Superintendent

President's Letter

Greetings!

Well, we certainly had some interesting times at Lake Place recently. On September 13th we hosted our annual Town Hall meeting to a standing-room-only crowd at the clubhouse. Two weeks before, your Board mailed to all unit owners a proposal for a Capital Improvement Plan to fix some of the components in the complex and to assess charges for those improvements, over the next five years. A groundswell of opposition arose, and at the Special Meeting convened a few days later, the proposal was defeated. So we formed an advisory committee, as some of you requested, to present alternatives for the Board to consider at our October meeting. We will, of course, communicate our decision and next steps to all of you soon. But in the meantime, we continue to work on other matters which face our community.

Thank you to those residents who cooperated in the dryer vent inspections. Unfortunately, we will shortly begin imposing fines on those who have not yet had inspections performed or those who failed to take necessary further steps after an inspection which showed that either cleaning or repairs were warranted. This is an important program, necessary for the safety of all of us!

In conclusion, I would like to ask for volunteers to serve on the Lake Place Board. The Board will be interviewing all interested candidates over the next few weeks before we select an individual to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Arlene Haynes. We thank Arlene for her excellent past service. Please contact me directly if you are interested in working with us on the Lake Place Board. Happy autumn! Stay tuned...

--Helen Oster

Remember! Speed Limit at Lake Place is 15 mph

Treasurer's Corner: Discretionary Spending

During the September Town Hall Meeting a question was asked about the split between discretionary and non-discretionary spending amounts within our annual budget and the possibility of redirecting those discretionary items to more pressing needs. The annual budget is now grouped into 7 categories with related individual items within the group.

The first is Contractual Obligations which include property management, landscaping and snow removal, insurance and refuse removal. These items total \$235.5K or 34.19% of our annual budget and are totally non-discretionary since they are all signed contracts.

Next is Professional fees of \$7.1K or 1% of the annual budget comprised of Legal, Audit and Tax and Web Master. These are non-discretionary amounts with the exception of the Web Master if the Association decided to eliminate the \$300 annual cost for the web page.

The following category is Utilities of \$47.4K or 6.9% for Telephone for communication between the property manager and their on-site representative, and an emergency phone for the pool, Electricity and Water and they are also non-discretionary as they are stated in our By-Laws as provided by the Association.

Next are Administrative costs of \$27.2K or 4%. This category includes the costs of the on-site property management personnel, the Lake Place newsletter, office supplies for Association mailings, copying, etc, statement fees paid to the property manager when unit owners are delinquent in their common charges, and the activities committee. These would be non-discretionary costs unless we choose to eliminate the newsletter for \$600 or the Activities Committee for \$2K.

The next category is Grounds which is \$88.2K or 12.2% and includes Recreational Facilities, Beautification, Paving, Tree trimming and Site Projects. With the exception of the Recreational Facilities which include the pool, tennis court, etc the rights to which we licensed to Lake Place West and are thus non-discretionary, these are discretionary in the amount of \$78.3K. However, if we were to redirect these categories, tree trimming, paving, street light repair, curtain drains, rotted railroad ties, stair resetting, and minor fence repair would be eliminated.

Building Maintenance is the next category and accounts for \$20.3K or 3.0% of the budget. Within this group is maintenance on the clubhouse such as replacement of the refrigerator, dishwasher, supplies for such things as interior repairs after a roof leak, miscellaneous painting, shoe covers for when the maintenance man enters your unit, and building maintenance. Building maintenance includes pest removal, interior repairs after a roof leak, gable vents, chimneys, soffits and related repairs.

The final category is the Reserve Transfer of \$283K or 38.1% of the annual budget. These funds are for the replacements of roofs under the continuing replacement program, windows and sliders which are in an ever-growing demand, fences when they need complete replacement, the annual painting program, and, hopefully something left over for future use. This year, the future use amount was set at \$6K.

So, what truly is discretionary so we could redirect it? It looks like we could redirect allocations for Future Needs of \$6K from the Reserve allocation, the Activities Committee of \$2K, the Web Site for \$0.3K, and Beautification for \$1.3K, the quarterly newsletter for \$0.6K. In total, this is just over \$10K. I will leave it to the Association members to decide if we should redirect these amounts.

--Bill Barry

Greetings from the Property Manager

I would like to thank all of you with whom I had the pleasure of working over the past 3 months and thank you all for your patience while I am getting to know your community and it's needs. We were able to get a lot of work done during the summer but still have many more projects to be completed before the winter is here. As Property Manager, I look forward to the challenges that lie ahead and doing what I can to contribute to the continuing success of the Lake Place community. I have particularly been very impressed with all the time and dedication your Board of Directors are giving to your community and it has become evident to me very quickly, that your community is very unique and tight-knit. It is rare to see this much involvement from volunteers and I am proud to part of your community. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at 203-312-1183 or by email at cainsworth@imagineersllc.com. **–Claudia Ainsworth, Association Manager**

Grounds Report for 2008

With the year coming to an end in a few months, I can reflect on numerous projects that we undertook in the spring. Namely, removing dead trees, pruning and also planting new trees where needed, implementing the new vinyl fence program, as well as repairing property drainage issues, and continue to maintain the beautification of our complex. Needless to say, with the year nearing the end, we will continue all landscaping issues where needed and assess the repairing of road asphalt where needed. I, personally, would like to thank each of you for your cooperation and look forward to next year. **-- Bob DiBuono**

Capital Improvement Advisory Committee Formed

The Board of Directors, hearing the concerns by the owners at the special meeting regarding the Capital Improvement Plan, held a meeting on Thursday October 2nd of all interested owners. An Advisory committee was formed made up of five owners and two Board of Director members. This committee has been charged by the Board to review the long range reports done by Imagineers and Advanced Reserve Systems (ARS) and the original Capital Improvement Plan proposed by the Board. They will research the options available to our community while adhering to our by-laws, then report back to the Board of Directors their recommendations concerning the three components most pressing: the gutters, the windows and the sliders. We are optimistic that working together, we can create a plan that will meet the needs of the community, protect the value of our homes and enhance the quality of life at Lake Place. We will continue to share our progress with you as it occurs. **--Nancy Imperato**

Lake Place's Beautification Efforts

Hopefully, all enjoyed the annual plantings at the entry walls and clubhouse! Our center islands offer \$50 each season for planting of Annuals only. Please do not exceed this amount. It is important to remember that the association must approve any plantings in the peninsulas in the front of your unit. Please submit a plan to either Bob Dibuono or Arlene Haynes. Plantings must be low maintenance, slow growing shrubs.

NOTICE: Lake Place Board Vacancy

Due to the resignation of a board member, we have a vacancy on the Board, as noted in the President's letter. Anyone wishing to volunteer to fill out the remaining term of the resigning board member (until March 2010) should contact Helen Oster by calling 743-3486 or by e-mailing her at hposter@baldwintech.com.

Use of the Clubhouse

Hello neighbors. Did you know that your Lake Place community offers rental of the clubhouse for your personal use? The facility offers a full kitchen, tables, chairs, and that extra space needed for extended family or friends, with the closeness to home. The clubhouse has been used for family reunions, birthday parties, showers, christenings, and yes, ...even a wedding. If you find yourself overflowing with guests for the upcoming holidays, the clubhouse may meet your needs. To rent the Lake Place clubhouse contact me, Gail Baldaserini, to go over the rental agreement. A security deposit of \$200.00 is required at the time of signing the agreement. After the event, a walk through inspection must show that the clubhouse was left the way it was found in pre-rental condition. At that time, the security deposit will be returned to you and the rental fee of \$125.00 is collected for the contracted time. For further information or to arrange a rental agreement, please contact me at 203-207-0270. I am available to show you the facility or answer questions which you may have.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE: For security purposes, locks on the clubhouse have been changed. If you need access to the clubhouse for any authorized purpose, please contact a Board member.

Be Responsible Water Users

CRITICAL: Money flowing down the drain. The water bills are paid by the Association, which means this money comes out of your common charges. Last quarter, we noticed one building had an exorbitant water bill in comparison to the other buildings. After much discovery work, it turns out that one of the residents in that building had two running toilets and a faulty water softener that was using a great deal of water. Please take note: we do NOT need water softeners here at Lake Place. If you do have one, please either disconnect it or make sure it is not continuously running and wasting water/money. We expect this building will now have water bills in line with the other units for the next quarter.

Please check your unit to see if you have any running toilets or leaky faucets. If so, please call a plumber and have them fixed immediately. We will continue to monitor water usage and contact those in buildings where the charges are out of line with the average. Thank you!

Want to do something different? The Variance Request

Let's say you don't like the landscaping in your limited common area. Is there anything you can do to change it? Here are the steps to follow:

1. Write up a plan with a licensed landscaper
2. Put together a variance request that must go to the chair of the Grounds Committee for approval.
3. Wait for approval before starting any work. (Of course, you will need to pay for this work on your own, if you do get approval.)

Please keep in mind that if you do not obtain approval and change the limited common areas, you will be subject to fines and the costs to fix up the area, if need be. This includes such things as cutting shrubbery, taking down trees, adding additional trees/shrubs, etc. When in doubt, put in a Variance Request!

Variance requests are also required to change anything having to do with fences or anything else outside. Also, on internal construction or any types of modification to units, variance requests are required, and as most licensed contractors already know, the city won't issue a permit to do any work unless the association first approves the work. Again, if you do not put in a variance request, you are subject to fines and potentially the need to remove what you have done. If you have any questions or need the variance request form, please contact Imagineers.

Crisp, Cool, Colorful Days of Autumn Are Here

Another successful pool season has come to an end with record use of the pool. Our pool helper, Jessie, did a great job opening/closing the pool and checking chlorine and Ph levels every day. Thanks Jessie for all your hard work! We hope to have you back with us again next year!

Looking forward to next Summer, we plan to purchase all new umbrellas to replace the 20+ year old umbrellas that are in badly in need of replacement. We will be replacing them with all blue umbrellas that should enhance the look of the pool area. See everyone next year at the pool!

Upcoming Octoberfest. Get your Reservation In

On Saturday night, October 25th, we will be holding our annual Octoberfest! Bring your appetite and get set for a scrumptious meal including Saurbraten and all the fixing. The highlight of the evening will surely be Elaine's Famous Black Forest cake!

If you've never been to the Octoberfest before, you've been missing out. Mark the date and make your reservations now by calling Carol Elder at 203-778-2015 or Elaine Neuberger at 792-6485 Only the first 50 will be able to attend.

Holiday Gala. Plan Now for Some December Fun

On Saturday evening, December 6th from 5pm - 8pm, the annual Holiday Gala will be held in the clubhouse. Please bring your holiday cheer and get set for a relaxing enjoyable evening with your neighbors. The event will be catered by Two Steps, so we know the food will be plentiful and delicious.

We are continuing our new tradition started last year of collecting unwrapped toys for the needy at this event. The toys will be donated to 'Toys for Tots' this year. Last year, it was wonderful to have the event with toys under the tree. We are hoping to expand the number of toys we collect and even get a mention in the Danbury NewsTimes this year for our donation! With the current conditions in the country, it is even more important that we think of those who are not as fortunate.

We look forward to seeing all of you there to help start the holiday season in style!

Best BBQ Yet!

Based on all the comments received, this year's Summer BBQ was by far the best ever! The theme was 'Mid-summer Night's Dream' with the pool area decorated with twinkling stars and festive balloons. This year, we decided to try something different and have the BBQ catered. After assessing many caterers in the area, we decided Caio had the best menu with the most reasonable costs. The food was out of this world and with more than enough for everyone to have 2nds, 3rds and in some cases 4th or more! (Those ribs and chicken, salads, veggies, etc. were out of this world!)

Lori Bran, the BBQ Chair, went above and beyond and ensured everyone had the very best time possible. The dessert competition was very well received with 15 entries. Gail Balderisini came in first place with her scrumptious entry!! The music provided by Bob was lots of fun and the dancing went into the wee hours. Several people also took advantage of the cool water and went for a mid summer night's swim.

We look forward to continuing this new approach going forward. Special thanks to the Activities Committee members and especially Lori for making this event an overwhelming success!

Looking for Website Volunteers

We are looking for lake place residents with knowledge of website development, content, and maintenance. If you would like to help, please contact Sara Weir at 203-743-2758 or s1w8.lake@comcast.net.

Real Estate at Lake Place

Current Active Properties:

133	B unit	\$344,900
23	B unit	\$345,000
144	B unit	\$349,900

SOLDS:

119	D unit	7/08	List \$317,000	sold	\$290,000
	lower level				
64	B unit	6/08	List \$319,900	sold	\$310,000
58	B unit	8/08	Reduced,\$339,900	sold	\$325,000
171	E unit	8/08	List \$510,000	sold	\$440,000

Currently there are no pending sales

Rentals: Available

2 Lake Place North	B Unit	\$2000
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Rented

14 Lake Place North	A unit (lower)	\$1850
5 Lake Place North	C unit	\$2395
29 Lake Place North	D unit (lower)	\$1895

My primary purpose of this column is to help all of us maintain & maximize your dollars and all of our market values. Units in better than average condition (units which have been well maintained, units that have been updated/upgraded and units with prime locations) are definitely experiencing shorter market times.

For your information, prior to listing a home for sale a suggestion strongly worth considering is to get a professional decorator to come in and have them evaluate and properly stage your property.

If you have a finished lower level (basement) and do not have the necessary permits and certificate of occupancy for the remodeled space, we strongly suggest that you start the process of securing them now. Please do not wait until you are ready to sell. Securing them is a relatively lengthy process with the City of Danbury building department which often can take up to three months or more. Furthermore, it is an important safety feature for your property, as insurance companies require them any event of a loss (i.e. insurance could be null and void in the absence of proper documentation in the event of any loss).

We, as a community, are competing with newer complexes. Please take it upon yourselves to ride through other complexes that are currently competing with us. Rivington, Sterling Woods, Lexington Mews and Barclay Commons. I would be happy to give you directions to any of these complexes, if requested. It would be wise, and in the best interest of ALL of us, for each and every resident to work toward helping to keep all of our property values up.

--Arlene Haynes

Note:

For new residents who are not aware of the reference to style of units,

We have five styles here at Lake Place. They are as follows:

A- small ranch style – 2 bedrooms 2 baths -1-car garage (upper & lower)

B-small townhouse –2 bedrooms – 2 ½ baths – 1-car garage

C- Medium townhouse- 2 bedrooms plus den - 2 ½ baths – 2-car garage

D- Large ranch style- 2 bedrooms 2 baths- 2-car garage (upper & lower)

E- Large townhouse- 2/4 bedrooms 2/3 ½ baths – 2-car garage