

Sherwood Forest Association
Annual Meeting Minutes
April 27, 2006

Attending: Archived Roster.

Jim Couling, President, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Opening Business

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the 2005 annual meeting. The motion was seconded and the minutes were approved. Jim introduced the current officers (Tim Pickford, Vice President; Wayne Bren, Treasurer; Whitney Pierce, Secretary) and acknowledged them and other volunteers for their contributions to the association over the past two years.

Financial Report

Wayne Bren, Treasurer, gave a summary report of the Sherwood Forest Association (SFA) financial position including:

Secretary of State Filings

- Filed with SOS 2006 annual renewal form to renew SFA as a non-profit corporation under MN Statutes, Chapter 317 (C-1157). This is not a tax-deductible status.

Internal Revenue Service Filings

- Filed Form 1120-H (U.S. Income Tax Return for Homeowners Associations) for our fiscal year 05/01/05-04/30/06 to elect to exempt our income from a flat Corporate tax rate of 30% under IRS Section 528 (41-1476820).

Financial Report

- On file for member inspection.

Database

- Using QuickBooks company file to track membership data and financial transactions
- 119 of 142 member households renewed for fiscal year 2005-06, 20 new memberships
- 132 have e-mail access on "Constant Contact," our e-mail broadcast service
- Encouraged sign up on Website at <http://www.sherwoodforestneighborhood.org>

Attendance Roster

- Everyone present asked to please sign attendance roster sheets for a record of attendance

Membership Forms

- Forms are available for fiscal year 05/01/06-04/30/07 at front and on web site.
- Membership dues support maintenance and general improvements of common areas, neighborhood events and seminars, communications, entrance utilities, association supplies and expenses. Your membership sustains the association giving you a voice and a vote, and provides a collective voice, on issues affecting our neighborhood.

Recap of the Year

Jim Couling reviewed the accomplishments of the association since it's revitalization in July of 2004. Highlights include:

2004-2005

- Monument reconstruction: neighborhood volunteers restored the vehicle-destroyed section.
- Buckthorn bust/front ponds restoration: removal of invasive buckthorn by neighborhood volunteers. The association prior to the bust held a buckthorn educational seminar, conducted by urban forester Janet Larson.
- Crime monitoring and crime alert communication via our e-mail and distribution of printed alerts to residents.
- Traffic/speed calming initiative including working with the city to have a road-cabled speed survey done and increased police traffic control efforts. In addition, an awareness sign (Burma Shave-like verse) campaign was developed and deployed.

2005-2006

- Monument landscaping: the old overgrown shrubs were removed by volunteers and replaced with new shrubs. Planter plantings done by volunteers Christie Boeder (summer) and Mary Lou Frank (winter); Mary Lou is creating the 2006 summer planter.

- Buckthorn bust/front pond restoration continued: volunteers removed additional buckthorn. In recognition of our efforts the city will donate native plants for replacement.
- Traffic/speed calming initiative continued: the police will increase radar patrolling in Sherwood Forest.
- Crime monitoring and crime alert communication via our e-mail and distribution of printed alerts to residents continued.
- Neighborhood Web site was redesigned by Wayne Bren and re-purposed with Jim Couling to be community common area providing a resource for neighborhood information and forum for communication via an interactive bulletin board.
- Chilly Fest community event at front ponds commons January 7. The potentially annual event was well attended and exceeded expectations.
- One front pond was kept shoveled for skating by Tim Pickford, Vice President; warm weather made it difficult to sustain.
- Front ponds duckweed removal by skimming it off was attempted but unsuccessful. It was noted that skimming it off is the only method of control allowed by the city on these (city-owned) ponds and that it might be more successful if skimming is first begun now before it gets to thick and continued periodically throughout the season. At this time there are no volunteers and/or plans to skim these ponds.
- Representing to city government neighborhood concern on the need for strategies to mitigate the difficulty and danger encountered in entering/exiting (via left turns) at the Live Oak Drive/County Road 73 entrance, especially with regards to the approval and coming construction of the I-394/73 Metro Transit parking ramp and the additional traffic it will generate. The city indicated it will study ways to ease left turns at CR73. The association also solicited Hennepin County's support. Unfortunately, the city plans to wait until the ramp is built before initiating a study. (Note: A stoplight at the entrance is not desired by the association, the county or the city. Creating gaps in traffic flow by changing existing signal light timing and/or limiting turns on red at CR73/I-394 will be likely strategies. One day, the county will rebuild CR73 but no date is established.)
- At the association's request, the new city forester agreed to follow-through on removal of the downed willow tree on the pond at Park Ridge/Live Oak. A forester no longer with the city had mistakenly interpreted the tree as originally growing on city right-of-way, and therefore, the city's responsibility and indicated to us that it would be removed. (Note: only the east entrance ponds are city owned; all others are private property -except for right-of way - and tree removal is the responsibility of the landowner.) Thank you, city forester!

Looking Forward

Jim Couling gave a review of initiatives the association will need to and/or likely continue working on.

- Restoring the front ponds in partnership with the city - the city will contribute planning and \$300.00 for native plantings this 2006 spring/summer. The 2005-06 officers had voted to match the city's funding contribution. The city plans to continue support of this restoration effort in 2007.
- The 2005-06 officers enlisted volunteer Aimee Blatz (Lakeview Lane) to spearhead the traffic speeding issue. She, with our city councilor, is exploring strategies to mitigate this problem on Park Ridge Dr., Live Oak Dr. and Hilloway Road. Possible strategies being explored include: improved signage, increased police presence, temporary speed humps and increased education of residents. To residents who live or walk or bike the affected roads excessive speeding is a serious and dangerous problem. The speed survey done in 2004 and subsequent citations indicate most speeders live in this area. Aimee initiated a petition calling on the city to look further into this issue; all present signed and the petition will be circulated through the neighborhood. The police have identified Sherwood Forest as a neighborhood where excessive speed is an issue and will direct more control efforts here.
- More community and family events are anticipated for 2006-07.
- Monitoring the city's follow-through on easing left turns at the entrance.

Bylaw Change Proposal/Discussion

Nearly 90% of the 139 SFA household memberships reside on Byrnes Road and to the east. For various reasons, most residents in the Hilloway Park area to the west do not support the association with membership and/or volunteerism. Therefore, a bylaw change is being proposed whereby the Hilloway Park area west of Byrnes Road would no longer be considered part of Sherwood Forest, as far as association membership eligibility is concerned.

Jim Couling, president, presented the following change to the Sherwood Forest Association Bylaws, Article III, Number 1, eligible membership.

Shall the Sherwood Forest Association bylaws Article III, Number 1 be amended as follows:

Current bylaw

“The following shall be eligible for membership: Any and all property owners of Sherwood Forest, Fox Hills and Hilloway areas.” (The Hilloway area has been interpreted as including the Hilloway Park area west to Plymouth Road)

Proposed bylaw

“The following shall be eligible for membership: Any and all property owners of Sherwood Forest up to and including Byrnes Road and Fox Hills (Timberline) areas.” (The Hilloway Park area beyond west of Byrnes Road up to Plymouth Road would not be eligible for membership)

The members present discussed the proposal and a motion was made that the bylaws not be changed and that current membership boundaries remain the same (and that an effort be made to increase membership from the area in 2006-07). The motion was seconded and unanimously passed; no change was made to the bylaws.

Election of 2006-2007 Association Officers

Nominations were submitted to Jim Couling prior to the annual meeting. No other nominations were made at the meeting. A motion was made to elect the nominees for the May 1, 2006 - April 30, 2007 term. The motion was seconded and the officers unanimously elected; they are:

- President: Patrick Nolan (Live Oak Drive)
- Vice President: Sharon Whiting (Live Oak Drive)
- Secretary: Carolyn Ondrey (Byrnes Road)
- Treasurer: Wayne Bren (Live Oak Drive)

Open Discussion and Question/Answers session

Jim Couling introduced our ward’s city councilor, Tony Wagner. Mr. Wagner responded to resident concerns regarding traffic, deer management and zoning.

- Deer management is a citywide program conducted by the police department that occurs for a week each in late fall and early February. Sherwood Forest and Hilloway Park are one of many control sites. The purpose is to reduce the herd to a more environmentally natural size. Upon conclusion of the program’s second year in February 2006, the herd had been reduced by over 400 deer (prior to this spring’s birthing of mostly twins but triplets too).
- Mr. Wagner stated support of the need for better traffic speed control methods in our neighborhood (and the city) and that he would be bringing the issue up with the council and city departments.
- Much concern was expressed on home building variances being granted and lot sub-division occurring in the neighborhood. Mr. Wagner explained the process and recommended persons affected and/or concerned get involved and educate themselves. Zoning ordinances are available at city hall and the city Web site. Development plans are submitted first to the city planning department for review and changes, etc. After staff approval, development plans are presented with the staff recommendation to the planning commission. The planning commission for approval or approval w/conditions or denial. Development plans are then presented to the city council for final approval (or approval w/conditions or denial).

City planning staff is willing to meet personally and review submitted plans with affected residents prior to presentation of such to the planning commission. All property owners within 400 feet of the proposed development are sent a letter with plan outline preliminarily approved by city staff and soliciting resident feedback. A second notice is sent announcing the date of the planning commission hearing. Residents, including those living beyond 400 feet of the subject, can attend the planning commission hearing and testify for or against (testimony should be fact-based as opposed to subjective opinion). Residents have ten days to appeal to the city council a development plan approved by the planning commission.

Mr. Wagner also stated that just because a variance is granted for one property it does not necessarily mean it will be granted for another property. According to him, “precedence” is interpreted by the city as valid only for one year.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.
Submitted by Whitney Pierce, Secretary