

November 2009 Newsletter

2010 Budget Approved

The Colecroft Station Board approved the Association's 2010 Budget on October 14, 2009. Average Residential Assessments for 2010 rise by a little more than \$2 per month.

Looking more closely at expenses, the Association shaved \$6,000 off payroll, negotiated \$2,000 off phone bills, \$2,000 off elevator maintenance and smaller sums on other services. A \$5,400 increase in electric power, an increase in landscaping (as we moved out of the landscape warranty period) and smaller increases in other contractor services offset the savings.

\$1 out of every \$3 in condo fees goes into the Capital Repair and Replacement Funds, the funding pool used to keep Association Common Elements – elevators, garage doors, cooling tower and such – in good repair. The Association is projected to enter 2010 with \$340,000 in Capital Repair and Replacement Reserves and next year's budget adds \$216,500 to these Reserves. Apart from balcony re-conditioning, likely garage door and other smaller repairs and replacements, no major capital projects are anticipated in 2010.

Thank You, Marlene – Santos – Oscar !

We owe to our wonderful staff much of our budget stability during the last three years. Site Manager Marlene Jose has a unique ability to negotiate deals with a roster of four-dozen contracting companies while remaining friends. (There is no truth to the rumor that Marlene delivers apple pie to losers.) Santos Munoz willingly took on the time-consuming job this summer of watering our new landscaping – and thereby reduced first-year plant attrition to less than 1% – while doing a very professional job painting and power-washing. Meanwhile, Oscar Medina assumed Housekeeping tasks with dedication and enthusiasm. Thank you all!

Universal Gym Machine

The Universal Gym machine is nearly 20 years old and in need of major repair or replacement. Some users consider that it should be replaced with separate machines because this is more functional when several people are using the Universal Gym features. Additionally, descending weights transmit annoying impacts into residential units above. Since many residents work non-standard hours and the Exercise Room is used 24/7, these impact transmissions may occur when other residents are trying to sleep.

Rob Cross and Jim Fazzio have agreed to consult with residents about reconditioning or replacing the machine and greater use of mats. If the existing equipment is replaced, the next question will be whether to purchase a single or multiple machines. Rob and Jim will be leading a discussion of this matter on **Monday, November 16, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room.**

Neighborhood Parking

Mass transit and residential high density promoters are lobbying the City of Alexandria to limit the number of garage spaces per unit in new rental and condo buildings – and to **deny on-street parking permits** to residents of multi-family buildings. Denial of on-street parking permits would affect Colecroft Station residents who own a second car.

The theory is that rationing parking will encourage mass transit use – as in Manhattan. The “Manhattan Theory” fails to acknowledge that employment in our area is scattered throughout the region and many City residents commute to Tysons Corner, Fort Belvoir, Reston, Chantilly and other places not served by Metro. One neighbor has worked for the same Agency during the last four years in three different venues, only one of which was accessible by Metro, and this resident needed a car whenever scheduled to meet with counterparts in other Agencies!

Richard Calderon has been invited to a City planning meeting to comment on proposed changes to parking ordinances. **Please participate in the process by filling out the attached questionnaire and returning it to the Site Office by Monday, November 30, 2009.**

Sliding Door Tracks

Balcony sliding doors are Limited Common Elements, which means that Unit Owners are responsible for cleaning and the Association for repairs. We are prematurely replacing wheels broken by dirty tracks at a cost of \$120 per door. **Please check your sliding door track and vacuum / clean if not smooth.** Wiping the track with WD40 would finish the job nicely.

Inkberry Hedge in Turning Circle

In September 2008, Springfield Nursery laid a flagstone path to the lawn facing Metro. In October 2009, Springfield Nursery added an Inkberry hedge to the Turning Circle. These improvements were generated by concerns of some unit owners facing the turning circle who objected to seeing lawn urine-nitrogen burns. The curved Inkberry hedge provides landscape layering and the aesthetic result proves that pets are a plus and no detriment to curb appeal

Miscellaneous Housekeeping

- Owners and renters are encouraged to report to Site Manager Marlene Jose any malfunctioning Common Elements (e. g. broken window-cranks or elevator cab misalignments with lobby floors). The Site Office is staffed Monday through Friday, 9:30 am – 2:30 pm. Tel: 703-684-9064. E-mail: Colecroftstation@Verizon.net.
- Kitchen-sink disposals in multi-storey buildings have a limited function of macerating and rinsing away **table scraps**. Our plumbers advise that residents should run water for at least two (2) minutes after shutting off the disposal to thoroughly clear drains and prevent plumbing back-ups. Some types of waste (coffee grinds, potato / onion peels, celery / carrot-stems, rice, pasta, grease) should not be sent through the disposal.
- The elevators in our Towers are extremely expensive to repair. Please contact the Site Office before moving or taking delivery of anything larger than a shopping cart or comparable load. Site Staff is more than willing to lock-down and pad the elevators to reduce the chance of damage to the doors and interiors of the cabs. Owners and renters engaged in moves or accepting large deliveries should contact Site Staff at completion so that elevator pads and packing debris can be removed and the elevators inspected for any damage. The OTIS elevator dimensions are:
Cabs – 49 inches deep and 80 inches wide. **Doors** – 84 inches high and 41 inches wide.

On-Street Parking Questionnaire

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Please circle the appropriate response.

- A. I/we live in a:**
- 1 Bedroom household.
 - 2 Bedroom household.
 - 3 Bedroom household.
- B. My/our household needs:**
- No car for work related / other trips.
 - 1 car for work related / other trips.
 - 2 cars for work related / other trips
 - 3 cars for work related / other trips.
- C. Over the next four years I/we anticipate using Mass Transit daily to reach work by:**
- Nobody
 - 1 Person
 - 2 People
 - 3 People
- D. An On-street Parking Permit allowing unlimited parking is:**
- Not** necessary for me/us.
 - Very** necessary for me/us.