

Mission Hills Condominium Association

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the MHCA Board of Directors was held on Tuesday, June 27th, 2023, at Mission Hills Condo Association's Club House and on Zoom.

I. Meeting Called to Order

- A. The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM by Al Robinson, Vice President, who also acted as chair for the meeting.

II. Roll Call

- A. Cheryl Acton, Secretary, took roll call. Present were:
 - 1. John Emberson, President - via zoom
 - 2. Al Robinson - Vice President
 - 3. Jone Burr, Treasurer
 - 4. Cheryl Acton, Secretary
 - 5. Doug Kuchle, Member at Large
- B. A quorum was established.
- C. Also present were:
 - 1. John Prokovich - Facilities Supervisor
 - 2. John Snow - guest speaker - Arborist
- D. There were approximately 10 residents attending in the Clubhouse. And 8 on zoom.

III. Meeting Minutes

This minutes will be more of a highlight of the exchange between John Snow and the board but it will be referenced to John Snow's report regarding Phase I tree study. Please refer to the study for more details. John Snow and John Prokovich had an informative Q&A, later John Snow took questions from the Board and attending residents and those attending on Zoom as well. The brief is as follows:

JP: Report mentions longevity of trees.

JS: If trees are not taken care of, life expectancy will probably decrease.

JP: Pruning every 2-3 years?

JS: Depends on specific need of each tree

JP: You suggest "outsourcing staff, pruning and take down?"

JS: Yes.

JP: "Project Manager with Certified Arborist"?

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JS: That is a general statement for management components as a reference. Strategic guidance thinking into the future.

JP: "Pipe realigning. Opportunity of addressing Phase I 3-4 live oaks on the courtyard."

JS: Planting smaller trees, staggered on a diamond formation and space them properly.

JP: Two live oaks and crape myrtle with the canopy over the roof will put us back were we are in relation to leaves over the roofs

JS: Trees have leaves and will blow on roofs. Limbs over hanging roofs are a different issue. If trees are maintained properly, I'm not concerned about limbs over hanging roofs. You could put 2 live oaks in the center area of the courtyard, several crape myrtles or even palm trees to accent. That is more of a landscape design. The live oaks, I recommend, being more centrally located because of the sewer lines up against the rear of the homes.

JP: In order to prevent what happens now when those live oaks are 15 years, prune properly.

JS: Key concepts: landscape concept, understanding when Mission Hills was built, the mature size of the tree. Also, understanding the genetic potential. Very few trees are goin to reach 100% of the genetic potential. Looking at the mature size we can determine where to put them.

JP: Utilities are public, this would be addressed by the utilities themselves. The sewer lines are privately own. That statement from John S is not correct because we had 6 figures on repairs in the last 3 years in utilities because of electrical lines because of the roots. We have to pay for that.

JS: It depends where the utilities are located. Most utilities when I had them located are in front by the road. For the most part, your utility company should be maintaining them. When it goes from their junction box to the building it becomes an issue the association has to address or the individual owner.

JP: There is a Duke Energy electrical line in the courtyard.

JS: I would not know that because it wasn't shown by Duke.

JP: The sewer lines and clean outs are mainly in the back of the patios.

JS: You can see the clean outs. Not suggesting to cut the root and the tree will be fine. Appears that the roots are on the tree side, not the utility side.

JP: The 8 foot planting distance is not up to date because of the canopy of the root system.

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JS: Can't see the root distance, short of excavating. We use formulas available to us so we have a good estimate of where that root system is. I expect roots to extend to underneath those patios. The question is, What diameter are those roots and are they significant to provide the structural support to the tree. At this point it is insignificant conflict unless you go there and trench the whole back yard and then is when you can run into some problems.

JP: "Excavating the sewer lines using hand tools and air or water excavation techniques to minimize root damage repairing or replacing the lines and installing root barriers for future root intrusion" Is that what you recommend?

JS: That is one method. Can go in there with some air tools and excavate out those areas do many kind of pipe replacement, repair work that need to be done. It would be wise to install some root barriers to reduce future conflict. The problem is that the roots can grow over or under it. Nothing is fool proof. But, if you want to preserve the trees, have to minimize the potential damage to the tree root, all these makes good sense.

If I had my preference, I would be pipe realigning, it might be more cost effective and might yield better results. I'm not a plumber. A lot of literature supports method of repairing damage pipes.

JP: Either way is going to cost money. A contractor could add barriers and will add to their bottom line.

JS: I don't disagree. If I had my choice, we would go back 50 years and plant the trees in a different area and may be not quite as many and we would not have some of these issues but the reality is we are faced with and we have to make good choices based on some planning probably in relationship to the infrastructure, some trees may have to go. But, ultimately we should preserve some of the trees at least extend their life makes good sense for the overall whole community.

JP: "Consequences", "In every instance the likelihood of tree failure was rated improbable..." Would you inspect the trees every 2 years?

JS: I would have a qualified arborist inspect the trees every 2 years. That could be pushed out depending what you do with the trees in the next couple of years. If we rate them in 100 year time frame, they would rate pretty high, every tree would have a high risk. We have to look at it from a reasonable time. In Florida, is a 2 year time frame and we base that on the climate, weather conditions, most of the decay, rot out a tree. That doesn't mean every tree needs to be inspected at a Level 2 every 2 years. That's an overkill. A lot of things can be picked up on a Level 1 inspection, and based on the results of Level 1, target a tree with additional in-depth analysis.

JP: The 15 trees you analyzed, suggested to take down 2 and 5 of them need additional info using a resistograph.

JS: The issue is that some of these trees, specially in yellow, have this boxes of decay. Therefore, we can't assess how far the decay is. Just because there is a cavity on the tree, doesn't mean the tree will fall over. There are plenty of trees out there that have large significant cavities that are just fine. With a resistograph, you can measure how much sound wood the trees has. That's an option. Biggest thing is eliminating some of

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This obvious things like dead wood over hanging the buildings that have decay, reducing those back up appropriately. One of the trees is a perfectly healthy tree but it needs to be pruned out, no reason to remove it. That tree in red needs to be removed. That tree over there, for example, there is nothing wrong with it but some over hang limbs. Just need to cut the limbs and pruned out, no reason to remove that tree.

JP: \$225.32 invested into these 15 trees. A resistograph is \$750.00 per tree. Trying to keep the trees for 5-10 year. Aren't we kicking the can down the road when taking a tree down is \$2,000?

JS: The community has these trees and were planted and over the years have received certain amount of care they received throughout the years has hasten the problems the trees has. The board has to make is a decision to remove all the trees, have nothing, replace the tree, you are looking at removing your largest asset to the community and looking at replanting them with smaller trees 2-4 inch caliber trees because is impossible for the Association can afford to plant 30 inch diameter trees; is going to be \$100,000. Look at these assets the community has and determine how best to manage that. You bring a valid point "are we kicking the can down the road?" The answer is Yes and No. We can take that immediate action, we don't have this inflation effect and this other issues. But, what we end up loosing by ding that can not be easily replaced.

JP: I agree but when you talk about the tree that is 100 years down the road but keep in mind ours are not 100, is 47 what we are planning now, we don't even know if its going to be there.

JS: Suggest the association needs to establish a good relationship with reputable tree companies that can perform the right work. What you will find is that you will be spending money on trees care but these newer and younger trees the cost of care over the life of the trees is going to be less than you would pay if do nothing and wait 10-15 years and we have these big limbs where they could have been pruned out when they were 1-2 inches diameter limbs.

The smart way to address this is to identify these problems, come up with a workable plan, build a working budget and work that plan from there.

Jack Emberson: We are a tree community, trees will cost us because we love our trees. We need a person like you that understands trees, trees will cost us because we love our trees. My feeling is we need an objective person such as yourself that doesn't have a horse in this race. In my mind, periodically, you would be like our doctor.

As far as limbs falling, those potential issues have to be looked at. I think someone like you that says what to do, another that says cutting and another that says running. But, the person the pruning, would do it at your direction, your prescription, you are the doctor in this case, we need that. It is the board that needs to understand the value and how to approach this,

JS: I am not affiliated with any tree service is up to the board to make that decision. What I am concerned is what you said about prescriptions. That's what I do, I make prescriptions for trees and in some cases might be the tree being removed. It is important to get the right people doing the necessary pruning.

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The Board will have to take action and will have to budget:

1. Do a Level 1 assessment,
2. Do a Level level 2 if needed.

In my tree industry, we have this Risk Assessment qualification (which I have) I don't know why they push for a Level 2 assessment. With no knowledge, I can be waking around and picking trees to be removed. Look at all the trees in the community and come up with a framework and then a plan with periodic inspections. I don't know how we got to the 75 trees, it doesn't matter at this point. What is important how to forward. Have a plan and do periodic inspections.

JP: you just answer my next question. What are we going to do with the 60 out of 75 trees talking to those residents I will refer them to the board. They are doing another study. My concern is that we have roots causing problems in Mission Drive East because they planted a tree right on back and is going under the foundation through the front into the sewer system; that is a live oak. We have one that just came in today at 1275 Mission Hills Blvd. had a back up and they want \$3500 for repairs.

JS: We have to separate the risk factor from the infrastructure issue. They are distinct issues. When the 2 begin to cross over is when we go in and start cutting roots to replace the infrastructure and damage the structural root. When we have trees and infrastructure, we have conflicts. The long term solution is to remove those trees, phase them out over time and replacing them with better suited, planted in the right location and will not be creating conflict 47 years from now.

JP: We are on the same page

JS: Were those trees that came down from the 60 or 75 identified?

JP: No. They are two.

JS: That's why I wanted to look at all the trees, not just the 60 or 75 identified. That's why I wanted to do an assessment of all the trees and not only the 60 trees.

JE: Take steps by step. Looking at the situation and not over reacting is very wise. I'm not ignorant of the fact that there is issues with plumbing underground but is how we approach those fixes is probably different of how it was done in the past.

Barry: What do the trees mean on property value in Mission Hills?

JS: Both angels: Studies show that having mature trees will sell from 5-15% more than properties that don't. Other is a realtor or property appraisers, don't have the knowledge or experience to provide a value for the trees, it is called Plant Appraisal. I did an appraisal 3 years ago on an aerial view. (Aprox 2.9mil value on previous study)

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“Owner” on zoom: Isn't it true that lots will grow even though the tree is removed?

JS: I would say that is a true statement. The trees are an energy storage mechanism. They might grow for a while, they are energy and will grow for a while. The caveat to this is that if there are no green leaves, the tree will not continue to grow.

Christine Ruekberg on Zoom: We should have 3 bids.

JS: Not always the company that cuts trees is good at trimming. Definitely have 3 bids.

A point on Storm, In our area, now that we are in hurricane season, people are getting antsy. I don't worry about the hurricanes because reality is that we have a warning and we have to leave, keep your insurance. I worry is the tropical storms. Limbs fall down or trees with 60-70 mph wind and these trees get affected.

JE: The board has been addressing the initial trees that you have pointed out. I'm concern that there are storm out there right now, we need to act as quick as we can on this but there are other areas. You did just a small segment. We are going to be dealing quickly as fast as we can to address and be moving quickly. I like your conservative approach to trees and nature.

Have a good doctor, a good pruner and someone that takes it all out. We are not going to forget what's going on underground and the problems and issues that comes with trees. It was mentioned the value of mature trees to home owners and other issues that come with it, all that needs to be balanced. We are not forgetting about the maintenance issue, our focus would be safety, what is right, get everyone ASAP based on the trees and our budget. All has to be balanced and this board is committed in doing that.

JS: I just want direction from you to implement, early July?

Jone Burr: We need a quote before we can start talking. We need some bulk part figure of a study of the entire property.

JS: I sent over the tree scorecard sample; That is the direction I would take to do the whole property for \$18,000

JE: I just want a future relationship if this is the approach we need to take.

JS: I did that with a community in largo. The big cost is the upfront cost. That's the big cost and then implementing a the plan.

AI: Which 2 trees need to be removed?

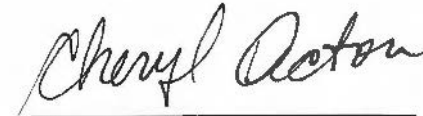
JS: # 9 and 10. I look at being pragmatic # 10 could be saved but the cost at the end is not worth it. I'm always going to err in the side of safely. I rather see a tree be removed than get a phone call that someone got hurt. We can't prevent but we can make good assessments.

Jone made a motion to get a proposal from John Snow, John Emberson second it, all voted in favor, motion passed

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Jack made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Doug second it. All voted in favor, motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 5:20PM


Cheryl Acton, Secretary