

Norton Hills Estates Recreation Association

September 2007 Newsletter

By Stan Miller – pres@nhera.org – 780-9219

Enjoy the Beach! Deck & Stairs Rebuild Complete

Construction of our new deck and beach stairs is complete, and they look and feel great.

A few details need to be tended to before we make final payment, but those will go very quickly and should not cause further closures.

Health problems prevented the contractor from starting on schedule, and the crew lost more than three days to rain during the work. Despite that, the stairs were closed for only about 10 days during construction.

The entire structure is significantly more solid than the old one. The new stairs are much closer to the dune, which will improve their long-term stability and allowed making them less steep and more even. And the deck and stairs treads are made of composite materials that will outlast wood without requiring maintenance.

The short path from the driveway to the deck has been covered with recycled rubber bark, which is guaranteed to hold its color for seven years.

The Hathaway Court Recreation Association has asked that we join them in purchasing a new sign that lists both associations on the same sign, and I expect we'll do that.

Remember that the driveway leading to the deck is a private drive; residents are welcome to walk and bike on it, but must not drive up, and absolutely no parking is allowed anywhere along that driveway.

Thanks to Vice President Joe McNarland and Lower Norcrest Block Chair Herm Zuidema for leading the effort to choose a contractor for this work.

City Mulls Second Entrance to Lake Harbor Park

The City of Norton Shores is considering adding a second public entrance to Lake Harbor Park with a parking lot off Treeline Drive.

The parking lot could be added if the city raises enough funds to purchase an additional 14.3 acres of forest north of the current park's boundaries.

An entrance to the park off Treeline would almost surely increase traffic in the neighborhood and lead to more speeding on Dunes Parkway.

Also, residents complain of underage drinking, trash and other problems at the current entrance off Lake Harbor Drive, which we could expect to occur at the new lot as well unless the city adds police patrols.

Please watch this issue closely as it moves forward, and let the City Council know your views.

Thanks to current Hathaway Court President Craig Lowe and Treasurer John Jack, and to former president Steve Richardson, for their help on this joint project.

And thanks again to all residents for your patience during construction. Enjoy the beach!

I'm going to add a few things here that most residents probably won't find very interesting but that should be widely known for future care:

- The posts, stairs railings and balusters, which are treated wood, should be pressure washed and sealed every two years, starting in fall 2008.
- No part of the new deck or stairs, including the wood portions, should ever be painted.
- We have four 8-foot sections of extra decking in case thoughtless people damage the stairs by doing stupid things like tossing telephone poles down the steps for a bonfire again. Currently those extra sections are in my garage.

Annual Meeting Returns to House of Chan Sept. 25

With the unfortunate closing of Topo's, which was a very popular choice for last year's annual meeting, this year's meeting will return to House of Chan on Sept. 25.

There are surprisingly few options in Muskegon or Norton Shores for a group of our size with our budget. House of Chan has a very nice facility and has taken good care of us in the past, and I'm sure they will do so again. The buffet is quite varied and can accommodate most dietary needs.

Dinner and one drink per adult are free to all residents in good standing; a cash bar will be available.

All association offices are up for election. As you know, Treasurer Stacy Sewick has decided that five years is enough and will not run for re-election, so we will need a volunteer to fill her shoes. And we have a lot to talk about this year, including:

- Establishing dues for 2008.
- Whether to pursue traffic calming without financial assistance from the city.
- Whether to buy computer software for our new treasurer.
- Whether to hold a fourth annual block party.
- Whether to join the Hathaway Court Recreation Association in some joint activities.

Please RSVP to Secretary Barb Miller by Sept. 18. You can reach Barb at 780-9219 or secy@nhera.org.

Finances: Jan. 1-Aug. 28, 2007

Income

Association Dues	10,535.00
Lot Sales Fees	250.00
Directory Ad Sales	95.00
Interest Income	354.01

Total Income \$11,234.01

Expenses

Activities	1,025.86
Depreciation	665.00
Filing Fees	20.00
Licenses/Permits	50.00
Maintenance	365.00
Post Office Box	40.00
Postage & Delivery	140.01
Printing & Reprod.	404.92
Taxes	525.80

Total Expenses \$ 3,236.59

Net income \$ 7,997.42

Current Assets \$15,895.71

Fixed Assets \$18,651.98

TOTAL ASSETS \$34,547.69

Fixed assets include \$6,245.74 paid by NHERA as a down payment related to the construction costs for the new deck and beach stairs. Those costs are depreciated over the useful life of the asset.

We will be paying the remainder of the construction costs shortly. Hathaway Court Recreation Association paid \$625.26 as their share of the down payment, and will pay their share of the remainder as well.

Second Garage Sale, Two Goodwill Pickups, Third Block Party All Successful

At least 16 homes participated in the second neighborhood garage sale of the year, drawing good crowds. Turnout was good enough that I suspect we'll continue to run two annual garage sales, one in late May and a second in early August.

Goodwill picked up donations at curbside throughout the neighborhood after both garage sales this year, and reports that they got a large truckload full each time. Thank you for your generosity!

Our third annual block party drew about 45 kids and just over 30 adults. The dunk tank was very popular; thanks to all the good sports willing to get dunked into very cold water. The clown also was very popular, and kids kept resident Heather Sturr busy painting faces the whole time for the third year in a row.

Thanks to Muskegon Mayor Steve Warmington and neighborhood resident Bill Groom for leading the bike parade on their motorcycles.

Thanks to Scott Sewick for grilling hot dogs again this year, and to all the kids who helped run the carnival games.

Thanks to many residents of Bloomfield Court for helping set up and clean up.

And thanks to the 2007 block party committee – Chair Rachael Ernvall, with Stacy Sewick, Barb Miller, Sarah McCarthy and Kim Taylor – for putting together another successful event.

A few pictures are posted on our Web site at <http://nhera.org/news/07Party>.

*** Briefly ***

Treasurer needed for 2007-08. Stacy Sewick has decided that her fifth year as treasurer will be her last, so your neighborhood association will need a volunteer to replace her beginning with the annual meeting Sept. 25. If you're interested, you can nominate yourself at the annual meeting, but please contact Stacy at treas@nhera.org or 780-0256, or me at pres@nhera.org or 780-9219, to let us know. Stacy can tell you more about the job.

Traffic safety starts at home. Residents who walk the neighborhood regularly, including Barb and me, notice that many of the speeders and stop-sign runners aren't driving through the neighborhood but driving home to it, or to work or school from it. Parents, please talk to your young drivers – and pay attention to the speedometer yourselves as you rush out the door in the morning or hurry home in the evening. The speed limit is 25 mph on all neighborhood streets, and the stop signs mean stop, not slow down a little. And in case you haven't been here long enough to know this, the stop signs at Dunes and Pleasant Hill are there because two little girls on a tandem bicycle got hit and seriously injured by a speeding driver. The few seconds it takes to actually stop and look don't seem quite so important, do they?

Oak wilt was diagnosed in a tree on Bloomfield Court this summer. Oak wilt is a fungus that kills oak trees; tree surgeons say the disease could spread rapidly throughout the neighborhood if not contained. Containment efforts continue, and so far no other trees have shown signs of infection.

If you left a pink plastic serving tray at the block party, contact Barb Miller at 780-9219 or secy@nhera.org.

New to the neighborhood? Did you receive a welcome packet? If not, contact your block chair or Secretary Barb Miller at 780-9219 or secy@nhera.org.

RSVP BY SEPT. 18 FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING!

Contact Secretary Barb Miller at 780-9219 or secy@nhera.org

Questions or Comments? Contact President Stan Miller at 780-9219 or pres@nhera.org, or see your neighborhood directory or www.nhera.org to reach other officers or your block chair.