



BARQUE HILL ASSOCIATION Annual Report - 2010

President's Note

Hello Neighbors! We kicked off the 2010-2011 Barque Hill Association season with a fine evening of warm fellowship and animated conversation this past Friday, June 11th 2010 at Tinker's Son in Norwell Center. Thanks to both Anne Merna and Rosemary Spurway for organizing this fine event and deepest thanks to the 65+ of you who came out and made the Social such a special and fun time. If you liked the idea of doing this, let Anne know and we can budget it as a regular occasion once or twice a year.

As our Association's incoming president this year, I would also like to take a moment and thank Mr. Tom Poor for his 9 years of service to our neighborhood and association as our immediate Past President. Tom remains on the board as Treasurer and I am counting on his guidance for all those little things that always got done invisibly and that almost always led back to Tom. It is more than just a little daunting to think I will be able to fill his shoes.

Please let us know what you are thinking about the work we are doing for you and the neighborhood. What makes an Association like ours work best is an active board - this year's crew is 15 strong so many hands should make light our work - plus lots of input from you all as to how we are doing. We serve with you in mind so please make it easier for us not to have to read your mind. We all live here - we all have an equal say. If you do not speak up, you agree with the decisions of those who did.

See you at the September Picnic and have a safe and restful summer. Drive with care.

Treasurer's Report

We are in good shape financially. Our fiscal 2010 (4/30/10) year ended with a budget surplus (see enclosed Income Statement) due to several items with less than budgeted expenses.

88 of 107 total Barque Hill owners paid their voluntary dues, one more than last year. Paid members are so noted on our web site as well as on our address/telephone listing that is published in the fall. On the expense side the major items of mowing and real estate taxes were about as budgeted. We reduced our picnic expense by asking everyone to bring their own drinks. Other expenses, notably fence repair and tree work, were lower, helping to bring total expenses in below budget. For the second year running the valuation of our six common land parcels declined, this year down \$24,000 to \$330,400, but our taxes increased about 1% due to a higher tax rate.

Looking forward to next year, we are budgeting level revenues from dues while expecting modest increases in expenses, producing a small deficit. We have a healthy reserve position of -\$9,000 which gives us some flexibility for new initiatives such as mulching Barque Hill Drive and some social gatherings.

Grounds

- The Association continues to contract with On The Green for our lawn-mowing and landscaping work. We reviewed the contract against other providers last fall and their prices and service remains in line with market and provides good value to the Association. Our agreement calls for \$250 per visit to maintain the common grounds. Given this year's unusually rainy spring they commenced earlier than is customary in April and we expect they will operate through October into early November if temps warrant. In addition, the vendor performs a twice-annual major clean up of the common areas - once in the spring, once in the fall.

- Outgoing president Tom Poor observed at this year's Annual Meeting there has been an increase in parking on the median on Barque Hill Drive by contractors and daily visitors to our neighborhood and suggested owners feel free to approach folks so doing and asking them politely to remove their vehicles to a more suitable parking area or to the street.
- The Association contracts with Armstrong Fence to maintain and replace fence posts and rails as necessary. We spent approximately \$200 this year of the \$1000 allocated to such repairs.
- Tom Poor expressed the Association's continued thanks to Jessie Chai for the very pretty floral work that is done at the entry to Barque Hill Drive.
- Both the Till Rock and Barque Hill Drive boundary stonewalls have been set back into this year's version of orderly free-standing placement - barring the appearance of any off-season snow plows or injudicious drivers, they should remain in good shape until next winter. All are invited to improve upon their current organization or presentation as the mood strikes.
- Work in clearing, maintaining and mitigating any poison ivy along the trails is being done as is required and customary. Our goal is to keep clearance on paths at a minimum 2-person side-by-side width. The best way to help us with this work is to just walk the trails.
- During this year's Annual Meeting John Garvey observed that segments of the median on Barque Hill Drive are unsightly, in terrible shape and absent grass are unable to hold down sand and dust. John then recommended overspreading those poorly-sod sections with mulch to allow them to revert to a more natural state. Significant discussion was held, numerous creative suggestions were proposed and the assembled unanimously agreed a solution was warranted, the best first step at this time being the application of a cover of hemlock mulch over the areas impacted. Look for that work to begin in the next 2 to 3 weeks once 3 bids have been solicited and reviewed. Any comments or input, please direct them to John Garvey or Hugh Spurway.

Association Functions

Welcome Committee - Anne Merna

- Anne stated that we have had two new families move in since the last meeting and continues to accord them a warm welcome on behalf of the Association as is our custom.

Picnic - This year's picnic will be held at Shipyard Park on Saturday, September 18th

- Having reduced this past year's expense and securing additional good will discounting from our good friends at Busy Bee Jumpers, we were able to enjoy a tremendous event that was blessed with almost perfect weather, full activities for the kids and still came in under \$1500.

Social at Tinker's Son, Norwell MA Friday June 11th 6-8 pm

- Anne Merna and Rosemary Spurway organized an Association-sponsored Social held at Tinker's Son in Norwell Center on Friday June 11th that was by all measures a tremendous success. Members wishing to suggest subsequent events of this nature should contact Anne or Rosemary.

Common Lands

- It would be fair to say that a permanent solution to the long struggle we have annually with how best to mark and protect the Barque Hill median from predation of Town of Norwell snow plows and their well-meaning but overzealous operators during the snowy months continues to elude us. Any new ideas are always welcomed.

Web Site. (<http://www.barquehill.org/>)

- John Garvey our Webmaster reminds owners that links to vendor recommendations are available and asks you for more input on those vendors whose products/services you feel would benefit the Association's members.

FYI

- Barstow Trust of Dallas, TX contacted the Town of Norwell and inquired if the Town was interested in accepting a parcel of land - Lot 130 - as a gift in order to cancel the \$900 tax outlay Barstow Trust is currently paying the Town annually. Lot 130 is essentially undeveloped tidal salt marshland on the North River surrounded by lands held by the Association under the protection of conservation and also adjacent to Lots 131 and 132, now owned by the Town Town Manager Jim Boudreau suggested Barstow approach the Association directly, which it did. Please see our website for a map of these plots.
- It is our intention to move forward and draft a courtesy reply to Barstow Trust on behalf of the Association expressing our thanks and soliciting further details as to terms of an agreement should one be forthcoming. It is neither the Board's nor the Association's intention at this point to enter into any agreements prior to presenting same to the full Membership for action so look for regular updates as this unfolds. It is our plan to continue to gather information as it relates to the parties' willingness to offset any of the cost or tax burdens associated with this transaction as raised by members during the discussion and report our findings back to the Association at such time as this information warrants.

2010-2011 Barque Hill Board of Directors

Steve Lynch - President
Tom Poor - Treasurer
Anne Merna - Secretary
Hugh Spurway - Vice President
Dan Uhlman - Vice President

Directors:

Bob Ashley
Kevin Bedford
Tom Flynn
John Garvey - Webmaster
Andrew Sage
Joel Shepherd
Rosemary Spurway
Eric Thorbahn
Rob West
Ken Williams