

# Lakeside Terrace

## Con-Do-It

Lakeside Terrace Condominium

November 2006

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

A peaceful October day with a blue sky and a brisk wind blowing the small clouds quickly from sight is perfect for a saunter around the neighborhood. Everything seems new and shiny after last week's rain. The balconies are splendid with newness. The yellow and brown leaves dance across the grass like rays of sunshine. A closer look at the surrounding landscape in front of building 7501 reveals tiredness. A tiredness from being beyond its youth and prime. The aging of the trees were not as apparent to the beholder when the foliage was there. But now with the change in season the leaves have dropped revealing more than previously in view with full foliage.

The trees seem to go up and up giving the appearance that there are a few leaves at the top with the remainders being trunks displaying scars from forty years on the premise. The trees are disproportionate. Since the branches and leaves have been removed on the building side to protect the roof and balconies from debris they look like half trees. Once proud and glorious trees are wired together to give the appearance of being a tree. If the wires were removed the branches would peel away like banana peels.

An examination of a branch blown from one of these trees shows extensive interior decay. If one branch displays this much rot, what about the whole tree? A tree silently rotting away is a sad thing and an unsafe thing. Branches can peel away at any time raining destruction to objects in its path.

When a beloved pet, a furry friend who has been with us many years becomes ill a vet is consulted. Knowing we have loved and nursed our companion through good times and bad the vet still has to tell us that nothing more can be done. The hideous task of deciding to end life is ours alone to make. We want the pain we see in our pet's eyes to end but we also want to have more time with our beloved friend. What is the right decision?

Our trees matured gracefully enriching our lives with shade and beauty while cleansing the air. We are fond of them and receive joy as they change from season to season. One day the arborist pronounces that our beloved trees are interiorly decaying and there is nothing more to do to stop it. Measures in the past were taken to prolong life but now it is to no avail. The trees are at the end of a long productive life. The decision is tough. It is difficult to end the life of a tree.

Recently while obtaining estimates for future landscaping at 7501 an arborist diagnosed severe decay in our trees. Also they have far outgrown their current space

which is restricted by the building and the roadway. The extensive root systems are dominating the total area around them. For any future landscaping to survive around these trees in front of 7501, these decayed trees with the extensive root system will have to be removed. The decision is tough.

It is obvious that the trees are way past their prime. They are an inherent danger as flying projectiles to any body or thing close to them. Their purpose of enhancing the landscape and providing adequate shade on a summer day has long passed. Currently they are a detriment to a pleasing harmonious landscape. It is sad to see trees in this state. So just as it is hard with our pets to make decisions that effect life, it is the same hard decision to make with trees and their future.

Take a look for yourself and see what a sad state of disrepair in which our languishing trees currently exist. Imagine young vigorous trees growing instead. Remember—for everything there is a season!!

See you around the neighborhood.  
President, Board of Directors

## **LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Landscape Committee has been working to obtain proposals to replace and improve the foundation plantings in front of 7501. At the October Board Meeting I gave an update on the Committee's recent efforts to obtain landscape bids and presented a report to the Board with a list of contractors contacted and those who had responded. In the course of our interviews with contractors and arborists we were told that the silver maples in front of 7501 would present a problem because their roots were growing across the garden beds toward the structure particularly on the 20 wing as well as down the slope and into the sidewalk and possibly the driveway. They recommended removing the trees now before we spent any money on rejuvenating our landscape.

The Landscape Committee has been working toward finalizing a bid before the Budget Committee deliberations commence in the new year in order to make a realistic request for funds to continue new landscaping in 2007-08. We have been told there is sufficient money in the 2006-07 budget to commence some of the work in the spring. We had not realized the trees would be a problem now, but all committee members realized in the beginning there were problems with the roots spreading and something would have to be done at some stage.

Because of our time table, and the fact that the Board's last meeting for the year will be in November, I felt we should advise the Board of our tree problems and request funds now for the work to be done in the late fall. We had two bids, one for \$12,600 and one for \$7,800 and were seeking at least one other. The Board approved the allocation of funds not to exceed \$8,000 to remove the four silver maples. Since the Board meeting, we have been advised by another arborist that a fir tree on the other side of our driveway between the big

oak tree and the dogwoods is rotting at the base and should be removed. We have received a lower bid from him to remove all four maples, the two smaller trees at the ends of the building, and the fir tree for less than \$6,000.

Some concerns have been raised as to whether a special permit is required for tree removal. I have talked to Ms. Laura Miller of the Montgomery County Environmental Protection Staff who advised that no permit was required in this case since the trees are on private land owned solely by the condominium community and don't fall into any of the categories which require prior approval.

In recent years trees have had to be removed because of disease or extreme crowding. We still have many beautiful trees on the property and the Committee plans to include trees in our landscaping plans. The community will be invited to review, make suggestions, etc. when we have a suitable landscape plan to offer. This has always been our aim. In the meantime we ask the community to understand our concerns and to look forward to how much more beautiful the property will look as we go forward with our rejuvenation plans.

Chairman, Landscape Committee

### **ACTIONS TAKEN AT OCTOBER BOARD MEETING**

**Trees:** The decision to remove trees is discussed in the President's column and in the report from the Landscape Committee.

**Cooling Tower:** The Board approved a contract with Densel Company for replacement of our cooling tower on the roof of 7505 at a cost of \$92,547. Originally the bid proposal called for a galvanized steel tower and Densel Company had been the low bidder at \$83,902. The Board questioned whether we should instead go to a longer-lasting stainless steel tower and asked what the difference in cost would be. It turned out to be an additional \$8,645. Considering that the galvanized steel would require replacement of its protective coating every five years as a cost of \$4,000-5,000 each time, the Board considered that the stainless steel tower would be cost effective over the life of the tower. Work is expected to begin in the late winter to early spring.

**Shed for tractor:** The Board approved the purchase of a small A-Frame shed to house the tractor at a cost of \$3,297.10. The tractor has been kept in the mechanical room which was always intended to be temporary arrangement. The shed will be placed in the parking lot by the side of the tennis court and will be under a light for security purposes.

**Snow removal contract:** The Board approved a one-year snow removal contract with Valley Crest. They have been performing this service in past years. The contract is on an hourly basis and we are only charged when they are called here to clear snow.

### **BUILDING NOTES**

**Balcony doors:** If you have old balcony doors be careful when you go out on the balcony not to let the door latch behind you. You need to leave the door open a crack so the lock does not catch and trap you out on the balcony. This happens to people from time to time and you need to be aware of it.

**Rear exit door:** The exit door for the 30-wing of 7501 is being replaced because it cannot be securely repaired. The lock has been replaced, but that did not fix the problem since it is in the door mechanism. Since our doors have to lock if we are to have security, a new door is on order and will be installed in about two weeks. In the meantime that door is not to be used although it could be unbolted in case of emergency.

### **INTEREST IN PARKING SPACE RENTAL**

At the finance Committee an idea was discussed of possibly numbering some spaces in the front of each building and renting them on a monthly basis for a small amount to residents who would like to have a guaranteed close parking space if they come in late in the evening. We would like to find out if there is any interest in such a proposal. If you would be interested, call the Office. No final decision has been made on whether such a proposal would be suitable, this is just to check for interest.

### **HOLIDAY PARTY**

#### **The Snowball Fling!**

Everyone mark your calendars for **Sunday, December 10**, for the **SNOWBALL FLING**, which will take place from 4 to 7pm in the Community Room in 7505.

Instead of the usual Holiday Dinner, the Lakeside Terrace Condo Social Committee thought it would be fun for condo residents who wish to do so, to contribute tasty tidbits or desserts from their ancestor's countries of birth, such as Tapas (Spain) or Sheep Dip (Ireland).

Wine, beer, sodas, fruit juices, tea, coffee and heavy hors d'oeuvres will be supplied. If anyone wishes to bring their own drinks, mixes and ice will be offered.

We hope everyone will come and enjoy a delightful "conversazione soiree"! Watch for the sign-up sheets on your laundry and mailroom bulletin boards.

Social Committee

## **HOLIDAY FUND FOR STAFF**

Every year we give residents a chance to show their appreciation for the work of our dedicated staff by making a contribution to a holiday fund which is then distributed to our employees. Contributions (cash or check made out to LSTC, in a sealed envelope marked "Staff Contribution") can be left at the Office. Contributions should be in by Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>.

## **NEXT BOARD MEETING**

The next Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 29 at 7:30pm. In keeping with our new policy of alternating meeting sites, this meeting will be held in the lobby of 7501. An Open Forum is scheduled for 7:00pm prior to the Board meeting. If no one has any questions or comments at 7:00, the Board Meeting is normally started early.

