



**September, 2022**

This issue of the newsletter contains an explanation of landscape modification forms, a quick preview of the October association meeting, a heartfelt thank you, the saga of the benches, and a couple of reminders.

### **Everything you ever wanted to know about LANDSCAPE MODIFICATION FORMS**

A major adjustment when we move from a private home to a condominium is that we are no longer responsible for some of the things we controlled as home owners. In a condo, the association owns and maintains the buildings, following the rough rule of thumb that “everything from the paint outwards” belongs to the association. Similarly, the association owns and maintains grounds that are “common areas,” generally the spaces between buildings, and “limited common areas,” generally the spaces that abut buildings (like front plantings and plantings alongside the buildings).

This edition of the newsletter will explain some basics about **landscape modification forms**. Next month, we’ll look at **building modification forms**.

#### **What is a landscape modification form?**

Modification forms can be found at <http://wwpines.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Master-Modification-Form.pdf> This is how you can request changes to plantings in your area. The form asks you to specify both the modification you would like to see and the reason you want a change. It also asks who will do the work, who will pay for the work, and if neighbors will be affected by the change.

#### **What happens to a landscape modification form after you turn it in?**

Modification forms can be electronically submitted from the wwpines.net website. Printed forms (with attached drawings, photos, etc.) can also be handed to a board member.

At the monthly board meeting, the board will vote to accept, reject, or accept with conditions each modification request.

#### **In general, what shapes the board’s decision?**

Short answer: the budget.

Longer answer:

- If a co-owner wants a plant removed because it is diseased or dying, the board generally agrees, and supplies replacement planting of its own choice.



- If a co-owner wants the board to re-do a front or side planting primarily for aesthetic or personal reasons, the board is likely to refuse.
- However, if a co-owner wants to re-do a planting at his/her own expense, and the plans presented in the modification form are acceptable, the board is likely to agree.
- In some cases, the board is willing to share costs with the co-owner. For example, if plant material is diseased or dying, but the co-owner wants a specific replacement that exceeds the board's budget, the board will pay for the removal, but not the re-planting.

### **Are there circumstances where co-owners can ask the board to do something, but no modification form is necessary?**

Any landscape work that *maintains* the plantings already in place does not require a modification form. Trimming, spraying for insects, dealing with broken or fallen branches, removing plant material that obstructs buildings, windows, air conditioners, or electric panels/boxes: all of these should be reported so that the board can address them, but none of them is a "modification." In fact, this sort of request can be handled by clicking on "contact us" at [wwpines.net](http://wwpines.net), then choosing "landscape" from the drop-down menu.

### **What is the landscape committee, and how does it function?**

The landscape committee, formed this year, is a group of volunteers who work with the board member in charge of landscaping (currently Gerry Stoneburner). Their role is to assess the general condition of the association's grounds, propose changes, and provide advice to that board member. All changes to limited common areas still require the condo owner to complete a modification request for full board approval.

### **How much gardening can co-owners do without filing a modification form?**

Annuals can be planted in the spring in mulched areas in front of and adjacent to buildings. The co-owner is responsible for removing such plantings by October 15. In addition, co-owners can place potted and hanging plants on their decks and porches, and in the limited common areas.

### **Annual Meeting of Waterway Pines Co-owners**

By law, condo associations must have once-a-year membership meetings. Mark your calendars for **Monday, October 10, at 7 p.m.** As we did in 2021, this meeting will be by Zoom. You will receive a Zoom link in the next few days. The board had to decide whether to meet in person, or via Zoom last spring. At that time, the uncertainty surrounding COVID, and



the fact that the previous year's Zoom meeting was well-attended and well-received, influenced the choice.

In the next week, you will receive a hefty email packet of information related to this meeting, including the 2023 association budget, information about association fees, a ballot for the two open board positions, and a chance to give board members feedback.

### **Thanks for serving on the board!**

One board member whose term is expiring is Paul Kehnle. Paul has served four non-consecutive terms on the board. We value Paul's experience, his ability to work with a variety of contractors and vendors, his calm when others are grouchy or irritated, and his efficient work in fielding requests from co-owners. Anyone who has served on the board knows that we also need to thank Paul's wife, Barb, for loaning him to us! If you see either Kehnle, let them know we appreciate Paul's volunteerism.

### **Moveable seating**

This summer, co-owners donated two benches to the association. Before you could blink an eye, one of them was stolen in broad daylight, hoisted atop the roof of someone's SUV. In response to that theft, benches are now labelled as Waterway Pines property, and are secured by bike chains. A bench was donated to replace the one stolen, and they are now situated on the east and west ends of the bridge. The plan is to store them over the winter, and to continue to move them around to find the best spot for their use. Gerry Stoneburner initiated this effort, and is happy to take suggestions about where to place them.

### **Two reminders:**

**Porch and deck furniture** as well as kayaks and other water craft must be stored away by the end of October. Gas grills may remain on decks or patios.

**Extended absence forms:** If you plan to be absent for more than two weeks, be sure to update your emergency key holder, if that has changed, and to file an Extended Absence form ([http://wwpines.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Extended\\_Absence\\_Form.pdf](http://wwpines.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Extended_Absence_Form.pdf)) with the board secretary. If your snowbird destination is the same each year, and if your local contacts do not change, you can mark your form "save for reference" at the top.

***See you at the association meeting!***