



Condominium Association

Newsletter

"A self-managed and run community composed of a volunteer Board that works to keep costs low while striving to enhance property values and provide efficient leadership through open and honest communication."

Summer 2020
(July/ August)

DIANA DRIVE REPAVING



As communicated in earlier newsletters, the state and county had appropriated monies to address drainage and grading issues on Diana Drive. Representative Mike Ramone had requested funding for this costly undertaking to re-grade and re-pave the entire street as there are serious inherent problems with the original fabrication and installation, ones which could not be rectified with simple measures such as patching and drainage repairs.

The Board was just newly informed that this project will be moving forward, following obvious delays brought on by the COVID-19 situation. Recently state contractor Cerillo was unexpectedly on site to scout out the area and begin the initial phase of the job. This entailed fixing the sewer access grates.

Due to this being a state and county funded project, Birch Pointe has no control over timing, nor will we receive any advance notice beyond 1-2 days prior to the repaving commencing. It may be a few weeks, or months from the larger work project taking place. We are hopeful that sufficient prior notification will be provided to the community since the entire street will need to be closed to traffic for several days. Although the Board is well aware that this will be a major inconvenience for many parking on Diana - both residents of this street as well as some from Birch Circle - alternative parking sites have been sought by out. Fortunately, the Arkieva lot on Fairmont Drive will be made available for use and should provide enough space for the majority of vehicles while this project commences.

As soon as any information on timing becomes known, signs will be posted and an e-mail blast will go out to give as much notice as possible.

PLEASE KEEP PREPARED FOR THIS PROJECT AS CARS WILL BE TOWED IF THEY REMAIN IN THE ACTIVE WORKING AREA.

ONGOING LANDSCAPING PROJECTS



Green Side Up, Birch Pointe's landscaping contractor, has been busy throughout the community. Planting of flowers and bushes as well as seeding of new topsoil has been ongoing. In addition removal of several dead or invasive trees has taken place along with clearing out underbrush and overgrowth, especially behind Diana Drive.

There has also been active combatting of the Spotted Lanternfly, an invasive, non-native species which is particularly is attracted to the "Tree of Heaven", of which Birch Pointe apparently has several. The Delaware Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with the USDA, has graciously provided Birch Pointe with free treatments of those trees to control the infestations. Please continue to report any sightings to the state so that these insects can be promptly dealt with.

PASSING OF FORMER BIRCH POINTE VOLUNTEER



It is with great sadness that we inform you that former Birch Pointe resident and long-time volunteer Joan Kovach has passed away. While Ms. Kovach never held a board-level role in Birch Pointe, due to her essentially comparable work for the community and tireless efforts, notably with collections, the sitting Board has decided to honor her memory as if she had been a M-A-L (Member-at-Large).

Ms. Kovach would often personally call and/or visit delinquent residents, help negotiate payment arrangements and form long lasting relationships throughout the community. She had moved to Colorado several years ago to live close to her children and their families. Always gracious, she volunteered to help whenever needed. Joan was a talented vocalist as well as an artist, her unit on Diana Drive filled with several of her own paintings. She will be missed by those who remember her from "way back" and who were fortunate enough to have known her.

The Board, on behalf of Birch Pointe, is remembering Ms. Kovach through a \$150 donation to the Arbor Day Foundation enabling the planting of 50 trees in her name.

RESUMPTION OF BALCONY REBUILDS



ProTech Construction, after many months' absence due to COVID-19 and some personal delays, is back in Birch Pointe and is taking up the balcony rebuilds again. Several units have already been addressed, with the majority of this year's efforts being directed to those on Diana Drive. If you see Paul and the gang, say hello!

ANOTHER REMINDER OF HOA FEE REDUCTION



As yet another reminder, **LOWER HOA FEES** went into effect on July 1st, with monthly costs reduced by \$30 as a direct result of the Comcast debulking which took place at the same time.

All ACH direct debits have been adjusted accordingly to reflect the new fee structure, done so automatically and for everyone's benefit. However, paper payments - both personal and bank bill-pay checks - still continue to be remitted for \$350 instead of \$320. PLEASE correct/modify these to the proper amount now due when writing checks out in person or setting up an online payment through your bank. Where such excess monies have been received on accounts with outstanding balances, funds are being applied to any arrears and unpaid monthly HOA fees or are credited towards future months. No refunds will be issued!

LATEST RULING REGARDING GOLF COURSE



The following update was recently issued by NCC Councilwoman Janet Kilpatrick's Office regarding the development of the former Three Little Bakers golf course off Skyline Drive:

"On Tuesday, August 18, the court rejected Pike Creek Recreational Services' (PCRS) interpretation of the Unified Development Code and the Restrictions as they relate to the density (# of units) allowed on the property. Follow up from PCRS could be in the form of an appeal or continuing through the county process with their existing plan. We will advise you of any further action taken by PCRS."

The developer - Pike Creek Recreational Services (PCRS) - is proposing to build more than 200 homes on the

open space, originally set aside as an 18-hole golf course. The recent court opinion rejects that proposal.

Note that PCRS has three options after this ruling moving forward: (1) submit another appeal, (2) request a continuation of their current submission, or (3) submit a new request regarding the acreage which was limited to 60 - 80 homes being allowed. State Representative Mike Ramone indicated that the site now seems to have protected the 130 +/- acres encompassing the golf course with no building being permitted thereon.

Although not totally settled yet, this latest ruling appears to be the positive outcome hoped for by the surrounding communities, limiting the proposed development with the construction of hundreds of new housing units to a much more manageable number.

VERY ACTIVE REAL ESTATE MARKET

With current interest rates at near record lows, the real estate market is booming... and Birch Pointe is no exception! Units are moving very quickly, with contracts issued almost as soon as they go up for sale. It is also noteworthy that pricing is keeping pace with demand in this sellers' market. Check out the recent list of transfers on our website, www.birchpointe.net under the "Community" drop down.

Remember, Eric (also our property liaison) can complete any necessary DUCIOA documents required for sales!

IMPORTANT SUMMER REMINDER



The Board would like to again remind everyone that **ONLY electric grills** are permitted for outdoor grilling. **The use of charcoal or any other open flame barbeque, including propane among others, are strictly prohibited** by order of the Fire Marshall. A non-electric grill left unattended even for a short period of time can turn into a deadly disaster in no time. This would obviously apply to fire pits as well! All structures in Birch Pointe are wooden and are at risk of catching fire. Please be safe!

BIRCH POINTE DIRECTORY / IMPORTANT NUMBERS



➤ GENERAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS

Eric Kennedy – phone: (302) 685-4310; e-mail: ekennedy@birchpointe.net

➤ MAINTENANCE ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

Maintenance staff (Dennis, Eric, Jules) – e-mail: maintenance@birchpointe.net

➤ ACCOUNT STATEMENTS / HOA FEE / OR ACH QUESTIONS

Monica Rieder – e-mail: mrieder@birchpointe.net

➤ BIRCH POINTE MAINTENANCE EMERGENCIES

phone: 1-267-474-2907; e-mail: maintenance@birchpointe.net

No July or August 2020 Board Meetings Held

Any/all important items were discussed via e-mails

Real Estate Status: Online resources such as Realtor.com, Trulia, Zillow, Estately, etc. (since the last newsletter and info as of 8-27-2020)



(1) Units on market now:	7 on Birch Circle 2 on Diana Drive	3 new listings, 1 FSBO; 3 under contract 1 new listing; 1 pending short sale pending
(2) Units recently sold:	6 Birch Circle 2 on Diana Drive	on 6-24-2020, 6-29-2020, 6-30-2020, 7-24-2020 (2) on 7-24-2020, 7-31-2020

When moving, PLEASE inform Treasurer Monica Rieder if you are on Birch Pointe's ACH program so that future automatic bank debits can be cancelled. Once DUCIOA forms are requested, any scheduled ACH draws should be discontinued if possible. Current owner monthly payments can be made at closing by check, still at the \$330 ACH discounted rate. Contact mrieder@birchpointe.net if there are any questions or concerns.

Note also that **parking hang tags for units being sold are to be returned to Eric**, not handed to new owners directly or to real estate agents. Tag numbers are associated with specific vehicles for security and tracking purposes. If the existing protocol is not followed, confusion may well result regarding undocumented cars and their actual owners if the new information is not provided. **This procedure applies to units which are rentals: tenants moving out should do like-wise and turn over their tags.** Remember that replacement fees for reissue of a hang tag is \$50. Your cooperation is most appreciated!

Notes:

- Eric Kennedy is the Birch Pointe real estate liaison and can provide many of the essential information and documents needed for property transfer – including completion of DUCIOA forms. **The fee for re-certification is \$50.**
- Birch Pointe has a policy regarding investors to protect the interests of ALL owners which must be disclosed to potential buyers, either directly by the seller or by his/her realtor. The document outlining this policy – which was established in 2013 – is available on our website.**

Collections Report:

(1a) Total operating income posted in June:	\$ 133,717	in HOA fees *
	\$ 150	3 DUCIOA re-certification fees

* includes \$35,160 in 6-month pre-payment income

(1b) Total operating income posted in July:	\$ 70,815	in HOA fees
	\$ 100	2 DUCIOA re-certification fees
	\$ 1,360	legal recovery fees

(2a) Three check bank deposits were made during the month of June which totaled \$13,048.



In addition, there were credit card payments for the month of \$4,060.
 Larger payment amounts received during June: 1 each at \$1,925, \$1,600, and \$450,
 of which two represent remittance toward sizable delinquencies.

(2a) Two check bank deposits were made during the month of June totaling \$12,875.
 There were also credit card payments for the month which came to \$2,630.
 Larger check payment amounts received during June: 1 at \$3,010, 1 at \$700, and 3 at \$400,
 of which the first is the balance owed on a 2019 promissory note.

**THE BIRCH POINTE BOARD TAKES LONG TERM DELINQUENCIES SERIOUSLY
 AND ARE REFERRING THEM TO OUR LEGAL COUNSEL!**

**REMINDER: – MONTHLY HOA FEES ARE \$320 STARTING JULY IF PAYING BY CHECK
 – ONLY OWNERS WHO ARE ENROLLED IN ACH (OR OTHER E-FUND TRANSFER)
 RECEIVE A \$20/MONTH DISCOUNT
 – PAYMENTS MADE BY CREDIT CARD RECEIVE A \$10 DISCOUNT**

ACH/FIS enrollment currently is at 85% (250 units)

Notes:

- Owners in financial difficulty should speak with a Board member to discuss their situation and arrange a payment plan/schedule to address ways of clearing up past balances.
- A Birch Pointe ACH enrollment form is attached for convenience. Sign up and receive a \$20 discount on your monthly dues. Contact Monica for more info at mrieder@birchpointe.net.



Treasurer's Report:

(1a) Total operating costs for June:	\$ 89,907	in	utilities, maintenance/trash, Comcast, loan, professional, payroll, and office expenses
(1b) Total operating costs for July:	\$ 62,816	in	utilities; maintenance/trash; Comcast; professional, payroll, and office expenses
(2a) Major expenditures for June: (other than normal utilities)	\$ 10,300	for	monthly landscaping installment plus tree removals, plantings, top soil contractors (water main leak on Claremont)
	\$ 9,380		hallway and additional cleaning services
	\$ 4,410		maintenance supplies
	\$ 3,203		legal consultations and letters
	\$ 798		

AMEX discount/rebate posted to June = \$561

(2b) Major expenditures for July: (other than normal utilities)	\$ 9,367	for	monthly insurance premium plus drone coverage; Workers Com adjustment
	\$ 4,100		monthly landscaping installment
	\$ 2,695		hallway and additional cleaning services
	\$ 2,546		maintenance supplies
	\$ 2,268		legal consultations/services
	\$ 1,248		fire system maintenance and inspection

AMEX discount/rebate posted to July = \$409

(3) No capital improvement expenses for either June or July

June 2020 Financials

▶ Operating Account

Beginning Balance:		\$ 132,323.17
Inflow – Operating Income:	\$	133,847.66
Inflow – One-time Transfers (from ORA*):	\$	0.00
Outflow – Operating Expenditure:	\$	89,807.38
Outflow – Capital Expenditure:	\$	0.00
Outflow – One-Time Transfer (to ORA*):	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ <u>176,363.45</u>

▶ Operational Reserve Account (*ORA)

Beginning Balance:		\$ 5,437.07
Inflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Inflow – Interest:	\$	0.36
Outflow – Periodic Transfers*:	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ <u>5,437.43</u>

▶ Reserve Account

Beginning Balance:		\$ 259,964.33
Inflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Inflow – Interest:	\$	372.90
Outflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Outflow – One-time Transfers:	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ <u>260,337.23</u>

July 2020 Financials

▶ Operating Account

Beginning Balance:		\$ 176,363.45
Inflow – Operating Income:	\$	72,275.07
Inflow – One-time Transfers (from ORA*):	\$	0.00
Outflow – Operating Expenditure:	\$	62,816.33
Outflow – Capital Expenditure:	\$	0.00
Outflow – One-Time Transfer (to ORA*):	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ <u>185,822.52</u>

▶ Operational Reserve Account (*ORA)

Beginning Balance:		\$ 5,437.43
Inflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Inflow – Interest:	\$	0.33
Outflow – Periodic Transfers*:	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ <u>5,437.76</u>

▶ Reserve Account

Beginning Balance:		\$ 260,337.23
Inflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Inflow – Interest:	\$	15.76
Outflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Outflow – One-time Transfers:	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ <u>260,352.99</u>

August financials will be available in the next newsletter
once they have been reconciled in early September

BIRCH POINTE CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION CENSUS FORM

P.O. Box 1195 Hockessin, DE 19707

Unit Address: _____ Number of Persons Residing in Unit: _____

Legal Owner's Name: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Legal Owner's Mortgage Company: _____

Legal Owner's Vehicle Insurance Company: _____

Legal Owner's Condo/Home Owner's Insurance Company: _____

Legal Owner's Phone Number(s): _____
Home Work / Mobile

If Non-Resident, Mailing Address: _____

Tenant(s) Full Name(s) and Phone Numbers:

Name	Home Number	Work / Mobile
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Emergency Contact Info: _____
Name Phone

Vehicle(s) Owned by Occupant(s):

Year	Make / Model / Color	State & License Plate Number
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Pet(s) in Unit: _____
Size / Breed

**** NOTE: Renters are NOT permitted to have pets/animals while residing in Birch Pointe ****

Are you currently in possession of the Rules and Regulations of the Birch Pointe Condominiums? Yes / No

If a unit is a rental, it is the duty and responsibility of the owner/landlord to notify the Management/Board and advise all tenants of the Rules, Regulations and Code of Conduct of Birch Pointe Condominiums

I understand that the above information is for the sole use of Birch Pointe Condominium Association and its authorized agents in maintaining the community and providing emergency services. I also acknowledge that I must notify Birch Pointe Management if there are any changes in this information and/or if my unit is rented or sold.

Signature of Owner Date

Direct Payment Plan Overview

A smart and easy way to automate your payment with Direct Payment.

Direct Payment is a repetitive payment between businesses and consumers that enables the service provider to deduct scheduled payments from the customer's checking or savings account. It's a dependable, flexible, and convenient process that does not require the consumer to use a computer or access the internet.

With Direct Payment, you will:

- Save time by having one less check to write
- Reduce postage costs with one less bill to mail
- Eliminate late fees or charges by making payment(s) automatically

How does Direct Payment work?

You (the customer) will authorize regularly scheduled payments to be deducted from your checking or savings account by completing and submitting an authorization form. Payments are originated one business day before the specified day that they are due. Direct Payment is usually a repetitive payment that will remain in effect until the customer terminates the authorization. It's just that simple!

What is ACH?

The Automated ClearingHouse (ACH) Network is a nationwide system that processes electronic payments on behalf of depository financial institutions. The ACH Network was established in the 1970s as an electronic substitute for recurring check disbursements and collections. The ACH system is designed to serve all depository financial institutions, regardless of size, on an equitable basis. The system uses batch processing which costs less than on-line, real time processing systems. This feature makes ACH payments less expensive than other electronic payment methods such as wire transfers, and allows many financial institutions to participate.

Direct Payment Plan Authorization Form

1. Mark the box of the type of account from which payment will be deducted, either a checking or savings account.
2. Fill in your name, unit number/address, financial institution information, and date.
3. Indicate what day of the month funds should be withdrawn and if this is for a monthly or 6-month pre-pay draw.
4. Attach a voided check for verification of all financial institution information.
5. **Be sure to sign the form!**

AUTHORIZATION FOR DIRECT PAYMENT

I authorize Birch Pointe Condominium Association to initiate electronic debit entries to my:

(check ONE)

checking account

OR

savings account

for payment of my condominium fee(s) on or about the day of the month selected below, as well as any late fees, fines or assessments that are assessed (returned ACH fee, census non-completion fine, general fines, etc.).

This authority will remain in effect until I have cancelled it *in writing*.

Processing date **(check ONE)**

(ONLY these dates are available)

1st of month

11th of month

21st of month

Processing schedule **(check ONE)**

monthly

6-month pre-pay

Starting month for regular HOA payments

Unit ID (e.g. 5001BC, 4005HC, 5203DD)

Financial Institution / Bank Name

(Please Print Neatly!)

Account Number at Financial Institution

Financial Institution Routing/Transit Number

Financial Institution City and State

Signature _____

Date

PLEASE KEEP A COPY OF THE AUTHORIZATION FOR YOUR RECORDS

Please mail to: Birch Pointe Condominium Association, P.O. Box 1195, Hockessin, DE 19707

Attach Voided Check Here