

June 19, 2017

MEMORANDUM TO : Mark Heshfield
President
Canal Run Homeowners Association, Inc.

FROM : Heidi Nuccio
Chair, Street Light Move Task Force

SUBJECT : Report on Street lights

At the January 18, 2017 meeting of the Canal Run Homeowner's Association (HOA), the Board of Directors voted to establish a task force¹ to take a look at the feasibility and cost of removing a certain number of street lights from the 2007 area,² placing additional lights in the original section, and using the remaining lamp heads to replace the basic lamp heads in the townhouse area.³ The task force was asked to report on its findings prior to the 2017 Annual Meeting.

BACKGROUND

The original section of the community was not designed to have electric street lights and was instead given gas fired lights for each property, many of which were subsequently removed because of the high cost of maintenance. Subsequent sections, however, were designed to have electric street lights. The costs of maintaining the street lights accounts for over ten (10) percent of the total budget

¹ The Chair of the Task Force was Board Member Heidi Nuccio and other members of the task force included Board President Mark Hershfield, John Vetrano, Phil Lazo, Beverly Russo, and Scott Pestrige. Alan Margolius assisted with the preparation of this report.

² The 2007 area consists of Canal Clipper Ct., the townhouse area, Conrads Ferry Dr. (and related courts) all the way up until Lockhouse Dr., and Canal Run Dr. (and related courts) from Conrads Ferry to Misty Hollow Rd.

³ The original section is defined primarily as the homes built in the late 1990s, but also includes newer homes on Ferry Hill Ct., Canal Run Dr., and Brookshire Run. Therefore for the purposes of this report, original section includes Ferry Hill Ct., Brookshire Run, the unlit part of Canal Run Dr., and Misty Hollow Rd.

of the HOA. All individuals in the community pay for the cost of the street lights, yet not all residents have street lights in close proximity to their homes. Many view street lights as items that increase home values and provide added safety to the community but for others they prefer not to have lights in front of their homes.

The community was asked to weigh in on whether the Board should look into moving street lights as part of the ballot questions at the 2013 September Annual Meeting.⁴ The “annual meeting survey” was meant to gauge the interest of the community in pursuing a street light move. No estimated cost data was included with the proposal. Seventy-four (74) percent of the community responded that they wished for the Board to “seriously consider” this option.

Following up on the annual meeting survey, in September 2014, a task force led by Board Member Beverly Russo recommended that nine street lights be transferred to the original section.⁵

In response to the report and after further research and discussions with the electric company, four new lights were approved by the Board in December 2015 and installed on Canal Run Dr. in August 2016. Additionally, one light was installed on Pennyfields Lock Court where it was originally intended. The Board did not choose to move any existing lights and instead used the lights that were purchased by the Developer, but never installed due to conduit issues.

SCOPE

The scope of the task force was broad. Nevertheless, this task force, as opposed to the 2014 task force, did not focus on the newly installed lights. The installation of those lights was completed in 2015. The task force also did not look at lights on

⁴ The specific question read “In the near future, the Canal Run developer will be installing street lights in the newest sections of the community. Areas of the original section were never designed by the developer to have electric street lights and are currently without them. This creates a difficult situation for the HOA as a whole. According to a local expert, the number of street lights going in the newest section is excessive. It is possible, once the new street lights are installed to have experts analyze the place of the new lights and transfer the excessive lights to the unlit sections. This would require the use of reserve funds in order to place proper wiring to move the light poles. Are you open to the HOA seriously considering this option?”

⁵ See Report on proposal to move street lights (September 29, 2014), available at: https://media.wix.com/ugd/38e31a_1742aa8e65e94e0e87649c0b39f48116.pdf.

Cassidy Court or lights that had previously been installed on Canal Run Dr. in August 2016. The task force did not look at these lights, because the agreement to install each street light is a ten-year agreement. After ten years, Potomac Edison has advised the task force that any (or all) of the lights may be removed. The task force therefore focused on places where the agreement had lapsed or was about to lapse (lights in 2007 area expire on October 29, 2017 and lights in the townhouse area have already expired).

While the task force primarily looked at the 2007 area, the task force also looked at the street lights needs of the townhouse area, which were installed prior to 2007 and therefore also eligible to be removed. The townhouse area has seven existing lights. The lights in the townhouse area, however, do not match the other lights in the community. Those lights utilize the standard lamp heads as opposed to the upgraded model that the Developer purchased for the remainder of the community.

The task force also looked at current lighting in the original section. Based on the number of transformers located in the original section without lights and the fact that placing street lights in the immediate vicinity of a transformer is the least expensive option, the task force looked into putting up to 6 additional street lights in the original section. The recommendations below are based on a review of the lighting in the 2007 area, as well as the need for the lights in the original section, and the appearance of the lights in the townhouse area. Keep in mind that “doing nothing” is also an option.

FINDINGS

WHERE WOULD THE LIGHTS BE LOCATED IN THE ORIGINAL SECTION?

The task force was extremely limited in where lights could be located in the original section due to cost concerns. The most inexpensive placement of the lights meant putting the lights directly in front of the existing transformers as such locations would require the least disruption of the existing area and require the least amount of wiring. The task force located six (6) transformers without lights in the original section, which are identified by a large green box. There is one transformer on Misty Hollow Rd., one on Brookshire Run, two on Ferry Hill Court and two on Canal Run Dr. Task force members relied on the 2014 report for the distance between the transformer and the sidewalk to assist in the cost estimates in the next section.

One issue that the task force was confronted with at the onset was what to do with Ferry Hill Court. Unlike the other roads where adding streetlights was considered,

Ferry Hill Court is not a through street and therefore the lighting would primarily only benefit the residents of the court. Based on prior statements of opposition to street lights, the task force decided to survey the households on Ferry Hill Court to determine if they would like two streetlights, one streetlight, or no lights at all.

Kyle Thomas, the property manager, conducted a survey of the households. Ten of the thirteen households responded to the survey. Three households expressed interest in either one or two lights. Six households responded that they did not want any lights.⁶ Relying on these results, the task force voted 4 to 0 (with the Chair abstaining) to recommend putting in four (4) lights in the original section and not installing lights on Ferry Hill Court.

WHICH LIGHTS SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM THE 2007 AREA?

The task force spent a significant amount of time discussing which street lights should be moved from their current locations. The task force focused on the amount of lighting in the areas and compared it to other areas in the community. Essentially, the task force members made personal selections of which lights were to be moved (in order of preference) and, after conferring with each other, determined the top ten (10) lights to remove.⁷ The analysis was a subjective one and the preferred method due to the cost and timeframe for producing the report.⁸

The task force divided the removal of lights into two categories. Category 1 are lights that all task force members readily identified. These lights are all closely bunched together and can be found at intersections. While the extra lights might serve a decorative purpose, they simply provide no purpose in terms of illuminating a dark area.

⁶ One household indicated that they were open to any option.

⁷ Not all task force members originally selected the same number of lights to remove. The ultimate determination as to how many lights to remove was made via consensus after determining the additional plans for the lights and the components of the lights.

⁸ If a thorough analysis were conducted, it would include luminescence values for each light and a plot of luminescence radii for each street light. Intersecting radii would then be the determining factor for which street lights to move. Such an analysis, however, would have been costly and the task force was not given a budget to perform its duties.

Category 2 was the subject of debate when the task force met on April 13, 2017. The task force eventually focused on cul-de-sacs and corners that did not need that level of lighting. The task force did look at other groups of lights, but all of the recommendations in this category involved either lights at corners or at the end of circles. Below are the ten (10) lights selected by the committee to be removed/moved, divided into two categories as noted above:

Category 1

- (1) 1708 Conrads Ferry – At the corner of Conrads Ferry and Canal Run Dr. are two lights, which virtually sit across the street from each other. As the light across the street is needed to light up the walking path, the task force recommends this one be removed.
- (2) 1800 Greysens Ferry – The corner of Greysens Ferry and Conrads Ferry has three lights in close proximity to each other. Any of the lights could be removed, so the task force selected this light due in part to the recommendation to remove another light further up on Greysens Ferry.
- (3) 2016 Cassidy Court – This light is located directly next to a newer light with an upgraded lamp head. Removing this light also requires the task force to find one fewer lamp head for the townhouse area.
- (4) 1708 Canal Run Dr. – There are two street lights located on the entrance to Canal Run Court. The task force selected the light further from the original section for removal as there as the lights are closer spaced in that area.
- (5) 1700 Conrads Ferry – At the end of Lockhouse Dr. sits two street lights. The prior street light task force report advocated removing the light on the other side of Lockhouse. As only one of those lights is eligible to be removed, the task force believes this other light should be removed.

Category 2

- (6) Between 1801 and 1803 Greysens Ferry – There are two street lights that touch the property at 1801 Greysens Ferry. Given the proximity of the two lights and the light at the corner, the task force believes that removing one is warranted.

- (7) Between 3802 and 3804 Canal Run Ct. – Canal Run Ct. has three street lights at the circle at the bottom of the court. While some courts in Canal Run have three lights, many others only have two lights. The task force believes this light is the most expendable at this circle.
- (8) Between 1729 and 1731 Conrads Ferry – The top of Boatman’s Circle has two street lights. Directly across the street is another street light meaning three lights illuminate this one area. The task force believes to continue the symmetry it makes the most sense to remove the light across the street.
- (9) 1721 Canal Clipper Ct. – The circle at the top of Canal Clipper Ct. has two lights in very close proximity to each other. Even though there are only two existing lights in the court, there is a light just outside of the court. The task force therefore felt one of the two clustered lights should be removed.
- (10) Between 1709 and 1711 Canal Clipper Ct. – Canal Clipper Ct. has a very small island with three homes. The island is illuminate both at the top and bottom of the small circle. Given its small size, the task force recommended removing the light that was in somewhat close proximity to two others lights on the court.

As mentioned above, the task force looked at many options of lights to remove. The task force met to determine the exact number and locations of lights to remove on April 13, 2017. All the decisions listed above were unanimous.

SHOULD THE TOWNHOUSE LAMP HEADS BE REPLACED

The lamp heads in the 2007 area are special order lamp heads. The task force has been informed that the cost of each lamp head is \$489. While this style of lamp head exists in the 2007 area, Cassidy Ct., and the area to the left of Lockhouse Dr., the townhouse area has the non-upgraded model of lamp heads. The lamp heads do not match the other lamp heads in the community including the lamps heads located directly across from the townhouse area. Task force members have previously been informed that Potomac Edison has no use for the upgraded lamp heads. The task force recommends using the excess street light lamp heads to replace the townhouse lamp heads.

WHAT WOULD THE COST BE FOR MOVING THE STREET LIGHTS

The expense of the project is essentially divided into two components, the conduit/trenching work and all the additional work (including moving the poles and lamp heads). A Potomac Edison representative was contacted for a price

estimate for the move along with an individual with Kolb Electric Co.⁹ None of the pricing below is guaranteed and it is always possible that additional charges may occur.

Based on previous work by Potomac Edison, the cost of installing four street lights in a manner consistent with the recently installed lights would be approximately \$2,400.¹⁰ This cost includes installation, as well as new wire for the four lights. The Potomac Edison representative has also recently confirmed that there is no cost of replacing the lamp heads in the townhouse area with the execution of a new ten year agreement for those lights.

The representative for Kolb Electric indicated that the cost of their end of the work would be approximately \$4,014. The cost involves providing the conduits, pull ropes, and raking and seeding the area where the conduits were installed to ensure it is restored to original condition. The total cost of the project would therefore be approximately \$6,414.

HOW WOULD THE STREET LIGHT MOVE BE FUNDED

As the community has a limited funding mechanism, the task force felt it was important to recommend a plan for funding this project. The cost of each street lights is approximately \$19 a month.¹¹ Therefore, removing one light will save the community approximately \$228 a year. The task force is recommending moving four lights and removing six lights. Removing six lights will result in a savings of approximately \$1,368 a year.

The task force recommends using reserves to pay for the proposal and then refunding the reserves with the annual light savings from the removed lights. At the current rate for each light, the buy-back period would be under five years. At the conclusion of that period the proposal will lead to additional savings of approximately \$1,368 for the community on an annual basis.

⁹ Patrick Magaha is an employee of Kolb Electric. There would likely be other companies involved in bidding for the job. His company was used because they did the work for the prior move.

¹⁰ Potomac Edison's representatives were non-responsive towards requests for information. As they ultimately, failed to produce a valid estimate, the task force used the cost per light from the prior installation.

¹¹ Note the rate does fluctuate with the market, so if the rates increase/decrease the cost of each light could change.

RECOMMENDATION

The task force recommends that the community weigh in on the proposal contained in this report (likely in the form of an annual meeting survey). The task force recommends that the community be provided access to this report to assist them in making their decisions.

The task force also recognizes that the ultimate determination as to whether to follow this proposal would be up to a future Board. The task force only asks that a future Board take this report, and resident input into account before making any determination as to removing or moving street lights.

