



Patriot Square Home Owners Association

www.PatriotSquare.org

Winter 2014

Landscaping Plans for Community Square

Many owners and residents of Patriot Square will have already noticed landscaping activity in the Square area in the center of the community that occurred this past fall.

In preparation for major landscaping, Easton Utilities connected electric and water service to the area. Afterwards, to safeguard future landscaping investment, an irrigation system was installed. The objective of the project is to create a relaxing, park-like green space that can be used and enjoyed by all Patriot Square residents.

Plantings for the area are being done in two stages. This fall

taller deciduous trees and evergreens were planted to begin creating the infrastructure for other plantings to occur in the spring. Come warm weather, smaller shrubbery and flowering trees will be planted, such as flowering camellia, ligustrum, okame cherry trees, and tulip magnolia.

At the intersection of Meadow and Tubman will be a large



perennial bed that will contain ornamental grasses, black-eyed susan, hydrangea and other low-maintenance and hardy plants.

The landscaping is being planned so that it provides seasonal color throughout the

year. Future plans under consideration are pathways, lighting, benches and a small gazebo.

The [design of the Square project](#) was a product of the Grounds Committee and we appreciate all who contributed ideas to the design and thank board member Katie Cassidy for her leadership and hard work.

Shutter and Door Paint Colors

In the process, the ARC committee has published a "Pre-Approved" list of paint colors that do not require individual approval. Please visit www.patriotsquare.org for info. [The Pre-Approved colors](#) are all Valspar brand paints and are available at Lowe's.

We encourage the employment of a professional painter for proper preparation and repainting of the doors and shutters.

If you decide to "do it yourself" please get some professional advice, so as to be sure to properly prep the old surface prior to repainting.



2013-14 HOA Board of Directors:

- Michael Thielke, president
- Katie Cassidy, vice president
- Jennifer Williams, secretary
- Jessica James, treasurer
- Jean Saballus, Member-at-large

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Many of the front doors and shutters in Patriot Square have reached a point that they need repainting.

Please remember that if you decide to change the color, prior to beginning work HOA documents require that you must submit an Architectural Review (ARC) application to have your new paint color approved by the Board.

In an effort to simplify this

A copy of the Patriot Square Home Owners Association [2014 Budget](#) was mailed to all owners in December.

During the past year, the HOA Board has made every effort to control expenses while also planning improvements to the community infrastructure in the future. The Board's biggest challenge continues to be collections & delinquencies which have a severe negative impact on Assoc. finances.

In planning for the future and

2014 Budget, Fees, and Violations Update

in an effort to begin enhancing the attractiveness of the community, the Board has approved a number of upcoming projects. During 2013 curbing was installed along the alleyway at the Meadow Dr. entrance.

For the purpose of creating a more finished appearance to the community and create an outdoor space for all residents to enjoy, work began this fall in landscaping the community Square.

Another project this spring will

be the replacement of the sign at the entrance to the community. Plans are for a sign that will give a good first impression to visitors of the community.

All of these projects have been budgeted as part of the Annual Operating Budget in order that the Reserve Funds that the board has been able to accumulate remains in tact and becomes a Capital Reserve Fund. The investment that all owners in Patriot Square collectively

2014 Budget, Fees, and Violations Update (continued)

have in the community (*value of individual residences plus the value of the common area*) amounts to almost \$2.75 million. Therefore, it's important that the HOA do all it can to sustain everyone's individual property value as well as help appreciate future values.

Other projects under consideration include lighting throughout all of the alleys, curbing some areas of the alleys to mitigate erosion issues, along with nature trails in and around the wooded and wetland sections of the community. These will be significantly expensive projects and are being thoroughly discussed by the Board prior to any final decisions being made.

Violations

Violations of HOA documents and rules & regulations continue to plague the community. One of the more frequent problems is loose trash and refuse that results from trash and recycle

containers. All owners and tenants are reminded that containers are not to be visible from the street and are to be kept in garages. For those having difficulty keeping containers in garages, the Board has made accommodation in the rules & regulations to allow containers to be kept in the back of a residence, up adjacent to the rear of the house. In this instance, it is required that the lids be secured in some manner (*i.e. bungee cord*) in order to prevent escape of any loose trash. All owners with exterior containers, and especially overflowed containers, that do not have lids secured to prevent the escape of loose trash will be fined. The Board is taking this matter seriously and will be increasingly aggressive about violations. Everyone's cooperation in addressing this situation is requested.



Security Tips

To prevent crime:

- Keep house and cars locked
- Keep garage closed and locked when not in use
- Put toys, gardening supplies, etc. away when not in use
- Do not leave valuables in cars
- Turn outdoor lights on at night,
- especially in areas that are not well lit
- Tell a neighbor you trust if you will be out of town

If you see a crime or suspicious activity:

- Report it to police, using 911 or 410-822-1111 (non-emergency)
- Ask neighbors to call police
- Go outside if you feel safe so police know the affected area
- Email HOA Board (board@patriotsquare.org) so further action can be taken if necessary

THIS SPRING: New Look For The Storm Water Management Pond

After the dreariness of winter, we can look forward to a plethora of colorful flowers to border the Storm Water Management Pond (SWMP). Earlier this fall Envirotech Environmental Consulting Inc. cut down the invasive growth around the east and north sides of the pond. Then an inch of organic compost was installed and Native Showy Northeastern Wildflower Seed was hand sown on the compost seed bed. Finally an additional inch of organic compost was added to protect the seed and provide good soil. In the

spring this same process will be completed on the southerly side of the pond. The result will be a wildflower buffer five feet wide. Not only will the look of the pond be enhanced, the buffer will help establish vegetative stabilization of the embankment.

This winter Envirotech will clean out the invasive species on the western/back side of the pond and on the island. The noninvasive plants will be left to grow and fill in the area. That way, protective cover will continue to be

provided for the geese, ducks, and other wildlife that inhabit the area.

Planned for later in 2014, Envirotech will also provide an educational outreach presentation for the young people of Patriot Square. Their Discovery Program is an "interactive inquiry based, educational program" with hands-on activities that will provide an in-depth look at wildlife and nature. An interested parent is needed to coordinate this program. If interested, please email djsaballus@goeaston.net

Owners Asked to Provide Email Addresses

In an attempt to reduce HOA expenses and improve communication, all owners are requested to provide their email address. If the HOA does not have your email address, please forward it to info@PatriotSquare.org. Owners are also requested to sign an [Email Authorization Form](#) so all formal

meeting announcements, election and financial information can be sent to you via email in lieu of the expense of mailing hard copies.

Don't miss important information about the community. Please forward your email address today to info@PatriotSquare.org.

