



ReView

Golf Course View Cluster Association

February-March 2010

Special Issue: Snow Services

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The winter of 2009-2010 was the snowiest we've seen since 1996 when back-to-back storms dumped 37" on our cluster in a week. This year we got even more in the three storms that hit between Jan. 30 and Feb. 7, and our neighborhood was truly snowed in for a number of days. For many of us all the hassle and frustration we experienced last month, was offset by a time of rare beauty and the outpouring of community spirit and neighborliness.

The question of what is the appropriate level of snow services the cluster should provide (pay for) is a perennial one, and this past winter offers us an opportunity to compare actual services and costs in a way we've not been able to before. Because of a breakdown in BladeRunners' ability to complete their plowing after the blizzard, the board hired another company to plow and provide front loader services. The difference in the cost of "standard snow services" and "extended snow services" is dramatic. This issue of ReView presents the facts and offers you the opportunity to share your views on what level of snow services we should consider and budget for in the future.

Snow Services Costs for 2009 and 2010

Date	BladeRunners Landscaping		Eastern Landscaping		Per Unit Cost	
	Plowing/Sanding	Sidewalks	Plowing	Front Loader	Actual	Budgeted
01-27/28-09	\$1,097.50					
03-05-09	\$740.00	\$700.00				
12-05-09	\$612.00					
12-19/20-09	\$1,396.12					
2009 Total			\$4,545.75		\$43.29	\$19.05
01-08-10	\$612.00					
01-30/31-10	\$761.25	\$675.00				
02-02-10	\$612.50	\$270.00				
02-06/07-10	\$935.00	\$1,890.00				
02-08-10	\$400.00		\$4,300.00	\$8,085.00		
Contractor						
2010 Totals	\$6,155.75		\$12,385.00			
2010 Total			\$18,540.75		\$175.58	\$38.10

For Your Consideration Regarding Cluster Snow Services Policy

- Until 2003, the cluster snow services policy was to provide plowing services when snowfall levels reached 4 inches. Barrels of sand were placed near courtyard entrances during the winter months for residents to use if icing became a problem. There was no provision for sidewalk shoveling.
- In 2003 when we contracted with BladeRunners for both landscape maintenance and snow services, the contract was enhanced to specify plowing when there were 2 inches of snow, sanding whenever appropriate and shoveling of sidewalks that face the parking lots when there were 4 or more inches of snow. This decision was based on the attractiveness of the pricing offered by BladeRunners, which has remained unchanged.
- In general, snow services are offered by landscape maintenance contractors to their landscape clients only. Companies like Eastern who have professional snow removal experts and equipment are rare and charge much higher fees for their services.
- The board does not make snow services policy, homeowners do. This policy has always been based on the decision made by the majority of members who attend the annual meeting held each June, and as recently as June 2009 the official vote was 20 to 2 in favor of maintaining the current level of snow services.
- The board will budget for the level of services the majority of homeowners want. The attached snow services questionnaire is your opportunity to tell the board what you prefer. Please take the time to complete the questionnaire and return it by April 1st.

Special Thanks To The Sidewalk Shovelers

We all owe special thanks to Gina Lundy, Jessica Korbel, Joe and Karen Durishin, John Moran, Andy Ryba, Kirk Dancy, Dave Miller, Lindsey and Ryan Hamilton, Joe Schweitzer, John Burke, Diane Lewis, Marge Hogarty and six residents of Golf Course Square for shoveling the sidewalks around the whole block the weekend after the big storm! You were amazing! We can't believe you did it, but are really glad you did.

Next Board Meeting

The next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 13 at 7:30 pm at 2080.

Interested residents are welcome to attend.

**Golf Course View Cluster Association
Snow Services Preference Survey**

This survey is designed to clarify your interests in the nature of the snow services provided by the Cluster. While it **does not** contain a formal motion to be voted on by the membership, your responses will be very useful in helping the board make decisions regarding policies and budget. Under the Cluster Bylaws, each townhouse is entitled to **ONE** vote when making cluster-wide decisions; therefore we will accept **only one survey per household**. However, for the purposes of this survey, we will consider the interests of **both** the **owners** of rental units and their **tenants**. Because not all of our residents and homeowners participate in our resident email system, **you must complete this paper survey and return it to Sandy Dresser (2159) or any board member no later than April 1, 2010 for your opinion to be considered.** We will report the results of this survey in the April newsletter.

1. House Number: _____ ☐ Owner ☐ Renter
2. The policy of the cluster for many years has been to provide snow plowing services at a level that enables people to get their cars out of and back into the cluster. This generally means plowing down to a "drivable" depth of snow in the parking lots and on the street.
- a. Do you consider this policy appropriate and adequate? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- b. If your answer is NO, please use the space at right or on the back of this form to tell us what level of service you believe appropriate.
3. Since 2003 our snow services policy has included shoveling the sidewalks that face the parking lots.
- a. How important is this service to you? ☐ Very ☐ Somewhat ☐ Not at all
- b. Should we continue to provide this service? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- c. If we were to discontinue this service, could and would you help shovel the sidewalks of those neighbors in your courtyard who cannot do this for themselves because of age, illness or travel? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Some residents have regularly asked that we shovel the sidewalk along Golf Course Dr. to accommodate pedestrians. **Should this service be added to our standard snow services contract?** ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Since 2000 we have budgeted between \$2000 and \$4000 a year for snow services—or between \$19 and \$38 per unit, depending on the weather predictions for the winter and we have generally been close to being "on budget" each year, except 2009 and 2010.
- a. Are you willing to spend more per unit to obtain a higher level of snow services? ☐ Yes ☐ Maybe ☐ No
- b. If you answered YES or MAYBE, would you be willing to pay the additional costs with an increase in the annual assessment? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- c. If you answered YES or MAYBE, would you be willing to pay the additional costs by spending less on our discretionary budget items such as, landscape improvement and tree maintenance, drainage projects, and cluster communication efforts (newsletter, website, directory)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- d. If you answered YES or MAYBE, on which budget item would you recommend we reduce spending? (Check only ONE) ☐ Landscape/Tree ☐ Drainage ☐ Communication