

## Letter from the Board Regarding Lid Repairs November 2019

November 21, 2019

Dear Owner,

On July 8, 2019 the Board sent a letter to Owners regarding the need for repairs to lids and walls to some of our garages. In that letter it was noted that the initial bids received from vendors were high and that the Board did not accept those bids. The Owners were promised that they would be kept informed and the process for repairing the leaks and financing the repairs would be transparent. This letter is to inform you of what has been done, what we have found and what is planned in the future. This letter is long, but the Board wants you to know what is going on regarding these leaks and how we are going to repair the leaks.

### WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING?

As noted in the July 8, letter, a Working Group was appointed with Deb Carter from Prime as its chair. The group favored seeking additional bids and phasing the specific repairs. REM, a contractor Point Edwards has used in the past, was asked to bid. REM had initially started to bid on our repairs, but they later declined due to the scope of the project. When REM heard that we were willing to complete the project in phases, they were willing to make a bid on the first phase of the repairs.

Phase 1 encompassed repairing the active leak in Building 31 which was damaging a storage unit. In addition, one third of the Bldgs. 61/71 lid would be repaired as well as the small Lid at the south end of Bldg. 51. The three bids are as follows: **McLeod's bid totaled \$364,280** (\$144,087 for one third of the Bldgs. 61/71 lid, \$101,285 for Bldg. 31 and \$118,908 for the Bldg. 51 lid). **Tatley Grund's bid totaled \$363,336** (\$93,490 for one third of the Bldgs. 61/71 lid, \$85,935 for Bldg. 31 and \$183,911 for the Bldg. 51 lid). **REM's bid totaled \$209,120** (\$119,064 for one third of the Bldgs. 61/71 lid, \$38,807 for Bldg. 31 and \$51,249 for the Bldg. 51 lid).

The Board accepted REM's bids of \$38,807.31 for the Bldg. 31 project and \$119,064 for one third of the Bldg. 61/71 project. REM's bid was 43% lower than the other two bids. The Bldg. 51 repairs were put off until 2020.

The Finance Committee recommended financing phase 1 on an interim basis through a \$150,00 loan from the Reserve Fund to be paid back over two years. In the meantime, the Finance Committee would develop a long-term strategy to finance the repairs for the entire project.

The leak at Bldg. 31 appeared centered at Unit 31-213. Unit 31-213 is a garden unit with a patio surrounded by a pony wall about 22 inches high. On the east side of the pony wall, arborvitae grew between the wall and the sidewalk. When the arborvitae was removed and the soil excavated down to the lid, a shallow tub-like basin was uncovered. This "tub" did not have a drain and the soil covered the top of the water proofing with no cap to prevent moisture from seeping behind the waterproofing. It appeared that moisture seeped under the waterproofing material and allowed the waterproofing to delaminate from the lid. Moisture then leaked into the

expansion and cold joints and traveled into the garage and storage locker. Inadequately sealed expansion and cold joints also allowed arborvitae roots to penetrate the joints.

The proposed remedy was to bore a drain through the lid to carry any water from the “tub” into drains. The expansion, cold joints and pony wall would be properly sealed. The “tub” would be waterproofed, with the waterproofing extending above any soil or fill as well as capped. Any fill would allow easy drainage and would not allow moisture to be retained. The arborvitae would be replaced by some type privacy screening anchored 5 inches deep into the concrete pony wall.

The surface of the lid within the “tub” was scanned to determine where a drain could be bored. It was important to find a location where drilling would not sever or damage the post-tensioned cables running through the roof of the garage. These cables are structural and if severed or damaged severe damage to the structural support of Bldg. 31 would be a real risk. Unfortunately, so many post-tensioned cables ran through this portion of the lid that no drain could be placed within the “tub”.

A location had to be found outside of the “tub” for a drain which required more excavation in the plantings on the other side of the sidewalk which borders the excavated area. A potential area was found and scanned. A drain was bored through the lid connecting to drainpipes in the garage. A drainpipe was placed running from the “tub” under the sidewalk to the drain. Because the drain was placed amid plantings and soil, a screen and cap had to be found suitable for that type of location. After considerable research, one was found and installed.

The Building 31 project is close to completion. The late heavy rains showed only a minor leak around the new drain and that is being fixed.

The Bldg. 61/71 lid is being done in phases. In 2019, one third of the soil atop of the lid is being removed as well as the gravel beneath the soil. The arborvitae along the sides of the patio north of Unit 61-217 and south of Unit 71-203 will be removed and replaced with screening. The surface of the lid will be cleaned, primed and the expansion and cold joints sealed. Tremco, the waterproofing product we are using, will be applied. Like in Bldg. 31, the water proofing will extend up the sides of the wall above any soil or fill and capped to prevent moisture from seeping behind and under the waterproofing. Drains already exist to carry excess moisture away but when they were exposed as the first one third of the lid was excavated, some drains were found to be rusted shut. How to remedy that situation is being explored.

The Bldg. 61/71 lid had other surprises as well. Roots from the plantings bound the soil which was difficult to remove. The original plan to stack the soil and gravel in the middle of the lid for reuse was found impractical. There was inadequate space to stack the soil and the more valuable gravel. Larvae found in the soil presented risks preventing the reuse of the soil and requiring the removal of the soil by hand. Our staff met this challenge with real enthusiasm. It was hard work, but the landscape and maintenance staff hand shoveled the soil over the side of the lid into pickup trucks and moved it over to transportation containers. They then shoveled the soil from the trucks into the containers. The staff made a considerable contribution to lowering the costs of soil removal.

## **WHAT WILL COME IN THE FUTURE?**

In 2020 the remaining portion of the Bldgs. 61/71 lid will be repaired in the same manner. After the repairs are completed, the lid will be landscaped. In 2020, the lid at the south end of Bldg. 51 will be repaired. Here all the soil will be removed, and the likely solution will be to seal any cracks and coat the lid surface with an Elastomeric coating to match the adjoining patios. Landscaping would be done with pots and decorative plantings. This proposal is still being discussed.

In 2021, repairs will be done to the walls and planters dividing the patios on the east (loop road) side of Bldgs. 61 and 71. The same methods used at Bldg. 31 and on the Bldg. 61/71 lid are likely to be used. Excavate the soil, clean the lid surface, seal joints and cracks, prime and coat with Tremco to above any soil line. Cap the waterproofing to prevent seepage. The existence of proper drains will be carefully reviewed.

The repair to the Bldg. 55 lid would be undertaken in 2021 using the same methodology.

### **WHAT IS BEING DONE ABOUT LANDSCAPING AFTER THE REPAIRS?**

None of the bids made so far included the cost of landscaping after the lids were repaired. There is an almost constant discussion between, Bel, Scott, the Landscape Committee, the Working Group, and members of the Board on how to approach landscaping the repaired lids.

Here are some of the general principles that appear certain. Some of the arborvitae used to provide privacy to the garden units will be replaced by a privacy screen. The arborvitae requires a lot of water and water is not our friend. Arborvitae roots do get into cracks and assist leakage into the garages. The specific arborvitae subject to removal will wait for the final landscaping design. Plantings on the lids need to be drought tolerant. The landscaping on the Bldgs. 61/71 lid must use less soil and less water. The same principles need to be applied in other areas as well. Owner input on the design of the new landscaping is important, especially regarding screening. Owner input at Bldg. 31 has been extensive and the same approach will be taken on the Bldg. 61/71 lid.

Bel has a deadline of the end of April to finalize the landscaping designs for Bldg. 31, and the 61/71 lid. Designs for the Bldgs. 61 and 71 wall and patio dividers will start after that time.

### **HOW ARE THE REPAIRS TO BE FINANCED?**

The Finance Committee explored several options. Their initial recommendation was to use a \$150,000 loan from the reserve fund to start the initial repairs. The Board adopted that recommendation, the loan was made, and the repairs are underway. The Finance Committee then looked at ways to repay that loan and finance the both the 2019 repairs and those scheduled for 2020 and subsequent repairs. Gradual increases in assessments, loans and various special assessments and combinations of these methods were all examined.

The Finance Committee's recommendation is to use a special assessment to repay the 2019 Reserve Fund loan and fund the 2020 repairs and landscaping costs. That recommendation was approved by the Board, but the specific amount of the special assessment was not approved. The work on Bldg. 31 and the 61/71 lid were not complete and the landscaping costs were not finally determined. The final details and the amount of the special assessment should be known and sent to the Owners in January 2020. At this time, the 2019 and 2020 costs are thought approximate \$545,850. This figure includes \$55,850 for landscaping the

repairs. Payment of any special assessment would not be due until July 2020. Staff, the Working Group, and the Board will review whether the proposed concept for the Bldg. 51 lid repairs might result in a significant reduction in the cost of that repair and the special assessment.

It is likely that a similar recommendation will be made to fund the 2021 repairs. That decision must wait for the determination of how the 2019 and 2020 repairs turn out and what the bids for the 2021 work will be.

The Board wants to encourage all Owners to take part in the workings of the various committees. It is difficult to put all the nuances of the active discussions on the repairs in one or even two letters to you. You will be well served by attending the various committees.

Sincerely,

Mike Mitchell, PEHOA Board President.

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