

Clubhouse Remake \$\$\$...Why Care?

Why should you, as a homeowner, care about the Clubhouse Project? And why now?

Isn't that something that our Board of Directors will diligently and prudently decide for us? Well, in word, NO. For the past year, the full Board has only passively listened, but never questioned, investigated or voted on *any* of the radical, unpopular, irreversible and expensive modifications being covertly foisted on the Association by Directors Jack Lenk, Helene Odeh and candidate Kathy Klein.

Some facts on the questionable Process and its resulting Plan...

The Process

A year ago the Board "created" a Committee (of 6, including myself) to advise, but failed to provide a written Charter, a requirement of our CC&Rs. Unfettered by a Charter, Helene, the "Board Liaison" appointed by Jack, then dominated every meeting, wrote all agendas, chaired every meeting, led every discussion, produced all reports to the Board and privately directed the architect, aided only by Jack and by Kathy, the nominal Chairperson (and new candidate for the 2017 Board Election).

The Committee was allowed to submit topics in advance to Helene and to discuss the ones that Helene introduced, but contrary ideas (for a more open process, votes, cost estimates, owner input or fiscal restraint) were resoundly rejected by Helene. To date, we have no professional cost estimates!

By that process, a highly biased and uninformative Survey was sent, with replies (from only 1/3 of the owners) graphed; the few results (~1/6 of owners in favor) *presented as over-whelming support* for:

- "Expand the Gym," not just into the hallway, but over the entire first floor, tripling it's size and doubling the fixed equipment (and costs), despite the current Gym's obvious under-utilization and without even an unbiased study to learn what actual gym users think or want or their satisfaction. Why? Perhaps, as they repeatedly and openly proclaimed, so Jack, Helene & Kathy can "give up their paid gym memberships"? While we all pay the high costs of this folly.
- Get rid of *all* billiard tables (in that locked room), a not so popular amenity, but still used.
- Make the Clubhouse "rentable" for private parties (by Mr. Lenk's catering business? Or so he can crash them, as he repeatedly says he once did?). Long blocked by every board for 18 very valid reasons of legal liability, insurance, clean-up, costs, rules enforcement, security, and fairness to excluded residents. Still no detailed policy proposal from Jack of how he'd do this.

Recently, the Committee (after one of my emails) was finally allowed it's first vote (on a motion by Helene advocating her choice of two plans) and even with that coercion, the vote was split (3 to 3).

Undeterred, Helene (and Jack, Kathy?) then privately directed the architect to prepare a "final" plan to her specifications...subject to a "Final Review" on May 25th by the Committee...until she cancelled (not rescheduled) that meeting. That's the "Final Plan" a lame-duck Board approved (3/0) June 21st.

The "Final Plan"

So, other than that sneaky Process, what's wrong with the current "Final Plan"? Lots. For starters...

No public cost estimates from the architect, despite 7 floor plans, renderings, public meeting and many requests...only rumours of \$300,000 to upwards of \$700,000...or \$1,918 per unit of money they've already collected via unnecessary dues increases (...but which could still lower future dues).

No reason for long-needed cosmetic renovations be bundled with the very costly, unpopular and ill-considered functional changes benefiting only a few. Or that it has to be all-or-nothing, not in stages. Or that DHVA's persistent flagrant cost overruns (Spa/Sauna/Bathrooms Project 3x over) won't revisit.

The current "Final Plan" Drawing (with no descriptions or renderings) would apparently do all of this...

Lower Floor: Ignore the efficiency of merely refurbishing the existing Gym and existing Multi-Purpose (Meetings/Yogi/Dance/Exercise) Room and existing Kitchen. Instead...

The entire Kitchen would be completely gutted and replaced with only a “wet bar” on one wall.

The Gym and its equipment would be expanded throughout the Lower Floor, doubling its size and expense, with the current large Yogi, Dance and Exercise Area separated into various odd and crowded corners (forever precluding large movement classes). All contrary to what you folks tell me you want. From 5:00am to midnight, my analysis shows only ~1.8% (0.35 hours/day) actually use!

Upper Floor: Ignoring the cost-savings of a more modest cosmetic-only refurbishment (long-deferred maintenance, really), the “Final Plan” would scrap all three regulation billiards tables and repurpose that room as a “Lounge,” with a hodgepodge of designer sofa, tables, chairs, counter, new “wet bar,” new “mini” pool table ...and a new large loud “wall-mounted television” (for our residents to fight over). No doubt, that’s Jack’s new “rentable” party room.

The current Library and Lobby area would be converted into a larger Meeting Room, without the bookcases (freeing up space) and old firepit/chimney (since we’re not allowed to light it). Partially a good idea, except for the new fake “wall-mounted fire appliance” and uncomfortable new “built-in window seating.” I’m not a fan of custom built-in furniture, too expensive and too inflexible.

Overall Look, Theme and Style: After a year of pleas, still no coherent written statement, decision or directive from the Board to the architect, on this, nor was any input by regular owners allowed.

Into that vacuum, I’ll again offer, as one and only one possible choice, this suggestion: “Classic Tahoe chalet, retro1970’s or mid-century rustic, raw-wood modern” (and NOT “some bland common generic all-white contemporary look”). Not that we shouldn’t hear *every* other suggestion, but we already have this look; it’s well-liked by many who bought here; it would be less costly to refresh and lighten it than to completely change it...and be better than painting over all our priceless solid woodwork, as our high-end designer suggests. I’m open to other written ideas, but the Board needs to act and now!

Conclusion: Well *before* hiring an expensive architectural firm and putting those designers to work creating a variety of looks, renderings and floor plans, as was done, the Board should ask its Membership, its Construction Manager, and its Committee for input pro and con, cost/benefit estimates and expert opinion on each specific \$\$\$ change! And then vote on each point, but they did not. Instead, our paid professionals heard only what Jack, Helene and Kathy told them in private and produced whatever was requested, ending in that one costly “Final Plan,” take it or leave it.

What the Clubhouse Project now needs is a total reset, with the new Board insisting on a full and open discussion of each major decision point, its estimated cost, its pros and cons, its homeowner input and vote...all in writing and all published...well before each Board vote!

Nor is there any reason why this needed Project cannot be done in stages, with the long-delayed cosmetic work first ...and the radical, irreversible, big-ticket capital-improvement alterations, that few support, last or not at all. With all future Committee meetings noticed and open to every Member.

Nor is there any valid reason, practically or legally, to appoint a Board Liaison, no matter how innocuous or well-meaning...even if appropriately quiescent during meetings, Liaisons have by their very presence, an undue influence on free committee discourse and decision-making. Given a detailed written charter and an unbiased Chairperson by the Board, committee volunteers can intelligently organize their own work to democratically research, recommend and publish options for the entire Board (and us). That Chairperson can and should report to and from the Board, all with courteous transparency and openness to all owner comment. *Demand no less. Thank you.*

*No disrespect or discourtesy to anyone is intended by this report...only an honest, long-overdue airing of facts...facts that directly affect the high assessments Members pay...and will pay. **Vote!***