

HICKORY CLUSTER ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

December 20, 2023, MEETING MINUTES

Virtual (Board hosted Zoom)

FINAL

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Jennie Kampf, Jennifer Rekas, Silvia Merrill, Kathryn Fay

DIRECTORS ABSENT: Daniel Cassidy

TWC STAFF: None

I. PROCEDURAL ITEMS

- **CALL TO ORDER:** President Silvia Merrill called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM and established that a quorum of the Board was present.
- **OPENING REMARKS:** This meeting is focused on RELAC topics. Board has been working with the HCA legal counsel and the Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC).
- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** N/A

II. MEMBER FORUM ABOUT RELAC

1. 11539 Maple Ridge - Have we heard anything more from RA about design standards or guidance. Ans - No we have not. Second question: are we legally bound to RELAC even though it is unable to provide the service? Are we not individually allowed to move forward with installing our own HVAC system? Ans. TBD
2. 11531 Maple Ridge - Are we still bound by the covenant? Ans. It is still in place, no guidance yet for any changes
3. 11507 Hickory Cluster - Been living Reston most of life. Had discussion with people in Waterview, they plan to reach out to HCA leadership. Thinks it's imperative that we understand what each condo's issues are, have different concerns, etc. When voting for covenants, it's only the class A members who get to vote (the single family townhomes). Some of the other customers, such as Vantage Hill are not class A. Most people who voted for RELAC in earlier votes to consider leaving it, live physically near it. Discussed details on how the cooling works. If people want to get off, results are better for those who stay on when properties leave.
4. 11543 Maple Ridge - Lived here a long time, seen different ownership of RELAC over the years. There's no utility like it. It's got a lot of moving parts. Requires coordination with the other people on the system. Been transferred over three times.
5. 11505 Hickory Cluster - Haven't been dissatisfied with RELAC, but it seems that if we have to find an alternative, decisions need to be made pretty quickly. People who got off the system, what do they use now? How effective have they been? Ans. Have a rooftop unit - RELAC couldn't provide the level of service at the time. Got permission for a supplemental unit, controls dehumidification on whole house. Have two units.
6. 11500 Hickory Cluster - RELAC people are meeting tomorrow with RA, the RELAC COO, etc. Friday morning, some members will be meeting with Mark, purpose is to come up with a seamless transaction to put three options to all users to consider in 4-6 weeks. Possible options: Carry on with it as is (with cost estimate), have cooperative owned by the community, or bring in some third party. Trying to seek a fair solution to present to the stakeholders.

7. 11531 Maple Ridge - Get variable level of service from RELAC - re-did RELAC system last year, about \$10K to get it working. Trying to get the system to work at optimum. Need to make sure that there are terms of service for individual homes. Need to consider home health concerns, e.g. humidity, etc.
8. 11533 Maple Ridge - Had \$50K of mold removal damage due to humidity, etc. Not an advocate for RELAC. Surprised that the RA wasn't aware of the solvency of RA of RELAC. There should be some kind of supplement from RA to offset the costs of replacement. Thought fees were excessive, when RELAC came to service, staff didn't seem certified or understanding of a lot of the systems. They didn't seem to be the right group to be operating a community system. Prefer some shift to new systems (even possible geothermal), but something with fresh infrastructure.
9. 11519 Hickory Cluster - With Caza construction and renovating 11519 Hickory Cluster. In the interest of transparency - interested in concerns for potential eventual rental or sale. Main motivation is what is functional for these homes, but value is of concern. HVAC is a particular issue in this property. Current experience in attempting to repair/remediate the HVAC system - can answer some questions about what an undertaking may involve to convert systems, what size, what electrical requirements there are, may be one of the first units to guinea pig some kind of solution (don't have heat or cooling now). Options in Hickory Cluster are better than some, e.g. roof-mounted units, many are quieter. If you want RELAC, someone has to figure out how to resurrect and maintain a thrice-failed system. In my opinion, only has a slight negative impact on value. If a group smaller than a decent-sized utility takes over the utility.
10. 11512 Maple Ridge - The scenario I'm afraid of is the can getting kicked down the road and how realistic getting RELAC in order by April, if that is pursued. Would be good to have realistic information about these things. If the records, equipment, etc is in transition to one ownership, etc. would like to have a chance to look through some of the technical specifications of the infrastructure to understand what all is involved. Would like to understand the status of the current system. Two main possibilities - preserve RELAC or get individual units.
11. 11543 Hickory Cluster - Requesting for Hickory Cluster and TWC to pull up site plans for a plan in case we are going with unit, to designate with the options are. Standardization cannot be done without feasibility, would like to come up with a feasibility report, perhaps look at MAP firm Architectural Incorporated in Reston to be utilized.
12. 11557 Maple Ridge - Addressed RA board of directors, urged to participate in a solution to collaborate with stakeholders. Multiple ranges of costs depending on the home configuration. Mention only of RELAC alternatives committee in board plans. Request RELAC proponents of what would like to second what 11500 Hickory Cluster stated.
13. 11527 Maple Ridge Road - Would welcome us to re-envision what RELAC is, some kind of non-profit run by professionals, framework for considering re-capitalizing RELAC.
14. 11511 Hickory Cluster - 2019 switched from RELAC to a heat pump AC system. RELAC isn't able to provide water temperature required to prevent mold and remove moisture from units. Measured water temperature and it wasn't sufficient. Described solution used. Offered to provide information on how solution was accomplished. Newer condos use heat pump systems.
15. 11530 Hickory Cluster - Worry that prices will have to rise if RELAC remains. Number of delinquent accounts could repeat now that people know that they can't cut off service. Ans. Newer units are quite a bit quieter. Hickory Cluster has the aesthetic concern - units weren't easily hidden.

III. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Committee Sought by Board:

RELAC Alternatives - committee self-organizes to perform effort of gathering information for members to be aware of and to provide to RA as needed.

Output from Committee:

Objective: Identified options for RELAC alternatives, suggested costs, desired design standards

Summary data that includes:

1. What background research was done (what was the approach, information gathered, etc.)?
2. What are courses of actions (COA)?
3. What are pros and cons of each COA? What are the risks?
4. What is the recommended COA?
5. Suggested timeline for conversion (assuming July is “due date”)
6. What are the design guidelines that matter (unit types, placement, sound level (decibel)), etc.)?
7. Are there any RELAC decommissioning activities from RELAC?
8. What are associated anticipated costs?
9. Where do we need help from Reston Association or another support, such as FEA engineering consultant?
10. What are other sources of \$ assistance for any transition (from county, etc.)?
11. What other information does the committee think is important to capture?

Deliverables

1. **3 minute elevator speech for RA of our top concerns/needs**
2. **Summary brief (or other brief format as desired) to address what we can of the questions**

Member Volunteers:

Jeff Ashley
Tom Drake
Farhad Sharyar
Fred Swartzendruber
Michel Poss
Ed Climo
Mark Beckett
Ann Youngren

HCA Milestones (TBD)

January 15, 2024 - HCA Committee Delivery
January 25, 2024 - Reston Association Meeting
July 2023 is “hot date”

VI. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned 8:52 p.m.

Next board meeting scheduled for January 17, 2023, at 7:30 PM on board-hosted Zoom.

//ENDS