

Shearwater Landscaping Committee Report
October 2015

LANDSCAPING MAINTENANCE

In addition to weekly mowing, edging and weeding, recent maintenance activities have included trimming back overgrown shrubbery and grasses; pruning and trimming low-hanging tree branches; removal of fallen leaves, branches and other debris; cutting back invasive vines climbing trees and shrubs; and other tasks to keep our grounds in good condition.

LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Projects to replace/restore/refresh plantings damaged or destroyed by weather events, construction activities and the ravages of time have been ongoing since Spring and will continue through the Fall. With assistance from Highlands, our grounds maintenance contractor, a variety of ornamental trees, shrubs, perennials and ground covers have been planted or transplanted throughout the community.

Front entrance and entrance drive – Fall mums were planted at the front entrance; various perennials (Lenten roses, lilies-of-the-valley, hostas) were transplanted along the entrance drive after removal from the beds in front of Bldg 15; four new schip laurels were planted along the entrance drive earlier this year, completing the evergreen hedge that shields views of the dumpster/parking area. A possible future project is the redesign of the landscaped area to the right of the front gate where a car accident took destroyed our entrance signs and various shrubs. For now, the area has been cleaned up and restored to a reasonable appearance pending resolution of insurance claims.

Racquetball court/dogpark – In the spring, five Virginia sweetspire were transplanted next to the racquetball court entrance and appear to be thriving. A fall blooming sedum “Autumn Joy” was planted in the container next to the walkway.

Pool area – The landscaping committee has moved the planters filled earlier in the year with summer blooming annuals and tropical plants to their winter home.

Bldg 3 – Three diseased and declining photinia shrubs, of the same era as the Leyland cypresses replaced last year, were removed and replaced with three new schip laurels in the area adjacent to the pool fence. A new nandina and transplanted yew and knock-out rose were added to the plant bed next to the boardwalk.

Bldg 7 – Upcoming: In the spring, lawn areas damaged by paving contractors will be restored; dead/declining shrubbery will be restored and replaced; and efforts to protect and enhance the living shoreline that was installed several years ago will continue.

Bldg 8 – Two hydrangeas were transplanted in front of the building to replace shrubs that had died; a new white flowering dogwood tree was planted earlier in the year to replace one that had died.

Bldg 9A – On the side adjacent to the community pathway, holly shrubs were planted to replace overgrown, declining juniper shrubs that were removed in the spring.

Bldg 9B – Upcoming: A lilac bush that grows into the parking area will be transplanted to a more favorable position in the planting bed between Bldgs 4 and 5.

Bldg 10 – Upcoming: A dead boxwood shrub will be replaced with new one to match existing

Bldg 11 - New spring flowering tree (redbud) was planted to replace a dead dogwood that was removed last winter; new azalea was planted in front of building to replace an existing azalea that died last spring; new azalea was planted next to 11A to replace shrub that had previously died. Upcoming: the slope in front of 11 will be regraded to eliminate ponding; new shrubs will be planted at front and side of building to replace those that have died and been removed.

Bldg 12 –A new boxwood shrub and groundcover (liriope) were planted to replace those that had died.

Bldg 13 – On slope from parking lot to water-side of building, groundcover (liriope) was planted to remediate and mitigate erosion resulting from damage to plantings and turf caused by work crews during deck replacement project.

Bldg 14 – A new planting bed was created on slope to right of building and planted with perennials (Japanese anemones and heuchera) that were removed from the bed in front of Bldg 15

Bldg 15 – Existing perennials were removed and replaced with evergreen shrubs (mountain laurel “elf”). The perennials were transplanted to other locations within the community. New encore azaleas will be planted in the spring as budget permits.

Bldg 16 – Some of the perennials removed from in front of Bldg 15 were transplanted to beds in front of this building and under the big chestnut oaks.

Other planned Improvements: No landscaping improvement projects have been undertaken this year for Bldgs 1, 2, 4, 5 or 6 – at least, not yet. The Landscaping Committee is currently working with residents in those buildings on plans for winter and spring projects.

CANOPY TREES

Although now fading into fall, the Maryland native trees (2 Willow Oaks, 5 River Birches, 3 Eastern Hemlocks, 2 Serviceberries and 1 Redbud) that were planted in the spring have done well, thanks in part to the ongoing watering help of volunteers Frank and Linda Bolling, David Densmore, and Larry Birch. There's one exception: one of the Eastern Hemlocks planted on the slope between Bldgs 4 and 5 appears to be dead or dying. It is under two year warrantee and will be replaced this fall or in the spring.

The 13 new trees were planted to replace dead and dying trees that were removed from the Shearwater critical area buffer (shoreline area) last winter. Removal of vegetation (including trees, shrubs, vines and groundcover) in the critical area buffer is governed by the Maryland Critical Area Act as well as county and city regulations.

Recent work on existing canopy trees includes:

- **Front Entrance Drive** – Removal of deadwood from willow oaks lining the driveway
- **Area near tennis courts** – Removal of several dead mulberry trees overhanging and threatening the property of our neighbors on Boucher Street.
- **Bldgs 5-6**– Removal of dead wood from willow oaks on front and side of building
- **Bldg 11** – Trimming of branches of honey locust tree that were leaning on roof and gutters

- **Bldg 12** – Trimming of branches of oak tree that were leaning on roof, gutters and side of building
- **Bldg 14** – Trimming of branches of crepe myrtle tree that were leaning on walls and windows

IRRIGATION. Terra Nova, our irrigation contractor, has performed fall maintenance and the system has been shut down for the winter. There are spots throughout the community that are not currently served by the system; we are analyzing those gaps with an eye to expanding the system in future when funding is available.

LANDSCAPING COMMITTEE. The Shearwater Landscaping Committee is comprised of the following volunteers: Deborah Birch (chair), MaryAnn Cummins, Pat Duval, Ron Faulkner and Charlotte Featherstone. If others are interested in joining the committee or contributing ideas, please contact us – we need your help!

As always, we encourage all members of the community to come forward with their concerns and ideas. *This is your community.* If you have suggestions, please contact: Deborah Birch, Chair, Shearwater Landscaping Committee, Email: dbirch@seagreenintl.com, Mobile/Text: 202-629-6035.