



Winter 2020 ISSUE

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www.Amhurst.org

Check out our website regularly for current snow removal information, updates, relevant information, Board Meeting dates and more!

2020 Monthly Dues
\$285

LAHA NEWS

AMHURST, A VILLAGE IN THE CITY

Lohman's Amhurst Homeowners' Association, St. Louis Park, Minnesota

STATE OF THE VILLAGE REPORT

BOARD PRESIDENT GINA SOUCHERAY

Greetings, fellow Amhurstonians! And welcome to what is likely going to be the last "hard copy" newsletter you receive! In the interest of saving trees while still maintaining a connection, the Board has formulated a communications program that will include one concise monthly update from us via email. If you are unable to receive our emails, please contact Jim Kraus about an alternative means of communication.

The 2019 **Annual Meeting** was held in Hopkins in November. Having a quorum of 69 homeowners represented is required so that the business of the evening can be conducted. We reached that and thank those who participated and made things move along.

Items of interest covered at the meeting included:

Home Sales – There were 10 sales over the last year with prices ranging from \$200,000 to \$250,000. We continue to see homes sell quickly, especially when they are priced correctly.

Crime Statistics – our neighborhood is very safe. There were a couple of trespassing incidents and two traffic episodes (no one was hurt – only property damage). There was one theft of property from an unlocked vehicle. If you park in the lots, please lock your cars and remove "articles of interest". Additionally, please leave your garage light and front door entry lights on at night (in most cases, they are on the same switch inside your front door). With an LED bulb in place, it is cheap security for those in the lots and walking the sidewalks to their homes.

Traffic Study – We await the results of the traffic monitor that was in place near the pool in June. The City is in the process of creating their new speed limit procedure since the new State Law that allows municipalities to control their internal limits. We hope to have more information on that after the first of the year and will keep you informed of the results. In the meantime, please drive no more than 20mph on our dark, curvy streets where dog walkers and joggers do not have sidewalks. And if you are a walker/jogger, please "light up the night" with appropriate clothing and/or lighted collars.

Volunteers – Many thanks went out to the 35 or so people who helped keep Amhurst the inviting community it is. Between gardening at the pool, entry monument, and bus stop, or the buckthorn brigade, or the team that realized a need for flagstone "steps" at the poop stations and did something about it – thank you! In addition to those activities, we also had help with Summerfest, the Annual Meeting and delivery of printed

materials. If you are interested in participating in any of these opportunities, please let Jim Kraus or a board member know.

If working with or on the Board is of interest to you, we are specifically looking for folks with the following talents – and you don't have to do them all! We need individuals who understand property insurance, structural engineering/construction/architecture, web or tech background, gardening/tree expertise. One can certainly reach out to companies for input, but they will just sell us services. It would be helpful to Jim and your Board to have "consultants" from the Village who understand some of the right questions to ask and who care about the results around our campus. With over 300 homeowners and residents, we hope to find a few who want to come and "play".

The Lohman's Amhurst Homeowners' **Reserve funds** were placed in a CD ladder program, protecting them through FDIC and earning significantly more than the .10% that was being offered by the bank! We have a strong foundation for the Reserve Fund which will protect homeowners into the near future. We need to continue to grow those reserves so that a catastrophe will not result in additional large assessments (as happened when roofs were replaced some years ago).

Projects for 2020 include some behind the scenes activities like electrical upgrades and pool water line considerations. We will continue the garage stub wall brick replacement, focusing this year on Clifton Court. Your property manager and board continue to monitor the needs of the community so that infrastructure and exterior facilities are maintained appropriately.

Some **questions** from the floor included speed bumps, curb cuts at Newport sidewalks, highway sound barriers, composting and door painting. The first three are already in motion with the related contractors or public entities. If your door has not been painted, please contact Jim Kraus to confirm its status and schedule for the spring. We did have some weather-related delays. See an article related to composting elsewhere.

Thank you to all who help make Amhurst attractive and welcoming. Staying on top of iced over storm drains and litter in the street is everyone's job, along with being aware of what your unit looks like from the street, parking lot or sidewalk. The next time you're out for a walk, feel free to pick up the errant bottle or cup, and look at your own area for tidiness and continuity. We are all a reflection of our neighbors.

Everyone have a safe and happy 2020 – be safe when driving, walking, or however you spend your free time. Enjoy all that awaits you here at Amhurst, your Village in the City of St. Louis Park – Minnesota's Sweet Spot.



ASSOCIATION UPDATES, TWO NEW POLICIES HOA DUES COLLECTION AND SNOW PLOWING



There are two new policies outlined in the 2020 Resident Guide, HOA Dues Collection and Snow Plowing Policies. While there are no major revisions to the existing policies, there are some changes with which you will want to be aware. For full details on these updates, please refer to the 2020 Resident Guide or the website at www.amhurst.org for the full details.

ICE DAMS

Ice dams present a challenge in Minnesota. The best way to be proactive is to seal up bypasses and correct any deficiencies in your insulation. Not only will you lower the risk of damage, but you will also benefit from energy cost savings! If you have any questions, call Jim Kraus, Property Manager at 952-933-9747

THE HOLIDAYS AT AMHURST

Many Amhurst residents choose to decorate their homes for the holidays. It certainly enhances our community and is a beautiful drive at night. This year a few Amhurst homeowners decided to share their joy of the holiday season by caroling some of our neighborhoods. Visited homes thoroughly enjoyed it and so did the carolers. Next year more people are encouraged to join in the fun! Beverages and appetizers were enjoyed before and after.

Remember, holiday trees and wreaths are picked up by Republic the first two Thursdays in January.



HELPFUL INFORMATION

Thinking of insulating your home's attic?

Many homeowners added insulation to their attics this fall. While it is a considerable financial cost, the homeowners who had done have told me their home is now more comfortable. No more chilly feet were one homeowner's gleeful response.

These two contractors have done this work at Amhurst, Budget Exteriors 612-400-8391

Northland Siding and Insulation 763-413-9430

As always do your due diligence to compare costs, scope of work etc.

Need an Emergency Repair Grant?

The City of St. Louis Park has resources available to you! Call 952-924-2196 for details.

Need Help Designing a New Space?

The City of St. Louis Park can help! They offer **free remodeling advisor services** to its resident homeowners. Call 612-335-5856 for more information and to schedule an appointment with an experienced remodeling advisor.

Need Help

Financing Improvements?

The City of St. Louis Park has partnered with the Lending Center at the Center for Energy and Environment to help manage a number of the city's home improvement programs. Call 612-335-5884 for more information about their low-interest financing options. Household income limits apply, but you don't know what you can get unless you ask!

Schedule Your Home Energy Squad Visit Today!

Start saving money and energy with a \$50 visit (\$100 minus a \$50 subsidy from the city of St. Louis Park) by an evaluator who will check your insulation status (via infrared camera), your home's heating system and water heater for safety, and conduct a blower test to measure the home for air leaks. Schedule your visit at www.mncee.org/home-energy-squad/slp/ or call 651-328-6220.

PETS

We have a responsibility to our fellow humans that our actions do not interfere with their happiness. Living closely with our neighbors at Lohman's Amhurst means we must have a heightened sense of that responsibility. Particularly, as dog

owners, that means our dogs do not bark excessively, are not allowed to roam freely and do not act aggressively. We also have the responsibility to ensure that our dogs' feces are picked up completely and immediately, whether in your own yard or when you walk dog about the Village.

During the colder season I receive more complaints about pet waste not being picked up and being left on sidewalks/driveways. Perhaps because the dog doesn't want to walk in the snow and/or the owner does not want to walk in the snow to clean it up? To be sure most dog owners do clean up after their dogs and for that I thank you!

The Association aids dog owners in cleaning up their pet waste by budgeting roughly \$5000 a year for pet waste collection stations, the supply of bags, and the service that collects and disposes of it. Please be aware the \$5000 comes from the dues of all homeowners, not just dog owners. The Association also provides relief to residents who have the frustration of pet waste left by irresponsible owners. The relief is a fine levied against the dog owner, provided the offending owner and dog can be identified. This means the offending owner and dog must be identified, usually by a photo or video, followed up by a written complaint. This is the process I explain to residents who bring this issue to my attention. (Refer to the Resident Guide, Page 14 for more complete explanation.) Most often a resident will tell me it is difficult to capture offenders on camera, and is there something else that can be done?

Pet owners, a few things to keep in mind:



- The appearance and the quality of the common areas are known to affect home sales, not just whether and for how much they sell, but how quickly.
- The more residents complain about pet waste, the more time I must spend on enforcement rather than serving our community.
- Uncollected pet waste can spread disease and attract rodents who feed on pet waste.

One solution has come to the forefront in this modern age is dog feces DNA testing. I do not have any hands-on personal experience so what I am sharing is just a rough outline of the DNA testing. This method requires all dogs at the Association be registered and to submit to a DNA swab. The DNA sample and dog identification information are sent to a laboratory which creates a data base connecting the DNA sample and dog information. When a dog's feces are found a sample is collected, sent to the laboratory, and the DNA matched against the established data base. Results are sent back and, if a match, the Association takes appropriate steps with the offending owner. The cost of the DNA test is the responsibility of the dog owner. The downside to this is the administration time of this program.

GOOD INFORMATION TO KNOW

AMHURST.ORG WEBSITE

Here you can find Amhurst specific documents, Board activities and the Resident Guide. Check out the website every Monday to find updates! When you have a

question, look at the website and/or Resident's Guide first. Then, call Jim Kraus or a Board Member.

NEXTDOOR WEBSITE/APP

It's like Facebook, but neighborhood specific. If you haven't signed up, talk to a fellow neighbor who has already. It is a great resource for City news, road closures, and neighborhood activities. Looking for a **HOA MONTHLY DUES | WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS?**

ACH – An electronic option where Sharper debits the homeowner's designated bank account for the amount of the monthly dues every month. The board encourages everyone to take advantage of this method because it is the easiest and most accurate method for both the management of Amhurst and our homeowners. Once a homeowner sets up a monthly ACH transaction with Sharper, Sharper will debit the homeowner's designated bank account for the amount of the dues on the 1st of every month. After creating an account, Sharper is responsible for changing the debit amount and the homeowner should not have to do anything further. If you would like to set up ACH, please contact Sharper using the information below.

Sharper Portal –The other electronic option is to use the Sharper Portal to set up one-time or recurring payments. The advantage of this method is the homeowner can choose which day the payment is scheduled. To use this payment method, homeowners will need their Sharper login information. If you no longer have this information, please contact Sharper using the information below. ***Please Note: you should choose the 1st of the month as the payment date. If you must choose a different date, please make sure it is no later than the 5th of the month to avoid late fees.***

If you have any questions about Amhurst monthly dues payments, please contact Sharper, Jim Kraus, our

book club or want to start one? Look there first! Please know, the Board and Property Manager do not respond to Association questions on Next Door. Contact Jim Kraus or a Board Member directly.

Property Manager at 952-933-9747, or any board member.

HO-6 INSURANCE | ANNUAL REQUIREMENT

Have you updated your HO-6 Insurance policy to cover the \$25,000 deductible on Amhurst's insurance policy? If you answered **NO**, you are NOT covered, and you should do the following:

- Contact your insurance agent and increase your HO-6 loss assessment coverage to \$25,000
- Request a Certificate of Insurance for your HO-6 policy be sent to Amhurst

If you don't have an HO-6 policy with adequate coverage, you could lose your home, unless you can obtain the cash to pay the deductible (up to \$25,000). If there is a loss in your unit or building and you cannot pay your portion of the deductible (up to \$25,000), Amhurst would be forced to foreclose on your townhome in order to obtain the insurance proceeds to repair the damage.

Each year you must provide a Certificate of Insurance to Amhurst as proof you have adequate insurance coverage with a current annual date, as it renews each year. If you haven't done this yet, please submit a Certificate of Insurance to Amhurst as soon as possible.

If you have any questions, there is additional information at amhurst.org, or feel free to contact Jim Kraus at 952-933-9747, any Board member, or your insurance agent/company.

COMMUNITY NEWS

SCHEDULED EVENTS FOR SPRING AND SUMMER 2020

AMHURST'S ANNUAL GARAGE SALE | SATURDAY JUNE 6TH 8:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.
Gather any items you'd like to sell, price them, and

Amhurst's Sharper Management Rep
Natalie Martynow
952-698-7572

or

Sharper Management | Contact Information

952-224-4777 or

clientcare@sharpermanagement.com

display them at your garage! Each year we have 30-40 homes participate in the sale. We have great crowds, weather dependent. The Association will place the large garage sale sign at the front entrance, flyers around the Knollwood area, and an ad on Craig's List.

DOG CLEAN-UP AND STREET TRASH

Many thanks to pet owners and exercisers who use the green doggie drops and beige garbage containers to dispose of dog poo and general litter. Both the green and beige containers may be used for dog droppings as they are all maintained by the same pick-up vendor. Thank you for helping keep Amhurst healthy and clean when you pick up after your dog and dispose properly. We have seen a wonderful increase in youngsters and walkers, so keeping common areas clear of “surprises” is more important than ever and taking a bag for litter on walks helps keep the property looking like we all care. See Resident Guide, Pages 13 – 15 for more information.

LITTLE FREE LIBRARY | TAKE A BOOK, RETURN A BOOK

Our Little Free Library is a free book exchange for our community found in the Rockwell Court. How it works is simple:

- We initially stocked the LFL with a variety of quality books in good condition
- Stop by and take whatever intrigues you
- Return the book and bring books to contribute
- LFL books are always a gift to lend – never for sale!

Have fun and happy reading!

ST. LOUIS PARK CLEAN UP DAY | SATURDAY, JUNE 6TH 8:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

The Annual St. Louis Park Spring Clean-up Day will be held at the St. Louis Park Municipal Service Center, 7305 Oxford Street. Call Public Works at (952) 924-2562 for more information.

ASK A QUESTION – If you encounter a question for which you can't find an answer, contact Jim Kraus, our Property Manager at 952-933-9747.

SUMMERFEST 2020 – AUGUST 4TH

Please mark August 4th on your calendar for Summerfest 2020! This year will be a new and exciting menu of food, so make sure you attend! Once again we will be **collecting donations of school supplies.**



GARBAGE AND RECYCLING PICKUPS

Garbage and recycling bins are to be put out no earlier than Wednesday evening for Thursday pickup. Bins should be returned to the inside of your garage Thursday evening. This is especially important in winter as bins may interfere with plowing

Please keep in mind the trash service uses a truck with a mechanical lifting/dumping arm. The driver does not get out of the truck so it is important to follow these guidelines to ensure your trash is collected.

- ✓ Place your bins 3 feet away from the building and each other. This allows the trash truck room to lift and dump into the truck without damaging the building and/or garage door.
- ✓ Fill your bin only to the point where the lid will close. If it is overfilled, it may not be collected.
- ✓ Do not place any items alongside of bins, they will not be collected.

If you plan on going out of town, please make arrangements to have your bins returned to the inside of your garage within the specified time.

Check the printed Collection Schedule provided for recycling weeks and also when there are holidays that may revise pickup dates.

Lohman's Amburst



Lohman's Amburst

**HOMEOWNERS
ASSOCIATION**

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