



### SPRING 2019 ISSUE

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**Board Meetings (all are welcome!)**  
See [Amhurst.org](http://Amhurst.org)

**Annual Meeting @ Hopkins Art Center**  
Tuesday, November 12<sup>th</sup>  
7:00 p.m. Registration  
7:30 p.m. Call to Order

**2019 Dues \$280**

**For updates and all relevant information visit [Amhurst.org](http://Amhurst.org)**

# 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!

A new season is upon us, so it is a good time to update all on where we have been, and where we are going.

The **2018 Annual Meeting** was held in Hopkins in November. We had sufficient homeowners present by proxy or in person to hold elections. It is critical we have a quorum present, so business of the evening can be conducted. Thank you to those who participated!

Those present elected Bink Semmer to the **Board**. I was reelected to the Board and the board elected me to be the new President. I want to thank Linda Dingbaum (what an invaluable historical resource) for her long service record with the Board in ALL of the positions (currently Treasurer), as well as welcome Bink Semmer as Secretary. Ashley Brown and Cindy Piche' will continue to represent as Vice Presidents. Please continue to reach out to any of these tireless volunteer representatives when you have questions. They care very much about our Village – and about you, a fellow homeowner.

John Rousseau stepped down after over eight years. He was thanked by standing ovation for his guidance and work in getting the community on a very sound Reserve Plan for the future.

If you are interested working with or on the Board, 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, and gardening/tree expertise. 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 recently placed in a CD ladder program, protecting them through FDIC and earning a bit more than the .10% that was being offered by the bank! As noted by Linda D at the meeting, 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).

Your Board is responsible for directing the **overall maintenance** of the property, so it remains safe, attractive and continues to build value for individual homeowners. With that mission, we have ongoing maintenance issues (landscaping and general fence staining/repairs) and reserve projects (garage stub walls, long term condition of amenities like the pool area, and semi-annual painting).

**Continued on Page 2**

Big projects completed (or still underway) in **2018** included cleanup and regrading around the north end of the south pond, patching of nature trails, replacement of some garage stub walls (starting with White Oak Court), and a couple of drainage areas.

In **2019**, we will continue with the garage stub walls, more drainage opportunities, redecking of the south end of the pool and “bridge” at the pool entry, sandblasting, and painting of the metal fencing at the pool. The latter items will occur either before the pool opens or immediately after it closes, depending on the weather and timing. Pool access will not be affected by the project.

Thank you to all who help make Amhurst attractive and welcoming! Staying on top of litter in the street and on the grounds 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 take a look at your own area for tidiness and continuity. We are all a reflection of our neighbors.

Elsewhere there is an article about upcoming **door /doorframe painting**. Over the last few years, some doors outside the four-color choices have cropped up, causing confusion and frustration for many. Please pay close attention to the information you receive about door frames and doors at your unit and be prepared to communicate your choice if a change is required. If you have questions in the meantime, refer to the Resident’s Guide where the color parameters are laid out.

Your Board (and Property Manager, Jim Kraus) continue to be available to you by email or phone. Contact info is in the Resident’s Guide or on the website at Amhurst.org. PLEASE – do call Jim when there is a question. Because many units are connected by water and/or power, something you do could affect your neighbors. We need to be aware of issues as they arise, so they can be addressed. If there is a light bulb out on your walkway, please let Jim know. He is not out at 10:00 p.m. at night looking for those deficiencies. We rely on you and your fresh eyes!

Everyone have a great Spring and Summer – be safe when driving, swimming, gardening, 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 – DOORS AND VINES

As an association it is our responsibility to ensure visible exteriors be kept architecturally attractive and uniform in appearance. Two new policies have been put into place to ensure a sense of uniform regarding vines and doors. These were communicated to all in the 2019 Resident’s Guide and may be found in the hard copy delivered to you or on the website.

**Vines** provide an attractive rustic charm to our Village; however, they do have drawbacks. Over time the vines have become widespread and require guidelines. **During the year 2019**, the Association will, at its own cost, completely remove vines and roots if homeowner does not desire to accept financial responsibility to prune. If you have any questions, please contact Jim Kraus, our Property Manager at 952-933-9747. See the Residents Guide, Page 22.

**Doors** may not be seen from the street or walkways, they can still be seen by buyers, guests, appraisers or other visitors. Please remember, any exterior modifications to your home must be approved by the Association. Do not replace any windows or doors without approval from Association. Jim, our Property Manager can help you define what is your property and Common Interest property. To avoid any frustrations, please contact Jim, our Property Manager at 952-933-9747. See the Resident’s Guide, Page 5.

**Spring/Summer 2019**, Jim Kraus, our property manager will be working with each homeowner to have all doors and vines align with approved policies. Please be on the lookout for a letter with a form for each homeowner to complete and return to Jim.



What a beautiful and safe community we have! We are fortunate to have an Association that has cared for our grounds and buildings over many decades, enriching our surroundings and increasing the value of our home investment. Amhurst is a very sought-after community in which to live!

As I was walking our circle (if you go around twice it is 1.1 miles) I noticed one of our residents walking with a plastic bag in hand. She was taking her time walking, picking up trash that accumulated over the winter. Sometimes we take our neighborhood beauty for granted because, 'it just gets done'. But so much of it is done by volunteers – good neighbors – who see something and just does it! Another example was pulling leaves away from the curb and sewer grates so our melting snow and rainfall could drain from our streets and parking lots. A huge thank you to our hidden helpers!

I also walk at night and am impressed that most cars enter our neighborhood driving slowly. We have a lot of dog walkers who can be hard to see in the dark. Driving slow, wearing bright colored clothes or illuminated vests/dog collars is a good safety precaution. And it goes without saying (but I'll say it anyway) always, always pick up after your dog.

I can't wait to see the green beauty and flowers this spring/summer at Amhurst. Thank you for keeping it a safe, beautiful and a welcoming place to live!

BRINGING FLOWERS TO OUR COMMUNITY | BINK SEMMER – BOARD SECRETARY

Our community's landscaping is kept clean and manicured by a professional service but as you drive around, you can see beautiful displays of flowers everywhere. Our residents do an excellent job of adding beauty and value to their areas. The association does not pay an outside service to do any flower plantings, as it is not part of our budget (other than the plantings at our entrance monument).

Over the years there has been a handful of volunteers that would plant and nurture flowers by the pool area. This year we thought it would be a good idea to form a committee to focus on this area as well as look at other options for our space such as bee and butterfly plantings, weeding the entrance area, etc.

If you are interested in forming/joining an Amhurst gardening committee, please contact Bink Semmer, 612-382-5755, [bsemmer9122@gmail.com](mailto:bsemmer9122@gmail.com).



**WINTER 2018/2019 – ICE DAM Q&A | JIM KRAUS – ASSOCIATION PROPERTY MANAGER**

This last winter season was the perfect storm for ice dams. A large amount of snow late in the season combined with freeze/thaw cycles made for more ice dams than usual. Several homeowners experienced water intrusion from the water trapped behind the ice dams. Here are some observations from this winter season as well as some answers to common questions from homeowners. I also wanted to take this opportunity to share the responsibilities/policy of the Association regarding ice dams.

**Q: Where did most of the ice dam leaking occur?**

**A:** At the brick chimneys and at the furnace vent stacks near the lower edge of the roof. Any saturation through the roof at the lower edge of the roof is a typical leak source. I am inclined to believe there is heat loss around the brick chimneys as the snow melted from that area sooner than the rest of the roof.

**Q: Why don't the flat garage roofs leak from ice buildup?**

**A:** Our garage roofs are a uniform structure and is one piece when completed. The shingled roofs are assembled from hundreds of individual pieces and designed to shed water. That is the reason the shingle roof is pitched not level.

**Q: Are the insulation/bypasses the Association responsibility?**

**A:** No, homeowners are responsible to correct their homes insulation/ bypass faults.

**Q: Why are there leaks when the Association paid for an extra waterproof barrier during the 2004 roofing project?**

**A:** This is true; however, the barrier is intended to minimize leaks, it is not guaranteed to prevent leaks. Additionally, the barrier performs best when lying flat on the roof deck, it does not perform well around any saturation through the roof deck (i.e. chimneys, furnace flues etc.). Also, the ice dam may extend past the barrier. Most of the leaks this season were at the brick chimneys and furnace flues.

**Q: What are the present code requirements for insulation and what were they when Amhurst was built?**

**A:** The present code requirement for Zone 6 in MN is R49. I can't say for certainty what the code was when Lohman's Amhurst built.

**Q: Why didn't the Association remove the ice dams before there was leaking?**

**A:** The Association by-laws only require ice dams to be removed after leaking is reported. Interesting note, a rough estimate to remove snow/ice from all the buildings, and clean up, was approximately \$70,000.

**Q: I understand from research the issues to correct are bypasses and insufficient/incorrect insulation. Is this a DIY project?**

**A:** If you do it yourself realize you will be stooped over in a cramped attic that will be likely be hot or cold. You will be working with itchy fiberglass as you must move the insulation to seal the bypasses, all the while making sure you do not fall through the ceiling. Also, when working with insulation you should wear full mask and suit to minimize exposure to insulation particles. I would have a professional do it.

**Q: Is there anything a homeowner can do to prevent ice dams?**

**A:** Yes, of course! Here are a few helpful suggestions: upgrade your attic hatch with insulation and weather-stripping, caulk light fixtures and exhausts through the ceiling, seal light switches and electrical outlets with gaskets (available at home improvement stores), and you can also seal the openings where the plumbing pipes enter the attic.

**Q: How do interior repairs get paid for?**

**A:** The answer to this is somewhat complex, but the simple answer is if the monetary damage from all the leaks (the cost of removing ice dams, and administrative time) does not exceed the Associations Master Policy deductible of \$25,000, then the individual homeowner is responsible for repairing interior. This season the amount of damage did not exceed the \$25,000 deductible.

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.



## HELPFUL INFORMATION

### CITY OF ST. LOUIS PARK RESOURCES

St Louis Park is committed to assisting homeowners maintain and beautify the homes in the neighborhood. Here are resources available:

#### Thinking of Updating Your Home?

The City of St. Louis Park matches 50% of utility **rebates** on energy-efficient furnaces, water heaters and air conditioners, in addition to air sealing and insulation. Go to their website [www.stlouispark.org/home-remodeling](http://www.stlouispark.org/home-remodeling) or call 952-924-2196 for details.

#### 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.

### FIRE EXTINGUISHER REPLACEMENT

Manufacturers say most extinguishers should work for 5-15 years, but you might not know how old the one is in your home. So how can you be sure it will fire away? It's recommended to check the pressure gauge monthly. If the needle is in the green area, it's functional. If it falls anywhere else, the extinguisher is unreliable and should be replaced. For older models without a gauge, have it checked by a pro. Use these tips to know when it's time to replace your extinguisher:

- Cracked, ripped, or blocked hose or nozzle.
- Missing locking pin on the handle or unsealed.
- Handle is wobbly or broken.
- Missing inspection sticker or hang tag, with a record of checkups and maintenance.

If it's no longer a reliable device, you will need to dispose of the extinguisher appropriately. Since they are considered hazardous waste they can't be placed in your regular garbage or recycling bin. You'll need to take it to a drop off facility or collection event. Visit the City of St Louis Park website to find disposable options: [www.stlouispark.org/services/garbage-recycling/household-hazardous-waste](http://www.stlouispark.org/services/garbage-recycling/household-hazardous-waste). Also see Residents Guide, Page 10 for more information.

### 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.

#### 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 Enhanced Visit Today!

Start saving money and energy with a \$50 visit by a pro 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/](http://www.mncee.org/home-energy-squad/slp/) or call 651-328-6220.

### 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 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 Krause or a Board Member directly.

## 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> of the month as the payment date. If you must choose a different date, please make sure it is no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month to avoid late fees.**

If you have any questions about Amhurst monthly dues payments, please contact Sharper, Jim Kraus, our Property Manager at 952-933-9747, or any board member.

**Amhurst's Sharper Management Rep  
Josh Reams**

952-698-2061 or [josh@sharpermanagement.com](mailto:josh@sharpermanagement.com)

**Sharper Management | Contact Information**

952-224-4777 or [www.sharpermanagement.com](http://www.sharpermanagement.com)



## 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](http://amhurst.org), or feel free to contact Jim Kraus at 952-933-9747, any Board member, or your insurance agent/company.



## COMMUNITY NEWS

### **AMHURST'S ANNUAL GARAGE SALE | SATURDAY JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup> 8:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.**

Gather any items you'd like to sell, price them, and 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 Residents 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 8<sup>TH</sup> 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.

### **SUMMERFEST 2019 – AUGUST 6<sup>TH</sup>**

Make sure to mark your calendars! **Summerfest 2019 will be on August 6<sup>th</sup>!** Back by popular demand Jim Kraus and the All-Star Volunteers will be hosting a fantastic pig roast. There will be beverages, yard games, bingo and much more! Lohman's Amhurst is committed to helping our local schools succeed. This year at Summerfest we are **collecting donations of school supplies. Please bring your donation of notebooks, pens, pencils etc.**

### **LIONS AND TIGERS AND BEARS – OH MY!**

Have you seen the fox, coyote, deer, feral cats, and other animals around Amhurst? Are you aware of the St. Louis Park ordinance against ground feeding of squirrels, birds, etc.? The following was pulled from the St. Louis Park website.

"If you see anyone using ground feeders for squirrels or other animals, please contact the city's natural resources coordinator at 952.924.2699. The city's feeding ordinance requires feeders to be five feet off the ground and excess seed must be removed in order to inhibit deer from feeding and to reduce the attraction for other animals. Coyotes will know where lots of seed is on the ground – which is also where birds, squirrels, and other critters congregate – and will frequent the area to prey on those animals."

Loose seed attracts small animals, which attracts larger animals. While it is wonderful to see nature in our Village, we shouldn't be inviting them into our spaces. In addition, if there are birds feeding on wayward or deliberate seeds on the ground mice and other small animals are too. They can find their way into your unit, or the unit next door, and create all kinds of havoc. Please ensure any feeders are five feet off the ground and that you clean up after the "messy" seed- flinging birds – they can be picky eaters! Thank you!

**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.

# Lohman's Amburst



## Lohman's Amburst HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

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Jim Kraus, Property Manager  
*Published Spring and Fall*

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