

## **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE REPORT - May 13, 2009**

The drought, at least for the present, is over. It's amazing what a few drops of the right stuff does to the over all appearance of Fleetwood. The grounds maintenance committee was very active last fall, and equally as active this spring. Since last October we have purchased, planted, and or installed

20 rhododendrons of various sizes and colors

21 dianthus

5 trees (2 cypress, 1 autumn blaze maple, 2 redbuds

15 ice plants

12 blue rug junipers

9 parson's junipers

3 blue princess hollies

2 Pieris shrubs

1 barberry bush

We have transplanted 22 shrubs from the circle to other areas of Fleetwood (burning bush, hollies, Euonymus)

### **1. THE CIRCLE**

The re-do of "the circle" is nearly complete. The decorative "rocks" are in place, a significant number of shrubs have been removed and transplanted to the north side of 900 building, the south side of the 1700 building, and in and around the pump house. New rhododendrons, dianthus and creeping juniper have been planted. And, thanks to the efforts of Jo Wilruth, Bob Hengst, and Danny Devine colorful annuals have been strategically placed to give the area spring, summer, and fall splashes of color. What's left is the planting of two to three more rhododendrons and the installation of a timer lighting system which will focus light on to the ground and up into the large oak. As a point of interest, the exact above sea level height of Fleetwood at the circle will be etched or stenciled in the rock. Once the elevation number is determined and the etching/stenciling done the circle project will be completed.

### **2. THE PUMP HOUSE**

The re-do of the pump area is nearing completion. With the addition of two more rhododendrons, and the planting of erosion control ground cover around the base of the pump in front of the Nellie Stevens hollies, that project will be complete.

### **3. TREE TRIMMING**

We have had two Fleetwood grounds tree trimming sessions; one last fall and one this early spring. The recent rains seemed to have brought back many of our maple trees which as of last fall were severely stressed. Shortly, we will be having discussions with our north side Pine Drive neighbors regarding the trimming or removal of trees impeding the views of our north side Fleetwooders

### **4. EROSION CONTROL**

a. Ground hogs. As you are aware, last year we had some erosion problems on the East side of Fleetwood caused in large measure by ground hogs. We were able to rip rap

the specific areas and, although we have identified two holes on the east side (one old but being reused and a newly dug one), to date that problem on that side has not reappeared. We are monitoring the area to make sure there is not a repeat of last year's problem. On the west side we have identified nine separate ground hog holes which at this time are not causing problems. Like the east side we will monitor their activity to make sure they do not cause erosion problems.

b. 900 Building. An area behind the 900 building may have a potentially serious erosion problem. We have called upon Mike Michalski, Frank Clark, Jimmy Porter, Todd Anders (our grounds maintenance company person) to help us assess the situation and arrive at a cost affective way to stop this problem. We have asked Jeff Cosgrove, President of Southwinds Landscape Company, to lend his council to this project.

c. Pine Drive bank erosion. There is an area on the bank next to Pine Drive on the north side of Fleetwood behind the 1000 building that is slipping. We have noticed this for a while but recently the slippage had become more noticeable and potentially more serious. Our fear is that if not stopped, the hedge of hemlocks on top of the bank may slip onto Pine Drive. Shortly, we will initiate a decorative rip rap installation, where approximately 100 linear feet of rip rap will be placed on the problem area. Perennials such as ice plants, phlox, dianthus and/or other decorative creeping ground cover will be planted in and around the rocks. In time this area will be covered with a pallet of color.

## **5. OTHER PLANTINGS**

We will be having one more late spring planting to fill in some other areas left bare by dead plant removal. We will plant as far as our budget will take us. Sadly, next fall we will be replacing at least two maybe three trees which at best are doing poorly. We will also be planting trees in some areas where the "great Easter freeze of 2007" killed off some of our young fresh red maples.

## **6. PEST CONTROL**

Using every legal means at his disposal Anders Ground Maintenance continues it's never ending battle against moles/voles. The GM committee thinks that we will never be totally without these critters. Todd Anders has gotten his license to use materials for use against the critter that is killing hemlocks. With this license in hand he has been closely monitoring our hemlocks behind the 1000 building which was treated for this disease about two years ago. So far there is no sign of a return. Todd continues to look for spider mites which are always an on going problem.

## **7. SPRING WEEDING/TRIMMING**

Spring weeding has begun. With the amount of rainfall we've had, progress will be slow, so be patient. Shrub trimming will begin as soon after the blooming has stopped.

## **8. SPECIAL KUDOS**

Since I was not here when much of the above was executed, special kudos must go to the following.

Todd Anders, president of our grounds maintenance company, for always following through with our planting plan in a timely and fair priced manner.

Jeff Cosgrove for his educated advice on how, what and where things should be done.

Jo Wilruth and Danny Devine for their over the top help in making “The Circle” as beautiful as it is now and will become.

Bob Hengst who helped execute all our planting plans and who continually presents new ideas on how to make Fleetwood more beautiful. Of special note were Bob’s Herculean efforts to keep our newly planted rhododendrons alive during a recent spring freeze. He personally went to each newly planted plant (over 48) in 33 degree weather in a 10-15 MPH wind and, with blue, hard to move fingers covered each with a plastic bag. After the freeze, he returned and removed each bag. Result, not one lost plant. Thanks Bob.

Ed Eggers