

Giants Neck Beach Association  
Clubhouse Grounds and Improvement Committee  
Meeting Minutes- July 28,2023

In attendance: Mary Ellen Donegan, Terra Moore, Michael Heenehan, Louise Wilcox, Irene Makiaris, Bonnie Henninger, Phyllis Berger, Rima Dagosto, Gail Zuckerbraun, Dave Zuckerbraun, Lee Ann Berger, Mary Ann Heenehan, Paul Formica

Unable to attend: Fran Wesoly, Kevin Mosher, Eric Davison, Glory Lena, Page Heslin

Paul called the meeting to order at 5:35pm welcoming everyone and thanking them for volunteering for this committee. He re-stated the three-fold purpose of the committee:

- Future development of the clubhouse
- Issues surrounding pickleball raised by community members (mitigation)
- Overall use of the recreation area

The committee was formed following the BOG meeting on 7/5- soliciting members through the website and also at the membership meeting on 7/15. Members were not polled on their feelings regarding property development or pickleball; the goal was to give voice to the community about the issues. Recommendations may be made to the Board of Governors with major decisions going to the Association membership for approval. There is no timeline or deadlines for actions to be taken. Meetings will be limited to one hour whenever possible.

Paul distributed copies of the original Clubhouse Ground Development proposal and suggested that as a starting point. The proposal was focused on safety issues, multi-generational activities, deck safety issues and expansion, landscaping and playscape enhancements. It was presented at the July 2022 association meeting, but no vote was taken.

Several committee members provided a short history of the original committee and the court itself. The original tennis court was not useable so the BOG spent at least 6 months researching and then proposing the multi-purpose court (tennis, basketball and pickleball) which was overwhelmingly approved in December 2020. Association members were equally assessed for the court. All documents related to the court project are available on the website for reference.

Discussion then shifted to sound issues related to pickleball. Paul provided an update of measures that have already been taken:

- Sound reducing balls have been purchased; players have been encouraged to use them and provide feedback. Consensus is that the yellow balls seem to reduce the sound but the nerf-like balls make it a different game
- Paul will direct Lou to purchase sound-reducing paddles to try to further reduce the sound levels
- Paul requested that the pickleball tournament start be pushed back from 8am to 8:45; the court committee agreed and changed the time
- Pickleball players in free play have been tending toward an 8:30 am start

Paul then initiated a discussion of measures that could be taken to mitigate the sound/court issues.

Discussion included:

- Post a specific ending time vs "dusk"
- Create and post temporary signage for start and end times (Court Committee)
- Replace "no parking" signs near the court which were removed during construction
- Encourage all players to use the sound reducing balls and paddles for evaluation

- Issues surrounding enforcement; Paul offered to come out if needed
- Windscreens could be added to the fencing (Terra to research)
- Landscaping could provide a sound barrier for abutting neighbors
- Sound proofing could be explored (Gail to pursue)
- Possibility of a membership for players
- Cost of improvements can be absorbed by the Court Committee/overall budget
- Suggest a decibel study for actual data on the sound levels (Michael and Louise have some experience)
- Possibility of enclosing the eastern side of the court to be able to lock/unlock at specific times
- Remove the basketball net completely if the noise and playing time is problematic
- Install a ring camera on the clubhouse to determine the violators and serve as a deterrent.
- Similar to action taken on West Beach stairs- situation impacting neighbors resulted in action/resolution

No action was taken on these suggestions; committee members are asked to research any/all of these ideas in terms of cost, effectiveness, etc. for report backs at the next meeting.

Paul provided everyone with an opportunity for a closing comment/reaction:

Dave Z- encourage the group to take a step back and determine how much activity the association wants for the grounds; does the general membership want increased activity? Perhaps poll the membership.

Gail Z- appreciates that people are listening to each other and appreciates the attention that the issue is getting.

Rima- the noise is annoying and she appreciates that people are willing to listen

Bonnie- this is a divisive issue for the community that really needs to be addressed

Phyllis- There is a difference between tennis and pickleball noise; neighbors are entitled to peace and quiet. Time frames for the court need to be established and enforced. The association should address the issues and not take a "not in my back yard" mentality.

Irene- they hear the pickleball sound but it doesn't bother them; but understand others' concerns. Some of the bushes that would have created a sound barrier have been removed or cut down. We should connect with other associations or groups to look for best practices to address the issues. We're not the only ones facing this issue.

Louise- we should be trying as many things as possible to make a difference including sound testing and decibel meters. A ring camera installed on the clubhouse would identify the violators instead of sending more messages to the general membership. If the basketball court is not necessary, remove it.

Michael- hears the noise but views it as a good sound of people using the facility for recreation and fun. We don't want relationships impacted so we should institute reasonable measures and spend the money that needs to be spent to make the appropriate accommodations.

Terra- sad that it is dividing the community. Pickleball is a social activity that should be bringing the community together. We should be limiting the hours of play. The original development plan was overkill.

Mary Ellen- Lives across the street from the court and is not bothered by the noise. Emphasized the special nature of our community and is willing to try anything to make it better.

The playground area needs attention; she attempted to weed there but poison ivy was everywhere.

Lee Ann- hopes to come up with solutions that will be reasonable for all. We should try the paddles, look at landscaping. Evening hours for play are still needed for those who work during the day. Additional fencing to allow for lock-up should be explored.

Mary Ann- appreciated the reasonableness and calm conversation at the meeting. Hoping for reasonable recommendations that will make the recreation area better for everyone.

Paul thanked everyone for their participation and asked for suggestions about future meetings. Consensus was to meet every two weeks with report backs and information coming from the committee for discussion by the committee.

August 11 was established as the next meeting date. The time had been set at 6:00 but due to a conflict at the clubhouse, this meeting will be held at 5:30 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Ann Heenehan

