

Gretchen's Weekly Property Coordinator Update
March 14, 2013

Another full week. Since last Thursday's update here's the short (honest) version of what's gone on here:

Plastering in the Meeting House

They showed up today – 4 days early – to start! They hope to be done by Monday with painter starting by Wednesday. He doesn't do "brush painting" so Rick is looking for another painter for wood work. He will (now) also take care of the many, many small holes in the foyer and balcony from the electrical work happening – nice guy. I expect the price will rise a little from this, but not much.

Electrical and Fire Safety Work

All Security: Started wiring today (3/14) in the Meeting House – not a moment too soon. We now have plans on file with the Westport Building and Fire departments for the first time in modern history. Awaiting word from lieutenant at Fire Dept. re: whether some of strobes can be white instead of red. The red box with the radio will be mounted on the side of the chimney in the balcony. I had hoped they could put it on the back side, but it's on the side – can't be helped. All Security will install a new alarm box in the Community House after completing the wiring in the Meeting House. The goal is to stay ahead of the plasterers.

I noticed that the fire extinguishers seem to have been last inspected, etc in 2007. They are supposed to be done yearly. That's on next week's list.

Jeff Kobza finished all of his electrical work last Thursday (working solo) in order to be ahead of the plumbers – took a day off from teaching at Voke to do it. He has given me at least 3 tips on things to mention or ask other contractors involved in this work that I would never have thought of or known, and all have been invaluable. He's a great guy. He actually emailed me instructions for putting in a new programmable thermostat in the Community House which I was successfully able to follow and do myself yesterday. It's a Lux 7-Day Programmable Thermostat. My plan is to tweak the program every week, depending on what is on the calendar so that no one (especially me) has to run over to turn the heat on 2 hours before an event. Hope it works and worship is warmer than it's been the last 3 weeks on Sunday. I chickened out on doing the FDS classroom thermostat – Jeff will do it when he comes back to do the exit signs. (I researched remote programmable thermostats, but they require a Wi-Fi connection.)

The Well

After not hearing from him for a month, I called Tom Leonard of American Well, on Monday just to say, "Hey, how are things going?" One thing led to another and in the next 24 hours he had pulled all the permits, and obtained approval for the sighting of the well between the Community House and the stone wall by the Catholic Church's building. Gas and Electric marked the lines on Tuesday. The actual drilling is to start tomorrow! Tom thought he could do limb cutting necessary for his equipment, but realized yesterday he couldn't.

I cashed in many, many favors and got Ray Oliver (a primo "tree guy") to meet me and Tom at the Community House at 9AM this morning. He is actually going to take the limbs down for Tom first thing tomorrow morning. Wow. While Ray's crew is here, they'll also take care of limbs on 2 trees in cemetery damaged in storms...couldn't help but ask.....

Tom says he'll start drilling as soon as Ray's crew leaves in the morning. He should be done with the drilling by early to middle of next week --- will then send water samples off for testing. Takes 7-10 days usually to get results and approval. If all okay, then he will schedule work to tie into the building and disconnect from well across the street – we may need an inside plumber for that. If all goes as planned, we should be on line with new well by first week of April.

Septic Flush

So, with 6 guys in the MH working and 2 out in the driveway talking, I discovered that none of the Community House toilets would flush and the sewage was backing up into the bathtub! Ha! I will spare the blow by blow saga and simply say New England Sanitation flushed 2100 gallons out of our 1000 tank in the backyard this afternoon, and all is solved. The last time the septic tank was flushed was in July 2011 – apparently the very wet weather contributed to our situation.

Other Small Repairs

I bought and installed a new, black mailbox across the street. Put felt pads on the bench on the floor of the Community House; continued my crusade to empty kitchen of old, gross things. Replaced the kickstand door stoppers on the front door and the one fire door in the Community House, and screwed in another line of hooks for things to hang in the utility closet.

Made an appointment to meet the health inspector next week for yearly walk through.

Community House Use

Met with an exercise instructor named Mary Derbyshire who is going to move her entire business from the Congo Church in Tiverton to our building. I negotiated a rate with the agreement that she will sweep before and after so that Meeting doesn't have to pay me or a cleaning person to do it. She starts April 1st.

Negotiated with the director of the Westport Historical Society to hold their lectures in the Community House. They gratefully and cheerfully agreed to sweep afterwards sufficiently for the exercise class the following morning – again as a cooperative venture for the fabulous rate we gave them!

Handled calls re: birthday parties (2 on calendar), the bride in the May wedding (sent a question from her to M&C), the Westport Women's Club (a donation they sent to us in September was never cashed), got the Blue Book Bin emptied and the Cardboard Bin emptied. We REALLY need to get Meeting Information on the bulletin boards in the Community House hall! Wasted PR Opportunities.....

I've met Anna, the woman who cleans our building (on staff for Mary Ann Turpin). She loves the new hall floor and is taking very sweet care of it.

Carpeting

No new progress at this point.

We need a 10 minute stick picking up party after worship some Sunday.

Gretchen Baker-Smith