



Castlewood Property Owners Association

2023 Summer Newsletter

August 2023

Below, please find updates on 2023 Association activities, the focus of which is to maintain and improve the facilities and infrastructure owned by the Association. With the continual influx of younger homeowners, almost of all whom have children, it's important for us to keep our assets safe and in good working order, and available for all to use.

2023 CPOA PROJECTS

Electrical Repairs

To date, we have had two electrical repairs addressed by Austgen Electric:

- (1) replacement of the daylight sensor for the Castlewood Park light; and
- (2) repair of one light socket and wiring on the southernmost light pole in the Castlewood Median @ East Valley Place. It's unknown if this damage was due to wind, animals, or vandalism, but it's damage we have not previously experienced with any light fixture. We have a third light issue with the Park Bench that is in the process of repair as of the date of this Newsletter.

Maintenance of Castlewood Drive Turf Area between East Valley Place & US Route 30, between the sidewalk and adjacent properties

This area is not owned by the Castlewood Association, and has never been owned by the CPOA. It was at one time, the only entry and exit from the subdivision, and the Association chose to maintain the property. It has been a general entrance to multiple subdivisions for at least 25 years. The Town of Dyer agrees that the areas to the east and west of Castlewood Drive are Town of Dyer 'Right-of-Way' areas, and are to be maintained by the adjacent homeowners. Going forward, the owners of Meyer's Castle are responsible for maintaining turf areas west of Castlewood Drive and the owner of the property to the east of Castlewood Drive is responsible for maintaining turf areas east of Castlewood Drive. This responsibility includes maintaining trees, shrubs, grass, and weeds in these areas. Town of Dyer Code enforcement is responsible for enforcing this effort and has been in regular contact with both property owners. The CPOA will not expend its funds for mowing, weeding, tree trimming, irrigation, or any other activity on these properties for which we are not responsible. The CPOA does own the irrigation system which is located within these properties and will maintain this asset going forward.

Maintenance of the Median Turf Area of Castlewood Drive between East Valley Place & US Route 30.

The CPOA will maintain this area, as we own everything above ground in the area, as well as all electrical and irrigation infrastructure. That said, this is Town of Dyer property and is not owned by the CPOA, nor has it ever been owned by the CPOA. We have aggressively sprayed for weeds this year, and have overseeded and fertilized

Irrigation Repairs

When the irrigation system was opened this year, we experienced very low head pressure in all irrigation zones. Our contractor asked us where the Valve Control Boxes were located so that they could evaluate the valves of each zone to determine if the low head pressure was due to valve issues or the water feed from the Town of Dyer. Unfortunately, the CPOA had no historical records showing us where the Valve Control Boxes were located, no records from the original 2004 Installer showing the irrigation system layout, and the Irrigation Zone Map we have from our 2021 vendor also did not show us any piping or valve configuration. Discussion with some long-time residents provided us some guidance: three (3) Valve Control Boxes were located, and some wire tracing, independent of our contractor, was conducted to validate the Irrigation Zones to those specific Valves. Upon the return of our irrigation contractor, we located the remaining Valve Control Boxes, and validated electrical wiring for each Irrigation Zone. All Zones were once again tested, and it was determined that only one Irrigation Zone Valve was in need of replacement. The vendor was able to determine that the initial issue we had with Irrigation Head Pressure was due to infiltration of soil into the system when the primary water valve was opened by the Town of Dyer (required by code).

The reason we needed to trace and locate every Valve Control Box is that the original install contractor buried the Valve Control Boxes 8'-12' below grade and did not provide us any documentation showing their locations. We have removed every Valve Control Box, and reconfigured them so that they now are slightly above grade, with the surrounding turf areas seeded and fertilized, with grass growing in.

We have a new Irrigation System Map, showing the exact location of every sprinkler head, every Valve Control Box, and every Irrigation Zone. We can now track every Irrigation Head which has been replaced, and every Irrigation Valve which has been replaced. We also shut down three old irrigation heads which are no longer of value to the CPOA, and added two new heads at the north end of the Castlewood Median for better coverage since bushes have been removed. All irrigation heads located in the turf areas between the sidewalk and the adjacent properties, are tested annually to be sure they are functional, and those Irrigation Zones are taken out of service. The CPOA does irrigate the Castlewood Median, three times each week, in the early AM hours.

Tree Trimming

Necessary trimming is performed on trees in the Castlewood Median that may impact traffic, as well as any limbs which fall due to storms or failing trees.

Little Library

The Little Library was repainted this year.

Park Fence

We have received quotes for power washing the fence this year, once other Park activities are completed. As there is no water available in the Castlewood Park, contractors need to have a service which includes a mobile water tank.

Mole Damage

Mole damage is substantially less this year due to work we performed in 2022, but aggressive action is necessary to keep destruction to a minimum.

Castlewood Park Playground

70 Cubic yards of playground mulch was added to the Park Playground area this year, adding a 5" depth of new mulch.

Castlewood Park Walkway

The area between the Castlewood Park and the Castlewood Pond, is one of the lowest areas in the subdivision, and because of this, it was historically a soggy mess. When we changed the Park playground surface a few years ago, we used dirt we removed, to fill in low areas throughout the Park including raising this area a few inches, and added a walkway, at a minimal cost, to alleviate the issue. The walkway we installed did not work out as planned, and with substantially more children in the subdivision, this area is used more than it has been in quite a few years. We were able to find some additional funds this year, and have undertaken a project to improve the walkway for the longer term, by installing a brick path from the Playground to the Pond. This is not only a walkway, as it must be built to a standard allowing for vehicles to drive on it. Any vendor we use, to add chemicals to the Castlewood Pond (algae and plant control), has one access point to the Pond, and it is through this area. Because of this, this walkway is designed to withstand the weight of a pickup truck with a boat and boat trailer, each time they go into and exit from the pond area. The Walkway Contractor has needed to work around rain events, but we expect the project to be complete by the end of August.

The 'forgotten' CPOA property

Nearly every Association has property donated to it by the original developer, property which is not suitable for building. For us, it is the property on either side of Lancelot Lane, south of Knighthood Drive, in the swale. There are a substantial number of trees in these lots and it is the responsibility of the Association to address the trees as necessary, as we did earlier this year. Funding for tree work will need to be added to the budget in future years.

Hospitality Lights

Please be reminded all hospitality lights must be functioning to go on at dusk and off at dawn

SWIMMING / BOATING IN THE CASTLEWOOD POND

We have received multiple requests about swimming in the lake. Our response has been consistent, **swim and boat at your own risk**. The Castlewood Pond is a detention pond, and is part of the Lake County Stormwater District, meant to collect stormwater runoff from the street, as well as run off from surrounding land. The pond also receives water from Dyer Ditch on the south end, and then releases that water at the north end, back to Dyer Ditch. The pond is not meant to be used for swimming and in fact, is quite shallow. The pond is also not meant to be used by boats with outboard or inboard motors. Use of paddle-craft is acceptable, foot powered paddle boats, or small boats with a low-speed trolling motor. Access to the pond, for those not living on the lake, is via the entryway at the southwest corner of the Castlewood Park / northeast corner of the pond. If you see someone who you think should not be in the Park or on the Pond, be smart, call the Dyer Police: 219-865-1163.

MAILBOXES

Mailboxes are to be in a safe working condition, as per the USPS. **Per CPOA Covenants, all mailboxes must be the same, and maintained in good working order.** Repair is simple, and the local retailer for all parts, is noted on our website:

<https://castlewooddyer.webchicago.net/mailbox.htm>

Mailboxes are the property of the homeowner and not the CPOA. ***The CPOA does not repair mailboxes, does not pay for the repair of mailboxes, nor does it hire contractors for the repair of mailboxes.***

Ask the Board

If you have a question which pertains to our Castlewood Community, please send those questions to:

castlewoodboard@aol.com. or

**CPOA
PO Box 340
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