



Greenbelt Homes, Inc.

COMMUNICATOR

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**Special
Edition**



Homes Improvement Project (H.I.P.) Update: Board of Directors Votes What Work to Recommend for GHI Membership Approval

At its regular December 4, 2014 meeting, the Greenbelt Homes, Inc. Board of Directors discussed and voted on Homes Improvement Project (H.I.P.) recommendations from the Buildings Committee. Specific work items were selected to recommend for approval by the coop's membership. The Board is planning a Special Membership Meeting in the Spring for this vote. Membership approval is needed because GHI will need to secure financing in order to pay for improvements not funded through our Replacement Reserves (RR).

Planned replacement of doors and windows in frame, brick, and block homes, and vinyl siding on frame homes, are H.I.P. work items that do not require a member vote or additional financing. They are funded from the Replacement Reserves. This work is on schedule, slated to begin in Spring, 2016.

With a 'packed house' in the Board room, all members who wished to speak addressed the Board to state their opinions on the H.I.P. Board President Skolnik also gave an update report on the continuing crawlspace work; see article on page 2 for more information.

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Building Envelope Improvements Recommended by Board of Directors

| Home Type | Main Component | Improvement | BOARD OF DIRECTORS RECOMMENDATIONS | | ESTIMATED COST |
|-----------|---|--|------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| | | | All Units | Member Option | |
| Brick | Attics | Air-seal attic perimeter | X | | \$375.00 |
| | | Insulate and install gaskets around attic hatches | X | | |
| | | Install blown-in insulation to increase value from R-16 to 38 | | X | \$1,552.00 |
| | Ventilation | Install bath vent fans with timer switches | | X | \$1,000.00 |
| Windows | Install casement windows in lieu of sliders | | X | \$4,000.00 | |
| Block | Exterior walls | Install vinyl siding over 2" insulation | | X | \$10,255.00 |
| | Ventilation | Install bath vent fans with timer switches | | X | \$700.00 |
| | | Installation of automatic control for fan operation throughout the day | | X | \$100.00 |
| | Windows | Install casement windows | | X | \$4,000.00 |
| Frame | Attics | Air-seal attic perimeter | X | | \$425.00 |
| | | Insulate and install gaskets around attic hatches; install insulating hatch covers over attic pull-down stairs | X | | |
| | | Install blown-in insulation to increase value from R-16 to 38 | | X | \$1,238.00 |
| | Ventilation | Install bath vent fans with timer switches | | X | \$700.00 |
| | Exterior wall Insulation | Install 1" exterior insulation beneath new vinyl siding | | X | \$3,986.00 |



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Board of Directors' discussion and voting resulted in some work items being identified as needed in all homes of a given type, with other work items being designated as 'member option'. For optional improvements selected by members, GHI will contract for and manage the installation, which is paid for by the individual members for work at their own homes. The table on page 1 shows the work items the Board voted to select for recommendation to the membership. *All costs shown are estimates, and subject to change.*

The Board has tasked our Finance Committee to research and recommend sources of funding for these improvements, and to report the estimated impact on member fees. Also, a task force of the Buildings Committee is currently researching financial incentives, such as grants, that might be available to offset the cost of certain improvements.

All members are encouraged to participate in caring for our coop. If you would like to get involved in the Homes Improvement Project, please contact Joan Krob, GHI's Director of Member Services, at jkrob@ghi.coop or 301-474-4161 – or visit www.ghi.coop where you can complete a Volunteer Interest Form.

Update on Proposed Remediation Project for Crawlspaces

For the past four years, GHI has been conducting a Pilot Program on home energy efficiency upgrades in 28 units, with technical assistance from the Home Innovation Research Labs (HIRL). Based on HIRL's recommendations, GHI's Board of Directors approved a project to improve crawlspaces under seven rows of pilot homes. A contractor was selected during the fall of 2011, and installed the following work:

Five Rows of Four-Unit Masonry Block and Brick Homes

Masonry Units currently have closed crawlspaces without vent openings. Improvements consisted of replacing vapor barriers on crawlspace earthen floors and fastening them to the perimeter of exterior walls; sealing all voids on existing wall insulation by adding rigid and spray foam insulation to achieve an R-10 value; and installing insulation on walls under porch

slabs. This work cost \$45,303 (average of \$2,265 per unit).

Two Rows of Four-Unit Frame Homes

Frame units currently have vented crawlspaces. Improvements consisted of replacing vapor barriers on crawlspace earthen floors and fastening them to the perimeter of exterior walls; removing existing fiberglass batt insulation from under floors, then sealing/insulating the floors with spray foam insulation to achieve an R-8 value. This work cost \$32,325 (average of \$4,041 per unit).

The Buildings Committee has analyzed the results obtained from the pilot program, and is currently deliberating what recommendations are to be proposed to the Board of Directors for crawlspace improvements in all GHI homes. Some members have voiced concerns about the environmental effects of spray foam insulation, as well as concern that foam insulation could make future repair and remodeling work more difficult; therefore, the committee has elected to research alternative insulation options for the frame homes. The Buildings Committee plans to submit its report with recommendations for crawlspace improvements and estimated costs to the Board of Directors before the end of this year. The Board will deliberate the Buildings Committee's report during an open session Board meeting, which as always is open to all members.

Sump Pump Repairs Ongoing

At the request of the Buildings committee, staff recently conducted a random inspection of the crawlspaces under 20 of the 189 rows of frame homes to assess the condition of vapor barriers, insulation, sump pumps, vents etc. The inspections revealed that all of the vapor barriers and insulation should be replaced, and that a large percentage of sump pumps were not operational. Staff subsequently have repaired all of the defective sump pumps in the 20 buildings, and are continuing to inspect and repair or replace non-working sump pumps in all frame buildings. As of this date, 33 building rows have been inspected. All of the 72 sump pumps in these 33 rows are now operational. Staff repaired or replaced 37 of those pumps (51% of the total). Staff have committed to complete the repairs of defective sump pumps in all 189 frame buildings no later than April 2015.

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