

## President's Report -- 2016

Without a doubt, we will view this year as a major turning point for the entire Stratfield Falls Community. As we recognize that our units are around 15 or 16 years of age, they are entering a phase in which we need to do more significant remediation to ensure the quality, viability and value of all of our homes. Five years ago, we took a giant step in this direction when we adopted a major project that included painting, caulking, wood rot remediation, masonry and major landscaping improvements. At that stage, we recognized the necessity for continual maintenance and upgrading of our homes. Tonight, you are being asked to pass a budget with no increase in common charges, to approve an extension of our special assessment and to pass an amendment to our Declaration that will protect the integrity, value and strong residential character of our community.

Three years ago, we undertook another major step by launching a 13 year plan aimed at meeting the structural needs of Stratfield Falls. As a community, we agreed to assess ourselves additional funds to ensure that the monies would be there as major repairs and projects emerged. Up to this point, we have replaced all exterior lighting, placed heating cables on many of our roofs and in leaders and gutters to help to prevent ice damming and icing on our sidewalks. Last year, we undertook some major landscaping work. Now, we are involved in deck repair and staining which will be completed in the early fall. This was not an inexpensive project but we can know with confidence that our decks are sturdy and will be more attractive to use. We will also be exploring maintenance cycles to ensure that our decks will be preserved in an attractive, usable and safe manner at all times.

The next major challenge will be our deteriorating roads and driveways. Over the past few years, we have tried to sustain them a bit longer with patching and sealing. However, additional patching and sealing will no longer be enough. We have reached a point in our community when we now need to look at repaving. We are in the early stages of collecting bids based upon a set of specs that will hopefully ensure that the repaving will last 20 years. Your board will be working closely with our new property management company on determining the best way to proceed with such a project and will bring it back to you at a later date for your approval. At the same time, we are asking County Management to assess the amount of time we have left before we need to move towards replacing roofs along with another major painting project etc. We will be looking for firm and realistic figures to ensure that we are planning properly for the future. Here again, we will share our findings with you.

In January of this year, we took a giant step forward when we contracted with a new management company. Recognizing that now more than ever, we needed a management company with more time and expertise to help administer and guide this community as we move forward to preserve the integrity and property values of Stratfield Falls. Your Board went through a long and thorough 3 month process to find the best fit for our community. There was a great deal of research, interviewing and background checks before we made a final choice. Ultimately we settled on two finalists. Your Board conducted 12 formal reference checks for each of the two finalists along with a variety of informal checks. We are delighted to have Gary Knauf and County Management as our partners in sustaining Stratfield Falls in a pristine condition. We have on-site checks here every week and our finances are managed by an accounting

**expert. We have people whom we can turn to with building and maintenance experience second to none. The County Management Office runs in an efficient, professional and friendly manner. Most of all, problems are addressed quickly and efficiently and they are always resolved in an expert and cost effective fashion. These are great folks and we are truly in good hands.**

**We also have an excellent attorney in Adam Cohen from Pullman and Comley who is incredibly knowledgeable in statutes and laws governing condominium communities. His knowledge and expertise are second to none. Adam helped us to update and strengthen all of our Bylaws, Rules and Regulations as well as the various amendments to our Declaration including the amendment we will vote on tonight. His advice was invaluable as we chose to end our relationship with our previous property manager.**

**Finally and most important of all are the very hard-working members of your Board along with volunteers from our Stratfield Falls Community. We are truly indebted to Gary Gibson, John Lotty, Barbara Sheffer, David Wohl and Jim Digney. They are an incredible team to work with and are so very dedicated to this community. I offer a special shout-out to Vic Berecz who has done a yeoman's job of managing our website. And of course very special thanks to all of you for your continued support and confidence in this Board. Stratfield Falls is a real gem. We have the finest condominium community not only in this town but probably in all of Fairfield County. I know that tonight, the decisions that we will make will continue to move us forward in this trajectory.**

**Thank you. Al Treidel**

