

# Masters Mailbox Review

Don Jancin and Dikran Ohannessian  
February 13, 2021

The Board at its December 9, 2020 meeting agreed to undertake a review of the community mailboxes for any needed repairs. Don Jancin and Dikran Ohannessian were assigned this task and were asked to report back at the next Board meeting.

### **Current state of mailboxes**

- The current mailboxes consist of a pole, base cover for the pole, box, the box support bracket, flag, and house number plate. The poles and base covers were installed in 2011. The other parts of the mailboxes were replaced in 2017, while the poles and base covers were only repainted.
- The review of the mailboxes yielded:
  - Mailboxes in good condition – There were only nine such mailboxes 3½ years after installation. This was far less than expected as 25 mailbox repairs were undertaken in the last three years. This is inline with 2013 experience, as two years after installation of new mailboxes, almost 50% of the mailboxes needed to be replaced or repaired.
  - Poles and base covers – The poles are made of extruded aluminium and are mostly in good condition. However, the base covers which are made of cast aluminium are not in good condition. There were a significant number with corrosion on the top part of the base and many have peeling paint. Damage could have been caused by water sprinklers, grass trimmers hitting the surface, and perhaps from using the powder coating technique on the original base cover. It was noted that the cap on several poles need to be replaced and a pole and base cover were loose.
  - Boxes – These are made from cast aluminium and are not in good condition (except those recently reinstalled). Significant corrosion has been caused by water from sprinklers getting into the boxes from the bottom. It was noted that the doors on a couple of boxes were loose because of missing or broken screws.
  - Support brackets – In general, the support brackets were in good condition. However, numerous corrosions were observed on the bracket where it attaches to the pole. It was also observed that one bracket was broken.
  - Flags – No material issues were observed.
  - House number plates – In general, the plates were in good condition. However, the screws used to hold the plates in place appear to have either lost their color or were never painted black to match the box. Corrosion was observed on several of the brackets that attach the plate to the box.
- Detailed findings are outlined in Appendix A.
- In the review, it was also observed that the mailboxes could have benefited from a periodic homeowner cleaning. There were water marks, bird droppings and dirt on the mailboxes.
- The Masters ARC Standards do not allow plants (real or artificial) nor pots around mailboxes. This is to allow Greenscapes to trim the grass around the base. However, it was observed that lights are being placed around mailboxes inhibiting Greenscapes from trimming grasses.
- Finally, it is questionable whether all mailboxes are in full compliance with all ARC guidelines. For ease of reference, the ARC guidelines regarding mailboxes are outlined in Appendix B.

## Background

- At its May 11, 2011 meeting, the Board approved the replacement of all mailboxes by ASAP Mailbox at a cost of \$297, funded 50/50 between the Association and homeowner. The Board also approved the Association assuming responsibility for maintaining the mailboxes and to establish a reserve for future mailbox maintenance and replacement.
- At its August 3, 2017 meeting, the Board approved the ASAP Mailbox proposal to replace 99 mailboxes (one had already been replaced) at a cost of \$269 per box. The cost included the box, bracket, double-sided address plaque and installation. The total cost for 100 mailboxes was \$26,900. The existing pole and base cover were repainted and not replaced.
- Historical Board discussions and decisions relevant to purchasing mailboxes in 2011 and replacing mailboxes in 2017 are summarized in Appendix C to provide a sense of the challenges the Board faced regarding mailboxes.
- ASAP Mailbox currently charges \$399 to replace a mailbox and post. As for repairs, they charge \$149 for a single bracket installed onto existing post with existing mailbox reattached. The repair cost increases to \$289 should a new mailbox with numbers be required.
- Cost of repairs since 2017 most of which were for installing a new support bracket and reattaching the existing mailbox to the existing post:
  - 2018 – \$1,470 (10 repairs)
  - 2019 – \$1,490 (10 repairs)
  - 2020 – \$745 (5 repairs)
  - 2021 – \$1,500 (budget)

The above excludes repairs paid for by third parties that caused damages to mailboxes.

- Reserves
  - 2020 Y/E – \$22,100 (replacement \$14,100 and deferred maintenance \$8,000)
  - 2021 Assessments – \$10 per quarter per house, which equates to \$4,000 for the year for the community.

## Next scheduled replacement

- The current mailbox replacement cycle is 7-years. Since the last installation was in 2017, the next one would be in 2024.
- The current plan is to assess \$16,000 over the next 4-years increasing the reserve to \$30,100 for replacement of mailboxes in 2024.
- The inclusion of the deferred maintenance reserve of \$8,000 would make \$38,100 available for replacement of mailboxes in 2024, assuming the maintenance reserve is not exhausted on an interim repair program. It should be noted that ad hoc repair costs are charged directly to our accounts and not to the deferred reserve account.

## **Pinehurst mailboxes**

- Pinehurst replaced its mailboxes in June 2020 at a cost of \$469 per mailbox including installation and removal of the old mailbox. They used ASAP Mailbox as we did in 2011 and 2017.
- If we obtain the same mailboxes and at the same price, our cost would be \$46,900. Our current funding target for 2024 is far short of the 2020 Pinehurst cost of mailbox replacements.
- Attached in Appendix D is a picture of the type of mailbox used by Pinehurst.

## **Mailbox selection – Quality versus lower cost**

- We have a harsh environment being within one mile of the gulf. Although we cannot control the environment, we can implement various actions to preserve the integrity of the mailboxes and prolong its life cycle. Actions such as:
  - introducing barriers around the post to protect against grass trimmers damaging the base,
  - redirecting sprinklers to minimize water spraying the mailboxes. This would also prevent mail from getting wet as it currently happens to mail in a few mailboxes, and
  - review mailbox locations to reduce vehicular damages.
- To enhance safety, the house numbers should be easily visible at night.
- A historical review shows that our mailboxes have been a challenge to maintain and fallen short of expectations.
- It might be appropriate to consider increasing the quality and pay more for future mailboxes.

## **Options**

- Three options were considered; do nothing, repair damaged mailboxes, or replace all mailboxes in 2021.
- Do nothing:
  - Under this option, we would continue as we are today fixing major repairs as needed until 2024 when the mailboxes are replaced.
- Refurbish:
  - On February 12, 2021, ASAP Mailbox provided quotes for two options:
    - Refurbish the mailbox pole with automotive paint and install a comparable new box with large reflective numbers on both sides for \$24,900.
    - Same as above but with existing box for \$16,900.
  - Details are outlined in Appendix E.
  - This can be partially funded from the deferred maintenance reserve of \$8,000. The balance could be funded by either a special assessment or through the Emergency fund

reserve for the second option, which may be replenished through 2022 quarterly assessments.

- The refurbishment could be done during the summer or sooner.
- The funding target and cycle for mailbox replacements would have to be revised.
- Replace with new mailboxes in 2021:
  - A special assessment will have to be imposed to fund the new mailboxes.
  - If we proceed with replacement effective June 2021 and assuming the Pinehurst type mailbox is selected, it will cost \$46,900 with the funding sourced from:

▪ 2020 Y/E Reserve	14,100
▪ Allocation of deferred maintenance reserve	8,000
▪ 2021 assessments for two quarters	2,000
▪ Special Assessment – \$228 per house	22,800
  - Special Assessments could be reduced if funds are diverted from the Emergency Fund reserve which may be replenished through 2022 quarterly assessments.
  - The Masters Declaration states that the Board may levy Special Assessments, from time to time, not to exceed \$25,000 (exceeding \$25,000 require approval by a majority of votes cast by the Members).
  - The funding target for future mailbox replacements should be set accordingly.

## Recommendations

We are only 3½-years into a seven-year program and the potential need for new mailboxes is a significant issue. We have refreshed the houses with new paint, have implemented a plan on restoring the tree canopy effect and new garage lights have been placed on many houses.

The refurbishment options presented by ASAP are akin to replacement of the mailboxes like 2017 but slightly cheaper. As such, new mailboxes would be an appropriate next step in enhancing our community. However, it is still an option to do-nothing. The recommendations are:

1. Mailbox replacement plan – Replace the existing mailboxes or do-nothing. The choice depending on whether we can identify a suitable quality mailbox. If we can find such a mailbox, then we can consider replacing the existing ones immediately.
2. Quality of mailboxes – The working team along with Cambridge undertake the task of identifying the requirements of a suitably priced quality mailbox and identify potential vendors.
3. Lawn sprinklers – Introduce a one-time program to ensure water sprinklers are directed away from mailboxes. Greenscapes has estimated a price of \$68.00 (price fluctuating depending on irrigation needs) to address the irrigation problem. Costs would be charged back to affected owners whose sprinklers needed adjustment.
4. Mailbox maintenance – residents should be reminded of their responsibility for maintaining the cleanliness of the mailboxes, ensure their sprinklers are not spraying on their mailbox and to promptly report damages. The role of owners in sharing responsibilities for maintenance and cleanliness should be reflected in the Masters ARC Guidelines.

**Appendix A**  
**Mailbox Repairs**

	House	No Issues	Replaced	Pole/ Base	Box	Bracket	Flag	Comments
1	21700			x				
2	21704			x				
3	21708			x				
4	21712			x	x			
5	21716			x	x			
6	21720			x	x			
7	21724			x	x			
8	21728			x	x			
9	21732			x	x			
10	21736			x	x			
11	21740		09.2020	x	x			
12	21743	✓		x				
13	21744			x	x			
14	21748			x				Pole Cap is damaged
15	21749			x				
16	21752	✓			x			
17	21753		01.2020		x			
18	21756				x		x	
19	21759			x	x			
20	21760	✓			x			
21	21763			x	x			Pole Cap is damaged
22	21764			x	x			
23	21767			x	x			
24	21768			x	x			
25	21772		04.2019^		x			
26	21773			x	x			
27	21776			x	x			Box is loose
28	21780				x			
29	21781			x	x			
30	21784			x	x	x		
31	21785	✓						
32	21788			x	x			
33	21789				x			
34	21792			x				
35	21795			x				
36	21796			x		x		
37	21800			x	x			
38	21803			x				
39	21804			x				
40	21808			x	x			

**Appendix A**  
**Mailbox Repairs**

	House	No Issues	Replaced	Pole/ Base	Box	Bracket	Flag	Comments
41	21809			x	x			
42	21812			x	x			
43	21815			x	x			Severe water damage
44	21816			x	x			
45	21819			x				
46	21820			x	x			
47	21823			x				
48	21824			x				
49	21825			x	x			
50	21828				x			
51	21832		01.2021*				x	Rusty screws
52	21835			x	x			
53	21836	✓						
54	21840				x			
55	21844			x	x			
56	21848			x				
57	21849			x	x			
58	21852			x	x			
59	21856		02.2020		x			
60	21857			x	x			
61	21860			x				
62	21863			x	x			
63	21864	✓						Water gets in the box
64	21868	✓						
65	21869			x			x	Pole cap is damaged
66	21872				x			Water gets in the box
67	21876			x				
68	21877	✓			x			
69	21880				x			
70	21884			x	x			
71	21887				x			
72	21888			x	x			
73	21891			x	x			
74	21892			x				
75	21895			x				
76	21896			x	x			
77	21900			x	x			
78	21903			x	x			
79	21904		01.2019	x	x	x		
80	21907			x	x			Box paint is peeling

**Appendix A**  
**Mailbox Repairs**

	House	No Issues	Replaced	Pole/ Base	Box	Bracket	Flag	Comments
81	21908	✓	10.2020					
82	21912			x	x			
83	21913			x	x			Severe corrosion
84	21916			x	x			
85	21917				x			
86	21920			x	x			Paint peeling
87	21921		02.2020		x			
88	21924			x				
89	21925			x	x			
90	21928			x	x	x		
91	21929				x			
92	21932			x	x			
93	21933			x	x	x		Pole base is loose
94	21936			x	x			
95	21937			x	x			
96	21940		05.2020		x			
97	21944			x				
98	21945			x				
99	21948			x	x			
100	21952			x	x	x		
		9	23	76	71	6	3	

^ Also replaced in 02/2019.

\* Also replaced in 04/2019.

Limited information regarding which property mailboxes were replaced in 2018 and part of 2019.

General comments: If a mailbox pole showed signs of corrosion or was severely impacted, we noted correction needed. A significant number of mailboxes showed corrosion inside the box while the exterior was acceptable. We concluded this was due to sprinklers entering the underside of boxes.

## Appendix B

### ARC Guidelines – Mailboxes

#### Pelican Sound

- a) The installation, relocation or modification of any mailbox must receive ARC approval.
- b) Mailboxes and mailbox posts must be kept in good repair. Examples of unacceptable conditions include rust, deteriorated paint, leaning or crooked mailbox posts, improper height and broken mailbox doors or flags.
- c) The attachment of permanent bulletin boards to the cluster mailboxes in multi-family home neighborhoods requires ARC approval. Approved bulletin boards may not interfere with the delivery of mail.
- d) Newspaper tubes, decals, reflectors, notices, signs, posters, announcements, including Neighborhood Associations' announcements, or similar items are not allowed on any multi-family or single-family mailbox or mailbox post.

#### Masters

Mailboxes may not be changed by individual homeowners. The mailboxes are the responsibility of the Masters Homeowner Association. Deteriorated or damaged mailboxes should be reported to Masters Property Management (Cambridge 239-249-7000) to be fixed or replaced.

Mailbox Plants – neither plants (real or artificial) nor pots may be placed around mailboxes.

## Appendix C

### Board Discussions and Decisions 2010-2017

**October 19, 2010** – Cambridge presented pricing from Lykins Signtek for replacing the mailbox and painting the post in place (\$106 each) vs. replacement of the mailbox and removal of the post for offsite painting by Lykins for (\$176 each). A request was made to look at the mailboxes in Pinehurst which were recently replaced.

**February 11, 2011** – A motion was made to replace the existing mailboxes with a completely new unit made of cast aluminum on a new post with a number plaque placed on the top of the mailbox, and the cost of this project will be split 50/50 between the association and the homeowner. The selection to be presented for review at the next meeting.

**April 5, 2011** – Two proposals for mailbox replacement were presented with a recommendation to choose the proposal from ASAP Mailbox. The Board decided not to move forward with the project at that time. At the next BOD meeting a resolution to move forward with revising the documents to address the responsibility of maintaining the mailboxes and posts would be tabled.

**May 4, 2011** – A report was presented on the history of mailbox repair and replacement within including a review of the current bidding process, and review of the Association documents with regards to this issue. The following 3 motions were approved:

- Funding of the mailbox replacement project – Fund the replacement of the mailboxes and posts by charging 50% of the project to excess operating funds, and billing 50% of the project to each homeowner on a proportional basis.
- Vendor Selection – Select ASAP Mailbox to replace the mailbox and post at a cost of \$297 each.
- Amendment of Bylaws – Amend the Bylaws to establish association responsibility for maintaining the mailboxes and to establish a reserve for future maintenance and replacement.

**October 12, 2011** – A reserve line item was created starting 2012 for the replacement of mailboxes. A recommendation was also made to gather information for quarterly maintenance on the mailboxes to help extend the life expectancy.

**November 7, 2011** – Approved the waxing/cleaning of the mailboxes biannually at \$1,000 per treatments for a total of \$2,000.

**April 19, 2013** – It was stated that 47 out of the 100 mailboxes that were installed need replacement or repair (22 need immediate attention and 5 need to be done now). It was also stated that there was a budgeted line item for quarterly cleaning of the mailboxes to be done by Jump, and to date no cleanings have been done.

**October 30, 2013** – Cambridge continued to work with ASAP Mailbox on the replacement of mailboxes with lifting paint. Once all the mailboxes identified for replacement have been completed, a final inspection will be conducted of all mailboxes.

**March 11, 2014** – Cambridge will ask ASAP Mailbox if the Association could buy several mailboxes and brackets and if so, to get a cost estimate. Cambridge to contact Lykins to get a price for using the automotive paint.

**October 21, 2014** – It was reported that Cambridge will inspect the mailboxes and make a recommendation on a course of action to address needed repairs.

**December 12, 2014** – Cambridge provided a proposal to make repairs at a price not to exceed \$1,075.

**November 19, 2015** – It was reported that Cambridge will obtain additional information regarding mailbox replacement costs for discussion in 2016.

**April 6, 2016** – It was stated that given the conditions of the mailboxes, Cambridge was asked to obtain pricing from Lykins and ASAP Mailbox for replacement and/or possible repainting.

**October 24, 2016** – Cambridge reported that mailbox sandblasting and repainting had been completed. It was also stated that due to delays which affected returning homeowner, the next phase of the project will be started earlier to avoid that problem.

**November 29, 2016** – Cambridge reported on the sandblasting and repainting of several mailboxes over the summer. Also recommended a follow-up inspection to identify a second batch to be addressed.

**April 10, 2017** – Approved to sandblast and paint 32 mailboxes at a cost of \$4,250 (\$133 per mailbox).

**August 3, 2017** – The April 10, 2017 decision was rescinded as the Board decided to replace all mailboxes.

**Appendix D**

**Pinehurst Mailbox Installed in 2020**



# Masters HOA

## Repair, Refurbish and Replacement Price List

### Refurbishments:

- Option #1: Remove existing mailbox. Grind all loose paint/corrosion areas on post, base, bracket and finial. Spot prime all bare metal areas with self-etching automotive Primer. Apply finish coat of 2-part Marine Grade paint. Install new mailbox (Same or comparable style as the existing mailbox ..... \$ 249
- Option #2: Grind all loose paint/corrosion areas on mailbox, post, base, bracket and finial. Spot prime all bare metal areas with self-etching automotive Primer. Apply finish coat of 2-part Marine Grade paint ..... \$169

ASAP verbally confirmed that the quotes include new vinyl numbering in any available color.

### Replacements:

- Mailbox, single bracket, post, base and finial ..... \$429

### Repairs:

(All of the below pricing includes removal and disposal of broken components and installation of new components)

- New mailbox installed onto existing bracket and post ..... \$199
- New bracket installed onto existing post with existing mailbox reattached ..... \$149

**\*All other repair scenarios to be quoted on an “as needed” basis.**