

# Fenmore Condominium Trust

50 - 52 – 56 – 60 – 64 Charlesgate East  
1109 – 1111 Boylston Street  
Boston, MA 02215

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## Capital Improvement Projects Update

We are writing to update you on the capital improvement projects that have taken place over the last several years. As you know, the Board is charged with the responsibility of protecting the value of the Fenmore Condominiums. From the 1960s to the 1990s, there was little maintenance done on the property and major renovations were deferred. This Board has taken an aggressive approach (both structural and cosmetic) to “catch up” on the deferred maintenance and bring the Condominium to a condition of which we are all proud. These extensive repairs and improvements were made possible by detailed budgeting, diligent funding of the Capital Reserve Account and careful planning of future capital projects. This process allowed us to undertake major projects (sometimes simultaneously) while still keeping the increase of condo fees to about 1% per year for the last 10 years, well below the cost of inflation (the last increase was in 2005). It also minimizes the reliance on Special Assessments which are unpredictable and can be a burden on some unit owners.

In twenty-five years, the Fenmore has only had two special assessments. The last assessment was in 2004 because inspections indicated our fire-escapes and sprinklers needed extensive repairs, oil prices had reached record highs, and our reserve account was depleted because of previous projects. A \$100,000 special assessment was necessary to cover these emergency expenses.

As a result of this work, the Fenmore Condominium property values have stayed at pace with neighboring properties in the Boston area.

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### History

Here is a list of the major capital improvement projects that we’ve completed.

#### 1. Boiler Upgrades

We have converted our heating system to natural gas and installed new steam boilers. Not only is the new boiler more efficient, but can be better controlled to improve the comfort of the residents. In addition to reduced heating costs, the boiler emits less toxic exhaust and is better for the environment. The result of completing this project has already saved the Fenmore Condominium Association \$250,000 since 2003 which is a \$1,500 savings for each unit owner.



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# Capital Improvement Projects Update, Continued

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History,  
(continued)

## 2. Electrical / Gas / Interior Upgrades (50-60 Charlesgate East)

The previous electrical wiring was insufficient to meet current needs and did not meet current code requirements. The old electrical system was often **flagged during home inspections** and would often **affect lenders approving loans** at the Fenmore. We installed 100 AMP service to each unit to improve the safety conditions and so that residents could now run multiple appliances at the same time without the danger of blowing a fuse. We renovated the interior corridors with new fire sprinkler heads, new ceilings, lighting, carpeting, and fresh paint. **This improvement created a safer condition for the residents and improved values.** Work on the remaining buildings (64 – 1109 – 1111) will begin November 2011.



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# Capital Improvement Projects Update, Continued

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History,  
(continued)

### 3. New Mailboxes

Due to the extensive wear and tear and age of the old mailboxes, we replaced them in each of the buildings. The new mailboxes are more secure than the previous ones and management issued new keys to each resident. We have also eliminated the sticker names on the boxes which are unsightly and difficult for proper mail delivery. There is now a centralized name directory above each bank of mail boxes.



### 4. New Intercoms

Intercoms were installed in front of each entrance on the outside for convenience and so both front doors could lock. The new Door King intercoms are remotely programmed so management can update resident listings quickly.



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# Capital Improvement Projects Update, Continued

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History,  
(continued)

## 5. New Front Doors

To improve the security and appearance of the front entrance ways, we installed two new front doors on each building.



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# Capital Improvement Projects Update, Continued

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History,  
(continued)

## 6. Building Wide Wireless Internet Access / Security Cameras

Installed in 50 – 60 Charlesgate East, the new wireless internet access has been well received. By offering building-wide wireless internet access, we not only have a competitive advantage over other condominiums that do not offer internet, but we collectively save money (imagine the total cost of each resident paying approximately \$40-\$45/month for internet access for 200+ units vs. the low monthly cost for the building's wireless access). With WiFi available throughout the buildings it will be possible to expand our security system by gradually adding cameras as needed, without the expense of running wires and cables. Internet service will be installed in the remaining buildings by the beginning of 2012.



## 7. Exterior Improvements and Maintenance

Over the past 15 years we've focused on maintaining the exterior façade. We have spot pointed, and sealed the brick exterior walls, repaired/encapsulated exterior window casings due to rotted wood and door headers, refinished lamp posts, renovated fire escapes, repaired roof leaks, installed new rear doors that have security windows so residents can see into the parking lot before exiting, installed LED lighting over the parking lot, installed new steel gates at the rear courtyards, and installed a new berm along the driveway edge to help control water drainage. We have maintained the landscaping in front of the buildings and installed an irrigation system for the property's gardens.





**New Rear Doors**



**Exterior LED Lighting**



**Courtyard Gates**



**Driveway Berm**

# Capital Improvement Projects Update, Continued

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History,  
(continued)

## Basement Makeover:

### 8. Laundry Facilities Improvements

Laundry rooms were added to each individual building for tenant convenience (previously there were only two laundry rooms). The equipment was also purchased so that the Fenmore receives the majority of the income. Mac Gray Laundry Services currently maintains the equipment and manages all collections. The Board also had internal auditing equipment installed on each machine to audit the collection process. In the next two years the Board hopes to install smart laundry equipment which will allow for credit card use and online equipment availability.

### 9. Storage Bins

In conjunction with the laundry room project, the board evaluated each basement to maximize the common area space. They were able to provide bike storage and storage lockers. The storage lockers are available to owners as well as renters for an annual fee which the Fenmore condominium receives the financial benefit of in the amount of \$3,000 annually.



### 10. Plumbing Upgrade

To reduce the frequency of water shut-offs, we installed individual shut-offs on each hot and cold water pipe riser. Previously, when plumbing repairs needed to be made in a unit, we had to shut down the water to the entire complex, affecting all of the units. Now water shut offs impact only the units on the affected riser.

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# Capital Improvement Projects Update, Continued

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History,  
(continued)

## 11. Elevator Maintenance

Each of the seven vintage elevator shafts have been sealed and fire proofed for safety. In addition, the Board has evaluated and prioritized each elevator for need of updating and has successfully modernized five elevators so far. Elevator breakdowns have decreased dramatically and **elevator maintenance costs have decreased more than 50%**. Two elevators remain to be updated and are currently operational. Breakdowns are no longer a daily event.



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# Capital Improvement Projects Update, Continued

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## 12. Other Improvements

The ceilings, lighting, and carpeting have been replaced to improve the appearance of the basements. New drains have been installed at the back entrance of 50 – 60 to reduce basement flooding. Further, all basement common area doors are locked to improve security and resident safety. We have also made some additional improvements in the past ten years.

### A. Insurance Coverage

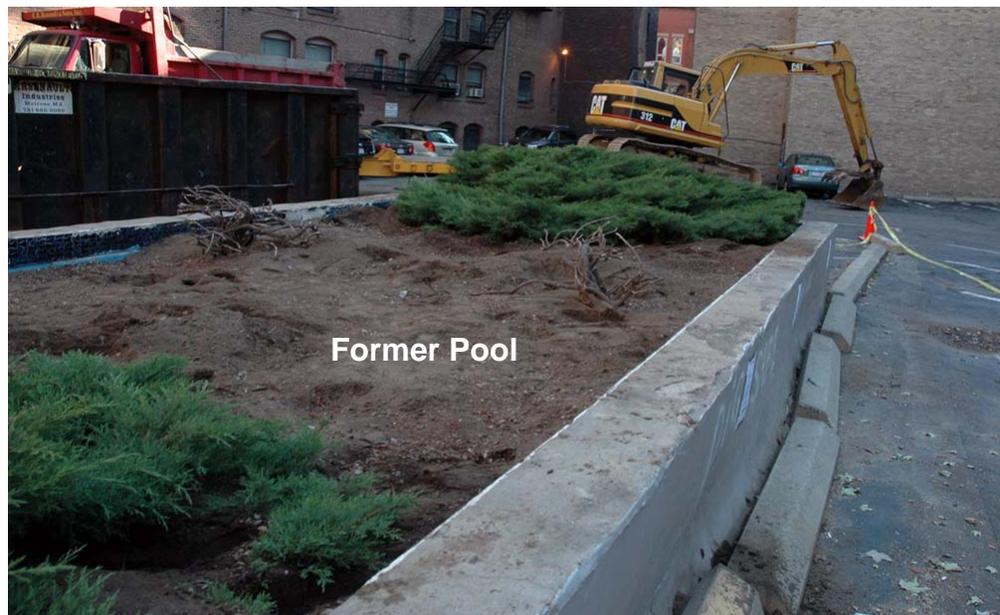
By bidding the property's insurance coverage, we have successfully reduced the premium by a third and increased the property coverage.

### B. Heating Control

While some units are much warmer than other units in the winter, we have made many improvements in our heating during the winter months. For those unit owners who are new to the building, we use a central heating boiler located in the 60 Charlesgate East building. The closer your unit is to this boiler, the more heat is delivered to your unit's radiators. Over the years, property's staff has saved our Condominium a lot of money by continually monitoring the thermostat and making continual adjustments.

### C. Pest Control

The old swimming pool, which served as a planter and a source of many pest problems, was removed. Removing the pool also opened up the back lot for units that face the area. We have also increased trash pick-up to a daily schedule. As a result, pest problems have decreased dramatically.



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# Capital Improvement Projects Update, Continued

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## 12. Other Improvements, (continued)

### D. Gas Lines

The Fenmore was built during an era of gas lighting so there were live gas lines to all light fixtures - a potentially dangerous situation. These lines were capped and new lines were installed to the gas stoves.



### E. Marble Stairs

All of the damaged marble stairs have been replaced. This repair not only improved the appearance of the stairwells, but also the safety.

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# Capital Improvement Projects Update, Continued

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## Future Goals

While it is impossible to speak about the future in certain terms, the Board would like to continue the campaign to improve the buildings and the condominium finances. Our future goals are:

- Continue the electrical/WiFi update in 64, 1111, and 1109 - November 2011.
  - Deal with the drainage issues in the parking lot area (ongoing).
  - Continue point work on the façade of the buildings, repairing loose mortar, broken window sills, missing bricks, etc. as necessary.
  - Update the Laundry Equipment - 2013
  - Replace the rubber membrane roofs - 2013
  - Continue to update security (ongoing)
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## Conclusion

We feel that it's important for you to see the progress of our Association. While the Board has the ultimate responsibility for protecting the Condominium, the Board has always taken into account the desire of the majority of the Unit Owners. We look forward to hearing from you and hope to see you at our next Annual Owner's meeting.

Sincerely,

Mary Michaels  
Trustee

Sheila O'Neill  
Trustee

Rusty Brough  
Trustee

Josh Medeiros  
Trustee

Mark Medlinsky  
Trustee

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## For More Information

For more information, please contact Lundgren Management at 617-887-3333

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