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When the Belle Haven Country Club in Alexandria, Virginia, renovated their club building, they added two rooms with floor-to-ceiling windows to take advantage of their view of the Potomac River. They soon discovered, however, that the most you could see out of the windows at night was your own reflection.

"We have a lot of parties after dark," said Manager Ed Shaughnessy, CCM. "It's no good to have a

great view if people can't see it." So the club hired a lighting design company to to "shed some light" on the subject. Vernon Daniel Associates placed illumination in the trees outside the club building and down the 18th fairway outside the dining room.

"Now, with the lights on, you can see the wonderful flower beds, the flag blowing in the breeze, and the fairway beyond," Shaughnessy said. "The members' visits are really enhanced and they get a chance

to show off the club to their guests."

A club can be illuminated at night by a hodgepodge of floodlights on the parking lot, spotlights on the club building, and lines of small fixtures along walkways. Or lighting can have a more dramatic impact, capturing the essence of moonlight, accentuating the natural beauty of buildings, trees, and statuary, and at the same time providing light necessary for safety and security.

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- Get references on lighting companies from other clubs and from employees whose judgment you trust, advised Congressional Country Club's project coordinator, Vernon Strickland. Go and look at examples of a company's work.

- Avoid any proposals that suggest bare floodlights attached to the corner of a building or little light fixtures stuck along paths and drives, agreed designers Vernon Daniel and Constantine Pergantis. Such fixtures are visible during the day and at night you see either the light sources or, if the lamps are shielded, little puddles of light.

- Don't try to light large trees yourself, advised Edward Felshow, general manager of the Chevy Chase Club: you won't get the effect you want. Some lighting experts design their own fixtures, so you can't even buy them.

- Combine your lighting installation with other work around the club, if possible, advised General Manager Ed Shaughnessy, CCM, of Belle Haven Country Club. While the club was repaving its golf cart paths, the lighting company installed wires in steel conduits underneath the paths. The Chevy Chase Club is waiting to finalize the adjustment of new lighting until its golf-course renovation is completed, said General Manager Edward Felshow.

- Have your maintenance staff do the routine work — the basic

electrical distribution — if there is no existing power or more distribution is needed when you install a new system, recommended Plainfield Country Club's General Manager, Roger Regimbal, CHA. When Plainfield added on to its lighting system, staff electricians completed the wiring after the first stage and did the final connections to the panels. The designer [Vernon Daniel] then installed the fixtures and oriented the lamps.

- Save on electricity by planning to zone lighting areas in much the same way you zone irrigation systems for the grounds, suggested Constantine Pergantis of Nite Lites. Areas that will operate on the same schedule should be wired together. They can then be operated by remote control by means of a combination time clock and photo cell.

- When you have lighting installed, put in some extra cable for later use, advised Belle Haven's General Manager, Ed Shaughnessy, CCM. With the extra cable the club had a light installed in a tree at the practice putting green and was able to light a new 40-foot flag pole that made a big hit with the members. The club also had three 2-inch conduits put in between the club building and a new sports center that they used later to tie together the telephone system, cable TV, and computer system.

During a period of increased security the Congressional Country

Club added a large light near the gate that illuminated a security person standing out in the traffic. "There was a certain amount of cushion built in when the system was originally designed," said project coordinator Vernon Strickland.

- Keep two extra light bulbs of each kind on hand so that the maintenance crew can replace bulbs, recommended Shaughnessy. Pergantis of Nite Lites recommended also getting a complete list of materials, including the manufacturer, the stock number, and what light bulb goes in what fixture (the overall effect of the lighting will change if a different light bulb is put in). Order at least one more of everything when 10 or more are needed.

- Take a maintenance package or pay on a yearly basis for the lighting company to come back and realign lights and change bulbs, suggested Roger Regimbal, CHA, general manager of Plainfield Country Club. Several managers agreed that it is convenient if the lighting company is close by.

- Do some of your own maintenance, recommended Strickland. Using a drawing of the property that shows light placement, Congressional's security staff checks at night for burned-out bulbs. Then maintenance replaces ground lamps in the daytime or Strickland calls the lighting company to replace lamps in trees. □

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Light-en up. Sometime soon, plan a moonlight stroll around the club. No need to bring your sweetheart, just a notebook and an open mind. First, assess the outdoor lighting as it is now. The kind of lighting you have may well depend on how recently it was installed and whether it was done in stages over the years or all

at one time under a comprehensive plan.

The next step is to make note of areas that could stand improvement — important landscape or architectural features that have been left in the dark too long. The cost of improving your nighttime illumination can range from a few thousand to \$40,000 or \$50,000, depending how elaborate a plan you undertake. Whether you spend a little or a lot, the benefits to the club will

be improved safety and security, a more beautiful setting, and increased member satisfaction.

Before any project is launched, consultation with a knowledgeable professional is in order. A lighting designer will be able to look at the overall setting of the property and use concealed lights to bring out the best of natural and architectural features — seen from both inside and outside. They may also reduce the effect of negative features sim-

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ply by not lighting them. An experienced lighting designer should also be able to light parking lots and walkways effectively without a harsh industrial feeling.

"We look at landscape lighting not just in terms of the landscape," said Vernon Daniel of Vernon Daniel Associates of Manassas, VA, "but the setting of the architectural structure in the overall plant landscape. With a country club you'll be driving up to the club. We want you to see the architecture of the handsome building as well as the beauty of the grounds and landscape and maybe large trees."

Lighting designers have the expertise to position the lamps, choose lamp colors, and conceal or blend in fixtures to bring out the

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best in your landscape and club building. Because most fixtures will be concealed among shrubs and trees, Daniel said, designers must understand plants and be able to work with a growing and changing landscape.

Two main lighting areas for clubs are typically the approach to the main entrance and sweeping nighttime vistas from large windows looking out onto fairways and greens from areas like the dining room. Vernon Daniel Associates placed lights in trees at the 9th fairway overlooking the main dining room at the Plainfield Country Club near New York City.

"At night when the lighting comes on it gives another dimension altogether," said Manager Roger Regimbal, CHA. "At the end of that hole you can see the skyline of New York. It is just like paving the way to look at the scenery of New York." With the enhanced view, the club's dining room is in a

better position to lure members' dining dollars away from downtown restaurants.

What the pros know. What can (or should) you expect to gain if you hire a lighting designer?

- A designer should work with you to help you prioritize your lighting needs and provide a comprehensive plan for the club. Is your need related to esthetics, safety, security, or all three? One plan should take care of all these needs, Daniel said. Then you'll need to decide what areas you want to light — for example, the club facade, the entrance view, walkways, or views of grounds and fairways from the dining area. Looking at a plan should help you decide what areas are most important to you.

- A designer should want to know what you are interested in and fit his or her suggestions to your budget, said Constantine Pergantis of Nite Lites of North Po-

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Special Effects

Designers can illuminate walkways with lamps concealed under shrubbery on the sides or in the trees above. Lights in trees provide downlighting, which covers a larger area and is an effective way of illuminating paths and driveways, said Constantine Pergantis of Nite Lites in North Potomac, MD.

"A tree-lined driveway creates a grand entrance coming up to the main clubhouse. It's more effective to light up the trees going up the driveway than to see parking-type lights along the drive — that makes it feel more like a runway."

Downlighting throws shadows similar to those caused by a full moon. The light is projected down through the tree to create interesting patterns across paved areas. Another method, uplighting from fixtures concealed on the ground, picks up the interior of a tree or highlights an object of interest like a statue or flag pole.

Designers will sometimes use uplighting, downlighting, and cross-lighting in a larger tree. They can achieve a silhouette by lighting a wall behind a tree with an interesting shape, leaving the tree dark so it will stand out against the light behind.

Uplighting a topiary will cause it to cast a shadow that is somewhat larger than the actual object, onto a building or wall behind. When it is windy the shadow of a small uplighted tree will move on the wall.

Patios, pools, and fountains look magical with night lighting and can draw your members outside on nice evenings. Backlighting a fountain can create dramatic sparkle. During the peak blooming season, colored lights can be used to highlight and enhance display beds. In winter, when the deciduous trees are bare, lighting gives a different effect, creating views that change with the seasons. □

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Does the company specialize in lighting design or is it just a fixture installer? What experience do the designers have and what jobs have they done?

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tomac, MD. If your budget will not allow you to do everything at once, where do you want to start? A comprehensive plan allows you to decide what you want at the beginning and install lighting as funds become available or the need arises.

The Plainfield Country Club began with key areas around the building and on the course, then added one or two lamps around the patio last year. Next they plan to illuminate the walkway to the patio.

"It's easy for the company [Vernon Daniel] to add on," Regimbal said. "They bring layouts of the course and the building and make recommendations on where and why to place lamps. There's enough room for your own input — if you say, 'This tree here is one we especially like because it's a landmark,' they'll do everything necessary to highlight it. You tell them what you want and they tell you what they think."

•A designer is a specialist in the long-term operation and maintenance of an outdoor lighting system. Because designers understand the basic features of fixtures — en-

ergy efficiency, lamp life, and resistance to weather — they can explain the pros and cons of the various lamp types and fixtures, Pergantis said. They also know what color and types of fixtures will blend in best with a building or among shrubs. They should be familiar with several fixture manufacturers.

Equipment should be able to withstand the environment for 20 years, Daniel said. Designers will choose mainly vapor lights, which have long life and high energy efficiency. The lamp life of a vapor light is on the average of 24,000 hours compared with about 2,000 hours for an ordinary incandescent floodlight. Vapor lights are as much as three times as energy efficient as an incandescent installation.

Lighting by design, then, produces greater efficiency and economy as well as esthetics. "In the long run the designer will pay for his services in tangible amounts of money based on a lower electric bill because of the use of more efficient and effective fixtures," Pergantis

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designers also know how to position fixtures for easy maintenance.

Choosing the best company for the job. First of all, it is important to know the company's background and how long they have been in business. Does the company specialize in lighting design or is it just a fixture installer? What experience do the designers



After dark, colored lights and other special effects can change the appearance of your pool area.

said.

•Designers will be involved in the installation process to ensure that fixtures are properly positioned and shielded to eliminate glare. "Any time your light source

is exposed, the eye immediately goes to the brightest source. Then you don't appreciate the beauty of the area," Daniel said. "You should not see any light source at all." De-

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have and what jobs have they done?

They should be able to give references, provide photos, and hopefully be able to send you to look at nearby examples of their work. Although the Chevy Chase Club in Maryland had done previous business with Vernon Daniel Associates, General Manager Edward Felsho also went to look at lighting installed by Daniel at Belle Haven Country Club nearby.

If you can find several companies that seem experienced enough and have a good track record, you can take competitive bids. Comparing the bids may not always be comparing apples to apples, however. The companies may suggest different treatments or one design might be more detailed and inclusive than another.

Congressional Country Club is currently planning to add lighting to the parking area at their tennis complex. They are considering two proposals with two different approaches. "We're not only comparing dollars but lighting concepts," said project coordinator Vernon Strickland.

After educating himself about

fixtures, Ed Shaughnessy looked at three proposals for Belle Haven. The winning company did not have the lowest bid, but it was located close by, a plus for maintenance work, and Shaughnessy and the board liked the company's ideas better than others that were presented. The club ultimately implemented a plan that combined ideas from several different proposals.

Second, the illumination company should also be willing to work with the manager in presenting the design to the board of directors. Night illumination can be difficult for the average layman to visualize. In addition to providing references and offering to show actual jobs, a presentation to the board with large color photos and plans of the club can be helpful.

To help you decide what you want, depending on the size of the job, the designer may be able to bring sample fixtures to the job site one evening and hook them up temporarily to give some idea of



Members of Belle Haven Country Club in Alexandria, VA, enjoy the nighttime views from the clubhouse.

how the lighting will look, Pergantis said. If some fixtures will be visible, you should be able to look at samples.

Third, a lighting company

should always be present at the installation, to fine tune the design and track details. Simple things — like making sure that extra cable is

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allotted to allow for the growth of trees — will save the club time and money down the road.

Typically, a lighting firm will take care of getting permits and meeting codes on your project. They should have (and be able to show proof of) workman's comp insurance and an umbrella liability policy against property damage.

Trees may be accessed through ladders, ropes and saddles, or bucket trucks. Although digging to place wires in the open may be done by machine, digging around tree roots and in garden beds is usually done by hand. "We take full responsibility for the satisfaction of the client, whether from a liability standpoint or from accomplishing esthetic effects," Daniel said.

As part of the installation, the lighting company must be available to meet with you and members of the board in the evening to review the lighting after it is installed and to make adjustments. "You need a night-time positioning meeting when it's pitch dark," Pergantis said, "with the customer, the lighting guy, and the technicians who are installing the system."

Fourth, the company should be available to do maintenance in future years. Downlighting will require tree pruning if the branches get so thick they block the light. It will require tree climbing if a lamp burns out or becomes misaligned, Pergantis pointed out. Uplighting is subject to vandalism and fixtures being run over by carts or cars.

Installation and maintenance should be a complete package, Daniel emphasized. You can purchase a maintenance plan from some companies to look over your system once or twice a year; others will return as needed, often on a per-visit fee. Your staff may be able to do some, but probably not all, of the maintenance.

Trees grow, branches blow down, and occasionally lightning strikes, as it did at Congressional in 1996. Every few years it's a good idea, Pergantis noted, "to pay a lighting consultant to come back and do an overview and see how things are doing." ❧