

THE MANOR MONITOR

A Monthly Publication of The Vint Hill Manor Homeowners Association

June 2008

www.vinhillmanor.org

Board of Directors' Monthly Meetings

The May meeting of the Board of Directors (BOD) of the Homeowners Association (HOA) was held on Tuesday, the 6th, at 7PM, in the Conservancy Conference Room at 4263 Aiken Drive. The regular, monthly BOD meetings are open and all members are invited to attend.

At the beginning of each monthly meeting, there is an opportunity for members to make comments and/or present questions for the BOD's consideration, as well as advise concerns, or offer ideas. Minutes of the previous meeting, as well as current financial statements, are made available to all attendees. Significant items addressed at the meeting are covered in the Newsletter.

Full Complement of Board Positions

The first item on the agenda for the May BOD meeting was for the BOD members to convene an Executive Session for the purpose of selecting a candidate for the one remaining vacant position on the BOD. Upon reconvening the regular BOD meeting, necessary motion action was taken and Mark Melancon became the fifth member of the BOD.

As noted in the "From the President's Pen" article in the May Newsletter, Don Simmons and Tom Daily had been selected at a special BOD meeting on Thursday, April 17, 2008.

Congratulations to the new members, a note of Appreciation to all the BOD members for the service they provide the community, and Best Wishes for a good and productive year.

The BOD also took action to fill vacant Officer positions of the HOA. Tom Daily was elected to fill the Vice President slot and Frank Fuerst was elected to fill the Treasurer slot. Other assignment action included Mark Melancon taking on the role of BOD liaison to the ARC, and the combining of the Programs and Communications Committees with Frank Fuerst taking on the role of Chair, with Tom Daily assisting. Both Frank Fuerst and Don Brettle are working on necessary web master type actions relative to the maintenance of the web site.

Trash Collection and Recycling

As reported in the previous issue of the Newsletter, the BOD was considering a number of options connected with the renewal of the trash collection contract with the current contractor, Culpepper Trash Services. In response to a number of inquiries, some of the options being considered included the addition of the collection of recyclable materials, such as: newspapers and magazines, aluminum, glass, and plastics (codes 1 thru 6). An informal poll had produced mixed results, therefore, the BOD decided to attempt to get entire community input to assist in making an informed decision. To that end, a survey was included in the May Newsletter containing the

full range of options and related costs.

At the BOD meeting, Frank Fuerst revealed the results of the survey. He had received 52 replies and over half of them supported adding the collection of recyclables, which the company had indicated would be done on Tuesdays. Below is the actual tally:

Options

1. Three Pickups – (2 trash, 1 recyclables) – 8
2. Two Pickups – (1 trash, 1 recyclables) – 28
3. Two Pickups – (2 trash/current plan) – 13
4. One Pickup – (just trash) – 3

The option of having the one trash collection day be on Tuesday or Friday was evenly split at 10 each. The BOD opted to go with Tuesday being the trash collection day, based upon a premise that the most amount of trash would be generated over a weekend. **Therefore, both trash and recyclables will be collected on Tuesdays starting Tuesday, June 3, 2008.**

Culpepper Trash has advised that they are flexible and would be amenable to change if whatever option decided upon at this time ends up not working out in the best interests of our community. The company also will be providing each home in the community with a special container for the recyclable materials. The recyclables will be collected on a separate run with separate equipment, i.e., a specially designed trailer.

Status of the Proposals:

At the April BOD meeting, Frank Fuerst, Chair of the HOA Chartering Documents Review Committee, agreed to review the wording of the documents, in light of the attorney's comments/suggestions, and present his findings at the May BOD meeting, which he did. The BOD approved the proposed changes, as rewritten, to go forward for review and approval by the Economic Development Authority (EDA). Frank hand delivered the proposed changes the day after the BOD meeting. In compliance with the regulations, as currently written, a Special Membership meeting will be held to allow the members to vote on the proposed changes once they are approved by the EDA.

Architectural Review Committee (ARC)

Stan Manvell, ARC Chair, advised that the committee had processed 20 requests affecting 10 homes during the month of April. Stan also advised that the current count of unapproved modifications is down to 29 affecting 16 homes.

The ARC meetings are held on the last Tuesday of the month and, like the BOD meetings, are open to the members of the community. The meetings are now being rotated among the homes of the members of the ARC. May's ARC meeting will be held at 7PM, on the 29th, at the home of Nancy Britton, 3582 Shugart Ct.

The ARC is always more than ready and willing to meet with any homeowner to provide guidance and/or assistance with the necessary application(s) which are required for exterior modifications to our homes.

When you need a plan, Stan's the Man – give him a call at 341-2886

Vint Hill Manor Homeowners' Association Board of Directors' Meeting Agenda June 3, 2008

1. Call to Order
2. Membership Comment Period
3. Minutes of Previous BOD Meeting
4. Financial/Treasurer's Report
 - a. Status of Internal Financial Review
 - b. Allocation of Funds for Required Financial Audit by Independent CPA
5. Committee Reports
 - a. Re-alignment of Committees and Chairs
 - b. Architectural Review and Covenants
 - c. Communications
 - d. HOA Chartering Documents Review
 - e. Programs
6. Unfinished Business
 - a. Status of Trash Removal/Recycling Contract
 - b. Status of Landscaping Around Raised Manholes
 - c. Status of Tree Removal Requests
 - d. Status of Proposals Returned From Legal
7. New Business
 - a. Study for Purpose of Determining Required Amount of Reserves
 - b. 2008 Budget Review
 - c. Schedule BOD Community Walk-around
8. Adjournment

ARMI

The Austin Realty Management and Investment Company (ARMI), as part of its service under contract to the Vint Hill Manor HOA, is positioned to serve as a liaison between the community and the BOD and/or the ARC members. Fred Austin, owner of ARMI, advises that direct contact with his company results in all BOD and ARC members, as the case may dictate, being advised.

ARMI's address, where our monthly HOA assessments are sent, is: PO Box 3413, Warrenton, VA 20188. Phone: 540-347-1901, Fax: 540-347-1900
Website: www.ARMIVA.com.

EDA/Conservancy Coordination – Frank Fuerst

A member of the Conservancy, the grounds maintenance contractor, and I walked our community area. At no charge to our community, the Conservancy agreed to the following:

TREES/LANDSCAPE

1. Remove six dead trees and monitor three others.
2. Spray crabapple trees on the right hand side of Cray near the entrance for tent caterpillars.
3. Re seed/fertilize bare spots on the right hand side of Cray near the entrance and on the hillside.
4. Replace the dead Leland cypress

trees at the pump house.

Since that evaluation, I have also asked them to remove or trim several other trees (E.g., along Aiken Drive).

This work will not be done until the Conservancy has evaluated the other HOA. So, if you know anyone in that HOA, please get them to urge their BOD to push that along.

MANHOLES

The Conservancy will stop mowing within five feet of the manhole closest to the pumping station, so that the natural vegetation will hide that manhole. The Conservancy is also willing to plant euonymus on two sides of the other three manholes. (The WSA has a right-of-way for those manholes and has asked that they are able to have access.) We will continue to work with the Conservancy and seek tailored solutions for these three manholes.

Handy Homeowner Hints – Russell Gibson

1. If your front lamp post light is out, first check the electrical outlet on the back wall of your garage (the same wall as the stairs). If a tiny red light is on, the circuit breaker has tripped. Push the rectangle in the center of the outlet to reset it.

2. If your sprinkler heads have disappeared from sight or are getting full of dirt, try placing a 2 x 3 pipe coupling around them. These cost 92 cents each at Lowe's.

If you have any proven Handy Homeowner Hints, please consider sharing them with the rest of the community via the Newsletter. Send Tom Daily an e-mail, with details, at tomrdee@comcast.net. As an alternative approach, give Tom a call at 341-7606.

Fear of Foreclosure

Not since the Great Depression have so many people had homes worth less than what they paid, and they can't get refinancing. The April, 2008 AARP Bulletin has a detailed article on this. If you are not on distribution, you can access the Bulletin at www.aarp.org/bulletin. The article offers tips for those facing foreclosure, such as: keep mortgage payments current, even at the expense of paying doctor bills or credit card debt; attempt to negotiate with the lender to restructure the mortgage; sell the house before it goes into foreclosure; file for bankruptcy to stop the foreclosure process and allow more time to work out a plan to keep the home. This information is important and universal. It does not apply – and this article is not intended to apply – only to older residents in communities like ours. Many of us have friends and/or children or other family members that may be facing housing/mortgage related difficulties; so please share this information with them.

Here are some potential sources for help:

* Institute for Foreclosure Legal Assistance – www.foreclosurelegalassistance.org (includes info on AARP's Legal Counsel for the Elderly)

* US Department of Housing and Urban Development – www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/nrhci.cfm (1-800-569-4287)

* Neighbor Works America – www.nw.org (202-220-2300)

* National Community Reinvestment Coalition – www.ncrc.org (202-628-8866)

* Mortgage Bankers Association – www.homeloanlearningcenter.com (click on "Foreclosure Prevention Resource Center")

Tips on Eating Smart

For a 'no-diet' way to trim some pounds, simply alter a few mealtime habits, according to an article in the May/June, 2008, issue of the AARP Magazine (www.aarpmagazine.org).

* There are pros and cons to having the 'sound of music' while you eat. The tendency for adults is to eat and drink more when there's background noise, and the louder and faster the music, the more people consume in a given time. However, that doesn't mean that slow, soft music is okay. Romantic music does slow chewing, which aids digestion; but, it also tends to result in longer lingering at the table and, thus, increased consumption. The suggested approach is to stick to quiet conversation at the table.

* The use of 'soft light' cuts down on the chances of overeating. By contrast, bright, fluorescent lighting leads to more rapid consumption which interferes with the timing of the 'full' signal between the brain and the stomach, which can cause overeating. Eating in front of the TV creates the same 'full signal' timing problem.

* Proper chewing is important. When food is chewed thoroughly, the saliva releases amylase, which is an enzyme that helps carbohydrates to be used immediately for fuel, rather than stored as fat. Chewing well also reduces the amount of air swallowed, which in turn diminishes bloating.

* Breathing between bites slows down eating and helps synchronize the stomach with the brain.

BON APPETIT!

What can we do to protect ourselves against Tax Rebate Rip-Offs?

As most people probably are aware, the IRS, as part of the economic stimulus package, will be sending payments to 130 million households, including more than 20 million low-income older Americans and 250 thousand disabled veterans. The checks will start going out automatically in May to those who have filed a 1040 or 1040A tax return for 2007.

To a con-artist, almost any news event offers an opportunity for profit. Already scammers have been reported contacting targets by phone, saying they represent the IRS, and explaining that

THE LISTENING POST



As always, your thoughts are welcome for this column.

they can direct-deposit the rebates right away – if the victim coughs up a bank account number on the spot. The truth, of course, is that the perpetrator will use that number, not to deposit funds but to steal them – or to steal the victim’s identity to commit an array of financial swindles.

THE IRS WANTS TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THEY WILL NOT BE CALLING ANYONE, NOR WILL THEY BE E-MAILING ANYONE ABOUT THE ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE. If you get a call or an e-mail claiming to come from the IRS, DO NOT REPLY. Don’t click any links or open any attachments, which could send you to an imposter website or load your computer with technology that tries to intercept financial information.

For information from the real IRS, go to www.irs.gov, or call 1-800-829-1040. File complaints about fake calls and e-mails with the IRS or the State Attorney General’s Office. For more on the stimulus payments and for help with tax returns, go to www.aarp.org/stimulus.

Source: April, 2008 AARP Bulletin.

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