

THE MANOR MONITOR

A Monthly Publication of The Vint Hill Manor Homeowners Association

April 2009

www.VintHillManor.org



Garden Month



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President's Column

I am pleased to be your President for the next year, and will do my best to serve you well.

I plan to hold a "meet and greet" for the members of the Board during the week of April 20-25. In addition, we will generate creative ideas and develop priorities to discuss at the next Board meeting. In preparation, I would like to ask you to provide ideas of what we might do. For example:

1. What would you like to change?
2. What areas do we need to provide a level of expectation for the membership?
3. What would be your top priority?

I would appreciate you sending your thoughts by April 20 via email to my address below. If you do not have email, please drop a note in my mail box. If you have any questions, please call me.

Thanks,

Frank Fuerst

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Annual Membership Meeting

On Tuesday, March 3, 2009, the Vint Hill Manor HOA conducted its Fourth Annual Membership Meeting. This year's meeting was held at the Greenville Elementary School, at 7389 Academic Avenue.

Although the area schools were closed due to weather, the Principal allowed our Annual Membership and Monthly BOD Meetings to be held. In order to minimize the late hour impact on the school's Maintenance Crew, the agenda was abbreviated with the emphasis on conducting just the necessary business, in order to allow for an early adjournment. Items such as Annual Committee Reports are included elsewhere in this issue of *The Manor Monitor*.

BOD Elections (3 year terms):

There were three positions up for election this year. Since there were three candidates already identified and no nominations from the floor, a motion was made and seconded to accept the identified candidates by acclamation. The vote by the membership was unanimous. The new BOD members are Tom Daily, Stan Manvell, and Ed Ortiz.

Trash Survey Results:

After receiving the results of the tabulation from Fred Austin, Don Brettle announced that Option #2, the current system, had won. The breakdown of the voting was as follows: Option #1 - 11 votes, Option #2 - 29 votes, Option #3 - 9 votes, Option #4 - 5 votes.

Desperately in Need of Chairpersons

Our HOA desperately needs some folks to step up and be willing to help out. We need a Chair (and some additional members) for the Architectural Review and Covenants Committee (ARC), and a Chair for the Common Grounds Committee (CGC). Potential candidates for these key Chair positions are asked to contact Frank Fuerst.

Happy
April Fools
Day

Board of Directors' Monthly Meeting

Immediately following the Annual Membership Meeting, the BOD held the regular monthly meeting which also had an abbreviated agenda in keeping with the spirit of expediting the proceedings.

HOA Officer Elections (1 year terms):

This was the main item to be accomplished at the BOD meeting. The results were as follows: Frank Fuerst was elected to be the President and, as such, in

accordance with the regulations, also will serve as Chair of the BOD. Tom Daily was elected to reprise his role as Vice President. Stan Manvell was elected to be the Secretary. Ed Ortiz was elected to be the Treasurer.

The balance of the agenda was tabled until the next BOD meeting on April 7, 2009, 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 here in *The Monitor*.

An expression of appreciation and best wishes is offered, on behalf of the community, to the new BOD and HOA Officers.

Membership Comment Period:

Some of the topics addressed at the Annual Membership Meeting included concerns about timely clearing of snow and/or treatment of our road surfaces, a proposed tax on recycling, and the proposed development of the Rte 29 corridor between Warrenton and Gainesville.

It is anticipated that these are items that the new BOD will be looking into and providing additional information on in the future (In fact, there is additional information on the Rte 29 project elsewhere in this issue). There also was a reference to looking into arranging for a presentation to be made on the historical aspects of the Buckland area.

An update on the AARP Safe Driver Program, to be held on March 16 and 17, was provided, as well as information that it is being offered at Fauquier Hospital sometime in June, 2009.

Vint Hill Manor Homeowners' Association

Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

April 7, 2009

1. Call to Order
2. Member Comment Period
3. Minutes of Feb BOD Meeting
4. Minutes of Mar BOD Meeting
5. Financial Reports for Feb & Mar
6. Committee Reports
 - a. Architectural Review and Covenants
 - b. Common Grounds
 - c. Communications
 - d. Program
7. Unfinished Business
 - a. Entrance Lights
8. New Business
 - a. Route 29 Study
9. Adjournment

Architectural Review and Covenants Committee (ARC) Annual Report

At the February 2008 ARC meeting there were 25 lots with 45 unapproved modifications. The Board of Directors Walk-Around in June 2008 added 4 lots and 11 new unapproved modifications for a total of 29 lots and 56 unapproved modifications. Thanks to the dedicated members of the ARC, we have reviewed and approved numerous requests leaving the community with only 5 lots (6 unapproved modifications) in non-compliance status today.

... Stan Manvell, *Outgoing Committee Chair*

Programs Committee Annual Report

Mark Melancon took over the Committee Chair position partway through the year. Prior to his taking over, Frank Fuerst had arranged for the Fall 'turning OFF' of the sprinkler systems for those interested. Mark is looking into making arrangements for the Spring 'turning ON' of the sprinkler systems and will get the word out to the community to see how many of our residents are interested. The benefit is a reduced price from what each of us would pay if we made individual appointments. Mark also made the arrangements for the AARP Safe Driver Program which was recently held on March 16 and 17. For those who missed this session, the Program also will be offered at Fauquier Hospital sometime in June.

...Mark Melancon, *Committee Chair*

Communication Committee Annual Report

The two areas of focus for this committee are the monthly newsletter, The Manor Monitor, and the website www.VintHillManor.org. Tom Daily and Bob McConahy have worked together on the newsletter from its beginning. Tom provides the bulk of the editorial content while Bob does all of the layout and other production oriented work. Over the years, the style and overall professional appearance of the newsletter has improved significantly as a result of the talent and efforts on Bob's behalf. Don Brettles deserves a lot of thanks and credit for taking over and maintaining the website. He has done a wonderful job of keeping the various items current and relevant.

...Tom Daily, *Committee Chair*

Chartering Documents Review Committee (CDRC) Annual Report

After a number of months of review and refinement, which included a legal review and obtaining the approval of the EDA/Conservancy, proposed changes to the Chartering Documents were submitted to the membership at a Special Meeting on October 15, 2008, at the Greenville Elementary School. The results of the election on the proposed changes achieved the following:

#1 deleted proxy voting rights of the Conservancy and the managing agent and gave each Owner the same proxy voting rights as the Board of Directors.

#2 gave Owners the right to vote via an absentee ballot.

#3 made secret ballots mandatory except where the number of candidates and the number of open positions are the same.

#4 allows Owners to return excessive reserve amounts to themselves if approved by a majority of Owners eligible to vote.

#5 reinforced the right to change governing documents by mail.

#6 changed the amount of votes to change our Bylaws from a majority of those voting to a majority of those eligible to vote.

#7 allows a financial review to replace an audit.

#8 changed the amount of votes to change our Covenants from 3/4 of those voting to 2/3 of those eligible to vote (to agree with Virginia State Law).

...Frank Fuerst, Committee Chair.

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Commons Grounds Committee (CGC) Annual Report

The Vint Hill Manor Grounds Committee, now known as the Common Grounds Committee, was formed in August of last year. The purpose of the committee is to:

1. Monitor the maintenance & management of the common areas within Land bay G insuring that the EDA/Conservancy is conforming to the guidelines established in the Vint Hill Conservancy Covenants and that maintenance vendor(s) are adhering to the scope of work outlined in the maintenance contract. *Prior to this committee being formed, there did not seem to be any oversight or quality control of turf maintenance or general management of the common areas.*

2. Make recommendations to the HOA Board of Directors concerning maintenance issues or improvements in the common areas to sustain an attractive and clean environment.

3. Be the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) between Vint Hill Manor homeowners, Vint Hill Manor Homeowners Assoc., and the EDA/Conservancy on common grounds issues.

We have achieved a few things in the short time that we have been formed. I will mention some of what we consider accomplishments.

1. Last Fall, after input from some of you and our own observations, we provided input to the EDA/Conservancy that the scope of work in the current maintenance contract was not being adhered to. i.e., lots of weeds, large bare spots in turf where there was neither grass nor weeds, and some of us had never seen the vendor do any fertilization or weed control. After some meetings with the Conservancy and a review of the current contract, the common areas (that you can get equipment to) were aerated, fertilized and overseeded last fall. There is still work that needs to be done here; but this was a start and, with this committee's efforts and the new Quality Control program that will be in place shortly, things should look better going forward.

2. Identified a drainage problem (standing water) in the open concrete storm sewer in back of lots 51 & 52. Because the water drains into the so called "wet lands", and the area cannot be disturbed, a more permanent solution is not available at this time; but the Conservancy did clean it and agreed to monitor and keep it clean to avoid standing water. Unfortunately the water does not have a good path to drain.

3. Bare turf areas at entrance and along Cray Dr. was repaired and grass sown last fall. This has improved the appearance of that area. There are other areas that need attention.

4. Obtained quotes from four (4) vendors for the maintenance of the shrubbery at the entrance (one side), and around the raised manholes, and to replace the dead spruce tree at the entrance. Fortunately, we will not have to hire our own contractor for the shrubbery maintenance. It will be handled as part of the overall maintenance in Land bay G beginning this spring.

5. Provided our requirements for maintenance of the common areas in Land bay G to the EDA/Conservancy. They were accepted and will be part of an overall maintenance contract for Vint Hill.

CGC Current Activities

1. Replace dead spruce tree at entrance (this spring).
2. Working on a major erosion problem behind Lots 16 & 17.
3. We want to insure that the spring maintenance of the shrubbery at the entrance is handled in a timely manner. Hopefully, the maintenance vendor will be named and will start work in time to do the spring maintenance of our shrubbery. If not, the committee does have a contingency plan.

The most recent negotiated contract will include: turf maintenance, maintenance of pocket parks, maintenance of shrubbery at entrance and around raised manholes.

With the new "turn key" maintenance contract for Land bay G, the primary function of this committee will be to serve as the catalyst for quality control to ensure a clean and attractive environment and SPOC to the EDA/Conservancy or their Quality Control Vendor on common grounds issues.

...Don Simmons, *Outgoing Chair*

Year in Review:

Don Brettle provided some general Year in Review comments. He touched on the amendments that were made to the Bylaws, the landscaping that was done around the manholes, the reductions to the monthly assessments, the accomplishments of the ARC in lowering the number of homes with non-approved modifications, the removal of a number of dead/dying trees, and the necessary filling of unexpected BOD vacancies. Don went on to express his appreciation to the BOD and Committee Chairs and members for their service, and then he expressed his appreciation to the membership in general, for the experience he had serving the community during his term, with the last two of his three years spent as Chair of the BOD and President of the HOA. During the Membership Comment Period, Anne Grabowski publicly thanked Don for his overall service on the BOD, and his leadership during a very rough period of time. The assembled membership expressed their agreement with enthusiastic applause.

ARC Members

In previous issues, we have carried appeals from Stan Manvell, who was Chair of the ARC at the time. He advised that several of the ARC committee members have served faithfully since the committee was formed in March 2006, and have asked to be relieved, having

served 3 years (regular term is 1 year). The BOD is looking for two or three homeowners to volunteer to fill these vacancies. In addition, because decisions by the ARC can be appealed to the BOD, it has been decided that it would be best if BOD members NOT be members of the ARC. Since Stan was elected to the BOD, he will no longer be the Chair, or even a voting member, of the ARC. To his credit, Stan has advised he will continue to meet with the ARC; but, serve only in the capacity of a liaison representative from the BOD. If you think you might be willing to serve on the ARC, please feel free to give Stan a call and he will be happy to review with you how the ARC operates.

Proposed Rte 29 Corridor Study

Recently there was some local e-mail traffic on this and it was brought up at the Annual Membership Meeting. Frank Fuerst attended the VDOT meeting at the Warrenton Community Center on February 16, 2009. It was run by Joseph Springer, of Parsons Transportation Group, who is the Project Manager of the State commissioned study. Route 29 has been designated by Congress as a major through-road connecting multiple states. The current study is the first to look at the entire 219 mile Route 29 corridor (from I-66 south) in Virginia. The study is looking at short range ideas (0-10 years), intermediate range ideas (10-20 years), and

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long range ideas (20 + years). They will consider both road and rail ideas. The study will be completed in December 2009

Another meeting was held on February 17 at Battlefield High School in Haymarket. The Bull Run Observer of March 6 gave an extensive review of that meeting in which they quoted Mr. Springer as saying, "VDOT has no particular plans to do anything." He emphasized that current fiscal constraints limit what ideas the state can implement. Details of the plans and upcoming meetings will be online at the website: www.virginiadot.org/route29

Contact Frank for a copy of the *Observer* article.