

Emerald Hills Homeowners Association

Winter 2020 / 2021 Newsletter

December 18, 2020

Dear Neighbors,

In an effort to keep Emerald Hills Homeowners informed regarding ongoing neighborhood activities, this letter is being sent out electronically via e-mail, posted on Facebook, posed on the webpage and sent via U.S. mail to those homes for which we still do not have e-mails addresses on file at this time.

At the most recent HoA Board of Directors meeting we discussed the importance of keeping the 180+ homeowners in the Emerald Hills Neighborhood informed. In light of there being over 35 property owners for which we still do not have e-mail addresses on file, there is still a need to spend money on postage stamps for mailing newsletters. If you would prefer to receive the Emerald Hills Homeowners Association newsletter in paper form there is nothing that you need to do. If you are not currently receiving these electronically but would prefer an e-mail version then send your updated e-mail address to the HoA Vice President at vp@ehhoa.info.

Neighborhood reminders

Property Improvement Requests

According to our covenants, owners are required to obtain approval from the Architecture Review Committee (ARC) before starting any new building, performing exterior modifications to existing structures, or altering your property. This includes new construction, exterior painting which changes the color scheme, structural additions, fences, walls, sheds, pools, etc. Please contact a member of the Board or the ARC, or visit our "<http://ehhoa.info/>" website to obtain a "Property Improvement Request Form". Please note that Modification Forms should be sent to "EHHOA ARC, P.O. Box 1024, Fishersville, VA 22939" rather than to APMS.

Bicycle and pedestrian safety. Walk on the left (facing traffic) and ride bikes on the right. Children on bicycles need to be reminded that they should not be speeding around road intersections.

Traffic Concerns: There continue to be speeding cars on Wyndham Hill Drive and Emerald Heights. A description of several of the speeding vehicles has been provided to the County Sheriff's office. In light of children staying home more for on-line school there is a safety concern.

Snowplowing. There are several newly acquired homes this past year. Consistent with years past, snowplowing of the roads is not the responsibility of the HoA. Snow plowing of roads is done by the County and VDOT. Plowing is done by VDOT trucks as well as by VDOT contractors.

Cats. There have been continued reports of feral cats in the neighborhood. Please do not feed any of the stray cats; perhaps they will go elsewhere. **Please don't feed the stray cats that are roaming the neighborhood.** Clearly there is a health and safety concern related to the feral cat colonies in Virginia.

Dogs. Complaints regarding barking dogs should be submitted to the property management company not the Board of Directors. If you walk your dog in the neighborhood please clean up after your pet.

Grass clippings. Next year when we start mowing again, please be mindful not to blow grass clippings into the street. Keeping grass clippings out of the road next to your home is a law. Code of Virginia 18.2-324, "nor shall any person throw or deposit or cause to be deposited upon any highway soil, sand, mud, gravel or other substances so as to create hazard to the traveling public" This is a class 1 misdemeanor with a maximum penalty of \$2,500 and one year in jail.

Wetlands Management. Most of the stormwater from the neighborhood collects in an area located north of the Augusta County Service Authority pumping station. In December we were informed by the County Engineering office that their application for a grant to modify this wetlands area as part of a Chesapeake Bay water quality improvement initiative and take over management of a large section of one of the open fields has permanently been placed on hold. The County Engineering office included the following statement ".... continue to pursue other plans for meeting the County's obligations..." This issue is now considered to be closed.

Property Management Company Update. The property management services contract with APMS is due for renewal at the end of March. The BoD is reviewing what it is that they do, what it is costing us and what it is that we need a property management company to do for us.

The BoD continues to discuss how to control HoA expenses and keep the annual assessment fee reasonable. One cost saving initiative that was discussed at the December BoD meeting was: Turning off the electric meter for the light located at the North Entrance sign. Unless there is a significant interest from homeowners to illuminate this sign, electricity will be turned off in March.

The major annual expense for the HoA continues to be mowing of the common area and wetlands.

Goals for next year:

a. Provided the pandemic social distancing restrictions are lifted thereby allowing us to have an in-person annual meeting next September there will be a few proposed additions to the existing HoA by-laws. Some of the proposed additions include:

(1) Standardizing late fees related to late payment of the annual assessment. Currently this fee is \$7.80.

(2) Implementing a structured fine standard related to violation of certain HoA by-laws.

As the age of the homes in the neighborhood increases keeping up property appearances will require ongoing efforts. The intent of imposing fees related to deviation from the established covenants and by-laws is to ensure that non-conformities can be discouraged and home values can be maintained.

Note: Each of the proposed changes to the by-laws would require approval by 10% of the homeowners.

The schedule for next year's quarterly meeting has been set for the following dates:

Sunday March 7th at 6:30pm

Sunday June 6th at 6:30 pm

Sunday September 12th at 6:30pm

Sunday December 5th at :30 pm

The annual HoA meeting has been scheduled for Monday September 20th.

Specific meeting agenda requests can be sent to Board@ehhoa.info. If the pandemic meeting restrictions are still in place then these meetings will be conducted via zoom; otherwise they will be held at the Yancey fire station.

Volunteers needed:

There continue to be three open positions in our homeowners' organization. They are: Welcome Committee, Webpage and e-mail Administrator (i.e. Webmaster) and an Architectural Review Committee member. Job descriptions for each have been written and are being posted on the webpage and Facebook page or can be obtained by contacting one of the Board members. If you are interested in volunteering to help out the organization please contact one of the board members whose names are listed below. The more tasks that we are able to handle ourselves the less money we need to pay the property management company. **Many hands make for light work.** Specific initiatives that will require additional homeowner involvement include: a garden committee to help develop ideas on how best to refresh the entrance sign area and to review and update the HoA by-laws.

Contact us:

Emerald Hills Homeowners Association Inc., PO Box 1024, Fishersville, VA 22939

Website: <http://ehhoa.info/>

Board e-mail: Board@ehhoa.info

Your volunteer HoA Board Members are committed to continuing the unique setting that we enjoy here in Emerald Hills. Thank you very much for your assistance and cooperation in making this an excellent neighborhood. If you have an interest in serving on a homeowner's association committee, please let one of the board members know.

Board of Directors are:

Jacques L'Heureux, President

Suzanne Reich, Vice President

Frank Battaglia, Secretary

Brent Adams, Treasurer

Nicole Baucom, Chairperson Architectural Review Committee

Association & Property Management Services ((APMS). PO Box 2182, Harrisonburg, VA 22801 (200 High Street, Bridgewater, VA 22812)

Phone: 540-423-3879

e-mail: office@apmsva.com

Sincerely,

Jacques L'Heureux, President EHHOA

president@ehhoa.info