

## **STATE OF THE COMMON AREA (and letter from the President)**

Spring is finally here, and while you might have thought your Board of Directors has been hibernating, I'm here to tell you we haven't. Sure, we've been keeping things running just like you'd expect and if you look around at the state of the neighborhood, I think you'll agree. We've also been busy bringing our old policy resolutions up to speed with the updated Bylaws and Declaration (aka CCRs), and we've been talking about how to approach a couple of big improvements I need to tell you about today.

First, you've probably noticed that the landscaping and entrances along Orchard Heights Road, especially the one where Chapman Hill meets Orchard Heights, have really started to show their age. Things have greened up over the winter, but moles have really torn things up and the rain will only keep the native grasses which have taken over looking green for so much longer. Our watering system needs a ton of work as well, say the experts who have assessed it, and frankly there are some sections of grass that really seem like they need to be removed and replaced by bark dust. There's more, but what I'd like to ask you to do is come hear it in person and have a chance to talk with the Board at the

## **Town Hall meeting on March 19 at Salem Electric at 7 pm.**

We haven't made any decisions other than the fact that we're ready to roll up our sleeves and make something happen and that we want your input. So please, your presence is requested to come down and help us figure out what to do next. And yes, *we'll have refreshments!* If you can find some time, please also consider driving or walking along Orchard Heights Road from Mousebird to Chapman Hill and take a look at the current state of the area before you come.

Second, you may not know but we've been saving the neighborhood a good sum of money by managing the processes and tasks we're required to fulfill without employing a management company. We did look into contracting with a company but it would have cost us around \$2,000.00 per month – 24k per year! That breaks down to 75 dollars extra per home per year. We thought that was too much, so we've started looking for some software we can use to continue to manage things ourselves, but in a more organized and efficient way. While this will still cost us some money, what we'll get in return is a better way to keep documents safe and more readily accessible, make processing ACC requests and CCR violations more consistent and speedy, and make it easier to transition new board members into their roles.

Lastly, since I have your attention – did you know the board has an email list we use to send out important information? It's true. Did you also know that this newsletter cost around \$400 to send out? Also true. Every time we send out mail, it costs us all money. Would you like to help save us some money? Of course you would! So, if you haven't already done it, please consider giving us your email address and let us know we can use it to subscribe you to our mailing list. If we can get to where 50% of homeowners will agree to get most communications electronically, we can start using the list to save at least \$1000 just in mailing costs every year.

*Scott Gilbert, 2019-20 Board President*

## **CC&R SPRING REMINDERS – Yards and Holiday Decorations**

Spring is just around the corner and with it comes our Spring neighborhood review. Now is the time to assess winter landscape damage and review the condition of your yard. Any cleanup or preparation you do now will help your yard look its very best when the growing season arrives. The MOST COMMON ISSUES we see requiring attention this time of year are:

- Overgrown trees and shrubs which need to be pruned (including those growing onto and over the sidewalks)
- Weed removal to get a clean start on the year.
- Lawns with bare or dead patches in need of repair and reseeding or sod replacement
- Bark mulch which needs to be added or refreshed
- Clean-up of landscaping soil and bark mulch spilled over onto the sidewalks

And **don't forget** to take down your **holiday decorations**, as the current rules require they be removed within 30 days after the holiday.

## **POLICY RESOLUTION UPDATES are COMPLETE!**

The Board has completed the review and updating of the neighborhood Policy Resolutions so they align with our new CC&Rs (i.e. Declaration) and Bylaws. Two updates were announced in a newsletter last Fall, with nine more communicated last month via postcard. The last six changes (four updates and repeal of two which are obsolete) were adopted by the Board February 20, 2020 and are now in effect:

- Policy Resolution #4-20 Annual Assessment Late Fees
- Policy Resolution #5-20 Real Estate Transfer Fee
- Policy Resolution #6-20 Collection Procedures
- Policy Resolution #7-20 Expense Payment Procedures
- Repeal of Policy Resolution #3-18 Confirmation of CC&R Violations
- Repeal of Policy Resolution #10-18 Rule Establishing Criteria or Granting Exceptions to the Architectural and Appearances Relating to Shrub Height Exceptions

Please be sure to review these updates online at [WHEHOA.com](http://WHEHOA.com). If you do not have access to the Internet, please let us know and we will provide you with a copy.

## **FROM the ACC CHAIR**

We are nearing the time of year when outdoor projects are being planned and scheduled. We all benefit from the improvement of properties in our neighborhood. As a friendly reminder, please make sure you fill out an Architectural Control Committee (ACC) application and submit it to the committee by mail or email. The process is fairly simple and ensures the continued quality of the neighborhood we all enjoy.

Fill out the ACC application (found on the website), describing the project and materials to be used. A brochure from the company being employed is a good idea as well. In addition, a diagram of the project may be necessary. After submitting the application and other materials, the ACC will respond in a timely manner.

## **PLEASE OBEY the 25 MPH SPEED LIMIT!**

Speeding in our neighborhood is an ongoing problem, especially with the “gravity assist” as people go downhill. Even as little as 5 mph over the limit can significantly reduce safety in our residential environment. *PLEASE keep your speed at or below the legal limit of 25 mph to keep your neighbors SAFE!*

## **NEIGHBORLY DOG ETIQUETTE**

We all love dogs, especially well behaved ones. Please remember that a dog's "people" also need to be well behaved by picking up after our four-footed family members and not putting them in a position where they bark excessively. Leaving their droppings in a neighbor's yard, in a vacant lot, or on a park trail is definitely not neighborly. In the last few months we have even seen regular "doggie gifts" dropped and left directly on the sidewalks!

## **CRIME PREVENTION REMINDER TIPS**

Although we are not aware of any recent pattern of vehicle break-ins or house prowls in our neighborhood, it's always a good time to remind people of some effective preventative measures. Not surprisingly, the most common time for these activities is in the wee hours of the morning when most of us are asleep. With today's cost-effective and efficient LED lighting technology, we recommend neighbors leave their outside house lights on all night as it creates an unfriendly environment for prowlers. If at all possible, keep your vehicles in a closed, locked garage. If that's not possible, park your car or truck in a well-lit portion of your driveway and consider adding motion-sensing lights. The next level of deterrence is a security camera system and/or doorbell camera. Lastly, if you are unfortunate enough to experience this kind of crime, be sure to report it to the police using their non-emergency line 503.588.6123. While they cannot respond in person to every situation, the information helps them see patterns to use when planning prevention patrols.

## **CC&R NEWS YOU CAN USE – Screening Waste Bins**

Screening of our garbage and recycling waste bins has been a requirement since our neighborhood rules were first established years ago. During the neighborhood review last Fall, we reminded quite a few neighbors of the requirement and got some feedback that verified it hadn't been consistently enforced over the years. We understand it came as a surprise to some, and have been working with neighbors on the best way to comply with the rule. We aren't sure how that requirement got "lost" along the way, but last year's update of our CC&Rs into one common document for all neighbors was a good reminder of the need to improve consistency moving forward.

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