

Forest Glen Station Homeowner's Association

Executive Board Meeting February 6, 2006

I. Call to Order and Review of Minutes of the Last Meeting. The meeting was called to order by the President, Catherine Bocskor, at 7:30 P.M. The meeting was held at the Wheaton Regional Library, 11701 Georgia Avenue, Wheaton, MD. Following review of the minutes of the January 17, 2006 Annual Meeting of the Association and Executive Board Meeting, the Board approved those minutes with one change, the adding of a sentence documenting that the President had directed the CMI representative to replace residents' parking stickers as needed.

Board Members Present: Catherine Bocskor, President; Kevin Covert, Vice President; Allen Feuer, Treasurer; Francis O'Donnell, Secretary; Chuck Ehrlich.

Others Present: Vincent Hughes, Chang Lee, Ruth Futrovsky, Rebecca Hess, Marcus Joseph (per sign-in).

II. Presentation on Solid Waste. The President introduced Mr. James D. Fustero of the Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services. He spoke and answered questions from the Board and Members for 38 minutes. He distributed to those present a number of information cards, pamphlets, and other materials. These can be obtained by contacting his office. Among the many items he explained were:

- In general, about 41% of trash and recycling material is recyclable paper.
- The current county contract with Unity has been in effect since August 2004. Routes for the trucks (650 homes) are now smaller than previously and the trucks have 2 man crews. A county goal is to pick up materials before school buses use the same streets.
- Recycling: County goal is to pass around a recycling kit each year.
- Paper bags are recommended for containing paper of any type for recycling.
- Rules of thumb for plastics: plastic containers that have necks are recyclable. Containers without necks, such as yogurt cups, frozen dinner plates, should be disposed of as trash. Lids should be removed from plastic recyclables, since the lids are made of a different kind of plastic.
- Metal objects such as lawnmowers, refrigerators, bicycles can be recycled, but the county must be notified at least 24 hours in advance for such large objects, i.e., by Monday morning at 9 A.M.
- Yard work debris for trash collection: Should be marked with the Green marker provided by the County. Either place the Green tag on the trash can or use the conventional paper bags sold for disposal of yard waste.
- The county permits 5 "trash specials" per year per home, for large items like sofas. These must be arranged in advance.
- Hazardous materials: These include gasoline, pesticides, oil-based paint, etc. Pickup must be arranged in advance.
- Latex paint can go into ordinary trash but it must be dry. He showed a special kit available from the county that will dry out latex paint in the can very quickly.
- If the trucks damage property (corners, automobiles), notify the County. He noted that alleys are more difficult to enter for the trucks.
- An orange sticker left by a crew on a recycling container indicates that something improper went into the recycling container.
- Paper should be placed separately from other materials in the blue containers. The other materials (glass, plastic, and metal) can go together.
- Do not place plastic bags of any kind into the recycling. They should go into the trash. They can be used when walking dogs and then placed into the trash.

- The plastic windows on food containers do not need to be removed when recycling the boxes.
- He encouraged containerizing cardboard and paper by use of cord, string, paper bagging, or boxing, to preclude blowing papers in the community.
- Separate trucks handle recycling, trash, yard waste, and bulk pickups.
- He noted that recycling works best when trash and recycling are collected on the same day.

Mr. Fustero then discussed the county's solid waste charges that appear on the county tax bills. The refuse collection charge is \$66 per year per residence. The total solid waste charges per year are \$335.86. He distributed a copy of an explanation of solid waste charges, taken from the county web site: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/swstmpl.asp?url=/content/dpwt/SolidWaste/reference/swc/index.asp>

He then covered the process by which a community could choose to terminate the county-arranged trash collection. A letter requesting such withdrawal would have to go to the county. The county would survey the owners in the community. 51% of the owners would have to say yes for the withdrawal to take place. If the survey failed to secure 51% approval of withdrawal, then such a request could not be made for another two years. He noted that 99% of Montgomery County residents have once per week trash pickup.

Discussion between Mr. Fustero and the Board members elicited the following information.

- No community in the county has ever opted out of trash pickup.
- Some have opted in because county pickup is cheaper than private service.
- If a community withdrew from county pickup and later changed its mind, it would take two years before county pickup could be restored.
- Townhouses usually generate less trash than single family homes.
- Forest Glen Station originally had 3 trash pickups per week, 2 from the private contractor and 1 from the county.

Mr. Fustero also encouraged homeowners to sign up for a mail list that provides notices about trash pickup for holidays, the impact of inclement weather on trash pickup, and so-called slide days for bad weather. Owners can sign up via a green card, which he distributed. One can also subscribe via the web page at: http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/swstmpl.asp?url=/content/dpwt/SolidWaste/mailling_lists.asp

The President offered to distribute this information via the community mail list and Newsletter.

IV. Officer and Committee Reports.

A. Treasurer. Mr. Feuer noted that the Budget and Finance Committee had recommended to the Board that it sign a 3 year contract for trash removal, remove the provision allowing the single family homes to decline the service, and to ensure that there are provisions for termination for cause.

He noted that the membership in the CAI is up for renewal. The President responded that the Board had felt that membership had not been fruitful, so the HOA would let its membership lapse.

Mr. Feuer asked about the procedures for reimbursement of expenses. The President noted that if the board has already approved an expenditure, then the bill should go direct to CMI. Alternatively, requests should go to the Treasurer who would forward them to the President who authorizes CMI to reimburse.

Mr. Feuer reported that Fraser Christie has volunteered to chair the Budget & Finance Committee.

The President reported that Mr. Ron Maccado of CMI has not sent monthly report because this meeting is a little early in the month.

B. Covenants Committee: Mr. Covert reported. There has been no meeting since the last Board meeting. He asked, and the President tasked the Secretary to, send the approved changes to the covenants to Josh Pitlick to post them on the web site. She will register the covenants changes with the county.

The next meeting of the Committee will be on February 9, at 7:30 P.M., at the home of Doug Keeton.

C. Parking and Safety Committee: This committee lacks a Chairman and has not met recently.

V. Open Forum.

Mr. Joseph reported that a neighbor's car was recently stolen from the parking lot on Darcy Green Court. He requested that a brighter light be installed in the lot. The President said the Board should consult with the residents in that area. CMI can contact a contractor to see about a brighter bulb.

Mr. Joseph also reported a dead tree in the forest retention area north of Darcy Green Court. He was concerned about it falling, and asked if it could be removed. Mr. Hughes said he would contact the county for permission to remove the tree, as well as another dead tree behind 2204 Kimble.

The procedures for collection of homeowner fees from bank accounts and the use of coupons were raised. The President stated that she will contact Mr. Maccado at CMI to get clarification about the proper procedures and requirements.

VI. New Business.

A. Safety and Lighting. A Member described a mugging and purse snatching that occurred near the picnic table and grill at the corner of Clark Place and Darcy Forest Drive. Two men pushed her, took her purse, ran off down Clark Place to a car, and drove off. She proposed installing additional lights and possibly surveillance cameras at that location and other locations in the community. She and Mr. Covert have discussed this. She has investigated and found lights with motion detectors. Some use solar energy. Web cameras are another possible measure.

Discussion that followed touched upon the issues of legal implications, soliciting homeowners' input, and privacy concerns. It was agreed that the Parking and Safety Committee should evaluate the options and give the Board a proposal. That committee needs a Chairperson. It was agreed that the Committee should walk the neighborhood as part of the preparation to make a proposal.

The President noted that Centex has installed the lights we were owed. She expressed the possibility that if the community saves money this winter from reduced requirements for snow removal, then leftover funds could be applied to safety measures like those discussed.

The lights on Metro property were installed by Centex but they do not work. The Board noted that Metro is responsible for the operation of these lights, not Centex or the HOA.

B. Parking Sign on Darcy Green Place: It was noted that the sign was knocked down. The President stated that she will call Henry's Towing to reinstall the sign.

VII. Old Business.

A. Metro Request for Proposal (RFP): The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) had issued an RFP for the building of townhouses on the present Metro parking lot. WMATA withdrew the RFP because only one proposal was received. Metro will contact community groups for input and will be contacting the FGS HOA. Metro may reissue another RFP. The President is trying to get a volunteer to be the Point of Contact for the HOA. She may ask Metro to send a representative to address our HOA.

B. Street Lights. Ms. Hess described her efforts to have the street light at the bottom of Darcy Green Court replaced. She has been in touch with Mr. Green of Centex and with a contractor. She described various options for reducing the light shining into her home. These included shortening the existing pole, replacing it with a new, shorter pole, putting a hat or halo on top to prevent light from shining upwards, mounting lights on the sides of homes, adding another light along the sidewalk in front of 1 – 7 Darcy Green Court, and using lights with motion sensors above garages.

The President said she would call Mr. Green of Centex and ask him to have Utility Systems replace the light behind 2125 Darcy Green Place with one on a shorter pole. This proposal was put into the form of a motion that was amended to include the placement of a light in front of the MPDU units. The motion passed. The President said she would consult with the Board after she has spoken to Mr. Green.

C. Private Trash Collection Contract. The Board discussed the issue of a contract with Potomac Disposal for Saturday trash collection. Provisions covered were the length of the contract (up to 3 years), whether or not to permit single family homes to opt out of the service, an option for the HOA to cancel the contract for cause, and a cap on rate increases.

Following discussion, the Board considered a proposal to allow seven single family home owners to opt out of the Saturday collections and the costs of those services. By a vote of 3 – 2, the Board approved the proposal.

The Board also considered a motion about taking steps to cancel the county trash collection services. By a vote of 5 – 0, the Board voted to take no initiative to opt out of county services.

The President said she would continue negotiations with Potomac Disposal with respect to length of the contract, provisions for cancellation for cause, and a cap on rate increases.

D. Communications. Mr. Covert led a discussion of possible tools to improve communication in the community. He distributed a list of proposed questions to homeowners covering preferred means of communication, including email, the bulletin board, the list serve, the web site, and the newsletter. He said he will modify the questions, circulate the updated list to the Board, post it on the list serve, and attach it to the newsletter.

He said that Committee Reports should be made monthly to the Board in writing and posted on Web Site. The list serve can be used to notify residents of reports. They can be given to Mr. Josh Pitlick for posting on the web site.

The subject of committee chairpersons was discussed. The Covenants Committee will be meeting soon. Mr. McKelvey is willing to serve as chair of the Social Committee. That committee could plan a social schedule for the year as well as the annual block party, which could be moved to the fall. The Board approved his appointment as Chairperson.

The Budget and Finance Committee was discussed. This committee is not provided for in the Bylaws and Covenants. The Treasurer is responsible for proposing the annual budget to the Board. In the past, the practice of both the committee chair and the Treasurer preparing budgets proposals was awkward. The division of responsibilities between these two persons was unclear. There are two schools of thought on whether or not the Treasurer should be Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee.

VIII. Next Meetings. The next scheduled meetings of the Board are scheduled for:

Monday, March 13, 2006

Monday, April 10, 2006

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Monday, June 12, 2006

The meeting adjourned at 10:12 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Francis L. O'Donnell
Secretary