



# NEWSLETTER - MARCH, 2014

Snowdens Mill HOA is managed by –  
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## YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors (BOD) has organized its activities into seven committees. The current officers include President Everett Casey, Vice-President Joe Tahan, Treasurer Joe Maas, and Secretary Patricia Brockway. The remaining Directors include: Dennis Holden, Kassa Kebede, Luann Mostello and Carlos Iraheta.

## 2014 ANNUAL MEETING - REPORT

Due to inclement weather, the meeting was postponed to Tuesday, Jan. 24<sup>th</sup>. Everett Casey called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

- Quorum Report: Everett Casey announced that there was a quorum present. Four positions on the board needed to be filled (three expiring terms and one vacancy).
- President's Report & Introduction of board members: Mr. Casey welcomed everyone to the 2014 Annual meeting. He introduced the board members and thanked all committee members. Over the last year, the board has adopted/amended the Covenant enforcement policy and the collection policy. Also, CIS was hired for our community inspections. There are two goals for the upcoming year, update our website and update the PIR form.

## Board Meeting Notices – Mar. 18<sup>th</sup>, April 15<sup>th</sup> and May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014 At 7:30 PM

All Board meetings will be held at: The Community Room in the Giant Food Store in the Burtonsville Town Center unless otherwise notified.

## Committee Reports

- Architectural Control Committee: The chairman, Tracy Shahan, was unable to attend so Everett Casey reported that the committee received about 65 PIR's (Property Improvement Requests) over the last year.
- Finance Committee: Joe Maas reported that the 2014 assessment will remain at the same level as 2013 (\$200). We have been able to keep the assessment at the same level for the past nine years.  
  
Joe passed out a short report which stated that the income was \$118,922.80 and the expenses were \$118,763.79. The 2013 budget did not include the contract to do a comprehensive review of homes in Snowdens Mill for covenant compliance. Very prudent financial management & aggressive collection of past due assessments allowed this \$8289.06 contract to be funded within the overall income.
- Covenant Enforcement Committee: Dennis Holden is co-chairman along with Tracy Shahan. Dennis reported on the progress of the covenant inspection process. The final inspection and notification of covenant violations is in progress.

- Landscape Committee: Kassa Kebede reported on the status of maintaining the common areas, grass cutting and tree maintenance. This past year we switched our landscaping services to Lasting Impressions. We are considering using a different company for updating and maintaining the nine flower gardens.
- Communications Committee: Patricia Brockway requested volunteers for assistance with articles, ideas and other suggestions for the newsletter, which is prepared bi-monthly. She also requested email addresses from residents in order to send out last minute notices of changes to trash collection, community meetings, and other changes.
- Elections of Directors: There are a total of nine seats on the board. One seat is vacant, and three seats are open for election (Everett Casey, Dennis Holden and Joe Tahan). The nominating committee consisted of those board members who were not up for reelection. Everett asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none. Mr. Ghim announced that he will have to withdraw his nomination. Joe Maas moved to close nominations and nominate the three returning to the board. All were in favor. The three nominees were re-elected to the board. The Board can fill the remaining vacancy anytime throughout the year.
- Homeowners Forum:
  1. Snowdens Ridge Parking: Concern was expressed about parking overflowing to the street. Any person who has their name on the lease can park in the parking spots. The owner can request a quest pass. The streets are public and there is no way to limit parking on them. The county permits a car which is licensed and operable to be parked for up to 72 hours.
  2. Parking Concerns in townhouse area. The Townhouse association owns the streets and controls the parking spaces within the townhouse area.
  3. A new resident in one of the townhouses was concerned about how the parking spots were assigned. One was by the unit and the second spot was further away. Concerned about safety coming from the second spot.
  4. 1910 Mica Drive Status: The County started condemnation. The owner filed for bankruptcy which halted the condemnation procedure.
  5. Corner of Olivine & Aventurine: A resident painted a yellow line on the curb in order to discourage people from parking at the intersection. It is considered to be an illegal defacing of public property and was reported to the county. This is a County issue. Our management agent will get the status of the complaint filed.
  6. Are there any HOA rules regarding an owner running a childcare operation from their home? The covenants prohibit owners from operating a business from their home with limited exceptions. Everett did not believe that it was allowed.
  7. Tenants/Guests: A question was raised as to how many unrelated people could reside in a single

residence. There is a limit of eight unrelated people to a residence. This is a county ordinance.

8. Trees/Plants Watering: Is there a water supply near the gardens? There is no piping nearby. The Board will address the issue at the next meeting.

## THIS YEAR'S TAX SCAMS

This article was taken from Home Actions Newsletter and I thought it was interesting.

The official opening of the federal tax filing season was on Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>. and it is also the unofficial opening of the tax scamming season, the Internal Revenue Service warns.

Tax fraudsters have posed as the IRS in everything from email refund schemes to phone impersonations all aimed at getting you to share your personal financial information. The scammers then use your personal information to steal your identity or file a fake return and collect a false refund.

The IRS never contacts taxpayers by email and it never needs to ask for your personal of financial information. It already has it from your last return.

The IRS also doesn't send text messages, nor does it post on your Facebook or Twitter pages.

There is no reason for the IRS to ask for your personal identification numbers (PINS), passwords or other passwords for your credit card, bank or other financial accounts.

If you get an email claiming to be from the IRS, don't open it or click on any links. Instead, forward the email to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov).

### **Pick Your Tax Preparer Carefully**

If you have a professional prepare your return, choose carefully since you're going to share all your financial information with them. While most preparers provide excellent service to their clients, a few unscrupulous return preparers file false and fraudulent tax returns and ultimately defraud their clients.

You're still responsible for the information on your tax return even if someone else prepares it.

Tips on choosing a preparer:

- Avoid return preparers who claim they can obtain larger refunds than other preparers
- Don't use preparers who charge based on the size of your refund.
- Make sure your tax professional signs and enters a preparer tax identification number (PTIN) on your tax return and gives you a copy.
- Consider whether the individual or firm will be around to answer questions about the preparation of your tax return, months, even years, after the return has been filed.
- Never sign a blank tax form
- Ask questions. Do you know anyone who has used the tax professional? Were they satisfied with the service they received?

## YARD SIGNS

Contractors are not allowed to leave up signs on the yards where work has been contracted. This is a violation of the Covenants of the Home Owners Association. It is your responsibility to explain that they can display a sign only when the work is taking place, not prior to being done or after the work is completed. You are not required to allow them to put up an advertisement in your front yard.

Political campaigning will be on the rise over the next several months. Campaign signage is permitted in the development. Please exercise restraint in putting out these signs. They must be taken down within 24 hours after the election.

## REQUEST FOR EMAIL ADDRESSES

If you have not already done so, please continue to send your email along with your name to the secretary of the board ([pabrockway@verizon.net](mailto:pabrockway@verizon.net)).

## TEENS OFFERING SERVICES

This is a new section listing neighbor teens who are interested in working in the neighborhood. We will be happy to add additional names, etc.

Elias Boussouf – [mseghirb@yahoo.com](mailto:mseghirb@yahoo.com) (301) 384-7994

Elias will do yard work: leaves, mowing, snow shoveling, etc. He is also interested in doing pet care.

Na'im Matthews-Johnson – [ultimatenaim@yahoo.com](mailto:ultimatenaim@yahoo.com) (240) 245- 6656

Na'im will do iPhone screen replacement and iPhone LCD replacement.

## NEW NEIGHBORS

Please give a friendly welcome to your new neighbors in the community:

Sunitha & Jacob Charuvilla on Aventurine Way  
Andre Chin & Ly Chin Wing on Goldstone Ct.  
Erica Jie Lin on Olivine Ct.  
Martin Baker on Serpentine Way  
Tigist Metaferia & Zekacrias Woldeyes on Turquoise Ter.

## TRASH / RECYCLING

Community wide trash and recycle (Blue Bins) pickup is every Thursday morning. Garbage and recycle bins should be placed at the end of your driveway by 7:00 a.m. Thursday and no earlier than 7:00 p.m. Wednesday. Kitchen refuse and trash waste should be placed inside covered, plastic trash containers.

All trash and the blue recycle containers must be stored out of sight from the street, such as behind your house or in the garage...

**Bulk Items:** Please call Montgomery County at 240-777-6410 before 11:00 a.m. on the business day before

(Wednesday) your trash collection day. Any requests received after 11:00 a.m. will be scheduled for the following week. You are allowed five free pickups per year.

You can check with the Division of Solid Waste Services web site

<http://www6.montgomerycountymd.gov/swstmpl.asp?url=/content/dep/solidwaste/index.asp> to see if pickups have been delayed. That link also contains a sign-up for their email announcements of holiday pick-up changes that you may find of interest.

## SMHOA WEBSITE

The Snowdens Mill HOA community website at <http://www.snowdensmill.com> allows you to quickly access and download SMHOA forms, including the PIR form, the Complaint form, HOA covenants and Bylaws, and policies adopted by the HOA. The Board is always looking for web content contributors and ideas to make our website more useful and interactive.

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Montgomery County has implemented a **311** phone number for non-emergency information and services. For emergency calls you should still use **911**.

<b>PEPCO (Outages)</b>	<b>877-737-2662</b>
<b>Miss Utility</b>	<b>800-257-7777</b>
<b>Missed Trash / Recycling</b>	<b>311</b>
<b>Animal Control</b>	<b>240-773-5960</b>
<b>Poison Control</b>	<b>800-222-1222</b>
<b>Police Non-Emergency</b>	<b>301-279-8000</b>
<b>Street Light Outage</b>	<b>311</b>
<b>Street Tree Damage</b>	<b>240-777-7623</b>

**Reporting Street Light Outage or Malfunction** – Montgomery County manages the maintenance of street lights positioned on metal street light poles. To report an issue related to a street light on a wooden pole, please contact PEPCO at the above number. Streetlight malfunctions include Cycling (light goes on and off), Dim (light not as bright as it should be), Knockdown (light pole has been knocked over) Leaning Pole (pole is far past 90degrees to the ground), Outage (dark) and Steady Burn (light does not turn off).

All Montgomery County Information, including how to apply for county building, shed, and fence permits plus information on events, can be found at: [www.montgomerycountymd.gov](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov). (Remember, you must submit a PIR to the SMHOA Architectural committee for any alterations that require a county permit or changes the appearance of your property.)

## VOLUNTEER COMMITTEES AND IDEAS

We need more residents to step forward and help out. **Want to make a difference?** Join a committee, work to create a new one or help with this newsletter. We are always looking for articles or ideas for articles for the newsletter. What would you like to see? As editor, email ideas to [pabrockway@verizon.net](mailto:pabrockway@verizon.net) or to Melissa at [smhoa.bod@communityassn.com](mailto:smhoa.bod@communityassn.com).