



Flints Grove HOA Newsletter

P.O. Box 83505 - Gaithersburg, MD 20833

President's Report by Bob Koenig

The HOA Board focused on maintenance issues this summer, both planned and unexpected. The planned activity resulted in improvements to the portion of our asphalt-walking path that was resurfaced last fall. After the resurfacing, there was some variation in grade between the path and adjacent turf. We hired Allentuck Landscaping to fill these areas with soil and plant grass seed to improve the grading. We also made progress with the streambed erosion control project with some initial work, which is described in more detail in the article by Brian Taylor on page XX of this newsletter.

One unexpected maintenance item involved the removal of a very large oak tree that fell on and damaged the wooden bridge on the path in early August. The tree removal costs were significant enough that a claim was filed with our insurance company and the insurance will also cover repairs to the bridge, which we expect to be done shortly by K & B Restoration.

Another unplanned and significant maintenance item is required repairs to our Storm Water Management Facility. This spring the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) inspected the facility and identified several repairs that we are required to make. Accordingly, we invited several contractors to bid on the required work and, although we selected the lowest bidder, the cost of the work will exceed \$8,500 to complete, which is an unbudgeted expense.

While the storm water facility repairs were unexpected, we would have faced them eventually because of our plan to transfer the structural maintenance of this facility to Montgomery County. Before the County accepts any transfer, they require that the facility be up to its standards. The transfer process is lengthy and somewhat complex because of the easements and covenants involved, deed research, of .

Come On-Board; Let's Keep Our Neighborhood Looking Beautiful! by Jessica Dolleck



A friendly reminder to all residents of Flints Grove to please keep your recycle bins and trash containers out of view and in your garage except on the days of your scheduled trash pick-up or the night before. Not only are

they an eyesore but also they tend to attract vermin and wild animals. Recently, coyotes have been spotted roaming in nearby neighborhoods.

According to the Flints Grove Homeowners Association Covenants, we are obligated to keep the exterior of our homes free of debris, including trash containers. This is stated in the FGHOA by-laws under rules and regulations for our community. If the new blue mixed-paper rolling carts are too burdensome for you and exceed your needs, you may call the Montgomery County Division Of Solid Waste at (240) 777-6410

and they will pick them up and return them to their facility.

To all of our townhouse residents, please be more courteous of your neighbors and keep all front yards and front stoops, clear of all debris, including snow shovels, rakes, brooms, and trash bags.

On a final note please be aware that the Montgomery County's Housing Code, states that all homeowners and renters need to be diligent in maintaining their property. This includes maintaining trees and shrubbery. All paved surfaces (driveways) need to be maintained as well as all wood surfaces and garage doors (against decay & rot).

FGHOA wants you to know that we are only interested in your welfare and that of your neighbors. By enforcing these rules FGHOA hopes to improve the quality of life for our residents, provide a safe and clean environment for all, and to enhance property values.

October
2005



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Bob Koenig - Directory
Jessica Dolleck—
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Hugh MacNeil,
(240-535-2203)

President’s Report (continued)

legal review and certifications, and finally, update of land records. We are working with a representative of the County DEP who will assist us with the application process. Once the transfer is complete, we will not have to allocate reserve funds for structural maintenance. If you have any relevant expertise (recording easements/covenants, deed research, or related legal activity), and can assist Board, please contact me at 301-424-1016.

will take 2 days. More information will be provided as we approach the time for this work.

- A resolution was adopted to explore the development of a Flints Grove HOA web site or message board with the objective of providing better communications within our community. If you have ideas or expertise in this area and would like to help, please contact Jeanne Kahn.

The Board took action on two timely items:

- An asphalt seal coating company will be hired to treat the parking areas in both the Flintsridge and Flintswood townhouse communities this fall. It will be necessary to completely clear the parking areas for this project to be successful. Currently, the work is scheduled to begin on Tuesday, October 11, and

On a lighter note, I'd like to report that our second Ice Cream Social was a very successful occasion. Thanks to Jeanne Kahn's work and creative writing, we won free ice cream for our party. For more details, please see the story on page XX by Jeanne, who for the second time organized this community event. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Board members for their interest and work to

**2nd Annual Flints Grove HOA
Ice Cream Social** by Jeanne Kahn



On Sunday, July 14, we celebrated our 2nd annual Flints Grove HOA ice cream social with approximately 100 people in attendance on DeHaven Court. The weather was perfect for eating ice cream, and the free (see more below) Edy's Slow Churned ice cream was thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance. With 12 different flavors, there was something to appeal to everyone's palette; the kids seemed to especially enjoy the toppings of M&Ms,

chocolate syrup, and whipped cream. Entertainment was provided by Karen Moulton, "Miss Valentine", who entertained the children with face painting and special balloon creations. The FGHOA board plans to keep the ice cream social as an annual event on National Ice Cream Day (designated by Ronald Reagan in 1984 as the 3rd Sunday in July), so please keep July 16, 2006 in mind for next year's event!

Welcome New Neighbors



On Flints Grove Lane:

⇒ Glen & Gale Velez

On Pebble Hill Lane:

⇒ Hugo Nopo

⇒ Dong Chan & Eunju Kim

Community Notes

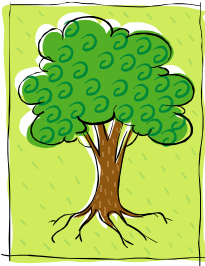
- If you have experienced pinhole leaks in copper plumbing, you might be interested to know that the Maryland Senate commissioned a task force to help residents understand the pinhole leak phenomenon and deal with its consequences. The MD Task Force has produced a final report and the Board has a couple of copies. If you would like to borrow a copy, please contact Bob Koenig
- Board Member Ed Myers recently joined the North Potomac Citizens Association in response to a Board objective to be more involved in local issues such as transportation and school districts.
- Please dispose of fall leaves properly. Flints Grove is not within one of those jurisdictions that offer curbside pick-ups; therefore, residents are responsible for the bagging leaves for pick-up by county recycling trucks. Please do not rake or blow leaves into the street or storm drains.
- For those residents who live adjacent to our wooded areas, it is tempting and convenient to dispose of lawn and leaf debris in the woods. However, please be aware that the woods are an attractive feature of our community and care needs to be taken not to offend our neighbors or create an eyesore by dumping large amounts of debris in the woods.
- The Board recently voted to remove the broken split rail fencing adjacent to the walking path from Dehaven Court.



Have your own
Community Notes to
share? Please email your
copy to the Editor,

Pam McLean at
pjlmclean@yahoo.com.

“Street” Tree Maintenance by Bob Koenig



“Street” trees are those planted within the 10-foot right of way space in our front yards along the County-maintained streets. Our neighborhood is experiencing a problem with “street” trees in several areas, especially along Flints

Grove Lane where three Norway Maples have died recently. An arborist from Mead Tree & Turf recently examined a Red Maple in my yard that was showing signs of stress and advised that the tree had been over-mulched in the past and was suffering because the roots could not get sufficient oxygen. When this happens, trees (Maples in particular) will put out surface roots at the top of the mulch, which encircle the tree and eventually strangle it. To help prevent this condition, the arborist advised removing old mulch before adding new each year and keeping no more than 2 inches of mulch over the tree roots.

There are a couple of choices regarding the “street” trees that are dead and need to be removed. Tree maintenance, pruning, and removal, is performed by the County Highway Services Section of the Division of Operations under a permit from the Maryland State Forester’s Office. If you have a dead “street” tree in your yard, you can call County Division of

Highway Services (240-777-7623) and request its removal. There is no cost for this service; however they currently have a one-year backlog on responding to removal requests. Additionally, the County provides stump removal service and tree planting to replace trees that have been removed from right of way areas. These services are also free, but long backlogs exist for these services as well. Tree trimming services are also available for trees in the right of way areas by the Division of Highway Services - call 240-777-7623 to request an inspection.

Dead, damaged or diseased “street” trees can be removed at the homeowner’s expense, but only with a permit from the State Forester’s Office as trees planted in a right of way are considered part of the State Forest and protected under the Maryland Roadside Tree Law. To request a permit, contact the State Forester at 301-854-6060.

If you have a dead or dying tree in the right of way area in your lawn, please make arrangements to have the tree taken care of using either of the appropriate methods described above. When trees are removed, either publicly or privately, the Board urges you to include tree replacement in your plans. A list of approved street trees is available at the Montgomery County website - www.montgomerycountymd.gov - see Highway Maintenance.

Selling Your House?



If you have a settlement coming up, please advise your attorney to contact Hugh MacNeil for the required financial information at least two weeks prior to settlement. Hugh can be reached by phone at 240-535-2203 or by email at SAILMACUSA@aol.com. As the Flints Grove HOA is self-managed, we don’t have a staffed office that can react immediately to requests from attorneys. Very often, Hugh or other Board members are on travel and need time to respond to these requests.

Award Winning Entry for Edy's "Two Scoop Neighborhood Salute"

Last spring, Edy's Slow Churned Ice Cream sponsored a national contest in which 1,500 neighborhoods were awarded a "Two Scoop Neighborhood Salute" ice cream party for 100 people. Contest entrants were required to submit a short paragraph explaining why their neighborhood deserved to be a winner. The winners were awarded a prize package consisting of 12-1.75 qt. containers of various flavors of Edy's Slow Churned Ice Cream, cups, spoons, napkins, name tags, a sign for the neighborhood, etc. - in short, everything but the consumers. In response to several requests made at our "Two Scoop Neighborhood Salute" party, the following is the award-winning entry written and submitted by Jeanne Kahn in May on behalf of the Flints Grove community.

"My neighborhood, Flints Grove, is in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, DC. This contemporary, middle-class development of about 200 single-family homes and condominiums was built approximately twenty years ago. Since that time, the population and housing market of the DC area has exploded, like many other urban areas. While some of the original homeowners are still here, many of the residents (like me and my family) are relatively new to the area, drawn here by the highly-rated public schools, the safety and natural beauty of our neighborhood, federal government jobs, the local biotechnology industry, etc. We are an involved,

ethnically diverse community that cares for and about each other. I truly think that Flints Grove is a great place to live, and I feel extremely fortunate to be here.

In 2004, our homeowners' association decided to sponsor a community ice cream "social" for many of the same reasons that your organization is having the Two Scoop Neighborhood Salute: we wanted people to come out and socialize with other Flints Grove families in a fun, friendly, relaxed atmosphere - to get to know their neighbors better. As a new resident who wanted to get involved in our community, I volunteered to chair last year's event, which we unwittingly held on National Ice Cream Day. Our social was a big success with the one hundred or so people who attended, in spite of some gloomy weather. We decided to make it an annual event to be held during the month of July and hope to increase the level of participation this year.

Last year, we used a local ice cream parlor for our social and were very pleased with the results, but we would love to try your ice cream this year, instead. Regardless of whether or not we are chosen as one of the package winners, though, we will still hold our neighborhood ice cream party this summer to promote a sense of community, and we applaud your efforts to do the same!"



Girls enjoying their sundaes at the 2nd annual FGHOA Ice Cream Social

Children Forced To Wait In Street: Dog Droppings Rule!

"It's a minefield," said one parent recently. "It's disgusting," said another.

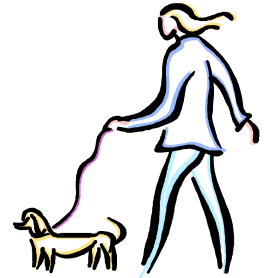
The strip of community lawn on Flints Grove Lane between Rich Branch Drive and the footpath is a particularly egregious "minefield", littered with multiple piles of doggie doo-doo. Amazing, isn't it? In a society obsessed with antibacterial everything and manicured lawns, some kind neighbors insist on leaving daily presents of dog droppings in plain view and underfoot for all to enjoy. Why, thank you!

Perhaps you didn't know that this area is a designated bus stop for kindergarten and middle school students. Imagine, 5 year-olds (yup, that's f-i-v-e) being told to wait in the street rather than on the grass; imagine a dozen or more middle school students congregated in the road at 7:30 a.m., opting to avoid the relative safety of nearby grass, just because it's littered with you-know-what! Imagine children walking home from play at rush hour, again avoiding the

grass for the same reason.

Perhaps you don't have a child who rides the bus? Please, imagine that you do. Imagine your child stepping in some dog's mess: subject to ridicule; tracking it onto the bus; another child sets his/her backpack on the tracks...then sets the backpack on the seat...sits in it...wipes hands on shorts...touches nose/mouth/eyes/another child...pass it on!

All joking aside, it really is unfortunate that some owners neglect to pick up after their dog. Please, please, please be a good neighbor and pick up what your dog leaves behind. No matter how special your dog is, its feces are not. Owning a dog involves a commitment to care for it, and carrying a doo-doo bag is just part of the joy.



Treasurer's Report by Bob Austen



Good news --- everyone in our Association has paid their 2005 Association dues with one exception. This represents a real accomplishment and is an indication of everyone's commitment to maintain the quality of our community.

The one property owner who hasn't paid his dues owns a townhouse on Pebble Hill Lane that he rents out and he hasn't paid his dues in three years, so we are proceeding with a lien on this property.

Association member fees are due annually by December 31st prior to

the start of the new fiscal year. The 2006 bills will be mailed to all homeowners during October, 2005. Remember that there is a late fee of \$10.00 per month so please send your payment in on time in order to avoid any late fees.

We have used the fees to maintain the common areas and to make progress on a number of overdue infrastructure projects including the walking path resurfacing, the drainage pond repairs and maintaining the townhouse parking areas. Be assured that we will continue to use your Association funds prudently to maintain the community which is in everyone's best interest.

"Rich Branch - Antigone" Stream Erosion by Brian Taylor



We've had a pretty dry late summer and early fall, but the big storms of late fall and winter will soon be here. Faithful readers of the FGHOA newsletter know that the Flints Grove Board of Directors has been working

on ways to deal with erosion damage along the streambed between Rich Branch Dr. and Antigone Dr.. In one section of the stream, in the area behind 14428 Rich Branch Dr., we saw that severe erosion was occurring directly adjacent to a homeowner's property. The stream cut a new channel after large branches and other debris clogged the original channel, threatening to undercut a very large

oak tree and topple it into the stream or toward the homeowner's house.

The Board retained Allentuck Landscaping Co. to clear and lower the old channel, and create a barrier with sandbags across the entry of the new channel. They also created a sandbag barrier at the base of the threatened oak tree. The cost to mitigate erosion along the entire streambed is far beyond the resources of the Association, but we hope our sand-bag band-aid will save at least one old oak. We would appreciate assistance on this issue from residents with relevant expertise."

NEWSLETTER INSIDE!!

Flints Grove HOA

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