



THE GOOD NEIGHBOR

April 2014



Calendar of Events

Apr 22nd (Sun) - Community Rain Gardens project - Tot Lot 9am

May 5th (Mon) - HOA Annual Meeting -NC Senior Center 7pm

May 10th (Sat) - Community Yard Sale

Jun 2nd (Mon) - HOA Meeting - NC Senior Center 6:30pm

Jul 7th (Mon) - HOA Meeting -NC Senior Center 6:30pm

Aug 4th (Mon) - HOA Meeting - NC Senior Center 6:30pm

Aug 5th (Tue) - National Night Out - Pavillion

Help us keep you up to date on community news and events by sending us your updated email address!



Inside This Issue

Community Rain Gardens Project	1
Message from the HOA President	2
Parking Safety & Courtesy	
Annual HOA Mtg Details	3
Land Use Committee	4
Neighborhood Tree Sponsorship	6
Yard Waste	

Get Involved!!!

Community Rain Gardens - Sun, Apr 27th

Neighbors, please join us for the installation of two 4'x10' rain gardens at our tot lot on **Sunday, April 27 at 9 AM**. This is a family friendly project—please bring your kids to help us dig! Storm water runoff is responsible for up to 70% of water pollution. Right now, our parking lot runoff is running right through the children's playground! Rain gardens help to slow down the flow of rainwater. We will dig the soil, amend with sand & compost and plant beautiful native plants. The plants I have selected will attract hummingbirds and butterflies, while their root systems should lessen the flooding of the playground. What an exciting project for Earth Day this month! Please email Kim Brown at vanet-tenk@hotmail.com for more information on supplies to bring.



NCF's Annual Homeowner's Association Meeting

**Monday May 5, at 7 PM
North Carroll Senior Center**

See pg 3 for details

Visit www.northcarrollfarmshoa.org or email Northcarrollfarmshoa@gmail.com with questions !

A Message from the HOA President

Greeting Neighbors,

Our annual meeting will be held on Monday May 5th @7pm. Over the last several years this meeting has been very poorly attended. I urge you to attend this meeting as there are several very important issues that will be discussed that will affect every household in our community.

The major questions that we will be discussing will be; **Are our current HOA dues enough to keep pace with the increasing cost of our aging community? Could there be a large dues increase in our near future just to keep pace with these increasing costs?** Currently we are over budget in 2014 for snow removal and common area maintenance. Old man winter has cost us a pretty penny this year. We need your input and ideas as to what can be done to cover these increasing costs now and in the future.

We will also be electing 3 new board members. We are in need of volunteers to run for these positions. Our community is made up of 220 households and currently we only have 5 households represented on the board. Life and obligations pull us in many ways but somehow we all find time to volunteer and support other organizations. I recommend you get involved with your HOA. Help us become stronger and prepare for our future.

Together we can accomplish a lot of great things. In order to make it happen YOU must get involved. I hope to see you on May 5th.

Ray Baker
HOA president

Parking Safety & Courtesy

The purpose of this letter is to raise awareness of a parking issue in our neighborhood and address the safety concerns as a result. North Carroll Farms was designed with overflow parking for the single family homes on the east side of Upper Forde Lane. Later, when the townhomes were added they were designed with their own parking (two spaces per home) as well as their own designated overflow parking. To avoid costly maintenance and expenses to NCF Homeowners, Upper Forde Lane was turned over to the county, thereby making it a public street. These parking protocols were respected by original homeowners (both single family and townhome), but with the turnover of properties they have been disregarded and used as primary parking for many townhome owners. The single family homes were originally designed with single lane driveways. Many of those homeowners have paid to add additional parking spaces and pads to accommodate for two vehicles in their driveways.

Previous HOA letters have mentioned the visibility issue of pulling in and out of the driveways and not being able to see other vehicles coming and children playing. It was suggested that we add yellow "curbed" no parking areas at each driveway skirt ten feet on each side. As this will help with visibility, it will eliminate more available overflow parking for the single

(Continued on page 3)

family homes on the street. In addition, many service and maintenance vehicles are having to park in the common drive blocking the line of traffic in and out of the private drives since they have nowhere to park.

We all have to live here together and we do not always realize some of the inconveniences that we cause to our neighbors. The point of this letter is to inform everyone as to the original parking design of NCF and request conformity and neighborly courtesy.

Sincerely,
Mark & Allison Edgar
4253 Flail Drive

North Carroll Farms Annual Community HOA Meeting

Monday May 5th, 2014 at 7pm

North Carroll Senior and Community Center
2328 Hanover Pike (Same shopping center as Mr. Tire)

Here is what is on the agenda:

- A representative from the Town of Hampstead will answer our questions and update us regarding the town's future plans.
- A member of the Hampstead Police Department will speak regarding police issues in the town and our community.
- Get an update from the HOA Board of Directors on the state of the HOA.
- Receive a complete financial update from the HOA.
- Election of three board members to serve new 3 year terms. Nominations currently being accepted. Volunteers are needed.**

This meeting will focus on the question: Are our current dues enough to keep pace with the increasing cost of maintaining our aging community? Due to the harsh winter, we are currently over budget in 2014 for snow removal and common area maintenance. We also have the need to put money aside for future repairs. What more can we do? Is there a larger dues increase in our near future? You input and insight are needed.

Remember this is your community and we need your input!

Please plan to attend this very important meeting. Looking forward to seeing you there!

NCFHOA Board of Directors

PS. If you are receiving this newsletter via regular mail it means the HOA does not have an email address on file for you. Please contact us at northcarrollfarmshoa@gmail.com with your email address. This will allow the HOA to provide you with important information that could affect you and your community. Emailing saves the HOA money and helps stop annual dues from being increased. Thanks!

LAND USE COMMITTEE

Dear Neighbors,

No question about it, this past winter was one of the worst winter seasons the North Carroll Farms community has had to deal with in recent memory. Through it all, we've heard from a few of you with a host of questions, concerns, and comments. Allow me to comment on a few of those here.

Some homeowners feel that the snow removal and ice management on the HOA-owned roads should be more frequent, and the plowing of the overflow parking bays (those facing the railroad tracks) is inadequate. It was observed this past season that some individuals chose to move their vehicles to a plowed, overflow parking bay while at the same time literally abandoning their own parking bays and not clearing them of snow. Consider the obvious: As long as there are the day-to-day thaw and freeze cycles, remaining melting snow pack results in runoff across the previously plowed thoroughfare. An adjacent, upstream neighbor who chooses not to clear the snow from his or her parking bays certainly impacts the conditions of the immediate surrounding areas. Our contractor is aware of these icing conditions and could certainly maintain the townhouse thoroughfares on a daily basis, but this obviously would not come without additional cost.

In regards to the thoughts that the overflow parking bays are inadequately cleared of snow, our contractor is fully aware of this concern as well. Keep in mind that while the contractor is fully insured, vehicles scattered throughout the overflow parking bays prohibits thorough snow removal. Attempting to clear parking bays of snow between vehicles carries a high risk for vehicle damage.

The most effective snow clearing on HOA-owned roads (as well as on the public streets) would occur when all vehicles are parked in their parking bays, driveways, or garages, and any vehicles parked in the overflow lots be parked adjacent to each other.

There is the belief that townhouse owners have their parking bays plowed at the expense of the HOA. This is simply not true. As a townhouse owner, I can personally attest to this. While the snow removal contractor does plow the access roads and main thoroughfare behind the townhouses, as well as attempting to plow all overflow parking bays (again, those facing the railroad tracks) and the parking bays at the pavilion when vacant, the negotiated contract DOES NOT include the plowing of any individually owned parking bays. Townhouse owners own their parking bays and are responsible for the snow removal from their parking bays as they see fit. It is also worth noting that the negotiated contract DOES NOT include the plowing of any shared driveway. Homeowners residing on shared driveways are free to negotiate snow removal contracts with their neighbors, and providers of their choice, at their own expense.

Another circumstance resulting from the more recent ice storm, which also is not specifically budgeted for, is the occurrence of downed trees and hanging tree limbs. On the plus side, the occurrences were few. However, each occurrence had to be assessed for personal safety and the potential for property damage. Quotes were obtained for trees and limbs that are determined a risk and were fallen as soon as was possible. At the time of this writing, we are still compiling quotes for one remaining concern.

From all of this, there is the perception that we are "not getting our money's worth" for the amount of our annual dues. Of course we would all like to pay less, but the annual dues amount is driven by the operating budget of the Homeowners Association. The HOA works to find cost-effective solutions that satisfies the requirements of the community. Although what has been presented here thus far revolves around snow removal and tree cleanup, keep in mind that the annual operating

(Continued on page 5)

budget also includes the costs for the lawn cutting and maintenance of all of the HOA-owned common grounds. So how does our annual fee compare to others? Below is a comparison of the larger Homeowners Associations within the Town of Hampstead:

Sub-Division	Annual Fee
Shiloh Run	\$120.00
Small Crossings	\$140.00
North Carroll Farms	\$145.00
Roberts Field	\$159.00
Westwood Park	\$230.00

Another topic of recent discussion is the parking along the east side of Upper Forde Lane. Upper Forde Lane is a public street and the Homeowner's Association has no jurisdiction over what occurs on the street, but consider this: While the townhouse owners have the luxury of back entrance, out-of-sight parking and the overflow parking bays for guests, our neighbors living on a shared driveway do not have quite the same luxury. We ask as a courtesy that if you own a townhouse, consider parking in your parking bays. After all, you own them. Allow our neighbors who live on a shared driveway who have maybe that new driver in the family, or the occasional guests over for a meal, the opportunity to park on the street. Similarly, if you live on a shared driveway, we ask that you utilize your driveway and garage to its fullest extent. As far as the snowfall is concerned, although the Town of Hampstead plows Upper Forde Lane, if a parking space was obviously cleared of snow by hand, resist the temptation to park there. Give the individual who cleared it a fair shot at returning to the fruits of his or her labor, especially if they live on a shared driveway.

Regardless of the season, there is no denying "It sure is windy here in Carroll County!" That being said, prepare your weekly trash and recyclables accordingly. Keep an eye on your trash as well, especially if put it out the night before. If the wind has strewn your recyclables about, or our neighborhood wildlife creatures have gotten into your trash during the night, kindly cleanup the remains prior to pickup. And, I hardly doubt your recyclable bin has been stolen. Chances are, its down (or up) the road a ways. Please pickup your trash containers within 24 hours.

Lastly, please do not forget that the access roads between the townhouses are designated and marked as "No Parking" zones. They are only wide enough to provide for vehicle entrance and exit to and from the back of the townhouses. In addition, they need to remain clear for emergency vehicle access. Keep your guests informed of this as well and note that the HOA can request any vehicle parked on these access roads to be towed.

Don't forget the annual HOA meeting coming up on May 5th, 2014, and consider a position on the HOA board of directors. I speak for all of the HOA board members in saying that we would most appreciate your help!

Here's to a great 2014, and a much milder winter next season!

Please remember that there is a one-way traffic pattern behind the townhouses. For safety reasons, we ask that you abide by this requirement.

NORTH CARROLL FARMS
HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 367
HAMPSTEAD, MD 21074



Neighborhood Tree Sponsorship

We would love your help in beautifying our neighborhood. Girl Scout Troop 10236 is working with a local native tree nursery and we have excellent pricing on native trees. Native species are great, as they are much harder than non-natives.

Please donate \$25 to sponsor the planting of a neighborhood tree! There are ten little girls waiting to see how many trees they can plant this year, with your help. Please send your sponsorship check to North Carroll Farms HOA with "tree" in your memo.



THANK YOU.....

The 2014 Easter Egg Hunt held on Sat, April 12th was attended by 19 children. After collecting almost 23 dozen eggs, cookies and drinks were enjoyed at the Pavilion. Thank you to all who attended and assisted!!!!

YARD WASTE

A friendly reminder to the community that yard waste pick up began on Monday April 7th, and will continue into the fall . Please place all yard waste in brown paper bags and leave on the curb for Monday pick up. Please do not leave bags at your curb all week, place them out on Sunday for the Monday pickup.

Dumping of yard waste, including grass clippings, branches and sod, on common HOA property is strictly forbidden. If you have hired someone to perform lawn maintenance at your home, it is your responsibility as a homeowner to ensure that all lawn waste is disposed of properly.



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