



The Acorn

The Newsletter of the Springfield Oaks Homeowners Association

<http://www.springfieldoaks.org>

President's Corner

Getting Problems Addressed

by Dave Adkins

In a townhouse community such as Springfield Oaks, smaller problems can seem to be more annoying than they would be in a single family environment with large private lots. Issues such as placement of trash, upkeep of front yards, noise, pet cleanup and general maintenance of neighboring homes can quickly become irritants.

The Homeowners Association Board of Directors exists, in part, to address problems that may violate the covenants of the community as well as common standards of behavior. However, the Board also faces many other areas of responsibility and may not be the best forum to immediately turn to once an owner notices problems in the neighborhood. The Board recommends as a first step in addressing problems that you calmly approach your neighbor to discuss the issue. Many times our neighbors are unaware that others are noticing their behavior or that an issue even needs to be discussed. A brief and polite face-to-face mention of the issue in question can often quickly resolve most of the personal issues facing our community. However, residents often overlook such an approach as they seek to use the management agent or the Board as a first step in addressing personal issues. Yet, such an approach often takes longer to resolve the issue and may not achieve the efficient results that can come from a direct approach.

However, if such a method does not address the issue, the Board is willing to hear complaints from individuals on the conduct of other individuals in the neighborhood. The most effective way to raise such issues before the Board is to attend its regular monthly meetings.

The Board generally sets aside time during each meeting for input from residents. Your case will be strengthened if you bring documentation of the problem in question (photographs, record of when you approached the individual, response of the individual, etc), rather than merely relying on your memory of the problem in question.

If you are not able to appear before the Board, you may also contact our management agent or the Board, (contact information may be found at <http://www.springfieldoaks.org/dir.htm>). It is recommended that you send an e-mail detailing your concerns. The e-mails regarding our community are compiled by the agent and are given to the Board for review at each month's meeting. If you do not have access to e-mail, (free e-mail accounts are available though the public computers at every Fairfax County Public Library) please leave a voice-mail message for the management agent regarding your particular issue. However, the Board recommends that owners attempt to work out their particular issues as friendly neighbors before bringing the matter before the Board.

Finally, if you are interested in participating in the issues surrounding the neighborhood, the Board has standing committees dealing with such issues as Architectural Review, Budget, External Affairs, Streets & Parking, Landscaping & Grounds, Neighborhood Watch, Neighborhood Newsletter, and Social Events. You can find out contact information for committees at the website address above. The Board encourages owner participation in the community.

It's your neighborhood, take charge of it!

Take a Bite Outta Crime in Springfield Oaks

Of late, there has been an escalation in the number of reports of petty and misdemeanor crime in the neighborhood, including attempted breaking-and-entering, car tamperings, vandalism, theft, etc. This according to resident input and police reports since the first of the year.

Our community can "take a bite outta crime", as the old saying goes, by being more vigilant of the comings and goings in the neighborhood and reporting suspicious activities, loitering, unregistered vehicles, etc. to the Police at 703-691-2131. Don't hesitate to report activities along or on Alban Road and the shoulders of that road as well if something doesn't seem right. Together we can all improve the security of the community!

Remember that floodlights installed on your house require an Architectural Review Committee approval if you choose that method of deterrence and do be considerate to your neighbor when installing such lights. Other inexpensive and simple methods of deterrence are to lock your back gate, place bars/boards in the tracks of your sliding glass door and consider a motion detector attachment for your rear patio/deck.

If you'd like to make more of a difference, consider joining the Neighborhood Watch Committee of the community. Mike Gropman is the acting Neighborhood Watch coordinator and the various Neighborhood Watch groups meet at the West Springfield Police station on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. If anyone is interested in coming or have any suggestions for neighborhood watch or to combat crime in our neighborhood, you can contact Mike Gropman at 703-569-0799 or e-mail him at mgropman@cox.net

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Alban Rd property to be developed

Your homeowner's association External Affairs Committee has been negotiating and debating over the past six months with a local developer who is under contract to buy and develop 8511 Alban Road, the 3 acre property at the corner of our community near the Alban Road bridge. This property is currently proposed for eight new single family detached homes, to be built by the same developer who is building single family homes across Pohick Road from Western Oak Drive in our community.

The HOA Board is pleased with the results of these negotiations, which yielded a number of commitments and concessions that were favorable to the Springfield Oaks community, including additional screening and landscaping in Section 9 of the community at the end of the 8400 block of Springfield Oaks Drive and contributions to the total lot improvement plan planned by the HOA Board of Directors for 2006. The proposed development also features a widening of Alban Road, including turning lanes, along the frontage of the property, as well as an extension of the trail along Accotink Creek, north to Alban Road, then along Alban looping back to the trail along the Alban frontage of

the community.

The project was introduced to the community in September 2004, which triggered four meetings with the developer and two information sessions for interested residents in the community in October 2004 and this past February. The HOA Committee has attended and provided public comment to two County Planning & Zoning organizations as part of this review and negotiation process.

The Board of Supervisors for the County is scheduled to make a final decision on the rezoning, which is currently recommended for approval, on March 21st, 2005. If you have any interest in learning more about this rezoning, contact Armstrong Management at communications@armstrong.net to be placed in touch with the External Affairs Committee.

If you are interested in serving on or heading the External Affairs Committee, please contact Greg Budnik, the current Committee Chairman at: springfieldoaksboard@gjbinc.com

Spring Tip

Neighbors! Spring is right around the corner and NOW is the time to fertilize our yards - preferably a fertilizer with crabgrass control. Fertilizing just before a rain is ideal using a whirly-bird" contraption can be purchased at Walmart, Home Depot for less than \$10 - this contraption allows for even distribution of the fertilizer versus using your hands to throw fists full out causing large patches of burnt grass because of uneven distribution. After two to three weeks, your yard will be greener and ready for grass seed!

Happy Spring!

New High School to Open

By: Beverly Johnson

South County Secondary High School is scheduled to open September of 2005. The new school is located on Silverbrook Road in Lorton. Gary Chevalier, Director of Facilities Planning Services, directed the boundary changing meetings. These town meetings were held on October 12th, November 3rd, and November 15th of 2004 at Hayfield Secondary School. Parents and property owners from school attendance areas that may be affected by the new school were invited to participate in the process. Our community at Springfield Oaks is considered part of the Saratoga boundary area, since our children attend Saratoga Elementary School. As part of this process, we were under consideration for reassignment. It was proposed that the Saratoga Boundary area attend Hayfield Secondary School or return to Robert E. Lee High School. We were not considered for South County Secondary High School. It was determined, through this process that the Saratoga school attendance would remain the same. On January 27th, the School Board voted on the boundary changes and they were approved. If you would like more information on the boundary changes please visit the official website at <http://www.fcps.edu/fts/bndry.htm>. In addition, if you are interested in signing up to receive school information by e-mail please visit the Fairfax County website at <http://www.fcps.edu/ocr/tellafriend.htm>.

Board of Directors

Dave Adkins
Carlos Almodovar
Greg Budnik
Shawn Davison
Mike Gropman
Michael Martin
Ken McCreless

Committees

Please contact management for meeting schedule for meetings.

Committee	Name
Architectural Review	Diane McCreless
Budget	Coreen Harney
External Affairs	VACANT-- looking for a new chair!
Landscaping & Grounds	VACANT-- looking for a new chair!
Streets & Parking	Gary Gajewski
Neighborhood Watch	Mike Gropman (acting) looking for a new chair!
Newsletter	VACANT-- looking for a new chair!
Social	Coreen Harney

Officers of the Association

Dave Adkins	President
Ken McCreless	Vice President
Michael Martin	Treasurer
Coreen Harney	Secretary

Management Firm

E-mail communications@armstrong.net

Include the name of the community; i.e., Springfield Oaks, in the message

Armstrong Management Customer Service	3949 Pender Drive, Suite 205 Fairfax, VA 22030	Work 703-385-1133 Fax 703-591-5785
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Miscellaneous

Fairfax County Police non-emergency	703-691-2131
Dominion Towing	703-978-0092
AAA Rainbow Trash	703-818-8222
Trash pickup	Monday and Thursday and by appointment. Call to schedule a day for free large trash item pickup.
Recycling pickup	Friday