



Arcadia Park Homeowners Association

Newsletter

Summer 2009

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

As summer draws to a close, we trust that all residents had a terrific and safe time. It's hard to imagine the fall season is soon approaching! This year is flying by for the APHA Board as well, as we continue to make improvements to our neighborhood. We rolled out improvements to our landscaping including adding aluminum edging and flowers to some islands, staining the wood bridge between Arcadian and Blushing Court, and coordinating a traffic study with the City. A special thanks to Ryan Fogelberg for making these improvements happen this year.

We are fine tuning plans for our 2nd MSU/UM Block Tailgate Party (Oct 3rd and Annual Halloween Parade (Oct 31, of course). The Block Party was a huge hit last year. We plan to mirror the favorites of last year: bouncy house, games, face painting, catering by Lipumas Coney Island, and watching the big football game. A few weeks later we will hold the annual Halloween Parade with a fire truck, which needs no explanation. Please mark your calendars for the events and look for our subdivision signs.

As we discussed at our January Annual Meeting with residents, we are continuing to resolve issues with the pond. This year, we retained legal counsel and a wetland specialist to assist us in applying for a conservation easement modification. This modification, if approved by the MDEQ, would lift the restrictions on maintaining the large main pond and create a new conservation easement in the wooded common area along the north edge of Arcadia Park subdivision, north of the home located along Bedlington and Windsong Drives. If the easement modification is approved by the DEQ, we will be allowed to proceed with plans to dredge/excavate the ponds.

The board would like to take this opportunity to welcome the many new residents who moved into this subdivision the last few months. It is also a great sign that there have been significant number of home sales this spring/summer. We request you to drop us a line at info@arcadiapark.org with your contact information so we can have a chance to say hello. Also, do not hesitate to contact us for any information or suggestions.

Lastly, we want to mention something about being involved and volunteering time for your community. We are all very busy with our family, careers, and other activities. You would be surprised how easy it is to fit in just 15 minutes to do something that makes a lot of people happy in the neighborhood, including yourself. This is also a fantastic way to teach a valuable lesson to your child. Whether you volunteer some time on the Board, ACC, or the new Landscape/Pond Committee, pull a few weeds in your nearby island, or share information or

resources with APHA, you will be making a noticeable difference for all. We hope you will consider helping our neighborhood. We will have board elections in January and we welcome anyone to run for office; the current board is approaching our 4th year and we could certainly use some fresh blood.

FROM THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE (ACC)

Pamela Chesterfield and Ermanno Ruccolo have joined David Schlitter and Randy Ferrara on the ACC, while Jodie Paul moved to South Carolina (thanks Jodie, for all your hard work). Besides approving several homeowner changes, we have initiated a program to improve the look of our subdivision. While 37 homeowners received violation notices for weeds, 33 homeowners received letters of commendation for maintaining exceptional lots. We will soon begin to call homeowner's attention to other conditions on their lots which need to be addressed. **Please familiarize yourself with expectations for your yards** and help us upgrade the quality of our community. A well maintained subdivision will bring more enjoyment to everyone and will also preserve property values.

As a reminder, every homeowner/occupant is expected to maintain their lot free of weeds (lawns, beds, pavers and under decks) and to keep their sidewalk edged. The appearance of homes and decks should be maintained (watch for faded or peeling paint/stain). Get approval from the ACC for major landscaping projects or exterior changes (including changing paint color). Store trampolines for the winter and maintain basketball hoops (sand goes into the base of portable hoops, not stacked on top). Keep play equipment or structures off common areas and follow all of the *Declarations of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions* which are part of our membership in APHA. Documents are available online at <http://www.arcadiapark.org>. If you have questions or comments (or want to help out), email the ACC at info@arcadiapark.org, or use APHA's P.O. Box (address to ACC/APHA).

CURRENT ISSUES & PROJECTS

Pond Situation: The easement modification process is initiated with the MDEQ. This could take 6 to 12 months for review and approval by the MDEQ. In the mean time we are not allowed to add chemicals to the main pond to control algae. The positive news with this delay is that we continue to grow a surplus of funds to improve the ponds. Our "big picture" goal is to free up the restrictions on the main pond, excavate and deepen the ponds, and add new landscaping and park benches someday.

While the permitting and planning activities continue, we retained legal counsel to evaluate our situation. If you live adjacent to the ponds and have documentation that you paid a lot premium to live next to the pond, please

contact us. Also, if anyone has information regarding lot premiums associated with pond lots or other documentation that demonstrates Pulte's use of the ponds to sell homes please contact us.

Geese Control: Another initiative we commenced this year was geese control. We received numerous resident complaints about the geese attacking residents and geese excrement. The subdivision's safety and aesthetic conditions are among the responsibilities of the APHA. Therefore, we worked diligently with the City, MDEQ, and a licensed geese control specialist to legally relocate some geese this year. One homeowner, Jason Bond, also volunteered a lot

of time on this initiative. The goal was to prevent an unmanageable population of geese at our ponds. For those of you that received the mailbox flier from an unnamed source, we assure you that we've looked into all, if not more, of the listed options on the flier to handle geese and APHA did not "kill" geese like they claimed. We hope you understand that APHA spent hundreds of hours determining the best solution to continue to protect our residents and maintain the beauty of our neighborhood. If you would like more information or would like to volunteer some time for our Pond/Landscape Committee please email us.

Snow Removal Contract: As the winter approaches, you should know that the residents at the Annual Meeting requested and approved plans to terminate our private snow removal contract. Residents felt that the City plowing service was sufficient and just as reliable. Therefore, APHA will rely on the City this winter and evaluate the service for future years. We may have to retain a contractor to plow some sidewalks and other areas not plowed by the City for safety/access concerns. The ACC plans to work diligently with homeowners this winter to ensure sidewalks are shoveled within 48 hours of a snow event, per City ordinance. If necessary, APHA will retain the snow removal contractor, at the owner's expense, to plow sidewalks that are neglected. Please be considerate this winter for residents and students that need to use sidewalks.

ACC Activities: Our Architectural Control Committee (ACC) continues to work hard reviewing applications from residents and assisting the Board with lot inspections and resident notices. We realize it is not pleasant to receive a "notice letter" from the Board. We just ask that you understand it is our job to encourage residents to strive for excellence with their property to ensure that we are collectively maintaining the values of our homes. In addition to lot inspections, the ACC is seeing a rise in required applications to conduct various home/lot improvements. We anticipate an increase of maintenance and improvements as our homes begin to age. The ACC will also help coordinate mailbox

replacement/repairs and conduct lot inspections.

Lot Inspections: As previously mentioned, APHA conducted general lot inspections in our neighborhood to look for obvious violations of the Bylaws. APHA followed this up with approximately 40 letters to select owners to address significant issues within 30 days. If the violations are not resolved, APHA has the right to access property and correct the issues such as pull weeds or remove dead trees/debris, etc., and bill the homeowners (by directly invoicing) for the work required as stipulated in the Bylaws. The most common violations we noted were:

- Excessive/tall weeds and grass
- Dead trees/bushes
- Edging of sidewalks and planting beds
- Multiple satellite dishes
- Dying grass that needs fertilizer and watering
- Debris piles and stockpiled firewood
- Unfinished landscaping and paver projects
- Trampolines and playscapes on common areas/wetlands

Most owners take pride in their property and have well-maintained homes and landscaping. By upholding all neighbors to the same standards, we will ultimately maximize our home values and improve the overall appearance. We are continuing to enforce the Bylaws and necessary corrective action.

Mailbox Repair: We continue to provide assistance to homeowners with damaged or degraded mailboxes. Another batch of mailboxes will be ordered soon for the subdivision. If your mailbox needs replacement/repair, please email the website to request contractor/cost information.

Annual Dues: We are still trying to collect annual dues from a few homeowners. Interest fees have been added to their payment. If you have not yet paid your January 2009 dues please do so immediately to avoid increasing penalties.

Subdivision Safety: We continue to see safety issues in our subdivision related to speeding cars and unleashed dogs. If you walk your dog, please be considerate of neighbors and other dogs and keep your pet leashed and remember to clean up after them. Regarding speeding cars, APHA is working with the City to design and cost two new speed bumps on Bedlington Drive.

Long Term Planning for Mailboxes and Entrance Lights: APHA has been working on long term plans for replacing the existing mailboxes and for adding street lights at the two John R entrances. Both of these activities will take considerate time and money. As such, we plan to present our ideas at upcoming meetings.

Social Events Recap: We had three main social events in the past few months. In April, we had our annual Easter Egg Hunt, with a

much more favorable weather compared to past years. On May 9, we had the Spring Clean Up. And on May 28-30, we had our second subdivision Garage Sale. This year, we had additional advertising in Detroit Free Press and Detroit News, with the anticipation of a larger turnout of non-residents.

Halloween Parade: We will continue our annual tradition of Halloween Parade on October 31st. The parade will begin on Enchantment Drive at the main pond. Please look for additional information on signs posted at sub entrances.

Football Block Party: APHA plans to block off a street, possibly Windsong Drive again, for our second subdivision tailgate block party scheduled for Oct 3rd. APHA will provide music, games, food, beverages, and a big screen TV. We are looking for volunteers to help set up or donate resources for this event. Please email us.

APHA Board

- President – Jeff Lanier
- Vice Presidents – Ryan Fogelberg and Ken Krajewski
- Treasurer – Stefanie George
- Secretary – Manish Vaishya

Summer 2009 Edition. Editorial suggestions or comments: manishvaishya@hotmail.com

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