



Homes Association of Cedar Hills



Dedicated to preserving the livability of our neighborhood since 1946

Spring 2019
www.cedarhillshoa.org

office@cedarhillshoa.org
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P r e s i d e n t ' s M e s s a g e

A Homes Association is an interesting exercise in democracy. It assumes that the neighborhood members are more willing to work with their peers than some other governmental agency. We embody our neighborhood expectations of conduct in the Association and then elect a few of our neighbors to "make it happen".

We are entering a time of renewed interest in how we run our neighborhood and how to achieve what we expect. It reflects the politics of the time we live in that misstatements and suppositions get most of the attention.

Our Association was formed to enforce the CC&R's as they were when you bought your house. Little changes happen every year, and we all get to say whether we agree or not (your vote counts!). It then falls to the Association to be the standard to which we hold our neighbors. Most adults do not like being told what to do, even if it is to hold them to the agreed upon standard. There are currently a number of neighbors, flush with community spirit, stepping up to make changes in a system they may not fully understand. For example, calling for change in the corporate voting procedure without having researched how the process currently works (other than a few comments on social media.)

The Homes Association of Cedar Hills has worked very hard for the last 73 years to do everything the Law requires and to represent its members' wishes as laid out in the CC&R's. The finances are reviewed yearly by a certified CPA firm and the Association is advised by legal counsel. Great care has been taken to uphold the interests and liabilities of the members. Of great concern to everyone is an active lawsuit currently on appeal. All Board members have agreed to proceed with this appeal and have resisted calls to drop this case, because the Board believes its position is correct, the issue involved is important to the Association, and the Association has a good chance to win its appeal and recover attorney fees it has incurred.

When there is disagreement or push back it falls to the seven elected directors to endeavor to treat everyone fairly. When a member seeks special treatment such request is considered only in terms of whether it would be fair to all members. This is the role you elect directors to fill. This is an important election and I encourage you to vote thoughtfully.

Mark

P o l i c i e s

The Board of Directors regularly reviews and discusses policy ideas to help define our community standards within the framework of our CC&Rs. The following policies were recently approved by the Board:

Accessory Buildings (Sheds) – after receiving updated information from Washington County, the Board has removed the new "Medium Large" category of 120 square feet, allowing that size the same setback requirements as the "Medium" category.

See the Association website, or call the office, for full details.

Spring Cleanup May 11, 2019



Spring Cleanup Day is May 11, 2019. You will find your notice enclosed. Please bring it with you for identification purposes. **There have been a lot of changes with cleanup in the last couple of years, besides not accepting hazardous wastes, propane bottles paints, batteries, solvents, pesticides, thinners, rail road ties, and rubber tires, we do not accept any electronics, TVs, monitors, computers, small engines, florescent tubes or appliances.**

As usual, the Scouts will be helping. Their information is located on the back of our notice. Even though yard debris recycling is available every other week through our garbage service, this is an excellent way to get rid of excessive yard debris and other unwanted items. Remember, cleanup is not limited only to "yard debris" so be sure and check your garage and back yard for unwanted items. This is an excellent opportunity to remove the old fencing from your fence project or deck replacement.

We are requiring that **ALL** yard debris be bundled in short efficient units (3ft or less) so it can be easily and quickly unloaded into a drop box. All unbundled yard /tree debris will be turned away and the member asked to come back with a bundled load. We will have a shredder truck 10am-2pm for your sensitive documents. After reviewing the clean up notice, if you have questions, please feel free to contact the office at 503-292-1259 or email us: office@cedarhillshoa.org

What's the Difference Between a Proxy and a Ballot?

While both a proxy and a ballot are used for essentially the same purpose, in a corporate election (the Association is a not-for-profit corporation) the timing of that use is different:

Proxy – this is what you turn in (by mail or otherwise delivered to the office) *before* the annual meeting. The President or Secretary becomes your "proxy" to vote your preferences for candidates and resolutions, so you don't have to *attend* to make your choice known. It *also* helps provide the Board with a required quorum (25% of the membership) "headcount", so the meeting can proceed. Proxy votes can be pre-counted, making the annual meeting vote-counting much more efficient.

Ballot – this is what we use to vote our preferences *during* the annual meeting. If we only had ballots, we'd need to have a meeting room large enough for every voter to attend, hoping everyone could schedule the time to attend. Counting hundreds (thousand?) of ballots would add considerable time to the meeting length.

Your presence or proxy is important in order to conduct Association business. Members who contribute this way get a small credit on their assessment. We don't care how you vote (even all blanks counts!), only that you provide your "presence" at the meeting.

But your actual vote is also important. Resolutions have failed for want of a *single* vote. Candidates have lost by just a hand-full of votes. We encourage you to exercise your right and responsibility to express your opinion when given that opportunity.

In some years, the proxy has included a check-box for you to let the Board vote its preferences in your name if you leave the form otherwise blank. This year, the Board has decided not to have that option. We want *your* opinion on your proxy – if you leave it blank, no vote will be cast. It's OK to leave it blank, but we want you to understand what the result will be.

W h y C o m m e r c i a l V e h i c l e s - A g a i n ?



Over the years, commercial vehicles consistently have created the most controversy as an issue, other than perhaps chickens. Surveys of the membership showed interest in allowing some commercial vehicles, but that previous resolutions did not have clear enough limits defined. Despite being divided in opinion on the question itself, the Board presents the current proposal to define some limits for the membership to consider as acceptable or not.

W h a t ' s a S p r i n t e r ?

The second proposal is directed at the issue of the "Sprinter" class of large vans. Some of these vans can be used for passenger purposes (e.g. for large families), although the vehicle was originally designed for commercial use and is therefore currently prohibited. Requiring separate votes on these two issues allows us as a community to choose how far we want to go – or to not go. Please read the descriptions of the resolutions and vote.

W h y T w o R e s o l u t i o n s ?

These are two independent ideas that have the potential to interact. If Resolution 1 *passes*, commercial vehicles smaller than "large vans" would be permissible. If Resolution 1 *fails* and Resolution 2 *passes*, large vans could be permitted *without* any commercial markings, for passenger use (e.g. with multiple rows of windows and seats). If *both* resolutions pass, large vans *could* be permitted *with* commercial markings and their taller height, and the height of pickups (commercial or otherwise) would remain at 85 inches (the current limit).

W h y D o n ' t W e H a v e S e c r e t B a l l o t s ?

The Association is a not-for-profit corporation and a corporate election is different than a public election. Each member has the number of votes equal to the number of Dwelling Houses owned. You sign your proxy/ballot to indicate your ownership of the right to vote. Your ownership is verified and vote tallied.

F a l l C l e a n u p R e s u l t s

Whether you take advantage of it or not, the Association's two cleanup days each year are a major benefit to members. This past fall, we logged over 300 trips to the school parking lot (some folks come through the line multiple times, which is fine). Together with the Boy Scout pickup service, this resulted in:

- Over 43 tons of garbage (drop box plus front load truck)
- 12.5 tons of yard debris
- 5 tons of concrete
- no paper shredding service was provided (bring it with you this Spring!)



What is on This Year's Survey?



Each year along with the annual meeting and election, the Association surveys the membership on various topics to gauge interest in possible things to work on in the upcoming year. This year we are asking about the website and sidewalks. Please fill out the survey and let us know what you think. (The survey is a separate yellow piece of paper included in this mailing.)

For the website, we are interested in how often homeowners use the current website and what areas of the website are visited. We would also like to know what pieces of information are not currently on the website, but are desired by homeowners.

We have heard requests to put the board meeting minutes up on the website. Because the minutes contain information private to members of the Association (such as the names and addresses of people attending the meetings), a secured section of the website would be needed to prevent access by the general public. Creation of a secure login for the website would incur additional costs to the Association, both in terms of changes to the website itself and the maintenance of logins (homeowner verification, password resets, etc.) The survey asks how much, if any, you would be willing to increase your annual assessment to add a secured area to the website so that meeting minutes and potentially other association-private information could be published online.

Sidewalk maintenance is the responsibility of individual homeowners. When a sidewalk needs to be replaced, it can be a complicated and expensive process. The board is considering creating a reserve fund for sidewalks similar to the reserve fund we already have for streetlight maintenance. If you have a streetlight, your annual dues are slightly higher than homes that do not - these funds go into the reserve that covers the cost of streetlight maintenance. The Association would like to know if there is interest in a similar program for sidewalks.

The survey first asks if you are interested at all in the concept of the association maintaining a reserve fund for sidewalks. The fund would be built over time by slightly increasing the annual assessment (only for people that already have sidewalks.) There are currently two options for how the sidewalk reserve could be used by homeowners – the survey asks about each:

- When your sidewalk needs repair, you could borrow from the reserve with a low interest loan. The loan would be secured by a lien on your property. You would have to find the contractor, manage the project, and pay back the loan. There are potential legal issues which need to be resolved before this proposal could be implemented.
- When your sidewalk needs repair, you would just call the office and the Association would manage and pay for the repair out of the reserve fund. This option would be more expensive and has unresolved (legal) details, but much easier for homeowners.

Finally, the survey asks for your "Hot Button" issue – the thing that is most important to you or that you would like the Association to consider over the next year.

Please fill out the survey and return it with your voting proxy, bring it to the annual meeting, or drop it by the office.



L a n d s c a p i n g N o t e s

The weather's changed and it's growing season: there's more sun during longer days with warmer rain (sometimes lots of it). That makes for branches that might need pruning away from sidewalks (or a front door), grass growing between eye-blinks and weeds doing their best to establish an empire in your yard.

- Dandelions – if you dig a few out each time you mow your lawn, they'll eventually disappear (OK, they'll never completely disappear, but at least your neighbors won't think they're about to be overrun by a fuzzy army of cotton-balls).
- Little Bittercress (those weeds with the "popping" seeds that go everywhere) - pulls out fairly easily this time of year, and if you get them *before* they pop, you won't have nearly so many next year (one plant can generate as many as 5000 seeds, just waiting for next year!)

Happy gardening!

M o r e R a t s ?

Although the winter months may have reduced the prevalence of rats in the neighborhood, they haven't gone away. You can do a lot to prevent them from becoming an issue at your home (or your neighbor's home):

Don't leave food out for your pets - rats will find it (so will the squirrels and raccoons...)

If you store birdseed for your feeders, make sure it's not where the rats can get to it, and inspect *under* your birdfeeders – if the birds are leaving a mess, the rats may try to clean it up (and make their own kind of mess)

If you compost kitchen scraps, please check to make sure you don't have "visitors" – you might need a different kind of composter, or some extra screening to keep the critters out

Check your shed or other covered areas for signs of rats in residence – they eat (or try to eat) just about anything

Set traps if you find traces (you'll know it when you see it) – hardware stores carry many types of trap – rats seem to really like peanuts (you can use peanut butter for mice)

If you actually see a rat, realize there are likely *several* more that you don't see.





H.A.C.H.

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Fourth of July Parade May Cancel

This year's Fourth of July Parade is in serious jeopardy of being CANCELLED due to lack of volunteers and a source of funding. Carolyn Moore and her husband, Ken Dyar, have been the primary source of funding, labor, and planning. Unless our community steps up to help, the parade will be cancelled this year. Please call Carolyn Moore 503-805-5927 before the 21st of May.

Thank you so much for your support.

Annual Neighborhood Garage Sale July 13

Got too much stuff...Let's join in for Annual Neighborhood Garage Sale **July 13, 2019**. We will advertise, all you have to do is participate, set your own hours, place your signs if desired. Contact the office by phone 503-292-1259 or email: office@cedarhillshoa.org no later than July 11, 2019 if you want to participate.

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