
Langley Oaks Newsletter

Spring 2006



Langley Oaks Homeowners Association

P. O. Box 681, McLean, Va 22101

SPRING CELEBRATION: The chairperson of the community events committee is looking for neighbors who would like to help plan and execute our neighborhood Spring Event. All input is welcome. Please contact Suzanne Seigel

FERTILIZING TIME: Springtime means that an army of lawn services and homeowners invade the Oaks with chemicals and pesticides which, ultimately, make for attractive and healthy looking lawns. However, our proximity to the Potomac River means that whatever chemicals we put on our lawns make their way to the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay very quickly. There are numerous steps that homeowners can take to reduce pollution while still having attractive lawns and gardens. There are many sources for information in this regard, including an informative website operated by the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, at www.potomacriver.org. Ultimately the decisions of how to maintain lawns are made by the homeowners, but well-informed homeowners can make well-informed decisions.

CAN EMERGENCY VEHICLES FIND YOU?: If you dial 9-1-1 in a life-threatening situation where police, fire, or ambulance service is needed, will the responding unit(s) be able to readily identify your residence? For your own protection, your house number should be plainly visible on your mailbox and on your house - usually in the vicinity of the front door. It has been noted that there are some LO houses where one or even both sets of numbers are missing. Take a moment to look at your house from the street - particularly after sunset - to determine if you can easily see your numbers. If you can't, the 911ers can't! Also, it is **IMPERATIVE** that trees and shrubbery be trimmed all the way back on the 11 common driveways in the Oaks so that emergency personnel can **SEE** and **ACCESS** the houses on the common driveways. Also, there is **NO PARKING** on the common driveways.

LOHA DIRECTORY: The board will be publishing an updated resident directory this spring. Your name, address, and phone number will be published in the directory UNLESS YOU OPT OUT. Included in this newsletter is a "2006 Directory" form. In order to ensure accuracy, or to ensure that you have clearly "opted out", please complete this form (neatly, please) and mail it to LOHA DIRECTORY, P.O. Box 681, McLean, VA 22101.

CLEMEJONTRY PARK: Residents with small children have undoubtedly been watching with interest as Clemejontry Park is being built alongside Georgetown Pike near Langley Forks Park. Though it was originally intended to be opened in 2005, numerous delays have been encountered. For example, the Department of Public Works required a much larger storm water retention pond than had been anticipated for this 18-acre park. The pond may now be a safety hazard, particularly for the intended park users. The pond is so big it now is attracting geese which have become a nuisance issue. Geese are apparently known to produce enormous quantities of messy manure. Appropriate authorities are now discussing and resolving the issues. Trees and shrubbery for screening are an issue, particularly along the Georgetown Pike side of the Park. Park dedication is currently expected in June of 2006.

"THE WALL": Most Langley Oaks homeowners have noticed the cinder block wall that a (non LO) homeowner built in front of their house on Georgetown Pike, opposite Langley High School. The Fairfax County BZA (Board of Zoning Appeals) has already ruled that the wall is in violation of county ordinances, and ruled that the wall must be significantly reduced in height. The homeowner has appealed the ruling to the court system, and it appears that a lengthy litigation process has begun. It will likely be some time before the wall comes down.

SELLING YOUR HOME? If so, you have an obligation to provide the buyer a "Property Owners' Association Disclosure Packet." The responsibility is the seller's. State law allows a buyer to get out of the contract in some cases based on the packet, so it's important to set the process in motion as soon as you have a signed contract.

The seller, or their real estate agent, must request a Packet in writing,

accompanied by a check for \$100 (payable to LOHA). It should be mailed to LOHA, P.O. Box 681, McLean, VA 22101. As soon as the packet is ready, the LOHA Treasurer will notify the requester to coordinate pick-up. While selling a home is stressful and often filled with urgency, please do not expect overnight turnaround; in fact, state law allows 10 working days. The contact point for packets is the LOHA Treasurer, John Bender.

CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR DOG; IT'S MORE THAN JUST COMMON DECENCY, IT'S THE LAW: This article is becoming a fixture in the newsletter, since there are some dog owners in the Oaks who just don't seem to care. All dog walkers are required to pick up after their animals - it is the law (aka the pooper-scooper law)! Your neighbors would really appreciate dog walkers showing some *common courtesy and responsibility* in this area. We are a small yet concentrated neighborhood with many pets and many small children. Leaving dog waste for children to step in, fall on, or play with, is not only rude, but also illegal.

TRASH TREATMENT: The board has received numerous complaints about trash cans being left in visible areas, and/or trash left in visible areas of the yard. Please be courteous and make sure that your trash cans are hidden from view (from the front and, if you are on a corner or common driveway, from the side of your house visible from the side street or common driveway), and that your yard is clean. If you put your trash out the night before pickup day, please be sure to use proper trash containers. Please do not set trash outside, especially the night before in the flimsy plastic bags provided by the supermarkets. There have been several incidents in the 900 block of Ridge Drive and elsewhere where these bags were literally shredded by the crows causing an unsightly and unhealthy morning mess.

BARKING DOGS: This is another perennial article; some dogs are left unattended and barking in yards for hours on end. If neighbors are bothered by this noise, the owners may be violating a County Noise Ordinance. This ordinance contains a number of complex, technical provisions and restrictions. It states that habitual barking or howling dogs which are audible across property boundaries are considered in violation of the noise ordinance. Homeowners with complaints should call the FC Zoning Administrator at 246-1300 between 8am and 4:30pm weekdays. For after-hours emergencies, the FC Police may be called at 703-691-2131. As a courtesy, of course, we

suggest you call the owners of the animal first.

LOOKING FOR DEPENDENTS TO DELIVER LOHA

PUBLICATIONS: From time to time, the Board needs reliable dependents to deliver items like the Newsletter, Directory, one-time notices about changing traffic patterns, dog bites, rabid raccoons and so forth. If you are middle-school age or older and would like to earn \$50 for a couple of hours work, please write: LOHA Delivery, PO Box 681, McLean, VA 22101.

MAKING CHANGES: All property in the Oaks is subject to LOHA's Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions. This document requires that property owners obtain *written approval* from the Architectural Control Committee before constructing or altering any structure or cutting any hardwood trees. Using the form inside the cover of this Newsletter will ensure your request contains all the information needed by the ACC to consider your project. It is strongly recommended that you have the form signed by your immediate neighbors, which can expedite the review process. Mail the form to: LOHA Architectural Control Committee, P.O. Box 681, McLean, VA 22101-0681.

DRIVEWAY PAVING: Asphalt being what it is, our driveways need periodic sealing and/or repaving. One of the significant expenses that contractors incur in small sealing or paving projects is known as "deployment," which is the seemingly simple act of getting a crew, sealing/paving equipment, and sealing/paving materials to the job site. In the past, L.O. homeowners have been able to reduce costs by having several driveways in the neighborhood sealed or paved at the same time by the same crew and with the same equipment. If you are interested in saving some money on a sealing/paving project this spring by combining with other homeowners, please contact Sherry Gill :

STREET PAVING: Several years ago the streets in Langley Oaks were resurfaced by a process called "slurry paving," which is essentially an extra thick sealer coat. As any resident can tell you, the slurry coat immediately began deteriorating. The Board has made our dissatisfaction known to VDOT, who maintains the streets. We have informally been told that the streets in Langley Oaks may get a "complete" repaving beginning in late 2006. In past years, resurfacing occurred first on Ridge Drive, followed by the other streets

the following year. If this occurs there will be some frustration with noise, dust, and partial street closures for a few days, but the results will hopefully be worth the trouble.

ASSESSMENT COLLECTION PROCEDURES: Your Association collects a modest dues assessment annually for each lot. The procedure to accomplish this task is summarized below for the information of all members.

The Association Board sets the assessment amount at its December meeting. The January mailing that provides notice of the Annual Meeting also informs all residents and absentee owners of the dues amount and provides a return envelope. Dues are payable by the end of February.

While almost everyone pays in good time, each year some 20 to 30 members need a reminder, which is sent shortly after March 1st. For those whose payments are still not received by April 1st, another reminder is sent. On or before June 1st, any accounts still delinquent are turned over to legal counsel for collection.

While the dues are minimal, it is only fair that everyone pays their fair share. On occasion, the Association has had to place liens on houses, garnish bank accounts or send the County Sheriff to seize a delinquent's vehicle.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING: The Annual General Membership meeting was held in Room 200 at Langley High School on February 7, 2006. As is the Board's custom, the draft meeting minutes are set out below. These minutes will not become final until approved by a majority vote of the attendees at the next annual meeting in February of 2007.

DRAFT

LANGLEY OAKS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

7 FEBRUARY 2006

I Call to Order

The duly noticed 2006 Annual General Membership Meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm by President Fran Miller in Room 200 of Langley High School. Thirty-three members representing thirty-three lots were present in person and members representing one hundred and three more lots were present by proxy. Light refreshments were served.

II Secretary's Report

John Speicher distributed draft minutes from the 2005 General Membership Meeting. Upon motion made and seconded, they were unanimously approved with no corrections.

III Treasurer's Report

John Bender presented the 2005 Financial Statement and answered several questions. Upon motion made and seconded, the statement was approved without change.

IV Committee Reports (For the record, all committee reports were voted on and approved by the attendees.)

Architectural Control - Chairperson Tom Moore reported the Committee received forty-eight written requests for information or action. These involved house, deck, or pool additions or changes, tree removal, roofing material changes, construction of tree houses and installation of an external antenna (not house-mounted). He stated that approval of projects was more rapid, often the same day, when the applicant showed consultation with neighbors before the form was submitted. When evidence of consultation was not provided, approval was delayed while the committee contacted the neighbors and allowed them time to comment. In addition, numerous telephone calls were received concerning ACC matters to include unsightly yard debris and contractor sign removal.

Mr. Moore reported that one homeowner applied to Fairfax County for an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) permit for her Anna Maria Court residence. If approved, this ADU permit would have allowed her to live in her house while simultaneously renting the remainder of the house to up to six tenants for a period of five years. After numerous LOHA neighbors and Board members wrote and spoke in person in opposition to her request, the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) denied the ADU by unanimous vote. The applicant could reapply for a permit one year from the date of this action ~ ie in Jul 06.

Mr. Moore reported that LOHA did not go on record as opposing ADU permits in general. Instead, the opposition was specific to this one homeowner who had repeatedly disregarded the architectural control committee, local ordinances, and laws. He stated that her actions over the past five years had consumed more committee time than all other ACC matters combined. In closing, Mr. Moore noted that the number of change requests from this individual had diminished and the committee feels the renovation project may be nearing completion.

Audit – Chairperson Fran Miller said she had not convened a committee meeting during 2005. However, she noted the Association’s financial documents were reviewed by a CPA firm during the summer. Again, there were no issues requiring attention.

Community Activities – Chairperson Suzanne Seigel said there were three neighborhood-wide events held during 2005. The Spring Fling and the Halloween Parade were well attended, but the July 4th Parade was not. She reported the committee is always seeking additional volunteers with new ideas in an effort to encourage a sense of community within Langley Oaks. She said interested homeowners should contact her.

County and State Liaison – Chairperson Andrew Hirsch reported the Residential Permit Parking District had been extended further north along Ridge Drive to Briar Hill Court . After one homeowner stated the pavement on Ridge Drive was de-laminating, a Board member related a conversation he had with a VDOT survey employee several months ago when he was told that Ridge Drive may be resurfaced sometime during 2006.

Maintenance – Chairperson Gene Bondy was not present, but Fran Miller reported on the various actions of Dr. Bondy over the previous year to include coordinating snow removal, plantings and maintenance of the front entrance, and working with homeowners in removing sick or dying trees from LOHA common land. Additionally, she reported that Dr. Bondy, on behalf of the Board, had investigated possibilities for improving the front entrance. Some ideas included new stone work and signs to replace the existing brick work and signs, new lighting and significant tree and shrub replacement. A discussion ensued regarding whether any work was necessary, how extensive the project might be, and how it might be financed.

MCA Liaison – LOHA Representative Tom Moore said the MCA was, at 80, one of the oldest such organizations in Virginia and provided opportunity for citizen

input on the myriad of projects being considered by our elected representatives. Most work is done at the committee level and he invited any interested homeowners to join. He said the owner of 6530 Georgetown Pike had been ordered by the BZA to remove the ten-foot-tall cement block wall he had erected across the front of his property.

Newsletter – Editor Doug Goldhush reported that spring and fall Newsletters were published in 2005 and that two Newsletters were also planned for 2006. The purpose was to make all homeowners aware of what is going on in the Oaks. Anyone with topics or suggestions for articles should contact him. He added that LOHA is always seeking middle-school-age and older dependents to deliver the Newsletter and other Association items for pay.

Safety and Speed – Chairperson Bob Carney was not present, but Fran Miller reported that a volume and speed study had been made by the County. Results had not yet been received by the Board. Upon receipt, the Board will consider asking the County to designate the Oaks as a special district which would increase the speeding fine to \$200.

Welcome – Chairperson Suzanne Seigel reported that she had distributed a dozen Welcome Packets to new owners and renters during 2005. She asked those present to contact her whenever they were aware a new family had moved into the neighborhood.

V Old Business

The National Park Service continues to work on its plan to extend an eight-foot-wide multi-purpose trail from Rosslyn to the American Legion Bridge. It is quite possible this trail would pass through existing parkland between Langley Oaks and the George Washington Memorial Parkway, which is located several hundred yards to our north. The Board has gone on written record to the Fairfax County Trails Planner that the Association is opposed to locating any public access points to the trail within the Oaks.

VI New Business

President Miller reported that Officer Pat Lucas, the Neighborhood Watch liaison for the McLean District Police Station, had provided reports showing the crimes reported in Langley Oaks. She stated he hoped someone from the Oaks would agree to be the Neighborhood Watch Coordinator. Officer Lucas had said it was not necessary to have daily patrols by community members. Andrew Hirsch agreed to contact Officer Lucas.

The Board plans to publish its tri-annual Directory in May 2006. Secretary Speicher will coordinate this effort. His annual January mailing included, and the spring Newsletter will also include, a Directory Information form. It is the intention of the Board to include as many LO residents (owners and renters) as possible.

Treasurer John Bender presented the proposed 2006 Budget. Upon motion made and seconded, the budget was unanimously approved.

Chairperson Andrew Hirsch reported the Nominating Committee proposed Keith Fischler, Doug Goldhush and Virginia (Gigi) Jarvis as the 2009 slate. Bio-data was included in the Secretary's annual January mailing so residents would know something about each candidate. Each was also present in person at the meeting. President Miller called for a vote and the slate was unanimously elected to three-year terms (2006-2009).

VII Proposed Meetings and Adjournment

President Miller reported quarterly Board meetings for 2006 are scheduled for 7:30 pm on Tue 7 Mar, Tue 13 Jun, Tue 6 Sep, and Tue 5 Dec. They are always held in a Board member's home. All LO property owners are welcome to attend any and all meetings, but should call a Board member as the date approaches for the exact location. The 2007 Annual General Membership Meeting is scheduled for Tue 6 Feb in Langley HS.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:10 pm.

By JCSpeicher

END OF DRAFT MINUTES

2006 BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:

The LOHA Board Officers and committee assignments for 2006 are:

President – Andrew Hirsch

Vice President – Douglas H. Goldhush

Secretary – John Speicher

Treasurer – John Bender

ACC Chairperson- Suzanne Seigel

Member and Alternate Chair - Douglas H. Goldhush

Members Andrew Hirsch, Doug Goldhush, and Tom Moore
(alternate), and Doug Goldhush

Audit Committee – Keith Fischler

Community Activities – Suzanne Seigel

County and State Liaison – Gene Bondy

Maintenance – Virginia “Gigi” Jarvis

MCA Liaison – Tom Moore

Newsletter – Doug Goldhush

Neighborhood Safety – Andrew Hirsch

Welcome – Suzanne Seigel

WELCOME TO LANGLEY OAKS: If you know a new family, or if you are a new family, please contact Board Member and Welcome Chairperson, Suzanne Seigel so she can provide a proper welcome to the neighborhood. She also delivers some welcome materials to include the latest Directory, recent Newsletters, Association documents, bumper ID stickers and the like. This information is also added to the directory either directly or via updates published in this newsletter.