



February 2016

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Board of Directors

President ~ Willis McCloud
 Vice President ~ Earl Burton
 Treasurer ~ Patrina Kandul
 Secretary ~ Charlotte Jordan
 At Large ~ (vacant)

Somerset News

President's Corner

By Willis McCloud



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As I am writing this letter, I am taking a well-earned rest from a few hours of shoveling as a result of the almost record-setting snows of the last few days. It was great fun for the kids and adults lucky enough to get to play in it. However, for most of us, our play consisted of guessing whether we could finish before the football game started on Saturday. I'm betting most guys and probably quite a few ladies made it back inside in time to see the Denver Broncos beat the New England Patriots – whether the job was finished or not! As usual, the storm brought out the best in our folks. Several neighbors came out to help each other. Kudos to Mike Irvin, Greg and Dayle Hodgson, Corey King, Curt Wallace and many others who came out to help their neighbors clear their drive ways, parking spaces or other areas. Helping out is also a great way to meet that person you've been meaning to say hello to but just never got around to it. Thanks also to George Smith of Smith Roofing and his team who did an absolutely awesome job plowing the roads and clearing the sidewalks. I even saw their guys lend a hand clearing

spaces they were not obligated to help out with when residents asked them for a little assistance. All in all the community came out of the storm in pretty good shape. No major damage and we didn't lose power to my knowledge, so we can all say we survived Snowzilla

If you haven't developed a plan to shelter in place by buying a self-powered radio in case of power outages, food, lighting sources, etc., then please use this as an opportunity to get those items before the next event. A little preparation can go a long way. If nothing else it may save you a trip to battle the crowds at the supermarket, Home Depot or Lowes to grab those last minute items – unless you like the excitement of visiting those stores with several hundred of your best friends all at the same time. Also, don't forget to place some emergency items in your vehicle as well. Most stores sell all-in-one kits that contain the tools, flashlights, tape, etc. that can be very useful in the event of a break down. Taking a few simple steps can ensure you are prepared for emergencies both at home and on the road.

Another way neighbors can help neighbors is by remembering to properly dispose of your trash. Good neighbors never put out their trash too early, especially putting trash on the curb on Friday before heading out of town for the

weekend. Leaving garbage cans sitting on the sidewalk for several days isn't fair to those left behind to see, and smell, someone else's trash. Good neighbors also never place their trash out in bags or leave their can on the sidewalk or in front of their home well after the pickup has been completed. Lastly, good neighbors never put out large items like furniture or large appliances without coordinating with American Disposal. You can contact them at (866) 884-8700 or at <https://www.americandisposal.com> if you have questions about what can or can't be thrown away in regular trash. They have a great website with a frequently asked question section that can probably give you the information you are looking for without having to speak to a representative. Just because large items or hazardous materials are removed doesn't mean American Disposal picked them up. In some cases your Association ends up arranging for disposal to avoid having items sit for weeks in hopes the responsible party will remove them. Removal does cost the Association (i.e. you and me) money each time this occurs. So please take a moment to call American

Disposal before you place that sofa or used can of paint out on the curb. With the New Year we will soon begin reviewing our 5-year strategic plan to ensure we are on track. Fortunately, many of the large projects (roofs, siding, fences and sheds) completed over the last few years has left us in a very good position going forward. We can now shift from repairing or replacing big ticket items to upgrading some of our facilities, like our security lighting, that may result in energy (dollar) savings to the community over the long term. As you may know, we are also looking at energy savings that could result from improving the thermal protection in the attics. Thanks to several of you who completed an energy audit last year, we now know where we are experiencing the majority of our heat loss. We also know potential solutions. However, due to the potential implementation costs of these solutions, we are considering testing the effectiveness of this strategy before applying it to the entire community. We may approve applying the solution to a single home then determining if any reduction in energy costs or

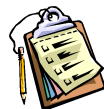
increases in comfort have occurred. We will provide an update on this and other projects planned for 2016 as soon as the board and the Architectural and Landscape Committee (ALC) discuss each planned activity.

Lastly, thanks to everyone for continuing to keep the number of delinquencies relatively low. Lower delinquencies greatly assisted us in receiving an approved Federal Housing Association (FHA) recertification for 2016-2017. Failure to achieve this recertification would have significantly impacted the ability of prospective buyers to obtain FHA loans to purchase homes in Somerset, thus reducing the number of people who can buy our homes if we put them up for sale. For those who are already delinquent or are concerned they soon will be, please contact our community manager, Stacy Panuzio, at 703-707-6404 or email her at spanuzio@capitolcorp.com if you have questions.

In closing, please let us know how we are doing as a board. Your input is valued and appreciated.

All the best! ☀

Board Minutes



By Greg Hodgson

Did you know that as a Somerset unit owner, you can read our association's Board meeting minutes on our website? While the meeting minutes are not intended to record every discussion and debate word-for-word, they do include all actions voted on by the Board. In addition to reading the quarterly newsletter, it's a good way to stay informed about what's going on in our association!

Accessing the minutes is easy: Just sign in to your Somerset account at www.somersetatwestridge.org and go to Resources>Board Minutes. If you have any questions, please contact Stacy Panuzio at spanuzio@capitolcorp.com or 703-707-6404.

Somerset at Westridge
2015 Architectural Landscape Committee (ALC) Report for Annual Meeting (updated)

ALC Members:

Mike Irvin, Chairperson
Greg Hodgson, Member

2015 Strategic Plan

- Plant eight (8) Zelkova trees along Quarterhorse Lane: Installation was completed in April/May. The existing irrigation system along Quarterhorse was extended to provide proper irrigation for the trees, versus paying for watering services. In the end the costs would have been roughly the same for both.
- Extend pavers and install trash can at bus stop: With the exception of the installation of the trash can (which is on back-order), this project has been completed. The trash can will be installed once received by our contractor.
- Plant screening trees on the hill behind building 10: Due to the cost of the Quarterhorse tree project, the decision was made to move this project to 2016.

General Comments and Information

The association is completing the first year with our new landscape contractor, Environmental Enhancements (EE). After a somewhat rocky beginning (substandard mowing/weeding/edging, absence of monthly reports, and absence of requested quotes), EE made the necessary personnel adjustments to get on track. Since June, EE's performance has been satisfactory. The ALC recommends retaining their services for 2016.

The ALC conducted property walks on April 12, May 5, September 5 and November 8. The duration of each walk was 2-3 hours. While the focus of each walk was primarily for landscaping issues, other concerns were also noted. All issues and concerns were documented on a spreadsheet and forwarded to the Board and Management for action. EE completed significant plantings in the fall to replace dead/expired shrubs. A split rail fence was installed at the corner of the sidewalk behind building 11 for safety purposes.

The ALC requested that the Board review the existing ALC Charter. Since the vast majority of the landscaping overhaul was completed over the past 3-4 years, it is our recommendation that the stringent meeting and membership requirements be revised to accommodate current conditions.

2016 Strategic Plan (contingent upon completion of remaining 2015 Strategic Plan items)

- Tree rehabilitation on the hill behind the Somerset sign: There are numerous trees on this hill requiring either removal or trimming of dead branches.
- Plant screening trees on the hill behind building 10.

As always, the ALC is looking for volunteers. Owners are asked to contact Management if they would like to serve on the committee. ☀

What Our Unit Owners Association Is All About!

By Earl Burton



All too often, we think of associations as a collection of rules and regulations limiting personal freedoms and individuality. But it is those same rules and regulations that protect, preserve and enhance the investment each of us have in our homes. If you dust off your copy of the By-Laws, Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions and re-read them, you will see that the Board of Directors have a precise blueprint on how to protect your investment.

The biggest advantage of living in a common-interest development is the ability of the Association to preserve, protect and enhance property values. Just how does the Board of Directors guide the Association to perform those duties?

First and foremost, our Association is not just made up of the Board, Committees and a few interested owners. It was established as a corporation in which ALL owners are members. What that means is that, as an owner, you have committed yourself to become business partners with every other owner in the community. But in order to achieve the primary goal of the Association (to preserve, protect and enhance property values), certain Covenants, conditions and Restrictions had to be established in order to achieve that goal. In those documents, the Board is given the authority to establish Rules & Regulations that complement the Association's purpose. When we follow the Rules & Regulations, we are doing part of our duty as members of the Association.

Architectural controls and guidelines and procedures for gaining architectural approval were established in order to promote aesthetic conformity and eliminate architectural changes that threaten the investment other members have in the Association. By following the architectural guidelines and obtaining approval from the Association before we replace windows and doors, we are doing part of our duty as members of the Association. Our Board of Directors is given the charge

of overseeing the operations of the Association and to see to it that the Rules & Regulations are followed by the Association's members. The Board is made up of owners, other members just like you. We volunteer our time and energy to serve the Association because we care about the investment we have in it. Committees are formed to assist the Board with their charge. These committees are made up of volunteer owners, just like you. When you volunteer to serve on the Board of Directors, or you volunteer to serve on a committee, you are doing part of your duty as a member of the Association.

Monthly assessments are necessary to protect and maintain our community assets and to help provide professional management to assist our community. When owners fail to pay their assessments on time, the Association is unable to meet all of its financial obligations. The result: The degree of property value protection the Association provides is reduced. In other words, even one owner who does not pay their assessments on time can adversely affect how Association business is conducted. When you pay your assessment on time, you are doing part of your duty as a member of the Association.

Finally, the Board of Directors meet the 2nd Tuesday of every month at the Westridge Clubhouse at 7:00 PM to make decisions, keep up-to-date on Association business and to hear from other owners in order to make proactive business decisions. As owners, keeping abreast of association matters and contributing during Open Forum is only good business. When you choose to attend the Board meetings, you are doing part of your duty as a member of the Association. ☀

Dryer Vents and Chimney Cleaning
Per Somerset Policy Resolution 07-02, this year each unit owner is required to have their dryer vent and chimney(s) cleaned, inspected and, if necessary, repaired. Receipts and/or reports for these completed services must be submitted to management by August 1 to be in compliance and avoid a violation assessment. Reminder notices will be mailed in the coming months.

Neighborhood Watch

By Willis McCloud



Safety Tips for Winter Road Trips

Preparedness is paramount when it comes to road trips year-round, and hitting the road for a long drive during winter months is no exception. With an increased risk of potential driving hazards like sleet, snow, strong winds and frigid temperatures, it's a good idea to think about ways to ensure you'll travel safely.

Consider the following tips when preparing for your winter road trip:

- **Invest in an emergency kit for your vehicle.** Available at most major retailers, these kits are relatively inexpensive and contain items like flares, booster cables, flashlights, ponchos and first aid supplies for minor injuries.
- **Develop a contingency plan.** Create a strategy for dealing with a flat tire, vehicle accident, dead battery or other potential travel delays. Keep a hard-copy list of people or businesses to contact for help should you need it.
- **Stay in touch.** Check in with a designated contact during your journey with updates on your location, delays encountered or unexpected situations that require longer travel time. When driving, remember always to pull off the road before using your cell phone.
- **Check the local weather report before heading out.** Winter weather can be tricky and forecasts aren't always accurate. You can double check your destination's weather history on a variety of websites to determine typical conditions to expect in that area during your travels.
- **Store warm clothes and blankets in your vehicle.** Be prepared to stay warm if you're stuck for extended periods by keeping a blanket or two in your car. Also, pack a small travel case with snow boots, socks, gloves, a scarf, hat and heavy sweater in case you need to leave your vehicle.
- **Review your travel route without GPS.** Read through detailed driving directions, including alternate routes, so you know your options. Also consider keeping a map handy in case your navigation system is compromised during your trip. ☀

Real Estate Beat

By Willis McCloud



Getting Your Home Ready to Sell

For any homeowner who has waited patiently for the real estate market to improve before putting a home up for sale, now is a great time to do so. After several sluggish years, home sales are experiencing a very healthy recovery. According to an article in *The Washington Post*, sales are up as much as 10 percent in some parts of the country.

But before you put the "For Sale" sign in your front yard, take some time—and the following steps—to get your home ready to be viewed by real estate agents and potential homebuyers:

- De-clutter and de-personalize the interior by removing family photos, personal mementos and knickknacks from shelves and table tops.
- Pay special attention to the kitchen: Remove small appliances, like toaster ovens and coffee makers, from counters. Take everything out of the cabinets and pantry and wash off shelves—or even repaint them—and only put a few items back. Arrange canned goods by size and height and spices alphabetically. Stack dishes, glasses and cups neatly.
- Clean out and rearrange closets and other storage areas so they look more spacious and not cramped. Hang clothing items by type, for instance, with shirts buttoned and facing in the same direction and shoes lined up in rows. If necessary, rent a storage unit for any overflow items.
- Make minor repairs, like caulking tubs and showers, patching walls and replacing cracked tiles and grout. Wash windows inside and out, and repaint any uniquely painted inside walls so they are now a neutral color. Replace worn-out bedspreads, throw pillows, curtains or other fabrications. And air out the interior to eliminate any food or pet odors.
- Make sure the lawn is mowed and bushes are trimmed, and place potted flowers on the porch and near the entry.

Remember to check with our manager, Stacy Panuzio, at 703-707-6404 or spanuzio@capitolcorp.com to inform her that you are relocating and to obtain resale documents. Good luck!! ☀

Upcoming Board Meetings

- February 9
- March 8
- April 12
- May 10
- June 14

Residents are welcomed and encouraged to attend monthly Board meetings, which are held at the Westridge Clubhouse and begin at 7:00 PM.

Somerset at Westridge, A Condominium

Management Company: Capitol Property Management
 3914 Centreville Road, Suite 300, Chantilly, VA 20151
 Manager: Stacy Panuzio; 703-707-6404; spanuzio@capitolcorp.com
 After Hours Emergency: 703-401-1918
 Somerset Website: www.somersetatwestridge.org
 Board of Directors: bod@somersetatwestridge.org
 Architectural Landscape Committee: alc@somersetatwestridge.org

Westridge Swim & Racquet Club

Management Company: Legum & Norman
 12764 Quarterhorse Lane, Woodbridge, VA 22192
 General Manager: Debbie Carter; 703-590-1600; HOA@Westridgeva.org
 Westridge Website: www.westridgeva.org

Additional Contacts

Emergency Police, Fire, Ambulance: 911
 Police Non-Emergency: 703-792-6500
 Washington Gas: Emergency, 703-750-1400; Non-Emergency, 703-750-1000
 Dominion Virginia Power: 1-888-667-3000
 Towing: Dominion Wrecker Service; 703-590-0994
 Trash: American Disposal Services; 703-368-0500; <https://www.americandisposal.com>