

# CARRIAGE HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

## FALL 2007 NEWSLETTER

Page 1



### Message From The President

I hope you all have had a good Summer. It's been a busy summer behind the scenes in Carriage Hills! I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Board Member and Community Manager. Sharon Collins was voted in as a new Board Director in March and she brings a lot of talent, expertise and enthusiasm to our Board. Lindsay Fox-Cardin became our new Manager from Common Interest Management in July. Our Customer Service Representative remains Jeff Gollihar. All of their contact information is listed on the last page of this newsletter. I'd like to also thank Bob Coontz again for his 15 years of service and dedication to the Board as your President and Vice President. He remains a valuable resource person for the current Board of Directors. The new Board has an agenda of items that we are working on this year.

- Number one on the list is the improvement of the common area landscaping at our entrances and along Castro Ranch Road. We have more plantings at the entrances and you will see the benefits of the new foliage and color as time goes on. We are now working on a plan for the gradual replacement of the fescue grass with drought tolerant plants. Due to the cost, it will take a few years, but we are all unhappy with the condition and look of the fescue grass. EBMUD has asked us to reduce our water usage by 25%, so drought tolerant plants seem to be the best solution. A drunk driver mowed down three of our trees and did some other damage. The insurance claim should be settled soon and we can begin restoring that area.
- The streets within our development are 20+ years old and need repair. The City of Richmond says that repairs will begin in the Fall, but we plan to stay on their case until it is done. We want all the streets to be repaired and resurfaced, not just "some." We may ask you to help us with an e-mail campaign in the Fall.
- We would like to have an e-mail list of all of our residents who have one. There is currently an e-mail watch list with about 40 residents. It has been helpful in getting out news about crime, fighting development and exchanging important current

information. We'd also like to be able to send our newsletter electronically and it would save us a lot of money. Please fill out the form at the end of this newsletter and send us your e-mail address.

- Maintaining the beauty of our neighborhood is an ongoing goal. Although the real estate market is no longer hot, the value of our homes is still good. There are fences that need repair before the Winter months, front landscaping that needs improvement and houses that need to be painted. Remember that any work you do on the exterior of your home or property needs prior approval. Please fill out the Architectural/Landscape Approval Form before you begin work. Many of you begin projects without prior approval and it can be a huge problem. What do you need approval for? Check out the Architectural Report segment of this newsletter.
- It is important that we stay involved in what is happening in the larger communities of Richmond and Contra Costa County. There are several developments planned along Castro Ranch Road (4 to be exact) that could adversely affect the quality of life in this neighborhood. Via our e-mail watch group, we were able to let the county supervisors know that we don't want the Golden Oaks development approved. We were successful this time but I don't think the developers are going to give up. There is also a community meeting that will be scheduled for this part of Richmond concerning the new General Plan. This area of Richmond has largely been ignored and we want the City to know what we need out here. Here is where an e-mail group list would be handy. We could let you all know when and where the meeting would be so that you can have some input.

As always, we welcome your presence at Board meetings (third Tuesday of the month at the Carriage Hills South Clubhouse at 6:30 PM). The Board is made up of volunteers and we are here to serve the whole community. We welcome your ideas and suggestions.

Your President,  
Kaye McKleroy

# CARRIAGE HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Page 2

## **Architectural and Landscape Approval Form**

One of the biggest frustrations of the Board is that residents don't get approval for the improvements they make to their houses, property and landscaping ahead of time. The CC&R's state that prior approval is necessary and that the Board has the right to have the work redone or removed.

**Where to get the form:** Call or e-mail Jeff Gollihar at Common Interest Management. Jeff will send your form to the Architectural Committee and will notify you when it is approved. Make sure your form is complete with signatures from neighbors, drawings, color samples etc. The approval process takes about two weeks, so allow enough time before the start of your project.

### **What you need approval for:**

Repainting your house whether it be the same color or not. The only approved colors are the Kelly Moore exterior colors posted on the mailbox bulletin boards and available at the Kelly Moore stores. If you use a paint other than Kelly Moore, the color must match. Be sure to send color samples with your approval form.

Replacing windows, doors, garage doors, or roofs.

Changing your landscaping: (a redesign, sod, dry or hardscape, tree removal, retaining walls, laying bricks or cement etc.) This applies to the front yard only and to the backyard if it can be seen from the street. No hedges or shrubs are allowed adjacent to the frontal or street sidewalk. Trees should not hang over the sidewalk.

Fence repair or replacement. Wrought iron or materials other than redwood are not allowed. Fences must be natural color, coated with a clear preservative or the Kelly Moore 'loam' color only. Fences may not be higher than 6 feet and any individual fence design will be approved on a "case by case" basis. So if you are adding an arbor or lattice, you need approval.

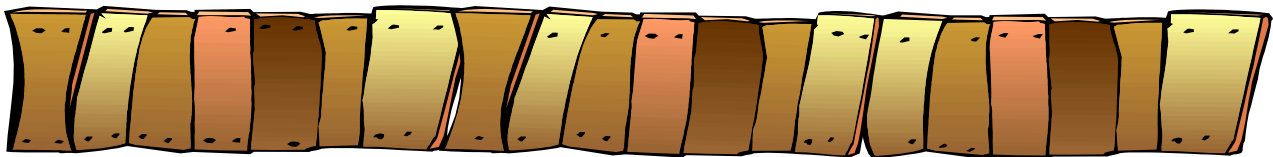
Addition of a storage shed visible from the street.

Other large back yard structures: pools, patio structures, sunrooms etc., although not visible from the street, are considered major work and need approval. They should meet required codes and be built with permits. They should also not impede the neighbors' views or privacy.

Solar panels do require architectural approval if placed in the back or on the roof.

**In general – if you aren't sure if you need prior approval, contact Common Interest Management first!**

**The Board is not interested in micromanaging your projects but wants to insure that the design and final product fit into the architectural style of the neighborhood and do not adversely affect your neighbors. We approve most of the projects submitted to us. Please do your part and get prior approval.**



### **FENCE REPLACEMENT**

The fences in the neighborhood are getting old. We understand the substantial cost involved to replace them, especially for the residents that have huge hillside back yards. Many of those fences are falling down, or are about to. If you have a large amount of backyard fence, consider just replacing the posts and reusing the slats, replacing rotten ones where necessary. It is important to get this work done before the Winter season. So, if you get a violation letter about your fence, please call Common Interest Management with your plans to replace or repair before Winter. Otherwise you could incur fines.

The CC&R's state that fences between neighbors are considered "party fences" and the cost of replacement, repair or maintenance should be shared equally. However, if your neighbor does not comply, the only recourse is to take them to small claims court.

# CARRIAGE HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Page 3

## VIOLATION LETTERS

Nobody likes getting these letters but it is our only way of letting people know that they are in violation of the CC&R's. Maintaining the beauty & appearance of our neighborhood is important to everyone. We know that most people don't read the CC&R's and often aren't aware they are in violation. Here is what our managing agent notices most frequently when she makes her bi-monthly site inspections. This information is helpful for new owners and a good reminder for long time residents as well.

- Landscape in need of mowing, trimming, fertilizing, watering, weeding, or mulching
- Garbage cans left outside (should be placed behind the fence)
- Inoperable and/or unregistered cars, often with blocks, in the driveway. Richmond city code does not permit this either or allow parking in the street over 72 hours.
- No commercial vehicles can be parked in the driveway. Commercial vehicles can legally be parked in the street. The CC&R's do not permit businesses being operated from the home and no more than one commercial vehicle should be parked on the street.
- Remove outdoor decorations 21 days after a holiday
- Paint on trim, garage doors, & house
- Repair or replace fence, trellis
- Remove debris or other materials stored in the front
- Boat or RV parked over 24 hours (the time limit for loading and unloading)
- Put garden hose away when not in use
- Trim trees hanging over sidewalk
- Clean oil stains on driveway
- Keep your dog on a leash and pick up the poop. If a loose dog is threatening, call Animal Control, otherwise put a notice up at the bulletin board – it might be a beloved lost pet.

## PAINTING



If you haven't already repainted your house in the last few years, it is probably time. The original stucco was colored but after 20 years, it is stained or dirty and no longer sealed against the elements. Repainting insures that your home will be in good shape for years to come. From time to time, it becomes necessary to repaint the garage door or trim if they deteriorate due to the Winter weather. Be sure to get an Architectural/Landscape Approval form first and follow the color guidelines.

The HOA is aware of how much it costs to paint a house. If you receive a letter telling you to think about repainting soon, be sure to call Common Interest Management with your plans. We are flexible but you need to **communicate** your plans. As long as your time frame is reasonable, we will accept it.

## RENTAL HOMES WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The CC&R's state that if you rent your property, you need to notify and get approval from the Board. However, there really isn't a policy or a process in place to facilitate that. So, the Board passed the following policy at the August 21, 2007 Board meeting and it will be adopted at the September 18, 2007 Board meeting. It is important to know where the rental units are and that they stay in compliance with the CC&R's, which has proved problematic in the past. If you currently rent your property, you will be receiving the new rental policy forms October 15, 2007. If you have neglected to tell the HOA you are renting, now is your chance to comply with the CC&R's. If you are thinking about renting, now you will know what to do.

### Policies Regarding Rental Units At Carriage Hills:

1. The Board of Directors must approve all rentals, whether they're a grandfathered-homeowner or a "new" owner of record making the request. A "new" owner of record is defined as any owner who purchased a home after, August 21, 2007.
2. All rentals must be for a period of at least one-year in term.
3. All non-resident owners will be required to submit the rental application and/or lease agreement to the management office.
4. Owners will be responsible to provide management notification that their tenant is moving or extending their leasing contract.
5. Any authorization by the Board granting permission to rent shall be ratified by a signature of the Owner. The signature will verify the understanding by the owner of the rental unit, acknowledging their responsibility to maintain the rented property in accordance with the CC&R's.

# CARRIAGE HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Page 4

## **WHAT DO YOU GET FOR YOUR ANNUAL DUES??**

The Board often gets asked the question: “Where does the money we pay for dues go?” Here is one piece of the answer. Of course, like you, the HOA has bills for EBMUD, PG&E, along with occasional maintenance or repair bills from time to time. One of our largest monthly expenses money is spent on is landscaping. D & H Landscaping maintains the entrances, common areas along Castro Ranch Road, and the mailbox areas. We also have the grass cut down in the open area along Carriage Drive in June. Like everything else, prices have gone up. The other large monthly expense is for the services of Common Interest Management. Most residents aren’t aware of the services that we pay for, so here is a summary of what Common Interest Management does for us:

### **CONTRACT SERVICES**

#### ***COMMUNITY MANAGER***

- Board Communications
- Correspondence
- Supervision and communication with vendors
- Invoice review and approval
- Assist in annual budget preparation
- Annual review of insurance
- Attend Board & Annual meetings
- Type & print minutes and other Board meeting materials
- Assist in writing & adopting rules
- Supervise upkeep & maintenance
- Regular inspections of the property
- Secure bids to maintain property
- Maintain the books & records of Association
- Coordinate Architectural Control
- Newsletter Composition

#### ***CUSTOMER SERVICE***

- Assist callers, answer questions and direct concerns to proper personnel
- Financial mailings
- Special mailings
- File Management
- Communications Support
- Clubhouse Rental Service
- Phone/Letter Logs
- Entry gate Management

- Process incoming/outgoing mail
- Coordinate Community Mailings

#### ***BOOKKEEPING***

- Accounts Payable / Accounts Receivable
- Collection of regular/special assessments
- Banking (operating & reserve funds)
- Delinquent Account Management
- Generate financial statements and delinquent reports
- Help to facilitate annual CPA report & tax returns and facilitate quarterly tax payments
- Title and Refinance processing
- 1099 Preparation

### **OPTIONAL SERVICES**

#### ***SPECIAL MEETINGS***

- Legal / Litigation
- Additional Site Walkthroughs
- Building / Landscape Acceptance
- Budget
- Hearings
- In-House meetings w/ Board/Homeowners
- Committee

#### ***OTHER***

- Special Mailings
- Research

- Web Site Management
- Ticketing/Towing Vehicles
- Document Revision
- Issuance of Permits/ID's
- Litigation Management
- Reconstruction Management
- Inspection Reports
- Emergency Work After Hours
- Special Projects

## ***CIMS OBJECTIVES AND MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY***

- To maintain and increase the economic value of the community
- To be considered the premier HOA Management Company in the industry
- To maintain our reputation as experts in our field
- To act as consultants to the Board of Directors in their governance of your Association
- To help the Board preserve and enhance the Community in order to create a pleasing environment for the homeowners and their guests
- To ensure strict financial controls and oversight procedures are in place to ensure proper fiscal oversight
- To stay abreast of all legal statutes that affect your Association in order to keep the Board informed
- To help create a rewarding experience for Association volunteers

**COMMON INTEREST**



**MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

## **YOUR ANNUAL DUES**



The dues for June 2007 were raised to reflect the rise in prices of all our vendors and services. Beginning in June of 2008, we plan to start billing you just once a year instead of bi-annually. We think this serves us all best. You only have to remember to pay once a year and not during a holiday. You can also set up a pre-pay account, which makes it even easier. The HOA benefits by not having to spend all year collecting late dues in both June and December. We also can avoid a budget deficit mid-year.

Although it has been a bit unclear in the past, your bills for annual dues will now indicate when it is due and when it is late. (due December 1, 2007 and late on January 1, 2008) Late fees are charged after December 31, 2007. The new policy adopted in 2006 states that you will receive two late notices and could be sent to collection after being 120 days (4 months) delinquent.

# CARRIAGE HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Page 6



## USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

- Our beat Officers have been very responsive to our concerns. You can contact all the **Beat 9** Officers by e-mail at: [PDBeat9@richmondpd.net](mailto:PDBeat9@richmondpd.net). Or you can call the non-emergency number: (510) 621-1212 and ask for a Beat 9 Officer. In an emergency, of course call 911.
- Problems with the City of Richmond? The best way is to e-mail them through Core Connect. The web site is: [www.ci.richmond.ca.us](http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us). Click on Core Connect and then on the department you want. They will respond within two days.
- Problems with your mailbox? For maintenance or vandalism problems, contact Anthony Butler at, (510) 232-9576 or [anthony.r.butler@usps.gov](mailto:anthony.r.butler@usps.gov). Don't call the post office.

***FYI: If the streetlight is metal, it belongs to the City; if it is wooden, call PG&E.***

***FYI: Street sweeping is on the first Wednesday or Thursday of the month. Be sure your car isn't parked on the street or it will be ticketed and possibly towed.***

## 2007 BOARD MEETINGS

Meetings are normally held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month. Watch for notices on the mailbox bulletin boards as meetings are subject to date changes: Upcoming meetings are: **September 18th, October 16th, & November 20th.** There is no meeting in December.

All meetings are at the Carriage Hills South Clubhouse (next to the mailbox area) on Country View Drive at 6:30 p.m. Homeowners are always welcome at the monthly meetings.

## **Carriage Hills Residents Association**

C/o Common Interest Management Services

315 Diablo Road, Suite #221

Danville, CA 94526-3409

(925) 743-3080 / fax (925) 743-3084

### **Lindsay Fox-Cardin**

Community Association Manager, ext. 238

[lfox@commoninterest.com](mailto:lfox@commoninterest.com)

### **Jeff Gollihar**

Customer Service Representative, ext. 237

[jgollihar@commoninterest.com](mailto:jgollihar@commoninterest.com)

## Your Board of Directors

### President:

Kaye McKleroy (Community Liaison Committee) [Doomack@aol.com](mailto:Doomack@aol.com)

### Vice President:

Alan Heynssens (Architectural Committee)

### Secretary:

Sharon Collins [sharon@collins-mgmt.com](mailto:sharon@collins-mgmt.com)

### Treasurer:

Judie Lowman [Lowmanjudie@aol.com](mailto:Lowmanjudie@aol.com)

### Director:

Lin Conrad (Landscape Committee)

[Ccd75@comcast.net](mailto:Ccd75@comcast.net)



## PLEASE SEND US YOUR EMAIL!

We would like to compile an e-mail list of residents. Please send your e-mail to Jeff Gollihar at Common Interest Management: [jgollihar@commoninterest.com](mailto:jgollihar@commoninterest.com).

**SUBJECT: CARRIAGE HILLS EMAIL LIST. Then be sure to give us your name, address and e-mail in the body of the e-mail. We'd also appreciate your phone number as well. THANKS!!!!!!!** By 2008 we hope to send our newsletter electronically to keep you updated on current issues within the neighborhood.