

# WALNUT VALLEY HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

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## Board Meetings

The following Board Meeting(s) have been scheduled for 2006:



*Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup> @ 7 p.m.*

This meeting is being held at East County Fire and Rescue Fire Station #1 located at 211 39th Street Washougal, WA.

## A message from your President...

I wanted to thank everyone for the good turnout to our last homeowners meeting. There were some great questions and input. I went back and did some homework and want to address some of the questions that came up. Below, I included a "Homeowners Frequently asked questions"(FAQ) section," I hope this helps clarify a few of the questions we had. I am also including some great info below about your fence!! I also want to include this small article I came across in the large 3 ring binder, "President of a HOA for dummies" guidebook I received for volunteering. I thought it addressed well the issue of having rules and reasons for having a HOA in the first place.

"Most would like to believe that people can live without rules-and they can, mostly. However, over time it becomes apparent that a high-density living environment like an Association is vulnerable to certain kinds of problems, some of which could seriously affect the quality of life and the value of the member's investments. A legal and carefully crafted set of rules, tuned to the needs of the community and without being overly burdensome, is necessary to prevent problems as well as to resolve them. Most of the value of having rules is in their prevention of problems. Becoming knowledgeable of the rules will help to sensitize members to each other's rights and interests and helps to prevent problems from occurring in the first place.

Should problems occur, having rules allows the Board to resolve them. Rules provide objective standards that, under the authority of the Declarations and CC&R's & Bylaws and the laws of the State, are legally enforceable."

Also some good news, the water line to the entrance area common lot was successfully installed! We are also now waiting for the sidewalk to be installed along this lot. Hopefully this will be completed by the time you receive this newsletter! We appreciate everyone's patience as we work with New Traditions, the initial developer and the City of Washougal to try to put together a great plan for this area!!

Lastly, at our next meeting, hopefully you will have the opportunity to meet our Architectural Committee. I want to thank these individuals for volunteering their time. We are currently looking for a volunteer to be our W. V. W. D. (Walnut Valley Website Designer!) If you enjoy creating websites and are interested in creating a simple website for our community please contact Michelle with The Management Group @ 360/891-8060. We are also looking for 2-3 volunteers to be on our Welcoming Committee. As a volunteer on the Welcoming Committee you would be the ambassadors of Walnut Valley, letting our new neighbors know about the cool new Starbucks, the exciting nightlife of Washougal, and letting them know about the Homeowners Association.

*-Anthony  
Board President*

## Mailboxes

It has been reported to Management and discussed at the last Board Meeting, the common practice of owners stopping quickly to obtain the daily mail...but while doing this quick daily task, the vehicle is left blocking the driveway of a neighboring home. If all residents, could please discontinue this practice, and either park fully against a curb not to block a drive in any way no

matter how long the errand takes, or drive to your home and enjoy the warm weather by taking a quick stroll to the mailbox. Your neighbors will greatly appreciate the effort!

## Fence Maintenance

**Quarterly CC&R Spotlight! Fences! All you wanted to know about your awesome fence!!**

- Stated in the CC&R's Section 15, Article 7, "All fencing to be constructed in accordance to specifications on the drawing attached as Exhibit B." Exhibit B identifies the fence stain as Olympic Semi-Transparent #909. Where can you buy this stain? How often do you need to stain?

The stain originally applied to our fence is available anywhere Olympic paint is sold. Mix semi-transparent stain with color #909 (color pigment-light oak.) Semi transparent stain protects wood from weathering. Available at Lowes for... indefinitely! The current approximate price is \$20 for wood protector or \$26 for Olympic maximum grade. Your fence is however pre-stained & good -to- go for 3-5 years. It is constructed of cedar boards but the support rails are fir.

### Resources

Lowes Vancouver 360-260-2120/Lifetime Fence Co. (Todd) 360/573-4452.

## Satellite Dishes

The HOA board would like to request that homeowners who are installing or having a satellite dish installed to place the dish in a location that is the least visible as possible from view of the street. Often, satellite installation companies are installing dishes in locations that allow the most convenient and easiest installation for them. Please advise the installer that the HOA Board has requested dishes be installed behind the front yard set-back line of the property, when possible. The Board is also requesting when possible that the satellite not be attached directly to the roof of the home. This attachment location is not requested just for aesthetics of the community, but please be aware that if you place the dish on your roof you may be voiding your warranty with the original roof.

## Recreational Vehicles

Parking of boats, trailers, motorcycles, mobile homes, campers or other recreational vehicles or equipment and parking of any other vehicles in excess of one ton load capacity, shall not be allowed on any lot, nor on streets or driveways adjacent thereto for more than six hours except only within the confines of an enclosed garage or within the confines of a side or rear yard where such vehicle is fully obscured from public view by vegetation and landscaping approved by the ARC Committee.

## Homeowners FAQ

**Do I need approval to landscape my yard? Can I plant a rosebush?**

Yes! Certainly go plant a rosebush! Of course you can landscape your unfinished, dirt back yard. The CC&R's of the Association gives some general guidelines for landscaping. Stated in Section 8, Article 7, "each owner shall maintain his lot and improvements thereon in a clean and attractive condition...each owner shall keep all shrubs, trees, grass and plantings...neatly trimmed, properly cultivated." Nowhere does it state that you cannot plant a bush or tree or your favorite rosebush. The only direction specifically in regards to types of plants or trees and hedges is that 1 deciduous tree should be planted within 6 feet of sidewalk in the front yard.

In regards to hedges, (our beloved Arbor Vitae) a hedge is defined as a "barrier" or "screening." For the Association's purpose, I think we need to use good old common sense as to what constitutes a hedge. A hedge is not 1 tree or 1 bush, it is multiple same specie plants or trees planted together which creates a continuous barrier. The Board is recommending clarification on current CC&R's pertaining to hedges. Currently, the CC&R's state that homeowners planting boundary hedges in street-side yards require approval by the Association. The Board wants to modify and clarify the rule so front yard hedges situated forward of the front yard set-back line and backyard area hedges situated "street-side," would require approval by the Architectural Review Committee (ARC). The Board is defining "nicely trimmed" as any hedges in the front yard or backyard street-side maintained so as not to exceed 6 feet in height.

(Article 5, Section 19.) In other words, an Excalibur like barrier of a 20 ft. high x 50 ft length continuous hedge in your front yard would not be permitted under the definitions and rules above.

## Can I paint my house any color I want?

The CCR's explain that any structure approved by the ARC also should include specifications as to the "...shape, height, materials, color, and location." In addition, the exterior of each building, and the exterior of all other painted structures attached to such building, shall be painted in accordance with a color scheme common to the entire building." (Article 5, Section 1)

## What about that cool river rock?

Believe it or not, there is no mention specifically of river rock in the CC&R's of the Association. I have some river rock too! The only general guideline is that in Section 8, Article 7, it states an owner should maintain "...grass and plantings neatly trimmed, properly cultivated and free from unsightly material." The Board clarifies below in the modifications that an owner is to maintain the grass that existed upon move-in in the front yard. An owner therefore replacing his or her entire front yard grass area with river-rock would therefore be in violation of the CC&R's.

## Association & Board Modification & clarification to Rules & Regulations

Rules Amendment Process... What is it?

"The Association may adopt, modify, or revoke such rules and regulations governing ....use of Lots and Property as it deem necessary or appropriate by an affirmative vote of 80% of Board members or by the assent of 51% of the votes of each class of members who are voting in person or by proxy for a meeting called for this purpose." Section 19, Article 7.

Board clarification of terms/modifications approved by the Board by 80%. These 3 items have been approved by the Board by 80%.

1. Hedges- The board is defining "nicely trimmed" (Article 7, Section 8.) as it pertains to hedges as no higher than 6 ft for all front yard hedges when situated forward of the

front yard setback area and street-side backyard hedges.

2. The Board clarifies that the grass that exists in the front yard (forward of the front setback line) is to be maintained. An owner therefore cannot remove the front yard grass area that was originally landscaped with the homeowner's property.
3. A "structure" shall be defined as any man or woman made object with a height of 3 feet and above. (This is defined for purposes of Article 5 in the CC&R's).

Below are rules and policies that the Board will be reviewing at the next meeting and are up for a formal vote by the Board of Directors:

1. Portable window installed air conditioner units. A homeowner is recommending we add an amendment to the CC&R's forbidding the use of portable window installed type AC units.
2. The Board recommends raising the annual assessment 20% for the year 2007 beginning January 2007. The new dues for 2007 would then be set to \$180/year. This requires a vote by ½ of each class of members who are voting in person or by proxy at a meeting duly called for this purpose. If the 20% annual assessment fails, the Board will by default elect to increase the annual assessment 10% to \$165/year. (Article 4, Section 3). Currently, our annual dues are not totally covering expenses. We will continue to attempt to find ways to keep the HOA dues as low as possible. We are currently at \$150/year. With an increase to \$180 for 2007, we would still be well below most other neighborhood HOA dues. Please watch the mail for a formally proposed budget for owners to review.

## Speed Limit

Walnut Valley is a small community...SLOW down. There are many children within our community playing throughout. Lets all slow down and ensure that there aren't any unfortunate accidents. We thank you all in advance for your cooperation.



## City of Washougal Information

"Did you know?"....

- Walnut Valley contains environmental sensitive areas such as open spaces, wetlands, wetland buffers, tributaries of Campen Creek, habitat protection zones, and steep/geotechnical sensitive slopes (with 30 foot geotechnical setbacks),
- Fifteen (15) foot perimeter buffers on specific lots,
- City of Washougal easements throughout the development, and
- An underground storm water system owned and maintained by the Homeowner's Association. Placing leaves or debris in the street runs into and can clog the system. The system also includes underground pipes that can be damaged by heavy equipment running over top of them. For example, there are underground storm water pipes between Lots 1 and 2 of Phase I and adjacent to the west and south side of Lot 2 and to the north of Lot 3 in Phase II.

The above information is not intended to be all inclusive of the details of the Walnut Valley Development, but is meant as examples.

Lot specific questions or questions related to building permits may be directed to the Planning and Development Department at the City @ 360/835-8501.

Building Permit Questions - Permit Technician, who will direct (i.e. deck, addition to the home) you to an inspector or the Building Official.

Land Use Permit Questions - Executive Assistant, who will direct you to a Planner or the Director.

## New Tradition Homes

New Tradition Homes mentioned as "leading the building industry by offering certified energy efficient homes."

Recently, Clark Public Utilities included an article in its June 2006 *Currents* publication about New Tradition Homes. New Traditions was named a leader with "Energy Star

qualifications." "Energy star is a symbol for energy efficiency that consumers look for when buying appliances and lighting products...Energy Star homes offer buyers superior quality, enhanced comfort, healthier indoor air and peace of mind. Each home earning the label is performance tested and certified to meet stringent energy efficient standards."

### Resources

*Clark Public Utilities*  
*June 2006 Currents Publication*  
*360/992-3000*