

RICHLAND FOREST

NEWSLETTER

Richland Forest Homeowners Association
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www.richlandforest.com

Spring/Summer 2006

Welcome to the Spring/Summer 2006 edition of the newsletter.

We are still looking for residents to volunteer to help with our committees. Come get involved in your community!! Please contact a committee chair, listed below and on the web site, for more information.

Architectural Control: Jack Jernigan
Landscape/Snow Removal: Sheila Singleton/Pamela Valatka
Developer Closeout: Shonnie Dennis
Traffic & Parking: Jeffrey Long
Communications: Natalie Rose

We are also looking for someone who would offer their graphic design skills for our web site. Please contact Natalie Rose (Natalie@richlandforest.com) if you are interested.

Remember To Get Approval for All Exterior Changes to Your Home

Everyone is reminded that essentially all changes, permanent or temporary, to the exterior appearance of a building or lot are subject to review and approval by the Architectural Control Committee.

The review process is inclusive of major additions or alterations, such as adding a room, deck, or patio, but includes such minor items as changes in color and materials. Approval is also required when an existing item is to be removed and not replaced with an identical or comparable item—this includes things like replacing a garage door, changing your deck, or major changes to your landscaping.

There are a number of exceptions to this otherwise inclusive review requirement:

- Building exteriors may be repainted or re-stained, provided that there is no color change from the original. Similarly, exterior building components may be repaired or replaced so long as there is no change in the type of material and color.
- Minor landscape improvements will also not require an application. This includes foundation plantings, or single specimen plantings. In general, landscape improvements of a small scale which do not materially alter the appearance of the lot, involve a change in topography or grade and which are not of sufficient scale to constitute a natural structure will be exempt from the design review process.

If there is any doubt as to whether or not a proposed exterior change is exempt from design review, and approval, homeowners should first seek written clarification from the Architectural Control Committee before proceeding with the improvement—it's fast and easy and it may save you hassles and money later.

You can get a copy of the application by visiting www.richlandforest.com

Property Maintenance Standards

Summer is upon us and the neighborhood is looking great. Thanks to everyone for keeping things looking beautiful. A number of people have been wondering what their responsibilities are as a homeowner, so here are a few of the general standards for the neighborhood.

- All portions of a lot that are not improved by an impervious surface or a structure must be maintained with grass or landscaping materials. No bare earth may be exposed on a lot.
- All turf areas on a lot must be kept neatly mowed during the growing season.
- No trash or debris may accumulate or be stored in a visible location on a lot or associated street frontage. Construction materials for the improvement of a home or lot should be neatly stored in as unobtrusive a location on the lot as possible when not in use.
- The exterior of a home must be maintained in an attractive manner. No significant blistering or peeling of exterior painted surfaces is permitted. Any exterior building components (i.e. siding, gutters and downspouts, roof shingles, windows and doors) that are missing, broken or otherwise in a state of disrepair must be repaired with like material as quickly as possible.

You can find out more by visiting our neighborhood's web site.

Keep the Common Areas Clear

Remember, the common areas are for everyone to enjoy.

If you use the common areas, please remember to clean up after you leave—this will help make the areas more enjoyable for those who come after you.

Also, if you live next to a common area, please be mindful of others and don't store your personal property on the common area.

Thanks for your help!!

Landscape Update

Since April 15, we have had quite a lot of improvement on our common grounds. Our new landscape company **Pine Ridge** has been doing a great job mowing and trimming the grass. They have mulched our flower beds and the tot lot play areas. Coming up in June, Augusta Dr. will get a pick-me-up with dead trees removed and trees trimmed. Our flower bed areas will get the bushes trimmed and some of the beds will get annual flowers.

We have had fence damage to repair quite often because of climbing children. The gate repair on the detention pond located off Ducksprings and Bullrush only lasted about 2 weeks. The rails and posts are pushed down and broken almost weekly. A resident has been repairing them so far because cost to the HOA would get too expensive for our budget. Please give us a hand, tell the children to stay off the fences.

Parking & Traffic:

Traffic safety and parking issues have been brought into focus since our last news letter as the end of the school year is here and the traffic in our neighborhood reaches larger volumes and overload capacities.

Parking: As the school year comes to a close there has been an increase in the number of student cars parking off campus on both Backwater and Bullrush. These cars are spreading out from the previously preferred areas on Ducksprings give rise to concerns about parking when Dominion High School arrives at capacity. What is ideal is to prevent Richland Forrest resembling the parking stranglehold that Potomac High School has on its neighbors.

Traffic: With the increase in traffic from students and commuters avoiding the Seneca Ridge/Augusta intersection, there has been an increase in aggressive driving through Mayapple and Ducksprings areas. Frequently there is observed and reported speeding, ignoring of stop signs and failing to yield to residence leaving their homes/driveways. Beyond the obvious potential for vehicular collision, this area is also a primary route for student walking to Seneca Ridge Middle and Dominion High Schools. The traffic control considerations are focused averting a tragedy in the making.

To address these issues, the board continues to discuss viable alternatives and research what the processes are to enact traffic and parking controls. As the

requirements become clear, proposals will be submitted to the community for consideration and vote.

Note of Thanks: We would be remiss if we did not recognize Dominion High School's efforts to make their student good and responsible citizens. There has been a dramatic decrease in the reports of students misusing the tot lots and renegade parking over the core school year.

Please remember that your board cannot enforce traffic or citizen safety laws, this is the responsibility of the sheriff's office. For emergencies, please call 911. For non-emergencies, please call 703-777-1021. Also, be kind to your neighbors by driving gently and observing all traffic laws.

Builder close-out:

Centex Homes is now working directly with Loudoun County. They have approved one community sign with lightning and landscape. The permit was submitted about 3 weeks ago so the board is hoping to hear something soon. The tree replacement will also be done for common grounds. Centex and their arborist are meeting with the County to review plans for new trees to be planted. To find out more, come on out to our next Board meeting, June 14, 7PM, at the Eastern Loudoun Regional Library in Cascades.

Community Clean-up

The sun was out, the humidity was thankfully low. The grill was ready to go, refreshments were iced. Everything was ready for the first annual community clean-up. Residents started showing up by 9AM and got to work. Groups of volunteers cleaned out the drainage areas, tot lots and gazebo common ground. They hauled away dozens of bags of trash and turned the areas into pristine oases in the middle of our neighborhood. Well, not quite, but these areas do look TONS better. Thanks to everyone who helped out!!!

Please help us keep the neighborhood looking great by picking up any trash you see while walking around. A few pieces here and there make a huge difference.

Stop signs

The stop signs seem to be a magnet for all kinds of advertising. Not only is this practice illegal, it also is extremely unsightly and gives the appearance of more trash in the neighborhood. For those that are so inclined, please remove these signs as soon as you see them. This will help deter future placements.

Let Us Hear From You

Do you have a question, comment or suggestion? The Board encourages any homeowner to responsibly write or e-mail any member of the Board concerning Richland Forest. Board members will respond as quickly as they can, but please remember that Board members are all volunteers with jobs and families and so your patience and understanding is greatly appreciated. Contact info can be found on the web site, www.richlandforest.com, or send general email to info@richlandforest.com