



George Mason Forest Reporter

NUMBER 1

gmfhoa.org

SPRING-SUMMER 2017

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear GMFHOA Homeowners/Residents,

This is my first letter to you as GMFHOA President and I would like to thank all of you for your kind words and support as I take over this new role. I also want to recognize members of the GMFHOA Board and Committee Chairs for their great support.

On behalf of the entire community, I want to also express special thanks to Tena and Ray Bluhm for their untiring and outstanding service to our community—and to John Mohn for his great work on important community issues. All of you will be missed.

With Tena's pending departure, it's necessary to find a new editor of this newsletter. Joe Barnes has volunteered to take on that responsibility and is our new editor. I appreciate his willingness to take on this task. Our goal is to publish a newsletter two to four times a year. If anyone has an issue that they would like covered in the newsletter, please let us know!

We added a new neighborhood social activity this past spring—a Corn Hole tournament—and we are hoping to come up with other activities to help bring the community together for next year. If anyone has a low-cost/no cost idea as a way for all of us to get together, please let us know.

I hope everyone has a wonderful and safe summer and please do not hesitate to reach out if you have a question or concern.

Finally, I look forward to seeing everyone at the annual GMFHOA picnic on September 9, 2017 from 4-6pm at the end of Red Spruce Road.

Sincerely, Heather



SUMMARY OF GMFHOA BOARD MEETING MINUTES

President's Report: Kathleen Lieb and I attended a forum on legislative issues and the potential effects on our community. Regarding hiring a management company, John Mohn submitted a report and developed an associated RFP on hiring a firm to run day to day operations. That issue is on hold pending identifying someone to coordinate this and consideration the cost of hiring a management company.. The Peterson Co. briefed the Board on the possible development of 9.2 acres of land at the corner of Braddock and Roberts Rd. to include 47 single family homes. A follow up presentation is planned for all GMFHOA owners. There's still no word on the NoVa Training Center property.

Treasurer's Report: As of May 2017, the reserve account balance is \$33,842, and the operating account balance is \$52,408. All annual assessments have been received and five late fees were assessed and paid.

Committee Reports:

Grounds Committee – 15 people participated in community clear up day. Seeding/aeration was completed at the Red Spruce entrance. Mowing of common areas and spring mulching/weeding completed and the entrance signs were power washed. Consideration being given to planting additional tree seedlings. There's continuing concern about the condition of common area bridges. Downed dead trees on paths were removed and a dead tree removed adjacent to Tapestry Drive. A meeting is scheduled with a landscaper for front entrances improvements.

Architectural Control Committee — Detailed summary of ACC actions during the past year is included with GMFHOA Annual Meeting information.

2017 ANNUAL MEETING

As noted in past newsletters, residents are reminded **NOT** to place trash cans and yard debris bags at the curb more than 24 hours before pick up day. Only trash cans with tops should be used to prevent trash blowing all over the neighborhood. When not in use trash cans are to be stored out of sight from the street. Residents are asked to pick up old and loose newspapers and trash around mail boxes and street gutters. This keeps the trash from being carried into the storm drains and the common land creek.

Complete Board minutes are on the web site

gmfhoa.org

The GMFHOA Board meets monthly except in Aug. and Dec. Below is a summary of Board minutes October 2016 through April 2017.

WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE CORNER OF BRADDOCK AND ROBERTS RD



During its April 19th meeting, the GMFHOA Board was briefed on a development concept for the 9.2 acre parcel of land at the corner of Braddock and Roberts Rd.

Mr. Taylor Chess of the Peterson Companies, and attorney Frank McDermot presented the plan. Then on June 12, the same briefing was presented at a special meeting attended by over 45 homeowners. The property is a combination of four parcels along the east side of Roberts Road from Braddock Road, north to the GMU Catholic Campus ministry. It also borders University Park and the end of Tapestry Drive. The concept includes 47 high-end single family homes plus common land with open social gathering areas and space for vegetable gardens.

Homes sizes range between 5,000 to 6,700 square feet and will be built on approximately 8,500 square foot lots. The GMFHOA community is the first to be briefed on the plan. The project is presently in the concept phase and it could take approximately three years for approval by county oversight committees before construction would begin. Several builders have been interviewed but none selected.

Attendees' concerns included storm water drainage/ damage to GMF property owners, the impact of increased traffic and other questions regarding the concept itself. Owners with further questions and/or concerns should contact GMFHOA President Heather Villavicencio at 703-764-9717.

The GMFHOA 2017 Annual Meeting was on March 15. The agenda included recognition of Tena and Ray Bluhm, and John Mohn for their years of outstanding service to the community.

The association's President, Treasurer and Chairs of the Grounds and Architectural Committees reported on activities of the 2016-2017 year. The 2017 Budget and a detailed five-year capital improvements budget were presented to attendees.

Following those reports, a special presentation on 'The Value of Association Dues' was presented by Board Member, Michael Kammerman.

The five GMFHOA members elected to the Board of Directors are Roy De Lauder, Kathleen Lieb, Claire Orth, Heather Villavicencio, and Fred Knowles.

The full meeting agenda, presentations and other information are posted on the GMFHOA website at gmfhoa.org under GMFHOA Board meeting minutes (March 2017).

CHECK OUT THE GMFHOA WEBSITE gmfhoa.org

The GMFHOA web site tab [Documents and Minutes](#) is password protected and requires a user name and password. The user name is **gmfhoa** and the password is **gmfhoa2014-131**.

GMFHOA BOARD MEMBERS

Heather Villavicencio-President	703-764-9717
Julie Stewart -Vice President	703-978-1203
Fred Knowles - Secretary	703-426-8204
Claire Orth—Treasurer	703-978-5477
Kathleen Lieb	703-865-5775
Michael Kammerman	703-323-1692
Stu Merrill	804-284-5152
Shannon Morrow	703-204-2880
Leslie Pease	703-966-6157
Tena Bluhm	703-978-9468
Roy DeLauder	703-425-3714

CHANGE IN RULES FOR YARD TRASH CONTAINERS

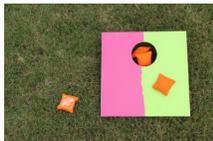
Residents may have heard that Fairfax County is considering new rules for yard waste collection, specifically about plastic bags. That said, a decision to pursue a regulatory change that affects how yard waste is collected has been postponed indefinitely.

Currently, there is no ban on the use of plastic bags for yard waste in Fairfax County. And it should be noted that grasscycling, mulching, and composting are environmentally sound alternatives to bagging grass clippings and leaves.

Remember that most curbside trash pick-up is provided by private hauling companies which may have their own bagging requirements.

Yard waste includes grass clippings, leaves, and brush (i.e., branches and twigs smaller than 4-feet in length) generated during general yard maintenance. Yard waste does not include materials generated during tree removal, land clearing or home renovation projects.

HORRAY, CORN HOLE TOURNAMENT



The first annual GMFHOA Corn Hole Tournament on April 29 brought out the competitive spirit in the neighborhood.

According to Board member Michael Kammerman, who organized the event, over 40 people attended and competed in two categories—adults and those under age 18. with awards presented for each winning team. In addition, the GMFHOA provided refreshments for the event.

This is first of several new ideas that the GMFHOA Board is looking at to engage homeowners and celebrate our great community.

Congrats to the winners and thanks to all who participated.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Annual **GMFHOA Picnic**—Saturday, September 9 from 4 to 6 pm at the end of Red Spruce Rd.

GMFHOA Halloween Party—Sunday, October 29. Details to follow.

GMU ANNOUNCES BUILDING “INNOVATION DISTRICT”

George Mason University announced plans for developing a new ‘innovation district’ on the western portion of its Fairfax Campus. This followed a three-day brainstorming session in May attended by 180 stakeholders at the university.

The meetings were the first step in the development of the 58-acre site located on the west side of Rt. 123 and bordered on the south by Braddock Rd. The GMU Field House and athletic fields are already located on the site.



According to a press release following the meetings, the working name of the plan is ‘Oxbridge’. Campus Drive, which connects the two sides of the campus, would be a main street through existing athletic fields and a new walkable town center of research and academic buildings.

The area would provide research and collaboration places, academic spaces, makerspaces and innovation labs, meeting places for activities and organizations, a mix of residential units, opportunities for arts and cultural experiences, a variety of retail outlets and flexible structures to accommodate changing needs.

A key consideration in the plan is the integration of academic, research and student life needs. In addition, a top priority is the preservation of as much as possible of the green space that is a hallmark of the existing campus.

The recent workshops are the first step in the development. University officials will begin managing the planning and implementation of the many varied projects.

The GMFHOA Board is tracking this project and will provide updates as they become available. For additional information, visit westcampusvision.gmu.edu.

NVTC PROPERTY STATUS

The status of the 80+ acres, former location of Northern Virginia Training Center, across Braddock Road from GMF remains unknown. Rumors abound the state has sold the property, but none have been confirmed.

PICK UP THAT WET NEWSPAPER!

If you don't want the weekly Fairfax Times or the Connection delivered to your home, please call the newspaper, ask them to have the delivery person stop delivering to you.

Many issues are not picked up by homeowners and end up in the street gutters and are swept into our stream by rain. Help keep our stream clean, our streets free of trash and looking good. It is not unusual to see some of our neighbors who are truly good Samaritans, picking up your papers.

CALLING ALL EXPERTS



The GMFHOA Board of Directors is looking for assistance. If you can help with either of the following jobs, please contact GMFHOA President Heather Villavicencio at 703 764-9717.

- (1) A volunteer to attend Fairfax County monthly/quarterly meetings on legislation / policies that may impact our community
- (2) A volunteer to develop a community capital improvements plan

CONTROLLING MOSQUITOES

The Fairfax County Health Department asks that we control mosquitoes in our yards. To do so:

- eliminate standing water weekly from containers like tires, buckets, flower pots, drain pipes, tarps, bird baths, toys, etc.
- If it's impossible to dump water from a container, treat it with a larvicide such as *Bacillus thuringiensis var. israelensis*—and follow label instructions
 - To prevent mosquito bites use EPA-registered repellents containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon, eucalyptus or IR3535. Cover exposed skin, treat clothing with permethrin, and keep window and door screens in good repair.



THE VALUE OF A HOA IS MORE THAN THE DUES

The following perspectives on the importance of the GMFHOA and its volunteer work in our community were presented at the annual GMFHOA meeting.

“Your association may be your best tool to protect the value of your home and the quality of your neighborhood”

“...one of the most important functions of an association is to enforce deed restrictions and protect the value of the community assets among those being your home”

“Estimates are that property values in a subdivision with an inactive association can fall as much as twenty percent due to failure to enforce restrictions”

“they purchased with an expectation that their property and those in their community would be protected by deed restrictions and maintained to a certain reasonable standard”

GMFHOA Annual Dues - \$179.00 / year OR \$15.00 / month OR \$0.49 / day —not much cost to you to protect your property value. Come lend hand and volunteer to do a small task at least one time a year. Contact the GMFHOA president and be counted as a GMF volunteer.

http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/article/Association/Value_Of_HOA, accessed 3/12/17)

FOLLOW UP

The last issue of the GMF newsletter reported the Board was considering the hiring of a management company for the day to day running of the association.

John Mohn was tasked with researching the project. He reported to the Board that the cost for the services that would be provided were much more than the budget would allow.

After due consideration, the Board decided to table the issue for the present and seek more volunteers to assist in the running of the association.