

Olde Ivy Vine



Volume 7, Issue 1 Condos Edition
2011

Spring

An invitation

The committees that do the hands-on work of making Olde Ivy a wonderful place to live are all looking for new members. To join a committee or learn more about what it does, email the committee chair. Active committee membership gives you a great chance to learn about and contribute to the community.

Neighborhood

Keiffer Phillips, President

As a property owner, no one will take better care of your investment than we ourselves. As a neighborhood, no one will look after our community better than we do. While Property Management companies are necessary and provide a good and useful service; quite honestly, they do not have a vested interest.

It is my belief that resident involvement is the path to a healthy and vibrant community. One of the main objectives of the Neighborhood Board of Directors this year is to support our active committees as well as form new ones where needs exist. This newsletter is the product of a revitalized committee, Communications, that had fallen by the wayside. With a new chairman and members, we once again have a vehicle to meet the important need for neighborhood communication.

Depending on the need, a committee may function with as few as two people, or could require several. Each committee will be led by a committee chairperson. The committee chairperson will provide a plan and budget, if required, for submission to the NBOD for approval. While each committee will have a member of the NBOD as a liaison, it is neither the intent nor the role of the NBOD to actively run any single committee. An effective, functioning

committee will work in tandem with the NBOD and our property manager to fulfill their defined responsibilities.

The NBOD is planning to form two new committees, a Security Committee and an Infrastructure Committee. While it is beyond the scope of this article to adequately define the specifics of each of these committees, I would ask that anyone interested in serving on or chairing one of these committees contact me directly to discuss specifics.

To those of you who currently serve or have served in the past, thank you! If you have offered to serve in the past and were not contacted, please ask again.

Thank you for your support.

Keiffer J Phillips, President, Neighborhood Board of Directors Keiffer@Keifferphillips.com

Neighborhood Financials

See separate attachment for Financial Reports from Heritage

Mailbox Security

Charlie Ryan

Unfortunately, there was a recent theft of outgoing mail from a resident's mailbox. There was a similar incident last year. Local police and postal authorities were notified. Both provided the following advice:

- Place your mail in the box as close to the time of the letter carrier's arrival (early afternoon) as possible.
- Do NOT raise the flag that indicates outgoing mail in your mailbox, since the flag provides an invitation to a potential thief. The letter carrier arrives daily with at least some junk mail so there is no need

to raise the flag to get her to open your mail box.

Police say that mail thieves are looking for checks. They can alter the amount of the check and/or the person to whom the check was written, using chemicals that erase your writing. The best security option is to drop envelopes with checks directly at a Post Office or into a Postal drop box. In any case, please double-check to ensure that your checks have been cashed by the intended party by checking online with your bank or with the vendor you are paying. An alternative is to pay bills online, which, of course, has its own set of security concerns and defensive procedures.

Cobb County Police Precinct 3 is located at 1901 Cumberland Parkway where it intersects with Beech Haven Trail. The police ask residents to call 911 to report any immediate criminal or suspicious activity. If there is any doubt about the nature of the behavior, the precinct captain says he would rather we call 911 and be safe. If the concern is not immediate, call Precinct 3 at (770) 499-4183.

Please keep an eye out for the personal and property security of your neighbors. Alert police first and then your Neighborhood Board.

NeighborhoodBOD@OldeIvy.org

Reserve Plan

John Bennison, Chair, Reserve Committee

What is a Reserve Plan?

A Reserve Plan combines an engineer's maintenance schedule with a financial model to budget for repairs. The engineering schedule includes a list of needed maintenance projects, a proposed schedule for required maintenance projects, and a professional estimate of how much this work will cost. Note: The maintenance inventory for the Neighborhood includes about 100 separate items.

The financial model projects the Reserve Fund balance into the future (typically 20 years ahead). It balances projected maintenance costs (after

inflation) against the accumulation of regular contributions and fund earnings.

Why is a Reserve Plan important?

Some potential maintenance expenses are large; for example, road resurfacing alone would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. Without advance planning, a homeowners association can suddenly find that it has huge unfunded expenses. With an appropriate reserve plan, those major expenses would be amortized over decades through small, regular HOA contributions. A good reserve plan results in proper maintenance funding with the lowest possible cost.

Without reserve planning, the HOA is likely to experience budget deficits, sudden special assessments, and soaring HOA dues. In addition, a well funded reserve fund will make it easier to sell your home. Prospective buyers are reluctant to buy into a situation that has had or may require special assessments for major repairs. Some banks will not finance the purchase of condominium homes where the HOA does not have adequate reserves.

Olde Ivy Neighborhood Reserve Committee

The committee was appointed in 2009 with Valerie Jacob, Jerry Crow, and John Bennison as members. The group reviewed the old Reserve Plan our neighborhood had received from the builder, and recommended to the Board that the Neighborhood obtain a more current and complete engineering section of the study from a different vendor.

In early 2010, the Board engaged a firm to perform a new engineering study and create a new financial model. The committee worked closely with the engineer throughout the survey process and reviewed multiple drafts and versions of the report.

In early 2011, the current Board received a presentation on the Reserve Plan.

Engineering findings included identification of the following:

- Safety issues

- Maintenance opportunities to avert potential damage
- Maintenance opportunities to protect investments
- Maintenance activities that are due or overdue

Among the financial findings were:

- Financial shortfalls predicted within a decade, with large and growing shortfalls thereafter
- Opportunities to avoid waste in the maintenance schedule
- Recommendations to improve the accuracy of the Plan
- Alternative contribution schedules including some with lower increases

The Reserve Committee stands ready to support the Infrastructure Committee as they manage maintenance and the Neighborhood Board as they budget for maintenance expenses.

Neighborhood Safety

Miriam Lancaster

Streets in Olde Ivy are narrow and visibility is sometimes limited. We have a number of fitness walkers and dog walkers in the neighborhood and seem to have more children and grandchildren than ever! Please be mindful of traffic safety.

The posted speed limit is 15 mph and the Stop signs mean STOP. Please be considerate of your neighbors on foot and avoid potential tragedy by lowering your speed and observing the Stop signs. We especially urge caution on the blind curve on Ivy Ridge Drive. Please stay in your lane on this curve.

Parents, grandparents and pet owners, please keep your children and pets safe by keeping them out of traffic – the neighborhood streets and parking areas are not play spaces.

Please don't feed the ducks . . .

Jerry Crow

Or any birds at Olde Ivy, actually. As much as we all enjoy the sight of wild birds congregating around a feeding station, we can't have bird feeders at Olde Ivy without also attracting rodents. Bird seed, hanging suet baskets, corncobs, or any other kind of treat you may put out for the birds—whether in a hanging feeder or spilled out onto the ground—attracts furry creatures of the non-loveable kind: rats. Unfortunately, rats have been spotted in the neighborhood.

Our pest control vendor has notified us that they will not include rat control as part of our contracted service if bird feeders remain in Olde Ivy. So, if you have a bird feeder on your deck or patio, please remove it immediately. If you have leased your condo, please inform your tenants of this requirement.

Thanks very much for your cooperation.

Pool Repair/Settlement

Miriam Lancaster

In late December 2010, the Neighborhood Board of Directors accepted an offer of settlement of claims against John Wieland Homes in the amount of \$35,000. This amount is obviously insufficient to compensate the Neighborhood Association for the costs associated with the repair of the pool, which totaled \$146,000 in construction costs and \$55,000 in other costs, including engineering costs, other repairs (some related to the construction defect and some unrelated), and legal fees during the repair process and in furtherance of the claims.

The settlement was the result of a demand which was made on Wieland in August 2009, followed by the filing of a lawsuit in early 2010. After the filing of the lawsuit, the Board continued to negotiate with Wieland as the litigation progressed. Unfortunately, Wieland was unwilling or unable to meet our original demand for the full costs of the repairs, and indicated the willingness

to fully litigate the case through the filing of motions and, if necessary, a trial.

The decision to settle was not made lightly. At the time of settlement, Wieland was prepared to file two motions for the court's consideration. If either motion had been successful, the case would have been dismissed and the Neighborhood Association would have received nothing. After consultation with legal counsel, the Board of Directors determined that the risks involved in continuing to litigate this matter were greater than the possibility of prevailing on both motions and at trial. The Board also determined that it would not be in the Neighborhood Association's best financial interests to incur the costs of continued litigation.

The settlement proceeds of \$35,000 have been placed in the Neighborhood Association reserves to offset costs that were incurred for the repairs and withdrawn from the reserves.

Please recognize the members of the Neighborhood Board, past and present, for the extraordinary time, effort and talent donated to the community to successfully repair the pool and manage the process. Although residents may be disappointed by the outcome of this litigation, and those involved in the process are not fully satisfied with the result, the repair effort was successful, the construction contracts were brought in on time and within budget, and the pool is a lovely asset that we all enjoy.

Clubhouse Committee

Chair, TBD

At this time it appears there is no Clubhouse Committee. We do have one volunteer, Nancy Sample. If you would like to volunteer for this committee, send Nancy an email at nsample@charter.net.

Covenants Committee

Susan Constantine, Chair

The Covenants Committee consists of Susan Constantine (Chairperson), Jesse Liebman, and www.oldeivyatvinings.com

Don Wagner. Susan and Jesse live in Townhomes and Don resides in the Condos.

The primary goal of the Committee is to ensure that the Covenants are adhered to, thus maintaining the integrity of the Neighborhood. Volunteers are always welcome.

The Committee can be contacted at Covenants@oldeivy.org

Communications Committee

Jerry Crow, Chair

Our newly reconstituted committee intends to publish our newsletter four times a year, beginning with this edition. More importantly, we are working to revamp the community website, www.oldeivyatvinings.com. Instead of its current static form, we are developing an interactive website to include some blog-like features that will encourage a freer flow of information.

Our goal is to provide a website with up-to-date information including welcome information for new residents, safety and maintenance information, a listing of neighborhood events, and also discussion of significant issues beyond our gates. The website will also be a tool through which residents can more readily contact their boards, committees, and neighborhood managements companies.

Our committee members include Leslie Maddock and Charlie Ryan. Miriam Lancaster is working with us as the Neighborhood Board's representative. We are all very thankful to our technical advisor John Bennison, who is leading the website effort. We hope to submit a plan for a revamped website to the Neighborhood Board in June. Suggestions are welcome. Please contact me by email: jaybirdcrow@charter.net.

We welcome new members to our committee. The next meeting is set for 7:00 PM May 19, in the community clubhouse.

Fitness Center

Scott Schuck, Chair

Recently, the Fitness Center Committee of Buddy and Victoria Fowlkes, Julie Rascoe and Scott Schuck worked with the Neighborhood Board to replace a broken treadmill. We have a plan to replace the other, older treadmill when it fails. Please let us know if you experience any problems with the older treadmill.

Also, we secured a contractor to make the following repairs of equipment:

- Replace handlebar controls on the elliptical machine.
- Replace pedal straps on the Life Fitness cycle.
- Replace elbow pad on the leg raise stand.
- Repair/replace bench pads.
- Replace frayed cables on pull-down and leg press machines.
- Replace any grips on Fitness Center equipment.

We expect these repairs to be completed by mid May, if not sooner. If you have any questions or suggestions; or if you want to participate in the Fitness Center Committee, please contact Julie Rascoe, jrascoe@nuesoft.com or Scott Schuck, swschuck@earthlink.net

Thank you!

Landscape Committee

Karin Baldzer and Sandra Zelly, Co-Chairs

Sandra and Karin share responsibilities for landscape issues. Please contact Sandra for any issues north of the clubhouse and Karin for any issues south of the clubhouse. We appreciate your contacting us regarding any landscape problems.

This year we have an excellent committee. Members are: Sara Cline, Sal Esposito, Valerie Jacobs, Leslie Maddock, Melinda McDonald, Charles Moon, Al Morrison, Sandy Nelson, Cecily Sapp, Pat Stuart, and Gay Watson. All

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committee members share the responsibility in maintaining our complex. The next newsletter will provide more details on this.

Below is a list of tasks that have been completed by Valley Crest, our new landscape contractor:

- Erosion issue correction
- Pine straw installation
- Major irrigation repairs
- Installation of rain/freeze sensors on all five irrigation controllers
- Replacement of many shrubs
- Trimming of crepe myrtles/roses
- Replacement of sod in a few areas
- Installation of seasonal color

In addition, we have had Arborguard provide root-zone treatment for our most distressed trees. We did not have sufficient funds to replace trees that were lost this year but we are hoping to do so in January 2012.

Unfortunately, we will not be able to do everything that is needed this year, so please be patient with us. We have a limited budget and have tried to address the most important issues first as well as those that affect the appearance of our property. There may be more work done this fall, as funds allow.

We would like your assistance, specifically on two issues:

1. Please contact us if you see any **irrigation leaks** or sprinklers on during the day. All sprinkler zones are set to start running around 3:30 AM, so none should be on after 10:00 AM. This will help us keep down our water irrigation costs.
2. **Pet owners PLEASE** work with us to keep our areas free of pet waste. There is always a “doggie station” near you. Sandra and I often have to walk the area with Valley Crest representatives and I cannot tell you how many times I have had to remove dog waste from my shoes.

Pet waste is also a health hazard, so please be responsible. In addition, please steer your dog towards the pine straw. The yellow patches of dead grass that mar our lawns result from dog urine.

Thank you very much to all of you who participated in the Neighborhood Spring Cleanup.

Karin Baldzer (770) 444-3880, cell (404) 936-6702) daphne2@earthlink.net

Sandra Zelle (770) 333-1908, cell (678) 521-1187) long-zelle@mindspring.com

Pool Committee

Dan Gonsalves, Chair

The Neighborhood Pool opens on Sunday, May 1, 2011 and closes on September 30. Pool hours are 6:30 AM to 11:30 PM.

The pool is one of our most cherished amenities, but it is available only to Olde Ivy residents, their family, and no more than two guests per visit per family. Since it's a community resource, it's important that everyone who uses the pool or the pool area follows these basic rules for security, safety and courtesy.

Security

- To enter the pool area, use a magnetic security device, a grey fob, to open the gate. If you do not have a grey fob or yours does not work, please contact your property management company representative.
- Close the gate after you enter or leave the pool area. Please do not let anyone into the pool area that you do not know.
- Enter the pool area from one of the gates. Do not enter or leave the fitness center through the fitness center glass doors.
- Pool parties are not allowed unless pre-approved by the Neighborhood Board of Directors.

Safety

- There is no lifeguard. Please supervise children carefully whether in the pool or in the pool area.
- For emergencies, use the special-purpose telephone to dial 911. It is located on the far left column supporting the back porch of the clubhouse.
- Do not bring any glass or other breakables into the pool area.

Courtesy

- There is no pool attendant. Please use the trash receptacles for your trash. Don't leave water bottles, sunscreen tubes, food wrappers, cigarette butts and the like behind.
- Please remove all of your personal belongs such as towels and toys when you leave the pool area.
- Please keep the bathroom areas clean. Do not put paper towels in the toilets.
- If you notice a broken chair, lounge or umbrella, please place it to the left of the fitness center door.
- If you observe problems in the pool area, please notify your property management company representative.

Enjoy the pool and have a wonderful summer!

Social Committee

Toby Walsh, Chair

The mission of the Social Committee is to support events that will foster a sense of community and friendship among Olde Ivy residents. To help accomplish this, we hope more of our talented and resourceful residents will become involved in planning and implementing these events.

There is no budget for social events this year. This means that we really need your creativity and energy to help plan events for the neighborhood to enjoy. The committee meets the first Tuesday of every month. To join the committee or help in any way with events, please contact me at tobyfwalsh@gmail.com.

The following are the Social Committee members for 2011:

- Toby Walsh – Chair
- Gay Gunter
- Sandy Christian
- Joe Thome
- Marthelle Cherry
- Pamela Weathers

For the Christmas season last year, we provided decorations on the gates and clubhouse. Many thanks to those who helped with the community decoration: Tom & Susan Constantine, Keiffer Phillips, Patricia Brown, Miriam Lancaster, Bill & Louise Nichols, Kathleen Liebman and Gary Walsh.

Condos

Valerie Jacob, President

We are happy to confirm that it is our plan to have both of the buildings' exteriors repainted this spring and we are currently obtaining competitive quotes to do so. We are confident that sufficient funds have been budgeted into our reserve account for this purpose. The project will likely commence sometime prior to June 1. You will receive ample notification regarding the scheduling and any preparation required of the homeowner.

Condos Financial Report

Miriam Lancaster, Treasurer

2010 was an excellent year for the Condominium Association. Due to reductions in our insurance premium and other cost savings, the Association ended the year under budget. At the end of the first quarter of 2011, there is a balance in the reserve account of \$75,435.49 and a balance of \$28,024.79 in our operating account.

The reserve fund is designed to provide funding for planned recurring costs, primarily painting and roofing, without the necessity for a large special assessment. Currently, \$60 of your monthly assessment is allocated to the Condos reserve fund. Maintaining the financial strength of the Association is the primary goal of the Board. If you have any questions regarding Association finances, please contact Miriam Lancaster at lancaster4792@gmail.com.

See separate attachment for Financial Reports from Heritage

Townhomes

Charlie Ryan, President

I am pleased to report that the finances of the Townhomes Association, with respect to both reserves and current operations, are in excellent shape. We are thankful that virtually every owner has remained current on dues. Thanks to the foresight of our previous boards, we do not anticipate the need for special assessments, even when large expenditures such as roof replacements are required. A special thanks to Scott Schuck, whose term as Townhomes Board President finished at the end of 2010.

Besides being graced by the colors of spring and efforts of the community Landscape Committee, this year, 38 Townhome units in seven buildings will benefit from Phase Two of our exterior maintenance program. Owners will be notified in advance of work to repair and repaint exterior trim. In Phase One last year, 53 units were done. The remaining 29 units will be done next year. We are repainting every six years and reserves are adequate for this. Additionally, every Townhome will have its deck and/or patio pressure washed and treated this year.

Insurance premiums for coverage of the Townhome structures have stabilized because we have had no claims for three years. A reminder: There is a \$20,000 deductible on the Townhome community insurance policy that covers the exterior structure of your building. You are

responsible for the first \$20,000 of any claim. Be sure the insurance policy covering the contents of your home also pays for that \$20,000 deductible, subject of course, to your own policy's deductible. That coverage is available at a very reasonable premium, if it is not already included in your policy.

Our property manager is Ken Baggs of Heritage Properties. You can reach him at (770)200-8262 or kbaggs@heritageproperty.com. He should be your first call for any issues of maintenance/repair of your Townhome.

The generic email address for the Townhome Board of Directors is TownhomesBOD@OldeIvy.org. This will get your message to current BOD members Keiffer Philips, Nancy Sample and Charlie Ryan, and to Jerry Crow, who is the Board treasurer.