

Grounds & Security Report (John Ward)

GROUNDS

1. Issues:

Problem:

Residents and visitors who walk through other residents' patio plantings and even across other residents' patios without permission

Please do not do this. Against Association policy – and common courtesy.

Association policy reserves to the first-floor resident's exclusive use all of the area in front of their unit out to the main sidewalk or out 20 feet from the building, whichever is closer

Problem:

Residents and visitors who play in and around the buildings, making considerable noise while playing, and disturbing residents in surrounding buildings.

Please do not do this, and please make sure other members of your household and your visitors do not do this. Against Association policy – can result in fines and other sanctions.

Problem:

Residents and visitors who use as a play area the pool plaza, the wall around the pool plaza, and the plantings around the pool area.

Please do not do this, and please keep other members of your household and your visitors from doing this. The pool plaza and the plantings around the pool area are **not** a playground.

2. Lawn areas:

Lawn maintenance:

2009 second year for Lunseth Lawn Care Professionals at Meadow Creek

2009 very difficult year for lawns although October rains made a big difference

Developing three-year program for improving Meadow Creek's lawns

Problems with geese:

Continued challenge to limit mess and problems caused by geese.

Part of concern: residents have slipped on goose feces, fallen and hurt themselves, and goose feces pose a health hazard.

Owners can help:

When geese start to gather near your building, it would help greatly if you would chase them away anytime you see them. If the geese go to a place and are repeatedly chased away, they will stop returning. **Making the geese uncomfortable coming to your building will make the difference.**

Association owes a big "Thank You" to Pam Brabender-Kley, owner of 806-4, who has volunteered to run the geese off Meadow Creek property on a regular basis using her hunting dogs.

Problems with animals:

Nature areas border Meadow Creek on three sides.

One consequence of mild winters: over-population of animals including raccoons, chipmunks, squirrels, voles and mice.

Solution for keeping raccoons out of dumpsters in trash buildings seems to be working. Please notify the Office if you see any raccoon damage in your trash building.

Gas grills:

Grills repaired, cleaned and painted each spring and fall.

Serviced as needed during the warm weather months.

Please report anyone abusing the grills promptly to the Association office.

New style of grill installed at six locations: behind 825, east of 708, north of 1010, east of 1007, behind 817, and behind 1015.

3. Trees:

Trees trimmed on 6 to 7 year program.

Lost several more mature trees in 2008 and 2009.

Re-started tree re-planting program in 2005 and continued in 2006.

Retained services of landscape designer for 2008.

Looking at significant increase in new trees for 2010.

4. Rain gardens:

New approach to dealing with run-off

Goal: reduce problems created by run-off on sidewalks and in parking lots, especially with ice during the freeze-thaw periods of the early and late winter

Rain gardens capture run off.

Native plant species with especially deep roots allow the water to sink into the ground much more easily than otherwise.\

Trying at two locations: between 814 and 816, and east of the pool plaza

If successful, will install rain gardens elsewhere around Meadow Creek

For a description, go online to: <http://metroblooms.org/what-is-a-raingarden.php>

5. Sidewalks:

Over 1.1 miles of sidewalks in Meadow Creek.

Major maintenance and replacement issue.

Replacement of sidewalks: looking at introducing more curves to replace sharp angles. (See new sidewalks in front of 1002/04/06 for example of where this has been done.)

New technique used in 2009: sandjacking. Allows the leveling of sidewalks without the holes left by mudjacking.

Snow removal:

For 2009-10 winter, staff will again be fully responsible for all sidewalks and paths.

Using sweeper and portable blower for light snows:

More efficient and better results

Less grit and ice melt to track into buildings

Staff starting earlier to clear as much as possible before new snow walked on. Work on walks on north sides of buildings first.

Trying to work smarter to minimize staff overtime.

6. Snow plowing:

Similar to lawn maintenance, new specifications for snow removal developed in 2007 Miller Maintenance retained again for 2009-10 winter.

Owners with garages: Please keep a shovel or old broom inside the entrance of your garage and push/sweep away any snow or slush that may accumulate there. This will go a long ways toward preventing your garage door from freezing to the concrete floor of the garage during really cold weather. This is especially true for north facing garages that get no sun.

7. Patios:

Association plantings program:

Permanent plantings and landscaping improvements: Association will pay half, not to exceed \$480 (if plantings not previously installed). Can work out (no interest) payment plan for unit owner's share if work done through Association.

Already scheduling work for 2010.

Talk to the Association Office about alternatives to shrubs and rock for permanent plantings, and about new designs and materials for edging planting areas.

Major ongoing focus: Working with unit owners who already have patio plantings to make sure they are well maintained. The Association trims the shrubs in your patio plantings twice during the growing season (unless you ask to be put on the "do not trim" list), but you are responsible for all other maintenance.

Patio slabs:

\$1,200 (cost est. for 2010) for new 8' by 14' slab, and restoration around the slab.

Owner's expense, but payment plan available if work done through Association.

April 10, 2010 deadline for scheduling late May, 2010 replacement.

Looking at different patio slab designs. Trying to introduce more rounded corners.

Bird feeders:

Can be a significant problem if seed not cleaned up from ground regularly.

Seed on ground attracts squirrels, voles, mice and other animals that can create problems.

Please: absolutely no feeding of ducks, geese and small animals. It is nice to be kind to wild animals, **but** with so much nature area around Meadow Creek, we need to work hard to not attract ducks, geese and small animals. They are a nuisance, leave messes that need to be cleaned up, and can do considerable damage.

Association owes a special "Thank you" to Jerry Coffman, the owner of 815-7, who has volunteered many hours of his time and done an incredible job of beautifying the entrance patio of the Office Center.

SECURITY

1. Crime prevention:

Work closely with Hopkins Police Department.

Review monthly report of police calls to Meadow Creek.

Sponsor events that allow neighbors to get to know each other:

National Night Out pool social: first Tuesday in August

Community-wide garage and yard sale: first Saturday in June, and if enough interest, third Saturday in September

Want to encourage everyone to report problems to Hopkins Police Department (911) and Meadow Creek office (952-935-9565)

2. Crime and residents' vehicles:

Theft **from** vehicle: 5 through September (down from 9 for the same period in 2008)

Theft **of** vehicles: 1 so far in 2009, 3 in 2008, 4 in 2007, none in 2006, two in 2005

Low incidence: over 700 vehicles parked in surface lots each night.

However, a low incidence does not help residents whose vehicles are damaged, or still worse, stolen.

Do not leave anything inside your vehicle.

Items covered with blankets are still attractive targets.

Report any suspicious activity in parking lots: individuals loitering or going from vehicle to vehicle. Call 911 immediately!

Association working on installation of security cameras for at least some parking lots, starting with Lot 2 and then Lot 4

3. Keys:

Unit keys retained by Association Office:

Kept in locked cabinets at all times

Protected by a burglar alarm after hours

4. Second-floor meter rooms:

New locking latch-sets installed on all meter room doors during 2006.

No security issues with those areas since then.

5. Vigilance:

We need your help in making sure that we do not have any crime problems at Meadow Creek! We have a very low crime rate. Let's keep it that way. You can make the difference!

When you are outside, be alert, especially at night.

If you have a cell phone, bring it with you.

Look for anything unusual. If you see anything unusual or peculiar, make a note of it.

Take down a license plate number if the situation involves a vehicle. There have been several situations in the past year where this information would have allowed us to catch a perpetrator. If you come into your building, and there is someone you do

not recognize loitering in the hallway or laundry room, talk to them if you are comfortable. Otherwise, call the Association office (952-935-9565) if it is between 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. At other times, call 911.

Don't ever hesitate, thinking that you may be making a fuss over nothing! The Hopkins Police Department welcomes suspicion calls to 911. The Association office wants to know about any situation, which may represent a problem or even a potential problem.