

# LRMHA Spring Newsletter 2023

## Assessments

Our HOA assessments are always due in January, April, July, and October. While almost everyone pays on time and some even pay the entire annual amount in advance, there are always a few people who don't realize that a payment is due until it is already late. While Northern Virginia Management doesn't offer autopay services, you can set up a periodic automatic payment with your own bank to make quarterly assessment payments more convenient – just remember to update the amount to reflect any annual CPI adjustments that may be required starting with every January's payments.

## Waste Removal Service

So far Champion Services has done a great job and arrives promptly to pick up garbage on Mondays and Thursdays and recycling on Wednesdays. Do NOT place any garbage out with recycling. Please check the LRMHA web site for restrictions on what can be placed out for pickup.

Please remember garbage should be in **heavy black trash bags and placed in a garbage can or double bagged in heavy black trash bags and placed out by 6 AM on the day of a pickup**. Other bags are too flimsy and attract animals. This results in garbage strewn on people's property and common ground. Yard waste is picked up with garbage and should be in large paper contractor bags that are available through home and landscaping supply merchants.

Recycling should be consolidated and securely placed in cardboard boxes, paper bags or reusable plastic bins. Please pack recycling to prevent loose papers or boxes from blowing around. Plastic bags clog the recycling equipment so **do not use plastic bags to dispose of recycling or leaves**.

Other recycling options:

- Plastic grocery bags may be placed in recycling bins at many grocery stores.
- Glass may be placed in the purple container at the back of the Mason District Government Center parking lot at 6507 Columbia Pike in Annandale.
- Mom's Organic Market in the Mosaic District, 8298 Glass Alley, Fairfax, has bins for compost, corks, tablets, eyeglasses and athletic shoes.
- Salvation Army at 6528 Little River Turnpike accepts drop-offs (drive-thru in rear) of many types of items and provides receipts for tax deductions. Donation Hours: Mon-Sat 8 AM- 6 PM.
- Search online for local electronics recycling – policies and costs vary.

## Time for Fun?

Now that COVID-19 is not as prevalent, let us know if you are interested in neighborhood social events, held outside or inside. Let an LRMHA Board member know or send a message via the contact form on our **LRMHA.ORG** website. What would you like to do? What days and times are best - or are never good for you? Possibilities include:

## LITTLE RIVER MEWS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

- A Fourth of July afternoon cookout is tentatively scheduled in the lower half of the traffic circle with drinks, hot dogs, hamburgers, condiments, and soft drinks provided by LRMHA Board members (no LRMHA funds are spent on this). Attendees can bring their own special entrees, side dishes, and desserts to share. Please bring chairs so you can sit and chat. The area will have two tents, a grill, a couple of large tables to serve food and beverages. We have had small ground fireworks and sparklers at past celebrations. All residents and a reasonable number of guests are welcome to join in the fun. Help us plan for attendance by signing up for this event on [Irmha.org](http://Irmha.org). We won't turn anyone away, it will just help us make sure we have enough on hand if you can let us know you'll be joining in.
- Adopt-a-Spot: Specialized landscaping services are expensive for planting and tending to flowering plants and shrubs. We can save money and improve the views by strategically planting and watering wildflowers, hardy perennials or flowering shrubs in areas where grass has difficulty growing. Volunteers are needed for this – see one of the Board members about starting a project.
- A National Night Out with police introducing themselves and offering safety tips to promote police-community partnership.  
*Our police station is NOT the one at the Mason District Government Center; it is located in Franconia at 6121 Franconia Rd., Alexandria. The non-emergency number is 703-922-0889. Dial 911 for a police or fire emergency. For a mental health or substance use emergency, dial 988 or in Virginia you can also call 1-800-HOPE (4673).*
- General get-togethers to meet and get to know your neighbors.
- Group walks – we can meet in the circle and walk around the nearby streets in the evening after it starts to cool down or at Green Spring or other Mason District Parks in the early morning.

### **Upcoming Fairfax County Construction Project**

Crews from Fairfax County will be accessing a small patch of our common ground behind 4502 through 4508 to correct a drainage problem for the pond in the adjoining property. This work has been rolled into the sidewalk project that runs from Little River Run to Hillbrook Drive by George Mason Regional Library. The Board approved a minor extension of the existing common ground easement to facilitate the project and LRMHA will receive \$110 as compensation for the extended easement. In addition, the County has assumed responsibility for repairing any damage to that area due to the work or any future failures of the drain or pipes.

From the Fairfax County Department of Transportation web page:

“This project proposes to fill in one of the pedestrian gaps along the Little River Turnpike corridor, providing 1,550 linear feet of nine foot wide curb abutted sidewalk between Hillbrook Drive and Little River Run Drive on the eastbound side of the road. The project features new pedestrian signalization (a Walk/Don't Walk sign at Little River Turnpike and Hillbrook Drive), bus stop loading pads, curbs and ramps, gutters, retaining walls and drainage improvements. As part of the project, water line and overhead utility relocation will be required.”

Because this project includes an extension of the sidewalk through the utility island at our entrance (leaving the ingress and egress lanes in place) and elimination of the “no parking” area at our entrance, we can expect that there will be a temporary disruption near our neighborhood entrance. We anticipate that this project will start in August or September.

### **Home Inspections**

Members of the Architectural Review Board (ARB) will be doing walk-arounds to evaluate and photograph the condition of each property and note where improvements are needed or violations exist. Weather permitting, inspections will start on June 25<sup>th</sup>. Please do not interfere with the ARB team while they conduct their reviews. If you've been putting off work previously noted, now is the time to get to it. Remember, any change to the exteriors, including color, style, or materials must be approved by the Board. Because many homeowners have used colors that are not included on our color chart, ALL exterior painting, deck staining and re-siding require submission of colors for review and approval by the ARB so that we can ensure all homes eventually have the correct colors and materials and maintain everyone's property values. Forms and color charts are available on our web site, LRMHA.org. Submit requests to [nvm@northernvirginiamanagement.com](mailto:nvm@northernvirginiamanagement.com).

The ARB is comprised of three members from the Board of Directors plus two appointed volunteers. The ARB is responsible for periodic reviews of all property for compliance with neighborhood standards, reviews of requests for approval of exterior work, evolution of ARB guidelines to accommodate changing technologies, laws and regulations, and performance of pre-sale inspections. ARB members work together to develop and maintain a consistent awareness of the Architectural Guidelines, LRMHA bylaw limitations, Virginia and County code changes, and changes in materials and technologies that members may wish to take advantage of when improving their homes. They ensure that all requests for modifications benefit from well-informed technical reviews and consistent application of rules, covenant and bylaw limitations, and Virginia and County code changes to reviews of members' property. When changes in market availability of materials or emerging technologies warrant a change in the Architectural Guidelines, they can and do alter the Architectural Guidelines in response to members' requests. ARB members are Pamela Rinehart (chair), Julie Soininen (vice chair), Kristen Newett (secretary), Pam Broberg, and Jessica Miller.

### **Amendment to Architectural Standards approved by ARB**

The ARB finalized an amendment to the Architectural Standards on June 4<sup>th</sup> to remove the requirement to obtain neighbors' signatures for most modification requests. The amendment also permits alternative materials for siding and the placement of solar panels on the front roofs of homes for improved performance. The amendment has been published on the LRMHA.ORG web site. LRMHA Board approval is anticipated during the June 12<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. A new Exterior Modification Form has also been posted to replace the old one that was in use for nearly forty years.

### **Watch your pets**

Please keep your pets indoors when you cannot be outside with them and walk dogs on leashes for their safety and the safety of residents. Coyotes, foxes, black vultures, raccoons, and other predators can spell disaster for an unattended pet and encounters with cars can be devastating.

Virginia state law requires that all dogs must be given adequate shelter during extreme weather. The law protects dogs when temperatures are 85 degrees and higher, as well 32 degrees and below. Additionally, dogs must also have shelter for hurricanes, tornadoes, and severe weather warnings. Fairfax County law requires that all dogs be on a leash when not on an owner's property, unless they are in a county-sanctioned, off-leash dog park.

**Landscaping**

Despite winter and spring deluges, our drainage improvements held and nothing flooded. The areas behind the fences are now draining quickly and we've noticed a marked reduction in the number of mosquitoes that always plagued us due to previous swampiness.

Trees on the circle were trimmed to make it easier for fire trucks to clear the area under the branches, a large tree that fell onto our property from the County's parkland was cut up and removed, and dead branches were pruned from the cherry tree near 4502.

The gate latch between 2019 and 2021 is scheduled to be fixed. The fence gate between 4529 and 4531 will be cut at the bottom to make it easier to open and close.

The Board is exploring using ground cover versus grass in common areas where grass is not doing well for ease of care, erosion control, nitrogen and carbon storage and savings on maintenance. Sample areas have already been seeded to evaluate what mixes work best. We are also testing planting portions of the steep sunny slopes in the water retention area with wildflower mixtures to add color and provide a haven for pollinators.

We appreciate the work people put in on their yards and gardens. The flowers and flowering trees and shrubs are beautiful and increase home values.

If any LRMHA member has landscaping or other concerns, please submit them to the Board through [nvm@northernvirginiamanagement.com](mailto:nvm@northernvirginiamanagement.com).

**LRMHA BOARD OFFICERS**

President:	Pamela Rinehart (4533)	Member at Large:	Bob Estadt (4548)
Vice President:	Karyn Selko (4518)	Member at Large:	Jessica Miller(4502)
Secretary:	Pam Broberg (4524)		

Owners may listen in on LRMHA Board meetings (except for Executive sessions where sensitive matters or privacy exclusions apply) but may not participate unless specifically asked to do so. At the end of Board Meetings, 15 minutes will be provided if needed for members who wish to bring up concerns. Contact Northern Virginia Management for call-in information. Board meetings are announced on **LRMHA.org** and take place at 7 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

Remaining 2023 LRMHA Board meetings will be held on June 12, July 17, August 14, September 13, October 23, and December 18. The **Annual Meeting of members will be held November 13.**

**Management Co. Move**

Northern Virginia Management's office has moved one entrance over. The address is the same, 4306 Evergreen Lane, Ste. 101, Annandale VA 22003, and the suite number and building location of the offices is the same except one doorway closer to Evergreen Lane.