



**Neighborhood
Residents
Council of BRANDERMILL**

A Committee of Brandermill Community Association Board of Directors

NRC Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, September 15, 2009, 7:00 p.m.
Brandermill Woods

1. Call Regular Meeting to Order
2. Member Voice 15 minutes
3. Motion to Approve Minutes – June 16, 2009 3 minutes
4. Chair’s Report 5 minutes
5. Committee Reports
 - A. NRC Liaison to the BCA Board: Robert Strickland 3 minutes
 - B. Membership Committee: Bev Bell 3 minutes
 - C. Communications Committee: Mamie McNeal 3 minutes
6. Treasurer’s Report: Mary Jane Zander 3 minutes
7. Status of the Master Plan with BCA Board of Directors - Frances Hillman ... 3 minutes
8. Nominating Committee – Frances Hillman 3 minutes
9. On-Line Surveys – Bob Strickland 3 minutes
10. Discussion of By-laws 45 minutes
11. Announcements 1 minute

NRC Meeting: Tuesday, November 17, 2009, 7:00 p.m.

12. Adjournment

For updated information, visit www.BrandermillNRC.com

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Neighborhood Residents Council

September 15, 2009

OPEN MEETING MINUTES

CALL MEMBERSHIP MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Frances Hillman, NRC Chair, on Sept 15, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the meeting room at Brandermill Woods, 14311 Brandermill Woods Trail, Midlothian, Virginia 23112.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Doug Camp – Barne’s Spring
Richard Kury – Cove Ridge
Tanya McGinnis – Huntgate Woods
Frances Hillman – Huntgate Woods
Beverly Bell – McTyre’s Cove
Mary Jane Zander – McTyre’s Cove
Robert Strickland – Oak Springs
Mamie McNeal – Planter’s Wood

Forrest Clapp – Shallowford Trace
Gerald and Christine Barnes – Sterling’s
Bridge
Dave Wilson – Three Bridges
Karen Gammons – Two Notch
Hamid Ghorashi – Walker’s Ferry
Rubie Gatlin – Long Shadow
Mark Smith – Cove Ridge

MEMBER VOICE

Mamie Mc Neal (Planters Wood) read a statement about covenants and encouraged residents to get involved. See statement at end of these minutes.

Karen Gammons (Two Notch) commented that enforcement of covenants should not focus on decoration in yards. She wanted a planned community that kept property values up and cars off trailers. She felt the worst offenders should be contacted first and not waste time on decorative items.

Richard Kury (Cove Ridge) explained the group organized by John McLenagan and crime prevention committee disagreed with his understanding of National Night Out. He said that the BCA Board paid \$2,000 to have a party that was not an authorized neighborhood watch event because the focus of the certified Neighborhood Watch program is to get neighbors to know each other. He was upset that BCA paid money for a program that is rewarding those who don’t understand the program or its function. He is now on the County Board for Neighborhood Watch. He wants a program to reward real neighborhood watches and that NRC should put together a budget to reward Neighborhood Watch in a positive way. He said that the county has a program with specific requirements for certification, and they offer training at no cost. It was suggested that he contact the Activities Committee to offer the program.

Jerry Barnes (Sterling's Bridge) reported a security light was out at the Brandermill storage area. He had reported it to the community manager, but nothing has been done. He is concerned about break ins at the storage area by PSI.

Bev Bell (McTyre's Cove) responded to a letter distributed to the community about a carved hawk in a resident's yard. She said that she likes the hawk but is concerned that it may start a precedent of having to approve the variety of views of art and favors the placement of the sculpture in the back yard of the resident.

Hamid Ghorashi (Walker's Ferry) asked for an explanation of the hawk issue, and a discussion ensued. Mamie McNeal responded that it is a living tree that was cut so that its trunk resembles an hawk. Frances Hillman explained the process of ARB and appeal. Richard Kury pointed out that the ARB standards change over time, and he wants a notification process when changes happen. .

MINUTES

MOTION: First Vice Chair Strickland moved to approve the minutes of the last NRC meeting.

MOTION SECONDED: Mamie McNeal seconded it.

MOTION CARRIED: Unanimous.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Hillman reported that Diane Cardea has been asked by BCA Board President Joyce Rowe to organize a task force to review the entire process of covenant inspections, re-inspections, notifications and enforcements. At that time, Ms. Cardea had 14 neighborhoods that would expressed interest in giving the Covenant Task Force feedback but would like more people within other neighborhoods. If your neighborhood is interested in participating in these meetings, please contact her (dcardea@verizon.net 744-3002).

Chair Hillman attended a County Comprehensive Planning meeting but asked BCA board member and member of the Chesterfield comprehensive planning committee, Keith McGuinness, to discuss its function. Director McGinnis is one of four Brandermill residents who serves on the County Comprehensive Planning committee. He explained that the current plan is 25 years old and being revised. The planning process is broken into three phases which will occur over the next 18 months. They include : (1) where are we now, (2) where we want to be and (3) how we should get there. The committee is currently finished with the first phase and entering the second phase. Opportunity for public input is available during meetings which are going to be

held in each of the county's magisterial districts. Interested community members may attend any of the meetings. The web site for this project is www.chesterfield.gov/cp.

Mike Hatch has agreed to speak at the November NRC meeting to explain changes at the Brandermill Country Club.

Chair Hillman continued in her call for a Secretary for the NRC and requested that volunteers come forward to serve on the nominating committee for the next NRC board of officers. She also thanked Bev Bell for her continued hard work on membership.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership Committee Chair Bev Bell reported that she had two tables at the 4th of July and Neighborhood Night Out. She signed up five new NRC reps, so 49 of the 79 neighborhoods are currently represented.

Communications Committee Chair Mamie McNeal reported hits on the NRC website are down from our previous high of 3,000. She requested that neighborhood reps submit short articles for the web site about community achievements and activities.

First Vice Chair and BCA Liaison Bob Strickland reported the BCA Board has approved a task force for the master plan. The task force should be in place by January. He called for increased participation with the Master Plan as well as encouraging their neighbors to get involved with the Brandermill community and the NRC.

He invited members to submit questions that could be answered by a survey. Issues that were suggested included those like the "hawk" issue or community feelings about panhandling. He also noted that there is no county ordinance on panhandling.

Treasurer Jane Zander reported that the NRC got their budget request approved by the BCA, enabling the NRC to implement some of the ideas that we have worked on for the past year. NRC has \$270 dollars left in our 2009 budget.

NRC BY-LAWS

Chair Hillman outlined changes to the revised NRC by-laws.

MOTION: Bob Strickland moved that that By Laws be approved.

MOTION SECONDED: Jane Zander.

DISCUSSION: Mamie McNeal made suggestions to modify the responsibilities the Communications Committee to reflect only technical responsibilities.

MOTION: Mamie McNeal moved that the by-laws be tabled until the next meeting, as some of the voting NRC reps had stated they had not had the opportunity to read the updated by-laws.

MOTION SECONDED: None.

MOTION CARRIED: All attendees except Mamie McNeal voted to pass the NRC by-laws; the vote was 11 to 1.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Hillman reminded members of the Green Market Natural plant presentation.

The next NRC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 17, 2009 at 7:00 p.m., Brandermill Woods. The speaker will be Mike Hatch.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Bob Strickland moved that the meeting be adjourned.

MOTION SECONDED: Jane Zander.

MOTION CARRIED: Unanimously.

Chair Hillman adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jane Zander, Acting Secretary
Neighborhood Residents Council

Frances Hillman, Chair
Neighborhood Residents Council

Statement Presented at 9/15/09 NRC Meeting during Member Voice

My name is Mamie McNeal, and I am a resident in Planters Wood. I'm speaking this evening, not as a NRC rep, but as a Brandermill resident. Some of you may know that I appealed my covenant case before the BCA Board, and with a vote of 4-2 the Board upheld the decision of the Hearing Panel. That was not surprising to me.

However, I was surprised to hear during the Standards Department's presentation at my Board hearing that because the current edition (2007) of the Residential Design Standards specified that all new homes were required to have foundation plants, existing homes were also required to do so; and these foundation plants had to be one of those listed in Appendix D. I'm no horticulturist or master gardener, but I did not find where any of the listed plants were native/indigenous plants to our area.

We just paid \$50,000 to create a master plan for Brandermill, and it was adopted by the BCA Board at its June Master Plan Workshop. Both Chapters 2 and 6 of the master plan indicates that landscaping in Brandermill needs to reflect more plants indigenous to our area. Why are we trying to force people to plant foundation plants from a list anyway? When did we give up our rights to plant what was desirable to us homeowners?

A sad story is that one of my neighbors attempted to comply by planting foundation plants found in that appendix. The poor man lost his job in 2008 and is still unemployed today, but with whatever monies he had, he tried to comply, only to be cited again by the Standards Department because the plants were not of sufficient size. Where does it say under Chapter 11. Property Maintenance Standards that existing homes must have foundation plants?

It was also disturbing to me to hear that although my yard matches that of the abutting open space, it was to be judged subjectively – I think – to be unkempt. Doesn't the very meaning of the word "covenant" apply to all of Brandermill, including the open space?

I built my home in Brandermill and have lived here continuously for over 31 years. I remember how proud I felt when Brandermill was named "best planned community in America" by Better Homes and Gardens and the National Association of Home Builders in 1977. Well, what's happened since then?

Well, we're gotten older and are now considered to be aging community, but as the baby boomers will tell you, that should only make us better. The only way we can make Brandermill better is for residents to become involved.

In the past two years, I've learned about Brandermill governance through attending numerous and various BCA meetings. The most important thing that I've learned is that a handful of people can make a difference. I watched a small group of waterfront property owners make a difference in our waterfront easement and maintenance policies. They

didn't get everything they originally wanted, but I believe that the compromise will serve us all well.

I watched even a smaller group of residents actually change State law because they believed that POA's (property owners associations) such as ours should have offer more transparency, especially along the lines of staff salaries.

The point I'm really trying to make is we must get involved, and we must get our neighbors involved. For the last two years, the message I've repeatedly heard from the BCA Board is that they both **want** and **need** our input. We've elected them to serve in our best interests, and they cannot do their best if we don't give them feedback.

If we residents don't get involved and give the BCA Board input, then we leave them with only feedback from the BCA staff, which may or may not be truly representative of what we residents want.

When you signed up to be an NRC rep, you agreed to disseminate information and to help the NRC bring about open, two-way communications between the BCA Board and the neighborhoods. The officers of this committee have worked hard to preserve the NRC's ability to transmit open, objective – not opinionated but objective – communication between the BCA Board and Brandermill residents.

As fall approaches and the leaves begin to fall, take a few minutes to walk your neighborhood and talk to your neighbors. I'll bet you'll be able to catch many of them blowing leaves in their yards. Urge them to become informed. Forward the Board packets to them and ask them to take a few minutes to learn what the BCA Board is considering.

Talk about the upcoming budget, the master plan, the County comprehensive plan. Talk about the hawk in Winterberry Ridge that is actually part of a living tree.

Get your neighbors involved. Have conversations with them to discuss the home grown topics of the day. Then give the BCA Board feedback, either through the NRC or Member Voice at a BCA meeting. If we get enough people involved, Brandermill can once again become one of America's best planned communities.

Thank you.

Mamie McNeal
Planter's Wood