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# Fairlington Commons Newsletter

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**3367 S. Wakefield Street, Arlington, VA 22206 December 2008**

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## 2009 Budget Approved

The Budget meeting of the Fairlington Commons Council of Co-Owners was held on Tuesday, December 9, 2008. Co-Owners from 87 of the Commons 229 units either personally attended the meeting or submitted proxies for a quorum of 39%.

A 2009 budget of \$811,000 was approved, with 75% of the represented Co-Owners voting aye, 22% nay, and 3% abstaining. The budget reflects an increase in assessments of 5%, in line with inflation.

Condominium fees coupon books will be mailed soon; if you don't receive yours by December 31, please contact Murphy & Associates at 703-370-9100. Condominium fees should be mailed to Fairlington Commons at Dept. 79265, Baltimore, Md. 21279-0265. Condominium fees are published at: [www.fairlington.org/commonsindex.htm](http://www.fairlington.org/commonsindex.htm)

The major topic of discussion at the meeting was the cost and appearance of manufactured versus natural slate roofing. The Board also announced that it was competing the grounds maintenance contract, and, in 2009, will compete the contracts for painting and trash removal/recycling. Rules enforcement was also discussed.

Based on feedback from the Co-Owners at the meeting, the Board will call a special meeting to further discuss the issue of natural versus manufactured slate roofing. This special meeting is tentatively scheduled for February. A formal notice with additional information will be forthcoming in January.

## Grounds

The Commons has signed new contracts for landscaping and snow removal services with Somerset Landscaping Company of Alexandria.

The Board solicited six proposals and received five, of which three were competitive. The Board and Grounds Committee Co-chairs Kate Clausen and Laura McPherson then met in executive session with the two finalists to hear their presentations and ask questions.

During reference checks with existing customers, including Fairlington Green, the Board heard glowing comments about Somerset. This positive experience of our neighbors was an important element in our decision to select them as our grounds contractor beginning January 1, 2009.

Somerset's bids were the lowest. At a base price of \$52,245.00, the landscaping contract is more than \$10,000 below the amount budgeted for 2009, with a final price to be determined following decisions regarding contract options.

The Grounds Committee is seeking your input! As a newly formed body, we are in the initial planning stages for our grounds "greening" efforts, and we would like to hear from you. A meeting is planned for January. Please contact Kate Clausen ([kateclausen@gmail.com](mailto:kateclausen@gmail.com)) or Laura McPherson at ([ljm2005@comcast.net](mailto:ljm2005@comcast.net)) if you are interested in participating.

## Time to Winterize

If you haven't already, please take the following steps to prevent burst pipes and flooded basements this winter:

- *Disconnect all garden hoses.*
- *Turn off faucet shutoff valves. (These are generally located under kitchen sinks for rear faucets and inside a hatch in the basement ceiling for front faucets.)*
- *Open faucets to drain trapped water.*

## Postal Problems

Mail has been coming later and later, prompting Co-Owner questions. Shirlington Post Office officials tell us that the facility has been downsized and is short-handed, that our previous carrier bid a new route, and that carriers are now pulling two routes a day at a time when volume is up due to the holiday. Please practice forbearance when you interact with our new mail carrier.

## If It Snows...

And your car is parked in an end space of our parking lots, please move it. This will allow our grounds crew to push the white stuff over the curb farthest from the street. Your cooperation in this matter is appreciated. Board members try to monitor the snow and ice conditions, but need assistance from volunteers throughout the Commons to keep us informed. Please contact John Sinks if you're willing to be part of a sidewalk/roads monitoring team this winter.

## Trash Talk

Complaints have recently been received about storage of trashcans and recycling bins. Trashcans and recycling bins are to be stored in your unit, patio, or on or under your deck. They are not to be stored in front of your unit, beside the porch, behind shrubbery, or otherwise in the General Common Element. Your cooperation is requested in maintaining the appearance of our community through the appropriate storage of all personal items. **Reminder: Due to the Christmas and New Year holidays, recycling pickups will be December 27<sup>th</sup> and January 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

## Rules Enforcement

Few people like rules, but in our case they help define expectations and promote harmony and a more pleasant appearance throughout the Commons. Recently, the Board has had to take action to assure compliance regarding satellite dishes, unauthorized signage, neglected vehicles, parking, and use of the General Common Element for personal

## Fairlington Commons Newsletter

storage. While we take such action with reluctance, the good of the community requires that we enforce our rules. Please cooperate. If you have questions about whether something you plan to do may violate our rules, check the Bylaws on our website or contact any Board member.

## Home & Garden Tour

The biannual Fairlington Home and Garden Tour will be held Saturday, May 16, 2009 and is hosted by the Fairlington Historical Society (FHS) to benefit its many functions. Funds raised from the tour this year will go to two projects: producing the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of *Fairlington at 50* and restoring the Fairlington model home display that was dismantled during the renovation of the South Fairlington Community Center.

The tour is an all-volunteer effort, and is seeking your help to develop a database, create and/or illustrate a brochure or T-shirt, or work with a printer. Since the FHS relies on voluntary donations, persons to help with fund-raising are also needed. During the tour itself, house sitters will be needed. To take part, please e-mail Committee Co-chairs Sharon Bisdee and Marilyn Brazier at [FHS2009Home@aol.com](mailto:FHS2009Home@aol.com).

Sharon and Marilyn are also seeking homes to be nominated. Several South Fairlington homeowners have already offered their units for consideration. Garden-only stops are also being sought. It would be great to have a Commons' property on the tour.

## Board of Directors

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