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Recycle, Recycle, Recycle
*The Newsletter for
 Fairlington Mews Residents
 Volume 2007 Issue 3
 May/June 2007*

Mews NEWS



Message from the President

Dear Mews Owners and Residents,

Annual Meeting

Fairlington Mews' Annual Meeting is scheduled for June 26 at Abingdon Elementary School. Sign in will begin at 6:30 PM with the meeting beginning at 7:00 PM. This is your opportunity for association participation!

Perhaps you will join one of the standing committees – Landscape, Finance, and Recreation; perhaps you can express your appreciation to those volunteers who are working hard to make the Mews a better community.

Your participation in the Annual Meeting should be a minimum expectation of every co-owner as you are a member of the most important community group – the Mews Council of Co-owners.

Current Board Activities

To ensure quality fiduciary management, the current board has been examining and updating existing contracts.

Two such contracts under scrutiny are those with Legum and Norman (management) and Engleking (maintenance) which have lapsed from annual to month to month agreements. The board is taking this opportunity to revise and update these contracts. The board has also begun to examine the insurance needs of the community.

To understand better the management of the infrastructure of the Mews, the board has met with Leslie Engleking and David Fyffe (Seal Engineering), among others, to re-establish schedules for maintenance projects – roofing, sewer relining, parking lots, and painting – to protect the physical structures.

We recently discovered that the Mews is in violation of existing Arlington County law with regard to recycling. The

County mandates that we disperse recycling bins for residents to deposit appropriate recycling materials. We are looking into the best way to implement an updated recycling program.

Our Responsibilities

When you purchase a unit within a condominium association, you “buy into” a larger community – in this case Fairlington – and more specifically an established condominium association – Fairlington Mews. By - laws, rules, regulations, and covenants are already in place when a prospective purchaser decides to buy.

The prospective co-owner receives important documents describing the financial status of the association, insurance information, and copies of all pertinent governing documents and has 72 hours to withdraw an offer if he/she thinks condominium living is not in his best interest!

There should be no mystery as to how a condominium community is run or how rules, regulations, and covenants affect co-owners.

The new co-owner not only “buys into” a community, but also makes a financial investment in and a personal commitment to that community. An elected board is responsible for looking after the fiduciary interests of the co-owner and makes decisions for the betterment and welfare of the community.

In managing contracts, selecting contractors, analyzing audits, and working with established committees, the Board of Directors, through its “agent” or management company, is responsible for the financial well being of the association.

The co-owner, in a sense, also agrees to accept a sense of responsibility within the association by understanding and abiding by the established rules of conduct - rules affecting trash collection, parking, requesting external repairs, monitoring limited access areas (patios), following rules governing pets and their behaviors, requesting variance requests, promptly paying condominium fees, or other activities affecting his neighbors or the community at large.

An owner or resident is also subject to laws established by local and state governments. Virginia has established some of the strongest condominium laws in America. Local laws also require attention and adherence, whether they involve vehicle registration and licensing, street parking, securing proper building permits, pet behaviors (again!), and other regulations governing community living.

Rules, regulations, laws, and covenants are the means to provide for harmony and well being within an association and a community. "Condominium", "community", and "cooperation" contain the common root "co" – together.

By working together, participating within the established parameters, joining neighbors to ensure the common good, co-owners and residents establish harmony.

"Call them rules or call them limits, good ones, I believe, have this in common: they serve reasonable purposes..."
(Fred Rogers aka Mister Rogers)

Fern Birtwistle
703-379-7354

MEWS CALENDAR

- **May 5 - Large Item Pickup**
- **May 22 - Board Meeting**
(7:00 PM @ 4830 31st Street South
Residents are encouraged to attend.)
- **May 26 - Pool Opens**
- **June 2 - Large Item Pickup**
- **June 26 - Board Meeting - Annual Meeting (6:30 PM Sign In, Meeting at 7:00 PM @ Abingdon Elementary School**
Residents are encouraged to attend.)
- **July 7 - Large Item Pickup**
- **July 24 - Board Meeting**
(7:00 PM @ 4830 31st Street South
Residents are encouraged to attend.)

(Note: To inquire about committee meetings, contact Julia Claypool, Finance; Lori Olivas, Landscape; and Ann Timmons, Recreation.)

Click Here, Dude! Fairlington Web Site Resources



- **Mews Handbook**
www.fairlington.org/mewshand.htm
- **Board Minutes/Newsletters**
www.fairlington.org/mewsindex.htm
- **Condominium Resources Site**
www.fairlington.org/condoresourcepage.htm
- **Emergency Preparedness Page**
www.fairlington.org/emergencypreparedness.htm



Board Minutes Highlights

February 27, 2007

(Board Minutes on Web Site

At www.fairlington.org/mewsindex.htm)

The Fairlington Mews Board of Directors met February 27 at 4830 31st Street at 7:00 PM. In attendance were board members Fern Birtwistle, Tami Anderson, Julia Claypool, and Seth Low. Manager Steve Navar was present.

No committee personnel were present except Tom Corbin of the Newsletter Committee. Mr. Leslie Engleking, Mews maintenance contractor, was present. Tom Corbin recorded the minutes.

There was no Homeowners' Forum.

Ms. Birtwistle introduced Mr. Engleking who responded to board member questions and concerns:

- Billing – request for more timely billing and need for accurate description of work performed, time for completion, and the address of each work order
- Mr. Engleking is not to accept any work requests from residents since these must be sent to him through management.
- Need for an annual contract since the status of the Engleking contract has been allowed to lapse to a month to month contract. Mr. Engleking presented a contract which the board will consider.

- Mr. Engleking performed a “walk through” of the Mews community noting problem areas and needed repairs which include the following: gate repairs; fascia/ soffit wood rot; gutter repairs and use of “gutter diverters”; battery replacement in apartment building smoke detectors.
- Question of whether or not the association can replace fascia and soffit trim with synthetic materials without compromising historic status. Ms. Claypool will follow up.
- Billing for electrical, wood, and general maintenance are to be noted separately on future invoices as they are paid from separate line item budget accounts.
- Cleaning crew, not Engleking, is responsible for bulb replacement in apartment hallways.

Treasurer’s Report

Items discussed included:

1. L & N \$35.00 fee for returned check from residents is charged back to the resident.
2. Discussion of increase in penalty for late payment of condo fee. L & N currently charges a processing fee of \$9.00. Details will be announced with Annual Meeting materials.
3. Need for L & N procedure for on-line payment of condo fees
4. Association is over budget in legal fees.
5. Surplus of \$31,000 from last fiscal year. Auditor recommends placing surplus in Unappropriated Members’ Equity Fund.
6. Snow removal invoices (Somerset Landscaper, contractor) – 2 of 4 total invoices received with payment of \$3,500. Mr. Navar was questioned why snow was removed after first snow since the accumulation was less than the prescribed 2 inches for removal. Mr. Navar explained that there had been a “misunderstanding”.

Old Business

Ms. Claypool asked for follow up as to why the December Operating Reserve was \$9,000 less than previous report. This had been brought up at the January board meeting. Mr. Navar did not have an explanation but will check.

Board requested information about the disputed plumbing repair by Dwyer Plumbing (discussed at January meeting) and whether or not this was a resident, not association, responsibility. Mr. Navar said he was waiting for a copy of the plumbing “ticket”.

Ms. Anderson asked why management had not followed up on the apartment buildings painting problem – exterior doors painting with wrong color. Mr. Navar will follow up.

New Business

- Board approved (4 – 0) deposit of \$16,500 to JED Mechanical for year three of sewer relining project.
- Board approved (4 – 0) contract with DEC Commercial Cleaning at \$559.00 monthly for cleaning apartment building hallways.
- Jeffrey’s Trash Service – Board discussed recent late pick ups and decline in service. Jeffrey’s is currently paid \$2,105 monthly.
- Request for Proposals – Mr. Navar has received one bid from Pro Pave for parking lot work and is awaiting two more bids.
- Association Insurance – Ms. Claypool will follow up on updating association insurance coverage with Mews insurance carrier.
- On – line voting for Annual Meeting – Ms. Birtwistle asked why association did not have on-line voting for annual meeting purposes. Ron Patterson had researched this issue last spring at board request and had sent his findings to the board.

**Court Representatives Update
(Submitted by Board Member Tonya Dodge)**

During the past months, I have worked on ways to improve communication among Board members, Court Representatives, and Mews residents by developing a “roles and responsibility” document that had been begun under a previous board.

Currently I am working with Court Representatives to create a description of the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the “Court Rep”. Work on this project is nearing completion.



**Volunteers
At Work**

**Landscape Committee
Lori Olivas, Chair**

Committee members and grounds personnel conducted commons area “walk arounds” in March to determine the spring landscaping needs. Residents who submitted timely requests will receive attention during the spring work which is scheduled for late April and early May.

Residents with special requests for future landscape removals, replacements, or additions should submit their needs in

writing to the committee by July 15 for attention during the fall season. A request form is available from the Mews website.

The Yoshino Cherry trees that were planted in the summer and fall of 2006 along the pool and in Court 11 are thriving. We thank those residents who watered them, for without your help they would not have survived. We remind all residents to water any new plants when there is insufficient rain (one inch per week). This includes any material planted within the last two years.

Weed management will now be performed by Alan Musselman from Weed Man, a subcontractor of Environmental Enhancements.

You may have noticed a proliferation of weeds in early March. According to our grounds maintenance contractor, an influencing factor was the erratic and warm winter.

Preventive measures being applied by the Weed Man and the scheduled mowing by Environmental Enhancements, our grounds contractor, will help control the weed population.

Tree work, to include spring fertilization and disease suppression treatment, will be performed by Thrive, our tree specialist, during this spring.

Don Hook's Tree Service completed tree work for overgrowth and safety, including removal of some overgrown junipers.

Because our grounds crew does not garden, residents who maintain flower borders during the growing season are reminded to clean up any debris from the annuals and perennials if you didn't do so last fall.

Keep in mind a good local gardening source is <http://www.fairlington.org/gardenadvisor.htm>



We invite all interested Mews residents to join the Landscape Committee, which generally meets on the second Monday of each month at the 4830 31st Street South.

Contact Lori Olivas, 703-379-4927 for date and committee meeting location.

Recreation Committee

Ann Timmons and Joanne Herman, Co-chairs

It's May and that means that Pool Season is right around the corner! The Recreation Committee is very excited about some changes at the pool and we'd like to tell you about them.

We will be welcoming a new pool management company this year, Curl Swim Services. Curl is affiliated with Curl-Burke Swim Club, a major trainer of competitive swimmers in the greater DC area.

So we will have lots of great lifeguards! In addition to guarding and maintaining the pool, they will be offering small group and private swimming lessons. Look for notices posted at the pool for more information.

Also, new umbrellas are coming! We hope you like the colorful new stripes and easy-to-work push-up mechanism. They are covered with Sunbrella fabric, which will not fade or stain. They should be with us for along time.

Fairlington's own swim club, FINS (Friends Interested in Neighborhood Swimming) will once again meet at the Mews pool the week of July 9th - 13th from 3:30- 5:20. Friday, July 14th we will have a swim meet from 6:00 - 7:30, and invite all Mews residents to come cheer our swimmers on to victory!

And finally, remember to fill out your Recreation Pass applications. You won't be able to swim without a pass. The applications are being delivered to your residence. If you are a non-resident co-owner, Legum and Norman has mailed them to you.

Please return your completed application (remember to SAVE your COPY OF THE RULES!) to Ann Timmons at 4638 South 34th Street. Please note that ONLY those currently living at your address are eligible for passes.

If you would like long-term visitors or care givers to use the pool in your absence, you must apply for special passes for them. Please follow specific directions on the application. You will be expected to accompany all other guests to the pool when they visit.

Our private pool is one of our biggest assets, and to keep it that way we will be checking passes on a regular basis. We will be delivering your completed passes to you as soon as they are ready.

See you at the Pool!



Timely Tips
From Steve Navar
Management Agent Representative
(As compiled by Tom Corbin)

Parking lot repairs will be performed by Brother's Paving in the near future according to Manager Steve Navar, who walked with company representatives on April 13 to identify problems.

Residents will receive notices when work is to be performed and will be expected to remove their cars from the affected parking lot by 7:00 AM on the day of the scheduled work until 5:00 PM the next day.

If you are planning to be out of town, please see that a neighbor has a key to your car and can move it on the scheduled work day.

Work to be done includes crack fill, resealing, and restriping of the lots. The "numbering problem" of Court 9 will be corrected. If you have questions, please contact Manager Steve Navar.

Notice of the Mews Annual Meeting will be sent no later than 21 days (required by state law) before the meeting date. This mailing will include budget information and candidate information for the board slot which is to be filled this year.

All exterior "green" doors in the apartment buildings have been corrected with the proper color, "Hunter Green".

If you live in an apartment building and feel that your door is still in need or repainting, please contact Manager Steve Navar. Also management reports that gate problems have been repaired.

JED Mechanical will continue the sewer relining project at the "end of May." Affected residents will be notified as soon as management has "the specifics" of the work.

Management has contacted Dominion Power about the recent work along S. Wakefield Street and their intent of restoring the grounds. Details from Dominion Power are still pending. Recently a transformer box on the left side of Court 9 was replaced by Dominion. Another box was removed from the common area between Courts 9 and 10.

"On line voting {for the annual meeting} will be a board decision and this will be discussed at the {April} meeting."

ITEMS OF INTEREST
Comcast Cable Issues

In spring 2006 Mews volunteers Tom Corbin and Ron Patterson worked with Comcast Cable and Arlington County Cable Commission representatives to see that many neglected, unburied cable lines in the common areas were corrected. One line had been attached at fence height across the common area between Courts 4 and 5 for over a year with no attention from Comcast crews!

This action in the Mews sparked Comcast to address Fairlington-wide problems and to correct unsightly and unburied cables. Again this year, we have sent a list of Comcast problems – broken or unattached cable boxes and unburied cable wires – to Ms. Veronica Santos of Comcast Cable and have copied Arlington County personnel on the list.

As of April 20, 2007, we have been told that "Kevin Webb's group started walking out the property to identify all infractions that exist...we will have our construction team to begin burying all of the exposed drops..."

If you have a problem with exposed wires, unburied cables, or unattached boxes, please contact Comcast personnel at: Veronica_Santos@CABLE.COMCAST.com, Kelvin_Webb@CABLE.COMCAST.com, or Ray_Ness@CABLE.COMCAST.com. You may also express your concerns to Rbillingsley@arlingtonva.us, the Arlington County cable representative. Remember, it takes a village!

Dog Owners – Take Note!

In a recent "Real Estate Bag" column (Washington Post. 31 March 2007, F22), columnist Robert Bruss was asked about the liability for any damage caused by an unleashed dog in a condominium common area, specifically any injury resulting from biting.

Mr. Bruss replied that the dog's owner would be primarily responsible if the dog injures anyone on the premises, but that the condo association could "also be sued for damages".

Remember: Arlington County law requires all dogs to be on leashes except when they are within county-run dog parks. Unleashed dogs are considered a "public nuisance" and are subject to police and/ or animal control officials' actions. County ordinances also require owners to pick up and properly dispose of dog wastes.

Before You Begin That Renovation (9 Tips for Working with Contractors)

The following recommendations from Arlington County are helpful for the success of your next renovation project.

1. Get more than one written estimate for your project. Make certain the estimate is detailed and includes all aspects of the job.
2. Check for contractor licensing. www.state.va.us/dpor provides a list of licensed contractors.
3. Confirm reputation. The State Board of Contractors (804-367-8504) maintains complaint records for two years. Information is provided about the problem's nature and resolution, but not about the complainant.
4. Check references. Get names and contact information from previous clients and contact them.
5. Read the fine print. Does the contract provide for the following:
 - a. If there's a dispute, does the contract call for mandatory arbitration? Do you have input into the arbitration panel?
 - b. Is there a performance penalty? The start/completion clause should include a penalty for each day the job runs over the contracted completion date.
 - c. If subcontractors are used, are they licensed and also covered by the prime contractor's insurance?
 - d. How are amendments and change orders to the job to be handled?
6. Hold the final payment. Withhold 15 – 25 percent of the contract price until you are completely satisfied.
7. Check on variances. Submit a variance request with architectural and engineer drawings to your condominium association for board approval before work begins.
8. Check on permitting. To learn what types of permits are required, go to <http://www.arlingtonva.us>, click on "Licenses & Permits" on the right hand side. A permit should be issued to the contractor's business, not to the homeowner.
9. Keep records. Make copies of all checks and any "change order" that is signed. Also ask for proof of payment made to any subcontractors used.

How "Old" Is Your Kitchen?

The National Association of Home Builders (as quoted in the *Washington Post* on April 15, 2007, F6) cites some interesting statistics about the "life expectancy" of kitchen features.

The longest lasting element is the cabinetry with a lifespan of 50 years, while the shortest lived appliance is the dishwasher at 9 years. You will probably need to replace your faucet (15 years), refrigerator (13), range (13) and waste disposal (12) if you remain in your unit.

Now what about those avocado green and harvest gold appliances that greeted many Fairlingtonians upon their unit purchase? And who said anything about the orange "shag" carpet in the lower level – timeless!

America Commemorates 400th Anniversary

May 2007 marks the 400th Anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, Virginia the first permanent English colony in the "new world".



Many celebrations are planned throughout the year, but the most important one is the official commemoration at Jamestown on May 11 – 13. Queen Elizabeth II will have visited earlier (yes, the real one – not Helen Mirrin!); she was also present at the 350th anniversary in 1957.

Many new discoveries have been made since the 1957 celebration including the unearthing of the original fort, once thought to have eroded into the James River. If you can't get to the actual historical site, the following websites offer much information and even some "virtual tours"!

- Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities' (APVA) Jamestown Rediscovery Project <http://www.apva.org/jr.html>
- Historic Jamestown <http://historicjamestowne.org/>
- Jamestown 2007 <http://www.americas400thanniversary.com/>
- The Virtual Jamestown Archive <http://www.virtualjamestown.org/>
- British Jamestown site <http://www.beginyouradventure.co.uk/index..php>
- Richmond Times Dispatch <http://explorejamestown400.com/>

MewsNEWS

This newsletter is published bimonthly by the Fairlington Mews Bard of Directors for owners and residents in Fairlington Mews. Suggested articles, comments, or items of interest from residents are always welcome. Please send to: tormrcor@aol.com

Editors: Tom Corbin/Ron Patterson, 4624 S. 34th Street, Phone: (703) 931-0687

Subscribe to the MewsNEWS - send us your email address at mewsnewsletter@aol.com - newsletter in Word or PDF format sent as attachment to email

Fairlington Web Site: www.fairlington.org/mewsindex.htm **Webmaster:** Ron Patterson, **Phone:** (703) 931-0687



Meeting Calendar

Board of Directors Board Meetings are scheduled for May 22, June 26, (Annual Meeting), July 24, 2007 @ 7:00 pm. Contact Board Members or Management Agent (Steve Navar at 703 848-4316) for meeting locations.

	<u>Liaison</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Board of Directors			
President	Fern Birtwistle	4678B S. 36th Street	(703) 379-7354
Vice President	Seth Low	4644 S. 34 th Street	(703) 379-0155
2 nd Vice President	Tonya Dodge	4666 B-2 S. 34 th Street	(703) 671-7530
Treasurer	Julie Claypool	4669 A S. 36 th St	(703) 931-9161
Secretary	Tami Anderson	4625 B S. 36th St.	(703) 820-5665

Committee Chairs

Landscape	Lori Olivas	4666 S. 36 th Street	(703) 379-4927
Recreation	Ann Timmons	4638 S. 34 th Street	(703) 820-9589
	Joanne Herman	4603 S. 36 th Street	(703) 931-5867
Newsletter	Tom Corbin/Ron Patterson	4624 S. 34 th Street	(703) 931-0687
Carriage Lamps	Janice & Larry Peters	4605 S. 36 th Street	(703) 578-4992

Court Representatives

1. 3600-3616 S. Wakefield	Tom Roberts	3616 S. Wakefield Street	(703) 820-1992
2. 4606-4630 S. 36th	Ben Marglin	4608 S. 36 th Street	(703) 671-7281
3. 4632-4636 S. 36 th	Shannon Blair	4632B S. 36 th Street	(703) 931-5538
4. 4638-4654 S. 36th	Myrta & Ricardo Alonzo	4646B S. 36 th Street	(703) 824-0631
5. 4656-4674 S. 36th	Renee Powlette	4670B 36 th Street	(703) 671-2774
6. 4676-4698 S. 36th	Fern Birtwistle	4678B S. 36th Street	(703) 379-7354
7. 4667-4671 S. 36th	Gordon Whyte	4667A S. 36 th Street	(703) 578-4564
8. 4664-4686 S. 34th	Gretchen Martin	4680 S. 34 th Street	(703) 933-1368
9. 4624-4658 S. 34th	David Biette	4638 S. 34th Street	(703) 820-9589
10. 4600-4618 S. 34th	Frances Kerns	4602 S. 34 th Street	(703) 671-0921
11. 3408-3458 S. Wakefield	Amy Blauman	3450 S. Wakefield Street	(703) 671-6671
12. 3500-3544 S. Wakefield	Victoria Lipnik	3512 S. Wakefield Street	(703) 379-7160
13. 4601-4611 S. 36th	Joanne Herman	4603B S. 36 th Street	(703) 931-5867
14. 4615-4637 S. 36th	Craig Wagner	4631 S. 36 th Street	(703) 931-7549
15. 4641-4665 S. 36th	Gordon Avery	4655 S. 36 th Street	(703) 820-3134

Additional Important Numbers

Sewer Back-up	Dwyer Plumbing	(703) 922-8220
Trash Collection	Jeffrey's Trash	(703) 591-9550
Large Articles of Trash	Put out at CURBSIDE on the 1st Saturday of the month or call Jeffrey's Trash for pick-up at your expense	(703) 591-9550
Management Agent	Legum & Norman 4401 Ford Avenue, Suite 1200, Alexandria, VA 22302 Steve Navar snavar@legumnorman.com	(703) 600-6000 (703) 848-4316
	Swimming Pool	(703) 379-POOL

Maintenance Work Orders Kristie Yoder, Assistant kyoder@legumnorman.com (703) 848-4332
Preferred Method to Track Work Orders: email kyoder@legumnorman.com

24 Hour Maintenance Call-In

Legum & Norman (703) 848-4369

EMERGENCY NUMBER (703) 600-6000 FAIRLINGTON MEWS