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MewsNEWS

The Newsletter for
Fairlington Mews
Residents
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WHERE DO WE LIVE?

Gordon B. Avery

We live in a row house. Well, in a way. But many row houses are right on the street and have few niceties around them, such as trees and shrubs, grassy areas, playgrounds, tennis courts, swimming pools, and varied settings in relation to the streets. My parents briefly lived in Fairlington in about 1952, and the brick Fairlington buildings stood out awkwardly, looking more like a housing project (which they were in the World War II years) than a place of gracious living. Well then,

We live in a park. That certainly captures the feeling of being away from businesses, garish signs, traffic, and the congestion of the city. It also captures the feeling of being able to walk or jog in the evening along lighted walkways and past interesting flower beds an grassy vistas, feeling both safety and peace. For quite a span in every direction, there is the aspect of “a village in the city.” Happily, professional ground crews deal with the lawns in the spring and the falling leaves in the fall. Not bad, but not the whole story. Well then,

We live in a condominium. That literally means co-ownership: living together. More than with individual separate homes, we are interdependent and create one another’s environment. There are many compromises and tradeoffs. We get planting and maintenance of the grounds; enjoyment of common areas, playgrounds, pool and tennis courts; professional oversight of the roofs and exteriors of the buildings; attention to maintenance of property values and parking lots, etc. But we are restricted in the colors we can paint our front doors and the types of windows we can have. Our Bylaws place many restrictions on how our units can look and what we can do on the grass, which would not be true in our little place in Falls Church. We also have to abide by group decisions with which we may or may not

agree. With almost 300 units in the Mews, it is like living in a very large family.

Thus – we have to accept the tradeoff of having our trash picked up late some days or paying more and perhaps having higher condo fees.

Thus – we can’t appreciably change the external appearance of our units.

See item on dish antennas below under Board Meeting.

Thus – if we want to preserve our investment in the tress and plantings around us, which have been neglected, we will have to go well over budget for landscaping. This will put our budget appreciably in deficit, and almost certainly require higher condo fees (see item below under Board meeting).

Where do we want to live?



OCTOBER 26 BOARD MEETING

The Fairlington Mews Board met on October 26 and considered several items:

- ✓ Large trees in individual backyard patio areas must be maintained so they do not damage the buildings, fences or intrude on neighbors’ areas. The Board agreed to apply a rule of reason in this regard but will respond to complaints in individual cases.
- ✓ It was noted that several TV satellite dishes have recently been installed on roof areas or in backyards where they can be seen above the fence. After discussion, the rule against such installations was reaffirmed, and letters will be sent to those concerned.
 - “No exterior antenna, satellite dish, or other device for the transmission or reception of radio or television signals or any other form of electromagnetic radiation shall be permitted without the prior written approval of the board of Directors or its designee.”

- ✓ The Building and Grounds Committee has been very active and presented a report requesting replacement plantings where overgrown shrubs have been removed, as well as consultation by an arborist. A goal was articulated of developing a multi-year landscaping program. Discussion revealed appreciation of the Committee's efforts and concern over the likelihood of a substantial budget deficit. Authorization was voted for \$6,365 in plantings and for a preliminary meeting with an arborist. See the B&G Committee's report below.
- ✓ On November 16, there will be a lawn spraying for fertilization alone, a process, which has been routine for years.
- ✓ One condominium was foreclosed and repossessed by the Association for prolonged non-payment of fees.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Lancaster Landscapers will soon begin the second phase of improvements. At its October meeting, the Mews Board of Directors approved funds for the addition of new plant materials in several areas. The Association approved this spending since few replacement projects have been sought in the past few years. Improvements include:

- Creating a mulched bed of liriopie around the oak south of the pool.
- Creating a mulched bed of perennials and shrubs around the large oak in Court 15
- Installing three flowering trees in Court 15.
- Replacing the removed shrubs in Court 15.
- Planting holly trees and grasses in the commons area between Courts 8 and 9.
- Creating a mulched bed of liriopie in Court 11 to prevent erosion.
- Landscaping the entrance sign at S. Wakefield and King Streets.

The first phase of landscape improvements has already begun. Blade Runners recently performed several grounds renewal operations including the following:

- Adding new wood chips to the "tot lot" near the pool.
- Removing selected overgrown trees/shrubs in several courts.
- Providing perimeter control of overgrowth on the King Street/95 fence.
- Grinding stumps from earlier tree removals.

- Pruning/removing selected trees (including "weed" or volunteer trees).
 - Removing ivy from masonry structures.
- Grounds Committee members, led by Elizabeth Grenfell, recently planted the bed at the intersection of South 34th and 36th Streets with pansies for winter color.

**Application of fertilizer
Set for Week of
November 13 -
Signs will be posted
as reminders of this
application.**

We know that a vigorously growing turf is the best deterrent to weeds. Compaction of the soil is also a problem as there is little topsoil in our area. Grass can be a problem under large trees since grass roots are a major

competitor with tree roots for moisture and food; this is the reason we are creating mulched beds around some of our larger trees.

Watering Encouraged

All residents are aware of the current dry conditions. Shrubs and trees need deep watering in the absence of rain as roots continue to grow and need moisture until the temperature drops to 40 degrees. Plants are going dormant now, but their roots continue to be active. **Please be sure to water until the rains come! Watering should cover the area of the tree's drip line (point to which the limbs extend) and should not be applied only at the trunk. It is important that residents water all new plantings**

Review of Patio Plantings

All residents share in the benefits of grounds improvement as our landscaping directly affects property value. Members of the Grounds Committee will soon begin a survey to identify patio trees and shrubs that are damaging or have the potential to damage masonry structures, roofs, and fences. Residents will be notified of any conditions that exist in their patio area with recommendations as to how to eliminate the violation(s). If the violations are not corrected within a reasonable length of time, the Mews Association will make such improvements and charge the resident.

Grounds Committee Reminders for Residents

- Maintain all personal plantings by weeding and deadheading regularly all material.
- Seek Association approval before adding, pruning, or removing any plant material.

- Put trash out the morning of pick up, not the night before.
- Put out large trash items (on the curb) only on the first Saturday of each month.
- Recycle glass and aluminum on Tuesday. Recycle newsprint on Wednesday.
- Bag properly all lawn, gardening debris and place it out with regular trash.
- Turn off outside faucets and drain them to prevent freezing of pipes.

Residents are also reminded that as the grounds crew begins its seasonal clean up, they too, should clean all beds individually maintained over the summer to conform to the overall cleanliness of the community. Please properly dispose of the resulting debris. Thank you for all that you have done with your individual plantings to make your court attractive.

Still Time to Plant!

It is not too late to plant spring bulbs especially tulips which can go in as late as December or until the ground freezes. There are some terrific buys on bulbs as the planting season ends. You can keep squirrels away from tulip bulbs (they like them!) by spraying them with a rodent repellent before planting or layering them with daffodil bulbs (daffodils are poisonous to squirrels, so they don't bother them).

Next Grounds Committee Meeting

Members of the Mews Condominium Association's Grounds Committee have been actively pursuing ideas to improve the landscape of our community with meetings in September and October and plans for another meeting on November 21 at 7:30 in the South Fairlington Community Center. All residents, as well as committee members, are welcome to attend these meetings.

Fairlington Historical Society

On Thursday, October 12, the Fairlington Historical Society held its first annual meeting, which included the election of the Board of Trustees. The annual meeting, which featured "An Evening with Catherine Fellows," was well attended (more than 65 residents and friends). The principle speaker was Catherine Fellows, author of *Fairlington at 50*, a history of our community. The event was held in the North Fairlington Community Center. Ms. Fellows reminisced about her experiences during the construction and evolution of Fairlington. Her historical and often humorous

perspective of events from the early 1940s through the conversion in the mid-1970s held the attention of attendees.

Elected to the Board were Sandy Hodapp, Ron Patterson, Terry Placek, David Manning, and Cindy Kutz.

On September 18, 2000, IRS approved tax exempt status for the society. Contributions are now deductible. The FHS is approved as a "Publicly Supported Tax Exempt Organization" under Section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, effective July 12, 2000 (the date of application to IRS for tax-exempt status).

Residents interested in becoming a member of the Society may contact Ron Patterson at 703-931-0687 or . Membership fees for the 2001 year are: Charter (voting) members, \$10, annually; Associate Member, \$10; Corporate Member, \$100; Honorary Member (selected by the Board), no fee. Membership forms may be obtained from Ron or from Fairlington's web site—www.fairlington.org, under "What's Hot" on the home page.

Ron Patterson

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next Board meeting will be Thursday, November 30, 2000, at 7:30 PM in the Fairlington Community Center. All Board Meetings are open, and interested Co-owners are invited to attend.

<p>MewsNews Published bi-monthly by the Fairlington Mews Board of Directors for owners and residents in Fairlington Mews. Suggestions or items of interest from residents are always welcome.</p> <p>Editor: Gordon Avery, 4655 S. 36th Street, Phone: (703) 820-3134 Layout: Dianne Ruddy Distribution: Judy Anderson, 4625B S. 36th Street, Phone: (703) 820-5665 Fairlington News Webmaster: Ron Patterson, 4624 S. Wakefield Street, Phone: (703) 931-0687 Fairlington Web Site: www.fairlington.org</p>
