



# ReView

Golf Course View Cluster Association

February 2012

## Board of Directors

### Officers

**President**  
Sandy Dresser

**Vice President**  
Bob Williamson

**Secretary/Treasurer**  
Stephanie Cavanaugh

### Directors

Rob Aaron

Lisa Gomes

Gina Lundy

Gary Villhauer

### Committee Chairpersons

**Architecture**  
Sandy Dresser

**Capital Improvements**  
Bob Williamson

**Communication**  
Sandy Dresser

**Drainage**  
Bob Williamson  
Gary Villhauer

**Landscape & Trees**  
Patty Williamson

**Playgrounds**  
Rob Aaron

### Financial Management Disclosure Packets

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## Next Board Meeting

Wed., March 13, 2012  
7:30 pm.

## Annual Special Issue: Overview of Cluster Management

Once a year the Board publishes a newsletter that reviews the basic information about how the Cluster Association works and how the common services and interests of homeowners and residents are managed. While this information is well-known to longtime homeowners, it's frequently useful news to more recent arrivals.

The Cluster owns a little more than eight acres of common property that includes: Golf Course Drive between the upper speed bump (by the cluster sign) and the gully, six courtyard parking lots, the common sidewalks along Golf Course Drive and facing our parking spaces, one and a half playgrounds and the common landscape areas. The common services paid for by the Cluster include: trash collection/recycling services; street lights; maintenance of the common landscape and trees, snow services; playgrounds, street and sidewalks; property and casualty liability insurance; legal counsel and financial management. The Cluster has no paid employees and engages private contractors to provide all cluster common services.

### Landscape Development and Maintenance

By far the largest portion of your annual assessment goes to pay for landscape services. Routine maintenance is provided under a contract with Blake Landscapes, Inc. This contract includes a number of routine services including:

- **Spring cleanup:** Once a year edging and mulching of all landscaped beds, cutting back perennials and ornamental grasses, and cleaning lawn areas and parking lots of winter debris.
- **Turf care:** One application of preemergent crab grass control; two applications of organic fertilizer; one aeration; one seeding in specified locations; and one application of lime. No pesticides are applied to our turf.
- **Mowing and trimming:** regular mowings and edging along sidewalks, and two minor prunings of trees and shrubs along walkways.
- **Tree and Shrub care:** A number of inspections and dormant oil applications and one fertilization of trees and shrubs.
- **Leaf removal:** Two leaf collections, usually in November and December.

In addition to the routine landscape maintenance, the Cluster budgets \$16,000 a year for landscape improvement and tree maintenance.

The \$9,000 budgeted for tree maintenance is spent on tree pruning and removal, based on a prioritized list reviewed each spring by certified arborists and the Cluster Landscape/Tree committee. The major portion of the work is done in the late spring, and has already been completed for this year.

The remaining \$7,000 is spent on significant landscape improvement projects identified and prioritized in the current 5-year landscape plan.

By extension, landscape maintenance also includes the resolution of drainage problems on common areas. These projects are budgeted for separately from other landscape improvement projects.

### Snow Plowing/Shoveling

Our contract for snow services includes plowing the street and parking lots when there is 2" of snow and the application of sand/salt whenever icing is a threat.

We pay for these services on the basis of a per man hour rate. The goal is simply to make it possible for residents to get in and out of the Cluster safely. Residents are responsible for clearing snow from their own walks and for shoveling common sidewalks near their homes.

### Trash Removal/Recycling Pickup

Trash is picked up on Tuesdays and Fridays except on major holidays. Recyclables are picked up on Fridays. When a major holiday (Christmas, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day and Thanksgiving) occurs on one of our trash days, the next pickup will be on the next regular trash and/or recycling day.

Our trash contractor, VHI, will pick up anything except large appliances, renovation and construction debris, and refrigerators, freezers and other appliances that use chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). Limbs, branches and other wood must be cut into 4 foot lengths and tied in bundles.

**All trash should be placed on the curb as close as possible to the front of your own unit. Parking lot islands should be used only by those who do not have direct access to the curb.**

### Board of Directors

The Cluster Association is managed by a Board of Directors. Directors are elected each year at the Cluster Association's Annual Meeting in June.

The board meets once a month, usually on the second Tuesday. Residents are welcome to observe board meetings and to bring issues to the board's attention, the time and place of which are announced in the monthly newsletter.

The real "work" of the board is done by those directors and residents who volunteer to serve as chairs of the various board committees. The names, addresses and phone numbers of board members and committee chairs are listed in each issue of the Cluster newsletter.

## Insurance

In compliance with the Reston Covenants and Virginia law, the Cluster maintains a million dollars worth of both hazard and property damage liability and directors' and officers' liability insurance and a \$150,000 fidelity bond on the officers and directors.

Homeowners must purchase individual property damage and liability insurance coverage as advised by their insurance agents.

## Financial Management

The Cluster operates on a Jan. to Dec. fiscal year. The proposed annual budget is presented to the community for comment in November and the final budget is approved by the Board at its December meeting. The annual homeowners' assessment is determined by the operating budget for the coming calendar year.

Homeowners can pay their annual assessment in full by Feb. 1 or pay in equal quarterly installments due on Jan. 15, April 15, July 15 and Oct. 15. When installment payments are 30 days late, a \$25 late fee is applied, and after 60 days interest in the amount of 1.5% is applied each month to the entire balance of the account. After 90 days, the account is accelerated and turned over to the Cluster's legal counsel for collection.

The Cluster's finances are managed by Karen Seymour. The mailing address is PO Box 434, Oakton VA 22124-0434. Karen also prepares the resale disclosure packets. Her phone number is 703-255-2461. You can email her at [fourflyin@aol.com](mailto:fourflyin@aol.com).

In addition to its operating fund, the Cluster also maintains a reserves for capital improvement fund. The reserves fund is used to maintain the Cluster's road, parking lots, sidewalks and playgrounds. A portion of your annual assessment is deposited to the reserve fund every year and any assessment revenues not spent on operating expenses during a year are transferred to the reserves fund at the end of the year.

The reserves fund was established in 2000 with the goal of enabling the Cluster to maintain our capital improvements without a need to levy any special assessments. The fund is currently invested in a Charles Schwab money market and three highly rated corporate bond funds, to maximize its value over time.

## Street Lights

The street lights in the Cluster are maintained by Dominion Virginia Power. Any resident can call the power company to report a burned out street light (1-888-667-3000). You'll need to provide the identification numbers on the lamp post. If you prefer, you can contact any board member to report the problem.

## Parking Rules

In 1989 the Cluster adopted parking rules that:

- provide two assigned parking spaces to each unit,
- identify safety zones (marked by yellow curbs) in which parking is never permitted, and
- list vehicles that may never be parked in the Cluster overnight.

These rules are incorporated into the Cluster By-laws that were included in your disclosure packet and are available on the Cluster website and in hard copy upon request from a director.

In 2010 the Cluster contracted with East Coast Towing to tow cars that are illegally parked. Cars that are parked beside yellow curbs, are illegally parked in an assigned parking space or are double parked behind cars in assigned spaces can and will be towed without notice. Other vehicles parked in violation of the parking rules will be marked with a parking notice and towed if not removed within the time limit specified in the rules.

Note: Golf Course Square Cluster will tow, without notice, cars that are parked for more than eight hours along Golf Course Dr. beyond the sign located near the steps by the gully.

Golf Course Square and all other public streets in Reston are designated by Fairfax County as a Community Parking District. All commercial and recreation vehicles are prohibited from parking on these streets except when actually engaged in work or for loading and unloading purposes.

All residents need to be aware of the parking rules and ensure that they and their guests park appropriately.

If your car is towed, you should immediately call the Fairfax County Police (703-691-2131) for information about where and how to collect your vehicle. You'll need the registration card and the means to pay for the tow and impounding to get your car released.

## Playgrounds

The Cluster maintains the "upper playground" in Courtyard D and shares the maintenance of the "lower playground" with Golf Course Square Cluster. The upper playground was completely renovated in 2006-2007 and again in 2011. The lower playground, was renovated in 2008 and is scheduled for resurfacing this year.

## Pets

Fairfax County has strict leash and "pooper scooper" laws that apply to the Cluster, and County Animal Control officers patrol the neighborhood on a regular basis.

Pet owners are required to walk their dogs on a leash and to pick up after their pets and dispose of the waste in a trash container. The Cluster takes dog waste clean up seriously, and "Mutt Mitts" are available from dispensers located near the swimming pool and in three locations along Golf Course Dr. and Golf Course Sq.

## Home Maintenance and Design Standards

All homeowners are members not only of the Cluster Association but also of the Reston Association (RA) and subject to its Covenants. Homeowners are responsible for maintaining their own townhouses and property in compliance with the RA Covenants and the Cluster design standards, which have been approved by RA and are administered by RA's Design Review Board.

**All changes to the exterior of your property must be approved by the RA Design Review Board.** This includes the removal of a live tree with a trunk diameter of 4" or more.

The Cluster design standards are spelled out in the Cluster Handbook and a publication titled "Working With the GCVCA Color Palette," both of which are available on the Cluster website [www.golfcourseview.org](http://www.golfcourseview.org) or upon request from the Cluster president. You can access the Reston Association design standards and information about the RA design review process and download the RA DRB Application Form through the Cluster website or at [www.reston.org](http://www.reston.org).

Cluster president Sandy Dresser can help you complete the RA DRB application form. **All RA-DRB applications must be signed by two or more of your nearest neighbors and an officer of the board.** These signatures do not signify approval, only awareness that the application is being made.

## Cluster Information Resources

The Cluster provides a number of information resources for homeowners and residents. Last month's newsletter highlighted these resources that include:

- **ReView**, this monthly newsletter,
- the **Cluster Handbook**
- two publications that explain how to work with the Cluster color palette for exterior trim.
- the **Cluster Website**,
- direct access to the board by email at [gcvca@golfcourseview.org](mailto:gcvca@golfcourseview.org).
- the opportunity to receive email messages from the board with up to the minute information about situations that affect us all. (If you're not already receiving these emails, you can join the list by sending us an email at the address above.)
- the **Cluster Directory** published periodically to promote communication among residents and provide quick access to frequently needed telephone numbers. The latest edition was distributed in the summer of 2010.