



ReView

Golf Course View Cluster Association February 2016

We Met the Challenge of the Blizzard of 2016

We knew snow was coming, but even so, we were all surprised to find our neighborhood buried under two and a half feet of snow on a sunny Sunday morning last month. While there will always be complaints about snow plowing, we did as well as most other neighborhoods in Reston. We requested bigger plows and a front loader at midafternoon on Saturday, but the needed equipment couldn't get here until Monday and Tuesday. Both VDOT and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority failed to get the necessary major roadways open so that Blake and other contractors could get their equipment to their Reston clients as quickly as we would have liked.

In our area of Reston, Golf Course Square wasn't cleared until Tuesday, as we were. Newbridge was clear by Monday night, but they have far less pavement to plow than we do. Hunters Green was not open until Tuesday, and even South Lakes Center was not plowed until Monday afternoon. The responses to an online survey by the presidents of 22 Reston clusters revealed that: 3 were open by Sunday night, 6 by Monday night, 10 by Tuesday night, and 3 not until Wednesday afternoon.

Overview of Cluster Management

With so many "first year" families in our neighborhood, it seems a good time to review the basic information about how the Cluster works, and how the common services and interests of homeowners and residents are managed. This is only the briefest overview, and you should read the Cluster Handbook for more detailed information.

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; snow services; and maintenance of the common landscape and trees, playgrounds, street and sidewalks. The Cluster has no paid employees and engages private contractors to provide all cluster common services. All of these services are paid for by our annual assessment.

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 meetings 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Landscape Maintenance and Improvement

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
- Turf care
- Mowing and trimming
- Tree and shrub care
- Leaf removal

In addition to the routine landscape maintenance, the Cluster budgets funds for landscape improvement and tree maintenance. The money budgeted for tree maintenance is spent on tree pruning and removal, based on a prioritized list reviewed each year by certified arborists. The remaining budget is spent on landscape improvement projects identified and prioritized in the current 5-year landscape plan.

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

GCVCA Officers

President
Sandy Dresser

Vice President
Bob Williamson

Secretary/Treasurer
Stephanie Cavanaugh

Assistant Treasurer
Karen Seymour 703-255-2461

Directors

Rob Aaron

Joe Durishin

John Natoli

Gary Villhauer

Committee Chairpersons

Architecture
Sandy Dresser

Capital Improvements
Bob Williamson
John Natoli

Communication
Sandy Dresser

Drainage
Gary Villhauer
Bob Williamson
John Natoli

Landscape & Trees
Patty Williamson 703-391-7228

Playgrounds
Rob Aaron
Joe Durishin

Financial Management Disclosure Packets

Karen Seymour
703-255-2461
fourflyin@aol.com

PO Box 434
Oakton VA 22124-0434

Cluster Website
www.golfcourseview.org

Cluster Email
gcvca@golfcourseview.org

Next Board Meeting

March 14, 2016
7:30 pm at 2159

Snow Plowing/Shoveling

Our contract for snow services includes plowing the street and parking lots when there is more than 4" 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 side-walks facing the parking lots.

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.

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.

Reston Association requires that we store our trash cans and bins out of sight in our trash enclosures when they are not out for a collection.

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 and the cluster's account number. To get this number simply send an email to the board at gcvca@golfcourseview.org. If you prefer, you can contact any board member to report the problem.

Playgrounds

The Cluster maintains the "upper playground" in Courtyard D and shares the maintenance of the "lower playground" behind Courtyard E with Golf Course Square Cluster. In addition to these play areas, our kids are also welcome to use the playgrounds in Newbridge (down the Reston Pathway that runs beside the tennis courts) and in Golf Course Square (behind Sarazen Ct.) and on our common lawns.

Our mulched landscape beds and river rock drainage installations, on the other hand, represent a significant financial investment on the part of all of us. They enhance the natural beauty of our neighborhood and positively affect both our property values and our quality of life. **Parents, please don't let your children play in these areas.**

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.

In 2015 the Cluster contracted with Battlefield Towing to tow cars that are illegally parked. Cars that are:

- parked beside yellow curbs,
- illegally parked in an assigned parking space,
- 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.

Golf Course Sq. (the street leading into our cluster) and all other public streets in Reston are designated by Fairfax County as Community Parking Districts. All large commercial and all 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.

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.

Pet waste presents a significant health hazard, and Golf Course View and our neighboring clusters take dog waste clean up seriously.

"Mutt Mitts" are available from dispensers located beside the swimming pool and in three locations along Golf Course Dr. and Golf Course Sq.—by the gully, at the intersection of Golf Course Sq. and Golf Course Dr. and at the pedestrian crosswalk to Newbridge.

Home Maintenance and Design Standards

All homeowners are members not only of the Golf Course View Cluster Association but also of the Reston Association (RA) and subject to its Covenants.

Homeowners are responsible for maintaining their townhouses and property in compliance with the RA Covenants and the Cluster design standards. The Cluster does not enforce maintenance or design standards. Enforcement is the responsibility of RA.

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 or upon request from the Cluster president.

You can access the Reston Association design and maintenance standards and information about the RA design review process on the Reston website (www.reston.org) at the Homeowners' Resources tab. You can download the RA application form at the Cluster website at the Handbook and Standards tab.

Cluster President Sandy Dresser can help you complete the RA application form with all the information you need to include. **All RA 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. These 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, www.golfcourseview.org
- direct access to the board by email at 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 the latest edition of which was distributed in the summer of 2014. We expect to publish a new edition next summer.