

Arbor Hills Newsletter

April 2020

Calendar of Events

April 28, 2020 **Board Meeting (to be held virtually). Board of Directors and Alex Stankiewicz. Residents are encouraged to email the Board at: board@arbor-hills.org with questions and/or concerns prior to the April 28 Board meeting. The Board will respond to you via email.**

Summer/Fall 2020 Neighborhood clean-up day has been postponed until summer/fall due to COVID-19.

Please Stay Safe and Sound

We hope this finds all of you and your families healthy and safely tucked into your homes guarding against exposure to the coronavirus (COVID-19). Many thanks to our courageous and caring residents who work in doctors' offices, hospitals, nursing homes, rehab facilities and for home health services to selflessly provide health care. We also appreciate the efforts of our emergency medical personnel, police officers, firefighters, utility workers and those who have continued to work in grocery stores, pharmacies, gas stations to help us meet basic needs. And, let's not forget all those "tech experts" who've help ensure we can remain in touch with each other via our computers and cell phones! We owe all of you a debt of gratitude! Although we must remain apart for now, we are really in this together! Please continue to follow Center for Disease Control (CDC) and our governor's guidelines to protect yourselves and others. We wish you and your loved ones continued good health!

Sign up Now for Sidewalk Repair Discounts!

In March, each of our co-owners received an "Inspection Notification" letter from Casa Bella Property Management, Inc. Some people were notified that their homes and sidewalks were in good shape and repairs are not needed. Others were advised to make repairs or address items of concern related to their homes, yards and/or sidewalks. We realize many contractors are unable to work right now, but understand our governor may be lifting some restrictions on outdoor-related businesses soon. Don't worry – **You have until August 31, 2020 to complete needed repairs.**

Good news! We have negotiated discounts for some types of sidewalk repairs. It's important for you to sign up now for discount programs even though actual completion of the repair work probably will be delayed until this summer due to the coronavirus. We have been fortunate to arrange for these discounts; they will save individual co-owners significant dollars in contractors' mobilization charges. **You will not be billed for work on your sidewalks until the work is actually completed.** Our Board members recently painted color-coded dots on sidewalks and ramps that need repair or replacement. Please take a look at the dot(s) on the sidewalk slabs and ramps adjacent to your property to confirm exactly what type of repair you need before you call to arrange necessary repairs. **Please see deadlines and contact information below:**

Red Dot: Replace entire sidewalk slab (Call Doan Construction: 734-971-4678. Discount is not available at this time, but we will keep you posted if this changes!)

Yellow Dot: Sidewalk slab or ramp section needs to be "saw cut" (Call Precision Concrete Cutting by **May 15, 2020** to sign up for discounted rates: 248-606-9161.) Rates will vary a bit depending on type and number of "saw-cuts" performed.

Blue Dot: Sidewalk slab needs to be "lifted" (Call Concrete Leveling, Inc. - "CLI" by **April 30, 2020** to sign up for discounted rates: 734-439-3200.) Approximate cost per slab "lift" -- \$45.00.

Green Dot: Sidewalk cracks need to be "caulked" (Call Concrete Leveling, Inc. – "CLI" by **April 30, 2020** to request assistance with this work.) Approximate cost per slab \$30.00. If you choose to do this work yourself, you might find the attached "INSTRUCTIONS FOR CAULKING/SEALING CRACKS" helpful. These instructions were provided to us by CLI.

Our homeowners' association -- Arbor Hills Condominium Association (AHCA) -- has responsibility for maintaining sidewalks, ramps, and curbs adjacent to our common areas. The Board will be taking advantage of the discount programs noted above to arrange for some "lifts" and "saw cuts" on sidewalks and curbs that abut ramps in designated common areas. Again, we hope this work will be completed this summer. If you have any questions about the inspection results for your property, please contact the Board at: board@arbor-hills.org.

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What's the Right Height for Trees Hanging over Sidewalks and Streets?

More than ever (and probably because everyone is antsy from being indoors over the past few weeks), people have been walking and biking through our neighborhood. In addition to addressing sidewalk slab repairs to help ensure everyone's safety, we need to make sure our trees don't injure people. **It is your responsibility to trim the trees near your sidewalks to allow for at least a 6-foot clearance above the sidewalk. Also, to help clear the way for large vehicles on our roadways and avoid damage to your trees, we encourage you to trim your street trees (or have them trimmed), to an adequate height for large truck clearance at a distance of 6 – 8 feet out from the curb.**

No Curbside Dumping Allowed!

This may be a great time to do spring cleaning, but **it is never okay to place disposed items at your curb in hopes that someone will pick them up.** (Please see Section 6.7 – “Aesthetics” in the Arbor Hills bylaws). Examples of items that must not be left for curbside pick-up include, but are not limited to: couches, chairs, appliances, boxes, TVs, old cabinetry. We want everyone to know our Board members take these violations very seriously and contact Casa Bella right away when violations occur. Casa Bella immediately contacts the co-owner who is in violation. A violation notice is then sent out and, if the item is not removed from the curb, the co-owner faces a fine. If notices from Casa Bella are ignored, arrangements will be made for a junk collector to pick up the item(s) and the co-owner will be charged for pick-up service. Some junk collectors, like 1-800-GOTJUNK, are still working. They charge about \$100 to pick up a couch. The minimum charge for a small, ¼ truckload of items is about \$150. Please respect your neighbors and do your part to maintain the beauty of Arbor Hills.

Yard Signs – To Post or Not to Post?

In accordance with the Arbor Hills Bylaws, (Section 6.9 “Advertising”) no signs or other advertising devices of any kind, other than signs for the purpose of advertising the property for sale or for purposes required by law, can be displayed if they are visible from the exterior of a co-owner's unit or on the common elements without written permission from the Association. If you have a sign in your yard that does not comply with this section of our bylaws, please remove it. We appreciate your cooperation!

Our “Reserve Study” and Pavement Engineering Consults are Underway

About every five (5) years, AHCA retains a qualified firm to conduct a “Reserve Study” to help us determine whether we are on track to fund future maintenance and improvement projects for common elements in Arbor Hills. For example, the “Reserve Study” should help us determine whether we will have enough money “in reserve” to fund pavement rehab and/or replacement in the future. Board members met on-site (and outdoors!) with the consultant hired to conduct the “Reserve Study” for Arbor Hills in early March.

The Board is not, however, relying solely on the results of the “Reserve Study” to chart our future course. Earlier this year, we met with City of Arbor officials for clarification and guidance about City ordinances and ADA compliance. We also confirmed where AHCA and the City's responsibilities for sidewalk and ramp maintenance begin and end. In late February, all of our Board members and reps from Casa Bella met with Civil/Pavement Engineers from a reputable consulting engineering firm to obtain technical guidance and learn more about various pavement maintenance, repair and replacement options. Shortly after the February presentation, we received a proposal and estimate for testing and evaluating our pavements with an end-goal of establishing a long-term, cost-effective pavement management program. The Board was scheduled to meet with another engineering firm in early March, but, due to the coronavirus, this meeting was cancelled. We hope to reschedule soon!

Crack Filling Coming Soon!

Late last fall, we managed to complete pavement repairs before bad weather hit. Two (2) potholes and two (2) areas of crumbling pavement were repaired with large, cut and replace, hot mix asphalt repairs. Unfortunately, we missed our chance to complete “crack filling” throughout the neighborhood because of a surprise snowstorm and subsequent rainy and cold weather! We plan to have our crack filling contract from last fall fulfilled later this spring or this summer. Many thanks to Ig Justyna; he recently spent several hours searching out and filling numerous, small potholes throughout the neighborhood with cold patch asphalt. This will help prolong the life of our pavement. In addition, the Board budgeted extra money in the AHCA 2020 Budget to address anticipated asphalt and pavement-related issues. **Please keep an eye out for posted announcements about exact dates/times crack filling will take place. You and your guests will need to park their vehicles off our roads when the crews are scheduled to show up!**

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Before You Start Home Repair/Improvement Projects ...

You must complete and submit a **“Request for Alteration/Modification” approval form in advance if you wish to make a change** from established color or design standards for items such as trim, roof shingles, front doors, vinyl siding, garage doors and/or window panes. (Muntin/grid glass-paned windows on front facing windows are required.) You must also submit a “Request for Alteration/Modification” form if you plan to construct or make changes to outdoor structural components (retaining walls, decks, fences). This form is available on the Arbor Hills website and from Casa Bella Property Management.

Please take care to ensure your neighbors’ yards or property will not be damaged in the course of having work performed at your house. Out of consideration for your neighbors, please let them know about upcoming, scheduled contractor work that may affect them: heavy equipment, roof shingle removal, increased noise levels. It is also the **responsibility of homeowners to ensure appropriate building permits are obtained** (either by themselves or hired contractors), prior to initiating electrical, mechanical, heating and cooling, plumbing, and/or renovation or construction projects. This also applies to roofing, window replacement, deck replacement/construction, fence construction, basement refinishing, and other home improvement or large landscaping projects. For your own protection, verify contractors are properly licensed and insured to do the work. And, don’t forget you are legally required to contact “MISS DIG” to identify/flag underground utilities before you or your contractors begin any excavation project (e.g., planting shrubs and trees)!

A Reminder about January Dues and Penalty Fees for Late Payment

Co-owner Association Fees are due from each Arbor Hills household every six (6) months -- by January 1 and July 1. Payment invoices/coupons (in the amount of \$365) are mailed to co-owners about a month before association fees are due. **Fees which were due by January 1, 2020 (in the amount of \$365.00 per household), which have not been paid, are now overdue (in arrears).** Residents who have not paid their homeowners’ association fees within a 30-day grace period following the due date, incur an additional \$25 *per month* late/penalty fee until all outstanding fees are paid in full. These late fees can add up quickly! Unfortunately, we have to engage an attorney to handle collections and, in some cases, arrange to garnish wages or place liens on homes in order to collect overdue fees. **Applicable attorney fees associated with collection activities are charged back to residents who are in arrears.** We hate this, but have a duty to collect homeowners’ association fees to cover AHCA’s budgeted expenses on behalf of all our residents! If you have a question about your association fees, contact Alex at Casa Bella immediately.

The Final Word on the Outcome of our Annual Meeting Last October

Several weeks ago, a few Arbor Hills residents expressed an interest in obtaining a legal opinion (letter) from our attorney about the outcome of our October 24, 2019 annual meeting and the subsequent continuation of certain Board members. Following receipt of the letter, the Board emailed a copy to each of the three (3) residents who had requested it. Attached to this newsletter is a copy of the attorney’s letter. Our Board looks forward to continuing to serve you and our community at large.

Keeping in Touch with You!

We recognize many Arbor Hills residents have established Facebook and Google Groups accounts for those who wish to informally participate in sharing information about our neighborhood. **Please be advised, however, the official and exclusive source of approved information for Arbor Hills residents is the Arbor Hills website: www.arbor-hills.org.** Visit arbor-hills.org to read newsletters, meeting minutes and various announcements, and to learn about our upcoming events, bylaws, policies and more. Various forms are available on this website. **If you identify a safety issue that affects our residents, please contact the Arbor Hills Board of Directors at: Board@Arbor-Hills.org.** **If you observe a fire or suspected criminal activity, immediately call police at 911.**

Please Register On-Line with Casa Bella

Each of our adult residents needs to establish an Arbor Hills Account through Casa Bella Property Management to ensure receipt of email communications (newsletters and announcements) about our community. These communications are distributed by Casa Bella on behalf of Arbor Hills. To set up your account, go to: www.casabellamanagement.com; click on CREATE ACCOUNT; complete your information; including the unit number for your property (Lot #); click CONTINUE. Within 1-2 business days, your account will be established with Casa Bella! **You can pay your association fees online once you establish an account with Casa Bella. You may also mail your association fees to Casa Bella at the address listed at the bottom of this newsletter.**

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Contacts

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Board: board@arbor-hills.org

Arbor Hills Website: www.arbor-hills.org

Dennis Stom -- President
Ig Justyna --Vice President
Sherri Fountain -- Secretary
Steve Haddrill --Treasurer
Thomas Edwards -- Director at Large

**We welcome your suggestions for improving
our neighborhood! Let us hear from you!**