

Arbor Hills Newsletter

December 2017

Calendar

- January 1st - Due Date for First Payment of Association Fees for 2018
- January 22nd - Open Board Meeting, 7:00 pm, place is tbd
- February 10th - Late Fees Incurred for Missing Dues

Happy New Year

The Arbor Hills Board of Directors' wants to wish all our neighbors a wonderful Holiday Season and Happy New Year. May 2018 bring everyone happiness and joy.

Snow Removal Reminder

The Association has contracted snow removal service to clean our streets within two hours of each 2 inches snowfall. In some situations, the plow service may take longer due to inclement weather, so please be patient. Our plow service has requested that homeowners remove all cars from the streets. In accordance with this request, the Board of Directors has established a towing policy for cars left on the streets that they will be towed. Due to the number of complaints and a few accidents over the years, the Board felt the towing policy was warranted and has been in place for many years. It will be the homeowner/renter's responsibility to inform guests, service personnel, etc. of the policy while visiting your residence. And remember: homeowners/renters are responsible for clearing their own sidewalks and driveways, not the Arbor Hills contracted snowplow service.

Salting

Our snow removal service is required to salt only our street intersections. However, the service is not always aware of slippery conditions. If you notice slick spots, please report them to the management company, Casa Bella, 248.655.1500 ext. 2020 for Neil immediately. (Regular "full-street" salting is not possible because of our sensitive wetlands and conservation easements.).

Snow Removal on Driveways and Sidewalks

If you own a snow blower or contract a snow removal company to clear your driveway and sidewalks, please don't blow the snow into the plowed or unplowed streets. This extra snow makes is hazardous for your fellow neighbors to drive through when traveling the street. Cleared snow should go into your yard.

Driveway Salt

Please do not use salt on your driveway and sidewalks. It will drain in to our wetlands and damage wildlife. Arbor Hills has very, very sensitive wetland areas. Try using sand as an alternative to tackle the ice or if needed, Pet Safe Salt.

Fire Hydrants

If you have a fire hydrant in your yard, please shovel the snow from around it during deep snowfalls. You never know when your hydrant might need to be found and used. This year all fire hydrants have been marked with flags for location.

Christmas Tree Pickup

The city does not pick up Christmas Trees anymore. However, you can drop your tree off at the recycle center on Ellsworth, call 994-7336 for a drop-off location and assistance. Make sure to remove all ornaments and tinsel; also do not use plastic bags. The Recycle Center will not take your tree unless it is totally naked. Please do not dispose of your trees on Association common property; if you are caught doing this you will be fined.

Annual Neighborhood Meeting

Our annual meeting was held on October 26st, 2017. The Association met quorum and several new Board members were elected on the Board. The new Board of Directors is as follows:

- Dennis Stom – President
- David Wang – Vice President
- Rajiv Saxena – Treasurer

Thomas Edwards – Secretary
Steve Haddrill – Member at Large

Thank you to the previous Board members, Usha Jindal and Elena Levin for their service.

New Management Company Note

As you know, effective December 1st, 2017, Arbor Hills switched management agencies to Casa Bella Property Management. Arbor Hills's representative at Casa Bella is Neil Kollipara. Neil can answer questions about the community, your account, governing documents, and various other matters. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Neil at [248.655.1500 ext. 2020](tel:248.655.1500) or nkollipara@casabellamanagement.com. Casa Bella's hours are 9a to 4p, Monday through Friday.

Prior to December 1st, several homeowners experienced issues with Casa Bella's website. That is because Arbor Hills had not yet been added to Casa Bella's systems. Now that Arbor Hills has been added to Casa Bella's systems, all homeowners should have no issue registering for and accessing the website.

Casa Bella reports that the transition is going smoothly and wishes you and your family Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

2018 Association Dues

Your first Association dues payment of \$365.00 for 2018 is due on January 1st. The collection policy is the same as last year for late payments. After 10 days from the due date each month a fee of \$25 will be charged to your account. However, for the dues due in January and July, a 30 grace period is in effect. A copy of the Collection Assessment Fees and Service Charges for the Arbor Hills Association is available on the website, arbor-hills.org.

Invoices were mailed to all homeowners on December 19th. Association dues may be paid by check or online. If you wish to pay online, you will need to go to casabellamanagement.com and register for the website. You will not gain immediate access to the website; Casa Bella will need to approve your registration in order for you to gain access. *If you wish to pay by check, you can mail your payment to the Las Vegas address indicated on the payment coupon, or you can mail it to Casa Bella's main office:*

Arbor Hills Condominium Association
c/o Casa Bella Property Management, Inc.
850 North Crooks Road – Suite 100
Clawson, MI 48017

Please do your very best to send payment before January 1st, 2018. If you are not able to, don't fret – there will be some leeway given the fact that the Association is transitioning to a new management company. In alignment with Association policy, a 30-day grace period is in effect.

Street Lights

It is the Board's policy due to cost to repair burnt out street lights every 4 months or when 3 or more lights are out. As a resident of Arbor Hills, please feel free to notify the management company of a burned out street light. Please specify the location of the street light pole and the number printed on it.

Arbor Hills Website

Visit our official website, www.arbor-hills.org for a calendar of events, history, Bylaws, Board policies, and other news are posted for your convenience. Please use the website's online form for any suggestions you may have.

Street Tree Trimming

For the notices sent to all neighbors this past Fall about trimming your street tree(s), the Board thanks all neighbors who trimmed their streets. This will aid in our snow plowing services to plow closer to the curbs and allow the trash and recycle trucks to pass by easier. Further details will be provided in the Spring along with a new guideline.

Lost and Found

A remoted controlled helicopter was found in Oakwoods Park recently. If you lost one, please contact the Board about it at board@arbor-hills.org.

2018 Deer Management Program

The City of Ann Arbor has released details of their 2018 Deer Management Program to take place in January. The program will include non-lethal sterilization activities from January 2 through January 7. The lethal program takes place January 8 - 31 on private and public lands. Several [parks and nature areas](#) in the city will be closed from 3 PM to midnight during this time. To ensure safety of community members, security will be in place monitoring and patrolling parks while sharp shooters are present. Parks and nature areas included in the Thurston boundaries include Arbor Hills, Oakwoods Nature Area, and Sugarbush Park (North of Rumsey Dr. only). Please remind your children to avoid walking through these parks after 3 PM and instead stay on sidewalks. Visit the city's [Deer Management Website \(https://www.a2gov.org/departments/community-services/Pages/2018-Program.aspx\)](https://www.a2gov.org/departments/community-services/Pages/2018-Program.aspx) for the complete listing of parks, signage locations, education efforts and additional information.

The City has posted notice signs at the official entrances of the affected parks.

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New Board - few official items

Notifications and discussions:

The new board is going to try to follow the policy of a period of discussion or notification prior to any significant change in spend or project from recent years. Change is not necessarily bad, but we would like to reflect the whole neighborhood's interpretation of the bylaws as much as possible. There have been some discussions surrounding surveys and unofficial but useful discussions in social media.

Water measurement stakes:

There have been some concerns about changing water levels in some of the ponds and wetland areas. A while ago the board bought some measurement stakes which can be attached to poles and driven into the ground in a pond. This would help to establish a documented factual record by allowing one to take some pictures of rising or high water levels for comparison. I would recommend that this is most useful where there is no engineered feature for comparison (if there is a riser or drain, that makes for a ready comparison). Let the board know if you feel the need for a stake and we can get one installed.

Common Areas:

Along similar lines, there have been some complaints about common areas expanding into neighbor's yards. We are open to hearing why not, but our current position is that you should feel free to trim encroaching vegetation off of your lot. You may wish to consider site lines and privacy, if you would open a view with a neighbor. But that is not likely a problem with common property. If a common trees pose a hazard to your property, please let the Board know.

Discussion:

There was a question at the last board meeting about pulling deadwood out of common areas, and prior boards being uncomfortable with that. Does anyone recall why? My non-professional understanding of forestry is that some dead-fall is useful for habitat (small animals), but too much starts to choke and become a fire hazard. If you look at professionally groomed forest-parks you see some branches and trees but not big stacks. What do people think about that? Please email the Board and let us know.

A number of times in the past few years I have been asked if there is a means of volunteering to keep some costs down. As a starter, we will likely want to look at and clean up the engineered drainage features to make sure they are clean and clear of obstructions. The expert at the city described some useful activity that can be done with a rake and a shovel. Think Spring!