

HICKORY FARMS COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

December 2020 Edition



HICKORYFARMS.ORG

P.O. BOX 2239, FAIRFAX VA 22031

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**YOUR \$250 HICKORY FARMS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT (DUES) MUST BE PAID BY
JANUARY 1 – CREDIT CARDS ARE NOW ACCEPTED**

Per Hickory Farms Community Association Bylaws Article VII, Section 2(c), your 2021 Annual Assessment was set at \$250 at the October 13, 2020, Board of Directors meeting. This reminder is also printed in the Hickory Farms newsletter. Individual bills are US mailed to each resident homeowner and each absentee homeowner who has given their contact information to the Board of Directors. Several notices are sent to homeowners who have joined the Hickory Farms Listserv email group. If you aren't already a member of the Listserv, please join at <https://hickoryfarms.org/hickory-farms-listserv>. Your 2021 Annual Assessment of \$250 is unchanged from 2020.

The Assessment must be paid by the person who owns the property on January 1. Payments that are not postmarked or in the physical possession of the Treasurer or received in the Hickory Farms Paypal / credit card account by January 7 are late and the homeowner will be charged a \$50 late assessment. Payments received after that date that do not include the \$50 assessment will be returned to the homeowner for non-payment. Beginning February 1, delinquent accounts may be turned over to the Association's attorneys for collection. Delinquent accounts could also accrue interest on the unpaid balance, liens may be placed on the lot or homeowner personally, and the Association may file a lawsuit against the homeowner in Fairfax County District Court. Collection fees could well exceed \$200. These procedures are in accord with the Hickory Farms Community Association Bylaws, which have no provision for waiver.

- Do not mail or hand deliver your payment to the Treasurer's house.
- Write your Hickory Farms house number and street name on your check or money order.
- Moved? New homeowner? Email owner's name, address, and telephone number to secretary@hickoryfarms.org, who maintains Hickory Farms records
- Questions? Contact Treasurer@Hickoryfarms.org
- Send your check or money order by January 1 to: Hickory Farms Community Association, P.O. Box 2239, Fairfax VA 22031
- You may pay by credit card or Paypal at <https://hickoryfarms.org/annual-assessment>. You will be charged \$257.78, which includes a \$7.78 convenience fee charged by PayPal

**FAREWELL AND THANK YOU TO OUTGOING HFCA MEMBER-AT-LARGE KIRK RANDALL
FOR HIS YEARS OF SERVICE TO HICKORY FARMS COMMUNITY**

By: The HFCA Board of Directors

After decades of service, we are sorry to see that Kirk Randall will be leaving our Board of Directors. His service includes being a past President of HFCA; mobilizing advertising to cover the entire cost of printing our monthly Newsletters; requesting VDOT to repair our sidewalks to keep them safe for pedestrian use; issuing Annual Assessment Dues notices every year; keeping us apprised of neighborhood matters via the YahooGroup Listserv; launching discounted home improvement vendor services for sidings, driveways, power washing and more for the whole community; maintaining and updating our Hickory Farms Homeowners Directory; liaison with HFCA's legal counsel firm; mobilizing to upload years of HFCA records onto our website; and being our liaison with our House of Delegates and Senate representatives in the Virginia State Legislature. We wish Kirk all of the very best for his future and thank him deeply for his cheerful and abiding service to all of us in Hickory Farms that has so helped strengthen us as a community.

2021 HFCA Budget

Income	Amount
Annual Assessment - Current Year	\$ 49,500.00
Late Fees	
Interest - Checking	
Legal Fees/Leans/Refunds	
Advertising	\$ 1,550.00
VPOAA Disclosure Package Fees	\$ 875.00
Total Income	\$ 51,925.00

Expenses	Amount
Common Grounds Maintenance	\$22,675.00
Common Grounds Improvement	\$4,060.00
Common Grounds Remediation	\$5,000.00
Legal Fees	\$2,060.00
Printing	\$1,500.00
Social	\$1,250.00
Neighborhood Watch	\$177.00
Management Liability Insurance	\$2,500.00
Commercial Crime Insurance	\$800.00
Commercial General Liability Insurance	\$309.00
Tax Preparation/Audit	\$335.00
Taxes & Government Charges/Fees	\$247.00
Administrative Fees	\$824.00
Bank Charges	\$52.00
Postage	\$366.90
Strategic Projects	\$1,000.00
Reserves for Capital Components	\$7,500.00
Total Expense Budget	\$50,655.90

Notes:

- 1) \$27,398 Reserve Fund as of 9/30/2020 – It is HFCA policy to maintain a reserve fund invested in low risk financial instruments.
- 2) The 2021 budget was set on October 27, 2020 and setting of the 2021 annual assessment was approved October 13, 2020 by the HFCA Board of Directors . The 2021 annual assessment is \$250.00. Under the Hickory Farms Bylaws and the Virginia Property Owners Association Act, the Board of Directors must approve a budget and set an annual assessment for the forthcoming year.



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SAFE. CONVENIENT. FUN! STREETS & TRAILS FOR EVERYONE

By: Bob Cosgriff
 Braddock District Representative and Vice-Chair
 Fairfax County Trails, Sidewalks and Bikeways Committee

As Supervisor Walkinshaw's appointee to the Fairfax County Trails, Sidewalks and Bikeways Committee, one of my responsibilities is communicating to Braddock District residents on issues concerning non-motorized transportation options, namely, pedestrian, bicyclist, rolling (scooter, wheelchair, stroller), and equestrian facilities in the district and the county as a whole.

For this article, I have chosen the tag line of the **ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan**, which is a comprehensive overhaul of the County's older Bicycle Master Plan and Countywide Trails Plan. It draws as well on information in Special Area Plans (e.g., the Tysons Urban Center, George Mason University, Metro stations, and several other designated areas) and is being developed in line with the County's Strategic Plan priorities. The new plan will become an appendix of the County's Comprehensive Plan and provide policy guidance on the development of non-motorized transportation facilities (i.e., trails, sidewalks, equestrian trails, BikeShare facilities, etc.)

As the current COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated, many people who cannot work at home are not necessarily using public transportation options. This points up the importance of having other ways besides an automobile to get to work, using a bicycle being the most obvious. Also, many people have more time on their hands and want to get out of the house safely. Nearby county, state, and federal parks have seen an uptick in usage. This means that a robust network of trails and bikeways is required so that people can easily move from one place to another. The reality is that Fairfax County was built out with cars, not pedestrians or cyclists, in mind. Retro-fitting existing corridors to bring trails and sidewalks up to current national standards is an exceedingly difficult—and expensive—task.

But any such construction needs to start with good policy and that is where the ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan comes in. And that is where you come in!

Work on the Plan is in Phase I, which will include various means of public outreach. In addition to the Trails, Sidewalks and Bikeways Committee, two citizen groups are being assembled: an Equity Advisory Group and a Youth Advisory Group to give previously under-representative groups a voice in the emerging plan. Further outreach will consist of public meetings, use of social media, and other methods of contacting citizens to get input of perceived needs.

Here are two links to use to get further information on the ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan. The first is a short slide presentation to the Transportation Advisory Commission in October, 2020:

https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/sites/transportation/files/assets/documents/pdf/tac/tac_october20_2020_activefairfax.pdf

The second is the ActiveFairfax Transportation website. At this point it is informational only, but an interactive capability will be rolled out as part of Phase I:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/bike-walk/activefairfax>

Finally, I'd like to give an update on three ongoing and one proposed project in Braddock District.

The pedestrian bridge in Smokewood Park (just south of the trailhead on Whitacre Road near Woodson High School) is closed pending replacement, scheduled for March, 2020). The asphalt path, which leads to Olde Creek Elementary School and then into the Long Branch Stream Valley Park trail system, is still open and it is possible to cross the small stream at the bridge on foot.

The second project is an extensive upgrade to the multi-use trail in Long Branch Stream Valley park from the entrance on Olley Lane to Rutherford Park, and then a longer section from Guinea Road to Woodland Way. The trail sections are closed during construction.

Third, a stream mitigation project in Wakefield Park will require the closing of certain portions of park trails and also the Cross-County Trail where it passes through Wakefield Park.

The proposed project is for a trail from Braddock Road just west of Burke Station Road to Royal Lake. I submitted this proposal to the Park Authority almost two years ago. The County builds park facilities from bond money so nothing could be started at the time. With the recent passage of the 2020 Park Bond referendum, planning can go forward on this proposal and others from around the county. There is a scoring system used to rank proposals. I believe this proposal will score well because of the large number of potential users living within a half-mile of the proposed trail. It would provide a needed north-south corridor. It links to a popular county park. Much of the alignment is along a stormwater/sewage right-of-way and is flat. Finally, Erickson Living will build a trail on the western edge of its senior living facility now being developed on the former site of the Northern Virginia Training Center, meaning the County will not have to pay for that segment. I will keep you posted on this proposal as the process moves forward.

In closing, I encourage you to get out and explore the many excellent trails in Braddock District, including Smokewood Park, Long Branch Stream Valley Park, Accotink Creek Stream Valley Park, Accotink Park, Wakefield Park, and Royal Lake. Farther afield, Burke Lake Park, Lake Mercer and the South Run Stream Valley Park are all beautiful places to walk.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please feel free to contact me.

JOIN OUR LISTSERV

There's no better way to stay in touch than through our Hickory Farms email listserv. Visit hickory-farms.org and click "Hickory Farms Listserv" on left and follow the instructions.

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ATTEND A HFCA BOARD MEETING FROM YOUR LIVING ROOM!

By Bruce Bernhardt

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Hickory Farms Board Meetings are now conducted using the Zoom audio/video conference application. That means that every Hickory Farms Community Association member can observe their Board in action without leaving home! To join a Board Meeting, contact any HFCA Board Member or send a request to join to hfca@hickoryfarms.org. You will be provided the date and time of the next Board Meeting. You will also be provided the Zoom meeting URL, meeting number and passcode. From the convenience of your own home, you can click on the URL or enter it into your browser, enter the meeting number and then enter the passcode. You will then see a screen display that indicates you are in the waiting room and will enter the meeting once the host opens the meeting.

Hickory Farms has a strong and consistent history of transparency regarding access by members to Board Meetings and the challenges facing our community. Please consider attending a Board Meeting so that you are fully informed with the issues facing our neighborhood!

WANT TO CONTACT THE BOARD?

Board of Directors: hfca@hickoryfarms.org

Architectural Control Committee: acc@hickoryfarms.org

President: president@hickoryfarms.org

Treasurer: treasurer@hickoryfarms.org

Common Areas: commonareas@hickoryfarms.org

Webmaster: webmaster@hickoryfarms.org

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STUDENT YELLOW PAGES

If you offer services such as raking leaves, lawn mowing, babysitting, general home maintenance, dog walking, tutoring, etc., please email Bill at berg_bill@yahoo.com to be included.

Bridgette Buchanan (17)	703-307-7323	Babysitting and dog sitting
Britney Mulliner (17)	571-474-7277	Babysitting and dog sitting
Cody Dempster (17)	703-776-0101	Yard work, snow shoveling, housework
Dominic Cannata (17)	703-568-9896	Lawn mowing, shovel snow, cleaning, mulching
Erika Maaseide (17)	703-659-5321	Babysitting; Special Needs experienced
Kiera Stark (11)	commonareas@hickoryfarms.org	Pet sitting, plant/tree watering, weed picking and leaf
Kent Coddling (18)	703-317-7319	Shovel snow, yard work, leaf raking
Paul Cannata (18)	786-445-5318	Lawn mowing, shovel snow, cleaning, mulching
Xavier Gilmer (15)	703-862-2192	Shovel snow; lawn mowing
Jaden Singh (17)	703-278-8800	Math tutoring, snow shoveling
George Coddling (14)	703-223-4101	Snow shovel, yard work, leaf raking



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COMMON AREAS 2020 REVIEW

By: Melissa Stark

In 2020, the Commons Area Committee (CAC) continued the goals to revitalize the HFCA Commons Areas to make it a safe place for the community to use and enjoy. The CAC goals have been to eradicate non native invasive species, maintain & monitor our trees health, removing vines & make as much of the Commons Area safe to play and explore. Especially during these times, where nature space is at a premium, now that we have been mostly confined to our homes.

Below are just a few of the many things that the CAC has been tackling this year -

1. Established a Commons Area Committee (CAC) in January 2020 to assist in the decision making and planning of our commons. The 2020 CAC members consists of the following members: Melissa Stark (Committee Chair), Jarrett Stark (Co-committee Chair), Bob and Judy Cosgriff (Advisor - Rabbit Run), Bill Berg (Advisor - Northern Path), Claire Coleman (Advisor - Front Entrances), Bryan Crabtree (Advisor - Lower Commons), Rich Dudley (Advisor - Upper Commons).
2. Multiple common area walk arounds & future plannings discussions. Please take a look at the meeting notes on the website for a more detailed overview.
3. Helping the health of our mature trees in the Upper Commons, by removing the last of the thick large vines trapped & wrapped in the branches. Removal of smaller vines was tackled via volunteers in the Lower Commons along the south side of the main island.
4. Our 1st year using Premium Lawn & Landscape to maintain our grass areas & entrances was a success! They did a wonderful job mowing, taking care of the signed entrances with a spring clean up and spring & fall flowers. The CAC has proposed moving forward with them in 2021.

5. The CAC held 3 successful volunteer events - mulching the Upper Commons meadow, mulching the Lower Commons main island path & fall signed entrance clean up. A huge thank you to all of our volunteers!! The continued help of volunteers allows us to tackle more projects and stay below or within our Common Areas budget.
6. Liam Ferguson's Eagle Scout project did a wonderful job in helping meet some of the CAC's future goals early. The additions of four new benches, a diving board bench, Upper Commons stepping stone path and clearing vines/debris/locust seedling growth near the Upper Commons boxwood grove can be enjoyed by now by all. Thank you Liam & the Ferguson family for your hard work and contributions!
7. The Upper Commons meadow is in its 2nd year and is filling in nicely! It has been providing a lot of food (bugs & seeds) and shelter for wildlife.
8. The Upper & Lower Commons aeration and seeding have helped fill in even more bare spots in the lawn, which helps displace weeds and more importantly, a hard to eradicate invasive - Japanese stilt grass.
9. In the Lower Commons, along the black path off of Cotton Farm Rd. there is an area that is known for being spongy and holding water, despite there being a buried french drain that was installed in 2009. Mid - summer the CAC team decided to first try amending the soil with an aerator, sand and organic matter to improve drainage and drying ability of the soil. After a couple of applications, this method is showing positive signs of helping the water get to the french drain, which is allowing the area to dry faster.
10. At the southern end of Rabbit Run - meadow & shrub planting started in 2020, with additional planting this year. This area proved to be very attractive to bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds over the summer and continues to draw in seed-eating birds. The CAC decided to move one of the old benches to that area to provide a comfortable place for residents to sit and enjoy nature.
11. Wonder why there are hay bales on the hill and by the trees along the black path in the Lower Commons? If we get snow, they act as sledding bumpers to keep kiddos from going in the wrong direction. At the end of the snow season, they composted and used to prevent weeds from popping up in the islands. A huge thank you to the Perkins clan for picking them up for us in their truck!! Last year my minivan looked like a barn stall after picking up the hay.
12. The most exciting improvement is coming in winter 2020-2021! In July 2020, the HFCA BOD approved using Common Area funds to partner with Area Landscaping, Inc. to help revitalize and reforest the Upper Commons Main Island, where the .75 acres of bamboo once stood in 2017. The reforestation of this area will bring 34 native trees & 46 native shrubs to the island. The timing of this planting is perfect, since trees and shrubs are dormant during this time, thus do not undergo the stress when planted, since they require little water during the winter.

The CAC thanks Hickory Farms residents for their support, participation & voicing their pleasure in the revitalized common areas!

HFCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINATING COMMITTEE AND NOMINATIONS TO SERVE ON THE BOARD

By: Jim Bever, Nominating Committee Chair

Please welcome Debbi Buchanan and Telah Jackson, onto our Nominating Committee. As homeowners were previously notified a couple of months ago, due to the complications of the pandemic and the need to find alternative electronic means if necessary for elections, we plan to hold elections for our Board of Directors as early as practicable in 2021. There will be one or more vacancies. If you would like to be a candidate for the Board or would like to nominate a fellow homeowner for such (with his/her advance consent), please email me at bentonboy@gmail.com. Thank you!



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