



Strawberry Ridge Owners Association, St. Louis County Summer 2020 Newsletter

For those new to our subdivision, WELCOME! If you (or any resident) have any questions, please feel free to contact any trustee listed at the end of this newsletter. Please note our legal name above. The HOA incorporated as an entity to protect trustees and homeowners in the event the HOA was sued and if the HOA needed to take out any type of loan for major subdivision work.

This newsletter will cover quite a few topics (but not everything). Please take time to read this through and if you have any questions, feel free to contact any trustee (listed at the end).

Social: Due to Covid-19, the subdivision will not be hosting a social. In the past, we have had cookouts, as well as pot lucks or catered food in the upper common ground of Strawberry Ridge Drive that overlooks the Meramec River. For this same reason, the HOA will not be hosting National Night Out (NNO) as an HOA event. We hope to plan a future event for residents to come out and meet one another, once it is safe for everyone's health.

Common Ground: The HOA needs your help and is in need of a landscape committee! If interested, please call Linda Campbell, 636-861-2221.

Common ground is for the use and enjoyment of all residents of the subdivision. We ask that residents refrain from putting any type of lawn furniture or structures in common areas for personal use. Please talk with a trustee if you have questions.

In the HOA's Indentures and restrictions, please note any changes of grade or slope on any lot MUST have trustee approval. We've recently become aware of a situation where work was done that caused water issues with neighboring residences as well as damaging our common ground. Strawberry Ridge was built along a bluff. The soil quality is generally poor (clay). We have hills and water runoff. Trustees will be getting the county involved as we do not know how to fix the issue.

Strawberry Ridge common ground (next to Meramec Bluffs): In February, the HOA applied for and received a grant of free trees and shrubbery from Forest ReLeaf's Project CommuniTree in Creve Coeur. Forest ReLeaf is a nonprofit that provides free trees to community groups for planting projects. Resident Bill Minford, who works for Sherwood's Forest, was gracious enough to pick up the 3 hackberry trees, 7 deciduous holly and 7 smooth sumac bushes and plant them for us. The area has an irrigation system to meet the water needs of the new plants. We hope to get another grant next year. Many thanks to Bill Minford!

Lawn care: The HOA engaged a new lawn care service this year. We are starting the process to look for a new service for next year.

Retention pond/tree maintenance: The HOA has two storm water retention basins. Maintenance/care of these basins are the responsibility of the subdivision. Last year we received a notice of violation from St. Louis county regarding runoff to Mombert Road from the upper Strawberry Ridge retention basin. While the bigger violation was cleared, a special assessment was required to clear debris, dead/diseased trees and shrubbery in and around the retention basin and problem trees on common ground next to a

home on Mombert Road. Trustees contracted with Omni Tree Service for this work. While the trees next to Mombert were removed, the promised work dates for the retention basin work have been consistently pushed back due to weather. Arrangements have also been made to remove a dead pine tree at the entrance to the subdivision as well as a diseased tree to be removed on the Berry Leaf circle. The Berry Leaf tree will be replaced in the fall. We'll update affected residents when we have firm dates for the work to be done. Our second retention basin, located on Vance Road, will be completely mowed and cattails taken down at the end of fall.

Cul-de-sac care: We have been working with resident Bill Minford (Sherwood's Forest) regarding cleaning up and maintaining the four circles that have monkey grass that has been overtaking the circles. Work will begin sometime in August. ** Parents, we ask that children not ride or leave bicycles, toys, bottles, etc, on any common ground area, including cul-de-sacs. **

Entrance: The entrance to the subdivision needs to be spruced up. The entrance retaining wall will need to be reworked. Trustees are exploring costs at this time.

Finances: At this writing, we have approximately \$10,000 from the yearly regular HOA assessment and approximately \$19,000 in reserve from the special assessment, which is dedicated to retention basin maintenance. Trustees receive a monthly updated expense report from City and Village the first week of each month. City and Village send out all assessment notices, collect assessments for the HOA and pay all vendor bills, including legal, liability insurance, electricity, water, lawncare, etc.

Yearly assessment: The normal yearly assessment for the fiscal year 2020 will be mailed out shortly from City and Village. Trustees have been slowly moving the due date back towards the current fiscal year. Budgeting current and future expenses has been increasingly difficult since the HOA got behind on the collections many years ago. Beginning next year and each year thereafter, the normal yearly HOA assessment will be sent out in February. This change will ensure the HOA receives funds on a timely manner for the current year's maintenance needs.

Special assessment: So far, \$3000.00 has been spent on dead/diseased tree removal on our common ground next to Mombert Road and one their resident's homes. Another \$8,000 will be spent on the upper retention basin to clear trees and debris in order to keep the HOA from receiving another violation from St. Louis county. The remainder will be used for ongoing maintenance of the two storm water retention basins.

Indentures/Homeowner Responsibilities: All homeowners should have received a copy of the HOA's Indenture of Trust and Restrictions at the time of closing on your home. The indenture is also available on the HOA website (see Communication). We hope all residents will take the time to read through them.

Homeowners are strongly advised to obtain a formal fence survey when fencing property. The general survey homeowners received at closing is not a lot survey nor suitable for fencing. A few homeowners have had the unpleasant surprise of finding their fences have encroached on a neighbor's property. HOA restrictions prohibit chain fencing. Vinyl or wood is allowed. Pools require trustee approval as well as fencing around the pool.

General info: As the HOA is located in unincorporated St. Louis county, residents are required to adhere to county ordinances. Neglected property, grass/weeds, etc., are generally referred to the county's

neighborhood preservation and code enforcement. Per county ordinance, yard areas should be clean and well maintained, with no accumulation of litter or used appliances, no grass or weeds taller than eight (8) inches, no areas of erosion, and no low areas allowing the collection of water.

Trash and recycling containers: Required by ordinance. Trash and recycling containers are required to be stored at 3 feet behind the main structure of the home (if not stored in garages).

Parked cars: It is unlawful to park a car, truck, bicycle, scooter, or any vehicle on a sidewalk so that it obstructs pedestrian traffic.

Parking: It is unlawful to park a vehicle within eight (8) feet of a public mailbox, within fifteen (15) feet of a fire hydrant, within twenty (20) feet of a crosswalk, and within thirty (30) feet upon the approach of any intersection or within an intersection. In addition to these regulations, parking is prohibited on a sidewalk, on a crosswalk, in front of a public or private drive, any place where signs prohibit parking, or on any part of a road that obstructs emergency snow removal. ****If a car is blocking a mailbox, the mailman may refuse to deliver mail to that residence.****

Streets: All streets in the HOA are public roads. The county took over maintenance many years ago, saving the HOA substantial funds for repairs and snow removal.

Basketball hoops, playground or sports-related apparatus or similar objects are prohibited on or within a public roadway or sidewalk.

Communication: Please join our resident FaceBook page. This is a **closed** group for residents of the HOA to share info. Just search for the group, Strawberry Ridge. As it is a closed group, anyone requesting to join will need to be approved by an administrator of the group.

The HOA has a website – strawberryridge-hoa.org

The website contains the HOA indentures, newsletters, county codes (simplified), and more. Trustee information is listed on the website along with an email address to communicate any issues pertaining to the subdivision.

Warning to residents: As trustees, we ask all residents to exercise due diligence when dealing with any contractor, whether it be home repairs, landscaping, etc. It is important to ask for business licenses, insurance and references. A reputable business will not have any objection to providing these to you. A reputable business will not ask for all cash or complete payment of a job up front. Cash or check provides no protection to you, should the contractor fail to complete the job.

Please feel free to contact any trustee listed below with any questions you may have.

Linda Campbell	636-861-2221
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