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**Strawberry Ridge Owners Association, St. Louis County**

**Fall 2024 Newsletter**

**\*\*\*SAVE THE DATA!! ANNUAL HOMEOWNER MEETING\*\***

**NOVEMBER 13, 2024 – 7PM**

**WEST ST. LOUIS COUNTY PRECINCT, 222 VANCE ROAD, VALLEY PARK, MO**

Happy Fall! 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 plan on attending our annual HOA meeting. Our neighborhood policing officer, Brian Hessling, will give a short presentation about happenings in our area. Also, we will be voting for a new slate of trustees (3). Terms are for 3 years. Director, Secretary-Treasurer, and trustee. Questions? Call one of the current trustees listed at the bottom of this newsletter.\*\*\****

Many owners in the HOA are still recovering from the May storm. Please use caution and due diligence in dealing with contractors. Check the Better Business Bureau, all references and above all, make sure that your contractor carries liability insurance. This storm caused a huge amount of damage in our area.

***Common Ground*:** The HOA is still in need of a landscape committee! If interested, please contact Linda Campbell, 314-605-3599.

Common ground is for the use and enjoyment of all residents of the subdivision. Please refrain from leaving or putting anything in common areas (recycling bins, sheds, fencing). Residents are responsible for knowing their lot boundaries. The “dry” survey that is usually included in home sale packets are not fencing surveys. Homeowners should get a fence survey before adding fencing or irrigation systems on their properties, preventing boundary disputes with neighbors. Please talk with a trustee if you have questions.

Per St. Louis County and our HOA’s indentures and restrictions, ANY change to grade or slope on any lot MUST have trustee approval. Water must not be redirected toward common ground nor other residential structures. Strawberry Ridge was built along a bluff. The soil quality is generally poor (clay). Water cannot be piped directly to any sewer. Lawn waste must be disposed of properly. DO NOT sweep, blow or dispose of lawn clipping in any sewer or retention basin. They are designed for storm water runoff, flowing into Fish Pot creek (a protected waterway).

***Cul-de-sac care*:** It has become more difficult to grow grass within the circles. In years past residents have helped water them. Sadly, that is no longer the case. It is very expensive to install irrigation systems for all 5 cul-de-sacs. A cheaper alternative would be removing the existing grass and mulching the circles. Rock is more expensive and a maintenance problem with children in the neighborhood. An informal survey was posted on our Facebook page (mulch was leading the vote). This item will be discussed at the annual HOA meeting.

*\*\* Parents, we ask for your help to make sure that children do not ride or leave bicycles, toys, bottles, trash, etc., on any common ground area, including cul-de-sacs.\*\**

*Retention pond/tree maintenance*: This is an ongoing item. MSD recently contacted the trustees regarding the upper retention basin. Our lawncare company cleared the issue. Two large trees damaged in the May storm were taken down by Monster Tree Service. Two large, diseased trees in another area of common ground are scheduled to be removed.

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

With ongoing construction, residential parking is a challenge. Sidewalks should normally not be blocked. The county can issue tickets for obstructing the sidewalk. Sidewalks are part of an easement. Driveways technically end at the sidewalk. We have disabled residents that use sidewalks and should not have to walk into the street to get around cars. *Please remind visitors that parking on grassy areas is prohibited by county ordinance*.

Grass and trees in easements between the street and the sidewalks are the maintenance responsibility of the homeowner. The HOA does not take care of easements, except those within the common ground boundary.

General info: Neglected property, grass/weeds, dead trees, etc., can be 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”.

**Finances**: At this writing, we have approximately $15,000 from the yearly regular HOA assessments and $4,000 in special assessment for retention basin maintenance. 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. City & Village accepts electronic payments. The regular yearly assessment for fiscal year 2025 will be mailed out in early February, 2025 from City and Vllage. Please note late payments incur interest. The HOA also contracts with attorneys at Sandberg Phoenix (specialists in HOA law).

*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)..

*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**: Facebook group: [Strawberry Ridge - Unincorporated West St. Louis County, Missouri](https://www.facebook.com/groups/206223823523221/)

Anyone requesting to join will need to answer a challenge question to be approved for membership.

Website: strawberryridge-hoa.org, contains the HOA indentures, newsletters, county codes (simplified), and more.

Please feel free to contact any trustee listed below with any questions you may have. We hope to see you at the HOA meeting November 13!

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