



The Shadowword

September 2006
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www.shadowwoodcondos.com

President's Letter

It's been a long, hot dry summer but change is in the air with cooler evenings and lots of changing leaves. School is now in session, the so-called "Shadowood" pool is closed for the season, and it's always a good time to remind everyone to drive carefully. **The speed limit in Shadowood is 10 miles per hour!**

Your board and staff have been busy over the summer, and I will report on some of the projects we've been working on. But first, a few quick reminders:

Until further notice, **please enter the office space through the community center's back door.** We've ordered new doors and they should be installed in September.

No parties or other uses of the community center can be accommodated until the renovations are complete sometime in the next few months.

Updates on all of these projects are posted on the SCA website:

www.shadowodocondos.com

and on the SCA TV Channel - Channel 10 on the property and available to view on the SCA website for everyone.

Koger Financial Management. Some of you have commented that Koger has not been responsive to your calls

and requests. We are aware of these issues and have been working with Koger toward resolution. Unfortunately, Koger's office move, an urgent and forced software migration and staff departures all combined at the same time in an unplanned way. Koger is working diligently toward resolution and has met with board members and officers keeping us updated on the progress.

Budget time is nearing. The finance committee meets on November 4th and will discuss and set the recommended 2007 budget for the board's consideration and vote at the November board meeting. If you have any special funding requests, maintenance or improvement ideas, please send them to me for consideration.

Comcast High-Speed Internet. What should have been a simple project has escalated into a complicated regulatory matter between Comcast, Shadowood and Dominion Virginia Power. We are doing all that we can to expedite the process and hope to have the final resolution complete late this year. At that time, the final construction can complete with the roll-out beginning shortly thereafter. As a reminder, all 450 units will be provided with Comcast high-speed internet and a cable modem and charged the discounted rate. Details on the programs, and schedule updates, are on the SCA website under "Cable and Internet."

President's Letter Continued...

As always, I strongly encourage unit owners to **attend the board meetings**. There are five elected board members, we work as a team to maintain and improve Shadowood, but it's very hard for us to know what's on everyone's minds when only a few people show up. Details on each meeting, including the agenda, are on the SCA website under "Staff and Board."

If you cannot attend your condominium's board meetings, please share your thoughts and directions on where you would like to see Shadowood invest. Our email address is:

president@shadowoodcondos.com

One unexpected item we are working on is the **community center and condominium office renovation**. Although the board previously tabled that project for other, higher priority work, the fire on July 9th changed everything. As such, we've refocused on updating the center with a few of the items highlighted here:

1. Lowering the ceilings in the bathrooms and making them both ADA compliant.
2. Lowering the ceiling in the lobby and expanding the lobby area into what was previously the president's office with a TV display for the SCA Channel, internet access terminals a desk for paperwork and a "meet and greet" area
3. Removing the walls and range, opening the kitchen and downsizing it into a small

galley with a microwave, small refrigerator and sink

4. Adding windows along the north wall of the community room
5. Lowering the ceiling in the main community room for energy savings, glare control by sealing off the east-facing clearstory windows and acoustical improvements
6. Installing a sound system
7. Repainting the building interior
8. Replacing all existing floor coverings with either carpeting or tile
9. Replacing and upgrading most of the existing lighting
10. Removing one or two walls in the office space and reconfiguring the space for more efficient operation and storage

In general, we would like to make the space more energy efficient, comfortable, inviting and useful for both the administration of Shadowood and as a meeting and recreation facility. **As required by the Shadowood Master Deed, funding for the project will come from insurance proceeds and a small special assessment on all 450 units**, most likely spread out over 1-3 years. The board will discuss and vote on this item at its September meeting.

If you have any ideas, suggestions or comments on what to do with the space, please let me know.

Parking island work. We are waiting for lighting proposals and rain before we complete the work on the big island near 2231 - 2253 Castle Rock Square. Two to four more islands will probably be completed this year with the remainder next year. Additional landscape, drainage and wiring work will be completed as funds, weather and contractor resources allow. I anticipate that most of the projects revealed at the annual meeting (backs of the buildings) will be worked on next year.

HVAC Room Doors. The board has directed the staff to being inspecting, repairing and replacing all 450 HVAC room doors. These are the locked brown doors on your patio or balcony. Each door should be painted, have a sticker on it indicating no admittance to the room, should have a functioning lock and be easy to open or close. No water or other liquids should seep from under the door. **If your door needs maintenance or repair, please contact the association office by email or phone and report the problems.**

Heating and Cooling System. After a short break over the summer, the HVAC committee is again reviewing the various options. Please see Vice President Lynch's letter for more details.

By recycling and rebuilding many existing HVAC system components our staff has done its best to minimize the cost of operating and maintaining the old system. Most of those old parts are

President's Letter Continued...

beyond repair, and we've depleted our spares inventory.

We were hoping to have a new system in place by now and delayed ordering spare and replacements as long as possible. Since we will have another winter and next summer using the old systems, we will have to spend tens of thousands of dollars on new and spare parts just to keep the old system operating. What's more, although we are planning on locking natural gas prices in place in September or October when they are usually at the lowest points of the year, I am again cautioning everyone to **budget for VERY high heating bills this winter**. Although our heating bills were higher than ever last year, we turned the heat on as late as possible, turned it off as soon as possible and the winter was much milder than usual.

Those of you living on Stoneview Square have noticed the newly paved and rejuvenated sections of the parking lots. This nearly \$100,000 project was funded mainly through our reserves with a budgeted component this year. Through good fiscal discipline and budgeting, this entire project was paid with no direct financial impact on owners.

I hope you enjoy the autumn season and weather and come to the next board meeting on Saturday September, 16th.

Brian Olivia
President

Vice President's Letter

Effectively and persuasively communicating is a challenge, and the number one problem in business. I'd like the Board to hear more, and regularly, from owners on SCA issues, especially big money projects. Our Board has just five (5) Members with voting power; if all are present, 3 votes can pass any measure, it is a serious responsibility. We need and want more participation in monthly forums, committee work, and any help you can provide.

I would also like to clarify and communicate some of my views to the membership and residents. The Board works together on SCA's agenda developed under President Olivia's leadership; we each have our viewpoints and outlooks; I have no separate agenda. I especially want to outline what I voted for and think so far on our biggest project - replacing the aging heating/AC system. There are meetings ahead, and plenty of time to make your own input. Please forgive any mistakes in my impressions of the details:

The full Board authorized an investigatory study by Chevron-Texaco, with the caveat that if their solution could not guarantee savings and reasonable payback, the study would be free. Chevron's officers met with us, and proposed what seemed an excellent quiet system with water cooling towers, that they later said would not be feasible because of distances piping would have to run and other technical problems.

Their alternative of heat pumps plus condensers on the lawns between patios, was eventually rejected for a combination of reasons, aesthetics, problems with putting condenser farms in the areas with swales, drop offs, or short yards, all the noise moved nearer to 148 ground floor units, high costs and the lack of guaranteed savings. I believe the vote was unanimous to reject that also.

Richards Heating Co. presented several ideas, including fixing 3-way valves as an interim improvement making control by individuals possible; and an overall solution of improved electric heat pumps that would fit our HVAC closets, with gas back-up for extremely cold weather. Costs seemed more reasonable and it sounded excellent to me. Several of us were ready to have a pilot project done in a few stairwells, but the Board wanted to look further. Chmn Newhouse proposed one or two more studies - unanimously authorized by the Board, and arranged another contractor meeting to discuss a gas alternative on August 30; details to be evaluated when we have more information from the presenter. The President also told us to not dismiss going back to a central boiler system, so the Committee will look further into that. Some of the problems we had with our old central system may not recur with the newer technology, different water temperatures and improved pipes.

Vice President's Letter Continued...

I've attended all the meetings to hear where we are and what we need to do, and gather information to inform my own eventual vote. I'd like more people to join the committee. If you have technical expertise, even better. If not, you probably "know what you like." All of you have life experience and can think critically about sales promises and claims.

Board members aren't required to be experts in every area, but I am indeed expert on what I think, support, or would compromise on. Business judgment, taking pros, cons, and price into account is generally the best I can strive for. I oppose nothing that hasn't been opposed by the Board majority, I have a long-term interest here, and concern for everyone's comfort, convenience, and pocketbooks, as is my duty, but also my desire in serving the community.

We've occasionally done community surveys and I hope we may again soon to get a better feel for 450 owners' views on big projects and how to finance them: should we borrow, spend reserves, do special assessments, a combination.... shrieks occur at the mention of that last one, but if we get a reasonable price, that's not a bad idea.

Please come forward to help. With community input and support, this could be a much improved place to live. Thank you.

More on those Pesky Rules – Pets, in Particular

Dear Neighbors,

First I'd like to thank the pet owners here who behave considerately and responsibly and "do the right thing." But..... some new-to-Shadowood and perhaps even some not-so-new residents need a gentle reminder on the pet rules. Lately I have seen just about everything from unleashed and roaming dogs; scary looking animals off-leash; people using the lawns as a dog walk and dog-relieving area; one person using the totlot(!) for a dog walk and becoming quite argumentative when I pointed out that was not permitted; very few cleanups after "accidents;" and general resistance to taking responsibility for owning an animal in a very tightly packed, high-density residential area.

I've asked the office to include the map which shows permissible pet walk areas (usually at the fringes of the property), and in all of those areas you are expected to **clean up** after your animal. Plastic bag dispensers are located throughout the property.

Here is a summary of Shadowood rules:

Allowable number of pets: 2 dogs or 2 cats (or one each); you must pay Shadowood a pet fee (\$100 for pets under 25 lbs, \$150 for those whose weight is, or at the age of a year is expected to be, over 25 lbs.); rabies vaccination certificate(s) required for all dogs and cats; when a dog is outside, it

must be leashed and accompanied by its owner or walker; pets are to be curbed in designated areas only and owners are responsible for removing droppings in all areas. There are additional rules prohibiting confining or chaining pets on the common elements or any patio/balcony, and keeping patios/balconies free of pet waste. For a complete set of the rules, please ask at the office; or send an e-mail requesting a copy (CommMgr@comcast.net).

If you want to allow your dog to run free, please use one of the nearby dog parks; the County has at least seven; and the nearest one is: Baron Cameron Off-Leash Dog Area, 11300 Baron Cameron Avenue, Reston. Others nearby are in Herndon and Oakton.

None of us are dog-haters. All of us would like to be able to walk on the lawns and other common areas without having to buy new shoes after we do, and want to open our windows for fresh air occasionally. We need everyone's cooperation, and consideration to make our Community pleasant.

With thanks for your help,
Lois Lynch, Vice President

**2006 Budget Meeting:
Saturday November 5th
9:30 AM EST
Shadowood Community
Center**



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