

WESTERLEE COMMUNITY NEWS

Westerlee: A Proud Covenant Controlled Community

November 2019

www.westerleenews.com



Editor: Pam Jarrell

President's Letter

What really are Covenants?

Westerlee is a community controlled by Covenants that come with the property title and can't easily be voted in or out or even be altered. How did they come into existence and why do we have them and other communities don't?

The history of covenants goes far back, as the biblical term suggests. Covenants precede zoning which came to the US only about 100 years ago. With covenants someone can control the future of an area via private law versus public regulation. This is why the Baltimore County Codes are not the same as the the Covenants. Covenants can be stricter but not more generous. An exception is where covenants violate federal, state or local law or even the Constitution. The history of covenants includes dark chapters like overt racial discrimination, language that is still lurking in some local covenants but is now illegal and not enforceable. Luckily our covenants never included discrimination.

Our covenants were conceived by the original owner and developer of the land with the purpose of keeping the community close to the original design intent he had in the early 1950s. This is why all alterations on properties that affect appearance need to be reviewed by the Westerlee Board and its Architectural Review Committee. Communities generally can elect to have an association and a board, but with covenants there must be a board to ensure they are followed. Hence also mandatory fees. The covenants can be looked up on our website www.westerleenews.com. They are simple, fit on one page and usually don't cause too much concern. The articles most likely to be seen as restrictive are the prohibition of dividing any lot and the prohibition of anything but single-family use. With working from home now a current occurrence, we are trying to be flexible on non-obtrusive uses like home offices that don't cause any disruptions. The matter is different when people operate commercial businesses out of their homes that require storage of goods, equipment or commercial vehicles. Those uses are not allowed, not by the covenants and mostly also not by the existing zoning.

Communication Towers create a spooky night

You will agree, that for the most part our community has been able to maintain the tree studded open park-like setting and tranquility which created the original appeal, no matter that the surrounding areas transformed from pastures and meadows to developments and that Baltimore National Pike has become a rather loud and garish commercial strip. Not everybody will like some of the special aspects of our community, such as the absence of street lights or sidewalks in some areas. Others, however, like the peace settling in after dark, the fact that one can still see the stars on a clear night and that no lights shine in anybody's bedroom. So, the shock was great when one Sunday night in October the nearly 1000' tall communication tower started emitting flashes so bright that the community blinked on and off like under a giant spotlight. Apparently, the aircraft warning lights malfunctioned after a local power outage. The warning lights are supposed to flash white during the day and red at night. We hope, the bright lights don't come on again. Nothing has lit up the message board of the social network NextDoor quite like this event. Light on the tower is not the only

WESTERLEE COMMUNITY, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Klaus Philipsen

kphilipsen@archplan.com 410-493-6239

Vice President: Wanda Richardson

Secretary: Fred Hickok

Treasurer: Rizwan Mahmoodi, send checks to: 2126 Fernglen Way

Directors: John Fox, Chris Goatee, John Herron, Pam Jarrell

Jacquiline Johnson, Joe Reid, Michele Snowden

Contact the board by emailing westerleehoa@gmail.com

concern: It radiates energy for TV, emergency responders and for cell-phones in all kinds of frequency and manner, including micro-waves. If everything works as designed, the higher intensity waves are kept high above our community. However, if the malfunction like the warning lights, they may not. The health impacts of communication waves are hotly contested in some circles; however, medicine and science have not been able to show consistent impacts in settings where things work as designed.

Community Party

The annual community party or picnic has become now an expected staple with increasing attendance every year. This year again we were treated with wonderful weather, lots of good food and the beautiful company of our neighbors. In addition, many neighbors picked up the customized and heavily discounted blue recycling cans that have now become a Friday icon of our neighborhood. In the time of ephemeral communication via text, email and phone, meeting actual people in person has become ever more important. Knowing one's neighbor makes a community better, safer and more resilient in adverse conditions, whether those are snowstorms, power outages, deluges or whatever the future may hold.

Party in the fall, but work at the Annual Meeting in the spring. Good attendance is important both places. In between, however, there is the upcoming holiday season for which I wish everybody peace, joy and harmony.

Klaus Philipsen,
President Westerlee Inc.



Meeting Minutes: Westerlee Community Association, Inc. October 21, 2019

The board meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Present were officers Klaus Philipsen (President), Wanda Richardson (Vice President) Fred Hickok (Secretary) and Rizwan Mahmoodi (Treasurer) and board members Jacqueline Johnson, Jon Fox, Chris Goatee, John Herron, Joe Reid, Pam Jarrell and Michelle Snowden.

Community Party: The board debriefed about the community party. All agreed that the party was a success and the board was pleased with the attendance. The board made several suggestions for planning the 2020 party including continued use of Maniak BBQ for catering.

Newsletter: The decoration contest will be on 12/18/19 by the Holiday committee: Pam, Jacqui, and Chris with Wanda and Joe as alternate judges.

Treasurer's Report: Balance at commencement of meeting was \$18,205.65, however receipts for community party, recycle bins not included. Rizwan estimated balance to be ~\$16,000.00. Rizwan reported that the status of paid dues is currently at 70%, an all-time high.

Welcoming Committee: Pam and John H. made their first official committee visit, delivering a small plant and community well wishes to our new neighbors on Fern Glen. The visit was enjoyable and well received.

Dumpster Day: The board was disappointed that we did not have as much participation as had hoped. The board agreed that we need new signs for Dumpster day and better notification for the event. It was noted that the county rules related to acceptable items has changed. One example of this would be old tires, which need to be taken separately like we do for paint and electronics.

Ideas for Board Work in 2020:

- Continue offering recycling cans program.
- Engage with county program for possibility of tree purchase or compost bins.
- Community leaf removal/county program or ability to contract with landscape companies.
- Ability to contract with concrete company to repair sidewalks (would need neighbor contribution)
- Add shredding services to dumpster day.
- Continue to work with DPW to develop pathway from Nuwood Dr.
- Truck prohibition signage for car carriers

Other Misc. Issues: Missing or damaged bricks on our current speed bumps should be reported to 311 for repair.

Annual Meeting: Nomination Committee (Jacqui Johnson and Michelle Snowden) to finalize officer slate by the end of February in preparation for community vote at the annual meeting (April)

Next meeting: TBD

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Chris Goatee

Westerlee Community Association

CY 2018- Quarter 3 Treasurer's Report
July 1, 2019 - September 30, 2019

Beginning Balance \$18,205.65

Income:

Total Income + \$0.43

Expenditures:

Annual Meeting 27.98
Newsletters/flyers 235.06
Community Picnic 650.00
4th of July Flags 99.00
Office Supplies 11.99
Recycle Bins 1,106.48

Total Expenses - \$3,373.51

Ending Balance = \$14,832.57

(Beginning Balance + Total Income - Total Expenditures)



westerleenews.com

Have you ever visited westerleenews.com? Answer riveting questions such as "Who's on the board?", "What are rules for building an addition?", "Can I find an old newsletter?" What events are coming up?". Site is updated quarterly.

Westerlee Holiday Home Decoration Contest

The most festively
decorated homes will
receive a \$20 gift card
courtesy of
Westerlee Homeowners
Association.

Judging Date: 12/18

pageborders.org

Westerlee Knows How to Picnic!



Dumpster Day

Westerlee Participates ↑



The pictures above are from the **Community Picnic** on September 7th. Neighbors joined together for fun, food and camaraderie. Thank you to our board members Jacqui, Wanda & Chris for planning a wonderful event and to Klaus for the use of his yard. Thanks to everyone who volunteered for set up and clean up. Thanks for all who brought yummy desserts. Most of all, thanks to everyone who attended, you make Westerlee awesome!!!

← **Dumpster Day** on October 5th. Thanks to Klaus for planning and to Fred for using his pickup and recycling paint and oils. Pictured are Klaus, Fred & Wanda helping neighbors to pack the dumpster.

Recycle Binge



Westerlee neighbors show strong support for recycling! By John Fox

Thank you to all of the neighbors who contacted me and purchased one of the 32-gallon recycling containers. I am proud to say that 37 homeowners participated in the Recycling container initiative! The Board took orders and distributed these during two of our annual signature events: the September Community BBQ and Octobers Dumpster Day.

As an HOA Board, we seek to provide value to the community with enhancements that benefit both homeowners and the community. We invite your future ideas and recommendations.

CELESTIAL SIGHTS

By Fred Hickok, Professor Emeritus of
Astronomy, Community College
of Baltimore County

December 13, 14 - Geminids Meteor Shower: The Geminids is the king of the meteor showers. It is considered by many to be the best shower in the heavens, producing up to 120 multicolored meteors per hour at its peak. It is produced by debris left behind by an asteroid known as 3200 Phaethon, which was discovered in 1982. The shower runs annually from December 7-17. It peaks this year on the night of the 13th and morning of the 14th. Unfortunately the nearly full moon will block out many of the meteors this year, but the Geminids are so bright and numerous that it could still be a good show. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Gemini, but can appear anywhere in the sky

December 21 - December Solstice. The South Pole of the earth will be tilted toward the Sun, which will have reached its southernmost position in the sky and will be directly over the Tropic of Capricorn at 23.44 degrees south latitude. This is the first day of winter (winter solstice) in the Northern Hemisphere and the first day of summer (summer solstice) in the Southern Hemisphere.

January 3, 4 - Quadrantids Meteor Shower: The Quadrantids is an above average shower, with up to 40 meteors per hour at its peak. It is thought to be produced by dust grains left behind by an extinct comet known as 2003 EH1, which was discovered in 2003. The shower runs annually from January 1-5. It peaks this year on the night of the 3rd and morning of the 4th. The first quarter moon will set shortly after midnight, leaving fairly dark skies for what could be a good show. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Bootes, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

February 9 - Full Moon, Supermoon: This was known by early Native American tribes as the Full Snow Moon because the heaviest snows usually fell during this time of the year. Since hunting is difficult, this moon has also been known by some tribes as the Full Hunger Moon, since the harsh weather made hunting difficult. This is also the first of four supermoons for 2020. The Moon will be at its closest approach to the Earth and may look slightly larger and brighter than usual.

February 10 - Mercury at Greatest Eastern Elongation: The planet Mercury reaches greatest eastern elongation of 18.2 degrees from the Sun. This is the best time to view Mercury since it will be at its highest point above the horizon in the evening sky. Look for the planet low in the western sky just after sunset.

March 9 - Full Moon, Supermoon: This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Full Worm Moon because this was the time of year when the ground would begin to soften and the earthworms would reappear. This moon has also been known as the Full Crow Moon, the Full Crust Moon, the Full Sap Moon, and the Lenten Moon.

Sources: <http://www.seasky.org/astronomy/astronomy-calendar-2019.html>
<http://www.seasky.org/astronomy/astronomy-calendar-2020.html>

Benjamin Banneker Planetarium Shows

Community College of Baltimore County
800 South Rolling Road, Room 030A Free admission

Friday, February 28, 8pm: Leap Year Tomorrow is "Leap Day!" Why do we have that this leap year? What's really going on astronomically?

Saturday, February 29, 10am: When Does the New Year Start? (kids show) Find out why long ago March was the first month of the new year.

Friday, March 20, 7:30pm: Seasonal Equality Yesterday, March 19, was the Vernal Equinox. Are the days and nights really exactly equal? What's so special about where the Sun rises and where it sets?



Local fun



25th Annual Catonsville Tree Lighting Ceremony & Holiday House. Saturday, November 30th at 6:30, Catonsville Fire Dept on Fredrick Rd. Santa, music & refreshments.

40th Annual Ellicott City Midnight Madness
Friday, December 6st from 4pm to 12am. Tree lighting, 6pm.
Santa, 4-6. Carolers, and Winterfest garden with craft beer & music.
Free Shuttle and late shopping.



YOUR \$25 DUES HARD AT WORK



Our awesome picnic, Dumpster Day, annual meeting, Westerlee website and the newsletter you are reading right now are all proof that your \$25 is well spent. Many neighborhoods pay a lot more and get so much less!

If you have not yet paid your 2019 dues, drop a check for \$40 (\$25 dues plus \$15 late fee) in the mail to Westerlee Homeowner's Assoc. c/o
Rizwan Mahmoodi, 2126 Fernglan Way.

Happy New Year!

Get Connected!

Join Nextdoor, our neighborhood blog. Neighbors keep neighbors informed. News, referrals, events, and much much more!

To join, email Klaus
kphilipsen@archplan.com

