

Somner Sentinel

Community Association Newsletter – Issue Three – Spring/Summer 2010

Board of Directors

Devin Bliss, President

Kathy Liucci, Vice-President

Kimberly Thurber, Secretary

Wally Farak, Treasurer

Rick Walrath, Member-At-Large

The Way We Were & How We Are Now

Many homeowners recall the state of affairs at Somner Place, three and one-half (3 ½) years ago, when we were asked by a former “*mis-management*” company to pay a Special Assessment of \$100 per property (\$7,400, merely to arbor trees), due to the fact that our Association was almost financially insolvent, and had no funds for typical expenses. The neighborhood flatly refused by preponderance of vote, and for good reason! That ignited a series of major transitions in the manner in which our community was to be operated in the future. Rather than relying upon the self-interest of *theoretically* professional property managers who rarely had Somner’s best interest at heart, it was resolutely determined that Somner’s (new and innovative) Board of Directors would take a tangible approach of **SELF-MANAGING** our community and making day-to-day decisions to **SAVE** our Association money, rather than erroneously **SPEND** it. The protocol paid off, and the Association now has a healthy, much needed reserve for the first time in a decade. This was accomplished **WITHOUT RAISING OUR \$71.21 MONTHLY ASSESSMENTS ONE DIME FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS!** Likewise, contrary to former agendas, the winter rye grass was planted (for three seasons, and counting), and to the extent necessary, the trees were nevertheless **STILL** arboresced each year. It was suggested by many, that this could not be done. Yet, the aforementioned was consummated, even in light of our Association also absorbing the exorbitant assessment losses attributable to twelve (12) home foreclosures (more than 15% of the neighborhood) over the past three years, resulting in unrealized revenues of over \$9,000. The Board is extremely proud of its achievement, and as we are now fiscally sound, we will be able to commence seeing improvements to our community, starting with the allocation of funds for the first augmentation to the neighborhood in years, highlighted below.

Initial Major Enhancement – Terra Cotta Concrete Borders

Somner instigated the upgrading of our neighborhood’s “*curb*” appeal, as well as finally eliminated most of the metal edging deemed as a safety hazard, with the inauguration of roof-matching, colored concrete borders separating the turf from the gravel areas. We have already gotten numerous compliments regarding this venture. **PHASE ONE IS COMPLETED.** Those homeowners who already mounted pre-established curbing of any nature, or purchased property with same, and are willing to eradicate and dispose of what currently exists on their frontage, will be offered replacement during **PHASE TWO.** The installation costs will similarly be paid for by the Association. Those interested need only to call the **Somner Hotline (602-476-1757)** in the upcoming two (2) weeks. As it requires a month for the cement to cure, we ask that you be conscious of removing and replacing trash receptacles so as to not cause inherent damage to a very expensive undertaking. The new borders are a stunning addition to our community, and we’re glad to finally have the funds to facilitate this endeavor.

Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!

We’re not referring to the popular song of 1945 above, but rather, Somner’s two-year alliance with **Snow Property Services, LLC.**, which has proven not only to be extremely successful, but also one of the most sound decisions ever made on behalf of the community! This East Valley business, responsible for our Association’s finances and accounting, has gotten rave reviews from our homeowners for their respectful demeanor, professional manner, profound integrity, as well as sincere dedication in resolving any conflict that might arise. What a different experience dealing with this superb company vs. previous administrative entities!

(continued on rear)

Please keep in mind that Snow handles only homeowner-directed matters relating to monthly assessments. Any and all other concerns should be forwarded to the **Somner Hotline (602-476-1757)**.

Sincere gratitude is owed to Snow's super team, including Dustin, Shari, Janet, Mary, Michelle, Aaron...and especially, Sheila Starkey and Leonita Lovelady, for their continued commitment and exceptional service!

The Grass "Ain't" Always Greener

Sunny Mesa Landscape commenced its third year of return in May 2010. Despite a few *flies in the ointment* and unexpected personnel gaffes, we are nonetheless content to have chosen to realign with proprietor, Brent Stapley and his grounds foreman, David Spencer. Although the winter lawns were delivered as promised again this year, the transition back from rye to Bermuda has been a bit scrupulous, especially with direct sunlight properties. The crew adopted to end the rye cycle a bit earlier, in hopes of taking advantage of the prospective high temperatures in May, to compel the Bermuda growth sooner. Unfortunately, the weather was not consistent with what was predicted, and we apologize for the patches of yellow and brown on many turf areas. **WHAT YOU'RE SEEING IS DEAD RYE.** The exact opposite will be imminent once the conversion is completed, so please understand that in order for summer grass to thrive, it requires proper sunlight. Those homeowners with large primary trees that deter Bermuda growth may need to trade the "green" for their "shade." Some residents had opted for the former, and at their request, two trees were approved to be removed in the past year.

Violations, Complaints & Bumpy Roads

Although the **Somner Hotline (602-476-1757)** has proven to be a victor in direct communication with our residents and certain complaints are handled almost immediately, we all need to be knowledgeable regarding the violation process. When someone is in breach of a regulation, they are sent a Violation Letter and have fourteen (14) days to correct the infraction before they are sent another. This course of action is repeated three (3) times for the same infringement before fines are imposed, as dictated by our CC&Rs. Please keep this in mind, if you do not see immediate resolution to a problem reported. The lack of instantaneous compliance does not imply that the Board has failed in its duties, as oftentimes its *hands are tied*. The Association is bound to pursue lawful procedure, so patience is of the essence in this regard.

The speed limit issue (maximum of 25 mph on Somner streets) is still abounding, and although the Board avidly sought to install speed bumps to dissuade excess speedsters, we found it an impossible task meeting the criteria for the City of Mesa's approval, and unfortunately, it appears unless a casualty occurs (God forbid), Somner will have to monitor its own streets regarding same. We ask our homeowners to promptly report any violators, with car details and license plate numbers.

Several Hotline grievances have been filed regarding incessant dog barking, children using inappropriate language, etc. Please note that, although the Board desires to address all concerns, unless this type of action occurs during very late night hours, homeowners are encouraged to contact individual parties involved, the Mesa Police Department, or any other agency which would handle these kinds of nuisances. Thank you for your understanding.

Annual Meeting & Board Election - June 17, 2010 - 6:30 pm

Please show your support by attending the Annual Meeting where you will be provided with your *Somner Place Annual Report*, have a forum to discuss relevant issues concerning the neighborhood, as well as formally elect the 2010 Board of Directors. The meeting will be held at the above-referenced date and time at the Somner Place Park. We look forward to seeing you there!