

Your Neighborhood News & Information



MARCH 2017

rchca.org

RCHCA MEMBERSHIP MEETING • MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2017 • 7:30 PM GRACE EPISCOPAL DAY SCHOOL • 9411 CONNECTICUT AVE

The Winter Meeting of the Rock Creek Hills Citizens' Association will include approval of the minutes of the last meeting, a treasurer's report, election of officers, updates on the new middle school (including construction, naming, and formation of a PTA), security, infrastructure (including sewer & water line work), the proposed SHA salt barn, covenants, and signage. Please contact any Board member if you know of any other items for the meeting. Only dues-paid members will be able to vote at the meeting. Dues are \$40 per household per year and may be paid online at www.RCHCA.org, in person by check at the meeting, or by sending a check payable to "RCHCA" to our Treasurer, Maria Marzullo, at 9801 East Bexhill Drive, Kensington, MD 20895, using the enclosed envelope.

President's Message

As I write these words in early February, snowbells are coming up. One of the joys of Winter is anticipation of Spring, and even Summer. Your RCHCA Board has served as community liaison at monthly onsite meetings during construction of the new middle school; the project is on schedule for an August opening, under the leadership of principal Dr. Traci Townsend. We welcome both the school and Dr. Townsend to Rock Creek Hills, and look forward to working together to seek mutual best outcomes to the challenges and opportunities that the new school presents.

This year, please consider making a donation to your Association in addition to your \$40 annual dues. Your contributions are the only source of support for the Association's activities that seek to preserve and enhance your quality of life in our community. This year, additional contributions are needed to preserve the covenants that protect our quality of life; and to erect signage in order to beautify and show pride in our neighborhood. (More on each these is provided later in this mailing. The estimated total cost of the proposed signage is \$5,000 for five signs.) Whether you want to enhance the welcoming appearance of our neighborhood (with signage) or maintain the harmonious, open character of our neighborhood (homes...or fences?) please consider providing support in the form of contributions beyond the \$40 annual dues this year. Thank you for your consideration of this request, and please note that an envelope is enclosed with this mailing for your convenience.

Best regards,
Jim Pekar, President, RCHCA

Next Year's Officers

The current officers have all agreed to serve for another year to provide continuity as the school opening comes into sight. The current officers & board members are: Jim Pekar, president; Hill Carter, vice-president; Maria Marzullo, treasurer; Jill Gallagher, secretary; John Robinson, past-president.

The Rock Creek Hills Directory

Please update your information now so your corrections will be reflected in the upcoming printing of the Rock Creek Hills directory. To access the online directory go to: <https://www.atozdirectories.com/home/login.php>. You will need a username and password to login. If you do not have one, you may email Sam Hoxie (hoxiesam@gmail.com), include your name and address and she will email you your username. If you do not have computer access, please mail to 9711 E. Bexhill or call Sam 301-942-0743 with any new information. More information and links to access the real time, updated online directory may be found on our website, rchca.org.

Join RCHCA Email Network

The Rock Creek Hills Citizens' Association e-mail network, rhcaneet, is for families of Rock Creek Hills. We urge everyone with email access to sign up for this, as it will allow information about the neighborhood, planned events, etc. to be easily disseminated to everyone in a timely manner. This communication forum is not intended to replace any existing communications. The instructions on how to join are posted on the RCHCA website, rchca.org, under the communications tab at the top of the website.

RCHCA Covenants

As mentioned in the President's Message, it appears that it may be necessary to take legal action in order to enforce and thus preserve the covenants that protect the quality of life in our community.

From the draft minutes of the last RCHCA meeting, held on October 17, 2016:

RCHCA Covenants Chair Vince DeCain provided an update on the neighborhood Covenants. Mr. DeCain said the community must be vigilant in monitoring and maintaining the Covenants in order to preserve them and maintain the character of the neighborhood. Recently Mr. DeCain sent a letter to a homeowner, asking them to cease construction of a front-yard fence. The Covenants state: "No line fences or walls of any kind shall be erected except growing hedges or such as may be approved by Rock Creek Hills Covenants, Inc." However, in this case, the homeowners (on Kensington Parkway) did not submit the required neighbor notification and application for construction, which is a violation of the Covenants, and have not responded to Mr. DeCain's letter. Dr. Pekar said that regarding this matter, he saw two goals – one being to enforce and thereby preserve the Covenants, by seeking removal of the noncompliant fence; the other being to ensure that civility is maintained by eschewing and rejecting any discussion of anyone's character or motivations. We seek to enforce and maintain the Covenants, and we will treat everyone with courtesy and respect. A motion was passed for authority to proceed with litigation if this issue can't be resolved amicably.

After the October meeting, the homeowner who erected the new solid wood fence, including a (partial) front yard fence, without having first submitted the required application for permission, submitted a belated application to construct the fence. In response to this belated application, the Board, keeping in mind that the absence of front yard fences is a positive aesthetic characteristic of the neighborhood; that the absence of front yard fences has been consistently enforced for decades; and that neighbors have expressed alarm over this fence ("There go the covenants?"), declined to approve the front yard portion of the fence, and requested that the homeowner reconfigure the fence. However, the homeowner has not indicated an intention to comply with this request, and so, consistent with the vote of the RCHCA membership at the October 17th meeting, your Board is prepared to take legal action to compel this outcome in order to preserve our

covenants. An update on this matter will be provided at the March meeting.



Neighborhood Signage

As mentioned in the President's Message, there is an opportunity to erect signage in order to beautify and show pride in our neighborhood. At the June 16,

2016, meeting of the RCHCA, attendees "...passed a motion to form a neighborhood signage committee, which will be in charge of procuring and placing "Rock Creek Hills" signs throughout the neighborhood. Laura Dennis was named the Committee Chair. She will use precedents with the Town of Chevy Chase View and other neighborhoods that have installed signs in the public right-of-way. Potential placement would be on Old Spring/Beach, Kensington Parkway and Saul, Stoneybrook and Kent, and the triangle at Littledale and Haverhill."

An update on this matter will be provided at the March meeting.

Treasurer's Report and Dues for this Calendar Year

As of publication the RCHCA checking account has a balance of \$1,480.04 and the RCHCA savings account a balance of \$6,096.20. Thus funds for operations are \$7,576.24. All invoices are paid, and due to further contributions, all legal expenses related to school issue were paid without using the general operating funds available last year. Legal expenses related to covenants incurred in the last calendar year have yet to be filed by the attorney.

Dues for the year 2017 are \$40 and should be sent to Maria Marzullo at 9801 E. Bexhill Drive, Kensington, MD 20895.

Rock Creek Hills Citizens Association Balance Sheet

AS OF FEBRUARY 10, 2017

Assets

RCHCA Checking	\$1,480.04
RCHCA Savings	\$6,096.20
Total Assets	\$7,576.24