

**SIGNAL HILL HOMES ASSOCIATION**

**2019 Annual Meeting of Members**

Braddock District Meeting Hall  
December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
7:30 pm

**Note:** *These minutes are published as, and considered DRAFT until such time that they are approved at the 2020 Annual Meeting of Members. Any comments regarding these minutes should be e-mailed to [info@shha-burke.org](mailto:info@shha-burke.org) for consideration.*

Kevin Martin  
Linda Wirth  
Kent Ford

President  
Secretary  
Treasurer

Pete Seigman VP  
Tom Johnson At-Large

**Agenda:**

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. **Recap of 2019 Accomplishments**
- III. **Look Ahead – 2020 Commitments**
- IV. **Disclosure of Proxies**
- V. **Approval of 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes**
- VI. **Treasurer’s Report, Proposed Assessment Increase, Budget Review, and Approval**
- VII. **Election of Directors**
- VIII. **Discussion Topics**
  - Greenway Portals Study Results
- IX. **Open Forum for Homeowners**
- X. **Upcoming Meetings – 2020 (DRAFT)**
- XI. **Adjournment**

**Note:** In the interest of time, and to ensure that all agenda topics are covered, during Sections I through VII, the Board will entertain brief questions / discussions, but ask that lengthy discussions or questions be tabled until Section VII – Open Forum for Homeowners.

Items that are specific to an individual homeowner / unit may be tabled until after other homeowners’ complete discussions of community wide matters.

**I. Call to Order** – Kevin called the meeting to order at 7:31

**A. Welcome**

Kevin welcomed the homeowners in attendance.

**B. Introduction of Board of Directors**

Board members listed below introduced themselves:

President	Kevin Martin
Vice President	Pete Seigman
Treasurer	Kent Ford
Secretary	Linda Wirth
At-Large	Tom Johnson

**C. Introduction of Committee Chairs (and openings)**

ACC	<i>vacant</i>
Grounds	<i>vacant</i>
Neighborhood Watch	<i>vacant</i>
Braddock District Representative	vacant
Welcoming	vacant
Webmaster	Kevin Martin
YAHOO Group Manager	Pete Seigman
The Outdoor Man (not present)	Frank Kyle

**D. Introduction of Metropolis Representative** Ben Colbert

**II. Recap of 2019**

**Kevin reviewed the significant actions / accomplishments of the Board for 2019:**

**Received and addressed over 1025 e-mails regarding homeowner / community matters**

**Reviewed 63 (was 58) homeowner applications for architectural changes**

- 55 were approved; 8 were denied.
- Most denials were due to homeowner failing to provide requested supporting information.
- Average adjudication time of 24 days

**Extremely successful in collecting dues. Of 493 homeowners:**

- Currently 16 homeowners have past due accounts –sent to the attorney for collections
  - o Collection costs / attorney fees are added to the accounts

**Continued to perform pre-sale inspections and create / provide resale documents**

- Thorough resale inspections, documenting all existing Covenant violations are a VA legal requirement
- **19** Packets resulted in ~**\$5200** of additional 2019 revenue for SHHA

**Worked with homeowners to resolve 77 (was 42) new Restrictive Covenant Violations in 2019**

- Board of Directors performs all inspections
- Currently **60** (was 76) open violations identified / working to resolve

**Long term violations are turned over to legal counsel for review and additional enforcement actions**

- Last resort; only after 3 notices of violation and a personal hearing opportunity with the Board
- Virginia Law prohibits fines / assessments, so legal counsel is the only recourse for non-responsive or un-cooperative homeowners.
- Attorney Demand Letter Has been successful in gaining compliance in most cases
- In all other cases, Fairfax County has granted injunctions for homeowner or SHHA to "self-correct"

**Worked with the management company to secure an auditor for backlog of annual audits**

- Provided needed information, and continue to work with the auditors on audits for 2017 and 2018
  - o No significant findings or discrepancies were identified by the auditors to date

**Worked with homeowner, neighbors, and Fairfax County Police to resolve a nuisance house**

- Numerous reports of significant police activity at the home
- Homeowner was contacted and ensured BOD that issue would be resolved
- Additional police activity reported / reported to homeowner
- Homeowner is terminating the lease of the current tenants as of the end of 2019
- Board will continue to monitor and take additional actions as needed

**Maintained all entrance signs and landscaping**

- Tree trimming / removal of dangerous, large leaning trees
- Seasonal plantings and landscaping
- Lighting maintenance

**Addressed numerous downed trees in the Common Areas and onto homeowner lots**

### **III. Looking ahead – 2019 Commitments**

Kevin said the community is privileged to have dedicated and active BOD members and thanked them for their service.

The Board is committed to:

Work with homeowners to review and approve Architectural Requests in a timely manner

Work with homeowners to correct identified violations of SHAH Restrictive Covenants

- Single biggest impacts to maintaining property values

Ensure dues collection

- Current procedures are very effective
- Involve legal team on multi-year delinquencies to protect the association's interests

Work with homeowners and legal team to resolve existing / long standing violations

- To the greatest extent possible, secure and protect judgements for legal fees incurred

Practice open / frequent interaction with homeowners

- E-mail, Facebook, NextDoor, etc.

**IV. Disclosure of Proxies for 2019 Annual Meeting** – As disclosing and counting the proxies would take some time this action was tabled and returned to later in the meeting after the counting was completed.

- A. After all members were registered, and all proxies counted, it was established that quorum was met for the annual meeting of members

### **V. Approval of Minutes (from 2018 Annual Meeting)**

- A. BOD Ask for updates – No updates mentioned
- B. Kevin Martin made a motion, and Bob Trenape seconded the motion to accept the Minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting as provided.
- C. The motion was unanimously approved.

## **VI. Review Budget – Forecast For 2020 – Treasurer, Kent Ford**

- A. *Treasurer's Report*** – Kent explained the draft Budget for 2020 that had already been passed out to the homeowners. There are two proposed 2020 Budgets; one keeps the assessment at \$140.00 and one increases it by \$15.00. Kent proposed increasing the assessment by \$35 to 175 a year. He then explained his reasons for doing so:
- a. The cost of removing trees in the Commons that threaten homeowner's property is increasing. The trees are aging, ash borer beetles are killing numerous ash trees, and storms are becoming more frequent and more severe.
  - b. Increasing the amount in SHHA's Contingency Fund is a 2<sup>nd</sup> reason for doing so. With no raise in the assessment only \$6,000.00 will go into the Contingency Fund. Ed Rahme, the previous Treasurer, explained that general accounting practices recommend an organization's Contingency Fund should be 100-150% of its annual budget. SHHA's Contingency Fund is below this standard. Ed said that at one point in the past SHHA's Contingency Fund was woefully inadequate at \$12,000.00 and the assessment was raised to deal with this. Any monies budgeted for the year and not spent in that year are added to the Contingency Fund.
  - c. In the general discussion about increasing the dues the fact that more trees will need to be removed was discounted. One homeowner questioned climate change as affecting trees in the Commons. Some homeowners questioned the value of increasing the Contingency Fund. One homeowner proposed that any increase needed to remove trees should be done by special assessment whenever the need arose. Ben explained that having special assessments can bring down the value of homes in SHHA and can result in the loss of insurance. Also, the process for a special assessment is laborious; a meeting must be called, and a special vote held.
  - d. Another question led to a discussion of legal fees paid. In court cases which SHHA wins, which has always been the case so far, the legal fees are repaid.

### **B. *2020 Assessment Increase***

- a. A Motion to increase 2020 SHHA assessments by \$35 to \$175 per year was made and seconded, and a vote was taken.
- b. The measure to increase the dues was defeated, 119 were for it and 124 were against it.
- c. A Motion to approve the 2020 proposed budget with no dues increase was made, seconded, and passed.
- d. SHHA Annual Dues for 2020 will remain at \$140.00



## **VIII. Discussion Topics**

- A.** SHHA Greenway Portals Study – Mike Davis described the activities of the Committee that was formed to deal with this topic. Reports from this Committee are posted on SHHA's website. The Committee recommended the points listed below. Recommendations iii and v have been done.

Mike also mentioned that not advertising the existence of the Commons or improving on the wild state that the County reclamation established is recommended by the police. Burglars prefer to case a house and then rob it from the rear. Have lots of well-established paths in a secluded area behind houses is an aid to them. So, the Committee believes that the SHHA should not attempt to improve the Commons between Home Guard and Parliament nor establish and/or maintain paths but let it remain as the County project left it.

- a.** These are the study's findings, recommendations, and actions
- i. The access portals should remain as they are, grass strips.
  - ii. The curb lettering indicating the access portals should be redone.
  - iii. A copy of the report should be posted on SHHA's website.
  - iv. Homeowners whose properties are adjacent to the portals should be notified about them.
  - v. Information about the report should be included in the letter sent to the homeowners announcing the annual meeting.

## **IX. Open Forum for Homeowners**

No further discussions were raised

## **X. Dates for Upcoming Meetings**

Since there is a new administration in the Braddock District the meeting dates after January are not reserved and reservations need to be made for these dates by the new Board.

10	January
6	February
14	March
11	April
9	May
13	June
11	July
8	August
12	September
10	October
7	November
5	December (Annual Meeting of Members)

## **XI. Adjournment**

Kevin thanked everyone for attending the meeting and asked for a motion to adjourn.

Such a motion was made and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30.

**Linda Wirth - The Oaks - Current Secretary:**

I and my husband are original owners who purchased the last house built in SHHA.

I am a retired librarian with volunteer activities with four other organizations: Archives at the National Cathedral, Board of the Friends of King Park Library, volunteer staff at Kings Park Library, and Board of Potomac Technical Processing Librarians.

I have been a Board Member of SHHA the longest of my volunteer activities, and feel that the SHHA Board does important work in keeping our neighborhoods in good repair, good looks, and keeping our property values high.

**Kent Ford - Woodedge - Current Treasurer:**

I grew up in Colorado, and then got a commission in the Navy after graduating from the Citadel in Charleston, SC. I served in submarines and commanded the USS Springfield.

I and my wife, Karen (Reecie), have lived at 9122 Lake Braddock Dr. since 1996, except for a short tour in Belgium with the Navy from 2000 to 2002. Our three sons have grown up in the neighborhood, all graduated from Lake Braddock Secondary School. One is now married and living in Burke, the other two are still in college.

I, as part of the SHHA Board of Directors, work with the homeowners in the review of maintenance and improvements to our homes to ensure the overall continued high quality of the neighborhood and value of our homes.

**Mike Davis - The Oaks:**

I am a resident of Signal Hill (The Oaks) neighborhood. I have resided at 9015 Fort Craig Drive for 24-years. I and my wonderful wife, Rita, are native Washingtonians with deep roots in the Capital City, and surrounding counties.

I and Rita have been married 51-years and are proud parents of two grown and married sons; and four wonderful grandchildren.

I am a retired federal executive and professional urban and regional planner. I have over 50-yrs experience working in federal, state, county and local governments.

I have an MA and BS degrees in Urban and Regional Planning.

I am fully aware of the issues confronting the SHHA neighborhood, and am committed to furthering the safety, livability, value, and attractiveness of the SHHA community.

I am strongly oriented to creative problem solving and conflict resolution through the application of creative thinking, negotiation and compromise.

**Tom Lombardi - Woodedge:**

My wife, Meredith, and I have lived in the Woodedge section of the community (off of Parliament Dr.) with our three young children — Ryan, Emma, and Tyler—since 2015.

We knew immediately upon seeing the community and the house we would soon buy that this is where we wanted to raise our growing family. I am an attorney with the U.S. Government Accountability Office, an agency that evaluates government programs and activities through the lens of good government practices and fiscal responsibility. I also spent some time as a federal prosecutor in the District of Columbia. I enjoy outdoor activities—in particular, running (if you've seen a pair pushing a couple of jogging strollers that may have been us) — and Meredith and I are always commenting on how great it is to see so many kids out playing and people out walking the streets.

To anyone who attended the last annual meeting at which candidates addressed the community, I spoke of the clear and apparent divide between the Board and the community it represents. This divide has fostered animosity created an unhealthy dynamic within a relatively small association. I have attended all but one monthly meeting over the past year, and I believe the Board has made a conscious effort to be more transparent and less confrontational. These are commendable strides and we should be thankful for the time each Board member has dedicated to keeping Signal Hill a desirable place to live.

This election, however, is an opportunity to introduce new voices and perspectives, and to ensure the Board continues to reflect the ever-changing community it represents.