

July 2020

The Timbers Log

In this Issue:

Upcoming Events

Recreation Area Cleanup

Information is Empowering

Financial Status

Operating Cost Breakdown

Special Community Benefits
District Proposal

Webpage and E-mail

Committee Notes

Your Neighbors

Executive Board members:

President:

Hank Sengelaub
95 Brooks Rd
(410) 384-9622
TimbersCivicAssociation@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Sue Tant
151 Tall Tree Trail
(410) 431-5204
s_tant@hotmail.com

Secretary:

Donna Sengelaub
95 Brooks Rd
(410) 384-9622
DMSengelaub@gmail.com

Timber Civic Association Newsletter

The purpose of this Newsletter is to provide a source of reliable, helpful and accurate information regarding the status of Timbers Civic Association and its stewardship of the Recreation Area.

The last newsletter sent was dated 2014 and since that time eleven families have made the Timbers their home. Welcome. It is a great place to live and raise a family.

More in-depth information, downloadable documents and frequently asked questions (FAQs) can be found on the Timbers Civic Association website:

www.timberscivicassn.wixsite.com/timbers-civic-assn

The Timbers Civic Association was established in 1972 to take conditional ownership of the Recreation Area and maintain it for the mutual benefit of its members.

The Recreation Area is 1.814 acres and is zoned for R-5 - which means 5 houses per acre or approximately 8 houses per 1.814 acres- could be built on the Recreation Area, should the Timbers Civic Association dissolve. The number of Townhomes per acre may be more.

The deed to the Recreation Area is very clear: Should the Timbers Civic Association dissolve or cease to be a legal entity; then ownership of the Recreation Area will revert back to the original owners or their heirs.

The Recreation Area is deeded to the Timbers Civic Association. It is NOT a county park.

The Timbers Civic Association is NOT a HOA (Home Owner's Association), nor can it ever become one. The Timbers Civic Association CANNOT dictate to homeowners within the Subdivision, how maintain their properties; nor can it intercede in property disputes with neighbors or enforce county property codes! Its purpose is to maintain the Recreation Area - period!

Upcoming Events:

Saturday 25 July 2020
Recreation Area Cleanup
9:00 pm - 12:00 pm

Thursday 30 July 2020 - 6:30 pm
Special Community Benefits District Committee
Meeting

Location: Recreation Area
Please Bring a Lawn Chair

Committee to establish
Timbers Civic Association as a
Special Community Benefits District for 2021
Anne Arundel County collects the annual dues in
Timbers Property Owner's annual tax bill

To join this Special Committee:
Contact Donna Sengelaub 410-384-9622
DMSengelaub@gmail.com

More Information on:
www.timberscivicassn.wixsite.com/timber-civic-assn

Recreation Area Cleanup

Saturday July 25

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Please join us to help drag limbs and clear branches from the wooded area; trim trees; and clean out and mulch the garden areas of the Timbers Recreation Area. Volunteer whatever time you can spare. Meet your neighbors in the process. Cleanup will start at 9 am and end promptly at 12 pm. Refreshments for the work crews provided. Please bring gloves, rakes, chainsaws, trimmers, eye and ear protection for those using power equipment. Free firewood & chainsaw chains and mower blades sharpened free during the cleanup. Contact Rick Miller - Timbers Maintenance Committee Chairman
rick@zeskinds.com Cell: 410-233-RICK (7425)

Information is Empowering. Please Read:

Thank you to those residents who have contributed their voluntary dues of \$100 per year, which goes directly to fund the maintenance, upkeep and insurance of the Recreation Area deeded to the Timbers Civic Association. Your contribution gives you a voice and a vote in how the money is used and how the Timbers Civic Association is governed for the upcoming fiscal year through 30 June.

Gentle reminder: If you plan to join, and contribute, but haven't gotten to it, please do so no later than 30 July 2020, so we have time to develop a budget for members to vote on and approve at the Sept meeting.

For those eleven families who have recently moved to the Timbers since our last newsletter, The Timbers Civic Association, Inc. was established in 1972 to take ownership of the Rec Area.

It was established to provide the lot owners of the Timbers Subdivision a way to share in the mutual benefit of; and in the shared burden of responsibility, for all of the maintenance, upkeep and liability insurance coverage for the Timbers Recreation Area.

The Timbers Civic Association is NOT a homeowners association (HOA) nor can it ever become one! The Association has nothing to do with a homeowners property nor can it get involved in disputes with neighbors.

Should the organization dissolve - due to bankruptcy, apathy or the inability of the Association to meet its legal obligations, we as residents would lose control of the Recreation Area which could then be legally be sold; and houses or townhouses built on the Recreation Area.

The Recreation Area is a rare gift of open community space in Anne Arundel County. It is the neighborhood backyard. It would be a shame to wake up one morning and find a subdivision sign posted there.

The caveat in the deed to the Recreation Area is very clear:

" In the event that the Timbers Civic Association, Inc. cease to be a legal entity, or the property herein described shall be used for purposes other than recreation area for the benefit of the lot owners in the Timbers Subdivision, then the property shall revert to and become the property of the GRANTOR herein, in fee simple."

This means that if the Timber Civic Association were to dissolve or we cannot maintain the Recreation Area to a reasonably safe standard, then ownership of the 1.814 acres would legally revert to the heirs of the original grantors.

This means, the heirs of the people who deeded the land to the Timbers Civic Association, would receive a letter from Anne Arundel County that they now own 1.814 acres of land in Anne Arundel County.

The Recreation Area is zoned as R-5. R-5 means that a developer can build 5 houses per acre or in the case of 1.814 acres or Recreation Area -- approximately 8 houses acres or 16 townhomes.

Financial Status and Projected Operating Cost Breakdown for 2020

The Timbers Civic Association has operated at a deficit of \$750 each year for the last six years, meaning that maintenance and operating costs were more than the annual revenue taken in from the yearly appeals for contributions to fund the Recreation Area.

The Timbers Civic Association has made up the shortfall for the last six years only through the generosity of a handful of residents who volunteered their time, labor, equipment and gas, to mow and remove leaves (average annual savings of \$3000 per year). Because of their generosity of time and labor; and the Executive Board carefully following a frugal budget, the Timbers Civic Association has carefully accrued a total of \$12,174.05.

HOWEVER, the residents who have volunteered their time and labor to make these savings possible, can no longer volunteer their time, labor or equipment to mow or remove leaves in the future. This means we must hire landscapers AND find a better way to collect funding to maintain the Recreation Area.

With an average of 30 of 48 households that reliably contribute to the maintenance of the Recreation Area each year, or \$3000 average revenue gain per year -- and with an average of \$3750 annual maintenance costs per year, the Timbers Civic Association will continue to operate at a \$750 deficit each year. Even with careful planning and budgeting, we will eventually exhaust the current balance, that has been carefully and frugally accrued through six years of voluntary mowing and leaf removal. This financial trajectory is not sustainable for the future - think of a leaky bucket that is not patched.

Furthermore, to raise dues on the few that reliably pay and volunteer their services over the years, is not an acceptable option. Eventually - even those residents will become tired, discouraged and stop contributing money, time and labor.

We have an annual audit to ensure accountability and anyone in the Timbers is welcome to view the financial records at any time.

2020 Projected and actual minimum operating costs:: \$3750

Breakdown of non-discretionary (required) minimal spending:

Mowing (average 15 times per summer)

$\$100 \times 15 \text{ mowings} = \1500 per year

Leaf removal (minimum 3 times each fall) -

$\$500 \text{ per} \times 3 = \1500 per year

Liability insurance = \$550

Admin/post office box = \$200

**Emergency reserve (downed trees, unforeseen emergencies) = \$1500

Lighting at park: discontinued light to save money- BGE account now closed (Cost was \$29 per month)

Note: There is \$750 shortfall each year, even with an average of 30 households contributing reliably each year.

So what can be done to ensure that the Timbers Civic Association is viable for the next 48 years, so that we retain the Recreation Area for future generations of residents?

The solution is to establish the Timbers Civic Association, as a Special Community Benefits District or SCBD, as an alternative method to our current method of mailing out an annual appeal, and HOPE that enough households in the Timbers contribute voluntary dues each year to meet our annual financial obligations for maintenance and operating costs for the Timbers Civic Association, Inc.

As an SCBD, Anne Arundel County would collect the Timbers Civic Association annual dues as a part of a homeowners property tax bill. The dues would then be redistributed by the Office of Taxation and Assessment to the Timbers Civic Association, Inc (minus a 5% administrative fee from the County). The dues collected as an SCBD are used according to our budget (which the members agree upon and vote on each year) and which must be submitted to the County Council in December, each year.

A SCBD, is formed voluntarily by the majority homeowners of a designated area that share in a mutual benefit - in our case it is the Recreation Area. As a SCBD, a county approved petition is sent all of the homeowners within a specified plat, to become designated as a special taxing district within Anne Arundel County, in order to fund the maintenance and upkeep of the Recreation Area.

It is a much fairer way to share the burden of responsibility equally among all the houses in the SCBD for the cost of maintenance, upkeep, lighting and insurance for the Recreation Area-- as well as pay for the administrative mailing and copying costs to run the Timbers Civic Association, Inc, -- the legal entity to whom the Recreation Area was deeded.

This is but a summary. Much more detailed information regarding this proposal will be in a forthcoming Special Edition Newsletter with amplifying information.

In the meantime, information to educate yourself about what a SCBD is and why it is to our advantage to become one, is posted on the Timbers Webpage under the tab Special Community Benefits District.

www.timberscivicassn.wixsite.com/timbers-civic-assn

Webpage and E-mail address

Webpage: www.timberscivicassn.wixsite.com/timbers-civic-assn

Email: TimbersCivicAssociation@gmail.com

Please bookmark the webaddress. Contains a wealth of useful information; Frequently Asked Questions; links to County Services; and County/State/Federal Government Offices

- Special Community Benefits District Information and Timeline
- Timbers Calendar
- Community Phonebook under link "Our Community"-
(password protected)
- Neighbor-Owned Business page - Courtesy Space to post your
Business Card and advertise your business/services to neighbors
- Helpful Links to County Offices and Services;
State & Federal Representatives
- Committee Information and Progress
- Budget for the Timbers Civic Association
- Minutes (Executive Board and Community Meetings)
- Important Documents for Homeowners to view & download -
Bylaws, Deed to the Rec Area, Subdivision plat, etc
- Important Community Information/Background history
- Community Photos

Committees Need Your Involvement and Ideas

The following Standing Committees make up the Timbers Civic Association:

- Bylaws
- Budget and Finance
- Recreation, Maintenance and Development
- Fundraising

Involvement in communities is where your voice is heard, ideas formulated and progress is made. The four standing committees are populated as needed and work in coordination with the Executive Board, to develop plans of action for improvements to the recreation area and general governance. Please step up and become involved. This is where your voice is heard and where you can make a difference.

Special Committees are also established as needed with the approval of the Executive Board.

Right now the active committees are Budget and Finance and the Maintenance Committees.

A *Special Committee* to establish a Special Community Benefits District will have a meeting on Thursday 30 July 2020 at 6:30 pm at the Recreation Area - please contact Donna Sengelaub (410) 384-9622 or DMSengelaub@gmail.com if you would like to join this committee or wish to attend this meeting.

If you are interested in serving on one of these committees listed below please contact

Hank Sengelaub 95 Brooks Rd
TimbersCivicAssociation@gmail.com
(410) 384-9622

or the committee chairmen listed below

Budget and Finance Chairman: Ruth Rabin 163 Tall Tree Trail
rerabin@yahoo.com
410-975-9908

Recreation, Maintenance and Development Chairman: Rick Miller 1171 Rubert Circle
Rick@zeskinds.com
410-233-7425

Bylaws Committee Chairman: currently vacant

Fundraising-Social - Committee Chairman: currently vacant