

Wilderness Property Owners'
Association

WPOA

NOVEMBER 2019
NEWSLETTER

Semi-Annual Association Meeting

Tuesday, November 19

6:00-9:00 p.m.

Grace Community Covenant Church
Fellowship Hall

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MESSAGE FROM THE WPOA PRESIDENT

Dear WPOA Neighbors:

Welcome to fall! The rain and wind are here. Please keep an eye out as you walk or drive in our neighborhood for people, critters, and cars. The weather and early darkness can make this time of year challenging.

The November newsletter provides you with a small preview of the upcoming Annual WPOA Member Meeting scheduled for November 19, 2019. We will be talking about neighborhood traffic safety, greenbelt work, and the 2020 Association budget and dues. In addition, we have scheduled two presentations on topics about which members have expressed interest – Neighborhood Traffic Calming and the Firewise Program.

An agenda for the meeting will be posted by November 1 to the website www.wildernesspropertyowners.org.

We hope you will attend!

We value the engagement of our neighbors and the support for the Board. It is the Board's intent to continue to serve our community to the best of our collective abilities. We continue to strive for a WPOA that works for everyone in the community in a way that is fair, respectful, and transparent.

If you have feedback, the best way to reach the Board is via email at WildernessBoard@gmail.com. We appreciate any feedback and welcome your ideas, thoughts, and suggestions.

Lastly, I want to thank my fellow Board members who create newsletters, manage Greenbelt issues, and countless other duties that make our neighborhood great. Your work is greatly appreciated.

Best wishes this upcoming holiday season and new year!



SOME IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANNUAL MEETING DATE AND PRESENTATIONS

The Annual Association Meeting will take place on **Tuesday, November 19, 6:00-9:00 p.m.** at Grace Community Covenant Church in the Fellowship Hall. Details can be found on the WPOA website including an agenda and logistics: www.wildernesspropertyowners.org. **Please note the new time for the meeting.** The meeting has been extended to allow for two presentations:

- Traffic Calming in the Neighborhood – Thurston County Public Works
- Firewise Program – Thurston County Emergency Management

EMAILS

Please send us your email address. It will reduce costs to the Association for mailings and ensure you receive messages from the WPOA Board and announcements from the City and County in a timely fashion.

WPOA WEBSITE

We continue to welcome your thoughts and feedback. Please be sure to check out the WPOA website wildernesspropertyowners.org, which contains information about the Board’s current work and community resources.

If you have suggested additions for the website or note that information provided is incorrect or out-of-date, please provide changes to the Wilderness Board via email at: WildernessBoard@gmail.com. We want to keep the website current and relevant.



2020 BUDGET

The WPOA Board proposes maintaining the same property owner dues amount (\$175) with only minor modifications to the proposed 2020 budget.

A table displaying the existing 2019 budget categories with actual or estimated end-of-year expenditures as well as the proposed 2020 budget categories (colored blue, the last column) is here: www.wildernesspropertyowners.org.

If you are unable to attend the November 19th meeting, please vote for or against maintaining the \$175 per lot annual dues assessment by either:

- Emailing to vote@wildernesspropertyowners.org (include your property address), or
- Providing another property owner attending the meeting one of the two proxy forms <https://wildernesspropertyowners.org/covenants-bylaws-and-maps>

Votes via email must be received no later than 3:00 PM November 19th!

2020 DUES ASSESSMENTS

Please remember to pay your 2020 WPOA dues assessment **no later than January 31, 2020**. Reminder invoices or statements will be sent to all property owners in December 2019. Tardy dues payments are subject to interest charges and, if not received by April 1, 2020, are subject to \$309 additional fees for lien preparation and recording.

Avoid all the associated expense and hassle by paying your dues on time!



COVENANT UPDATE

This past year the WPOA Board undertook a review of the current WPOA Covenants. The Covenants are the legal document that lays out the guidelines for the WPOA community. The review was initiated for two reasons: 1) the WPOA Covenants have not been updated since the original drafting in 1978 when the WPOA was established and 2) in response to feedback from members of the Association regarding potential changes and updates.

In September, the WPOA Board put the new Covenants to a vote by the WPOA Members. The Covenants must be approved by 51% of the lot owners in order to adopt the changes. The WPOA Board received a total of 94 votes. Seventy-five votes were in favor of the proposed changes to the Covenants and 19 votes were in opposition. The total votes cast were insufficient (66 short) to meet the threshold of 51% for approval.

The result of the vote is that the current 1978 approved Covenants will remain as the governing Covenants for the Association.

With regard to next steps, the WPOA Board has added a user-friendly version to the website. In addition, the WPOA Board will be developing a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document regarding the Covenants. The intent is to provide shared and clear communications regarding the Covenants and consistency in the WPOA Board's response to common questions. The hope is to have this information posted to the web by February 2020.

The WPOA Board wants to thank all of the members for their engagement in the Covenant discussion and process. We believe this opportunity provided a chance for community building, communication, and engagement.



TRAFFIC CALMING

Over the last several months the WPOA Board has heard concerns by Association members regarding traffic safety in our community. Over the past year the WPOA Board has communicated reminders to be aware and safe while driving within our neighborhood. Building on the Board's communications, the WPOA Board reached out to the Thurston County Public Works Department to inquire about how the Wilderness neighborhood may be able to respond to increase traffic safety concerns.

The County offers a Traffic Calming program. The program provides educational, behavioral, and environmental solutions to assist in addressing traffic safety concerns in neighborhoods. The County's program consists of two phases intended to obtain neighborhood participation coupled with low-cost activities by the County to assist in changing driving behaviors and, if necessary, consider environmental changes to the roadway system.

The first phase focuses on changing driver behavior. There are multiple options for engagement by neighbors in this phase. Below are options for both WPOA Board engagement and individual neighbor volunteer opportunities.

WPOA Board Engagement

- **Radar Trailer:** Upon request or by county action the speed trailer and speed sign will be deployed on county roads. The trailer is primarily used for short term operations and the sign is for longer-term operations. The WPOA Board has requested the radar trailer for both the entrance from Boulevard Avenue and the entrance from Wiggins Avenue.

Individual Neighbor Volunteer Opportunities

- **Neighborhood Speed Watch:** Provides a way for residents to alert drivers to concerns about speeding and to encourage safe, controlled driving on residential streets. This program actively involves residents in the education process as participants. The Neighborhood Speed Watch Program is a way for residents to

improve the safety of their own neighborhood without waiting for the County to provide enforcement or the installation of physical devices. The program has proven effective across the nation.

- **Yard Signs:** This program actively involves residents in the education process as participants. The program allows for timely and cost-effective responses to speeding traffic in neighborhoods. These signs/devices should only be used when there is activity in front of your home otherwise they will quickly lose their effectiveness.
- **Signing, Markings, and Brush Trim:** The County can improve the safety of some areas by simply cutting vegetation, installing stop bars, establishing no parking zones, installing roadway reflectors, and upgrading signs. These are easy and inexpensive things to do that can improve the safety of a roadway/neighborhood.

From this work and information collected, the Association can engage with the County to implement targeted enforcement. Even though there are a limited number of deputies for the actual enforcement. The County is able to conduct targeted patrols of neighborhoods as patterns emerge from the speed watch data and as residents provide more specific information regarding observed traffic patterns too. If you are interested in volunteering, details can be found at wildernesspropertyowners.org/resources.

The second phase focuses on changing the Roadway Environment. If the actions employed in Phase I of the Neighborhood Traffic Calming program do not reduce reported traffic problems, physical changes may be made to streets. There are several steps that must be undertaken by the Association and the County to implement this work including continued concerns by neighbors and meeting the County guidelines for location.

To be eligible for this phase the following criteria will need to be met:

- Satisfaction of certain roadway criteria
- Support from the majority of the neighborhood (lot owners)
- Neighborhood has the ability to fund the project.

If you are interested in volunteering for any of the options in Phase I and/or learning more about Phase II, the Board strongly encourages you to attend the presentation at the November Annual Meeting.



PROACTIVE GREENBELT WORK ACCOMPLISHED IN 2019

As reported in the summer newsletter, the WPOA Board hired **SOUTH SOUND TREESCAPES** to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of all greenbelt spaces within the Wilderness neighborhood. It is the WPOA Board's hope this evaluation will help guide proactive preservation, sustainability of the greenbelt, and prioritization of future issues.

Preservation and sustainability, along with safety, were the main issues identified in the neighborhood survey conducted this past year. This is the Board's first endeavor to proactively address these issues.

The first projects were intended to address safety concerns by cutting or pruning potentially dangerous trees that were dead or dying, and/or threatened adjacent property. The largest areas of greenbelt on either side of Frontier and Donnelly were the primary focus of this work. These large acreages of greenbelt were selected because trees could be cut and left in place in order to keep the cost down, and not have a major impact on nearby residents.

To date over \$14,300 has been spent to cut or prune over 33 potentially dangerous trees as well as for the arborist's evaluation and report. Costs of tree work can vary depending on the size, location of the trees to be cut or pruned, and access to the worksite. Funds to support this work have come from residual funds from previous budgets. The Board plans to continue with proactive work if future budgets allow. Additional information regarding this work can be found on the WPOA website here:

wildernesspropertyowners.org/wpoa-homeowners-greenbelt-neighborhood-survey.