

Frequently Asked Questions

February 2020

What is the Wilderness Property Owners Association (WPOA)?

The WPOA was established to maintain the neighborhood's common properties, shared services (street lights) and standards for the planned community development.

The membership of the WPOA consists of all the owners of lots in the development. The WPOA is led by the WPOA Board. The WPOA Board includes seven volunteer members. This includes four officers (i.e. President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary) and three At-Large members.

The WPOA is governed by the WPOA By-Laws.

What is the difference between the WPOA Covenants and the WPOA By-Laws?

The Covenants and By-Laws are two different governing documents that apply to the Association but have different roles. The Covenants lay out the guidelines for the planned community as defined by the Plats of Wilderness and Wilderness Division. In other words, the Covenants are the rules for the neighborhood.

The WPOA is a nonprofit corporation established to manage a private, planned community (i.e. Wilderness). Like other corporations, the WPOA is governed by a board of directors and a set of rules (i.e. Bylaws) The bylaws govern how the WPOA operates and contain the information needed to run the association as a non-profit corporation.

How Do Lot Owners Receive a Copy of the Covenants?

The Covenants are available on the WPOA website. Each lot owners receives a copy of the Covenants as part of each and every deed that identify restrictions placed on properties in order to maintain property values and community standards.

How Does an Association Member Share Suggestions or Concerns?

Please consider attending the semi-annual meeting in April/May and the annual meeting in November/December. The meeting is typically held at Grace Community Covenant Church. The date and time will be announced in the WPOA newsletter and posted on the WPOA website.

An Association member can also email or telephone the Board members.

Can the Covenants be Changed or Amended?

Yes. According to the Covenants Section E-1 states the Covenants are effective for ten years from the date the Covenants are recorded. The Covenants automatically renew for successive periods of ten years unless there is an affirmative action taken by the majority of owners of lots. The Covenants Section E-2 states that the Covenants may be amended at any time if agreed to by a majority of the owners of the 280 properties in Wilderness.

What Criteria Must Be Met for Action by the WPOA Board concerning Violations of the Covenants?

The WPOA Covenants Section E-4 state that the WPOA Board can only respond to a potential violation of the WPOA Covenants when the WPOA Board receives a written communication (e.g. letter or email) from two Association members speaking to the potential violation. The WPOA Board is then required to give written notice to the owner of the property with the alleged violation requesting compliance with the Covenants.

When are WPOA Dues Assessed and How do Association Members Pay their Dues?

Each December the WPOA Treasurer sends an invoice for the following year's dues to each lot owner. The invoice is sent to the address on record for the lot owner according to Thurston County records. It is the responsibility of the lot owner to make any changes to address known to the WPOA Board.

Annual dues are payable no later than January 31st and must be paid by you or your bank's bill paying service, check mailed to the WPOA, PO Box 466, Olympia, WA 98507.

In accordance with the Covenants, interest charges are assessed for the late payments postmarked after January 31st and liens with associated processing fees are placed on properties for which payments have not been posted by the end of March.

Can Association Members Work in Association Common Areas?

The Common Areas are defined in the Covenants in Section C-2 as *those areas dedicated solely to the purposes of providing recreation greenbelt and playground areas and pathways to the owners or residents of The Plat of Wilderness.*

The Covenants, Section C-4, state that work in the Association Common Areas is not permitted without permission of the WPOA Board.

To gain permission, an Association member must complete the *Working on the Greenbelt Form* and submit it to the WPOA Board for consideration and either approval or disapproval.

Are Changes to Physical Structures and Lots in the WPOA Neighborhood Allowed?

Article Three of the WPOA By-Laws identify the rules regarding architectural changes to a lot. Members considering architectural changes should complete the Architectural Control Committee Approval Form and submit it to the WPOA Board for consideration and either approval or disapproval.

Are Signs Allowed in the Wilderness Neighborhood?

The Covenants, Section B-5, state *no sign of any kind shall be displayed to the public view on any lot, building, or structure, except signs used by a builder to advertise the property during construction, by a home owner or his designated representative advertising for sale or rent, or by the developers (James Muirhead and Howard J. Jacobson) for any purpose deemed appropriate.*

The exception to this is state law which allows the display of political signs. Washington state law prohibits the ban of political signs. According to the Revised Code of Washington 64.38.034:

The governing documents may not prohibit the outdoor display of political yard signs by an owner or resident on the owner's or resident's property before any primary or general election. The governing documents may include reasonable rules and regulations regarding the placement and manner of display of political yard signs.

This section applies retroactively to any governing documents in effect on July 24, 2005. Any provision in a governing document in effect on July 24, 2005, that is inconsistent with this section is void and unenforceable.

Are Pets required to be on Leash in the Wilderness Neighborhood?

According to Covenant Section B-9 *no animals, livestock, or poultry of any kind shall be raised, bred, or kept on any lot except that dogs, cats, or any other normal house pets may be kept, provided that they are not maintained for any commercial purposes and do not create a disturbance or nuisance in the community.*

Thurston County, in which the WPOA neighborhood resides, requires animals to be on leashes on public property according to County Code 9.10.050

Are Fireworks Allowed in the Wilderness Neighborhood?

The Covenants do not address fireworks. Thurston County code 6.68.055 and 6.68.057 states that *the discharge of consumer fireworks within the Association each year is restricted to nine a.m. to eleven p.m. on July 3rd and nine a.m. to eleven p.m. on July 4th. No person shall discharge any consumer fireworks except within these times and dates. The discharge of consumer fireworks is prohibited during periods of extreme fire danger as recognized by Thurston County.*

What are the Rules regarding Vehicle Parking?

According to the Covenants, vehicles are not allowed to be parked on lawns. The Covenants Section B-14 states *no form of vehicle shall be parked or stored, nor maintenance performed upon same, on any lot, except on driveways or prepared hardstand such as concrete, asphalt, or hard gravel, unless not visible to the public view.*

Two-way traffic on the county streets should not be impeded by parked vehicles and the safe passage of pedestrians and bicycles should not be restricted.