

Stanton Farms

Mid-Size HOA of the Year Award Winner

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The **Stanton Farms Townhomes Community** consists of 189 units and is located south of Bowles Avenue and west of South Kipling in a quiet neighborhood setting with Foothills Parks & Recreation facilities nearby. The first homes were built in 1984 and the last in 1996.

Beginning in 2010, many changes occurred which altered the direction of the community. For the first time in almost 10 years, there was a quorum at the annual homeowners' meeting, followed by another quorum in 2011, as well as an increase in attendance at regular monthly meetings. There is a homeowners' forum at the beginning of the board meetings where homeowners are allowed to ask questions, make comments or requests. Agendas are posted on the Association's website, www.neighborhoodlink.com/Stanton_Farms_Townhomes/home, prior to the meetings to inform residents of what issues will be addressed during the meetings, while only sensitive issues are discussed in executive session.

The present board understands the importance of transparency and keeping homeowners informed as to how their association is being managed and its financial status. Approximately one year ago, a policy was initiated to have the first contact with someone who was not adhering to the rules be a friendly reminder rather than a violation notice and a fine. Another policy established by the present board was that board members attend the CAI Essentials class in the first year of each term that they serve on the board.

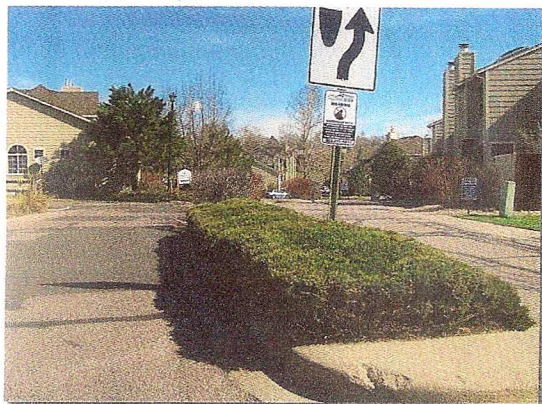
Reserves have increased from \$4,400 in 2009 to \$257,000 at the present time. This has been accomplished even though there was extensive repair and painting of 31 units in 2011. There is a seven year plan to repair and paint the

buildings, and a five- phase plan to repair and improve the deteriorated driveways. The board uses a "hands on" approach in the budgeting process and "walks" the property frequently to assess the needs of the community and prioritize the work to be done.

The Management Trust - PMA was hired in April 2010 and continues to serve the community well with their knowledge and expertise, as well as their commitment to respond in a timely and professional manner. The team continued to grow as the board hired the legal firm of Orten, Cavanaugh, Richmond, & Holmes, auditor Michelle Giometti, CPA, insurance agent Pat Wilderotter, and investment advisor Gene West. All new professional team members have either attended the annual homeowners' meetings or monthly board meetings to allow homeowners the opportunity to meet them and ask questions.

Several contracts had not been put out to bid in many years. In 2011, two major contracts were reviewed. After thorough consideration of three different bids for the insurance policy, the board gave the contract to a company that saved the Association almost \$15,000 in premiums, provided better coverage than the previous policy that had been in place for many years, and is rated as good as or better than the previous company. The trash hauler's contract was the second one reviewed. The contract was awarded to a company that would provide the same services but for \$7,000 less per year than the previous contract.

This is the third year of a five year relationship to improve water savings with Denver Water. Significant improvements have been made to the irrigation system with the installation of new technology controllers and by contracting with an



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irrigation specialist. In March 2011, the water conservation measures resulted in a substantial rebate from Denver Water. Plans to continue to conserve water will focus on additional improvements to the irrigation system and changes to the landscape.

The Parking Committee completed an assessment of parking availability last year resulting in more visitor parking while still meeting West Metro Fire District clearance requirements. The Landscape Committee that was formed in the fall of 2009 continues to be very active. In 2010 volunteers removed overgrown, unsightly bushes from the two main entrances to the community and replaced them with rock and boulders. In the spring of 2011 the volunteers planted perennials in these areas. In addition to the continued efforts in the area of water conservation, responsible use of fertilizers and pesticides is another directive of the Landscape Committee.

The Landscape Committee sponsored a "Plant-it-Forward" Beautification Contest in July 2011. Local businesses donated gift certificates that were used as prizes and a homeowner made a birdhouse that was given as a prize. Many residents brightened up their walkways, patios, or a corner by their front door even though they didn't enter the contest. Homeowners are sharing/splitting plants and giving them to their neighbors, offering help to their neighbors with planting or caring of their plants, or purchasing plants and planting them in the common areas for all to enjoy, thus giving real meaning to "Plant-it-Forward".

Neighbors are getting to know their neighbors better through involvement in the activities of the Landscape Committee or by just getting out and improving their own areas for the benefit of the entire community. There were several events that brought neighbors together in 2011 - the inaugural community-wide garage sale, and for the second year, the B.Y.O.P. (Bring Your Own Picnic) event. Attendance greatly increased from the previous year and many participated in a yoga demonstration provided by residents in the community. Several homeowners brought their extended families. The National Night Out event attracts "children" - young and old - from the community and the surrounding neighborhood.

The newsletter is hand-delivered or emailed to the residents (homeowners and renters). It educates, informs, notifies residents of upcoming events, acknowledges

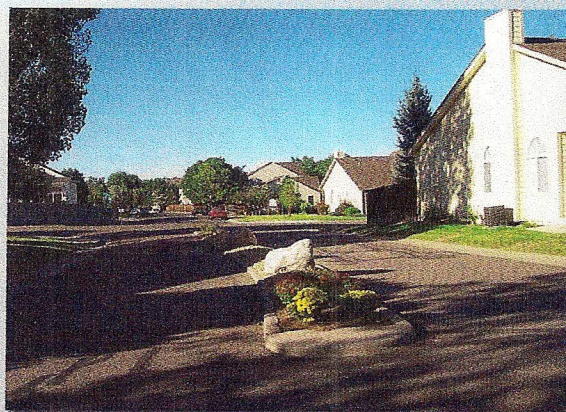


individuals for their contributions or achievements, and often has a "Meet Your Neighbor" article that features residents in the community. If the board is considering a new or revision of a previous policy, notice is provided in the newsletter so residents who wish to comment may do so at the next board meeting.

An association is a business and there are rules to follow, regular maintenance and repairs to perform, fees to collect and use wisely, yet it is also a community. In the past two years, Stanton Farms Townhomes has made great strides in addressing the serious lack of reserves, improving the professional operation of the association, and developing a sense of community. This is definitely "a work in progress" with plans for future changes and improvements. A once bleak financial picture is getting brighter. There is renewed interest and involvement by the residents. These changes could not have been accomplished without the efforts of many individuals - homeowners who voted for and continue to support the changes that have and are occurring, the staff of The Management Trust - PMA, the team of professionals, and members of CAI for their advice, education and support. 🏡



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