



Montibello Community News

The Montibello Homeowners Association

Board of Directors

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president@montibello.org

Jim Curtis,
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Heidi Cook-Sebes,
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Kristin McKittrick,
Street Hostess Coordinator
streethostess@montibello.org

www.montibello.org

Letter from the President

Greetings all Montibello Residents!

I hope that by now you have returned the Montibello Homeowners Association membership form along with dues payment to your Street Hostess or Host. If not, please do so immediately. You may notice that MHA dues increased \$25 this year. The MHA Board passed a dues increase in the fall. Funds raised from the dues increase will be used for neighborhood beautification projects. The results of a neighborhood survey last spring indicate a majority of residents would like this work done and support a modest dues increase.

During our recent annual meeting some residents raised concerns about this project. Our Beautification Co-chairs Barbara Dickie and Carol Richards have just taken office but have already improved the natural areas in the Montibello and River Ridge cul-de-sacs. They are working with brick masons and other professionals to create a plan to upgrade the entrances to the neighborhood. I encourage those interested to volunteer for the beautification committee. Barbara and Carol will welcome input as they craft a plan. Please be patient with this work. It may take a couple of years to adequately fund improvement of all of the entrances.

I want to thank those who attended the annual meeting in January. The new officers, including myself, were installed. Outgoing officers Tom Berger, Rich Boss, Nancy Buechler, Stacey Young and Mike Kavanagh served this neighborhood well and sought great replacements for their positions. I look forward to working with our new group of volunteers over this next year. (For a complete list of officers please see the sidebar.)

During our meeting, Tom Berger gave an update on old business including the recent vote on the Carmel/Colony parcel rezoning. The MHA worked with other neighborhood associations to oppose the rezoning but the City Council voted overwhelmingly to approve it. The only council member to vote against the rezoning was our representative, Andy Dulin. Our greatest concern is that other parcels of land along Carmel may come up for similar rezoning in the future and, if passed, add to the density issue in our area. We'll keep you posted should any similar issues arise.

Another area discussed by Tom was the zoning dispute on Ravencliff. MHA retained legal counsel to investigate the matter. MHA also had the property in question surveyed at the request of the neighbors. MHA's lawyer found that "the Association has no 'standing' to enforce the restrictive covenants. This does not mean the restrictions are unenforceable. However, the right to enforce the restrictions is vested with the individual owners of the lots." The MHA Vice-President, Jim Curtis, contacted a number of

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other HOAs in our area and found similar circumstances. **So, we urge a thorough review of the Montibello covenants before undertaking any building/remodeling projects. Three different companies developed Montibello and your covenants are specific to your section of the neighborhood. There is a copy in your directory or contact your Street Hostess or Host if you do not have them.** Out of courtesy please inform your immediate neighbors about planned additions. These steps taken together could prevent a similar situation in the future. The MHA Board can also serve as a source of advice in these situations, but as noted above we cannot enforce the covenants.

And as always let's continue to keep an eye out for one another. Break-ins have decreased but they have not disappeared. Our new Neighborhood Watch Coordinator, Chuck Roberts, should be contacted if you notice something unusual. Chuck also wants to establish Montibello as a Neighborhood Watch Community so you'll be hearing more about that.

I've already had a chance to hear from some of you on these issues and I expect I'll get more calls and email. You can reach me at 341-9011 or president@montibello.org. But I ask each of you to help me by joining the MHA and encouraging your neighbors to do so as well. Membership may not be mandatory but it certainly is expected. We plan to improve the aesthetics of the neighborhood. We will continue to monitor zoning issues and development around and inside the neighborhood. These efforts benefit everyone in the neighborhood. Let's make sure we each do our part to keep the neighborhood friendly and vibrant.

Thanks,
LuAnn Martinson

Message from the Vice President

The current strong trend of home improvement investment in Montibello and similar south Charlotte neighborhoods can be expected to continue for the foreseeable future. The consistent quality, solidity of value and ready marketability of our homes is of ongoing interest to us all, and also of your MHA board.

As your new board wrestles with the issue of how we best protect the character of our neighborhood amid change I would like to take a moment to offer

perspective of the multiple layers of protection we all benefit from:

- We benefit from zoning. This makes it extremely unlikely that we'll see commercial or multifamily construction on our collective property in our lifetimes. As we saw recently, however, with the high-density rezoning of property at Carmel and Colony roads, we must be vigilant and not take zoning protections for granted. Unfortunately, that successful rezoning effort sets a precedent for other properties in the area. Some neighbors have identified six to eight other single-family homes with large lots along Carmel Road which could be seen as ripe for high density development.
- We benefit from city ordinances ranging from animal control, to yard maintenance, to restrictive residential use, to parking.
- We benefit from the county's enforcement of building standards. Many people I come across as a building contractor seem to have a presumption that building permits and inspections are things to be avoided. The reasoning goes that it adds delays, adds cost, forces you to do things you don't want to do - then triggers an increase in your property taxes. While these claims are not necessarily false, they overlook the greater good of permits. A building permit is for your protection. It assures that work is done to an established set of standards by properly qualified people. A building permit is required by law for any project greater than \$5000, and any project of any value involving electrical, plumbing or heating & air modifications. On a typical remodeling job, such as a kitchen or bath, permits and inspections add only a couple hundred dollars and a couple of days to the project. While the work under a permit may trigger a commensurate increase in your property's tax value, having work done without a permit may catch up with you when you go to sell your home. As homeowners in a great neighborhood, as law abiding citizens and as good neighbors I think we can all afford to do the job right.
- And, we all benefit from each other's compliance with the restrictive covenants under which our neighborhood was built.

As we work over the coming months to define how to best protect the character of our neighborhood through

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these covenants we hope that you will see a balance of the MHA acting within its authority on the matter, while taking a fair, even-handed and proactive stance toward the protection of all homeowners.

Thanks,
Jim Curtis

Treasurer's Report

The accompanying financial report shows budget compared to actual income and expenses for calendar year 2005 and, in the last column, the budget for 2006 approved by the MHA board on January 29, 2006.

In 2005, expenditures for core (regularly recurring) expense items (operations, grounds and member activities) totalled \$18,375.16. The only extraordinary (non-recurring) item was a \$1,500 legal fee paid to an attorney retained to advise the association concerning an alleged violation of deed and/or zoning restrictions by a Montibello homeowner constructing an addition to his residence.

The 2006 budget includes \$19,125 for core items (those mentioned above plus income taxes which are due for years in which interest income exceeds \$100). Budget for extraordinary expense items includes \$2,000 for legal costs related to the deed/zoning restriction case mentioned above and \$32,000 in a new budget category titled Reserve for Landscape Capital Improvements.

The 2005 budget allocated \$20,000 for landscape capital improvements. An expenditure of \$1,126.25 was made in January 2005 for design work done by a landscape architect in late 2004. Planned progress on the landscape project was thwarted by unexpected turnover of board members who were overseeing the project. Expectations for progressing the landscape project this year are addressed by LuAnn Martinson in the President's Letter.

Envisioning that the landscape project will be ongoing beyond the current year, the board established the Reserve for Landscape Capital Improvements as a multi-year account. The \$32,000 allocation for 2006 is comprised of all revenue expected from the dues increase (\$10,667) with the remainder coming from 2005 year-end fund balance. Any unexpended funds at year-end

will be carried forward to 2007 and we anticipate that future revenues from the dues increase will be added to the reserve each year until project completion.

2006 Financial reports will appear in the newsletter on the following schedule:

April:	First quarter
August:	First and second quarters
October:	First, second and third quarters
February 2007:	End of year report

I encourage MHA members to pay attention to these periodic financial reports. The board is spending your money on behalf of Montibello and you are entitled to complete disclosure about MHA finances. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have about financial matters and I promise you straightforward responses.

Thanks,
Hap Arnold

Communications

As a reminder for those of you that have or will elect to receive the MHA newsletter via email, please add communications@montibello.org to your list of acceptable addresses so that any of our communication does not bounce back as undeliverable.

Thanks,
Heidi Cook-Sebes

Membership

There's still time! The annual Montibello Homeowners Association membership drive began in early February and is still underway. If you have already submitted your dues to your Street Host/Hostess, then thank you for doing so in a timely manner. If you have not, then there is still time to do so.

Please return the membership form (attached) and your \$75 dues to your Street Host/Hostess or to me (4622 Carmel Valley Rd) by February 28th. **Final deadline for your membership information to be included in the 2006 directory is March 31st.**



Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding the membership drive. Telephone 704.542.4620, Email membership@montibello.org.

Thanks,
Sarah Bailey

Neighborhood Watch Review

Our goal in 2006 is to become an "Active" Neighborhood Watch Community. The Neighborhood Watch Program is neighbors working with neighbors and the local police department to prevent crime. This program is based on the concept of people looking out for one another and sending a message to potential criminals that someone is watching every move they make.

In order to meet the police requirements for a Neighborhood Watch program we must do the following:

1. Define the area for the Neighborhood Watch. This area is either the entire neighborhood, or individual streets in the neighborhood.
2. Organize a meeting.
3. Invite a member of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department to the meeting.
4. To become an "Active" Neighborhood Watch we will need representation from 50% of the residences within Montibello in attendance at the meeting.
5. We will need "Block Captains" for each street. They will be the key contacts for the chairperson. The chairperson will be the contact with the police and the "Block Captains" will keep the community informed.
6. When Montibello has met the above criteria, "Neighborhood Watch" sign(s) will be issued. The community will be considered an "Active" Neighborhood Watch.

We will soon be scheduling a neighborhood meeting to organize the Neighborhood Watch Program. Keep an eye out for notices that will be distributed soon to your email inbox and/or mailbox. From time to time, I will also send out blast email reports on incidents that have occurred in or near our community to those of you that have requested to receive MHA news and notices via email. For this reason, I ask that you please add neighborhoodwatch@montibello.org to your list of acceptable addresses to ensure that email does not bounce

back as undeliverable. If you would like to get involved in the Neighborhood Watch program as a "block captain" please contact me at neighborhoodwatch@montibello.org or 704.542.1627.

Thanks,
Chuck Richards

Beautification Update

During December, the Montibello Drive cul-de-sac was replanted with Otto Luken Laurel, Astilbe, Lily of the Valley, Ostrich Fern, and Hostas.

Our goals for the coming year are as follows:

1. Prune and replant River Ridge Road cul-de-sac.
2. Improve the appearance of the entrances through plantings, new signage, and improved entrance monuments. We plan to seek the advice and consent of the neighbors contiguous to the entrances, and work within the regulations of the city of Charlotte.
3. Restore the "Yard of the Month" program.

We welcome any neighbors who are interested in working with us on these projects. You may contact me, Carol Richards, at beautification@montibello.org or 704.542.1627 and you may contact co-chair, Barbara Dickie, at beautification2@montibello.org or 704.752.0067.

Thanks,
Carol Richards

Street Hostess News

I am pleased to announce that Kristin McKittrick is our new Street Host/Hostess Coordinator. She is also the Street Hostess for Daresby Court. Kristin can be contacted at 704.540.5914 or by e-mailing streethostess@montibello.org.

Thanks,
Sarah Bailey



Community Club News

Montibello Ladybugs Garden Club

The Ladybugs, established in 1978, is a social organization welcoming all women of Montibello. Morning meetings are held in a member's home on the first Thursday of each month, September through May. The September and May meetings are luncheons. There also is an evening Christmas party which includes spouses.

Along with fellowship, each meeting features a program dealing with subjects, such as wellness, gardening, home décor and issues of community interest. For membership information, please contact Anne Montgomery, 704-541-7888.

Montibello Women's Club

There are still a few monthly meetings and a "couples social" in the Montibello Women's Club 2005-2006 calendar year. Our next meeting will be on April 6th. We invite you to join us.

In addition to our fun filled meetings, we regularly support the Battered Women's Shelter, A Child's Place and other local charities. We also support our own neighborhood through the proceeds from our yearly pine straw sale fundraiser.

Our year will end in May with a luncheon/fashion show on May 4th. Call Sharon Winstead at 542-9662 or Ava Thomas at 541-5138.

**MONTIBELLO HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION
2006 MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY INFORMATION & ANNUAL DUES PAYMENT**

1. PRIOR YEAR MEMBER?

Were you a member in 2005? If YES, go to Section 2. If NO, skip to Section 3.

2. MHA 2005 MEMBERS ONLY, please enter _____

Last Name

Street Address

*NOTE: Please review your information in the 2005 Directory and enter only changes below in Section 3.

3. DIRECTORY INFORMATION FOR 2006 (Enter data you would like included in directory)

MEMBER NAMES _____

List names of husband and wife if appropriate - or list names of up to 2 adults

STREET ADDRESS _____ HOME PHONE _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Check appropriate e-mail use: (A) ____ Publish in directory; (B) ____ Receive MHA documents by e-mail, forgoing redundant hand delivery; (C) ____ Receive MHA documents by email and hand delivery

*NOTE: Checking of (A) results in inclusion of e-mail address in member directory. Checking of (B) authorizes e-mail delivery of documents such as Montibello News and notices of social events. Checking of (C) authorizes e-mail and redundant regular delivery of documents. MHA board recommends option (B) over option (C). You may change your delivery option at any time.

Please set your e-mail to allow messages from neighborhoodwatch@montibello.org and communications@montibello.org.

HUSBAND _____

Workplace/Professional Listing

Workplace Phone

WIFE _____

Workplace/Professional Listing

Workplace Phone

AT HOME CHILDREN - NAME(S) AND BIRTH YEAR(S)

(Please note any children interested in baby sitting with a B and pet sitting with a P.)

<u>CHILD'S NAME</u>	<u>BIRTH YEAR</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>CHILD'S NAME</u>	<u>BIRTH YEAR</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>P</u>
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4. WANT TO GET INVOLVED? WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.

MHA needs concerned residents to serve on its Board of Directors and Committees. If interested, please complete the information below. If you want more information, contact any board member.

NAME _____ BEST WAY TO CONTACT (phone # or e-mail address) _____

PLEASE CHECK AREA(S) OF INTEREST:

<input type="checkbox"/> President or Vice President	<input type="checkbox"/> Secretary
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Treasurer
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications/Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/> Membership/Directory
<input type="checkbox"/> Beautification	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Affairs
<input type="checkbox"/> Street Host/Hostess Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/> Street Host/Hostess
<input type="checkbox"/> Technology	<input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Watch

We are considering establishing Montibello as a Neighborhood Watch Community. We will need 50% of residents to support the effort by attending a meeting. Are you willing to support this initiative? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. ANNUAL DUES & FORM RETURN

Please return this form and your **\$75 dues to your Street Host/Hostess by February 28 to permit orderly update of membership records. (Final deadline for your membership information to be included in 2006 directory is March 31).**

You may direct questions to Sarah Bailey, Membership Chairperson, at (704) 542-4620.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING MONTIBELLO

DO NOT WRITE BELOW

DO NOT WRITE BELOW

DO NOT WRITE BELOW

Host/Hostess
1/28/06

Check # _____

Membership

Check Processed _____

Entered in Database _____

V1-06 Approved

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1			Montibello Homeowners Association						
2	Financial Report for Calendar Year 2005 And Approved Budget for Calendar Year 2006								
3								Budget	
4			Quarter	Quarter	Quarter	Quarter	Year to	Position	Approved
5		Budget	Ending	Ending	Ending	Ending	Date	Over/(Under)	Budget
6		2005	3/31/1905	6/30/1905	9/30/1905	12/31/1905	12/31/1905	2005	2006
7	Beginning Cash Balance	31,665.55	31,665.55	39,916.44	43,941.39	37,675.92	31,665.55	0.00	34,702.89
8									
9	Income								
10	Membership Dues	22,000.00	12,650.00	9,300.00	0.00	0.00	21,950.00	50	32,000.00
11									
12	Contributions:	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	550.00	550.00	550.00	0.00
13	Interest	75.00	16.45	72.60	171.34	152.11	412.50	337.50	600.00
14	Total Income	22,075.00	12,666.45	9,372.60	171.34	702.11	22,912.50	837.50	32,600.00
15									
16	Expenses								
17	Operations:								
18	Newsletter	1,000.00	341.02	128.57	244.89	0.00	714.48	285.52	1,000.00
19	Directory	1,200.00	0.00	734.20	209.42	0.00	943.62	256.38	1,200.00
20	Insurance	1,750.00	0.00	1,818.00	0.00	0.00	1,818.00	68.00	1,900.00
21	Supplies	225.00	53.36	0.00	0.00	0.00	53.36	171.64	225.00
22	Postage	50.00	0.00	223.00	0.00	0.00	223.00	173.00	250.00
23	Miscellaneous	400.00	121.55	276.78	0.00	0.00	398.33	1.67	400.00
24	Total Operations	4,625.00	515.93	3,180.55	454.31	0.00	4,150.79	474.21	4,975.00
25									
26	Grounds:								
27	Maintenance	8,000.00	2,550.00	1,963.00	2,042.00	1,992.00	8,547.00	547.00	9,000.00
28	Landscaping:								
29	Beautification	0.00	194.14	0.00	0.00	0.00	194.14	194.14	0.00
30	Capital Improvements	20,000.00	1,126.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,126.25	18873.75	0.00
31	Total Grounds	28,000.00	3,870.39	1,963.00	2,042.00	1,992.00	9,867.39	18132.61	9,000.00
32									
33	Professional Services:								
34	Legal	500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,000.00	2,000.00
35									
36	Member Activities:								
37	Egg Hunt		0.00	204.10	722.71	0.00	926.81		
38	Picnic		0.00	0.00	3,217.79	48.10	3,265.89		
39	Halloween Party		0.00	0.00	0.00	135.04	135.04		
40	Holiday Party		29.24	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
41	Total Member Activities	4,500.00	29.24	204.10	3,940.50	183.14	4,356.98	143.02	5,000.00
42									
43	Taxes	30.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	30	150.00
44									
45	Miscellaneous Expenses	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100	0.00
46									
47	Reserve for Landscape Capital Im	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	32,000.00
48									
49	Contingencies	2,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2500	2,500.00
50									
51	Total Expenses	40,255.00	4,415.56	5,347.65	6,436.81	3,675.14	19,875.16	20379.84	55,475.00
52									
53	Ending Cash Balance	13,485.55	39,916.44	43,941.39	37,675.92	34,702.89	34,702.89	21,217.34	11,827.89
54									
55	Notes: 2006 budget approved by MHA Board Of Directors 1/29/2006.								
56	*Multi-year reserve account. Funds will be transferred as needed to Landscaping: Capital Improvements.								
57	Reserve account will be discontinued upon project completion.								