



# Forest Pond Newsletter

## HOA Discussion Forum

The Forest Pond HOA Discussion Forum is free for your use—this is a sounding board where you can write about the things that are important to you and do so with complete anonymity.

This function is part of our website and is a way for you to express yourself to the HOA Board and neighbors alike.

I, as Editor and Website Coordinator, will always try to respond to all of the postings and give feedback - whether you agree or not with what I write is part of a discussion forum.

It is there to sound out ideas, let others know how you feel about happenings within the community and make suggestions on how we can improve our operations and quality of life.

The rules are very simple (the following is from the hosting website Neighborhood Link™):

"The Discussion Forum is one of several two-way communication venues that makes Neighborhood Link a unique communication tool.

Neighborhood Link has a profanity filter in this and all public areas of the Web site. We will not delete discussion items because a person es-

poused a particular view-point, no matter how radical or different from those of the other members of the discussion. If the quality of discussions in a neighborhood's Discussion Forum ever degrades to a point where Neighborhood Link's "Terms of Use" are consistently violated, Neighborhood Link may temporarily make the neighborhood's Discussion Forum inactive.

Neighborhood Link can not, and will not, provide any personal information about our users unless we receive a court-ordered subpoena.

At the bottom of every page within your neighborhood site is a hotlink entitled "Terms of Use." The above policies and guidelines are stated in greater detail within this section."

All Forest Pond HOA Board Members will be reading these discussions and, I hope, will join in on the discussions.

This discussion forum is not just for the homeowner's use but for the renter's that live within in our community as well. Otherwise, how can we call ourselves a community if we don't invite participation from the residents and guests alike?

I beg all of you to visit the other communities that have active websites and look at their discussion forums - you will be surprised to see that they are talking about the same things that we are and may even have some ideas that we can use. For example, go to the Neighborhood Link home page, type in zip code 28209, and select "Madison Park" and look at their Discussion Forum - as you will see everyone uses it.

We do not live in a world of two choices but rather in a world of unlimited choices, where we must be able to view and have a meaningful dialog about all sides of an idea under discussion and come to an mutual understanding.

Unlike other websites where the legalese is enough to bog down a freight train, the "Terms of Use" at the bottom of the Discussion Forum is very short and very complete; read through them and you will appreciate the brevity with which this website operates.

The website is there for us to use but, we must use it wisely! There are very few free things in this world and we must be thankful for what is shared!

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## National Night Out

National Night Out (NNO) is the first Tuesday in August and it is designed to:

- 1) Heighten crime and drug prevention awareness,
- 2) Generate support for crime prevention,
- 3) Strengthen neighborhood spirit and police community relations,
- 4) Send a message to criminals letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

Your Block Captain has been trying to contact you and gain your support for the Forest Pond NNO on Tuesday, 7 August 2007. This purpose of this event is to bring neighbors together in order to support the tenants on the program listed above. Like everything else in our neighborhood, we need your involve-

ment to make this work.

So just how can you be involved without shelling out a lot of money? I'm glad you asked - because first and foremost you are not required to hand over your wallet. In fact, depending on how you apply the tenants in the first paragraph, you may not pay out a single penny.

Come down to Sunday Park during NNO, Tuesday evening between 7:00 and 8:00 PM and see just how much you can support yourself and your neighbors without spending any money.

You can walk away from the NNO meeting in the park armed with information that will provide you with a renewed sense of belonging to a commu-

nity that cares for each other and not just the personal pronouns; show the criminals that we are in control and they will always be on the outside looking in; and meet your neighbors and fellow residents that live in other sections of Forest Pond that you don't normally go through.

So, here is the low down, the only investment you have to make is between 30 to 60 minutes of your time at the Sunday Park located near the pond. Just show up, ID yourself and your children, meet and greet your neighbors, and enjoy some free treats, refreshments, and door prizes! Now how much more simpler can that be? See you there.

## C&Rs Reminders

The Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (C&Rs) were established to help guide everyone that lives and visits within the confines of the Forest Pond community. However, we have had a rash of violations lately that need to be addressed.

These rules apply to everyone and not just a select few. Article 2: Applicability states - "These Restrictions shall apply to all Common Areas, all subdivided numbered Lots..." This means that every area of the subdivision, common and private, is the responsibility of the person or persons living or residing within Forest Pond and therefore, they are to be held accountable for their actions. The following C&R restrictions are being violated consistently and thus need this reminder:

- 1) No vehicle of any Member of any type shall be parked on any street in the subdivision. No truck nor other vehicle of any Member in excess of

a one ton capacity, ...shall be parked or kept overnight or longer, on any Lot, in such a manner as to be visible to the occupants of other Lots or the users of any street or recreation area.

Interpretation - this means that if your vehicle is designed for commercial work you may not park it in front of your house or within Forest Pond area.

- 2) No stripped, partially wrecked or junked motor vehicle, or part thereof, shall be permitted to be parked or kept on any Lot. All motor vehicles of any type kept on any Lot shall have current registration and inspection certificates. This is also a City of Charlotte Ordinance and can be enforced by CMPD.

Interpretation - this means that if your vehicle is not street legal, you may not park it in front of your house (put it in the garage or at off site storage).

- 3) All fuel storage tanks shall be buried

below the surface of the ground and all outdoor receptacles for ashes, trash, rubbish or garbage shall be installed underground, screened or so placed and kept as not to be visible to the occupants of other Lots or the users of any street or recreation area.

Interpretation - this means that your trash container and your recycle bin should be out of sight except for the designated collection day every week (put it in the garage, behind the house, or if your shrubbery is mature enough to conceal them, behind the shrubbery).

- 4) All radio and television antenna installations shall be approved in writing by the Committee (ASC) before the antenna is installed.

Interpretation - this means that your satellite dish has to be approved prior to being installed.

Please be considerate of others when you do something that has an impact on the neighborhood as well as your home.

## Gardening - What Not To Do!

I love gardening, no, I really do! I love working the soil to bring it to just the right level of richness to promote vigorous plant growth. The tilling, the mixing of peat moss, manure, fertilizer, nutrients and, of course, the seeds (just to do it the old fashion way).

Aerating the soil when it gets too hard from too much sun, weeding the garden to keep out the unwanted. Caution - make sure you are removing weeds and not the newly sprouted seeds!

Watering your bed of delectable veggies every day to ensure that they will grow quickly; being extra careful not to step on the front row of veggies as you extend your hose to reach those in the back!

The exercise of squatting and standing, wide-stance balancing while working on your beloved plants; don't forget where you are and step on the middle row of green onions.

The concern of tall growing plants dur-

ing a storm; so you tied the plants to stakes to lend support and then pull the stake out without removing the tie first!

And finally, admiring the fruits of your labor and drooling with anticipation for the day that those fruits and veggies are yours for the picking and you go out to discover that the squirrels, rabbits, dear, and raccoons have left you with one or two edible selections; you have to put out bait for them away from the garden and not next to it!

## How Long Can You Wait In Traffic?

Everyone wants to know: "How long are we going to have to contend with the dangerous intersection that is known as our entrance?" Well, to help you understand the answer to that question we turn to an email shared with me from a Forest Pond resident.

[ "The traffic analysis that was done several years ago (2003) when Nevin Rd was being designed indicated that the new 4-way intersection would not meet the warrants for signalization right away, but that we would continue to monitor it once the roadway was open. Since Mallard Creek is a NCDOT roadway, they did not authorize a signal as part of the construction based on that analysis. During the past year, we became concerned that it may meet warrants very quickly, based on recent volumes and the geometrics of the intersection (skewed angle), so we authorized our signal section to go ahead and design a signal so that it would be ready to go (which it is). As with most circumstances, the next hurdle to cross becomes finding the funds to pay for the signal. Once we deem it appropriate to install the signal, we will begin figuring out how to pay for it. Now we need to wait and have NCDOT's approval to install

it. We will continue to monitor this intersection and until we have concrete evidence to take to NCDOT, we will continue to wait on their approval for installation."

### **Traffic Control for Mallard Creek / Nevin Road**

Although it is apparent from the traffic analysis that this intersection experiences significant average delay in the peak hours for the 2015 horizon year, it is unclear when this intersection would satisfy enough of the warrants for signal installation. CDOT will monitor the performance of this intersection and install a traffic signal when it becomes appropriate. ]

The preceding answer (in braces) is from an Engineering Services Investigator with Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT).

If you are not upset at this then you are not human. Basically, what it all boils down to is saving a few dollars at the expense of residents and guests who must gamble with their lives and the lives of others when trying to drive through a poorly designed and hastily executed intersection because of a lack of money and a very high degree of lack

of care and concern for the safety of their fellow man.

I want to leave you with a couple of contacts that you might want to use if you are having trouble entering or exiting your community:

Councilman James Mitchell, Work phone: (704) 398-9480, email: JamesDistrict2@aol.com (member of Community Safety committee)

Councilman Anthony Foxx, Work phone: (704) 376-1913, email: FOXXCharlotte@aol.com (member of Public Safety committee)

Councilwoman Susan Burgess, Work phone: (704) 333-2874, email: SBurg346@aol.com (member of Transportation committee)

Senator Malcolm Graham, Work phone: (919) 733-5650, Mailing: 620 Legislative Office Bldg, Raleigh, NC 27603-5925 email: MalcolmG@ncleg.net

I think I have worn out my welcome on this issue with Councilman Mitchell but you are all invited to contact them. I don't know about you but, I don't want to wait until 2015 to see if someone is going to be maimed or killed because two departments can't talk to each other over the cost of a single traffic light!



## Charlotte's Urban Street Design Guidelines Briefing

The Charlotte Department of Transportation and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department have been working for the past five years to make changes to how Charlotte's thoroughfares and streets are designed. Those changes are needed to accommodate growth and to reduce or eliminate existing deficiencies.

The proposed Urban Street Design Guidelines (USDG) are intended to create "complete streets" - streets that provide capacity and mobility for motorists, and that are also safer and more comfortable for pedestrians, cyclists, and neighborhood residents. The USDG will be considered for adoption by the

City Council in late summer or early fall. Before then, Council will want to hear from the public about the new guidelines.

You and/or other representatives of your neighborhood or homeowners group are invited to attend the following briefing on the USDG:

Thursday, 19 July 2007 at 5:00 PM or 7:00 PM (these are duplicate meetings, offered for your convenience) in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, 600 East Fourth Street, Room 267

At the briefing, you will hear from staff about the USDG and you will have the

opportunity to provide comments. You can also view the Urban Street Design Guidelines at: <http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/Transportation/Home.htm>

If you would like more information about the USDG or this briefing, feel free to contact me (Tracy Newsome) at 704.353.0778 or by email at [tnewsome@ci.charlotte.nc.us](mailto:tnewsome@ci.charlotte.nc.us). I hope to see you on the 19th.

Tracy Newsome  
Transportation Planner

## How Secure Is Your Wireless Security?

You have the latest and greatest in home computing and you have just had your home network installed and everything is working like a Swiss time piece, congratulations!

A couple of weeks go by and one afternoon you are sitting at home and you just happen to look at your wireless MODEM and the lights are flashing like you are downloading a Service Pack upgrade from Microsoft - what the heck?!

You aren't doing anything on any of your computers but the lights say you are. Chances are your wireless security has a hole bigger than a broken Charlotte water main.

Think back, did the installation tech have you reset the wireless password from the default to something only you would know? Did you have him/her change it for you?

If the answer is no to the first question you definitely have a serious local problem - serious because the default password for most MODEM's is 12345 and local because somewhere within a couple hundred feet of your MODEM is the hacking computer.

If you answered yes to the second one you more than likely have a security problem. That problem is that your password was shared by the installation technician or he didn't really change it. The first thing to do is change your wireless password to something you will remember and that someone cannot guess. And don't put it on the computer somewhere!

The next thing to do is start upgrading your security features so that nothing goes in or out without your knowledge. To do that you must be in charge of your computer security and not the technician or hacker who took

control of your computers while you were napping at the controls!

Microsoft WINDOWS have a variety of security settings that are not enabled when you bought the preloaded computer or installed the upgrade to your operating system. You need to take the time to learn the basics of computer security and make your computer as safe as possible.

You cannot make a computer totally secure unless you never connect to the Internet. However, if you don't want to mess with the security settings on your computer without expert guidance than you have to contact an expert and have that individual help you take control. You do that by following their directions and use passwords that you type in, not the technician.

Security is a necessary tool today in our digital world - get used to it!

