

Montibello News

The Newsletter of Montibello Homeowners Association

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April, 2008

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President's Letter

Dear Neighbors,

Spring greetings to you, Montibello neighbors. We're coming off a successful membership campaign; we have an exciting new adult social event planned in May; and our entrance improvement project is finally under construction.

Over half of our board members will complete their 3-year terms this year, creating a larger-than-normal number of openings to fill. It is my plan to have candidates identified by mid-summer and bring them into several board meetings this fall so that they can launch 2009 without ramp-up time.

I continue to get comments and questions about my presentation at the January MHA annual meeting about development along Carmel Road. Below is a brief summary.

Obviously, there is a lot of construction and real estate activity going on in the segment of Carmel Road from Carmel Vista to Colony Roads. With and without zoning change, acreage is being subdivided for denser development. Most of the land in this corridor is zoned R-3 which allows 3 detached residential homes per acre. Barring deed restrictions prohibiting subdivision (like on Montibello building lots), owners of acreage may "by rights" subdivide to R-3 density with no zoning concern. That said, the city's posture on denser zoning has been supportive of owners' petitions in recent years. The city's General Development Policies give leniency to rezoning in "transit corridors" such as Carmel Road. And it's no secret that denser development helps raise the city's property tax base.

The Quail Valley Apartments (behind Olde Town) will be razed this year. Faison Company will substantially modify the site for 229 upscale condo and town homes. A new entrance will appear on Carmel. Though there was a successful rezoning petition, there is no density increase with this project. We and other nearby HOAs support this development as it will bring more stable owner-occupiers to the immediate area.

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President's Letter (Continued)

Site work is under way at The Hagood Reserve (Carmel at Colony). There will ultimately be 36 high-end town homes built around existing lakes. A tree buffer has been promised along Carmel. The MHA (unsuccessfully) opposed rezoning for this in 2005 because the height of three buildings will exceed 70 feet, which we felt is inconsistent with the neighborhood feel.

Triverny on Carmel (across from Mill Pond) will include five \$1.8 million homes behind a brick wall that is now under construction. Tufton Brae (across from Royden) will be a six home gated community with prices \$2-\$3 million. The Village at Tottenham (north of Kingswood Dr.) is about half complete and will end up as a nine home gated community with homes in the \$1.2-\$1.5 million range.

Midterra at Carmel (south of Kingswood Dr.) is being graded presently for a walled and gated community of twelve detached Tuscan villas around a central pool/spa and courtyard. \$1.6-\$2.4 million preliminary price.

Many expensive new homes have been popping up along Green Rea Road, in Tuckaway and along Carmel View and around Carmel Vista. Between Hillingdon Rd. and Colony Rd. there are a substantial number of acres that are for sale or have recently sold that we can expect to see developed – probably as small cul de sac neighborhoods – in the next year or two. There will remain a handful of older homes along Carmel and on English Garden that have substantial acreage. As home values, property taxes, and land demand grows in the corridor there will be market pressure to sell off, subdivide and develop that land.

Over the next several years we will be welcoming quite a few new neighbors along Carmel who will be living in houses and town homes valued quite a bit above those typical in Montibello. Once the rollout of these new neighborhoods is complete – with homes built and sold – it will have an undoubtedly positive impact on the desirability and value of Montibello homes. But getting there could be shaky. With a number of pricey, new Carmel-facing homes already sitting unsold, can the market support a further surge in supply of homes over \$1 million as these new neighborhoods are completed? I believe we are in a very fortunate position to own homes in such a desirable location with nice lot sizes, high quality housing stock, great neighbors, and a strong MHA. I hope you think we are fortunate as well.

Jim Curtis

Neighborhood Watch

As a Montibello homeowner you need to be concerned about residential burglaries in our neighborhood. Most residential burglars look for crimes of opportunity. They pick what appears to be an easy mark. There are many steps you can take to keep your home and your neighborhood safe. The most important step is to work together with your neighbors. This is why we have the Neighborhood Watch Program.

Things you can do as a homeowner to reduce crime:

- Never allow people you do not know into your home (i.e. door to door salesperson). If someone asks to use your phone, make the phone call for that person. Do not allow them in.
- Always keep your doors and windows locked day and night.
- Never leave your garage door open.

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Neighborhood Watch (Continued)

- Don't have valuables visible through windows.
- Keep ladders locked in your garage.
- Don't hide a key outside.
- Don't advertise new purchases. Break up cartons that would advertise new purchases before you put them on the curb for recycle.
- Call 911 immediately when you see suspicious persons or activities.
- Make a list of serial numbers of your property. Engrave your driver's license number on your property.
- If you see a burglar in action, get a good description of the person, their vehicle, and the vehicle's tag number.
- Alarm systems definitely have a place in a home security plan and are effective. The deterrent value comes from the alarm decals on windows and the alarm company yard sign. Burglars will bypass a property with a visible alarm sign.

Contact with our CMPD Officer Virginia Woodlief, who is responsible for community relations with the Montibello area, revealed that there has been no reported criminal activity since February 17, 2008 when a burglary occurred on Foxridge Road. That burglary is still under investigation.

Chuck Richards

Membership Report

Our annual Membership drive for 2008 has been completed, and I want to thank each of you for joining this year. We have several new members this year, in addition to many of you that have been members in the past. We currently have 411 members and hope that other families will join us throughout the year.

I want to recognize Susan Watson, Street Host Coordinator, and all of the Street Hosts who have made this membership campaign a success. Their dedication and hard work again started our new year strongly and make the Montibello Homeowners Association one of the strongest associations in the area. Every one has spent untold hours distributing documents, tracking memberships, calling and visiting neighbors, and selling the Association to the residents of our neighborhood. Please thank them for their efforts when you see them.

I also want to thank each of you that indicated a willingness to serve the Association. Many of you indicated that you would help with social activities, contribute as street hosts, and serve on our Board of Directors. We will be contacting each of you to discuss how you can help make Montibello an even greater place to live.

We are having some minor glitches in producing our membership directory, so if you know of any neighbors that have not joined the Association for 2008, please urge them to do so in the next few days. There is still a short window of time that they can join and be listed in the 2008 membership directory.

Thanks again for all of your support, and we look forward to another great year for Montibello in 2008.

John Harmon

Beautification Report

We're having a wonderful spring. I'm always excited to see all the beautiful blooms in our neighborhood. THANK YOU to all our neighbors whose yards produce such beautiful blooms! We're very fortunate to live in a community where pride of ownership is very apparent.

I'm excited to see the beginnings of our new entrance monuments on Hillingdon and Morrowick. Please watch their continued progress. Thank you to our neighbors on those corners who have allowed MHA to create new monuments on their property. We won't be planting until the fall to give the new shrubbery the best chance for survival.

MHA contracted to have the overhang on the Carmel wall pruned. It definitely looks better. There are still some dead trees on the homeowner's side that we would hope the homeowners will remove. The city removed the dead hollies and MHA is still hoping the city will also remove the stumps. If the city doesn't grind down the stumps, MHA will be forced to incur that cost. MHA has to determine the availability of water and the cost before there's a plan made to replace any of those shrubs.

I've seen evidence of dead tree removal as well as dead shrub removal through the neighborhood. We're all suffering from the results of the drought and many of our trees and shrubs didn't make it. Please cut down and remove all dead vegetation.

If you happen to have a storm drain in front of your property, please keep it clean of debris so it can function as it was intended. For all neighbors, please, please don't empty refuse in the storm drains. This affects all of our ground water.

Special THANK YOU!! to the Browns on River Ridge for watering the circle planting at the intersection of River Ridge and Sentinel Post and to Sharon Hockfield, our neighborhood Master Gardener and garden design consultant for her willingness to offer advice whenever asked. She's always very generous with her time and expertise.

Please remember, we're still in a drought even though some of the restrictions have been lifted. Please continue to conserve our precious water.

Carol Richards

Social Report

The 1st annual MHA Adult Spring Social is coming! Save the date, **Saturday, May 17th**, for an opportunity to mingle with neighbors and chow down on delicious barbeque from Elliot's Barbeque. The event will take place in the Trefoil cul-de-sac from 7:00 - 9:30 pm.

Dinner will be catered and will feature barbeque pork, chicken, baked beans, coleslaw, dessert, and tea. The price is \$10/person and is BYOB for those that wish to enjoy an adult beverage. Enjoy the company of your great neighbors, meet new ones, and celebrate spring. We would like to build this into a large, annual event so your support for the 1st Adult Neighborhood social is vital to making that happen.

To make your reservation, e-mail Karen Brown at brown5618@earthlink.net or call her with the number of attendees at 704-540-0038. For planning purposes, we request an RSVP by **Sunday, May 11th**. Please bring \$10 cash or a check payable to MHA to the barbeque. We kindly request that if you have made a reservation and subsequently have to cancel, that you let Karen know in advance so that the Association does not incur the burden of paying for excess food.

If you have any questions, call Karen at 704-540-0038. Look forward to seeing you in May. Happy Spring.

Karen Brown

Montibello Garden Club Report

The Montibello Garden Club invites you to join us as our guest for a tour of Tom and Millie Snyder's Heritage Garden (recently featured in Charlotte Magazine) on Monday, May 5th.

For specifics about the tour or the club in general, please contact Gayle Daly at 704-543-6665 or gdaly@CottinghamChalk.com.

We hope you'll join us!

Gayle Daly

Treasurer's Report

Please refer to the accompanying financial report for the quarter ended 3/31/08 for specific details. Revenues from 2008 membership dues totaled \$28,125, representing 375 members. Expenditures totaled \$4203, of which \$1337 were non-recurring expenses for various ground maintenance, such as turf & fertilizer application and trimming overhanging trees along the brick wall. Please contact me with any questions or concerns you may have about MHA financial matters at (704) 264-2147 or treasurer@montibello.org.

Jolinda Boelkins

Board Update

The MHA Board would like to locate a neighborhood resource to help the Association with technology issues. These issues include maintenance of membership data base, web site maintenance, and newsletter production and distribution.

If you have technology experience, or you know of someone in the neighborhood with experience, please contact Jim Curtis 704-752-7529 or president@montibello.org.

Jim Curtis

Montibello Homeowners Association

2008 Financial Activity

3/31/2008

	<u>Original Budget 2008</u>	<u>Jan 08</u>	<u>Feb 08</u>	<u>Mar 08</u>	<u>Quarter Ending Mar 08</u>
Beginning Cash in Bank	42,334.85	42,334.85	41,976.58	52,175.69	42,334.85
Income:					
Membership Dues	31,800.00		10,950.00	17,175.00	28,125.00
[See Membership Stats at Bottom of Report]					
Contributions	0.00				0.00
Interest	700.00	43.68	26.20	36.26	106.14
Total Income	32,500.00	43.68	10,976.20	17,211.26	28,231.14
Expenses:					
Operations--					
Communication	1,000.00		281.53	33.79	315.32
Membership Administration	1,200.00				0.00
Insurance	1,900.00			1,835.00	1,835.00
Supplies	200.00				0.00
Postage	25.00				0.00
Miscellaneous	140.00	6.95	31.56	44.00	82.51
Total Operations	4,465.00	6.95	313.09	1,912.79	2,232.83
Grounds--					
Maintenance	9,000.00	1,154.00	464.00	1,111.00	2,729.00
Landscaping:					
Beautification	0.00				0.00
Capital Improvements -Entrances	15,000.00				0.00
Total Grounds	24,000.00	1,154.00	464.00	1,111.00	2,729.00
Total Member Activities	5,500.00				0.00
Professional Services	1,000.00	(759.00)			(759.00)
[Return of Attorney Retainer]					
Taxes	400.00				0.00
Other Expenses	200.00				0.00
Total Disbursements	35,565.00	401.95	777.09	3,023.79	4,202.83
2007 Net Activity (Income Less Expenses)	(3,065.00)	(358.27)	10,199.11	14,187.47	24,028.31
Ending Cash in Bank	39,269.85	41,976.58	52,175.69	66,363.16	66,363.16
Reserves:					
Reserve for Landscape Capital Improvements	(20,000.00)	(20,000.00)	(20,000.00)	(20,000.00)	(20,000.00)
Contingencies	(5,000.00)	(5,000.00)	(5,000.00)	(5,000.00)	(5,000.00)
Total Reserves	(25,000.00)	(25,000.00)	(25,000.00)	(25,000.00)	(25,000.00)
Ending Unrestricted Cash Balance	14,269.85	16,976.58	27,175.69	41,363.16	41,363.16
New Memberships	424	0	146	229	375
Cumulative Paid Memberships	424	424	146	375	375
% of Total 571 Residences	74.26%	74.26%	25.57%	65.67%	65.67%

Prior Year Membership Statistics:	%
2001 - 443	77.58%
2002 - 445	77.93%
2003 - 445	77.93%
2004 - 428	74.96%
2005 - 439	76.88%
2006 - 407	71.28%
2007 - 419	73.38%