



# MERITAGE NEWS

*Good Communication, Builds Great Communities ...*

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

SUMMER 2008

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## Community Vision

Long ago, a wise man said, “Where there is no **vision**, the people **perish**.” This is not only true with individuals but is also true with communities. As you all know, Meritage has been in a state of formation for the past five plus years. Our future state is only as good and desirable as the vision we have of our community and our commitment to actualize it. Of course, no vision is ever formed in a vacuum; it requires the input of all community members.

As we talked with members of our community and heard their comments, it became clear to us that what our community wants is to see Meritage transform into an aesthetically appealing, culturally enriching, economically value-adding, and socially rewarding community.

Is this an achievable vision? We believe it is, if we diligently take care of our properties, abide by the deed restrictions, genuinely care for each other, and actively participate in the community life for the collective good. How we relate to each other and attend to our properties, both personal and common, have a boomerang effect. In this sense we are truly “our bother’s keeper.”

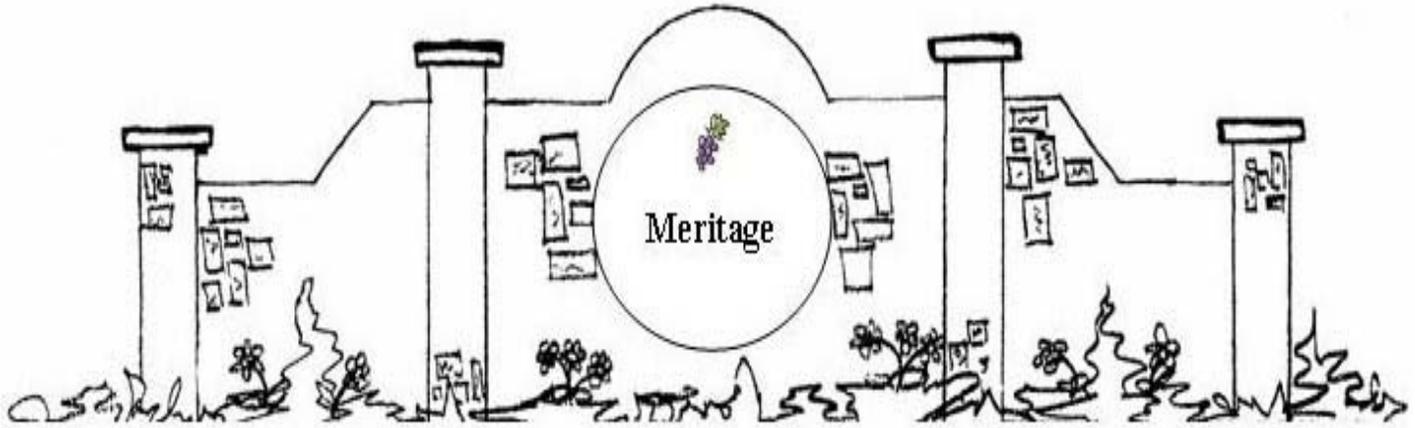
It is the Board’s goal this year to really make a visual difference in the community. The core responsibility of our association is to provide maintenance for our community’s open spaces and recreational areas. By really focusing in on improving these areas we can make a big difference in how our community looks not only for our own enjoyment but how we are perceived in the larger picture. This will undoubtedly translate into better property value and more enjoyable surroundings for all of us.

In the upcoming year the Board hopes that all of you will join us in really making a difference by getting involved. We have several events planned in the near future and we hope to see you there. Please be sure to mark your calendars for our clean up day and community picnic. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions please feel free to contact any of your Board representatives (listed on back cover).

GOOD COMMUNICATION, BUILDS GREAT COMMUNITIES...



## New Entrance Update



*Artist Rendering: Sign will be made of stone with stucco accents. It will be illuminated at night, and both sides of the development entrance will be landscaped.*

On behalf of the entire Meritage community, the Board would like to thank everyone that served on the Sign Committee for all their hard work in making the new entrance a reality! Many hours went into researching vendors, reviewing proposals, and developing communications. Also, we would like to thank everyone who has already paid their annual homeowner fee and one-time assessment for this project! This has been a great help in enabling us to move things forward in a timely manner.

A quick update on our progress: The proposal from Bristoll Plantation has been reviewed and approved by the Board. The deposit has been given, and construction is expected to begin in September. The vendor is now pulling the appropriate permits, scheduling for the installation of a meter for lighting, and purchasing needed materials.

## Social Committee Headlines

### Clean Up Day

As requested by community members at the annual meeting, we will be holding a "clean up the community" day on Sunday, August 24th. We will meet at the playground area at 1 PM. Please bring your trash bag and join us as we pick up litter and debris throughout the community. If you are not able to join us, but wish to participate, please clean up the common spaces around your property at your convenience.

### Annual Community Picnic

Save the date: The Annual Community Picnic will be held in the playground area from 12 Noon to 3 PM on September 14th, 2008. We are actively planning this event. More to follow.



## Meritage is Now Online!

Our neighborhood now has a Web site! Our new Web site includes information about Meritage, an online newsletter, a list of the local schools in our neighborhood, and community pages about issues and events that affect our neighborhood. Links to city government officials and services, including the police, make it a great communication channel.

It is not just an information source, but also a place for all neighbors to be connected on the Internet. Want to tell people about an upcoming meeting, garage sale, or lost pet? Then post a notice in the "Community Calendar". Talk to your neighbors - solicit new viewpoints. Go to the "Talk About It" section and create a new discussion.

You don't need any special computer skills to post information to the site - simply fill out forms and the information is posted! All you need is Internet access - everything is in an extremely user-friendly format. So check it out! Our new Web site can be found at: [neighborhoodlink.com/newark-de/meritage](http://neighborhoodlink.com/newark-de/meritage)

## New Castle County Instant Ticketing

This new initiative, through which civil penalties may be assessed by the County for select property maintenance infractions, is being pursued to more efficiently attain code compliance on properties owned and/or managed by difficult property owners, and to help offset the costs of code enforcement.

Under this new program, after a complaint is received by the Office of Code Enforcement, a courtesy letter and accompanying brochure will be mailed to the owner of the property about which a complaint was received and any tenants, if applicable. The purposes of the courtesy letter and brochure are to explain the ticketing process, place property owners on notice of the infractions that may be subject to instant ticketing and outline the appeals process. The property owner will then have 10 days from the date of the letter to resolve all violations identified through the information contained in the one page brochure before a code enforcement officer performs an official inspection. If any violations are observed during that first inspection, a \$50.00 fine will be assessed to the property owner for each violation. The ticket must then be paid within 30 days to avoid the doubling to \$100 per violation.

## Architectural Review

The Board would like to remind homeowners about the importance of adhering to all deed restrictions and procedures established within the Declaration of Restrictions everyone signed when we purchased our homes. Please make it a point to familiarize yourself with this document, especially before making any external changes to your home or property.

If you are making any such changes please complete the Architectural Review Form (enclosed) and submit it to the Architectural Review Committee (contact information on form) for approval. Some examples for when approval is needed are: fences, decks, patios, walls, additions, and exterior color changes. This is not an exhaustive list, please see your Declaration of Restrictions for more detail. If you have any questions, concerns, or just need more information, please feel free to contact BC consulting and/or any one of the Board members (contact information on last page of newsletter).



# New Castle County Important Numbers

### Office of the County Executive

Christopher A. Coons: 395-5101

### Administration

Information, Assistance, and Complaints: 395-5555

### Community Services

Community Partnership: 395-5600

Senior Services: 395-5657

Special Events Information: 395-5656

Sports and Athletics: 395-5890

Medical Transport for Seniors: 395-5660

### Land Use

General Information: 395-5400

Inspections Scheduling: 395-5515

Licenses/Permits: 395-5400

Zoning: 395-5400

### Police Emergency 911

General Information: 395-8171

### Special Services

General & Sewer Emergency: 395-5700

### Treasury

Sewer/Tax Bill Inquiries: 323-2600

### Issue Area Staff Person Phone Number

Assessments/Billing Gale Taylor: 395-5011

Code Enforcement/Complaints Paula Marsilii: 395-5044

Community Drainage Issues Chip O'Connor: 395-5464

Storm water Pond Maintenance Carolyn Haag: 395-5284

### Basketball Hoops in the right of Way: 326-4679

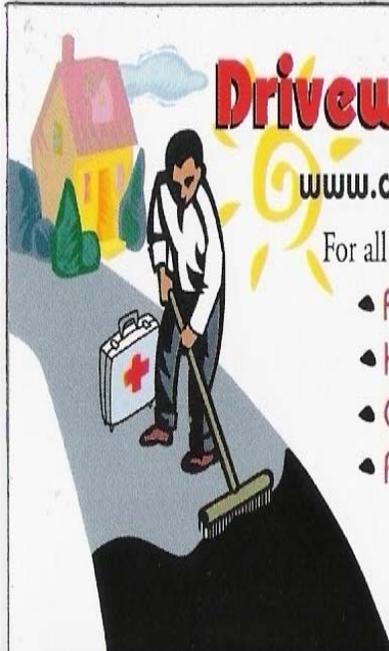
### Report street light outages: 800-375-7117

## Meritage Board Contact Information

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