



*Arbor Hills Condominium Association*  
**annual report 2009**

# Annual Report

## **Board of Directors**

In this past year, the Association Board of Directors has striven to improve management of the Association's common areas, storm water management system, conservation wetlands and woodlands, front entrance landscaping, unit aesthetics, Association account delinquencies, as well as vehicular traffic at the entrance of Arbor Hills, road crack sealing, and community partnerships and the understanding of Association and City regulations. It has emphasized consistency in the Board and Association regulations and strengthened enforcement of adherence. Much of this enhanced how the Association responded to several issues which arose in the financial to legal to administrative and management realms throughout the year. Also, many management issues that have been either dropped, never addressed, or weakly pursued by the Association in the past, were identified and considered and those appropriate to the purview of the Association have been added to its scope of responsibilities.

## **Financial Report**

### **Association Budget**

Next year's dues will be going up 3% from this year, or \$15 for a total of \$510 in dues for next year. The 3% increase will cover increases that Arbor Hills has to pay out for management services, wetland survey, road replace fund, and a few other small increases within the budget. The Board went back and forth in determining the best way to handle the projected costs for next year and realizes that funds are tight all over everyone. As Arbor Hills already has several delinquent accounts in the neighborhood of around \$9000 dollars, it's was truly hard to overlook this deficient in the budget and to keep letting reserves cover the missing funds. There were discussions of raising the dues to everyone to cover the missing funds, but that wouldn't be fair to make everyone else pay for the few homes that are behind. So, instead, the reserves are covering the missing funds and Arbor Hills as a whole is just out the interest on that money. The budget covers many things that go on within Arbor Hills that allows our community to function. The budget covers many items such as snow plowing, lawn mowing, management fees, taxes, insurance, social events, mailings, newsletter, web site, dues notices, road and drain repairs, electrical cost for the street lights, repair for the street lights, insurance, and a road replacement fund.

### **Association Co-owner Accounts**

This year was particularly impacted by the poor economic situation as the Association saw a dramatic increase in the amount of unpaid dues from account delinquencies. Because of the increased delinquencies, the Association Board has worked to follow through more stringently on account delinquencies and improve delinquent account processing so that delinquencies would be treated consistently. The new Board will be faced with deciding whether to add an interest component based on the balance on a late account to the late fee to recover the significant interest being lost to the account delinquencies.

### **Association Monthly Late Fees**

Late fees were increased earlier this year, but unfortunately it was not noted until recently that the change had not taken place within the accounting system. Thus, late fee increases will not be charged retroactively, but will be charged moving

forward. Fortunately, prudent budgetary management on the part of the Association Board, has allowed the Association to limit its increase in budget to 3% in next year's annual association dues.

## Alterations and Modifications Requests

Many of this year's alteration modifications request forms involved re-roofing. We also had issues with a number of homes that did not realize they needed to complete the form and receive approval prior to starting the work. Web site information was updated on this and what is defined as an exterior alteration or modification.

## Association Events

There was an overall increase in the number of organized Associations event this year.

### List of 2009 AHCA Association Events

Organizer	Event	Date	Comments
Steve Haddrill	Memorial Day Parade	Saturday, May 23rd	
Collin Ross and Klingstens	Adopt A Park Spring Workday	Saturday, May 30th, 2009	Worked on and panted flowers in Kilburn Park flower beds
Carrie Sayer and Lisa Branton	Annual Sub-wide Garage Sale	Saturday, August 1st, 2009	At least 15 homes participated
Steve Haddrill and Klingstens	Annual Neighborhood Picnic	Saturday, August 29th, 2009	Pot Luck Meal, Bounce House, Raffle. New for this year, Balloon Twister, Face Painter, and Tent.
Collin Ross and Klingstens	Adopt A Park Trails Workday	Saturday, September 12th, 2009	Oakwoods Nature Area trail maintenance
AHCA Board of Directors	Annual Meeting	Thursday, October 29th, 2009	Three open board positions
Steve Haddrill	Halloween Parade	Saturday, October 31st, 2009	upcoming
Collin Ross and Klingstens	Adopt A Park Fall Planting Day	Saturday, November 12th	upcoming

## Administrative

The Board of Directors went from meeting once every two months to once a month in order to alleviate lengthy meeting times and to lighten the amount of purely needed to be covered each meeting. The Board lost two members this summer and one of the vacant positions was filled. Another has remained open.

Select Community Management continues to be the Association's management company and Shireen Williams. our management company representative. Select is now also direct handling and processing the invoicing of our Association dues payments and mailings.

## Maintenance of Common Elements

### Front Entrance and Center Islands

Between last year and this year, the front entrance and center islands has seen quite a bit of property damage caused by vehicles turning into Arbor Hills. An accident left a large portion of the west front landscaping bed damage as well as some damage on the front center island. In the process of determining the damage for the insurance claim, it was identified that some of the plants were invasive and not appropriate for planting near conservation areas. As a result the front entrance and front center island received a facelift, courtesy of the replacement of the damaged material. Some additional damage resulting from unreported vehicles and salt damage, left some shrubs on the east side of the front center island in poor condition and those were replaced. In addition Karin Monnett volunteered to plant some plants this fall in the front landscaping beds as part of the work related to the Adopt A Park Fall Planting Day, so that we would be able to enjoy those plantings longer this season.

### Streetlights

Based on some feedback from Association members on the Association's streetlight repair policy, the Board updated the policy so that streetlights will be repaired when either three of the lights have burned out or three months have passed, once the first streetlight is reported as needing repair. This change from four months to three months in the policy is predicted not to impact the budget for street light repair, as the board also clarified the policy to fix any broken streetlights just prior to Halloween. Vedder Electric continues to service our streetlights.

The Association Board started researching LED and solar streetlights, in an effort to reduce long-term maintenance costs and electric bills. The city of Ann Arbor also moving in this direction, and we have been attempting to obtain information from both the City and directly from the manufacturers themselves.

### Road Repairs

Annual crack sealing was completed by S&J, a new contractor for 2009. They have returned to reseal missed or inadequately sealed cracks as were marked by Steve Haddrill, AHCA Treasurer and Shireen Williams, Select Management. In addition to some routine storm drain repairs, the Association is currently investigating doing major road repairs for the first time since the development was completed. Although our reserve study is out of date and does not take into account the dramatic increase in recent years of construction costs and petroleum products (including asphalt needed for road replacement), fortunately, we remain on track for our reserves based on the original study. Next year, a reserve study will need to be considered to include a greater number of Association elements in the reserve study as we are currently drawing from the reserves to cover expenditures not included in the reserve study.

## Environmental Conservation and Management

Arbor Hills uniqueness as a neighborhood, became readily apparent this year, especially in regards to our private storm water management system integrated into our conservation wetlands and woodlands. This year the Association has begun to pursue wetlands management through an Atwell-Hicks environmental engineering team based on the management plan included in the Second Amendment of our Master Deed, and has plans for commencing woodlands conservation management in the upcoming year. To begin with, Bobbi Pearson and her team of environmental engineers at Atwell-Hicks has been contracted to provide us with a conservation study of our wetlands required every five years as established by the Arbor Hills Master Deed amendment management plan. The Association has been amortizing the

expected cost of the study over the past five years. The cost of the initial woodlands management efforts and ongoing maintenance is being amortized over ten years, and being financed by the reserves. These conservation management initiatives directly impact our storm water management and other integral issues such as the recovery of our woodlands from the decimation of ash trees by the emerald ash borer.

## **Storm Water and Wetlands Management**

This year, the Association finished a few large scale projects, and started working on some new ones. Not only did the Association moved forward with additional maintenance on the integrated storm water system and conservation wetlands, we entered into a partnership with the County Drain Commission and had a study completed by Atwell-Hicks on the designed flow of storm water through Arbor Hills and outflow to off site entities. The work contracted to Twin Oaks in 2007 and 2008 to do maintenance on our storm water management system was finally completed in its entirety this summer. The Association Board has decided to switch to consulting with Atwell-Hicks, the engineering firm who originally designed Arbor Hills for storm water management and conservation management. Work in the near future includes a site inspection by our professional engineer at Atwell-Hicks and the wetlands conservation study mandated every five years as stipulated by the Association Bylaws. In the long term, the Association Board set goals to restore the storm water management back to its designed capacity, maintain according to periodic maintenance schedules, and determine long term maintenance. The Association started mosquito control treatments this year, and plans to resume the algacide treatments of the ponds next year.

## **City Storm Water Appeal**

The City has imposed a new storm water rate structure affecting Arbor Hills in October 2008. With the City changing its storm water rate structure, and the correction of the ownership of the Association common area parcels in the tax database, the Association and all of the individual co-owners are now receiving storm water charges from the City for storm water that is already being privately managed by AHCA. However, because our storm water is privately maintained per our Bylaws and almost all of the direct outflow out of Arbor Hills is not managed by the City, the Association requested an appeal when the new charges commenced last October. Following this, Atwell-Hicks was hired to do a study to substantiate our storm water claims and the Association is currently in the process of appealing to the City on these charges on behalf of the both the Association accounts for common areas and the co-owners' individual units. We have brought this to the attention of our City Ward Council Member Stephen Rapundalo, and he is on board with our circumstances. The City engineers are now reviewing the study and the appeal prepared by the Association's attorney, Ed Zelmanski and the Association is waiting to hear feedback.

## **Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety and Traffic Engineering**

Due to complaints of traffic entering the Arbor Hills subdivision at a high rate of speed, and the repeated property damage caused by drivers losing control of their vehicles as they turn in from Green Road on to Kilburn Park Circle, the Association Board spent some time and energy this year discussing options to improve the intersection. The entrance to Arbor Hills is a primary pedestrian and cyclist thoroughfare; has a city bus stop; and grants sole public access to Kilburn Park as well as access to Arbor Hills Park and Nature Area and Oakwoods Nature Area. Some City engineers were contacted regarding the intersection and several options were presented including an interim solution to cut rumble strips into the shoulder of the road.

Another major issue in the area is where the north shoulder of Green Road, just east of Kilburn Park Circle, actually merges with the sidewalk on the north side of Green Road. It has been observed that drivers traveling westbound regularly become confused by the merged road and sidewalk surface and drive on to the sidewalk. It is of great concern as there is an extremely high risk for pedestrians or cyclists, when this happens.

Because the intersection is on the pedestrian and cyclist school routes for children attending Thurston Elementary and Clague Middle Schools, the City engineer Pat Cawley has put us in contact with the Thurston PTO's chapter of the State Safe Routes to School program. The Thurston PTO is planning on applying for a grant to install several measures to improve pedestrian and cyclist routes for school children, including a proposed pedestrian island, just a few hundred yards west from the entrance to Arbor Hills. The Association Board has been trying very hard to convince Pat and Brett Springgay, the Thurston PTO Safe Routes to School coordinator, to consider shifting the pedestrian island to the entrance of Arbor Hills or just east of it so that the shoulder/sidewalk merge may also be addressed by the island.

Another intersection of concern is the corner of Kilburn Park Circle and Dunwoodie. This is an intersection where school children are picked up by school busses and the intersection where Kilburn Park is located. Because of the pedestrian traffic and the speed of traffic, the installation of a raised crosswalk on the west crossing of Dunwoodie, is being considered by the Association.

## Community Partnerships

### Community Partners for Clean Streams

In April of this year, the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commission (formerly the Washtenaw County Drain Commission), granted approval for the Association to become a partner in the Community Partners for Clean Streams program. Early this year, the Association passed an assessment and created a water quality action plan for the program to become a partner. The program provides support in the form of information and education on promoting clean storm water run-off, soil testing, signs for labeling storm drains, and other resources for aiding in reducing toxins in run-off that reaches our storm water drains and flows out to our wetlands through our storm water management system. the preservation of wetlands. As a Clean Streams partner, the Association and its co-owners are entitled to receive an additional credit on their storm water charges from the City,

### Adopt A Park

Last year, the Association entered into a partnership with the City of Ann Arbor's Adopt A Park program, starting the program off with a fall workday and fall tree planting day. The Adopt A Park partnership went into full swing this year with three events throughout the spring, summer, and fall seasons, covering two city parks, Kilburn Park and Arbor Hills Park, and one nature area Oakwoods Nature Area. Site reviews for planning and potential maintenance also included one additional nature area, Arbor Hills Nature Area. Volunteers from Arbor Hills worked on and planted additional flowers in the landscaping beds of Kilburn Park, maintenance of the trail head of Oakwoods Nature Area off of Dunwoodie and invasive species removal from Oakwoods Nature Area. Thanks to the Monnetts, the Arbor Hills Park trail was wood chipped this spring. The upcoming Fall Planting Day will include tree plantings at Kilburn Park and tree replacement at the Dunwoodie entrance to Oakwoods Nature Area.

The Natural Area Preservation staff which administrate the Adopt A Park program have also been very helpful in assisting the Association Board in other matters, such as the appropriate selection of plants for landscaping and which invasive species to avoid, as well as the selection of grass seed mix for the reseeding of a vegetative swale, a storm water management component.