

# Sea Pines Homeowners Association Newsletter

December 7, 2011

Dear Neighbors,

We now enter that quiet time of the year at Sea Pines. The pool is closed, the kayak racks have been disassembled, the beach and tennis courts are empty, all the boats have been stored, the big evergreen on the Clubhouse lawn is lit up at night with festive lights and there are rather few folk here at any given time. Sea Pines slumbers now, waiting for warmer days to come (and hoping we don't spend too much on snow removal in the meantime...)

That Hobie boat I described in the November newsletter that was still on the Clubhouse parking lot lawn was finally removed. Don't know who owned it or when it was taken. Mercantile had put a lock on it after contacting the Brewster police about it but, apparently, whoever took it cut the lock and ran away (with the boat and trailer.)

Sea Pines now has a mailing list for FMB meeting agendas and approved FMB minutes. If you would like to receive this information via email, please email me your name, unit address and email address. In order to be added to this list, your email address must be listed in your entry in the homeowner directory. This is required to ensure that this private information is sent only to actual current unit owners. This is being managed by me, not Mercantile. Be aware that FMB minutes are approved at the next FMB meeting, so minutes of Saturday's December 3 meeting will not be available until after the next meeting on January 28, 2012.

The propane gas tank policy for fireplaces and kitchen stoves has been approved. It has been published on the web site. Click on "Rules and Regulations", then "Propane Gas". You will have jump through a few hoops to take advantage of this and ensure a safe installation. Unfortunately, not all unit owners who would like it will be able to take advantage of it. For instance, since tanks must be filled on-site, your tank must be capable of being reached by the 100' delivery truck hose. To install a propane tank, a variance request must first be filled out and submitted directly to the FMB (send it to Mercantile), not the Grounds and Maintenance Committee. To ensure the safety of the community, the FMB will not consider or will reject any such variance request which has not complied completely with the published propane gas policy.

The embarrassing condition of the Clubhouse bathrooms was discussed at the FMB. It was agreed to have them gutted and remodeled this winter.

Following up on the November newsletter's article about Jeff & Kenny having to remove kayaks from the racks after the October 15 deadline when the racks had to be disassembled, the FMB has decided to fine these kayak owners for failure to follow these crucial kayak rack rules.

An issue that comes up far too often "Oh, I didn't know I needed to submit a variance request for that," followed closely by "When do I need to file a variance request?" The answer is, as is posted on the web site under "Interior/Exterior Improvement Rules", essentially anything beyond interior paint and wallpaper requires a variance. Although kitchen cabinet replacements do not strictly require a variance, there are so often things that need to be done to a unit to replace cabinets and those "tangential changes" often DO require a variance, that you are safer to file a variance for cabinet replacements.

No exterior changes are permitted without a variance - that includes but is not limited to lighting changes, replacement windows/sliders and doors and storm doors, a/c and landscaping of any kind except for small amounts of annual plantings.

No unit owner owns any of the land outside their unit and/or deck and no unit owner has the right to alter the landscaping or the lack of landscaping without an approved variance. Just because you see your neighbor do something to the space outside their deck does not mean you can too. Submit a variance first, since your neighbor could be doing it illegally and could be fined and forced to undo the work. Or they could have had the work approved via a variance but that does not necessarily mean your variance will also be approved.

Variances are dealt with on a case-by-case basis and sometimes have subtle aspects to them which can alter how a variance is treated by the Grounds and Maintenance Committee, despite how a similar variance elsewhere was treated.

Why is all this variance stuff here? Because the Grounds and Maintenance Committee, at the direction of the FMB, has begun enforcing \$10/day fines on unit owners who violate the variance process by either doing work without a required variance or failing to adhere to the conditions of an approved variance. These fines pile up day after day until the violation has been fixed by either undoing the work or getting an approved variance. Getting an approved variance after a violation stops the fine accumulation but does NOT cause it to be waived, although the fine can be appealed to the FMB. Depending on the circumstances, the FMB may waive or enforce fines that are appealed. It waived a couple appealed fines at Saturday's meeting but enforced a couple others. The fines are not designed to be a fundraiser - they are essentially a last resort to get unit owners to pay attention to and follow the variance rules and the conditions imposed in

an approved variance. If you don't know or are not sure, file a variance request! Ignorance is not an excuse. All needed forms are available on the web site under "Interior/Exterior Improvement Rules."

The discussion at Saturday's FMB of the re-siding issue at the remaining non-Bluff streets starting with Landing Lane was once again lengthy, lively and highly productive, and far too complex to adequately detail here without getting many things inappropriately taken out of context. The discussion mostly centered on full replacement versus aggressive spot replacement. No decision was made since there was insufficient information yet on how the choices could be effectively financed and financing is the most difficult aspect of this project. It is hoped that a decision will be reached at the March 31 FMB. You are encouraged to attend this meeting to hear what is said and understand the process. I'm sure there will be another lengthy and lively discussion about this at the January 28 FMB. You might want to try to get to that one as well.

Let me know if you have comments on this newsletter or thoughts on future ones or the Sea Pines web site. Stay warm, stay safe, and have a great winter.

Sincerely,

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