Annual Meeting Highlights Progress

The Oakmont Commons Annual Homeowners meeting was held on April 23, 2007. Many important issues were discussed and two one-year Board of Directors positions were voted on.

Board President Walt Brotherton opened the meeting with a general overview of the state of the Commons. His statements included a review of the direction that the Board would like to see the community move in and highlighted some of the positive changes to our community over the past year, such as improved home appearances and work on community property. He also touched on some of the areas in which the Commons has saved money since hiring a management company.

Treasurer Dean Hornsby then gave a detailed presentation on last year’s performance and the budget for 2007. Some items discussed included gross revenues and anticipated expenditures, the percentage of money allocated to key areas and our current financial status. Mr. Hornsby reported that as of March 31, 2007, our operating account was at $31,128.57 and reserve account at $22,757.15. Total income was budgeted at $78,638 while key expenses included $37,000 budgeted for pool/lawn maintenance, $17,169 for administrative fees and $25,200 for community property maintenance.

Rubinoff Co. Contract Renewed

After much consideration, the Rubinoff Company’s contract to manage the Commons was extended for an additional year. Their responsibilities include: collecting homeowners fees, payment of OCHA bills, clubhouse rentals, issuing resale certificates, overseeing the community budget, mediating disputes, and enforcing the OCHA Bylaws, Covenants, Rules & Regulations.

Mr. Doug Valentine is the property manager assigned to Oakmont Commons. You may contact him at: 412-231-1000 or e-mail valentine@rubinoffcompany.com regarding any of these responsibilities. Additionally, you may contact Mr. Valentine to request an appointment when he is on-site.

Vigliotti Chosen for Landscaping

Vigliotti Landscaping was chosen by the Board for the Commons landscaping for the current year.
STATE OF THE COMMONS
FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Greetings to all and welcome new residents of the Oakmont Commons Community.

I would like to bring everyone up to date on the progress of OCHA, and plans for the future.

Shortly after our inception as Board of Directors, we joined Community Associations Institute, a leading company in the field of property management. We did this to educate ourselves about the leadership of a Homeowners Association. One thing we learned from them is that we could save money by hiring a management company which would do the work of both the manager and the accountant saving us over $10,000 per year in wages, payroll taxes and Workers Compensation Insurance.

With a management company on board, we also save money through the contractor referrals they are able to provide. So far, we have managed to balance the budget, create a reserve fund, and start a capital improvements program that is ongoing.

A year ago, I said in a newsletter article that I would like to see the Oakmont Commons become a Gold Star Property, which is the best rating set by CAI which gives us favor with banks and also favor with Real Estate Agents. However, this cannot be a goal of just one individual. It must be adopted by the entire community. And as a community, working together to keep the standard high, we will accomplish the goal and here are some reasons why.

First of all, we already have the advantage of being located in the Borough of Oakmont, one of the best small towns in western Pennsylvania. Houses appreciate at or slightly above the national average, consistently in Oakmont.

Second, we are one of the newer developments of Oakmont. When people look at our community to buy, generally they aren’t looking at a place that needs completely upgraded. Our units already have modern kitchens, multiple baths, and a garage; not to mention, a heated pool, beautiful clubhouse, and low monthly dues.

Third, the price range is at a very favorable level for the real estate market. With that, and the built in appreciation value, it is probable we are the best “location value” in Oakmont.

One of the ways you can join forces is to maintain the exterior of your home and yard and serve on a committee. Choose a committee that interests you, one where you can impart something positive or creative. Please consider doing this as our financial situation is also affected by how many volunteers are available. Without volunteers we will need to hire people to fill some of these positions.

As the leaders of this Association, the Board has joined together as a team, in order to move forward in reaching our goal. I think just by looking around, you can see the positive changes that have already been achieved and we have more to plan. The bathrooms in the clubhouse have just been renovated, the clubhouse is being painted, a new HVAC system installed, and the pool has been repaired, cleaned and painted. The Borough of Oakmont is trying to pave Greenwich Court, at which time we will pave the parking areas using the same contractor.

If we all do our part by getting involved in some small way, we can and will reach our goal of being the “Sweet Spot” in Oakmont within the next few years.

MEETINGS

OCHA Board regular meetings - the third Monday of the month at 7:30 PM.

Oakmont Borough Council meetings - the second Monday of the month at 7 PM.

CLUBHOUSE READY FOR SUMMER PARTIES!

The Oakmont Commons Community Center, or clubhouse, has undergone its second phase of renovations. These improvements include: painting the exterior, remodeling the bathrooms, replacing the screen doors and installing an air-conditioning system.

These renovations complete the work that was started last year when the clubhouse’s main room and kitchen were renovated.

We now have a completely beautiful facility that we can be proud to rent year-round.

See page 7 for rental rates. Rental forms are available on-line and through Doug Valentine. Book rentals with Doug Valentine.

COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE

The annual Garage Sale will be held on Saturday, June 23, 2007 from 8:00 am - 1:00 pm. Residents are welcome to set up and sell their unwanted treasures in their own driveways. There will NOT be a sale in the Clubhouse this year. OCHA will pay for advertising the Commons Garage Sale.
**Oakmont Developments**  
*Borough Council News*

The Borough has been approached by HHI Company, a Folino-owned Company, regarding a concrete plant to be constructed on the Folino property located in Dark Hollow Road. It is being reviewed by the Planning Commission now and is expected to be submitted to the Borough Council for a public hearing as early as the next meeting on June 11. We the residents of OCHA should be present at that meeting with our concerns to present to the council. They expect over 100 trucks per day to use Dark Hollow Road. There may also be additional noise and dust created from the plant. We are circulating a petition (at the pool/clubhouse) that we hope to have signed by the majority of our community to present to Council at that meeting. It is believed by some that the plant is being rushed to completion in order to supply the concrete to the new homes being built on the Edgewater Steel property.

The Borough is still working out the details with the Kacin company regarding the building of 225 various style homes at the Edgewater Steel property. The Brooks & Blair Company seem further along with their plans to develop the triangular parcel behind the Kacin property. They will also build over 200 homes. Prices will start at about $250,000 up to $600,000. This should positively affect our property values as long as we continue to maintain our properties to make the Commons attractive to buyers.

**Pool News - Making A Splash**

The Board has announced that the pool opened on Memorial Day Weekend - May 26, 2006. Regular pool hours are: Sunday - Thursday 10:00 am - 8:00 pm; Friday & Saturday 10:00 am - 10:00 pm. Guest fees are $1 pp - Mon-Fri, and $2 pp Sat - Sun and Holidays. Children 1 and under are free.

Please sign in when you get to the pool. Children 17 and under MUST be accompanied by an adult.

Additionally, Volunteers are urgently requested to help on the Pool Committee. This committee helps by taking turns opening and closing the pool as well as taking measurements of the pool’s water condition. Volunteers are a vital part of our ability to maintain the pool for the summer. Without them, we may not be able to have the hours or number of days open. If you are willing to volunteer, please contact Doug Valentine.
**SPRING INTO MAINTENANCE**

*Spring is here and now is the perfect time to maintain the appearance of your home. Some ideas for improvement are:*

- √ Powerwash the exterior to remove winter dirt and mildew.
- √ Paint your home if it needs it or if you have been requested to paint by the Architectural Committee. Paint charts are available on the website or from Doug Valentine and are enclosed.
- √ Trim trees and mulch flower beds.
- √ Keep lawns neatly mowed.
- √ Seal your driveway.
- √ Spray for bees, wasps and other pests.

*The Architectural Committee has a list of preferred vendors such as Bee Control, Thomas Giel and Sherwin-Williams. Some of these vendors offer special pricing for Oakmont Commons residents. Please contact the Doug Valentine for a complete vendor list.*

**OCHA Website Offers Information and More!**

Oakmont Commons website is up and running. You can find the site at http://www.oakmontcommons.org. The web site contains very useful information such Clubhouse rental forms, Official Rules and Regulations, Color Charts, Operating budgets and more.

Homeowners can even list their homes for sale on the Homes page. Our site gets over 200 hits per week. For only $75, you can list a description of your home and even include pictures. You can use the site to refer people for pictures of your home on-line.

If you haven’t viewed our website lately, take a look at all of the useful information provided!

For information regarding the web site, suggestions, listing a home for sale or placing an advertisement on the web site, contact Dean or Catherine at dhornsby01@earthlink.net or call 412-828-4478.
A BUZZING PROBLEM

Carpenter bees are very active from early spring through summer around houses and other wooden structures. These insects bore ½-inch wide holes that appear to be perfectly round on exterior wooden surfaces of house siding, eaves, window trim, fascia boards, shingles, decks and outdoor furniture.

Homeowners are often frightened by these pesky black bees that fly erratically around their homes. The male carpenter bee is very territorial and protects its nesting sites by hovering and attacking intruders. Although the male is aggressive, it does not have a stinger, making it harmless. The female does have a stinger, but rarely stings.

Homeowners often refer to these large, dark colored insects as bumble bees because of their similarities in size and appearance. Carpenter bees nest in excavated wooden tunnels. Bumble bees nest in the ground. Carpenter bees are robust, heavy-bodied bees that range ¾ to 1 inch in length. The carpenter bee can be identified by having bright yellow, orange or white hairs on the thorax and a black shiny abdomen. The bumble bee has a hairy abdomen, black or yellow in color. The male carpenter bee can be identified by having white markings on the head.

Carpenter bees are nuisance pests in most cases, but they can cause considerable structural damage from repeated colonization of the same area. Fine sawdust caused by the adult bee’s excavating activities during the spring of the year will normally be found lying on the ground beneath the gallery entrances. Repeated boring activities may result in unsightly stains caused by falling bee waste around the entrance hole. Repeated colonization over several years, however, may result in considerable damage.

Unpainted, exposed wood is especially attractive to carpenter bees. The most effective deterrent to carpenter bee activities is a painted (oil base or polyurethane) surface. Insecticide additive paints are available which may repel bees attempting to nest. Nail holes or exposed saw cuts should be filled in with wood putty or dowels and painted. If practical, remove severely damaged wood and replace with chemical pressure-treated wood to deter nest construction. To further discourage carpenter bees looking for potential nesting sites, a homeowner should secure all doors, windows and other building openings during the spring. Non-wood surfaces such as vinyl siding are not damaged by carpenter bees.

Information taken from: Clemson Extension - Home and Garden Information, [http://hgic.clemson.edu](http://hgic.clemson.edu)

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Homeowners Meeting

Continued from Page 1

Committee Reports were then presented. Kim Butler of the Architectural Committee thanked homeowners for their efforts to comply with architectural guidelines and commented on the positive improvements that have been made throughout the community. Nettie Waxter reported for the Landscape committee and Emily Aftanas, for the Nominating Committee, reported on the Board nominations to that point and nomination and voting procedures.

Nominations from the floor were then taken and the vote for two one-year positions on the Board of Directors was held. Walt Brotherton and Kim Butler were elected to fill the two positions available.

The meeting was then opened up to members for questions and comments. Following the question and answer period, the meeting adjourned.

Complete meeting minutes as well as presentations and supplemental reports are available for viewing upon request.

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www.beecontrolpittsburgh.com
**Commons Courtesy**

Please be a good neighbor and remember to show courtesy and think of others in the many things that you do around the Commons.

- **Pick up after your pet.**
  Pet feces is especially nasty. Think of the poor landscaper that mows over it. Think of where it is spread when he does mow it. Think of the people and children that use the common areas (and access roads). Think of the pests (like rats) that it attracts. Be a good neighbor and pick up after your pet.

- **Watch your speed while driving.**
  The speed limit is 15 mph throughout the Commons. This is especially important now that more children are out playing. There is a new WATCH CHILDREN sign posted on the hill on Commons Drive. Let’s keep everyone safe.

- **Take care with noise levels.**
  Loud music, vehicle noise, barking dogs and crowd noise from parties can be very annoying. Especially in the late evening when many people enjoy a quiet evening at home or kids have gone to bed. Show others you respect them by keeping noise levels down. 

  Let’s all be good neighbors and use Commons Courtesy.

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**Clubhouse Rental!**

The beautiful, air-conditioned Oakmont Commons Clubhouse is a great place to rent for your next small function. Rates are as follows:

- **Clubhouse Rental (Pool rental additional $75):**
  - $75 Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Holidays;
  - $35 Monday - Thursday weekday rate (except holidays);

- **Refundable Deposit on all rentals:** $100.

Contact OCHA Manager, Doug Valentine, at the Rubinoff Company to schedule your function. 412-231-1000 or e-mail: valentine@rubinoffcompany.com.

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**Foxes in Our Neighborhood**

Please be aware that there have been many sightings of foxes in our neighborhood. Pennsylvania has both red and grey foxes. The fox eats a wide variety of foods. It is an omnivore and its diet includes fruits, berries and grasses. It also eats birds and small mammals like squirrels, rabbits and mice.

This means, that if you put out food for the birds, squirrels or rabbits, you will probably also attract the foxes. One was even witnessed eating bread that was put out for birds. Please be cautious as these are wild animals.

**Gas Line Replacement Awareness**

Recently, a neighbor had to replace her gas service line from the valve to her house due to the gas line rusting out. The representative from Equitable told her that this has happened to a few neighbors with older houses. A repair such as this can cost well over $1000. Equitable does offer gas line insurance that would cover this cost. If you own an older unit, you may want to look into the health of your gas line and weigh the cost of gas line insurance versus paying out of pocket for a replacement gas line.

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**Welcome to our New Neighbors!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>49 New London</th>
<th>Whitney Kratsas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Greenwich Court</td>
<td>Brian Roofner and Nicholas Dragonier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Greenwich Court</td>
<td>Sara A. Schaffer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Greenwich Court</td>
<td>Frank &amp; Claire Pawlowski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>267 Commons</td>
<td>Ryan Antonikas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>306 Canterbury</td>
<td>Dr. Abigail Collins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>127 Commons</td>
<td>Steven Burk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240 Commons</td>
<td>William J. Devlin Jr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121 Commons</td>
<td>Anthony Lukas</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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**Resale Certificates**

**REMINDER!** In keeping with Pennsylvania law, all units sold in Oakmont Commons either by the owner or an agent, requires a Resale Certificate issued by the Oakmont Commons Homeowners Association (OCHA). The fee to obtain a resale certificate is $100. To obtain a Certificate, you must call the Doug Valentine at 412-231-1000 or e-mail: valentine@rubinoffcompany.com.
Staging to get the most value for your home

Buyers are looking for a home they can picture living in. They’ll pay top dollar when all they need to do is move in and add their own personal touches to make the house a home.

Staging your home allows it to be more marketable or have more appeal and possible be on the market for less time than an unstaged home. Furniture, accessories, traffic flow, repairs, maintenance, cleanliness, sensory perception and aesthetics are all addressed during staging. The objective is to have your home priced right and looking better than the competition, especially in a desirable market like Oakmont.

Some of the benefits of a staged house include a higher selling price. According to statistics reported on www.stagedhomes.com, a staged house sells an average of 6.9% more than an unstaged house. They also report a return on investment for home staging is 169%.

Some elements to consider when you stage your home before placing it on the market include:
- Front entry
- Make repairs an essential priority
- Thorough cleaning
- De-clutter
- Furniture placement
- Storage space
- Eliminate Odors
- Outdoor Furniture
- Curb appeal - weed, mow and mulch.

Further information can be obtained from Jackie McDavitt at Northwood Realty - 412-377-8573.