
Deer Hedge Run Condominium Trust

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Living In A Condominium

Since there are many new residents at Deer Hedge Run, the Trustees believe a brief explanation of condo living could be helpful for unit owners and residents.

When you purchase a condominium, you have two forms of ownership. First of all, you directly own the inside of your unit. This includes the walls and floors, but not the wall studs, floor joists and supporting members of the structure. You also have a 1/155 voting voice in the Association, which owns all other parts of the structure you live in and also the common areas – the decks, porches, lawn, woods, clubhouse, parking areas, roadways, etc.

You have the exclusive right to use your two numbered parking areas, the patio, decks and front porch – however, you do not own these elements.

Your monthly condo fee pays for the upkeep and improvement of all the common elements including the roof, siding, decks, lawn, and roadways. Deer Hedge Run has no full-time employees. A Board of Trustees elected by the membership of the Association oversees the property. The Trustees do not receive compensation for overseeing the property.

The Trustees employ a series of vendors to perform the many services needed to maintain the lawn, plow the snow and keep the outside of the buildings in proper condition. Through these vendors, we have emergency services seven days per week and twenty-four hours per day. These services are not free of charge. We have contracts that specify what services are to be performed and also what the vendors are required to do and what they can expect when they arrive on the property to perform the contracted service.

If we do not follow the contract in terms of keeping the property clear of obstructions etc. as required by our contracts the vendors have a right to charge extra for performing their services. For example, if plowing of the parking areas is required on a trash collection day, the snow vendor moves the trash placed in the parking areas and returns the containers after plowing is completed. This service is charged in addition to the plowing contract.

If vehicles cannot be moved for plowing, the contract allows the vendor to submit an extra charge. Likewise, if the lawn areas are not free of items, it is more difficult to mow the lawn and this can result in additional charges.

While our monthly fee may seem to some owners to be “expensive”, \$3,720 per year would not go very far if you compare this cost to what it would take to have full services at an individual home including periodic replacement of the roof and painting and full maintenance services.

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Because of our purchasing power (we have 155 units), we can negotiate a better cost per individual unit. It is important that each unit owner follow the procedures outlined in the newsletters and the rules and regulations so that the majority of our monthly fee can be used for repairs and improvements to the common property.

When you purchase a condominium, the deed and associated documents you sign essentially commit you to live in concert with 154 other owners and to agree to follow a series of social and economic conventions. These conventions are basically intended to preserve each unit owner's rights to a quiet life. These protections also insure that common funds are used productively, residents are not subject to major inconvenience and that our property values are preserved and increased.

Condominium living is not for everyone. There are restrictions to what you can do under a condominium form of residential ownership and there are also freedoms – from shoveling snow, mowing lawns, etc. Massachusetts General Law provide powers and authorities to the Trustees and also responsibilities. Trustees must consider the general welfare of the residents and must also preserve the assets of the Trust. At times preserving the assets of the Trust can be restrictive to individual desires.

The Trustees spend significant time balancing the need to protect the assets of the Trust with the interests of individual unit owners. The interests of the Trust supercedes an individual's desire. For example, on occasion someone will want to run a business from his or her unit. While the Trustees understand why this may be beneficial for the individual, there are significant issues with allowing such a practice. First of all, there would be additional traffic on the property. In addition, the small number of visitor spaces we have would be unavailable to most residents due to business visitors. Further, there are insurance and liability risks that could result from a business operating on the property.

This is a brief overview of the many aspects of community life in a condominium. If you are unsure of how to proceed on a matter of interest to you, please contact our on site office at 978-897-8800. When needed, an appointment can be obtained to speak to the Trustees.