



Fourth Quarter Newsletter

December 2014

MSTU Project Updates

For those that might not be aware of what the MSTU (Municipal Services Taxing Unit) is, it is essentially a special tax which the community voted to pay as an extension of our property taxes. The purpose of the MSTU tax is to enable Golden Hills to control decisions about the nature and timing of improvements to our roads and other neighborhood projects. There are two MSTU funds: 1) the roadways fund which is managed by an Advisory Board and 2) the general services fund, which the GHPOA board administers. We currently have two projects in various stages of execution: 1) roadway pavement markings (roadways fund) and 2) 78th Avenue lighting replacement (general services fund).

You may have noticed that the front entrance and other roadway surfaces have been marked out for installation of new center and side lines and some stop bars. The MSTU Roadways Advisory Board, working with our MSTU project coordinator, identified the areas that needed to be addressed and that work has now begun with an estimated completion in early January, weather permitting.

The improvements to the 78th Avenue lighting replacement have seemed to drag on for some time, but the project is now in the first stages of implementation. The reason for the lag time between approving this project and its start is that the MSTU general services fund needed to be built up to a level that would support the construction and installation of the new lights. We crossed that boundary with the most recent tax bills and work should begin soon.

2015 Golden Hills Directory

In the next few weeks we will be sending out a short form to gather current contact information for the residents of Golden Hills. Unlike past directories, the next one will include information about both owners and renters in an effort to include everyone that lives in the community. If you are an owner of a rented house, it would be helpful if you could provide name and contact information for your tenants.

Safety Concerns

We have begun to experience a growing number of complaints about speeding vehicles in the neighborhood and want to ask everyone to help us address this problem. The complaints have cited both residents and commercial vehicles and we need to encourage everyone to obey the

speed limits on our streets. For those that aren't aware, the posted speed limit on all Golden Hills streets is 25 MPH as posted at the entrance. We all need to try and make sure we are part of the solution to this problem. In particular, a black Ford F150 pick-up truck has been seen and reported as repeatedly travelling with rapid acceleration and at very high speeds in the 80th Avenue Road area – if you know who this is please ask them to slow down. We will be alerting the Sheriff's office about this concern.

Another issue that has been brought up repeatedly as a safety concern is the driving of golf carts by underage drivers on the public streets. This is often more common during the holidays but it can be a concern at any time of year. While most often the drivers are simply going up and down the streets, sometimes they might drive erratically and may not be aware of vehicles on the roads. We should all do what we can to avoid any unfortunate situations that could arise.

Deed Restriction Modifications

Last year we made a concerted effort to make some changes that needed to be made to Golden Hills Declaration of Restrictions to clarify some points and to remove some that are no longer relevant. The nature of the change process was such that we had a deadline of December 31, 2013 to pass them with a lowered threshold which we did not meet. Nonetheless, we can still make the changes; we just need more votes to do so.

A committee is being formed by a couple of board members to try and push this initiative forward. If you would be willing to help by serving on the committee please let us know by contacting the board secretary at 352-622-1000 or secretary@ghpoa.org. In either case, if you haven't completed a ballot, you will be contacted by a committee member to cast your votes – please help us get the necessary votes to pass at least some of the more important changes.

GHPOA Board Openings

There are currently four vacancies on the Board with various terms of service. Three are for the remainder of this year and one expires in 2017. If you would be interested in serving on the board, or if you have questions about what serving as a director entails, please contact us for more information.

Our annual Nominating Committee will be headed this year by Derek Read to identify home owners that would be interested in serving on the board next year. In particular, we have a number of new owners in Golden Hills; serving on the board would be an excellent way for you to learn more about the neighborhood and help us all out at the same time.

Security Issues

One common thread in the survey responses was the sense of security that most of our residents have about Golden Hills. It certainly is a highly valuable characteristic of our community and one that we need to maintain and protect.

The neighborhood, as a deed restricted community, prohibits unrequested solicitations and as such should experience very few, if any, strangers making door-to-door calls. We encourage everyone to take reasonable steps to safeguard your property. This can be especially of concern during the holidays.

Other Thoughts

With the exception of just a few notably chronic situations, we are pleased to report that we have seen a significant drop in deed restriction violations over the past few months. As noted, we do have some and we are taking steps, including legal action, to correct them. But, in general we want to thank everyone for their cooperation in submitting applications and complying with our covenants. You will see in the survey results that most of the property owners want us to enforce the restrictions and we appreciate their support.

You may have noticed that the front entrance has been decorated for the holidays. We would like to thank Jacki and Chet Steckel, Liz Marco, and Joe Gatti for taking the time to figure out what to do and then getting it done. We have received a number of comments about the decorations and appreciate the efforts to dress up our entrance for the season.

In a similar vein, we would like to acknowledge all of the nicely decorated houses within the community. It takes investments in time and money to do that and we appreciate it.

You may have also noticed that the jockeys have been replaced in the front entrance. Thank you to Chet Steckel for freshening up the paint jobs and to Henry Tobin for getting them placed in the landscape area.

And, of course, we want to wish everyone in Golden Hills a merry Christmas, a pleasant holiday season, and a very happy new year.

Property Owner Survey Results

The 2014 property owner's survey was sent out in October, yielding over 90 responses or nearly 40% of the property owners. Based on standard survey response expectations this is a very significant response and we want to thank everyone who provided their input. A table showing the responses appears on the next page of this newsletter. But, there were a couple open ended questions as well.

In response to the question "What do you like most about living here" there were several recurring responses. They included the large lot sizes; a non-cookie cutter appearance, good neighbors, the quiet neighborhood; and a sense of security. Additionally, only about 44% percent of the responses indicated that they had visited the GHPOA web site (www.ghpoa.org) of whom most (88%) found it useful.

Responses regarding the question about the purpose of the home owners association most frequently cited its role in maintaining property values by ensuring that community standards are upheld for property maintenance followed by ensuring the upkeep of the common areas. There was less emphasis on information dissemination to the community and the mechanics of dues and deed restriction enforcement.

GOLDEN HILLS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

2014 SURVEY RESULTS

How long have you lived in Golden Hills?

less than five years	5 to 15 years	more than 15 years
33%	27%	40%

What is your residence status?

live here full time	live here part-time	rent out their house or their house is currently vacant or they own vacant land
84%	10%	6%

What were the major factors in your decision to live in Golden Hills?

like the look of the community	like living on a golf course	like a deed restricted community
76%	66%	45%

If you could, what would you change about living in Golden Hills?

more enforcement of the deed restrictions	a security gate at the front entrance	less enforcement of the deed restrictions
35%	34%	10%

Should the Association spend POA funds to maintain properties that are not being kept up?

yes, if there is a reasonable opportunity to recover the funds	yes, even if the funds may not be recovered	no
59%	29%	12%

Do you feel you have received value for your annual dues?

yes	not sure	no
63%	28%	9%