

MILL CREEK HOME



Newsletter of the Mill Creek Homeowners Association, Charlottesville, Virginia
also available online at www.millcreekhomeowners.org

Mill Creek needs *YOU* !

Our community needs *you* ... and *you* ... and *you*. We need volunteers for all aspects of neighborhood live. What can you do?

- Help with Common areas and dog stations
- Become a Board member—the Board is now severely under size and needs 4–5 new members in order to meet the HOA’s obligations.
- Help with a specific project:
 - Get out letters about mailbox maintenance
 - Walk the Mill Creek Trail to identify areas where foliage or path needs work
 - Submit ideas for the newsletter
 - Plan the next Mill Creek social event—a picnic? ice cream social? pizza night?
- Discuss ideas with your neighbors and suggest them to the Board.

In This Issue

Mill Creek Needs <i>YOU</i>	1
Come to Mill Creek Board Meetings	1
County Planning Commission Recommendations	2
Former Treasurer Released from Jail	2
Albemarle County Announcements	2
Decisions and Challenges	3
Notices about Mailboxes	3
Need to Know More about Your Trees?	4
False Alarm Ordinance	4
Hatton Ferry	4

We all need to pitch in to keep our neighborhood healthy and lovely. Contact a Board member—or me—today to volunteer for projects you consider important.

Addeane Caelleigh, Editor
asc8f@virginia.edu

Mill Creek Board Meetings

Mill Creek Board

Neal Grandy, President & Treasurer
Grounds Committee
nrg2p@virginia.edu

Brian Markot, Vice President &
Co-Treasurer
wbm0n@embarqmail.com

Maritza Saavedra, Member at Large
Architectural Review Committee
mms3u@virginia.edu

Sue Voires, Member at Large
Architectural Review Committee
Grounds Committee
suevxyz@yahoo.com

Come to Board meetings

—2nd Tuesday of each month, 7:30 pm—

~ All homeowners welcome ~

Share your ideas, learn about current issues, ask questions!

Meetings are held in members’ homes.
Contact any Board member to learn the location of the next meeting.

County Planning Recommendations for the Mill Creek Area

The Albemarle County Planning Commission is updating its comprehensive plan. Earlier in the spring the planning staff held public meetings to inform neighborhoods of the issues and to get feedback about possible changes to the Comprehensive Plan. Several Mill Creek homeowners attended those meetings.

On April 24, the Planning Office presented its recommendations to the Planning Commission which will later make recommendations to the County Board of Supervisors.

Varied issues. The neighborhood meetings and the planning recommendations cover a range of issues: sidewalks along Avon Extended, zoning of

residential land for higher density development or as light industrial, maintaining the rural character along Rt. 20, the desire for a library south of I-64, and areas available for housing developments. Mill Creek is part of "Neighborhood 4," which includes the areas along Rt. 20 and Avon Extended.

More information. The Planning Commission's website contains the planning recommendations as well as attachments containing notes from the earlier meetings. See http://www.albemarle.org/upload/images/forms_center/departments/community_development/forms/PC_Reports/SR_4-24-12_Staff_Report.pdf



Albemarle County Announcements

Would you like to receive email from the County about upcoming events, meetings, and news?

Interested? Register here:

<http://www.albemarle.org/page.asp?info=mail>

Former Mill Creek Treasurer Released from Jail

Kevin O'Connor, who was Treasurer of the Mill Creek Home Owners Association (MCHOA) from 1999 to 2009, was released from jail in early March after serving 20 months of a 22-month sentence for embezzling more than \$70,000 from the MCHOA.

Original Court order. The original Court order required him to be on probation for five years, get a job within 60 days of release, and begin paying 20% of his earnings as restitution payments to the MCHOA.

Not compliance with order. According to District 9 Probation and Parole, he did not get a job within the required period. This fact has been reported to the Court, but it is not known yet what effect his noncompliance will have. Failure to make restitution payments could lead to his return to jail.

Mill Creek Faces Decisions and Challenges

—*what should we do?*—

The Mill Creek community faces several important decisions. Here are a few—discuss them with your neighbors, think about the choices, and send your opinions and suggestions to the Board. Or better yet, discuss them at the next Board meeting.

- *The sidewalk on Mill Creek Drive.* The sidewalk has long needed major improvements—cutting back encroaching grass and resurfacing the walkway. The Board has set this as a priority. What do you think?
- *Albemarle County Planning Commission.* The Planning staff has held meetings about changes to zoning in our area. What do homeowners want to happen and how do we let the

Commission and our elected officials know what we want and don't want?

- *Mill Creek Trail.* Each year the trail becomes overgrown and needs maintenance, not least because of motorcycles that churn up the trail. How should the trail be maintained? It is a special amenity for all homeowners—and it is potential liability issue for the HOA.
- *Biscuit Run Park.* Creation of Biscuit Run State Park will affect Mill Creek. What are the plans and what does the community want to promote?
- *Maintenance of common grounds.* A major HOA expense is grass cutting, maintenance of the entrance area, and managing trees in common areas. What do we want done and how should it be handled?

Fringe Tree: versatile Virginia native

Do you want a hardy tree or shrub covered with lovely white blossoms each spring? Consider planting a Fringe tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*), which can be a large shrub or a small tree.

How lovely? Our neighbors at 112 Mill Creek Drive have a large one in their front yard—it was beautiful this spring. We didn't take a picture in time—but the one below gives you the idea!



See it in color on the website.

Notices about Mail Boxes

Some of us will soon receive letters about our mailboxes and posts. The survey of mailboxes is completed and notices about needed repair and maintenance will be sent this month. And, yes, a couple of present or past Board members will be receiving notices!

Maintaining our houses, mailboxes, and gardens contributes to the aesthetic of the whole community. Our distinctive mailboxes are an important part of creating good impressions for visitors ... and each other.

The first set of letters will focus on urgent cases that need major repair or maintenance. A later set will cover more minor cases, such as cleaning and minor re-painting and repairs.

Need to Know More About Your Trees?

Are you concerned about your trees? Some healthy trees may look weak, whereas some diseased and weak trees may look perfectly healthy. How do we tell the difference?

Tree Stewards. The Charlottesville Area Tree Stewards work to increase the public's knowledge about trees, support rural and urban forests, and increase the tree canopy in our area. They offer classes regularly. If you are interested in learning more about trees in general and in our region, these classes can help.

<http://charlottesvilleareatreestewards.org>

Virginia Department of Forestry. The VDF offers expert information about planting and caring about trees. "Trees 101" is an online resource: <http://www.dof.virginia.gov/mgt/trees-101.htm>

False Alarm Ordinance

Do you have a home security system? If so, you need to know about County changes

Two contact numbers required. Registration is still free, but two contact numbers are now required.

Fees for false alarms. There will be no fee for police responses to two false alarms within any 12-month period. After the second false alarm, however, fees will be levied, beginning at \$100 and increasing for each successive false alarm.

Attempt to contact. The alarm company must first attempt to contact the owner before police are dispatched to the house.

Hatton Ferry

Can't get away for a cruise this year? Try the Hatton Ferry instead—it's the last poled ferry in the United States and just a few miles from Mill Creek.

The Hatton Ferry has carried people and vehicles across the James River for 140 years.



Operated by volunteers, the ferry this year operates April 14–October 28 on Saturdays (9–5) and Sundays (noon–5). Donations of \$2 per person and \$5 per vehicle are requested.

Yes, the volunteers pole the ferry!



For more information, directions, and more photos, see <http://thehattonferry.org>.