



# Diamond Farm Newsletter

— *Winter 2018* —

## Board of Directors

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**Amanda Wallace - Secretary**  
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**Pat Butler - Board Member**  
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**Lauri Gotthelf - Board Member**  
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**Larry Lucas - Board Member**  
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**Matt Ovington - Board Member**  
*matt.o@diamondfarmhomes.com*

**Laura Tierney – Board Member**  
*laura@diamondfarmhomes.com*

[www.diamondfarmhomes.com](http://www.diamondfarmhomes.com)

[diamondfarm.nextdoor.com](http://diamondfarm.nextdoor.com)

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## In This Issue

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# From the President

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

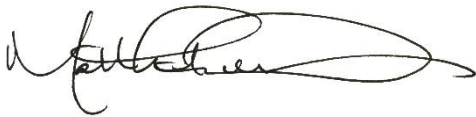
It's hard to believe that spring is almost here, even if recent temperatures have given us a nice preview of what lies ahead. As we head deeper into 2018, it's time for all of us to consider some of the biggest challenges and opportunities that we face as a community. I'd love to spend another letter thanking all of the hard-working folks that have helped us over the last few months, but we have a big meeting coming up in the spring and I want to see all of you there!

Our Annual Meeting is less than two months away. In 2017, we saw the largest resident turnout in years, but I know that we can do better in 2018! In addition to the election of three board members, we're preparing an agenda that highlights a lot of the accomplishments of the last year while also focusing on our goals for 2018. It's all a part of our continued efforts to be as accessible to the community as possible while sharing as much information as we can. I hope that you've circled **Wednesday, April 11<sup>th</sup>** on your calendars – we're very excited to see you!

Now, let's move on to a messier issue . . . parking. There are no two ways about it, there just isn't enough parking in our neighborhood. Between households with commercial vehicles, children that drive, and weekend/project cars, our guest spots are often full. This leads to a lot of hostility and frustration among those that just want a place for their friends and family to park when they come to visit.

As many of you know, a class-action lawsuit alleging predatory towing practices against G&G Towing and other companies left us without any means of enforcing our parking regulations for the better part of the last three years. However, that lawsuit has recently been settled. We are now in the position to decide as a community how we want to deal with parking moving forward. We can look at securing a new contract, but there is risk that goes along with it; if the company that we choose to do business with engages in practices deemed predatory or violates other state or county laws, we could be held liable. We have to decide if that's a risk that we're willing to take, but it isn't a decision that nine people can make for 268 households. We need your input, and we need to start a larger conversation across all of Diamond Farm.

You don't have to wait for the Annual Meeting to offer input, though. Please continue to reach out on Nextdoor, or through our website, or email. Stop by the informal happy hour scheduled for **Wednesday, March 7<sup>th</sup>**, at the Buffalo Wild Wings just up the street! It'll be a great chance to relax and meet other residents outside of a tiny meeting room or school cafeteria. Remember, at the end of the day, we're all just neighbors.



Matt Wallace  
DFHC Board President

# Information

## Upcoming Board Meetings

- March 19
- Wednesday, April 11 (Annual Meeting)
- April 16

*For a full calendar of Diamond Farm events, including board meetings, visit <http://diamondfarmhomes.com/calendar/diamond-farm-events/>*

## Recent Board Meeting Notes

### November

- The tree survey conducted by ETC was confirmed as having begun.
- The board approved a Code of Conduct for all directors, present and future.
- A list of tows conducted by G&G on behalf of DFHC was reviewed; while none were conducted illegally, it was determined that the corporation could face future liability if subsequent contractors aren't monitored and violate any laws or regulations concerning towing.

### December

- The ACC committee, chaired by Matt Ovington, has begun conducting the resale inspections for home sales in Diamond Farm, saving the community \$75 per inspection.
- Several residents have expressed concerns over drivers ignoring the stop signs entering and exiting Diamond Farm. Residents can report traffic violations through the City's CITE program at <http://www.gaithersburgmd.gov/services/online-services/cite>
- Mike Turow, Treasurer, reported an operational loss of approximately \$12,000 for FY2017 due to the FY2017 budget using contract figures from FY2016.

### January

- Irek Zawadski suggested an idea for a community garden to be maintained in one of the abandoned plots of the Pepco field.
- A Nominating Committee was created to handle ballots and information for the upcoming election. Pat Butler was appointed chair of the committee.
- The final budget for FY2017 was reviewed and showed an actual loss of approximately \$1,500.
- The results of the Montgomery County meetings and planned changes to laws surrounding short-term rentals (AirBNB, VRBO, etc.) were shared and reviewed. Though feedback was solicited from communities within the county, the board declined to take an official position on the matter.
- Plans for the election and annual meeting were discussed, including two proposed amendments to the governing documents.

*Full meeting minutes can be accessed through your Pileria account at <https://app.pileria.com/index.php/login/commassoc>*

## **FY2018 Budget Adoption**

In November, the board held an annual budget meeting to solicit comments and feedback on the proposed budget for 2018. At the conclusion of the meeting, the attending board members voted 6-1 to adopt the budget. The operating budget is available online at <http://diamondfarmhomes.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Adopted-2018-Budget.pdf>

## **Trash/Recycling/Bulk Pickup Dates**

The board and our management company continue to receive complaints and notifications from our residents concerning trash, recycling, and bulk pickup items. Please remember that items should not be put out earlier than 7pm on the evening before the collection day. This includes bulk items, which are only collected once on the first Friday of every month. For full details please visit <http://diamondfarmhomes.com/resident-resources/trash-recycling/>

## **Cleaning Up After Your Dogs**

Recently, the number of complaints relating to dogs in and around our community have increased as well. The majority of these relate to owners cleaning up after their dogs. Not only is pet waste an eyesore and an unpleasant surprise for anyone who happens to walk through it, but it can attract flies and other pests that carry disease. Please remember to carry waste bags with you when you walk your dog, and please remember to dispose of those bags properly. Gaithersburg law requires that pet owners pick up after their pets and will fine owners \$100 per instance if reported and confirmed. Residents can report violations to Gaithersburg Animal Control at 301-258-6343.

## **Snow & Ice Shoveling**

We've managed to get through most of this winter with only light snow fall, but there's still time for more! The city plows our streets and we have a contract for snow removal on the community paths and sidewalks. However, the sidewalks in front of or adjacent to houses are the responsibility of the resident. This includes end unit houses that sit on corner lots.

Please ensure that you are complying with the city's regulations and have any snow and ice removed from your sidewalks within 12 hours of any snowfall. Remember that others use the sidewalk in front of/beside your house – neighbors going for a walk, pet owners exercising their animals, children heading to the bus stop – all types of people need a safe path through our community. Clearing your sidewalk isn't just a city requirement, it's a considerate and neighborly thing to do that benefits everyone.

# Committee News

## **Architectural Controls** – [acc@diamondfarmhomes.com](mailto:acc@diamondfarmhomes.com)

It may not seem like time to do Spring projects, but if you can see beyond the constantly changing conditions outside, warm weather will be upon us.

If you are planning updates to the outside of your home like a new roof, replacing the storm door and shutters, or renovating that old shed and fence, we have resources for you.

Please take a look at the current Guidelines, Architectural Review Form, and Approved Paint Colors, all available on our website, to help the process run smoothly. Kindly discard old versions of the guidelines and forms.

If you would like to volunteer or learn more about the Architectural Review Committee, please email [acc@diamondfarmhomes.com](mailto:acc@diamondfarmhomes.com) or attend one of our monthly meetings.

-Matt Ovington, Committee Chair

## **Maintenance** – [maintenance@diamondfarmhomes.com](mailto:maintenance@diamondfarmhomes.com)

While trimming of trees and bushes has ground to a halt for the cold months, the committee continues to patrol the grounds for downed branches and other issues. One big item that will help the committee, as well as the Board, is the recent completion of a comprehensive tree inventory. This consisted of a qualified professional inspecting and numbering every tree on the common grounds of the community (for a grand total of 568 trees!). We now have a map of all of the trees along with a spreadsheet listing the type of tree (oak, pine, etc.), as well as any issues that could require attention. The Maintenance Committee definitely will be using this resource to prioritize various issues with our trees.

Currently the committee consists of only two members. We would definitely like to see at least one more member of the community get involved with the committee and help out with determining what issues there are on the common grounds and how to prioritize them. If you are not able to commit to being a full committee member or are just looking to get a little exercise a few times a month, we would also like to entertain volunteers to help patrol the grounds, gather up downed branches and place them at the curb for Friday morning pickup, and assist with moving branches trimmed by committee members to the curb for pickup.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns (or if you would like to volunteer). You can reach the committee at [maintenance@diamondfarmhomes.com](mailto:maintenance@diamondfarmhomes.com) or me directly at [laura@diamondfarmhomes.com](mailto:laura@diamondfarmhomes.com).

-Laura Tierney, Committee Chair

## **Publicity** – [publicity@diamondfarmhomes.com](mailto:publicity@diamondfarmhomes.com)

The publicity committee still needs a chairperson! Responsibilities include ensuring that postings are made to Nextdoor and the community website for events and organizing the distribution of the quarterly newsletter. Ideally, this person will also serve as the editor of the newsletter. If you're interested, please email me or the entire board.

-Matt Wallace, acting Chair

## **Recreation** – [recreation@diamondfarmhomes.com](mailto:recreation@diamondfarmhomes.com)

I hope everyone had a joyous and restful holiday season. To end the year on a strong note, the DF Recreation Committee hosted a food drive in November, and because of your generous contributions, we were able to donate 192 pounds of non-perishable food and a monetary donation to the Manna Food Center. We served cookies and punch for anyone who stopped by the board meeting space with contributions, paid for by the money raised by the October tag sale.

Next on the Recreation Committee schedule is a happy hour/half-price burgers at Buffalo Wild Wings in the Quince Orchard Shopping Center on March 7 from 5-8pm. Kids' meals are half off as well, so bring your family! We hope to get the word out for our quarterly events like these through posting on Nextdoor, so be sure to check the site for upcoming events.

I'm looking forward to a fun-filled year of getting together as a neighborhood. Contact us at [recreation@diamondfarmhomes.com](mailto:recreation@diamondfarmhomes.com) if you have future Recreation Committee event ideas, or if you'd like to get involved. Hope to see you soon!

-Meena Farzanfar, Committee Chair



**BUFFALO  
WILD  
WINGS**

**Diamond Farm Happy  
Hour!!**

**Wednesday, March 7**

**5pm – 8pm**

**Half-priced burgers and  
kids' meals!**

**See you there!!!**

Buffalo Wild Wings @ Quince Orchard Shopping Center  
668 Clopper Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20878