



# Severn Woods HOA

June 2024 Meeting



# Agenda



- ❖ Recap
- ❖ Current Standing
  - Property value-wise
  - Business-wise
  - Financially
- ❖ News
  - Grant
  - Police Activity
  - Front Signs
- ❖ Old Business
  - Last Meeting's Minutes
  - Old Propositions
- ❖ New Business
  - Vinyl fence vote
  - Open forum/any new proposal requests?





# Recap

*(Last Year)*



# Broken/Dangerous Utility Boxes

- ❖ 81 broken/old utility boxes were reported to county
- ❖ 78 of them replaced by utility companies/the county (over 2 months)



# Sidewalks Fixed (*plus Utility Boxes*)

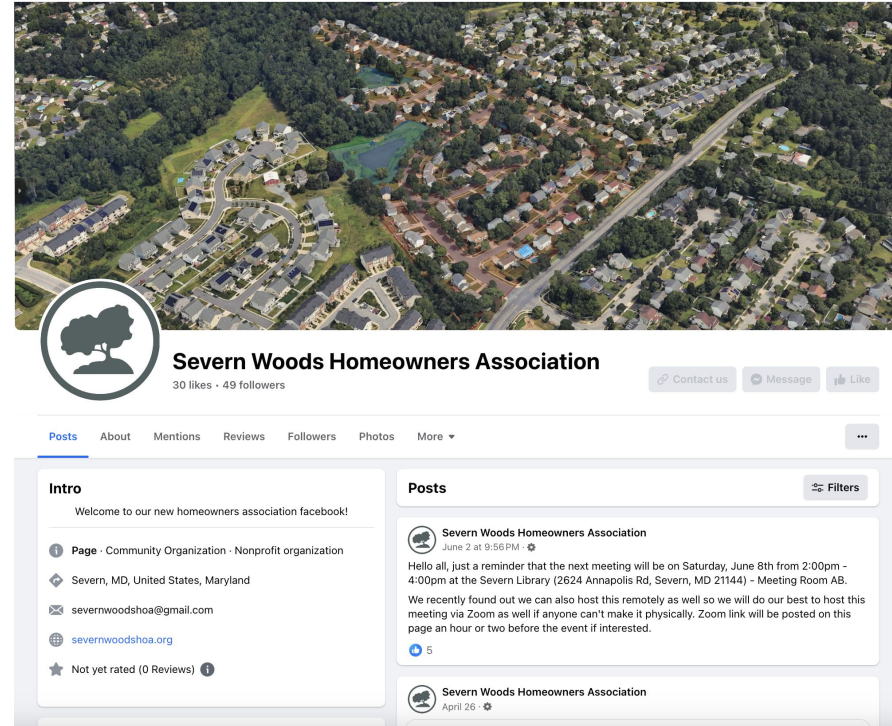
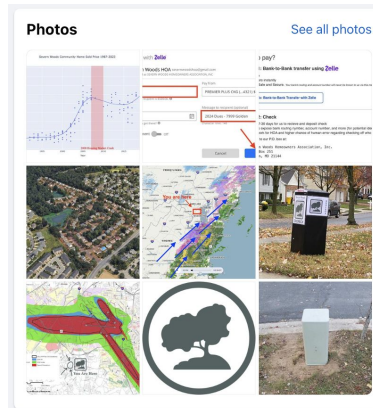
- ❖ County replaced all sidewalks in our community sidewalks that were hazardous
- ❖ Also see examples of replaced utility boxes



# Social Media Refresh

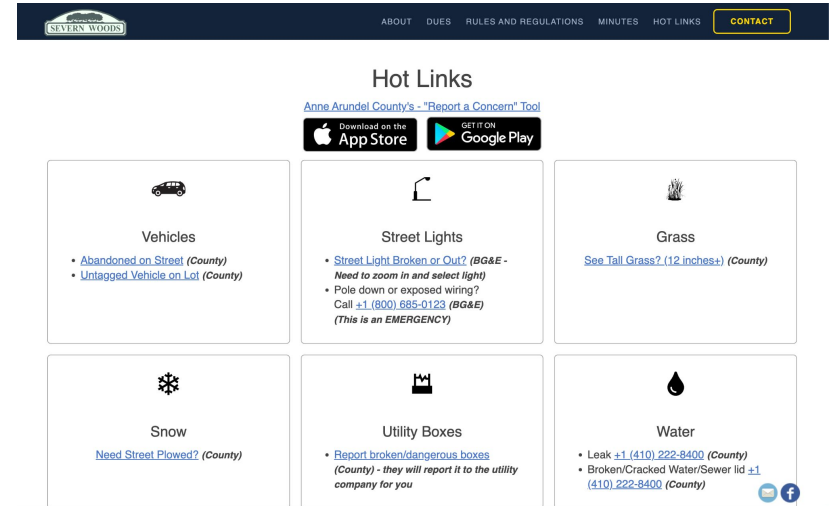


- ❖ New Facebook page created
- ❖ 17 posts since October (~1 every 2 weeks)
- ❖ Posts about BWI flight path changes, some of our initiatives, super bad weather PSA, etc.
- ❖ 49 followers today (from the community)



# Website Expansion

- ❖ Supports HTTPS now  
*(no more scary warnings)*
- ❖ Added hot-links so people can self-service directly with the county/find information easier.
- ❖ Made it work better on phones (mobile devices)
- ❖ Other helpful things for new homeowners like a countdown on when trash is picked up, who provides what cans, internet providers, & schools.



The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with 'SEVERN WOODS' on the left and 'ABOUT DUES RULES AND REGULATIONS MINUTES HOT LINKS CONTACT' on the right. Below the navigation bar is a 'Hot Links' section. At the top of this section is a link to 'Anne Arundel County's - "Report a Concern" Tool' and two buttons for downloading the app: 'Download on the App Store' and 'GET IT ON Google Play'. The 'Hot Links' section contains six cards, each with an icon and a title. The cards are: 1. Vehicles (car icon) with links for 'Abandoned on Street (County)' and 'Un-tagged Vehicle on Lot (County)'. 2. Street Lights (street light icon) with links for 'Street Light Broken or Out? (BG&E - Need to zoom in and select light)', 'Pole down or exposed wiring?', and 'Call +1 (800) 685-0123 (BG&E) (This is an EMERGENCY)'. 3. Grass (grass icon) with a link for 'See Tall Grass? (12 inches+) (County)'. 4. Snow (snowflake icon) with a link for 'Need Street Plowed? (County)'. 5. Utility Boxes (utility box icon) with a link for 'Report broken/dangerous boxes (County) - they will report it to the utility company for you'. 6. Water (water drop icon) with links for 'Leak +1 (410) 222-8400 (County)' and 'Broken/Cracked Water/Sewer lid +1 (410) 222-8400 (County)'. There are also social media icons for WhatsApp and Facebook at the bottom right of the water card.

- **Black Cans** - general waste. Bin to be provided/maintained by homeowner.
- **Yellow Cans** - recycling. Bin can be provided/repared by [Anne Arundel County](#).
- **Bins with a "X", Paper Bagged, or Bound** - yard waste. Bags/Bins to be provided/maintained by homeowner.



General Waste



Recyclables



Yard Waste

## Pick up time

All types, **Thursdays**, all within the range of ~7:30am-9:30am.



Next Pickup: (estimated)

2 00 42 43  
Days Hours Minutes Seconds

# Mail-in Voting was a Success

- ❖ For a month encouraged owners to drop off ballots or mail them in
- ❖ Received **54 ballots** of 99 homes in good standing
- ❖ Only **1 of 12 Props** passed but all others had **78-91%** still in favor, just lacked required minimum votes.



Proposition #9: Board's Permission to Maintain	Proposition #11: Rule Update - Vehicles	Proposition #12: Rule Update - Fences
<p>Permit the Board to modify governing documents without Homeowner input if solely fixing spelling issues, changing text styling, or adjusting things to be legal if it no longer is per the county, state, or federal government laws or regulations. Details of these changes <b>must</b> be included in Board meeting minutes and presented to Lot Owners at the next meeting, at minimum, to be official.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> In Favor <input type="radio"/> Opposed</p>	<p>Modify rule on vehicles (<b>Article XIII, Section 12</b> of the Covenants) to now allow all non-hidden/covered RVs, trailers, boats, large trucks, etc. by allowing all cars and vehicles if they meet the following conditions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No person/animal may live/sleep in it while within the community.</li> <li>If on one's Lot, it must be fully parked in one's garage or driveway (i.e. not fully/partially on one's grass).</li> <li>Must be following state/county laws (i.e. not parked encroaching on a sidewalk).</li> <li>Cannot be inoperable, falling apart, leaking, missing license plate, tags, etc. (if applicable). Else, must be parked in one's garage or fashioned with a fitted cover.</li> </ol> <p><input type="radio"/> In Favor <input type="radio"/> Opposed</p>	<p>Modify rule on fences (<b>Article XIII, Section 13</b> of Covenants) to now allow a fence to be set up to the halfway point of the side of one's house so long as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The fence is still forming right angles from the house.</li> <li>None of the fence extends past the halfway point (towards the street) of the dwelling.</li> </ol> <p><b>Meaning:</b> Currently Permitted (ONLY):</p>  <p>Would now be permitted:</p>  <p>Reminder that new fences still require Architectural Committee approval.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> In Favor <input type="radio"/> Opposed</p>
<p><b>Proposition #10: Attorney Fees to Liens</b></p> <p>Modify governing documents to permit the addition of attorney or other legal/processing fees to fine or lien amounts.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> In Favor <input type="radio"/> Opposed</p>	<p>I hereby certify that I am the person that has marked this ballot and if there are multiple Lot Owners for this lot, I have consulted them and have their permission to vote on behalf of the Lot.</p> <p>Lot Owner Name (Printed): _____ Address (1st line): _____ (2nd Line - Print City) Lot Owner Signature: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>If physically incapable of marking my ballot, I attest I have made my mark on the above signature block above to the best of my ability and I was assisted by the following individual:</p> <p>Assisting Signature: _____ Assisting Name (Printed): _____</p>	





Standing



# Property Values (Real)

- ❖ 6 homes sold in 2022
- ❖ 2022 Avg. Home Sale Price = **\$447,525**
  
- ❖ 4 homes sold in 2023
- ❖ 2023 Avg. Home Sale Price = **\$494,070** (↑10.4%)



Severn Woods Community Home Sold Price 1987-2023



# Business Standing



- ❖ We're in good standing
  - We filed our taxes
  - No pending issues with state/federal governments

Maryland.gov

SEVERN WOODS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.: D02398147

General Information | Filing History | Annual Report/Personal Property

### General Information

Department ID Number: D02398147

Business Name: SEVERN WOODS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Principal Office: [i](#)  
SEVERN MD 21144

Resident Agent: [i](#)  
SEVERN MD 21144

Status: INCORPORATED

**Good Standing: THIS BUSINESS IS IN GOOD STANDING**

Business Type: CORPORATION

Business Code: 04 ORDINARY BUSINESS - NON-STOCK

# Landscaping - Details

- ❖ Mowing the following 7 areas every 2 weeks from April to end of October.





# News



# Grant for Fence

- ❖ Plan to replace the ~1050 feet of fence on street with vinyl fence
- ❖ We applied for it
- ❖ State of it now?



# Police/Fire Activity in Community (last year)



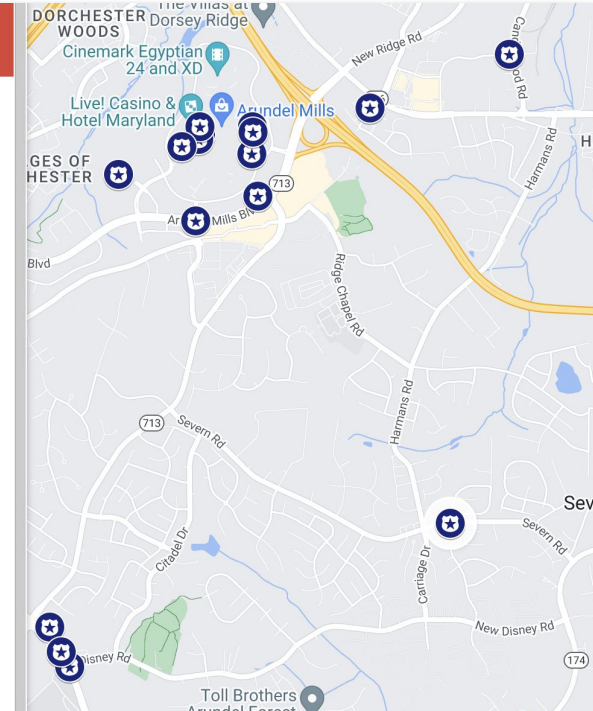
- ❖ No fires
- ❖ Police called a few times for noise complaints and some loose animals (which is the right thing to do)
- ❖ 2 crimes that we know of/could find
  - October 26th, 2023 - couple minors used a hack they learned on TikTok to attempt or succeed in breaking into 3 Hyundais in our community.
    - Thanks to Ring cameras and other evidence police could find, the kids were found and civil charges were allowed to be brought up against them by our neighbors if they wished.
    - We recommended anybody with a Kia or Hyundai from 2011-2022 with a key-ignition start take it into a dealership to get it retrofitted for free by Hyundai to defend against this kind of break-in.
  - March 21, 2024, coincidental traffic stop on/outside our street of 4 men between 19-21 years old were arrested and one tried to flee from vehicle in/around our area.

← Weapons | CDS Violations

name  
Weapons | CDS Violations

description  
Weapons; CDS Violation - Severn  
24-710058

On March 21, 2024, at approximately 6:20 p.m., officers conducted a traffic stop on a silver Infiniti in the area of Severn Road and Severn Tree Boulevard in Severn. As the vehicle came to a stop, one of the passengers fled on foot but was quickly apprehended after a short foot pursuit. He was found to be in possession of a loaded Glock 17 handgun, which was concealed in his waistband. The driver was found to be in possession of approximately 1.28 grams of suspected psilocybin mushrooms and a loaded Polymer 80 handgun concealed in his waistband. A .223 caliber Ruger AR 556 loaded with 28 rounds of ammunition was located in the passenger compartment of the vehicle. \$3,421.00 in U.S. currency was found within the vehicle and seized. All four vehicle occupants were taken into custody and charged.

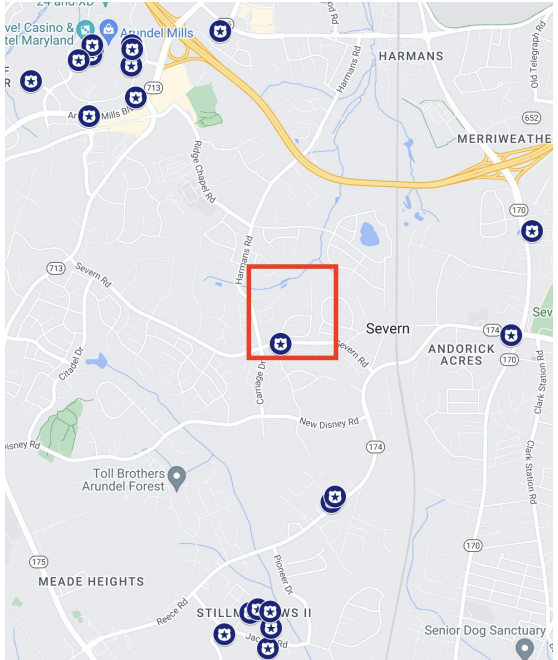


# Police/Fire Activity around Community (last year)

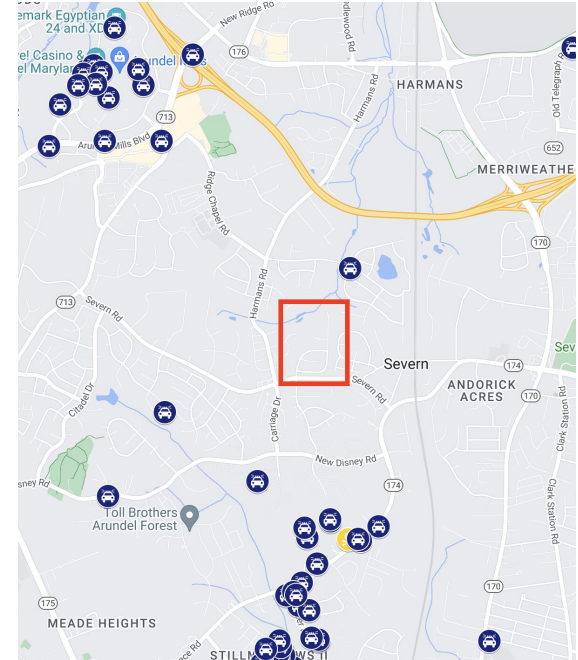


- Crime mostly still localized to mall and Meade Heights area (*which are being regularly policed*)

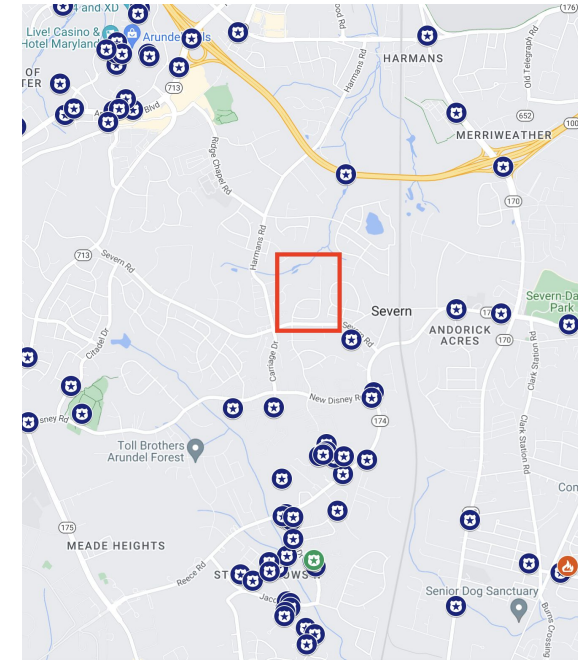
**2024 (up through now)**



**2023**



**2022**





# Front Signs

- ❖ Gave some attention to the front signs.
- ❖ Now illuminate at night thanks to a couple cheap solar panel lights.  
Only community now in the area we know that light up at night.

**Before:**



**After:**





# Old Business



# Mosquitos

- ❖ In 2022 owners raised issue about influx in mosquitos in community
  - the board in 2022 called the county to look into it and they serviced the ponds and the back of the dam also (*pretty sure*).
- ❖ Last meeting (Oct. 2023) homeowner raised mosquitos were still bad.
- ❖ Board did some research and believe we finally determined why...

*(next slide)*



# Mosquitos - the Minor Problem (fixed)

- ❖ A number of containers/trash exist behind our community that were filled with water.
  - All has since been turned over or properly thrown away



# Mosquitos - the Bigger Problem

- ❖ Area behind community is “100-year flood plain”.
- ❖ Bigger streams are being maintained.
- ❖ Smaller streams... cannot



Example Big Stream



Example Small Stream



How the ponds are connected by these streams

# Proposition 1 - Quorums



- ❖ **We'd like to split it up:**
  - **#1a.** Approving Homeowner Meeting Minutes wouldn't require quorum
  - **#1b.** The second half to keep the **60% initial quorum** for all other things but remove stipulation that modifying our governing documents requires majority of total homes (not just of those voting) also to vote in the affirmative for it to pass.

## Proposition #1: Quorums

The mandatory reaching of a certain threshold of homeowners shall remain unset to call a Homeowner meeting official or to approve said meeting minutes.

However, all other Owner actions including but not limited by the following, *with the exception of dissolution*, may not be approved without majority consensus of an at minimum voter turnout of 60% of **all** Owners:

1. Modifying governing documents
2. Changing the dues
3. Making an election official

**In Favor**

**Opposed**

# Proposition 2 - Director Seats



## ❖ Was passed!

Was the allowing of total directors to fluctuate from anywhere between 3 to 9 not hard-set at “9”.

### Proposition #2: Director Seats

Modify **Articles of Incorporation** to specify number of board members may fluctuate but shall be set to at minimum three (3) and at maximum nine (9).

- In Favor
- Opposed

# Proposition 3 - Electronic Voting



- ❖ **Propose we drop it** in favor of only mail-in.

**Reasoning:** Some distrust electronic voting and mail-in voting was proven very successful.

## **Proposition #3: Permit Electronic Voting**

Approve the use of electronic signatures for HOA votes requiring signatures.

- In Favor**
- Opposed**



# Proposition 4 - Board Ethics



- ❖ **Propose keeping.**
  - Open up floor for any proposed edits by homeowners:

## **Proposition #4: Board Ethics**

Permit the Board to add an initial set of "Board Ethics" to the governing documents as well as how to remove directors that break it.

- In Favor**
- Opposed**

# Proposition 4 - Board Ethics - *DRAFT* section 1 of 3



**“Section 1. Defining Ethics & Consequences.** Failure to adhere to any of the following shall be undeniable grounds to remove said Director or otherwise be a disqualifier from individuals becoming a Director (acting or otherwise).

- A. **Nepotism/Conflicts.** No two Directors shall be currently from the same household or the same family.
- B. **Conflicts of Interest.** No Director shall allow the Board to hire their own companies, companies of their family, or use one of their business's products or services while being a director without making it known and recusing themselves from voting on said vendor.
- C. **Not Performing Duties.** Failure to attempt to have an official homeowner meeting at least once a calendar year as indicated by sending notices for such or failing to show up and/or run said meeting.
- D. **Favorability.** Unequally applying or reinforcing the covenants between Members of the Association.
- E. **Misappropriation.** Stealing money or reimbursing without Board approval.
- F. **Anonymity.** Selling, sharing, or any personal or malintent use of the names, contact information, or other identifiable information of people within the association to anybody other than law enforcement, the county, or fellow Directors for official business. If the identity of a Owner can be protected, it should simply be stated as “a homeowner” or “a member of the association”.
- G. **Other.** Any other abuse or breaking of what may be considered ethical behavior that’s been discovered by a fellow Director or raised by a Owner.”

**NOTE** - attorney may need to adjust exact phrasing.



# Proposition 4 - Board Ethics - *DRAFT* section 2 & 3



**“Section 2. Voting and Re-elections.** If a Director is ever removed due to violating ethics, who doesn’t step down willingly, they shall retain the right to vote as a homeowner as long as they are up to date with their dues. However, they, their kin, and anybody else residing in their same residence while they remain an Owner will be unable to run again or otherwise be elected to a Director or Acting-Director position.

**Section 3. Abuse.** If there is ever an abuse or breach of the aforementioned sections in this article and the Director does not call for a standard or special meeting to occur within 90 days with the homeowners to examine the facts themselves and vote for the keeping or removal of said director, it shall fall on the Owners. Under Maryland Law in these circumstances it shall be the Homeowners responsibility to write to the county to interfere and put in place temporary leadership until the Director or entire Board can be replaced. In such a case and if the county finds it so and any Director is removed, Section 2 shall also apply to any Directors not doing their due-diligence to host said meeting.”

**NOTE** - attorney may need to adjust exact phrasing.



# Proposition 5 - Election Procedures



- ❖ **Propose we drop it** in favor of just board maintaining some ongoing publicly-facing procedures that can be receive minor updates as time goes on.

Protections and general guidelines already in place in our Articles of Incorporation.

## **Proposition #5: Elections**

Permit the Board to add to the documents an initial set of "Election Procedures".

- In Favor**
- Opposed**

# Proposition 6 - Ineligible Votes



June 2024 Homeowner Meeting

- ❖ Propose we **adjust it**.

It's already the way voting is supposed to be done in the state of Maryland for HOAs, propose just adding a definition of what “In good standing” means (not more than 90 days late on payments) and append this “in good standing” in a couple places in our governing documents.

## Proposition #6: Ineligible Votes

Reaffirm what is partially already in our **Articles of Incorporation** and Maryland HOA act that the Association may exclude homes from the number of votes needed and their right to vote that are in arrears for more than 90 days.

- In Favor
- Opposed

# Proposition 7 - Calls to Votes by Homeowners



*June 2024 Homeowner Meeting*

- ❖ **Propose we drop it** in favor of just board maintaining some ongoing publicly-facing procedures that can be receive minor updates as time goes on.

## **Proposition #7: Calls to Votes by Homeowners**

Permit the Board to add to governing docs an initial set of procedures for Homeowners to request a call for a general vote to modify said documents or request an election.

- In Favor**
- Opposed**

# Proposition 8 - Mail-In Voting



*June 2024 Homeowner Meeting*

- ❖ **Propose we drop it** in favor of just board maintaining some ongoing publicly-facing procedures that can receive minor updates as time goes on.

## **Proposition #8: Mail-In Voting**

Permit the Board to formalize an initial set of procedures within the documents for mail-in and electronic voting.

- In Favor**
- Opposed**

# Proposition 9 - Board's Permission to Maintain



- ❖ Propose we **adjust it**.
  - Propose it just be a one-off fix of the following spelling/grammar things we will define here:
  - Board is already able to change formatting (the indenting, bolding, etc.)
  - Agreed, rest could sound scary.

- 
- ❖ **D.o.C. > Article I. > Section 2.** “‘Owner’ shall mean [...] whether one **of** more persons..” (change to “**or**”)
  - ❖ **D.o.C. > Article III. > Section 3.** “open space areas [...] **situate** upon the Properties.” (change to “**situated**”)
  - ❖ **D.o.C > Article VIII > Section 7.** “Hunting and trapping are **expressly** forbidden **with properties**.” (change to “**explicitly**” and “**within the Properties**”).
    - Capital “P” Properties refer to all HOA and owner land within the community.

(next slide)

## Proposition #9: Board's Permission to Maintain

Permit the Board to modify governing documents without Homeowner input if solely fixing spelling issues, single-word grammar, changing text styling, or adjusting things to be legal if it no longer is per the county, state, or federal government. Details of these changes **must** be included in Board meeting minutes at minimum to be official.

- In Favor
- Opposed



# Proposition 9 - Spelling/Grammatical Errors



- ❖ **A of I > Section 1.** “corporation is **herby** formed” (change to “**hereby**”)
- ❖ **A of I > Section 2.** “additions [...] may **herafter** be annexed” (change to “**hereafter**”)
- ❖ **A of I > Section 3.** “purchase, lease, hire, receive donations of, or otherwise acquire, hold, own, **develop. Improve**, maintain and operate” (change to “**develop, improve, ...**”)
- ❖ **A of I > Section 3.** “Association shall have the following powers: [...] to **old** and subscribe” (change to “**hold**”)
- ❖ **A of I > Section 7.** “An Owner may **hot** decline membership in the Association” (change to “**not**”)
- ❖ **A of I > Section 7.** “Any member [...] who **falls** to pay [...] shall **hot** be entitled to vote” (change to “**fails**” and “**not**”)
- ❖ **A of I > Section 9.** “total votes [...] eligible to be **cost** shall constitute a quorum” (change to “**cast**”)
- ❖ **A of I > Section 9.** Replace “**Chairman**” with “**Chairperson**” or similar (to be non-gendered)
- ❖ Replace “by-laws” with “bylaws” in multiple places.  
**Reasoning** - Popularity of the word had swung the other way.
- ❖ Anywhere the first letter of a sentence wasn't capitalized.
- ❖ Capitalize “P” in Properties, “M” in members, “O” in owner”, and other places where the capital is needed because these are defined definitions.

## ARTICLE I: Definitions

**Section 1.** “Association” shall mean and refer to the Severn Woods Homeowners Association, Inc.

**Section 2.** “Owner” shall mean and refer to the record owner, whether one or more persons or entities of a fee simple title to any lot which is a part of the Properties, including contract sellers, but excluding those having such interest merely as security for the performance of an obligation.

**Section 3.** “Properties” shall mean and refer to all real property hereinafter described and such additions thereto as may be hereafter brought within the jurisdiction of the Association.

**Section 4.** “Common Area” shall mean and refer to all real property owned by the Association, including recreation and open space land, as shown on the plat of Severn Woods, for the common use and enjoyment of the Owners.

**Section 5.** “Declarant” shall mean and refer to Severn Woods Homeowners Association.

**Section 6.** “Members shall mean lot owners in the subdivision of Severn Woods. “Associate Members” shall consist of members of the immediate families of lot owners provided that said lot owner resides in the subdivision. Associate Members also shall include tenants occupying the premises under a lease in the case where the member is not a resident of Severn Woods.

**Section 7.** “Buffer” shall mean an area of no less than 25 feet adjacent to the non-tidal wetlands as shown on the final plans, record plat and final development plan which is to be left undisturbed.

# Proposition 10 - Attorney Fees to Liens



*June 2024 Homeowner Meeting*

- ❖ **Propose keeping.**
  - Open up floor for any proposed edits by homeowners:

## **Proposition #10: Attorney Fees to Liens**

Modify governing documents to permit the addition of attorney or other legal/processing fees to fine or lien amounts.

- In Favor**
- Opposed**

# Proposition 11 - Rule Update on Vehicles



June 2024 Homeowner Meeting

## ❖ Propose keeping.

- Open up floor for any proposed edits by homeowners:

**Justification:** We can continue to not allow these being in driveways but they will always be allowed on the street per the county. Which is a bigger safety hazard or worse to curb appeal?

### Proposition #11: Rule Update - Vehicles

Modify rule on vehicles (**Article XIII, Section 12** of the **Covenants**) to now allow all non-hidden/covered RVs, trailers, boats, large trucks, etc. by allowing all cars and vehicles if they meet the following conditions.

1. No person/animal may live/sleep in it while within the community.
2. If on one's property, it must be fully parked in one's garage or driveway (i.e. not fully/partially on one's grass).
3. Must be following state/county laws (i.e. not parked encroaching on a sidewalk).
4. Cannot be inoperable, falling apart, leaking, missing license plate, tags, etc. (if applicable). Else, must be parked in one's garage or fashioned with a **fitted** cover.

# Proposition 12 - Rule Update on Fences



June 2024 Homeowner Meeting

## ❖ Propose keeping.

- Open up floor for any proposed edits by homeowners:

**Justification:** Dozens of homes already have this and it slipped past multiple architectural committees before this board... and it's pretty standard now to do.

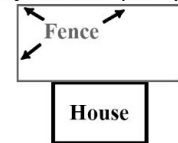
### Proposition #12: Rule Update - Fences

Modify rule on fences (**Article XIII, Section 13 of Covenants**) to now allow them to start at up to the halfway point of one's house so long as:

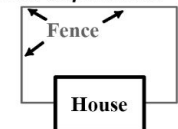
1. The fence is still forming right angles from the house.
2. None of the fence extends past the halfway point (towards the street) of the dwelling.

#### Meaning:

**Currently Permitted (ONLY):**



**Would now be permitted:**

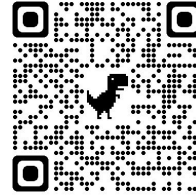


*Reminder that new fences still require Architectural Committee approval.*

# Previous Homeowner Minutes



- ❖ Vote to Approve [Last homeowner minutes \(October 2023\) - 5 pages](#)



## Summary

- ❖ Old telephone boxes
- ❖ Gas lines
- ❖ HOA financials
- ❖ Landscaping
- ❖ Empty lot
- ❖ Trees trimming
- ❖ Casino grant
- ❖ Meeting minutes are public now
- ❖ Board's desire to have outside counsel review governing documents and also update procedures
- ❖ Board workload
- ❖ Signage/notifications for meetings
- ❖ Update to Vehicle rules
- ❖ Board to add link on website for getting street light repair/fixes from county
- ❖ Casino grant - fencing
- ❖ Fence responsibility if HOA pays for it
- ❖ Mosquitos





# New Business



# Proposition 13 - Reimburse Two Homeowners for Vinyl Fence

- ❖ If/when grant money received, propose giving reimbursement to the two homeowners who already replaced theirs on their own dime in ~2022 based on the footage ratio of OUR quote for the fencing they replaced on the street-side.



# Potential Referendum on what to do with Top Lot?



June 2024 Homeowner Meeting

- ❖ We've heard a lot of ideas on the top lot including a mixed used, part playground, shed for HOA stuff and for dropping off ballot, partial concrete flat top for holding meetings, gazebo, planter boxes, etc.
- ❖ With that, we may come up with a ballot-style referendum to answer for us what the priorities are so we know what to budget for in our next grant.







# Open Forum

Any proposition requests, any complaints, etc.

