



# HILLCREST HAPPENINGS

Tidbits of Information About Hillcrest Cluster

Spring 2021

## UPCOMING WORK: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

In response to a dangerous tree behind 11010 through 11018 Saffold Way, the Cluster will have work performed to remove the tree. **This work will be performed on Wednesday, April 14th, weather permitting.** Due to the nature of the tree, a crane will be utilized for the removal. Do accommodate this, **ALL VEHICLES must be removed from the parking lot in front of 11000-11018 Saffold Way on Wednesday for safety.** Notices will be placed on all affected vehicles. For more information or questions, please email [ben@hillcrest-cluster.com](mailto:ben@hillcrest-cluster.com).

### PROPOSED STANDARDS UPDATES

Following feedback from residents, the Board of Directors has started an effort to revisit and review all of the design standards for the cluster. This effort has been taken on with the goal of modernizing standards to offer inclusion of modern materials which represent reduced maintenance opportunities for homeowners, as well as the introduction of clarity of wording to better represent the intent of existing standards.

Following an initial review of all section standards, the Board has identified the following areas which will have formal DRB updates filed:

- Cap Flashing
- Gutters & Downspouts
- Fences
- Landscaping
- Air Conditioners
- Decks
- Siding
- Lighting
- Stairs
- Paint

Thus far we have drafted proposed updates for:

- Cap Flashing
- Gutters & Downspouts
- Fences
- Landscaping

Prior to submitting these applications to the Reston Association DRB, the Board of Directors wanted to offer an open opportunity for feedback on the proposed standards updates.

The proposed updates can be found on the cluster website at <https://www.hillcrest-cluster.com/proposed-cluster-design-standards-updates/>

On this site you will find the existing standards language and the proposed updates for all sections and each standard category. **The Board would ask that you review these and offer any feedback via email at [info@hillcrest-cluster.com](mailto:info@hillcrest-cluster.com) by April, 25, 2021.**

The updates primarily reflect improvements of wording to better clarify the existings standards, as well as explicit inclusion of existing standards which currently apply from Reston Association, but that weren't explicitly included in our handbook previously.

If approved by Reston Association, the proposed updates **WILL NOT** mean that homes will be required to immediately change their properties to comply with any new guidance. However, it means that for any work completed moving forward, homeowners will be expected to comply with these standards rather than previous standards or what currently exists on the home.

We are trying to move as quickly as we can on the updating of all of these standards so that residents planning summer maintenance have the direction and support they need prior to starting any work.



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## ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POLICY

After months of research, the drafting of a policy, and review from the cluster legal counsel, the Board of Directors passed a resolution at last night's Board meeting providing clear instruction on charging of electric vehicles within the cluster. This policy was developed with the intent of ensuring safety around all charging vehicles, while communicating a clear support for any resident in the cluster who may be investigating electric vehicles as an option for their household. This policy can be found on our cluster website as well at <https://www.hillcrest-cluster.com/services/>.

This policy was effective as of April 9, 2021. If you own an electric vehicle, please be sure to review this policy and adhere to the instructions therein when charging your vehicle moving forward. If the policy is not adhered to, it lays out the enforcement mechanisms therein, which will be taken by the Board.

Thank you for your patience while we get this policy developed within the legal authority within the association and for all input we have received from residents that prompted the desire to formalize this resolution.

To help offer clarity on this policy. Below is a photo of how charging cables should be placed going across cluster sidewalks.



## ANIMAL WASTE REMINDER

Here in Fairfax County, we love our dogs and clean water, too. We can have both if dog owners are responsible and clean up after their pets.

Pet waste contains fecal coliform bacteria and can transmit diseases and parasites such as salmonellosis, cryptosporidiosis, and hookworm - just to name a few. These can make both humans and pets sick. Decaying pet waste can also contribute to fish kills in local streams and the Potomac River.

Always clean up after your pet. **IT'S THE LAW.** Failure to properly dispose of dog waste is a Class 4 misdemeanor and **subject to a \$250 fine** (County code, Section 41.1-2-6). Plus freezing poop popsicles are a bad look for winter.



## CLUSTER COMMUNICATIONS

If you have not yet done so, please complete the Cluster Census form to confirm your contact information for cluster communications.

<https://forms.gle/eoiSNwgmjTt7ew8>

We recognize that if you received this newsletter via email, you are already in our database for communications. Consider mentioning and sharing this form with your neighbors if you see them in person, to help make sure we get as many people as possible the information they need on upcoming cluster announcements.

It is critical for the Board to have up-to-date contact information for all residents **AT ALL TIMES.**



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## 2021 DUES PAYMENTS

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**The dues assessment for 2021 is \$1320.00 per house, which are due by June 30th, 2021**, after which interest will accrue at a rate of 1.5% per month, charged on the first day of each month in which there is an unpaid balance until the account is paid in full.

Checks should be payable to **Hillcrest Cluster Association** and mailed to:

**Hillcrest Cluster Association  
c/o Capitol Property Management  
P.O. Box 71239  
Philadelphia, PA 19176**

If necessary, quarterly statements will be mailed to all HCA members with an outstanding balance on the first of April, July and October, with additional reminders as needed.

All accounts with an overdue balance on December 31st will be referred to the HCA legal counsel for collection. After the account is referred and after due notice has been given, a lien will be filed against the title of the property. Should the account continue in arrears, further legal action may be taken. All legal expenses, including attorney fees, incurred by the Hillcrest Cluster Association in seeking to enforce its governing documents shall be added to the account balance, and shall be the basis for a lien and/or lawsuit to recover all sums owed.

## DRB PROCESS REMINDER

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As you are working on your home or are considering upgrades, we urge you to consult the cluster standards which can be found on the Cluster website at [www.hillcrest-cluster.com](http://www.hillcrest-cluster.com). **If there are any specific questions about a standard, please air on the side of caution and contact a board member first at [info@hillcrest-cluster.com](mailto:info@hillcrest-cluster.com) BEFORE conducting the work.**

Remember that while your contractors may be professional and know what they are doing, they are **NOT** experts on the Cluster standards, and may recommend work be performed which, while well-intended, violate the Cluster Standards, and require a formal DRB application prior to

being installed.

Our goal is to maintain the high design standards of the community, while avoiding any homeowner being reprimanded for work they had installed, resulting in the removal of that work at the homeowner expense.

A brief summary of the steps needed to complete and submit a request for alterations or additions to your property follows. Homeowners are encouraged to call the Reston Association Covenants Office for more complete information and assistance, or to check the website at [www.reston.org](http://www.reston.org).

Please Note: In addition, alterations to your Saffold Way property must also follow Fairfax County zoning and construction permit ordinances, which change from time to time. It is your responsibility to be sure your project is in compliance with these requirements.

1. Download a DRB application from the RA website: [Link Found Here](#). This form also can be picked up at the Reston Association Office (12001 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, VA 20191), or you can call (703) 435-6530 to request that the form be mailed to you.
2. If you have any questions, call the HCA Board member responsible for DRB applications and RA's Member Relations Office and/or to find out if approved Cluster specifications already exist for your project or to get a clearer idea about what will be acceptable. If so, your request must conform to those specifications. Copies of the Reston Association's booklet, Design Guidelines and Design Review Process User's Guide, are available from the Association office. Design guidelines are also available on the Reston Association website, [www.reston.org](http://www.reston.org).
3. Complete your application, making sure you get the proper signatures required and provide as much detail about your project as possible. Specifications matter. You must also inform your neighbors of your plans, and be sure the Neighboring Property Owners Acknowledgement at the bottom of the application form is signed. Another signature must be completed by an officer of the Cluster Board of Directors.
4. Submit your application to the HCA Board member responsible for DRB applications. S/he will review the application and either approve it as is or disapprove



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and list the Board as an affected party.

5. The HCA Board member will return the application to you.
6. After gathering the required signatures acknowledging your plans, submit the application to the Reston Association. You may scan and email, mail, or hand-deliver your application to the RA Covenants Office.

HCA Covenants Advisor: Cat Castrence – ccastrence@reston.org, 703-673-2038

7. Our RA Covenants Advisor will review it to verify the the information provided. They will advise you if additional information is needed. They also will notify you of when the application will be reviewed by the DRB, as the DRB meets at scheduled meeting times to review these applications. Note that it may take weeks for your application to be reviewed.
8. If the application is for a major addition, or another party is involved, it will be included on the agenda for consideration at the next available scheduled meeting of the DRB. You should attend the meeting and present your application.
9. Attend the DRB meeting where your application will be discussed.

The DRB is the ultimate authority regarding approvals. If the DRB approves your application, the form will be approved, signed, dated, and returned to you and the original application will be filed at RA in a folder for your property.

## THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

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I wanted to personally take a moment to thank everyone in the cluster for their patience, feedback, and support of the Board of Directors. It is important to remember that everyon on the Board are volunteers and neighbors who actively work to maintain and improve the cluster for ALL residents.

For those who have provided feedback through our website and email account, thank you. For those who had responded to previous cluster survey's, thank you.

I know that, at times, it may not seem like the Board is listening to you, but I assure you we are.

actively trying to balance the interests of all members of the community, while addressing what often feels like overwhelming challenges for the cluster, especially related to erosion and tree maintenance concerns. (Examples of this include the successful completion of the stormwater management which was just completed in the “Lake Saffold” area behind Fairfield Section, and upcoming work this week to remove a tree in immediate danger of falling.)

We do all of this while trying to ensure fiscal responsibility for the association, and compliance with all legal regulations placed on us.

Our primary objectives have been to act on the feedback we have recieved, and ensure safety first for all homes and residents, as well as ensuring equitable, fair enforcement of policies that are in place.

If you have provided feedback or highlighted a Cluster project that has not yet been address, I ask that you have patience with us. We have not forgotten about you. We simply are trying to do the most we can with the limited budget available each year, while we priortize projects which address safety concerns first.

The reason we produce this quarterly newsletter is to offer as much transparency as possible on what we are working on to help the community. Please remember that we are on the same team, and are constantly trying to improve the transparency of communication at all times.

I hope that everyone is staying safe, as the cluster, state, and nation navigate our way through what is hopefully the end of a very difficult year with the COVID-19 pandemic. The Board will continue to work it's hardest to serve the cluster effectively with reponsibility and empathy for our community.