

Audubon Square / Fallbrook Newsletter

Volume 4/Issue 10

October 2020

Board of Directors

President Dena Saunders

Vice President

Secretary Stephan Kaufman

Treasurer Supreet Kaur

Director at Large Elizabeth Baldwin



OPEN MEETING via ZOOM
October 20, 2020

The Board is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom
Annual Meeting on October 8th @ 7:00pm

To Join the Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/5268390540?pwd=MWZXRTRRa2RWNUlmbGRYYIVydzRVZz09>

Meeting ID: 526 839 0540

Passcode: Audubonsq

Trash Pick-Up is Tuesdays & Fridays

Trash in a secured container
AFTER 7:00 pm on Monday & Thursday

Recycle is on Mondays
Set out **AFTER 7:00 pm** on Sunday
**MUST BE PLACED IN A
GREEN RECYCLE BIN**
If your recycling is missed, call: 311

CITY OF GAITHERSBURG

“ON DEMAND BULK PICK-UP PROGRAM”
Schedule a Pick-Up 301-258-6370

Community Association, Inc.
15742 Crabbs Branch Way
Rockville, MD 20855
P: (301) 258-7711 F: (301) 258-6283
www.communityassn.com

COMMUNITY MANAGERS

Josie Wells
Josie.Wells@communityassn.com
Phone: (301) 258-7711 Ext. 150

Brenda Lanier
Brenda.Lanier@communityassn.com
Phone: (301) 258-7711 Ext. 180

REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

NO bulk, NO YARD clippings, NO TRASH on Fallbrook! It is costing the community a fortune every year. Dues will go up if it continues!

Gaithersburg Board of Elections Information

Office Address: 18753 North Frederick Avenue, Suite 210 Gaithersburg, MD 20879
Office Hours: 8:30am - 5pm, Mon- Fri
Accessible Parking and Building

Early Voting in person (Oct. 26 and No.3): Early Voting Centers open at 7 a.m. until 8p.m. Be in line before 8 p.m. and you will be able to vote. Voting Centers will be listed with the ballots sent by mail.

Voting by mail: Post Office – mail goes to Board of Elections.

Voting by using Ballot drop boxes: Put ballot in Drop Box. There is a Ballot drop box outside the door at the Gaithersburg Board of Elections. The Drop boxes are secured by surveillance cameras that run 24 hours, in-person security, or a mix of both, and the boxes are inspected and emptied twice a day.

Registering to vote requires a Maryland picture ID and some document such as an ID, a utility bill or bank statement that proves where you live. You may register online or in person. If you want to vote by mail, the online ballot application process is:
<https://voterservices.elections.Maryland.gov/OnlineVoter-Registration/InstructionsStep1>.

Deadline to register is Oct. 13th

If you prefer to register in person, printout an application and either mail it to our local elections board or show up there. Other places such as MVA, health departments and state offices have applications available that can be filled out and returned there.

If you would like a mail-in ballot and it is after the Oct. 20th deadline, you may show up in person at your local elections board and exchange your ballot application for a blank ballot.

Track your ballot

<https://voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/votersearch> (the Maryland State Board of Elections website) to track that your ballot has been processed.

Halloween & COVID-19: Have Fun While Staying Safe

Many traditional Halloween activities can be high-risk for spreading viruses. There are several safer, alternative ways to participate in Halloween. If you may have COVID-19 or you may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, you should not participate in in-person Halloween festivities and should not give out candy to trick-or-treaters.

LOWER RISK ACTIVITIES

These lower risk activities can be safe alternatives:

- Carving or decorating pumpkins with members of your household and displaying them
- Carving or decorating pumpkins outside, at a safe distance, with neighbors or friends
- Decorating your house, apartment, or living space
- Doing a Halloween scavenger hunt where children are given lists of Halloween-themed things to look for while they walk outdoors from house to house admiring Halloween decorations at a distance
- Having a virtual Halloween costume contest
- Having a Halloween movie night with people you live with
- Having a scavenger hunt-style trick-or-treat search with your household members in or around your home rather than going house to house



MODERATE RISK ACTIVITIES

- Participating in one-way trick-or-treating where individually wrapped goodie bags are lined up for families to grab and go while continuing to social distance (such as at the end of a driveway or at the edge of a yard)
- If you are preparing goodie bags, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 second before and after preparing the bags.
- Having a small group, outdoor, open-air costume parade where people are distanced more than 6 feet apart
- Attending a costume party held outdoors where protective masks are used and people can remain more than 6 feet apart
- ***A costume mask (such as for Halloween) is not a substitute for a cloth mask. A costume mask should not be used unless it is made of two or more layers of breathable fabric that covers the mouth and nose and does not leave gaps around the face.***
- Do not wear a costume mask over a protective cloth mask because it can be dangerous if the costume mask makes it hard to breathe. Instead, consider using a Halloween-themed cloth mask.
- Going to an open-air, one-way, walk-through haunted forest where appropriate mask use is enforced, and people can remain more than 6 feet apart
- If screaming will likely occur, greater distancing is advised. The greater the distance, the lower the risk of spreading a respiratory virus.
- Visiting pumpkin patches or orchards where people use hand sanitizer before touching pumpkins or picking apples, wearing masks is encouraged or enforced, and people are able to maintain social distancing
- Having an outdoor Halloween movie night with local family friends with people spaced at least 6 feet apart
- If screaming will likely occur, greater distancing is advised. The greater the distance, the lower the risk of spreading a respiratory virus.

HIGHER RISK ACTIVITIES

Avoid these higher risk activities to help prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19:

- Participating in traditional trick-or-treating where treats are handed to children who go door to door
- Having trunk-or-treat where treats are handed out from trunks of cars lined up in large parking lots
- Attending crowded costume parties held indoors
- Going to an indoor haunted house where people may be crowded together and screaming
- Going on hayrides or tractor rides with people who are not in your household
- Using alcohol or drugs, which can cloud judgement and increase risky behaviors
- Traveling to a rural fall festival that is not in your community if you live in an area with community spread of COVID-19



OPPOSE City of Gaithersburg Entry into CCOC

A large majority of respondents to a recent survey rejected the idea of the City of Gaithersburg opting into the Commission on Common Ownership Communities (CCOC) program, according to a city official who spoke at an April 8 mayor and City Council work session.

The City of Gaithersburg is considering legislation to allow residents, community managers and boards of homeowner and condominium associations to use the services offered by the CCOC. Among the most important of these is impartial resolution of disputes between homeowners and their associations, which the CCOC claims is faster and cheaper than going to court.

CCOC operations are funded by an annual \$5 per residence fee. The City of Gaithersburg is the only large political entity in Montgomery County that has not opted into the program. The increase would total \$1170 at \$5 per year, which is the cost of a tree removal, half the cost of keeping Fallbrook clean or the entire cost of the newsletter!

Of the survey respondents, 19 of 68 residents (28 percent) and two of three property managers (66 percent) supported opting in. None of the boards of directors favored the idea.

Respondents in favor said the program would:

- provide a neutral party to oversee homeowners' concerns.
- help ensure proper operation of associations.
- potentially save money by keeping people out of court.
- protect property values by upholding community standards.



Forty-six of 68 residents (68 percent), 15 boards of directors (100 percent) and one property manager (33 percent) opposed joining the CCOC.

Among other things, they said it would:

- cost too much
- add another layer of bureaucracy
- merely duplicate services already offered by homeowners' and condominium associations.

To contact city council members, email: Ryan Spiegel: Ryan.Spiegel@gaitthersburgmd.gov;

Neil Harris: Neil.Harris@gaitthersburgmd.gov; Laurie-Anne Sayles: Laurie-Anne.Sayles@gaitthersburgmd.gov;

Michael Sesma: Michael.Sesma@gaitthersburgmd.gov; Robert Wu: Robert.Wu@gaitthersburgmd.gov

Let's Get Ready for Winter!

In Gaithersburg, residents and business owners are required to remove snow and ice from the public sidewalks abutting their property within 12 hours of the last precipitation; however, when possible, property owners should wait until the snow removal crews have cleared the roadways to avoid continuous clearings.

Do I have to clear the sidewalks in front of and to the side of my house if I have a corner lot?

Yes, adjacent to property that the person owns, leases, or manages, including any walkway in the public right-of-way.

Why should I clear my walk? Nobody walks on it when it is covered.

Part of being a good neighbor is clearing the sidewalks so pedestrians can use them if needed. Maybe no one walks there *because* it is covered with snow and ice.



**BE
WINTER
READY**

What are the requirements for commercial properties?

Each owner, tenant, or manager is jointly and severally responsible for clearing snow and ice from the property within 24 hours after the end of the precipitation that caused the condition.

What are the requirements for multi-family properties or apartments?

An individual who lives in a multi-family residential property is not responsible for removing snow and ice from a common walkway or parking area.

I live in a Homeowner Association property. Am I still required to clear my walk?

Unless otherwise indicated by a Homeowner Association, walkways adjacent to your single-family residential lot are required to be cleared, while most Homeowners Associations clear common areas.

What is the penalty for violating the law and who is responsible for enforcing the law?

A violation of this Section is a class C violation (\$50 fine) – although the emphasis is certainly on voluntary compliance. The County Department of Housing and Community Affairs, Code Enforcement Section is authorized to enforce this Section.

Am I exempted from the law if I am a senior citizen or have a disability?

No, there is no automatic exemption.

Do I still have to clear my walk even if I am out of town? Yes.