



January 2016

# Communicator

GREENBELT HOMES, INC. | A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

## When Snow and Ice Don't Make Everything Nice

By Lauren Cummings

Winter is upon us, and inevitably, GHI will see some snow and ice covering our roads and sidewalks over the next two months. GHI members are fortunate to have both cooperative staff and Greenbelt city employees at the ready to keep our community accessible and safe.

GHI will begin plowing and cleaning sidewalks once 4 inches have accumulated on the ground. First priority is given to removing snow from the 88 court parking lots, GHI-maintained road surfaces and main service-side sidewalks along roads and court parking lots (approximately 2.3 miles of walkway). Second priority is given to secondary walkways, gardenside walkways and other pedestrian egress (approximately 4.1 miles of walkway). The City of Greenbelt places salt on roads in preparation for storms. When two or three inches of snow have accumulated and more is expected, snow is plowed. Main roads and streets, connecting public thoroughfares, and public residential streets will be plowed first.

**Did you know that you have responsibilities too?** Here's a list of do's and don'ts for GHI members.

**Do** remove snow and ice from sidewalks within your yard boundaries within 24 hours after the snowfall stops, on both gardenside and serviceside. On shared walkways between individual units, responsibility is shared by adjacent neighbors.

**Do** help your neighbors who may be physically or otherwise unable to clear sidewalks. *(optional)*

**Do** keep the walkway to your refuse containers and recycling bins clear of snow and ice in order for the collectors to

provide service to your home. During significant snow / ice storms and the days immediately following, containers must be placed adjacent to a cleared parking lot.

**Do** be of assistance to your community by cleaning off a storm drains in your court's gutter to help melting snow run off or shovel out a nearby fire hydrant for accessibility. *(optional)*

**Do** use ice melt products containing Magnesium Chloride rather than rock salt for concrete sidewalk areas.

**Don't** use rock salt because it can cause pitting in concrete surfaces, thus shortening the life of the concrete, which then costs the co-op money to repair.

**Don't** shovel snow from walkways or cars into any portion of plowed streets, courts or sidewalks. Placing snow in these areas only hampers snow removal efforts, increases costs for all members, and creates a nuisance for other members or visitors to the Court (i.e. mail carriers). Snow should be shoveled into your yard or common areas.

**Don't** overexert yourself. Be aware of the stress shoveling places on your muscles and your cardiovascular system and also be mindful of hypothermia and the effects of frostbite.

For more information, visit <http://www.ghi.coop/content/winter-storm-event-procedures>. To report problems with city roads conditions, contact the Public Works Department at 301-474-8004.

### 2016/2017 BOARD of DIRECTORS' OFFICERS

**Steve Skolnik**  
President

sdskolnik@gmail.com  
301-503-0815

**Susan Ready**  
Vice Pres.

suready@verizon.net  
301-345-1612

**Chuck Hess**  
Treasurer

Chuckhess1040@netzero.com  
301-474-3670

**Ed James**  
Secretary

edward.james@gmail.com  
301-345-8479

### Stefan Brodd Selected to Fill Vacant Board Seat

At their November 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Board selected Stefan Brodd to fill the vacant seat arising from the resignation of Frank DeBernardo. Director Brodd, who has been a GHI member since 1999, will serve on the Board until the next annual meeting in May.



### STAY CONNECTED



Greenbelt Homes

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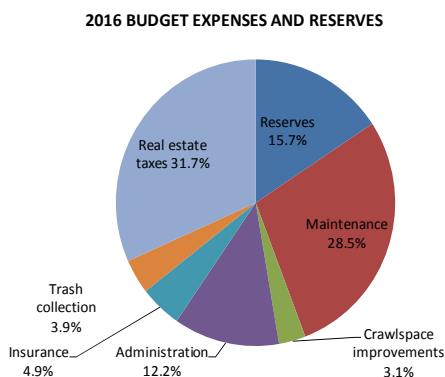
## An Update on GHI Finances: Key 2016 Budget Priorities

By Joe Perry, Director of Finance

It's a new year, GHI! For the Finance Department, it's a busy time of year. We've completed the 2016 budget, applied adjustments for real estate taxes, mailed fee letters, updated monthly charges, and issued coupon books. We're currently processing year-end transactions in preparation for the annual audit. **The substitute 1098 real estate tax statements that many members need in order to file their 2015 income tax returns will be completed and mailed January 28<sup>th</sup>.** Interest in becoming a member of the co-operative remains high, as evidenced by attendance at pre-purchase orientations. The sales of memberships totaled 80 for 2015, and selling prices remain steady. All things considered, it looks like we

will have a small surplus once the final audit is complete for 2015. Savings associated with insurance and trash collection contributed to the surplus.

Looking forward, the 2016 budget offers information on the first year of the



Homes Improvement Program, which includes replacement of reserved improvements (windows, doors, siding, baseboard heaters, etc.), crawlspace improvements, and optional improvements. All members with crawlspaces will begin contributing in 2016 as the work on the first group of crawlspaces begins. GHI has planned this work to be completed over the next 5 years.

There are three main contracts which either significantly increased or are new in 2016: fee-for-service contracted work increased, and two new contracts are for needed repairs to concrete porch roofs and garage walls and floors. In 2015 staff implemented a plan to utilize an arborist to identify decaying trees which are in close proximity to GHI property so they can be removed before they fall and damage property. That plan will continue in 2016 at a slightly lower cost than budgeted in 2015.

The GHI Board and staff continue to look for ways to keep costs down. If you have any questions about the budget or your co-op fee, please contact the Finance Department at 301-474-4161, ext. 136, or email [jperry@ghi.coop](mailto:jperry@ghi.coop).

### Member Announcements

#### Recycle Your Christmas Tree at Designated Locations

Greenbelt Public Works will pick up trees at locations throughout GHI and process them into mulch. Between December 28 through the first week of February, look for a drop off location near you that is designated by a small wooden sign in the shape of a Christmas tree.



## WHAT'S HAPPENING

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held at the GHI Administration Offices on Hamilton Place, and are open to all GHI members. Dates are subject to change.

### January

1	--	OFFICE CLOSED: New Year's Day
7	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
9	11:00 am	Pre-Purchase Orientation
12	7:30 pm	Task Force - Existing Windows & Doors
13	7:30 pm	Architectural Review Committee
14	7:00 pm	Finance Committee
15	--	OFFICE CLOSED
18	--	OFFICE CLOSED: Martin Luther King Jr.
19	7:30 pm	Companion Animal Committee
20	7:00 pm	Woodlands Committee
21	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
25	7:00 pm	Communications Committee
25	7:00 pm	Pre-Purchase Orientation
27	7:00 pm	Buildings Committee
29	--	OFFICE CLOSED

Call 301-474-6011 for emergency maintenance outside of normal hours or when GHI is closed.

### Member Announcements

#### New GHI Legislative & Government Affairs Committee Seeks Members

At the December 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, the Board established a Legislative and Government Affairs Committee. A charter will be developed and published in the GHI E-News in the near future. Members interested in this committee will be invited to submit their applications to the Manager's office at [sswaim@ghi.coop](mailto:sswaim@ghi.coop).

#### Red Added as Door Color Option for HIP

The Board approved the addition of "red" to the color choices available for HIP exterior doors, beginning in 2017.

#### Updates to the Members' Handbook

There are three sections of the Handbook that were updated. Please replace the following pages:

X.I.12. Exterior Walls: Replace pages – 62a-09/62b-09 with 62a-09/62b-15

X.K.4. Central Units and Ductless Split Systems: Replace pages – 63d-13/63e-09 with 63d-13/63e-15

X.I.B. Exterior Painting: Replace pages – 64-14/65-09 with 64-15/65-09