



January 2017

# Communicator

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

## HELP WANTED: YOUR CO-OP

By Ken Shields

When my wife and I moved to GHI almost three years ago, I wanted to learn more about our community. One way was to join a committee. Another was to drink beer and listen to great music at the New Deal. I have done both.

Participation on a GHI committee is a fun way to meet other members and a great way to have a voice in GHI. Participation on committees makes our co-op successful. The most important thing I have learned by working on a committee is that GHI staff, board and committee members want GHI to continue to thrive.

In a recent survey of GHI members, respondents' most common answer to the question about participation on a committee was that they "do not have time." **It takes as little or as much time as you can share.** Some committees are even able to accomplish a lot of their work remotely using email. Comments made in the survey also indicated that members do not clearly know the goals of committee work or how they can personally contribute. **We all have a vested interest in GHI and valuable contributions to make, regardless of expertise.**

Abbreviated descriptions and/or current activities of GHI committees are listed below. Volunteers are specifically needed for the Marketing and Member Outreach Committees, but all committees could use more volunteers. **Complete the online volunteer interest form at <http://bit.ly/2h5YCJ9> or contact Maesha McNeill at 301-474-4161 ext. 128.**

### 2016/2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS OFFICERS

**Steve Skolnik**  
President

sdskolnik@gmail.com  
301-503-0815

**Stefan Brodd**  
Vice Pres.

Stefan.brodd.greenbelt@gmail.com  
301-474-3183

**Chuck Hess**  
Treasurer

Chuckhess1040@netzero.com  
301-474-3670

**Ed James**  
Secretary

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

The Architectural Review Committee makes recommendations for preservation and enhancement of homes, yards, and common areas.

The Buildings Committee is now working on changes to GHI rules for additions, updates to ventilation requirements and reviewing Washington Gas proposals.

The Communications Committee publishes the monthly "Communicator" newsletter and is currently working on a recommendation for member participation in meetings using technology.



Woodlands Committee volunteers at a recent clean up on Ridge Road.

The Companion Animal Committee is developing a "Guide for Members with Companion Animals" to identify animal-related resources in the area and to assist new members' transition with their animals to GHI.

Protecting and enhancing GHI's assets, and preserving the financial stability and sustainability of our community, is the purpose of the Finance Committee.

The Investment Committee oversees the administrative and investment management policies of the co-op.

The Legislative and Government Committee informs and advises the board about legislative, judicial, and governmental matters affecting GHI.

Promoting GHI, attracting new members, and supporting sales of memberships is the goal of the Marketing Committee.

The Member Outreach Committee encourages member participation, and provides avenues for member input including recognition of volunteers and welcoming new members.

The Woodlands Committee is currently working on eradicating invasive species. It leads efforts to manage the GHI woodlands.

Committee meetings are open to all members to attend. In 2017, find a little time to get involved with your co-op! Volunteering your time helps us all save money and there's bound to be something listed here that you have an interest in. We can use your help and any time you can devote to helping your neighbors and our great co-op. Let's make 2017 the year of increased co-op volunteerism!

### STAY CONNECTED



Greenbelt Homes



GHIimgmt

**Subscribe to our weekly E-Newsletter for the most up-to-date information!  
Visit [www.ghi.coop](http://www.ghi.coop) and click on "I Want To...Subscribe to GHI E-News"**

## BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN HIGHLIGHTS ENORMOUS WORKLOAD FOR CO-OP

By Lauren Cummings

Each year the Board of Directors adopts a strategic plan that helps guide the work of managing our wonderful housing cooperative. Many of the items span multiple years, while others are intended to be completed within the 12 month period. This year, Board and staff focused on the following areas:

- buildings and property
- organization and infrastructure
- financial stability
- internal and external communication

Related to our buildings and property, the Board finalized the scope of work for frame building crawlspace remediation, and expanded the member loan repayment deferral program for the Homes Improvement Program (HIP). Also, a policy was established on solar energy systems, and 88 trees were planted with funds from a PEPCO line of credit. Ongoing efforts include managing the HIP, determining interest in installing natural gas co-op wide, and negotiating with WSSC regarding water pipe replacement, to name a few.

Under organization and infrastructure, the General Manager is developing a training and succession plan for staff, and the Board has completed the review of committee charters to ensure work is aligned with co-op goals. The Board also hopes to establish a long range planning committee to consider the best direction(s) for our coop in years to come.

Financial stability is always an important item in the Board's strategic plan; this year the Board accepted a plan to fund contingency reserves in light of anticipated spending needs. Additionally, the Board hopes to develop volunteer(s) to seek grants, and to create an education program on GHI finances including real estate taxes, inflation, and what's included in our monthly charges.

Communication with members and other groups that GHI works with is ongoing; this year the Board is examining methods to increase member participation in meetings using technology, and better ways to obtain member feedback on controversial topics.

The Board and staff are also working with the City of Greenbelt to assist GHI members who have hoarding issues. The Board has formed a new task force to formulate a policy for more expeditious transfer of membership in the event of a member's death, and also a task force to study and recommend possible bylaw changes.

With 1,600 units and 250 acres of land, GHI has a lot to manage. The Board's strategic plan is an important tool to keep our co-op moving forward.

## 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

2	--	OFFICE CLOSED
5	7:30 pm	<b>Board Meeting</b>
7	11:00 am	Pre Purchase Orientation
9	7:30 pm	Storm Water Management Task Force
10	8:30 am	Yardlines Committee
10	7:30 pm	Legislative and Government Affairs
11	7:30 pm	Architectural Review Committee
12	7:00 pm	Nominations & Elections Committee
12	7:00 pm	Finance Committee
13	--	OFFICE CLOSED
16	--	OFFICE CLOSED (MLK Day)
17	7:00 pm	Pre Purchase Orientation
17	7:30 pm	Companion Animal Committee
18	7:00 pm	Woodlands Committee
19	7:30 pm	<b>Board Meeting</b>
23	7:00 pm	Communications Committee
23	7:30 pm	Storm Water Management Task Force
24	7:00 pm	Audit Committee
25	7:00 pm	Buildings Committee
27	--	OFFICE CLOSED

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

### Member Announcements

#### Town Hall Meeting Scheduled for January 29<sup>th</sup>

The Board of Directors and GHI staff will host a Town Hall meeting for members on Sunday, January 29th.

This is a great opportunity to hear updates about the Homes Improvement Program and other co-op business. Members are also invited to ask questions and share their ideas for keeping the co-op strong. Information about the meeting time and location will be sent to members via a door hanger and announced in the E-news.

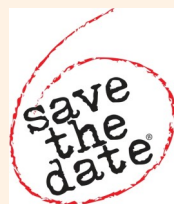


Image via Clipart Kid

#### 2017 GHI Budget Available Online

View the 2017 co-op budget that was passed by the Board of Directors at <http://bit.ly/2gFGMNp>.

#### 2016 Home Sales

85 Homes sold from January through November 2016. Welcome to all of our new members!