



Greenbelt Homes, Inc.

COMMUNICATOR

Monthly Publication of the Communications Committee



Home Improvements: Do I Need a Permit?

By Lauren Cummings

Living in a cooperative community means that we all agreed to be "the keepers of our property, and we have the right to expect that all of us will act responsibly to protect and care for that which each own and treasure together." Making improvements to our units is an important way to maintain them, but it also gives us a way to add our own touch to our homes. Maybe you've been saving up for a long time or perhaps you've decided to spend your tax refund on making some changes to your home. Before you invest your time and money into improvements, ensure that you follow the appropriate rules. The rules make sure that work is done correctly to protect our homes from safety issues as well as to help our co-op keep its historic appeal.

Permits must be obtained in advance of starting any work. Some modifications will require a GHI permit as well as a city permit, county permit, or even a WSSC permit, if plumbing is involved. Examples include improvements that require structural or electrical changes. Below are some of the most common GHI permits that members need for renovations or improvements.

- **Type I** - Additions, Decks
- **Type II** - Kitchen, Bathroom, Electrical, Shed
- **Type III** - Fence

You also need to obtain a GHI permit if you want to replace your unit's entrance door, add exterior lighting or install a rain barrel, just to name a few.

You can access all of the rules and GHI permit request forms on our website at <http://ghi.coop/content/tools-and-rules>. Keep in mind that processing permit requests takes time; some require up to 30 days, and longer if your request requires Board consideration. So plan ahead!



*Interior wall during a renovation
Photo Credit: Tom Sporney*

We are lucky to have several knowledgeable and dedicated staff members in GHI's Technical Services Department to help us navigate the rules and regulations of the co-op, city and county. If you have questions after reviewing the information about the permit process, you can contact Tom Sporney, Director of Technical Services at 301-474-4161 ext. 142.

2014/2015 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



"Like" us on
Facebook
"Greenbelt
Homes"

Subscribe to our E-Newsletter for the most up-to-date information! Visit www.ghi.coop and click on "I Want To...Subscribe to GHI E-News"

Follow us on
Twitter:
"GHImgmt"



Finance Tip: Lowering Your Property Taxes

By GHI Finance Department

Do you feel your property taxes are too high? Is your gross income less than \$60,000? If you answer **YES** to these questions, you could be eligible for the Maryland Homeowner's Property Tax Credit. The State of Maryland provides a credit for homeowners of all ages based upon your income. The credit is not automatically granted and each person must apply and disclose his or her income. You must apply every year no later than **September 1**. It may be worthwhile for you to complete Form HTC-60 to see if you qualify.

Homeowners who file and qualify by **May 1** will receive the credit directly on their property tax bill. Applicants filing after May 1 will be issued a refund check by the local government.

To obtain the application form, visit <http://www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/HTC-60.pdf>. You can also pickup a hard copy form at the GHI Information Center at the administration building on Hamilton Place.

Member Announcements

Town Hall Meeting Q&A and Video



In case you missed it, or just want to relive it, check out all of the resources available from the January 25th Town Hall Meeting. The scripts and Q&A from the meeting are available online at <http://www.ghi.coop/content/homes-improvement-program> (see "Additional Links" at the bottom of the page). The video will be broadcast on Comcast

channel 77 and Verizon channel 19, and can also be viewed on GHI's YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/Greenbelthomes>. Learn more about where the Homes Improvement Program stands and the decisions that the Board of Directors has already made regarding mandatory versus member opt-in components. The Homes Improvement Program begins next year – get informed!



Spring Your Clocks Forward

Daylight Savings Time begins on March 8th. Stay safe and change your smoke detector batteries!

New Online Fee Payment Process Coming

Enclosed with this newsletter is an insert with details about the changes in making online payments. No big changes, but we know you'll want to know!

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.

March		
2	7:00 pm	Pre Purchase Orientation
5	7:00 pm	Finance Committee
9	7:00 pm	Member Outreach Committee
9	7:30 pm	Marketing Committee
10	8:30 am	Yardlines Committee
10	7:30 pm	Historic Preservation Taskforce
11	7:30 pm	Architectural Review Committee
12	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
13	--	OFFICE CLOSED*
17	7:30 pm	Companion Animal Committee
18	7:00 pm	Nominations and Elections
18	7:00 pm	Woodlands Committee
19	6:30 pm	Investment Committee
19	7:30 pm	Finance Committee
21	11:00 am	Pre Purchase Orientation
23	7:00 pm	Communications Committee
25	7:00 pm	Buildings Committee
26	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
27	--	OFFICE CLOSED
30	7:00 pm	Pre Purchase Orientation

* Emergency maintenance service is available outside of normal hours or when GHI is closed. Call 301-474-6011.

Ice Cream Social – Learn More About How You Can Serve Your Co-op

If you think you may be interested in running for one of our co-op's elected positions, please join the Nominations & Elections Committee on Sunday, April 12th from 2-4 pm at the GHI Administration Building. At this fun event you can learn more about the terms of services, particular responsibilities, and details of the election process.



The membership will vote at the Annual Meeting in May to elect members to the Board of Directors, Audit Committee and Nominations & Elections Committee. Consider running for a position to help guide decisions about your co-op.

You can download the candidate packet at <http://www.ghi.coop/content/2015-candidate-packet>.

Additional information is available at www.ghi.coop, the GHI office, or from N&E Committee members, including chair Kandis Wyatt, who may be reached at ghi.nominationsandelections@gmail.com or 301-538-5715.