

A message from the board

Thank you for the outstanding participation in the neighborhood survey. We hope this summary accurately reflects the viewpoints expressed in the survey and gives you an idea of what the board will be focusing on the months to come.

As your neighbors and volunteers on the board, we want to ensure that The Crossings remains an outstanding place to live.

Covenants

Enforcing the covenants

A recurring theme within the survey results was the desire for the board to more proactively and consistently enforce the covenants. Common violations that were noted in the survey results include:

- Light post enforcement
- Yard maintenance
- Junk
- Fences
- Usage of common space
- Sheds
- Clean up after pets

The board response:

Over the past week, five notifications have been sent to home owners making them aware of violations to the covenants. One more will be sent out this week. **We will enforce and remediate to the extent permissible by the covenants**, including financial penalties, interest, and fees.

Rental Properties

A majority are in favor of putting some type of restrictions in the covenants that prevent owners from leasing. Some considerations include:

- Allowing exceptions for short term leasing due to lost jobs, relocation, military, difficulty selling, leasing back for closing
- Determining whether some or all current property owners are grandfathered from the leasing restrictions
- Preventing registered sex offenders from renting

Some homeowners not in favor of leasing restrictions, but did want property upkeep to be monitored and enforced in the neighborhood. Other suggestions include having tenants sign the covenants and mandatory background checks of tenants.

The board response:

- It is the **owner's responsibility to maintain their property**, regardless of whether they live in the property or lease it; and the board will be more proactive in holding owners accountable of this (see above – enforcing the covenants).
- Within two months, the board will propose an amendment to the covenants that puts restrictions on leasing. We will use the feedback from the survey and the advice of our legal counsel to guide this proposal, which will then be sent out to the homeowners for a vote.
- The covenants already restrict registered sex offenders from leasing in our neighborhood, which the board enforces (see above – enforcing the covenants).

Other Items for review

The survey identified several additional items that the board should consider amending to our covenants.

Some items to consider removing from the covenants include:

- Above ground pools
- Resale of house fees
- Livestock/chicken coops

Some items to consider adding to the covenants include:

- Matching mailboxes
- Color of houses
- Consideration of disabled vehicles as junk
- Wattage requirements on front lamp posts

The board response:

Over the next few months, the board will review these items and determine if there are opportunities to amend the covenants, considering the suggestions noted in the survey results. The board will strongly consider the rights and well-being of all homeowners, the value of our neighborhood and homes, and practicality and enforceability while making any proposed amendments. Any change to the covenants must be voted on by homeowners.

We will use the **annual HOA meeting in April** as an opportunity to discuss these items in greater detail with our neighbors.

Being good neighbors

In general, the survey results indicated that one of the pillars of this neighborhood is the people. We like each other!

Concerns

The survey results identified several areas of concern:

- Speeding in neighborhood and on Rochester and Powell
- Parking on the street
- Snow removal
- Sidewalk and property maintenance
- Cleaning up after pets
- Music volume

The board response:

Some of these items are a violation of our covenants, which we will enforce. Some of these items are a violation of township regulations (i.e. street parking and snow removal). Regardless of covenants and regulations, **respect of and goodwill towards your neighbors** is an expectation of anyone living or visiting our neighborhood.

Social Events

We all agree, we want to more opportunities to get know each other. This neighborhood was built off of great community activities and events. There is a strong desire to keep that going.

Ideas from the survey results include:

- Composting club or garden challenge
- Neighborhood street fair/party
- Increased participation in the luminary event

The board response:

We are working to create a new role on the board that is responsible for chairing **a social committee**. There were 14 respondents on the survey who were interested in being a part of this committee. 3 of the 14 identified themselves. In the coming weeks, we hope to kick off this new committee and will encourage participation, especially of the 11 respondents who did not identify. Social activities in the neighborhood require time and commitment of all of us. Our hope is that having a committee will distribute the effort and increase participation and involvement.

Communication

In general, the preferred method of communication is email and Facebook. However, there is still a need to communicate important information (primarily neighborhood voting and dues collection) through mail.

Some opportunities to improve communication include:

- Ways to communicate referrals for home services
- Ways to alert problems/criminal activity in or near the neighborhood
- Ways to incorporate more fun postings
- Ways to better promote activities
- Updates to the neighborhood directory

The board response:

The communication methods of the board appear appropriate according to needs of our neighbors.

Facebook is a community resource and can be used for many of these reasons. Based on the suggestions from the survey, the board will review in opportunities to promote improved communication within the neighborhood wherever possible.

Common Areas

The survey results identified many opportunities to improve our common spaces.

The Phase 1 Park and Playground

Some suggestions include:

- Fixing the drainage
- Improving the paths in and out
- Improving/expanding the pavilion and picnic areas
- Adding a fire pit
- Adding shade to the playground
- Repairing/adding additional play equipment and options
- Adding lighting
- Adding a toilet and trashcans
- Adding a pool
- Adding a clubhouse

Other common spaces

Some suggestions include:

- Cleaning up the corner of Rochester and Powell
- Cleaning up downed trees and trash – including wooded areas
- Lighting in street areas that do not have houses
- Replacing the big stones at the entrances with signs
- Improving visibility pulling in and out of neighborhood
- Having an additional fall clean-up of leaves
- Improving plant choices – having a landscape architect
- Adding trash cans/dog waste bags
- Adding trees back
- Adding grates on the drain pipes by the large retention pond
- Reviewing the phase 2 play area – invest and maintain, or remove to focus resources on other areas

The board response:

In addition to grass cutting, insurance, and a 1 time fall cleanup of leaves, the remainder of our dues primarily goes towards tree cleanup. Please notify the board if there are downed or concerning trees in the common areas. Please also notify the board of any visibility concerns pulling into and out of our neighborhoods due to overgrown trees and bushes. The board will promptly respond.

Each year, the neighborhood has a **spring cleanup day**. Participation in this event has traditionally been low. We should take advantage of this day as an opportunity to conduct general maintenance and cleanup of the neighborhood. But, it requires participation. In absence of participation, the neighborhood would need to pay for maintenance services.

Beyond general maintenance, we will use the **annual HOA meeting in April** as an opportunity to discuss options about what we would like to do with our common spaces. Most of these items will require an investment by homeowners in order to make, maintain, and possibly insure improvements. Significant changes requiring a special assessment of more than \$10,000 must be voted on by homeowners.