Change IS happening...

This newsletter has occasionally been criticized for bearing too much bad news. There’s some validity to that because our mission from the beginning was to become informed and then to inform you...of everything. As we studied governance of our Association over the past two years, much of what we found was unfortunately..."bad news".

In this issue, we connect some recent dots that seem to be flashing green as we trek down the road of transition from developer control to self governance. Read on...

1. Meeting of our Board of Directors, December 22, 2014

The following appeared in the minutes:

"Mr. Manery* reported that Pulte had reviewed the sites included on the updated erosion repair list provided on 11/13/14 from First Service Residential. Pulte will be repairing, at its expense, 15 of the 20 items on the list with two of the items already completed."
For over a year, GIO/TST had been communicating many of these issues to our Board of Directors and thus indirectly to Pulte, without much progress. The fact that the Board of Directors is now dealing with these issues and getting significant cooperation from Pulte is a positive step forward and we welcome it.

* President of the SCCL Community Association and simultaneously Pulte VP Land Development

2. Facts About the Soil Collapses

Our first report of soil collapse to our board of directors was about Watsonia and Mandrake on April 17, 2014. Nothing happened until Lancaster County stepped in on June 18th. We followed with other written reports of other locations over several months. None were acknowledged, much less repaired. We began releasing summaries of those letters to you in June. Still, not much happened.

Today, EVERYTHING has changed. First Service Residential (“FSR”)* has accepted many reports about earth movement from many owners all around our property. They are working cooperatively with the Property & Grounds Committee (“PGC”) and have started publishing a list of the cases on the website. Vernon Kline, Community Manager, is meeting regularly with the PGC to update them on progress toward solutions. Vernon also passed out copies of that list to the members of the Resident’s Advisory Committee at their final RAC meeting last Thursday. (see Article #4 below)

* FSR: Our Property Management company that manages the property. Not to be confused with “the HOA” which is the corporation we all own.

Some highlights of the most recent PGC meeting, open to all owners, last Tuesday:

Left: Jerry Arnold, Chairman of Property & Grounds makes his point to the team.

Right: Vernon Kline, Community Manager, describes the things that need to be done and his commitment to get them done.
Sidebar: Contact With PGC

Jim also tells us of the progress of working down a backlog of emails that have been sent directly to the committee. For future reference, here is how to most effectively communicate a property related issue:

1. Your first point of contact has been and continues to be our property management company, First Service Residential. They are equipped for and will handle any property related issue, best communicated through a work order or email from you. (See the Community Home page of the website.) Vernon Kline and Brett Lindsay (Common Area Manager) are committed to ensuring the property is properly maintained.

2. Then, if your issue is not handled, feel free to contact the Property and Grounds Committee at their email:

   propertyandgrounds.committee@oursuncitycarolinalakes.net

Caution: as a responsible owner, you should keep a detailed record of what the issue is, what you have done about it, what has happened, and when it happened. Include that information in your email. They cannot help you on issues lacking specific facts and/or unfounded opinion. The PGC has established a process for following up with FSR on such issues, and FSR is now in the process of bringing all work orders into their computerized work order system for regular review. Another positive step forward.

Read on...
3. Retaining Walls Study

At the February RAC meeting, Jim Abel, Vice chair of the Property and Grounds Committee called on all RAC members to raise volunteers in their respective neighborhoods to take a detailed inventory of all the retaining walls in their Pod. The response was overwhelming. The Reps of all pods - except one - recruited 45 owners to take the inventories. Those 45 owners, including several Pod Reps themselves, have walked backyards and braved brush filled ravines and rough terrain to tabulate the length, height, surface area, and maintenance needs of the walls in their Pods. To date, 116 walls have been surveyed and the walls of only 10 of the 38 legally defined, sub-divided neighborhoods remain to be inventoried.

The Property & Grounds, Finance (insurance), and Compliance Committees will use these surveys to assess maintenance needs, risks, environmental issues, the need for an independent outside engineer's assessment, and budgeting considerations. We WILL be prepared for transition.

This is an example of the cooperation and mutual support among owners that comes with ownership of our community. Thanks to all who pitched in!

Read on...

4. Restructured RAC (Resident’s Advisory Committee)

In our February 8, 2015 newsletter, we reported First Service Residential's ("FSR") decision to turn over the RAC to owners. It had been controlled by FSR since 2009. A sub-committee of 10 RAC members immediately volunteered to develop a charter and operating rules for a new group in time for their March meeting.

At last Thursday's March meeting, the sub-committee reported the results of their several working sessions into which they had poured over 400 owner-hours of their time. At the same time, they sent a written copy of their recommendations to the entire RAC membership for their consideration, discussion, and vote at their April meeting. The recommended name for the future is "Home Owners Advisory Council".

Left: Bill McDonough, (Carriage Homes) was co-lead of the sub-committee

Right: Peggy Mertes, (TP Phase 3), is collecting nominations for chair, vice chair, and communications
Right: Bob Kiener co-led the sub-committee and presented the proposal summary

Far Right: Larry Ayres explaining the fine points of meeting disciplines and conducting effective discussions

Your RAC (HOAC?) representative can tell you more about this significant event through their update to your Pod or you may call them if you are interested. If you don't know who they are, you can CLICK HERE to see an unofficial list.

Miscellaneous

We have no objection to you forwarding our email newsletters to anyone you choose.

HOWEVER, we strongly recommend that you do so ONLY to people you personally know who accept our objective and support our mission. Some owners simply do not want to be informed. A very few even object to our message. If you forward to someone who does not want to be informed and they click on the "Unsubscribe" link at the bottom of this page, YOUR email address will be instantly removed from our mailing list, we will not be permitted to restore it, and you will not even know you were removed.

If you want to forward, use the safe 'forward email' link at the bottom of this newsletter instead of your own email 'forward' action.

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SIGNING UP: If you received this email from someone else, you can signup as a NEW supporter yourself: CLICK HERE to jump to our web site. (You are already enrolled if you received this email from the GIO/TST.) Once there, read our objective and mission and, if you agree with them, click on the "Sign Up" button.

Or ask us any question. If your issue involves the entire community, tell us about it. Click here to send us an email: