

NEW MARK COMMONS HOMES ASSOCIATION

2024 ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, March 11, 2024

Held In-Person in the NMC Clubhouse at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes Taken by Kaitlyn Ambush

Attendees

Board Members: Alex Belida, Kathleen Moran, Karin Boychyn, Timothy Petros, Cou Kalantary, and Samuel Scheib.

Abaris Community Management: Shireen Ambush and Kaitlyn Ambush

Homeowners: The Attendee List is included as an attachment to the minutes.

1. Call to Order

Kathleen Moran called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

- A. **Proof of notice of meeting:** Shireen Ambush attested that all homeowners were sent notice of the Annual meeting on January 9, 2024, and on February 15, 2024.
- B. **Proof of quorum:** Shireen Ambush attested that the 25% quorum requirement has been met via proxy submission and those currently present at the meeting.
- C. **Minutes of 2023 Annual Meeting:** Karin Boychyn moved to accept the 2023 Annual meeting minutes; seconded by Samuel Scheib and carried unanimously.

2. Election Inspection Officer Appointment

- A. The Board unanimously appointed Jim Denny and Dennis Moran to serve as the official election inspectors of the 2024 Annual Election.

3. Reports from the Board

- A. **Presidents Report – Kathleen Moran’s President’s Report is an attachment to the minutes.**
- B. **Treasurer’s Report – Karin Boychyn’s Treasurer’s Report is an attachment to the minutes.**
- C. **Committee Reports**
 1. **Architectural Control Committee (ACC) – Rita Molyneaux, ACC Chairperson’s report is an attachment to the minutes.**
 2. **Communications Committee (CC) – Pat Reber, Communications Committee Chairperson’s report is an attachment to the minutes.**
 3. **Landscape Committee (LC) – Saven Wilkins, Landscape Committee Chairperson’s report is an attachment to the minutes.**

4. **Pool Committee – Stephanie Bloom, Pool Committee Chairperson’s report is an attachment to the minutes.**
5. **Security Task Force Committee – Evan Gossin, Security Task Force Chairperson’s report is an attachment to the minutes.**
6. **Welcome/Social Committee – Cou Kalantary, Welcome Committee Chairperson’s report is an attachment to the minutes.**

4. Open Forum

Raj Gupta thanked Pat Reber for her work on the Communications Committee and the NMC Newsletter!

Lori Newman introduced the Villages Committee and the New Mark Commons Snow Patrol, which offers assistance to those who are in need of snow removal. The Committee has since received 6 volunteers to join the Snow Patrol, and the Committee is hopeful to hold events with the Social Committee in the near future.

Kathleen Moran briefly introduced the new Abaris Vantaca Portal and noted the Board’s support of the portal. NMC is excited for what the new portal can do for the NMC community!

Stephanie Bloom requested the Board accept the flat fee of \$3 for each guest pass, as well as the inclusion of 30 guest credits (10 guest passes) to be applied to each owner’s account. *Alex Belida made a motion to accept the new guest pass fee of \$3, as well as the inclusion of 30 guest credits to be applied to each owner’s account at the start of the pool season. The motion was seconded by Samuel Scheib and carried unanimously.* Stephanie Bloom also noted that the Non-Resident fee will remain the same at \$675 per household. *Karin Boychyn made a motion to eliminate “quiet hours” entirely from the pool rules. The motion was seconded by Samuel Scheib and carried unanimously.* Stephanie Bloom suggested the revisions to the pool rules which specify family/friendly behaviors, which the Board unanimously accepted.

Rocio Crumley inquired if electronic voting would be considered for the 2025 Election.

Ron Tipton recounted the great success of the International Dinner and Annual Meeting forum and encouraged the Board to return to in-person meetings in the future.

The owner of 172 NME, Von, inquired what the process is to determine the need for tree removals throughout the community. Kathleen Moran noted that no tree in the community is removed unless it is professionally assessed by an arborist.

The owner of 242 NME commented on the recent snow removal services and inquired if the Board is considering changing contractors, at which time the Board confirmed they are not looking for another snow removal contractor.

5. Election of Results

Ballots were counted and the following election results were announced at the close of the 2024 Annual Meeting.

Amanda Mita and Emily Ecker were elected for 3-year terms. Congratulations!

6. Old/New Business: Alex Belida made a motion to post a draft of the 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes on the HOA website, in draft form, until formally adopted at the 2025 Annual Meeting. The motion was seconded by Cou Kalantary and carried unanimously.

7. Adjournment: Alex Belida moved to adjourn the 2024 Annual Meeting. The motion was seconded by Samuel Scheib and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

NMC 2024 Annual Meeting Attendee List

Owners

1. Jose Villalobes (864 NME)
2. Samuel Scheib (7 Harlow Court)
3. Karin Boychyn (3 Letchworth Circle)
4. Jim Denny (514 NME)
5. Raj & Madeline Gupta (5 Cumbernauld Court)
6. Pat & Alex Belida (705 NME)
7. Wini Herrmann (504 NME)
8. Sandra Clark (4 Lakeside Overlook)
9. Cou Kalantary (332 NME)
10. Julia Binder (501 NME)
11. Ron Tipton(218 NME)
12. Bethany Kroese (142 NME)
13. Marian Swain (1 Stevenage Circle)
14. Saven Wilkins (7 Watchwater Court)
15. Evin Gossin (326 NME)
16. Joshua Lubell (15 Watchwater Court)
17. Rocio & Tom Crumley (2 Letchworth Circle)
18. Amy Potocko (21 Watchwater Court)
19. Vaughn Martirosyan (172 NME)
20. Jim & Donna Rudark (2 Cumbernauld Court)
21. Ann Turner (605 Tegner Way)
22. James Whalen (603 Tegner Way)
23. Susan Klein (9 Watchwater Way)
24. Colleen Tschakert (17 Watchwater Way)
25. Laurie Krug (322 NME)
26. Debbie Nathanson (1 Radburn Court)
27. Ulugbek Nadjimova (262 NME)
28. Maryanna Kieffer (2 Tegner Court)
29. Stephanie Bloom (7 Bentana Court)
30. Aline Cabal (214 NME)
31. Lori Newman (276 NME)
32. Arthur Katz (2 Stevenage Circle)
33. Natalie Gora (2 Radburn Court)
34. Kathleen & Dennis Moran (18 Welwyn Way)
35. Amanda Mita (168 NME)
36. Tim Petros (4 Harlow Court)

Abaris

1. Shireen Ambush
2. Kaitlyn Ambush

NEW MARK COMMONS Annual Meeting March 11, 2024 President's Report

The past year in NMC has been significant. Highlights include:

- **Homeowners approved new Covenants and Bylaws** to replace documents created by the developer in 1967. NMC is now compliant with State of Maryland HOA requirements. This was truly an historic accomplishment that took years to realize.
- **Financially NMC is strong.** The Board and Abaris working together have implemented effective long-range planning. Increased assessment fees made five years ago and maintained since, have allowed NMC to meet operational expenses while also positioning the community to be able to fund a 1.3-million-dollar lake/dam project expected to start in 2024. The project will include State of Maryland mandated repairs to the lake spillway and dam, plus a dredging which is needed to maintain the health of the lake. The Board thanks NMC homeowners for promptly paying their dues.
- The **Board created a Security Task Force** in response to residents' concerns. The task force was charged to assess issues identified via a walk through with City of Rockville Police Lt. Ken Matney in June. The task force recommendations will be presented at this meeting.
- **A current priority for the community is encouraging homeowners to comply with the covenant requirement to keep trash/recycle containers out of public view.** This standard has been in place since the 1960s and impacts the aesthetic of the community.
- **NMC's property management company Abaris Realty Inc.** experienced a change via new ownership and leadership changes. Shireen Ambush, who continues to work directly with NMC is now co-president of Abaris. We are honored to have such professional expertise continuing to assist with our NMC business operations via Shireen's NMC staff team.
- **Contracted professional services have kept NMC meeting high standards in operations.** Companies serving NMC have included:
 - AW Landscape, Pool Personnel, S&P Tree Care, Prestige Tree Care, Solitude Lake Management, BayLand Consultants and Designers, Inc., Lerch Early and Brewer Attorney Ruth Katz, ETC Engineers, Goldklang Group CPAs, P C.

What makes NMC Special? THE PEOPLE

- All the **NMC Committees** are active and thriving. Reports presented at this Annual Meeting reflect the efforts of so many residents volunteering their time and talents to make NMC a great place to call home. NMC committees address areas of focus that include Architectural Control to maintain our design; Communications to keep us informed and connected; Landscape/Lake/Trees to ensure preservation of our environment; Pool to oversee safe and active use of our Pool and a vibrant swim team, and Social/Welcome to support the diverse interests of community members.
- The Board of Directors cannot thank the **NMC volunteers** enough for: serving on standing committees and task force; supporting the swim team; providing help at special activities and events; and demonstrating help within NMC in so many other ways.
- NMC is also wonderful because **neighbors continue to help neighbors.** Recent work by residents meeting on the Village concept has also validated the prevailing caring attitude of the community,
- **Board of Director members** have assumed huge responsibilities for the community and as President, I want to thank Alex Belida, Karin Boychyn, Joe Jordan, Sam Schieb, Tim Petros, Lisa Halvorson (who served through October) and Cou Kalantary (who joined the Board in November). Without these people providing thoughtful debates on issues, sharing of their knowledge, conducting research when needed, making sure common sense prevails, and remaining dedicated to the NMC community, many of the accomplishments of the past year would simply not have been possible.

New Mark Commons 2023 Treasurer's report

The year in review, here are the numbers

- We ended the year with more than \$1.8 million in the bank
- We owe just over \$266,000 on our loan
- We had a surplus of over \$100,000 (still needs to be verified by the auditors) \$60,000 of that is due to increase in revenue which we can never take for granted. We also underspent on snow removal (\$40,000) and grounds enhancements
- We overspent on legal, postage, miscellaneous, Electricity, water/sewer and tree care.

We got a lot done in 2023, but are still waiting on the big expenses the dam repair and dredging. We are waiting for the permits to get approved. Our biggest capital projects for a total of \$150,000 were:

- Furthering the Dam investigation
- Installation of bottom rail of fence of the tennis courts
- Retaining walls by the clubhouse
- Engineering work for the retaining wall on 100 and 800 block
- Plumbing and lighting repairs at the clubhouse

Most of us paid our dues and we have just over 2% outstanding, which is a great accomplishment, thank you homeowners and Abaris.

We spend just over \$150,000 in capital improvement projects and we will end the year with almost \$1.2 million in reserve funds and just over \$345,000 in UME. This is 32% of our budget so the auditors will make a recommendation on what to do with the high UME.

The reserve study from 2021 will help us plan for capital projects over the next 5 to 10 years and spread our expenses over multiple years, but we first need to finish up the work on the dam and the lake dredging. The value and enjoyment of all NMC properties is tied to the care provided and condition maintained of all the HOA common grounds and amenities (like the clubhouse, lake, pool, parking lots, sports courts etc).

Thanks

Karin Boychyn

**Architectural Control Committee
Annual Report
2023**

Members of the ACC in 2023 have included:

Christine Holdsworth Co-Chair
Rita Molyneaux Co-Chair
Tim Petros, Board Liaison
Susan Knowles
Rocio Marino-Crumley
Amanda Mita
Barbara Quinn (Retired)
Courroche (Cou) Kalantary (Retired)
Matt Hagner (Retired)

The ACC continues working with residents to help improve their homes within New Mark Commons' Guidelines and Covenants. All residents are required to apply to the ACC to do **any exterior** work on their home. The approval process allows both the ACC and the owners to plan before work begins. In 2023 the ACC received more than 133 applications or inquiries about proposed work.

The ACC has been working to improve the application process. To that end, we initiated a new online application while maintaining the existing paper-based one. We are now working with Abaris to set up an application process in the new Portal that will replace the current online application. The paper-based form will still be an option.

Letters based on the 2022 inspection went to homes where door, roof and shed violations were found. Owners were notified that they should take action to correct any violation. More recently, owners were reminded of the requirement to store garbage containers out of public view. The board gave an opportunity to request an exception. A one-year extension was granted to those who requested exceptions. The ACC may be able to help with solutions for removing trash cans from view.

ACC member Susan Knowles presented two workshops – one online and one in person. She shared her experience working with the Maryland Historical Trust to receive a tax credit for pre-approved work on her house. She is happy to advise New Mark residents about this program.

The ACC meets on the first Monday of the month at 7 pm. Our meetings are usually hybrid Zoom meetings. Residents are welcome to attend.

Landscape Committee Report
NMC HOA
2024 Annual Meeting

Thank you to our current members: Emily Ecker, Jonathan Ferguson, Elyse Hanger, Jennifer Jackson, Rocio Marino-Crumley, JP Mullen, Ellen Stein, Ron Tipton, Jim Denny and Kimberly Cullen. And special mention of Debbie Mesmer, Amanda Mita and Max Bliss who work with the Landscape committee to help keep our community beautiful and functional. We started 2023 with Lisa Halvorson as our board liaison but she moved away part way through the year.

Last year was my first full year as the chair. I appreciate that our previous chair, JP, is still an active committee member. He donates countless hours maintaining our community. For example, he is often seen out in the woods watering our newest trees. Thank you JP!

Events:

We held two community Enhancement events last year. For our Spring Community Enhancement Day among the various activities of the day, we planted a bunch of trees we acquired through the tree-mendous program that allowed us to procure trees that were subsidized by the state of Maryland. Thank you to Jonathan Ferguson for organizing that purchase. For the Fall Event we were more organized with an online signup option and a better plan for tasks that needed to be accomplished along with purchasing plants and mulch ahead of time. The event was a big success with multiple simultaneous projects. I'd like to thank Kim Cullen for her work planning and organizing significant new plantings around the pool. I encourage everyone to sign up for this year's Spring Community Enhancement day which will be on Saturday April 20th. 4:20 might be an easy date for some of you to remember.

Last year Rocio revived the idea of the Spring Garden Competition which was a staple of our community for many years. It was a successful community building event. We had a bunch of participants and I will again congratulate last year's winner Eugene and Olga of #5 Lakeside Overlook. I encourage everyone to participate this year and the winner will receive a gift certificate from the event sponsor, Good Earth Garden Market. Thank you to Rocio for leading this effort!

Trees:

A major goal of the Landscape Committee is to grow lots of new trees. We have a goal of replacing any tree removed with at least one new native tree nearby. Additionally we are filling in other spots of our neighborhood where there are gaps in the tree coverage.

We have planted over 60 native trees since 2020 and more than 19 native trees last year. We have also planted many native shrubs like Spice Bushes and Viburnums. Most of these trees were planted by volunteer residents, and we had 7 planted by Stadler Nurseries.

Emerald Ash Borer has killed all mature Green Ash Trees in the region. Our neighborhood did not have an abundance of Green Ash trees, but we have had to cut down a handful. We do not cut down any tree unless it is a safety hazard. A dead standing tree is a valuable part of a natural and healthy landscape. But any tree, alive or dead, needs to be removed if it is an imminent threat to someone's property or is a safety hazard. For example, we removed the large White Pines behind the 200 block of New Mark Esplanade along the top of the lake hillside there. Those pines were more or less alive but they should have never been planted there and had grown too large, too close to those townhouses.

Lake:

We keep a close eye on the health and welfare of the lake. We make sure to keep the health of the lake in front of the board to proactively maintain water quality and to handle issues quickly when they arise, such as algae blooms. We are looking forward to replanting the hillside behind the dam with the goal of blocking the view of Parkside Apartment buildings and parking lots. We won't be able to plant as much as we would like because of the restrictions from the State of Maryland but we will do as much as we legally can.

Landscape:

One of the functions of the Landscape Committee is to provide oversight for our Landscaping contractors. Abaris does a ton of work managing and paying our Landscaping company, AW Landscaping. But we are Abaris's eyes and ears. I'll start by saying that AW does a good job maintaining New Mark Commons. But if they mound mulch around tree trunks or if they are using their leaf blowers too much or not enough then it's up to us to facilitate the communication with all parties involved to make sure that these issues are addressed.

- Thank you to Elyse for spearheading an effort to get our community lamps cleaned and stairway rails painted.
- We had AW improve the swale behind 824-836 New Mark Esplanade to manage water runoff better.
- We had about a dozen Hawthorn and Hazelnut trees donated by a community member which we planted in various locations.
- We are experimenting with a method of removing invasive bamboo without chemicals or digging. We targeted the bamboo stand between 400 New Mark Esplanade and the path. We had AW cut down the entire stand last year and this spring will be our first big test of how we can keep on top of removing all the new shoots.

We continue to battle invasive species such as garlic mustard, asian honeysuckle and Bamboo. An invasive like the asian honeysuckle can't be simply removed by cutting it down, we also have to fill its ecological niche with a native alternative like a spicebush, otherwise the honeysuckle will always come back. This is a long term, ongoing effort to improve the health and balance of our local ecosystems.

Meetings:

We meet on the 3rd Tuesday every month at 7pm. Our next meeting is next week on Tuesday, March 19th at 7pm. All of our meetings have been on Zoom and some have been hybrid Zoom meetings held at a volunteer's home. I encourage everyone to join us!

Communications Committee Annual Report / Annual Meeting, March 11, 2024

The posters now hanging in the meeting room are the result of more than a year of effort by our committee. This major project was partially funded by a \$1,000 Community Development Grant from the City of Rockville, matched by 112 hours by 11 volunteers and by financial contributions from the Board of Directors.

The posters were produced in 2017 to commemorate New Mark's 50th anniversary. They reflect original material stored in our archives. The first step was preserving them digitally, and making them available on the website. Framing has preserved them physically. Hanging them makes them accessible for every resident, using a system that we spent months studying to make sure it won't damage the walls.

Our other activities included:

- Sorting and cataloguing two copies of every newsletter dating back to New Mark's earliest days.. They are now more easily accessible for interested residents in the fireplace room, on shelves left of the fireplace.
- Sorting , organizing and digitizing original planning and promotional material as well as media coverage for New Mark Commons. This is still a work in progress. The digital file is on an external hard drive kept in the bench in the fireplace room.
- We produced a monthly newsletter and occasional broadcasts as needed for special events. Four times a year, we deliver printed newsletters house to house. Amanda Mita has stepped up to be editor of the newsletter to replace Pat Reber, who has reduced some of her commitments to the committee.
- We made some changes to the menu and navigation of the website. You'll now find "Contact Us" information at the bottom of every page and hopefully resources for residents and the committees are easier to find.
- We produced the annual directory, with lots of updates and new residents as is usual every year. We rely on residents to keep their directory information up to date by emailing the committee.
- We invite contributions of historic memorabilia. Please don't throw away!

We're a great crew to work with! More writers and editors are always welcome. A high school student interested in photography has even become a contributor.

Most importantly, here's a shout-out to all the volunteers and contributors over the past year: Alex Belida, Rocio and Tom Crumley, Jim Denny, Madeline Gupta, Bill Holdsworth, Morris Kaplan, Amanda Mita, Kathleen Moran, Eric Peich, Ann Reiss , David Schwartzman, David Sloane, Saven Wilkins.

Pat Reber would welcome the chance to step down as chair of the committee, and is looking for a volunteer to do that! She will remain on the committee.

POOL

Pool Committee Report March 11, 2024

The committee would like to thank the Board and the Communications Committee for all their continued support during the 2023 pool season. With the help of Abaris, the third season with the Member Splash system was generally smoother and more efficient operationally. There was some confusion with the guest credits the Board gave to all NMC households. Because the Member Splash system can only track guest credits and not the number of guests with the current guest price structure of \$2 on weekday and \$4 on the weekend, the number of credits granted to each household will need to be addressed and clarified prior to the start of the upcoming pool season. In general though, the ability to allow residents to bank guest credits in the system using credit cards allowed us to more accurately track guest revenues and attendance.

The summer 2023 pool season was a nice return to normal with fairly smooth operations by our pool management company, Pool Personnel. There was much enjoyment by both children and adults throughout the summer. One change was the elimination of the adult swim time due to discrimination concerns. The trial of a quiet time was difficult for the lifeguards to enforce consistently.

The July 4th celebration brought the neighborhood together with food from the Bean Bag, DJ from Unique Dreams, children's games, and pickleball.

One concern was the status of the diving board which was refurbished in an effort to keep the diving board operational. Unfortunately, the diving board has reached the end of its useful life span and the guidelines for diving boards have changed since the diving board was installed in 2011. With the current configuration of the bottom of the pool, the NMC pool does not meet the newer FINA guidelines which does not allow us to replace the diving board.

The New Mark Commons Swim team had a successful season finishing 4th in Division K of the MCSL. The season was also full of many social opportunities. The sale of ice cream and water helped support our swim team.

Work has begun to prepare for the 2024 pool season reviewing the pool rules for updates, researching diving board issues, and updating information for non-resident members. The pool committee will love to have a few more members so please bring your ideas.

We will remain a cashless system, so please remember to go online and add funds to your account in anticipation of bringing guests and buying ice cream this summer. Information on using the Member Splash system can be found on New Mark's website under the Administrative/Pool tab located on the home page.

In order to use the pool this summer your name and photo needs to be in the Member Splash database. If you recently moved into the community or have had a baby or a family member has

moved out please contact Abaris to have your account adjusted accordingly. Remember, we reserve the right to request valid ID documenting residency.

Pool committee Members include: Stacy Immerman, Sara Tenenbaum Love, Peggy Metzger, Mara Bauman, Joe Jordan, Sam Scheib. Anyone wishing to become a part of the pool committee should contact Sam Scheib, Board Liaison, or Stephanie Bloom, Committee Chair.

NEW MARK COMMONS AD HOC SECURITY TASK FORCE

Report To the New Mark Commons Board Of Directors

March 11, 2024

Introduction

The New Mark Commons Board of Directors established the Ad Hoc Security Task Force in September 2023 to address safety and security issues within the New Mark Commons community. The board created this Task Force after a June 27, 2023, residents' walk-around with City of Rockville Police Lt. Ken Matney, during which residents identified a series of safety and security concerns.

Through a series of community-wide emails and newsletter announcements, the Board called for volunteers to serve on the Ad Hoc Security Task Force and requested that interested individuals submit an application to participate. Eleven NMC residents responded with their willingness to join the group. The Board reviewed the eleven applications and accepted all of those who applied, inducting them into service at the September 1, 2023, monthly Board meeting.

Members of the Ad Hoc Security Task Force

Evin Gossin (Team Lead), Saven Wilkins, Chris Durso, Jim Denny, Tom Crumley, Michelle Tongratanaski, Amanda Mita, Morris Kaplan, Josh Lubell, Arnie Rubin, James Nations (Team Scribe).

NMC Board Task Force Liaison: Kathleen Moran

Purpose and Scope of Work

The NMC Board charged the newly established team with the following Purpose and Scope of Work:

Security Task Force Purpose

To identify, research, and prepare recommendations to the New Mark Commons Board of Directors to address safety and security concerns within the New Mark Commons community. This is a temporary task force asked to present the resulting documents to the NMC board by March 1, 2024.

Security Task Force Scope of Work

- Signage
- Fencing on NMC Perimeters
- Security Cameras
- Security Staff Presence
- Engagement of NMC homeowners

Operational Parameters

- The Ad Hoc Task Force is asked to select its own Chair.
- The Ad Hoc Task Force will operate per the same standards of other NMC Committees and have the responsibility to announce to the community: its meeting dates in advance, its meeting agendas in advance of the meeting, and its past minutes of the meetings via the NMC website.
- The Ad Hoc Task Force may meet in person at the Clubhouse and/or virtually via the NMC Zoom account.
- The Ad Hoc Task Force should work with Abaris to understand resources/businesses contacts that can support needed research/proposals.

Safety and Security Background Data

1. NMC is a planned community of 384 homes accessed by both public streets and public sidewalks.
2. The two vehicular access points into the community are both public streets.
3. Pedestrian passage is provided by easement sidewalks and pathways located:
 - a. Between the end of Welwyn Way and Potomac Valley Road
 - b. Between the end of Harlow Court and Maryland Avenue
 - c. Between the end of New Mark Esplanade and Monroe Street near Dogwood Park via the City of Rockville right-of-way and asphalt pathway.
 - d. Between the area near the lake/dam/spillway and Monroe Street near the Parkside Landing Apartments entrance
 - e. Between the 100 block town homes and Monroe Street near Big Oak Court and Monroe Street
 - f. Between Maryland Avenue near the tunnel under the street and New Mark Esplanade in the core of NMC
4. NMC is within easy walking distance for students at Julius West Middle School and Richard Montgomery High School.
5. NMC is currently a favorite walkway for: City of Rockville employees at City Hall; Montgomery County employees in Town Center buildings; Potomac Valley Nursing Home staff and residents; Markwood residents (homes on Potomac Valley, Marcus Court and Leonard Court); Parkside Landing Apartments residents, Waddington Court

townhomes off Monroe Street, Hungerford Stoneridge residents; Tower Oaks residents; as well as NMC residents.

6. NMC is a public pass-through area on the City of Rockville Bikeways Master Plan Map. This includes New Mark Esplanade on to the public greenway from the end of New Mark Esplanade to Monroe Street near the entrance to Dogwood Park, as well as from the tunnel under Maryland Avenue across the NMC hiker/biker asphalt pathway between Maryland Avenue and New Mark Esplanade.
7. NMC has been advised by the police on how best to handle fishing violations at the lake and the ad hoc committee is not needed for additional recommendations.

Ad Hoc Task Force Recommendations

Task Force members agreed that in order to properly address security concerns within our community, we first need to understand where and when these incidents occur. “Collate the data, define the problem, then define the solutions,” members decided. The team also agreed to focus on explaining “the why” behind what it recommends to the New Mark Commons Board of Directors. The team emphasized that the Final Report to the Board requires clarity in outlining potential responses to safety and security issues in the NMC neighborhood. We seek to advise the Board, as one task force member put it, “To decide what’s practical, what’s impractical, and what’s Impossible.”

In a series of meetings, Task Force members detailed the safety and security incidents that have occurred within the New Mark community during recent years. Noted incidents include individuals and groups fishing in the NMC lake despite No Fishing signs; young people throwing rocks at deer and geese, resulting in the death of at least one goose; poaching of turtles from the lake; individuals riding motorized scooters on NMC sidewalks and pathways to the endangerment of pedestrians; vehicles being rummaged while parked on NMC property; rocks thrown at residents’ windows; public smoking of cannabis; cases of apparently inebriated individuals disturbing the peace on NMC community property; and NMC residents’ calling out inappropriate behaviors of apparent visitors, resulting in uncomfortable verbal exchanges and threats.

Team members acknowledged that the noted problems were frequently caused by non-resident individuals passing through NMC, but also that reported offenders sometimes turned out to be NMC residents and called for improving awareness and communication among the community’s families.

After a series of monthly meetings, email discussions, and site visits, the Ad Hoc Security Task Force determined the following:

Signage

The New Mark Commons Board of Directors and Ad Hoc Security Task Force acknowledge that our community is required by the City of Rockville and for legal liability reasons to maintain PRIVATE PROPERTY/NO TRESPASSING signs at the entryway to the community at the lake and spillway near Monroe St. Plastic signs with this message are currently installed with plastic ties on the 6-foot tall, black chain link fence between the NMC dam/spillway and Monroe St. The community is also required to post NO TRESPASSING signs on the fence surrounding the community swimming pool. The metal pool signs are permanently attached to the 8-foot fence that surrounds the pool.

The NO FISHING/NO SWIMMING/NO SKATING signs posted around the NMC lake reflect a community rule rather than a City of Rockville or State of Maryland requirement.

The team discussed the possibility of placing a NO TRESPASSING sign on the black chain-link fence where a mulched (non-cement) path leads to and from Monroe St. in the wooded area in front of the 100 block of New Mark Esplanade. This area has been reported multiple times as the site of illicit use of cannabis by unrecognized individuals. The team noted that, while a sign would not necessarily deter illegal activities, it might serve as a psychological deterrent to would-be miscreants. Several Task Force team members supported the idea and others resisted, because the path is frequently used by resident joggers and dog walkers, as well as by local school students walking home. After much consideration, the team voted 6-1 **not** to add additional NO TRESPASSING signs to entrances and exits anywhere within the New Mark Commons neighborhood.

The team also considered the possibility of erecting respectfully-worded signage in problem areas of the community to remind visitors and passers-through that New Mark Commons is private property and asking them to Please Be Respectful. The team noted that New Mark Commons is not a gated community, and that we seek to present a respectful face to our Rockville neighbors. After much discussion, the Task Force team determined **not** to add these signs, noting that they were unlikely to affect the behavior of individuals intent on illegal behavior.

Fencing on NMC Perimeters

Task Force members also discussed the idea of closing off or constructing a gate at the gap between the mulched footpath between Monroe St. and the 100 block of New Mark Esplanade, but learned that an opening is required at that point by a variance agreement New Mark has signed with the City of Rockville. This agreement requires us to leave an opening in the fencing at that point (as well as at the Monroe St. entrance to the lake) to allow pedestrian access. NMC can change the variance only by carrying out a legal process to establish a new agreement with the city.

New Mark does not own the 6-foot black chain link fence that runs from the pedestrian opening at the lake spillway past Parkside Landing Apartments, separating New Mark and Parkside Landing. Instead, the fence is owned by Parkside Landing Apartments. Pending approval from the City of Rockville, the New Mark Commons Board plans to construct a new 8-foot wooden fence along that property line, but must first conduct a new survey of our southern property line, publish a call for bids, and select a contractor to carry out construction.

Temporary Fence at the Spillway

Team members learned that a temporary fence constructed during fall 2023 on the northeastern side of the dam/spillway (going up the hill from the spillway toward the 100 block of New Mark Esplanade) has been repeatedly breached where it joins the 6-foot black chain link fence that separates the community from Monroe St. On several occasions, unknown individuals have clipped or unwound the fence to provide passage to the 100 block or to a small patch of vegetation that grows between the spillway and the final houses of the 100 block.

NMC residents reported that the parking lot for the houses in the 100 block of New Mark Esplanade is sometimes frequented by lone individuals in non-resident cars and that the cars are visited by other individuals who arrive on foot (or in other cars). The residents surmised that illicit activity, perhaps drug sales, may be taking place during those brief interchanges and raised the idea of blocking off access between the spillway and the 100 block of New Mark Esplanade. To address these concerns the NMC Board authorized construction of the temporary fence that was later repeatedly damaged and breached. The temporary fence is currently (February 2024) patched and standing, but with gaps that allow individuals to continue to pass through.

The Security team considered several potential countermeasures to blunt these activities, including installing security cameras in the area or hiring private security guards (details follow in subsequent pages of this report).

The southern and southeastern border of New Mark Commons property—the boundary between New Mark and Monroe St. and the boundary between New Mark and Parkside Landing Apartments—is delineated by a 6-foot tall, black chain link fence. Between the community and Parkside Landing Apartments, the fence has fallen into disrepair, likely due to a fallen tree branch. The Board had planned to replace this section of the fence with an 8-foot, double-sided, wooden board fence, but learned that Parkside Landing Apartments--rather than NMC--owns the fence. However, New Mark is authorized to construct a new fence on our side of the property line, running parallel to the 6-foot wire fence. The board is waiting for the initiation and completion of lake dredging and spillway reconstruction before beginning construction of this new fence, a process that will require a property line survey and a City of Rockville fence permit. (This new fence will run between New Mark Commons and Parkside Landing Apartments, but would not replace the fence that runs northeast along Monroe St.

New Mark Commons has a contract with BayLand Consultants and Designers, Inc. to establish specifications for dredging the NMC lake and replacement of the lake spillway to meet city, county, and state regulations. BayLand presented their project plans at the NMC Board of Directors meeting on January 4, 2024, and the consultants and Board are waiting for review of these plans by the State of Maryland Department of the Environment Dam Safety Engineer Office, a step expected to be completed during February 2024. Dredging and reconstruction cannot begin until the plans are finalized and the Board has issued bids and signed contracts with dredging and construction contractors. The actual work of dredging and construction is expected to take around 7 months and to be completed during winter 2024-2025.

When design, contracting, and on-the-ground work is complete, the community can seek the required permit from the City of Rockville to add a new, 8-foot wooden fence between the community and Parkside Landing Apartments. BayLand's design for spillway reconstruction calls for a permanent fence near the dam on the southwest side of the spillway. BayLand consultants acknowledged that a second fence could be constructed on the other side of the spillway, if the community requests it.

To deny human access from the dam and spillway to the hill and wooded area leading to the 100 block of New Mark Esplanade, the Ad Hoc Task Force recommends that—once lake dredging and spillway reconstruction have been completed—the community install a permanent 8-foot tall fence on the opposite side of the spillway (going up the hill) to connect with the 6-foot tall, black, chain-linked fence that runs along Monroe Street. This fence could run along the far edge of the spillway to further impede human passage. Construction of this fence would not interfere with the entrance/exit from Monroe Street into New Mark Commons property, although the community may choose to reassess its stance on this public access passageway after completion of spillway reconstruction.

The Ad Hoc Security Task Force heard divided opinions from residents about the concept of closing the fence or installing a gate at the gap that currently allows pedestrian traffic in and out of the community near the dam on the southern border of NM property. The gap in the fence also provides vehicle access for emergency vehicles, allowing quick response time for problems in or around houses near the dam.

The Task Force sought clarification on several issues from R. James Wasilak, Chief of Zoning, City of Rockville, who informed the team that, *“A fence permit is required for all fences. The City does not regulate fence type generally, so the fence between the properties may be a type of the HOA choosing and up to eight feet in height. However, for a distance of 25 feet from the right-of-way for Monroe Street, the fence is limited to 4 feet in height, as the variance approval*

did not cover this section. Accordingly we would look for HOA approval to be submitted along with the fence permit”

*“The NMC HOA applied for and was granted a variance for the existing fence along Monroe Street in 2010, covering the fence from the dam spillway almost to the property on Big Oak Court. This allowed for the fence to be six feet in height rather than the normal maximum of four feet. There were also conditions associated with this approval, including that this fence be black chain link, **and that a pedestrian opening be maintained at each end of the fence.**”*

After much discussion of the concept of closing off the two entrances into the NMC community from Monroe Street (near the wooded path and near the dam), the Security Task Force acknowledged that doing so would violate our variance agreement with the city to provide pedestrian ingress and egress to the New Mark community, and would likely result in unofficial social trails and continuing breaches of the fence between New Mark Commons and Parkside Landing Apartments. The Task Force team subsequently determined that we **do not recommend** closing off either entrance.

Security Cameras

The Task Force team also discussed the possibility of creating a system of security cameras to monitor specific areas of New Mark Commons property. NMC currently has no community-provided security cameras. The team acknowledged the cost and conditions that such a system would require and raised questions that included: Who would pay the costs of installing and monitoring the system, who would monitor the cameras’ output, and who would have access to the recorded/active data?

The team submitted a series of questions to NMC official counsel and learned that signs *falsely* declaring the existence of security cameras are a legal liability and should not be posted. However, private homes in NMC may legally install as many exterior cameras as they wish, regardless of which areas (public or private) are covered by the cameras’ viewpoint. The team also learned that many New Mark residents already have private, home-installed video monitoring systems, such as RING, and pointed to the possibility of promoting increased communication among neighborhood residents about unwanted activities seen via those cameras.

The team pointed to the difficulties of attempting to coordinate the output of the privately-owned RING-type cameras scattered throughout the community and acknowledged the existence of informal communication systems such as Next Door. In the end, the Task Force abandoned the idea of trying to formally coordinate the output of privately-owned cameras, but supported the use of privately-controlled cameras on the property of NMC residents. The team agreed to emphasize the positive aspects of voluntarily installing privately-owned RING-type cameras on their homes.

Task force members discussed the possible installation of a wildlife camera (also called a trail camera) pointed at the specific problem area of the temporary fence near the lake spillway to capture images of whomever/whatever is damaging this section of New Mark Commons property. Wildlife cameras are motion sensitive and capture either still images or short videos of movement in the camera's field of view. In areas frequented by miscreant humans, the cameras are usually cable-locked to a tree or other sturdy structure to prevent theft. The camera's recording chip is exchanged periodically and inserted into a personal computer to reveal the recorded images. The cameras work equally well in daylight or at night, using an infrared flash that is normally unobserved by the subject.

Unless well camouflaged, the camera is visible to observant human beings (and by some animals), resulting in revealing snapshots and funny animal selfies. The presence of a motion sensitive camera has been noted by law enforcement officials to serve as a deterrent to undesirable activities.

After discussing the pros and cons of installing a wildlife camera pointed at the spillway fence, the team agreed to float the idea with the New Mark Commons Board of Directors. Kathleen Moran, Board Liaison to the Security Task Force, reported back that the Board did not unanimously support installing a camera near the spillway. One NMC Board member noted that, *There is no existing policy that prohibits anyone from passing through this area, so no matter "who" or "what" or "how many" are passing through this common ground hillside by the spillway, they are not doing anything wrong.* [This response does not address the fact that damage to the fence, which is New Mark Commons property, is both a violation of community rules and a violation of the law.]

Lack of consensus within the Board meant the issue had to be discussed as part of the NMC Board meeting held December 7, 2023, and the Board Liaison asked the Task Force to submit a written clarification of the intent of the camera. Subsequent email traffic within the team led to realization that installing a wildlife camera—as well as monitoring and archiving images from the camera—was far more complicated than previously thought, and that installing a camera was both impractical and contrary to our prior agreement to avoid community-funded security cameras. The team agreed to drop the issue.

The Task Force team acknowledged that the next step might be installation of a 6-foot chain link fence along the spillway to prevent pedestrian traffic in the area and that a chain link fence with non-cemented posts might serve as a temporary fix while the Board waits for the State of Maryland to issue final directives regarding the NMC dam and spillway.

New Mark Commons legal counsel informed the Security Task Force members that if anyone is injured on or about the lake spillway, the injured party is responsible for having voluntarily entered a common property area, and that the legal liability of the NMC Home Owners Association (HOA) is extremely limited.

Security Staff

The Task Force examined the question of whether or not New Mark Commons should hire professional security guards to have an on-site presence full-time, during certain hours, or not at all. The team discussed the potential for hiring private security guards to patrol the New Mark neighborhood and learned from Abaris that the cost to have **armed** security guards would be prohibitive due to liability issues. After much discussion, the Task Force Team unanimously agreed not to recommend hiring armed security guards nor, in fact, any private security guards at all, given that our community includes public roads and presents the potential for improper stops and charges of discrimination.

Lighting

NMC residents who participated in the June 27, 2023, security walk-around with Rockville Lt. Ken Matney expressed no interest in increased lighting within the community, even though Lt. Matney identified it as potential area of consideration. Residents noted that additional lighting sometimes presents problems for residents whose properties are illuminated.

The Task Force team learned that the spotlights installed on many townhouse end units are privately-owned and maintained by the residents of those end units. The community does not have the ability nor obligation to maintain, repair, or control these lights.

Communication with Law Enforcement Officers

NMC's Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors and residents, held on the second Monday of March each year, includes a guest speaker, and team members suggested that a speaker be invited to focus on community security. The Rockville Chief of Police gave such a presentation during a previous Annual Meeting, and the Task Force recommends that the Board contact the City of Rockville to request another appropriate speaker.

The team noted the positive engagement and active community participation in the Rockville Police security walk-around and recommended that additional walk-arounds be organized, perhaps as early as June 2024.

Communication Between Residents and Visitors

Task Force members noted that when NMC residents encounter apparent violators of community regulations, the words used in the initial stages of interaction frequently set the tone for the outcome. One Task Force member pointed out that, "Every problem is solved through process (laws, courts) or through communication." The team recommends that residents be urged to approach potential confrontations gingerly, with respect, and with non-emotional tones. In cases of obvious violations of rules or law (fishing in the lake, threats to wildlife), residents are not

required to confront the violators, but should instead call City of Rockville Police to report the issue.

Engagement of NMC homeowners

After considering a range of safety and security issues, Task Force members are convinced that New Mark Commons residents should be the primary change agents to enhance safety and security, primarily through improved communication and information. New Mark is recognized in Rockville as a safe and secure place to live. Crime rates are low, and residents walk through the neighborhood confident of their safety. The Board and residents can maintain, even improve, this situation by enhancing communication among residents and between residents and visitors and residents and law enforcement authorities.

The proper response to the statement, “Somebody should do something about this,” is for residents to know which somebody is authorized to deal with the issue, have the information to contact them, and be willing to make the call or write the email that launches the proper action.

Positive change in safety and security issues means knowing the rules, following the rules, and directly reporting violations to the proper authorities—the Board, Abaris, or the Rockville Police Department.

The Task Force recommends the creation of a community-wide campaign of **See Something, Say Something, with the** goal of enhancing residents’ awareness of security issues and improving their response to perceived threats. The team suggests use of the community newsletter and website, as well as distribution of hardcopy fliers to advise residents of the appropriate numbers to call in cases of emergency or concern. For example, **illegal parking** issues should go to Abaris at 301.468.8919 (after hours at 301.421.4530), but **non-emergency crime** issues should be reported to the Rockville Police at the non-emergency number of 240.314.8900. More serious issues should be reported via the 9-1-1 emergency number. Task Force members also recommend that the Board emphasize that residents themselves are responsible for contacting the police or relevant authorities when they witness actual or potential crimes being committed. The Board of Directors is not the police.

In the appendix to this document, Task Force team members present a document citing **Security and Safety Tips** for NMC residents, along with a list of phone numbers and websites listing **Who to Call** for security and safety services.

The Board of Directors should consider participating on a local level with the national organization, National Night Out. Detailed information and website addresses follow.

National Night Out <https://natw.org/about/>

“National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law

enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances.

Millions of neighbors take part in National Night Out across thousands of communities from all fifty states, U.S. territories and military bases worldwide on the first Tuesday in August.

Neighborhoods host block parties, festivals, parades, cookouts and various other community events with safety demonstrations, seminars, youth events, visits from emergency personnel, exhibits and much, much more.”

Dog Walker Watch <https://natw.org/dog-walker-watch/>

“Dog Walker Watch encourages neighbors to assist local law enforcement as extra eyes and ears while out walking their dog. The program enhances the partnership between police and community while providing resources for neighbors to be more aware and how they can effectively observe and report suspicious activity.”

Concluding Recommendations

The Ad Hoc Security Task Force was convened to address safety and security concerns within the New Mark Commons (NMC) community. Through a series of meetings, discussions, and site visits, the Task Force addressed signage, fencing, security cameras, security staff, and NMC homeowner engagement.

Key Findings and Recommendations:

1. Signage:

- The Task Force reviewed existing signage and debated the addition of new signs. Ultimately the task force decided against adding additional "No Trespassing" and/or “respectful” signage.

2. Fencing:

- The task force considered changes to fencing, including closing gaps in existing fences along Monroe Street. The Task Force learned that NMC can apply for a different fence variance at any time for the Monroe Street area. The recommendation to maintain the current fence status is influenced by pending lake dredging and spillway reconstruction. The construction project, expected to last seven months, will necessitate closure of the current Monroe Street opening during these months. Reconstruction can include adding permanent fencing on both sides of the spillway, thereby deterring movement between the 100 block of NMC and Monroe Street via the opening at the dam/spillway.
- To deny human access from the dam and spillway to the hill and wooded area leading to the 100 block of New Mark Esplanade, the Ad Hoc Task Force recommends that—once lake dredging and spillway reconstruction have been completed—the community install a permanent 8-foot tall fence on the opposite side of the spillway (going up the hill) to

connect with the 6-foot tall, black, chain-linked fence that runs along Monroe Street. This fence could run along the far edge of the spillway to further impede human passage. Construction of this fence would not interfere with the entrance/exit from Monroe Street into New Mark Commons property, although the community may choose to reassess its stance on this public access passageway after completion of spillway reconstruction.

3. Security Cameras:

- The Task Force considered implementing community-based security cameras. However, challenges related to costs, liability, and privacy resulted in the Task Force supporting only the use of private security cameras/systems installed by homeowners.

4. Security Staff:

- Hiring private security guards was deemed impractical due to cost and potential liability issues. Concerns about potential discrimination and the existence of public roads within the community also factored into the unanimous decision against recommending security personnel.

5. Lighting:

- The Task Force does not recommend increased lighting installed by the community. Homeowners may install lights, including those with motion detection, but should be considerate of impact to neighbors regarding where they are installed.

6. Communication with Law Enforcement:

- The Task Force recommended inviting speakers from law enforcement to community meetings and organizing security walk-arounds with the police and emphasized the importance of positive interactions between residents and law enforcement officials.

7. Communication Between Residents and Visitors:

- Residents are encouraged to report violations to the appropriate authorities: i.e., the Board, Abaris, the City of Rockville, and the police, rather than directly confronting individuals. Residents should focus on respectful communication if they do choose to speak to possible violators.

8. Engagement of NMC Homeowners:

- The Task Force emphasized the role of residents as the primary agents for change, and proposes a community-wide campaign: "See Something, Say Something." The campaign will enhance residents' awareness and prompt them to report concerns to the relevant authorities. The Task Force also recommends distribution of safety and security tips and important contact information to all residents.

Conclusion: The Ad Hoc Security Task Force's recommendations center on a balanced approach involving community awareness, communication, and collaboration with the proper entities. The

Task Force's recommendations aim to maintain and improve safety within the NMC community while respecting both legal constraints and residents' concerns.

New Mark Commons Safety & Security Tips

There are many things you can do to increase your safety and security and that of New Mark Commons (NMC) residents. This list isn't exhaustive, but through these actions we can each help build and maintain safety and security within our community.

1. Get to know your neighbors.
2. Secure your home.
3. Secure your vehicle.
4. Stay informed.
5. Report concerns and incidents – if you **See something, Say something**.
6. Know whom to contact.

GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS.

Neighbors can share with each other information about their needs and concerns as well as observe activity that is out of the ordinary.

- Participate in NMC events to build community and familiarity with your neighbors.
- Exchange contact information with your neighbors.
- Maybe share an extra set of keys with a trusted neighbor in case of an emergency.

SECURE YOUR HOME.

Increase your home's security with these options that require no approval from NMC. Please be considerate of your neighbors when installing motion-activated lighting and let neighbors know if you're installing outdoor cameras.

- Secure your doors and windows, reinforce entry points with deadbolts and sliding doors with security bars, lock your garage door.
- Install a security system; these are scalable and may be self-installed.
- Install motion-activated lights.
- Install a smart doorbell camera.

SECURE YOUR VEHICLE.

- Always lock your doors and windows.
- Install/activate a car alarm.
- Keep nothing of value in your car.
- Use steering wheel locks or electronic immobilizers to make it hard for thieves to steal your car.
- Place key fob inside your home in a Faraday case to prevent thieves from using the fob's signal to open your car.

STAY INFORMED.

- Attend NMC meetings.

- Stay updated on local news and crime reports.
 - [Weekly Crime Reports | Rockville, MD - Official Website \(rockvillemd.gov\)](#)
 - [Alert Rockville \(everbridge.net\)](#)
 - [LexisNexis Community Crime Map](#)
 - Consider other options such as the Ring Neighbors app for real-time crime and safety alerts, no Ring subscription or equipment required.

REPORT CONCERNS AND INCIDENTS – IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING.

- Use emergency services. Call 9-1-1 for all emergencies. Know the correct contacts and report any suspicious activity immediately.
- Document incidents. Keep a record of any unusual incidents or activities, including dates, times, and descriptions.
- Inform neighbors. Share relevant information with your neighbors to enhance overall awareness and vigilance.

KNOW WHOM TO CONTACT.

The New Mark Commons Board of Directors is not the police and not necessarily the authority to call when you see safety and security problem. Consider saving these contacts to your mobile device or storing them where they are quickly accessible.

Call 9-1-1 for all emergencies.

City of Rockville
www.rockvillemd.gov

For non-emergencies, call Rockville Police Dispatch at 240-314-8900.

The city's website has a [Form Center](#) to report concerns with streets, sidewalks, trees, street light outages, building/fence permits, etc.

City Hall	240-314-8900	
Animal Control	240-314-8937	animalcontrol@rockvillemd.gov
Public Works	240-314-8500	
Roadway/Snow Removal/Leaf Collection	240-314-8566	
Recycling/ Refuse	240-314-8568	recyclerefuse@rockvillemd.gov
Streetlights/Traffic Signals	240-314-8500	
Tree Concerns Private/City	240-314-8700	forestry@rockvillemd.gov
Utilities/Water/Sewer	240-314-8567	

NMC Property Management – Abaris Realty, Inc.

Hours of operation: Monday through Friday – 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

During business hours, call 301-468-8919, or email sambush@abarisrealty.com.

After hours emergency, call 301-421-4530.

Contact Abaris Realty, Inc. for:

- Townhome parking lot issues
- Towing vehicles from parking lots
- Light outages in parking lots, pathways
- Trash concerns on HOA grounds
- Trees on HOA grounds
- Lake/dam concerns
- Pool concerns
- Sports court concerns
- Playground concerns
- NMC governance concerns

New Mark HOA

www.newmarkcommons.org

Board of Directors	board@newmarkcommons.net
Architectural Control	acc@newmarkcommons.net
Communications	newmarknews@newmarkcommons.net
Landscape/Tree/Lake	landscaping@newmarkcommons.net
Pool/Swim Team	pool@newmarkcommons.net
Social/Welcome	social@newmarkcommons.net

NEW MARK COMMONS - SOCIAL COMMITTEE - 2024 ANNUAL MEETING REVIEW

Active members of committee:

- Cou Kalantary
- Karin Boychyn
- Mats Olsen
- Elyse Levine
- Markus Fingerle
- Kenneth Davis
- Rocio Crumley
- Rhonda Gordon
- Sandra Crowe
- Lori Newman

Activities:

- Yoga at the clubhouse
 - In the summer of 2023 we hosted yoga sessions at the clubhouse that NMC residents could attend for free. The sessions were led by NMC resident Barbara Quinn. The social committee is looking for a way to host more of these events in the future.
- Yard Sale
 - A yard sale was organized on Aug 12, 2023. We are looking to organize another Yard sale, ideally in the Spring of 2024.
- Bingo Night
 - We organized a Bingo night at the clubhouse in July 2023. This was a success and we're planning to do it again this year.
- Movie Night
 - We've had one movie night so far. A lot of neighbors attended. We're looking to do Movie Nights multiple times per year now. We still have to figure out a non-temporary method to display the movies and play the sound.
- End of Season Evening Pool Party
 - A evening pool party was held at the NMC pool, and extended past the regular pool hours. This was a success and we're looking to do it again in 2024.
- Halloween Parade
 - The social committee absorbed the organizing of the yearly Halloween Parade. We offered hot drinks by the clubhouse, and there were a lot of attendees this year. The social committee will continue to organize these moving forward.
- Music and Dance Party (in collaboration with Villages)
 - This was organized in collaboration with the NMC residents who are putting together a Village concept for NMC. Residents of all ages were welcomed to this event, where multiple instruments could be crafted, and then a band played live music that residents could play, dance, or sing along with.
- Board Hosted Open House

- The Open House is a yearly cocktail party held at the Clubhouse in the Fall, with an open bar and refreshments. This year it was held on October 21, 2024. We will continue to organize this yearly.
- Welcome Committee
 - The Social Committee absorbed the Welcoming Committee in 2023.
 - The welcome pack has been replaced with a fridge magnet, that has a QR code linking to the NMC website's welcome page. This page includes all the information that new and existing residents often need access to.
- Whatsapp Community
 - The Social Committee has put together a Whatsapp Community which includes multiple Whatsapp groups. Any resident can easily join the Whatsapp Community, which then gives them access to each of the groups as well.
 - The number of NMC neighbors who are in the Whatsapp Community has grown quite a lot over the past year. We have about 70 members on it. We expect this number to keep growing as more and more engagement is happening on Whatsapp.