

DECEMBER 2007

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Editors: Lauri Barwick and
Nina Macdonald

HRB MINUTES - November 6, 2007

HRB Attendees: Chris Hane, Mostafa Eldefrawy, Cyril McCormick

ICHA Attendees: Andrew Herndon, Ron Reid

HRB Election Season is coming!

The HRB remains understaffed with only 6 of 7 positions filled. Please consider volunteering your time to help improve our community. Whether your interest is voting on Harry's paint palette, expanding the social events, providing input to the last phases of UHills development or assisting with the Community Center, please participate by serving on the HRB.

Listserv and web site:

Nina Macdonald asked ICHA to approve moving the listserv from its current service provider to her own company, Pixelloom, to better manage more services. This transfer would also reduce monthly costs 50%. ICHA asked for the HRB's view of this transfer. The HRB does not have an issue with the transfer. The HRB is coordinating with Nina about web site changes.

Secure Mailboxes:

A resident has inquired about installing a secure mailbox. ICHA asked for the HRB's input for this request to better establish guidelines to consistently handle this and anticipated future requests. The mailboxes approved by the USPS are large, roughly 4x the size of our traditional boxes, and heavy. All boxes must be at the same height.

The HRB recommends that homeowners who wish to install a secure mailbox first discuss this with the neighbors who share the same post. All mailboxes on the same post should use the same format. You are not allowed to install a single box on a new post. Before installing a new box, especially a secure one, the existing post and cross beam should be evaluated for their structural integrity (damage from water, dry rot, etc.). Please review any changes with ICHA as the USPS has strict standards for boxes.

UHills may soon receive a 3rd blue box for outgoing mail. The 2 existing boxes are near the ICHA office on Los Trancos and at Gabrielino and Russell. The HRB recommended the 3rd box be placed convenient to the California-Anteater exit so that all 3 egresses from the neighborhood have a blue box nearby. The exact placement of the 3rd box could be at Gabrielino & California, or on California closer to Mistral and the Community Building site (the new street closest to Gabrielino).

Anteater-Murasaki Fence:

ICHA Management installed the fence in October. About three years ago, Area 8 residents requested some type of access control in conjunction with recreation use of the greenbelt by children. At that time the HRB acknowledged sufficient concerns regarding the traffic conditions and speed of vehicles traveling Anteater Drive. They requested and supported the installation recognizing it would be installed after the Gabrielino Park Expansion was complete.

Traffic:

There have been complaints that drivers are passing school buses while the red lights are flashing. The UCIPD is aware of this and recently have had an unmarked car follow the bus through the neighborhood. Please

continue to report violations to the PD at 824-5223.

The HRB asked ICHA to install a 25mph speed limit sign on California near the dog park. Today there is a 35mph sign on California near Anteat, but no 25mph sign on California westbound until Whistler.

ICHA informed the HRB that there will be stop signs on California at both new streets, Mistral and Wharton. The existing stop sign at Whistler & California will be relocated to Owen and California.

(Since the meeting there has been more discussion on appropriate speed limits for collector roads versus residential streets as well as stop sign placement. Please email your thoughts to the listserv or hrb@uhills.org).

House Colors and Improvements:

The Ground Lease defines the regulations for maintenance (Exhibit E) and the architectural guidelines for our homes. This includes the process for approving the exterior painting. All painting that does not repeat the existing colors of the house is subject to HRB approval. If the HRB rejects a palette the homeowner can appeal to the HRB and the ICHA Board, or submit a modified palette. The ICHA Board can refuse to hear the appeal in which case the HRB decision stands. It is also possible that the ICHA Board could overrule the HRB. In over twenty years, the ICHA Board has never heard an appeal of the HRB's decision, nor have they overruled an HRB decision.

A significant number of homeowners have indicated their approval for more leeway in house colors. The HRB is thankful for this input yet must continue to work within the approved guidelines and procedures.

One aspect of color variation in UHills has been errors in paint matching. This usually leads to a much brighter color being applied to the house when the homeowner thought they would get the faded version of that color. Sometimes the color is just plain wrong, but too expensive to fix. To remedy this situation the HRB would like ICHA to make it easier for homeowners to find the existing palettes either on-line and/or at local stores.

The HRB is contemplating recommending a change to the Architectural Guidelines that would more clearly recognize the unique nature of our community and its residents. The nature of our re-sale market means that the guidelines for conformity found in other communities may not be necessary in UHills. Due to the high demand for housing, it is unlikely that my neighbor's house color adversely affects my re-sale price. If ICHA thinks a palette adversely affects their desire to acquire a house, then they should be within their rights to not pay the maximum re-sale price just as if other maintenance on the property was sub-standard.

With regard to improvements, please contact the ICHA office when considering external improvements. Do not wait until after you have started work! Recently a few homeowners have had issues with contractors doing work that does not meet building code. The ICHA review of these plans helps to protect your investment and avoid costly re-work to meet code. It's not just an approval process, ICHA is a resource for you too.

--- Chris Hane, HRB

NOVEMBER 2007 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Management is continuing discussion with the Irvine Ranch Water District about a third party billing structure (very similar to other Irvine residents). IRWD is proposing that the operation be tracked by the Metropolitan Water District of Orange County to qualify for grant funding. A summary of the service and subsequent benefits is anticipated this month.

Associated Landscape will be expanding its contract to include landscape maintenance of the Santiago Apartments and mowing of the Gabrielino Community Sports Field. Additionally, Associated will take over

expanded custodial services at all the recreation and park facilities. This expanded service will include weekly care of areas not previously covered by contract service, and will expand service to the tot lots, picnic, bench and BBQ areas and the new Gabrielino Community Park restroom. These services will occur at a reduced cost from the previous custodial rates.

Both Condo communities received mailings of their annual Year End Financial Audit from the firm of Bradford Benton and Associates in compliance with State mandates.

The ICHA tree management program and the pruning techniques utilized each year afforded the community an excellent performance record during the recent Santa Ana winds. Minimal branch and limb failure occurred and no damage was recorded from trees within the common areas.

Architectural Review

Four recent architectural submittals have been approved or are under review. They include general landscaping, painting and a solar PV panel installation.

Community Maintenance

On Going and Completed Community Improvements and Repair Work
Work in Process:

Painting of the Schubert Condos continues and is anticipated to run through mid November

Mulching of selected landscape areas is in process and will continue into the winter months.

Approximately 200 rodent bait stations are in place across the community. Activity appears to be extremely high. A licensed applicator is responsible for bi-weekly inspection of the secured stations.

Work Completed:

A new fence separating Murasaki and Bronte streets from Anteater Drive was completed in October.

In light of the October fires, a recent review of the community's fuel modification zone along the westerly edge of the community was performed to insure clearing and that safeguards were in place. This work was in addition to a clearing and inspection by the OCFA and Campus Fire Marshal performed last May. Irrigation that services the green zone was extended to expand a moisture and non-burn area immediately adjacent to the homes. Select residents were advised to relocate concentrations of combustible materials away from the preserve side of their homes in keeping with OC Fire Authority recommendations. An on site visit with the Campus Fire Marshal has been set.

Tree pruning on Harvey Court (Phase 6) was completed this past month.

---Andrew Herndon, ICHA

VISITOR NIGHT AT THE UCI OBSERVATORY

Date: Friday, Dec 14, 2007

Time: 8 - 10 pm

Place: The Observatory at the University of California, Irvine

Come use our telescopes to see the Ring Nebula (M57), star clusters and Mars, when it is only 0.6 AU from Earth, the closest it has been in the last four and a half years and only 60% farther than it was during its spectacular close approach in August, 2003. Listen to a lecture entitled "Dark Matter in Galaxies." Night Sky Maps will be given out so you can learn to locate your favorite constellations.

Visitor Nights are free of charge, and no reservations are required. They are fun for the entire family -- children, teens, parents and grandparents. Please remember to dress warmly and bring along flashlights. We heartily encourage amateur astronomers to bring along their own telescopes to share with our visitors.

The Observatory is located on the campus of the University of California, Irvine. Note that only cars transporting telescope equipment or a handicapped person will be permitted to drive on the road leading out to the Observatory for safety reasons. We kindly ask that you be considerate of our neighbors and keep noise to a minimum to avoid disturbing other residents, some of whom are young children that go to bed early.

In the unlikely event of rain, Visitor Night may be canceled. If so, a cancellation notice will be posted on our website by 3 p.m. that day. However, if it is cloudy but not raining, Visitor Night probably will go on and you can still tour the Observatory dome and listen to the lecture.

The UCI Observatory is operated by the Department of Physics & Astronomy, and Visitor Nights are funded by the School of Physical Sciences. For more information on the Observatory, see our website at <http://www.physics.uci.edu/~observat>. A poster advertising Visitor Night can be found at <http://www.physics.uci.edu/~observat/visnite.html>.

---Tammy Smecker-Hane, Director, UCI Observatory

IRVINE RANCH WATER DISTRICT NEWS

The December 2007 issue of Pipelines, the free e-newsletter from the IRWD, is out. To access this issue, and past ones, go to <http://www.irwd.com/FreePrograms/publications.php>.