

NORTH FORT HOA NEWSLETTER

March, 2009
Spring Issue



Road Transfer Accomplished!

Last winter, your HOA began the process of transferring ownership of Fort Boone Court, Bragg Court, and Helen Jean Court to DOT. After a great deal of work and multiple inspections, our petition was forwarded through a series of state and county offices for approval.

We are happy to report that this process is now complete. Transferring these three roads to DOT ownership has significantly reduced our potential maintenance liability, saving North Fort residents approximately \$14,400 dollars per year.

We will soon start a similar petition for the remaining portion of North Fort Drive and Apache Drive. If successful, this action will save residents an additional \$10,030 per year. Please plan to support our efforts.

Keep in mind that DOT does not accommodate permanent structures or irrigation equipment within the road right-of-way (approximately 25' measured from the road's centerline). Ornamental walls flanking a driveway culvert are allowed, but they are limited to a height of 3". Failure to comply with DOT regulations may result in the following: (i) DOT has authority to remove such items at homeowner's expense if they interfere with future maintenance operations, and (ii) DOT can seek compensation for any damaged equipment or injuries resulting from such items.

Annual Membership Meeting

The Board has scheduled our annual HOA membership meeting for Saturday, April 25th at 9:00 am. We will meet at Sam Robert's house on 114 North Fort Drive. Please mark your calendars accordingly and plan to attend.

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This meeting is especially important because we will elect Board members. If you cannot attend and still wish to vote, sign a proxy and let a neighbor vote on your behalf. You can download a proxy from the North Fort website. You can also request a proxy from Jay Frick, 553-4412 or Bernice LeBlanc, 630-1627.

Your thoughts and opinions matter. Attend and make your voice heard!

North Fort Unveils New Website

Your HOA invites you to review North Fort's new Internet site. We extend special thanks to Connie Simpson who has volunteered to serve as our web master. You can view the site at <http://northfortcommunity.com/>.

Our web site is intended to put a variety of information right at your fingertips. It was designed to address the following objectives:

- Enhance neighborhood appeal by promoting amenities, activities, and community spirit.
- Improve availability of information such as covenants, bylaws, minutes and forms.

- Provide information regarding storm damage, neighborhood safety, and criminal activity.
- Encourage resident participation through surveys and on-line forums.

Although this effort is a work in progress, our long-range plan is for the web site to emerge as the primary communication vehicle for the community.

We realize the site will only be effective if residents find it useful. As such, your comments and suggestions for improvement are encouraged. Please contact Connie at bergoomay@nc.rr.com with your ideas.

Covenant Update

There seems to be considerable confusion over the recent survey regarding the community's desire to amend North Fort's covenants. The ONLY intent of the survey was to gather information on resident's preferences. Even a majority response on the survey is not legally sufficient to change our covenants. *Therefore, please be advised that none of our covenants have changed.*

The actual process to make a covenant change is dictated by applicable NC law governing planned communities. Once a draft document is created, a minimum of 75% of North Fort's property owners must approve of the changes in writing. Finally, the amended document must be filed at the courthouse and distributed to the residents.

The survey was excellent in getting homeowners vocal and agitated, especially regarding sensitive issues like brick outbuildings and storage of boats and campers. The upcoming meeting is an excellent opportunity for you to share your concerns.

Finally, please note that the North Fort Board addresses a covenant violation only after a resident submits a written grievance. Therefore, the first step in covenant enforcement is up to you.

Farmer's Market Coming to Clayton

Mark your calendars for the opening day of the new Farmer's Market in Clayton. Starting April 4, local vendors will set up in Clayton Town Square (100 W. Main Street between the library and O'Neil Street) from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The market will be open each Saturday through October. Available goods will include fresh produce, baked goods and craft items.

Please Consider Serving

At the meeting on April 25th, five (5) Board members will be elected. Board members must be qualified lot owners in good standing (that means their annual dues have been paid) and eligible to vote as regular members of the Association. The Board members are charged with appointing the President and other HOA officers. The Board also makes all the decisions regarding HOA expenditures.

We are a small community and it would be expensive to hire outside management for our regular business tasks – such things as paying bills, keeping financial records, creating and disseminating notices, monitoring road status and making the decisions that potentially affect us all.

If you appreciate the hard work others have done, then show your appreciation by doing your share and standing for an office this year.

If you absolutely hate some action that has been taken or a decision that has been made, this is your opportunity to do something about it!

Our community doesn't run itself. Get involved. Contact Jay Frick (553-4412 or jay_frick@yahoo.com) to get your name on the ballot for April's election. Deadline for submitting your request is Saturday, April 18th.

Red Imported Fire Ants

North Fort now suffers a significant infestation of red imported fire ants. Most, if not all, of the bright red mounds which have popped up are attributable to this pest, and it is going to get a lot worse as the weather warms up.

Red imported fire ants are highly aggressive and their stings can be extremely irritating and painful. Some people are allergic, so please use care around these mounds and keep children and pets well away.

There is no simple set-and-forget or permanent cure for this pest. Red imported fire ants are subject to setting up practically anywhere, including inside your home, although they prefer open areas in full sun that aren't disturbed frequently and are near a food source.

Hardware and garden stores carry a variety of chemical controls that fall into two categories: bait and drench. Baits are easy to use but slower and completely ineffective unless it's warm enough for the colony to be foraging, which generally means a soil temperature of 70F or higher. Drenches can be applied any time, but are harder to use correctly and substantially more trouble.

It is actually recommended that homeowners use the "two-step method," beginning with bait and following up with a drench 5-7 days later. Whatever you use, read the label carefully and follow the directions exactly.

For more information, go to:
<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/Urban/ifa.htm> or contact the Johnston County Cooperative Extension Service at 933-5380.

Contact Information

Please provide the Association with correct and current contact information, including telephone and email. Due to cost and convenience, HOA information is often disseminated to those for whom we have accurate email addresses. You can update your contact information by emailing any Board member or officer (see page 4).

Tidbits . . .

Architectural Committee.

Northfort has an architectural committee consisting of Cindy Frick, Cathleen Olson, and Carlton Brown. Please submit any request for project approval to one of these members. Any structure built in North Fort (including a new home, outbuilding, fence, pool, etc.) must first be approved by the architectural committee. Please prepare a simple site plan to accompany your request.

Cindy Frick, cfrick1@nc.rr.com
Cathleen Olson, cathleenolson2003@yahoo.com
Carlton Brown, clbrown2@earthlink.net

Pets.

Both North Fort and Johnston County have rules forbidding uncontained animals. All pets must be leashed. If you walk your pet, clean up after it. There have been complaints of owners letting their pets defecate in neighbors' yards. Please be courteous.

Board of Directors

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Special Acknowledgements**Front Entrance Landscape.**

Thanks to Bernice LeBlanc for leading this effort. Thanks to everyone else that volunteered time and energy. North Fort saved a lot of money by keeping this project in-house.

New posts and signs.

Thanks to Bob Seroka and Gary Meek for getting new signs and making sure the poles match our neighborhood theme. Thanks to everyone else that participated.

Walkway to the pond.

Thanks to the Rodriguez family for maintaining the fence and walkway to the pond.

Road Transfer.

Thanks to Roy Stroud for initiating the transfer process for Bragg, Helen Jean, and Fort Boone Ct. Thanks also to Bob Seroka for all his effort.

Volunteers do make a difference!

North Fort HOA
 Clayton, NC 27527