PPHOA 2020 Spring Newsletter

THE (Temporary) NEW WORLD WE LIVE IN
By Bob Hayes, PPHOA President

Well, it appears we have all moved to a strange and unpleasant world. Ever since we began social distancing, it seems everything has changed…. Including our attitudes about what is and is not important. Many things that seemed so important before are just an afterthought today. But let's all remind ourselves that this is temporary, and eventually we will be able to resume our regular lives. But let's also recognize where we stand while in this strange new world. Some of us are lucky. We get to complain about cabin fever, but our incomes and our health are unaffected. Thank God I fall into that category! Others face the prospect of financial ruin if this doesn't end soon. Still others fall into high risk categories, and quite literally fear for their lives. This is scary stuff. Let's all pledge to be good neighbors and help where we can.

Now, just to give you something else to think about, let's remember back to late February and early March, when lots of things were happening in the neighborhood that seemed then to be important. On February 25th the HOA hosted a public meeting with NC DOT personnel to discuss the improvements to I-485, the planned exit onto Weddington Road and how that will affect us. A very large crowd showed up and learned a lot about what the changes will be. If you missed the meeting, the short story is that Weddington will be widened to 5 lanes (two lanes each way plus a turning lane) from Plantation all the way to McKee. There will be I-485 entrance/exits right across from Plantation Road and also just the other side of the bridge, near the YMCA. Construction on Weddington will start soon and will take about 18 months. It will probably be closer to 3 years before the freeway entrance/exits will be operational.

Also, at the meeting, after the NCDOT people were done, we had a very good discussion about what the HOA does, and what else it could do. It was explained to the attendees that they all had good ideas, but the problem was that we needed people to do the work, and the existing Board members were already very busy. Then several people stood up and volunteered to join us and work to make Providence Plantation an even better place. There was a feeling of excitement as people began to plan for new events, social activities, or other ways to improve the neighborhood. Then COVID-19 appeared, and everything was put on hold. So, for now, the HOA is stuck in a holding pattern until we are released from Social Distancing.

Hopefully this newsletter will give you a reason to think positively about the future and how Providence Plantation can be an even better place to live once we can get our lives back.

I-485 Weddington Road Interchange by Harvey Katowitz

The guest speakers for our annual meeting on February 25 were NCDOT Division 10 Super Engineer Brian Davis, and Warren Cooksey, Director of Toll Operations, NCDOT Turnpike Authority (formerly Director of Outreach and Community Affairs, NCDOT Division 10).

They were invited to the meeting to discuss the I-485 Weddington Rd interchange and how it would impact the residents of Providence Plantation during the construction.

Click here for additional information on the I-485 interchange.

Staying Social While We Shelter in Place by Scott Hammet

As we practice social distancing, many of us are now using video conferencing technology for work, virtual classrooms, checking in on family and neighbors, and yes, even Happy Hour. It's easier now than ever to stay connected while staying apart. Yet, just like its predecessor, the telephone conference, virtual gatherings run the risk of attracting uninvited attendees.

Recent reports of cyber-hooligans joining video conferences have been justifiable cause for concern. The easiest way to prevent the uninvited from disrupting your meetings is to be careful where you post the meeting details. Sharing links to conferences over social media is the biggest risk, and easiest opportunity, for them to find their way into the wrong hands. Even if you know how to secure what you share, those you invite may not. Instead, use the tools within the video conferencing software to invite your guests. If you must send the connection details outside of the conferencing software, text or email the details directly to your guests, and advise your guests to do the same if they intend on sharing them with others.

Beware of Financial Scams by Scott Hammet

Follow the money long enough, and you'll likely find criminal activity. The coronavirus has already attracted the attention of cyber criminals looking to profit from the unwary. Now is the time to be especially wary of unsolicited emails that offer software to track the spread of the virus, provide helpful information for staying safe, and of phone calls that offer help to you get your share of the $2.2 trillion economic stimulus recently passed by congress.

Cyber criminals are remarkably cunning in their use of social engineering tactics to convince smart people to do, well, dumb things. A few simple, easy ways to protect yourself: never click on links in emails, and never provide personal or financial information to someone who calls you. Neither your bank, nor the IRS, nor any other official government agency will ever call you (versus you calling them) and ask for personal or financial information.

When in doubt, visit their website directly…don't click the link in the email. Emails that try to create a sense of urgency—you must act now to take advantage of an offer, or to avoid some penalty—or use misspelled or broken English are clear warning signs. If you're asked for personal or financial information by someone claiming to be from a bank or the government that you yourself did not call, politely get off the phone, and look up the number to whomever they claimed to represent to call them back. Don't ever call back using a number provided by the caller.

Official information related to the coronavirus economic stimulus distribution can be found here in the IRS press release on coronavirus-related scams.

Security Report by Harvey Katowitz

On Feb 21, a Providence Plantation homeowner lost control of his car and drove through the entrance wall on the north side of Plantation Road.

Estimates to repair the damage was submitted to the homeowners insurance company and we received a check last week.

Several homeowners have contacted the HOA to find out when the wall was going to be repaired.

We are waiting to hear from the NCDOT on an expected date for them to begin the interchange construction and the removal the wall. Once that information is received a decision will be made on the feasibility of repairing the wall.

The following crimes were reported in Providence Plantation since Jan. 1.

Date	Description	Location	
1/27	Simple Assault	3200 Block Mattia Ct	Family dispute
2/17	Larceny	2700 Block HIGH RIDGE RD	Power Washer from Car Port - Came back on 2/19, but scared off by homeowners
2/17	Harrassing Calls	2700 Block Providence Spring Ln	
2/22	Burglary	3000 Block High Ridge Rd	Storage Shed
2/26	Att Burglary	3000 Block High Ridge Rd	Lock on storage shed broken - Nothing removed
2/28	Burglary	3500 Block Lancelot Rd	Rear doors to vacant house that's being renovated forced open, nothing missing.
3/6	Hit & Run	Plantation Rd & Weddington Rd	SUV turning into the neighborhood hit vehicle waiting to exit and fled the scene.
3/14	Vandalism	2000 Block Retana Dr	

Normally when the unemployment rate increases there is a corresponding increase in property crimes.
So far this has not happened, but if things do not improve quickly we can expect them to increase.

Please be extra vigilant. I repeat my usual mantra, close your garage doors, lock you vehicles, do not leave anything of value in plain view and if you see any suspicious persons or activity, call 911. The police would rather respond to an unfounded crime than not respond and have a crime committed.

PPHOA SOCIALS by Valerie Roberts and Janet Pierce

Since the last newsletter, our Socials world has changed temporarily but dramatically. Although Socials has put the brakes on our group activities (including our Easter Egg Hunt, supper clubs, and paper shredding event), we urge all PP residents to take advantage of new ways to stay Social-at-a-Distance, including virtual gatherings via social medial such as ZOOM, Facebook and other free, on-line apps.

Virtual "get-togethers" via ZOOM and other apps enable us to see and chat with one another, all from the comfort of our individual homes. But- - keep in mind that virtual gatherings run the risk of attracting uninvited and unwanted attendees. See "Staying Social While We Shelter in Place" in this newsletter for advice on avoiding unwanted participants.

Since we're spending more time in our kitchens, this is a great time to share some of your favorite recipes with other PP residents. My favorite new recipe is for (amazingly quick, easy and yummy) individual pizzas made from packaged tortilla shells. If you or your children have recipes to share, please email them to Socials@pp-hoa.org. (Be sure to include your name and phone number in your email).

While we're staying safe by social distancing, take advantage of on-line social media to stay in touch with your friends and neighbors, share your favorite recipes and join others in walking the neighborhood (keeping proper "Social Distance" spacing).

And, when you do walk our beautiful winding roads, stay safe by wearing white and / or light bright colors and remember that when walking in the street, walk facing traffic. Click here for more information on driver, pedestrian and bicycle laws in North Carolina and additional FAQs.