



March 2021 Newsletter

Slopes Report

A Message from Your HOA President

Phil Klein

Despite the required social distancing constraints and the attendant requirement that monthly HOA meetings be conducted via Zoom, the work and responsibilities of the board have progressed quite well. In fact, I am happy to report that the lawsuit in which the board has been involved with since October 2016 was settled through mediation and was dismissed as of February 10, 2021.

In the September 2020 newsletter, I requested your help to advance the project of updating the PC&Rs and Bylaws by providing your email addresses. Thanks to your response, we were able to distribute the updated PC&Rs and Bylaws and supporting documents in early March along with a Google Form for you to provide your comments and suggestions. If you did not receive this information via email or the USPS, please contact me (858-775-7956) or any member of the board and we will provide the documents to you.

Please review the updated PC&Rs and Bylaws and supporting documents and send us your comments and suggestions as soon as possible. This will allow sufficient time to summarize your input, share it with you, and refine the PC&Rs and Bylaws based on your input. We are strongly committed to completing this work by the end of this board's term in June 2021, for which we need your responses to the proposed updates before the end of April.

In 2020, the Slopes Committee continued work focused on maintenance and upgrades to the slopes. Yearly tree maintenance was completed following recommendations of our certified arborist. In addition, 14 new trees were planted to enhance the slopes. These included *Rhus lancea*, Australian willow, and *Melaleuca*, which were chosen for their drought tolerance. The committee also focused on updating ground cover plants in select areas throughout the neighborhood based on available budget.

Our contract with Martinez Landscaping was renewed. They will continue to provide landscape maintenance as well as addressing storm damage, minor tree maintenance, and irrigation upgrades/repairs throughout the year. Work in the coming year will focus on upgrading sections of the 45-year-old irrigation system for the slopes as budget allows. The galvanized metal pipes and antiquated sprinkler heads will be replaced to better manage water usage and improve durability. The system supplying the slope on north Santa Camelia will be upgraded in late spring, followed by replanting.

Please submit questions and issues related to the slopes to the HOA at info@SanElijoHills1.org.

Architectural Report

The PC&Rs obligate homeowners to submit their construction plans to the HOA for approval, but the architectural committee likes to think of this as a service rather than an imposition. Because the PC&Rs can be legally enforced neighbor-against-neighbor through the courts,



it's in your interest to get HOA approval as evidence that your property is in compliance with the PC&Rs.

The form that you need to submit to get HOA approval for changes to the exterior design or color of your property is available for download from the Documents page of our website at www.SanElijoHills1.org. HOA approval is not required if you are just maintaining the existing structure and color of your home, or for interior modifications. Even when HOA approval is not required, changes to your property still must comply with the PC&Rs and Policies. For example, an interior modification that subdivides your home into two separate dwellings does not require approval, but it would be a violation of the PC&Rs and likely subject you to legal action.

There have been 20 new requests for architectural improvement submitted in the past six months, compared to 15 over the same period last year. All but four were approved within 3 days or less. Of the four that were slow, one was approved after modification, one was eventually withdrawn, and two were ultimately rejected.

We strongly recommend that homeowners use licensed and insured contractors to ensure that improvements meet the latest building codes and to limit potential liability for the homeowner.

Financial Report

As of mid-February, we are running about 7% over budget, mainly due to increased county dump fees and high water use due to lack of rain in the fall and early winter. We have delayed some scheduled irrigation improvements until we can get overall spending back on-track.

For the semiannual fees due in March, we will be trying our first round of electronic invoicing. All homeowners who have given us their email address will receive an electronic invoice that can be paid directly from your bank account. If you prefer to pay by check, please print and follow the instructions on the invoice and mail-in your payment. We can reduce our postage, handling, and printing costs significantly if many of our members elect to pay electronically. Please contact diane@mlbinc.com if you have any difficulty paying electronically. For any other requests or questions relating to the HOA, contact us at info@SanElijoHills1.org.

The board voted to use \$30K from our reserve fund to pay for settlement of the lawsuit mentioned in the President's report. We plan on replenishing our reserves beginning with next year's budget cycle, which runs from July 2021 to June 2022.

If you have not already done so, please email your name and street address to us at info@SanElijoHills1.org