

Save the Meadow

by John Sisker

That should really be a no-brainer, yet it actually wasn't very long after Deborah and I moved in here to Newport Terrace, that we learned some felt just the opposite. Yet, the Meadow itself was a definite draw and major amenity to us, something you just don't see very much in other communities. In addition, it is the things, such as the Meadow, that are helping to keep and actually increase our overall property values. Believe me, I should know – I am licensed by HCD (Housing & Community Development) to sell select type housing. Plus, it is 14+ acres of open space; plants, shrubs, bushes, trees, hills, trails, and even that is presently going through changes to make it even better.

Therefore, why would anyone object to the Meadow, when there are so many positives involved? That answer is actually quite simple. Some apparently feel the Board of Directors are spending our hard-earned, and rather high monthly association dues, on something not really needed, at least in their opinion. They seemingly feel all that money should really be going for things that are a much higher priority, such as the residing and roofing projects. While such priorities are obvious to even a layman, simply ignoring everything else from this perspective, would be like cutting off your nose in spite of your face.

Yet, this is such a big and obvious controversial issue, which no-doubt was a major factor behind the recent recall attempt, causing some to develop a love/hate relationship for select members of the present Board. Likewise, a few will quickly point out the good and bad of past Boards, the flaws of present and/or past vendors, and the things that did not go entirely as originally planned. Now, don't get me wrong. This is not meant to belittle anyone for having a different opinion; it is just that there will always be at least two sides on any given issue. The trick is to know how to get your point across with others who may not always agree with you. If it's a "my way or the highway" attitude, no one will get anywhere.

In addition, I am not that naive to know that some may feel that I may have already been bought off, sort-of-speak, that I am too easily misled with what they perceive as wrong information. This is quite obvious with those who have now shut down all communications with me personally. Yet, let me assure you that nothing could be further from the truth. One thing I am not though... is easily harassed and/or influenced with hearsay and misinformation. In my line of work, and as a business owner, checking out all the facts and information, no matter the source, is my mode of operation before forming any conclusions.

Then just who is right and who is wrong in such a controversy? That answer is also very easy. No one is! However, the real problem is those not fully understanding the total solution, but they think they do. They also don't know how to work within the system, nor are even willing to

compromise to achieve positive results. There is an old expression... “If you’re not part of the solution, then you’re part of the problem.

The bottom line is, siding and roofing are indeed the major priorities, and no one will deny that. Yet, other things need to be kept in proper perspective as well, including the Meadow. Neglecting the other things that also need attention, will only cost a lot more in the long-run, when they can no longer be ignored. The Meadow and other landscaping issues, since this is the primary emphasis of my article anyway, only accounts for 3% to 5% of the overall budget. Do the numbers yourself! That is hardly worth dividing Newport Terrace against one another, considering even if that entire 5% were put back into the siding and roofing projects, it would actually make very little difference anyway. But all those other things that can no longer be put off, will then be at a much greater expense, just to bring them back up to par.

With this type of thinking, you’re simply asking for an increase in association fees and/or special assessments, something others seemingly think they can avoid by putting all their eggs in one basket now. Believe me, it doesn’t work that way. Disagree? Good! Then let’s debate the issue. I’m more than willing, are you?

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