



June, 2013

Welcome Aboard!

City Council Recognizes the Sapphire Hills Neighborhood

On May 9, 2013, the Sapphire Hills Homeowners Association was formally recognized by City Council. The Sapphire Hills neighborhood was established in 2008. This neighborhood is an attractive small townhome community where neighbors know and care for each other. Officers for Sapphire Hills are: President – Melanie Williams; Vice President - Karen Broadway; Secretary – Kathleen Green; and Treasure – Tamara Swaringen. The staff appointed liaison is Ed Shaver, Concord Fire Battalion Chief. Please join me and extend a warm welcome to the Sapphire Hills neighbors.

Every neighborhood plays an integral part in the vitality of the City of Concord. Currently there are 54 neighborhood organizations throughout the City of Concord formally recognized by the City Council. [Click here](#) to discover more about the neighborhoods currently participating in the program.

Neighborhood Leadership Council

Increasing Participation in a Neighborhood Association

The 2nd Quarter Neighborhood Leadership Council Meeting (NLC) was held on Tuesday May 28, 2013. I realize the day after a holiday can be challenging so I was certainly happy with the turn out. During the meeting, neighborhood leaders had a spirited discussion on community engagement and ways to increase participation. The participants discussed the importance of employing methods to "meet people where they are" and ways to discover the passions and interest of neighbors. The group would like to revisit the topic during a future meeting - "Coffee on Main Street" sometime in July. I will email everyone the meeting details as soon as I finalize things.

As you know, the goal of the NLC is to provide an open forum where neighborhood leaders can come together and exchange information and ideas. The Council will meet quarterly and the agenda for each meeting will be guided by the members of the Council. The next meeting will be held on August 27, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. A meeting notification flyer will be mailed as that date approaches. The topic for discussion during the next council meeting will be "Planning a neighborhood improvement project / Concord's Neighborhood Matching Grant Program." Hope to see you there!

Good Neighbor Tip:

Drive slowly on neighborhood streets.

Stop signs, traffic lights, and speed bumps are not the only thing that can slow down traffic in your neighborhood. In most cases, speeding results from habit. "Speeders" are not bad people from somewhere else – most are neighbors and friends who speed because they are so familiar with their neighborhood that they do not realize how fast they are traveling. To address the problem, try having open discussions with neighbors and during the neighborhood meeting. This raises the awareness level of everyone and gives everyone an opportunity to weigh in on the problem (don't forget that sometimes perception can sometimes be as important as reality). Also, try driving a few miles per hour slower than the speed limit in your neighborhood. For example if the speed limit is 25, try 20 instead. Regular slower driving on neighborhood streets by multiple neighbors reduces some of the faster driving by itself. Furthermore, drivers looking for a short cut won't find it as desirable once they discover that neighborhood traffic is moving at a slower pace. This is by no means the complete answer to slowing down traffic within residential neighborhood - just a recommendation to encourage neighbors to get involved in the process in their neighborhood and become part of the solution.

Crime Prevention Tip: Preventing Mortgage Fraud

If you are a struggling homeowner, beware of people who say they can help save your home and lower or eliminate your mortgage debt. Consumers who are behind with their mortgage or other debts should be particularly wary of companies offering “mortgage relief,” “debt adjustment,” and “debt relief” services. Many of these offers come from individuals or companies offering bogus services. The companies often collect high up-front fees and then do little or nothing to actually help consumers. Distressed homeowners can contact the [National Foundation for Credit Counseling](#) (800/388-2227) for foreclosure assistance tools and referrals to low-cost, certified housing counselors. In North Carolina, the [State Home Foreclosure Prevention Project](#) (866/234-4857) offers similar assistance and provides a call center to field questions from distressed homeowners.

News Headlines

Neighborhood Litter Sweep Winners Announced

Three neighborhoods participated in the Spring 2013 Litter Sweep Event —Brandon Ridge, Gibson Village, Brown Mill. Combined, these three neighborhoods collected 153 bags of litter, which is 17 more bags than was collected last Fall. In the Most Bags Contest, cash prizes were awarded to Brown Mill - \$100, Gibson Village - \$75, and Brandon Ridge - \$50. Congratulations to all the winners and participants!

Neighborhood Leaders - [Please help us to improve the Litter Sweep campaign by clicking here and completing this short survey. We will use your feedback to determine how we can improve our future events.](#)

City Manager recommends FY 2013-14 budget

Concord City Manager Brian Hiatt presented his fiscal year 2013-14 budget recommendation to the Concord City Council at a special meeting on Wednesday, May 29. The City-wide budget totals \$213,386,710 for all funds, including utilities and various special revenue funds. The recommended General Fund budget, where the primary funding sources are property and sales tax receipts, is \$68,960,872. The City Manager has recommended the tax rate remain at 48 cents per 100 dollars of valuation. To learn more, visit [concord.gov](#).

Start planning...National Night Out is scheduled for Tuesday August 6, 2013

Every year, neighborhood organizations all across the City plan various events and activities including, but not limited to, block parties, cookouts, parades, visits from emergency personnel, rallies and marches, exhibits, youth events, safety demonstrations and seminars, in effort to heighten awareness of the importance of crime prevention and to further enhance community relations with public safety and city official. For more information visit the [www.nno.org](#) or contact Captain Betty Stock at (704) 920-5010 or send email to [stocksb@concordnc.gov](#).

Paper towels and flushable wipes causing sewer spills and back-ups

Out of sight, out of mind—that’s what most of us think about what goes down the household toilet. For most home owners this is true, but not always—and you would be surprised at what is becoming the biggest cause of sewer spills and back-ups: paper products other than toilet paper. Three of the City of Concord’s twenty three pump stations have already been affected by paper towels and wipes. In one instance, one of the pumps was so impacted with wipes that it stopped working. Another was

only running at 60 percent of its capacity. Had the pump not been repaired in time, about 1,000 households could have had a severe problem to deal with. Learn more about this problem – check out this recent story on [WBTV News](#).

Youth soccer registration

Soccer registration for youth ages 3 to 15 begins June 1 and continue through June 30. Registration is available at one of the three [recreation centers](#) weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., or any time at [concordparksandrec.org](#). Registration is \$30 for City residents and \$50 for non-residents. For more information, visit [concordparksandrec.org](#) or call 704-920-5618.

Financial Assistance for struggling homeowners

[The N.C. Foreclosure Prevention Fund™](#) helps North Carolina homeowners who are struggling to make their mortgage payments due to job loss or temporary financial hardship. For qualified homeowners, the Fund can provide [an interest-free loan of up to \\$36,000 to pay mortgage](#) and other related expenses for up to 36 months. To participate, homeowners may be behind (or at risk of getting behind) on mortgage payments, or in foreclosure. This is a program offered by the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency, a self-supporting state agency. For more information visit the [program website](#) at [www.NCForeclosurePrevention.gov](#) or call 1-888-623-8631.

Automated Phone Messaging System

Recognized Neighborhoods can use the City's Blackboard System, which is an automated phone messaging system to send prerecorded phone call messages or text messages to notify or remind members of upcoming meetings and events. This is an effective way to communicate with members of your neighborhood organization. Let technology work for you!! For more information or if you are interested in using the system, please notify me via [email](#).

Welcome New and Returning Neighborhood Leaders!

Congratulations to the newly elected and re-elected neighborhood leaders. Thank you for your dedication to your neighborhood. Your service to your neighborhood will benefit your neighbors and the City of Concord! If you have not done so already, please [email](#) me the names and contact information for your board members. Also please let me know if you have changed the meeting date, time or location.

Neighborhood Meeting Calendar

Click the heading above to access the June 2013 Neighborhood Meeting Calendar. The calendar includes meeting dates, times and locations for neighborhood meetings, City Council Meetings, Planning and Zoning Commission Meetings and other city events. Please note that as reported by the organization. Meetings date and times are subject to change without notice. This is a live calendar so changes are made immediately after they are report. For a full schedule of all recognized organization meetings, visit the program's website [concordnc.gov/neighborhoods](#).

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Partnership for Stronger Neighborhoods

BUILDING relationships to
EMPOWER communities
and **CONNECT** citizens to resources.