



Rustic Hills Improvement Association

Newsletter

March 2023

RusticHillsAcres.com

ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR MAY 24

The Rustic Hills Improvement Association (RHIA) Annual Meeting will be held at 7:00pm on Wednesday, May 24. The location will be the **Envoy Church** (formerly called Sunnyside Christian) on the northeastern corner of Constitution Avenue and Murray Boulevard.

Association business regularly conducted at the Annual Meeting includes voting on new Board members and a budget for the new fiscal year (May 1 to April 30), as well as setting the amount of the RHIA membership dues to go into effect 11 months in the future. Dues for 2023-2024 were approved at last year's annual meeting. The amount is \$50 for the year.

All current memberships expire on April 30, so please pay your dues for 2023-2024 at or before the meeting. If mailing your check, please do so by Monday, May 8. **The mailing address is RHIA, P.O. Box 75074, Colorado Springs, CO 80970.**

Each year, at least six of the ten Board member positions expire and need to be filled. In accordance with the Association's Bylaws, the RHIA President has appointed a Nominating Committee to recommend willing candidates for election. All positions are unpaid, volunteer roles.

In addition to routine annual business, this year's agenda includes a report from a neighborhood task force that is looking at **potential updates to our Protective Covenants**. Also, a city representative will be invited to explain the **neighborhood road construction that is expected to begin in May.**

COVENANTS QUIZ

What is the first sentence of **the first covenant (#C-1) that legally applies to EVERY lot** in our neighborhood?

- A. No lot shall be used except for residential purposes.
- B. No lot shall be used except for residential purposes.
- C. No lot shall be used except for residential purposes.

If you selected Answer A, B, or C above, you are CORRECT!

CURRENT RHIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Interested in joining the Board? Contact us at rusticboard2018@gmail.com

Position	Incumbent	Term Expiration
President	Dan Allgeier	Imminent – May 31
Vice President	Ray Hoff	Imminent – May 31
Secretary	Tamie Farris	Imminent – May 31
Treasurer	Doug Eberhart	Imminent – May 31
Filing 1 Rep (first year)*	Linda Cash	2025
Filing 1 Rep (second year)	Tom Neppi	2024
Filing 1 Rep (third year)	Jamie Wilson	Imminent – May 31
Filing 2 Rep (first year)**	Shane Bruckner	2025
Filing 2 Rep (second year)	Jim Rickman	2024
Filing 2 Rep (third year)	Jim Kelly	Imminent – May 31

* Filing 1 consists of the lots two acres or more in size (eastern part of Rustic Hills)

** Filing 2 consists of the lots that are approximately one-acre in size (western part of Rustic Hills)

WANTED: KING OR QUEEN OF THE TRASH COALITION

Jamie Wilson was gracious enough to take over the (unpaid) coordinator for the Rustic Hills Acres Trash Coalition (RHATC) after longtime coordinator Tom Hartig stepped down several years ago. Now that Jamie's three-year term as Filing 1 representative is coming to an end, it is time to appoint some lucky Board member as the new trash czar.

Our neighborhood gets a fantastic group discount from Waste Connections, and billing is handled by a third party (Janice McLain, "Red Oak Associates"). The RHATC coordinator is involved in monitoring service trends, billing issues and the RHATC budget, and negotiating a contract with Waste Connections once every five years. RHATC exists solely for the benefit of our neighborhood customers. Trash Coalition funds are kept completely separate from the RHIA (dues) account.

New representatives replacing Jamie Wilson and Jim Kelly, whose terms are expiring, may be considered as candidates for the RHATC coordinator role if they so desire.

READY OR NOT, IT'S PAYTON CIRCLE PAVING TIME!

Colorado Springs Public Works Director Travis Easton caused quite a commotion at the Annual Meeting in 2022 with some contradictory statements made about upcoming road paving activity. On a positive note, this led to extensive RHIA review of the city's paving plans, led by RHIA neighbors Juan Rodriguez and Kent Morris. The final plans do not fully address all local concerns, but at least our local input was heard and considered.

The City reportedly awarded a contract for the work in March, and we can expect to see Payton Circle affected in May, through the summer. Some mailboxes and landscaping are located within City right-of-way, and will be removed by the contractor. Also, to keep postal delivery out of the construction zone, a bank of community mailboxes is expected to be installed for temporary use. Trash service and other service vehicles (e.g., Amazon deliveries) could encounter challenges during the construction as well.

FEELING CHIPPY? SIGN UP NOW FOR FREE TREE LIMB CHIPPING IN JUNE

The 2023 Colorado Springs Fire Department Chipping Program is now open for residents to sign up on-line via: the direct link to the Chipping Sign-Up Page: bit.ly/3US4jwE
You may also sign up by calling Ashley Whitworth at 719-385-7342.

This year there are two dates for Rustic Hills neighbors to sign up: June 12th and / or September 12th. This is the start date, piles will be picked up sometime within the next two weeks of that date. Note: piles must be out on the start date. Residents may sign up for one date or both dates.

This is a free service to residents, please be respectful of the request by CSFD on stacking your piles and what is acceptable. Review the CSFD Neighborhood Chipping Program online. For additional information, links to the CSFD Home Page: <https://www.coswildfireready.org/> and the Chipping Region Map

RUSTIC HILLS: BEAUTY OR BLIGHT?

Have you noticed that the visual character of our neighborhood has been deteriorating? We are beginning to look like a trailer park, folks are leaving unsightly debris in their yards, and too many unapproved sheds and stalls have popped up. The RHIA Architectural Committee and the Covenants Review Task Force are working on proposals to update our Covenants to stop this blight creep. We will provide more information at the RHIA Annual Meeting in May. Meanwhile, your effort to tidy up your property would be much appreciated!

KILLING THE “CONSTITUTION EXTENSION”

Thanks to all Rustic Hills residents who attended and/or spoke at the various public meetings that resulted in killing the “Constitution extension”!!!

Over the past several months, a number of Rustic Hills residents joined in the fight to convince the City of Colorado Springs to NOT study the idea of connecting Constitution Avenue to the Interstate 25 Fontanero interchange, which would undoubtedly add thousands of additional cars and trucks to Constitution as it passes our neighborhood. Note that all 205 lots in Rustic Hills Acres are completely dependent on Constitution for getting in and out of our neighborhood. That is a dangerous challenge today that will worsen over time, but the last thing we need is a “Constitution Extension”. Connecting Constitution to I-25 would be the first step in turning Constitution into a crosstown expressway.

There was ample evidence that City staff was ready to undertake a Constitution Extension Study, which they renamed Central Colorado Springs East-West Mobility Study to try to hide their intentions. Today’s City Council members seemed to be unaware of the year 2002 East-West Mobility Study and the strong public opposition to making Constitution a high-speed expressway across town. Their engineering consultant also failed to point it out. Incompetence, or bad intentions?

The RHIA Board of Directors sent a letter opposing the study to all nine members of the Colorado Springs City Council.

At the City Council meeting, approximately 30 citizens from various neighborhoods spoke passionately about the many adverse impacts that connecting Constitution to I-25 would have. Then, in an embarrassing and pathetic moment, one "citizen" spoke in favor of the study - an employee of the Home Builders Association employee, who said she lives along Dublin Boulevard. She said it's not that bad living right next to a busy arterial roadway, except for when the motorists are drag racing.

Fortunately, there emerged on City Council a champion of truth and accountability. Councilman Dave Donelson, from District 1 (not our area) led the charge to protect neighborhoods and not sacrifice them to appease developers out east of us. Councilman Donelson obviously did his homework on the matter, and asked questions of staff that clearly revealed that important and relevant facts were being ignored. In particular, he pointed out that the Constitution Expressway idea had already been studied and rejected 20 years ago,

Our own City Councilman, Nancy Henjum, strongly supported Councilman Donelson, once she recognized the facts of the matter. The issue was very much in question when the council met in February and finally voted 7-2 to eliminate this "study" from the city's new long-range transportation plan. Councilman Donelson supported a concept to create a greenway for non-motorized use where the city staff was pursuing the road connection. Hopefully, this will "kill" the Constitution connection concept once and for all.

Councilman Donelson does not represent Rustic Hills Acres, but he is very much our friend, and this should be kept in mind for future elections, especially if the developers make big donations to some other candidate to oust him.

City Councilman (and current mayoral candidate) Wayne Williams did not demonstrate any friendship for the potentially affected neighborhoods, including ours. He did everything he could to persuade other council members to keep the "study" in the long-range plan. He actually made a motion to approve the plan as is, including the "study", before there was any city council discussion of the issue. This is stated as a matter of public record and fact, for your information. RHIA does not make political endorsements.

Another current mayoral candidate (not currently on Council), Sallie Clark, attended one of Councilmember Nancy Henjum's public forums on the topic, and argued passionately for removal of the "study" from the long-range plan, to protect neighborhoods including Rustic Hills Acres. Sallie Clark also led opposition to a Constitution extension back in 2002, when she was a member of the City Council. Again, this is stated as a matter of public record and fact, for your information. RHIA does not make political endorsements.

Political pundits in the local news media are predicting that no mayoral candidate will receive more than 50 percent of the vote on April 4, and therefore the two candidates with the most

votes would face each other in a runoff election in June. The top two candidates could well be the ones mentioned above.

When you vote in the June runoff election, remember that all 205 lots in Rustic Hills Acres are completely dependent on Constitution for getting in and out of our neighborhood. You might ask yourself, which candidate cares about our neighborhood's safety and quality of life, and which one does not?

SPEED LIMIT QUIZ

The speed limit (mostly ignored) on Constitution Avenue is 35 miles per hour. What is the speed limit on all other roads in Rustic Hills Acres?

- A. 25 miles per hour
- B. 25 miles per hour
- C. 25 miles per hour

If you selected Answer A, B, or C above, you are CORRECT! Please drive accordingly.

EDITOR'S NOTE

You haven't missed any issues. This is the first RHIA newsletter prepared since April 2021.

UPCOMING RHIA EVENTS

For the information of neighborhood newcomers, RHIA in 2023 is likely to conduct the following events which it has done annually for a number of years. Dates have not yet been determined:

- Neighborhood Cleanup Day – typically in June
- Neighborhood Garage Sale – month can vary
- Neighborhood BBQ picnic – typically around Labor Day
- Halloween Hayride in Filing 2 – usually October 31

Additionally, there is a ladies' social group called the JULIETs (Just Us Ladies Into Eating Together) and the ROMEOs (Retired Old Men Eating Out). These groups typically meet on a monthly basis. For more information, see the Hospitality tab on the website of Rustic Hills Acres (rustichillsacres.com).