

# St. Charles Hills Subdivision

[www.saintcharleshills.org](http://www.saintcharleshills.org)

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**Attention: Subdivision Meeting: March 4 – 6:30pm**

**Location: Jefferson Intermediate School – Cafeteria**

Greetings and Salutations from the Trustees of Saint Charles Hills!

We want to welcome you to the subdivision if this is your first newsletter. We are glad you are here. Many of you have lived here for many years and we are grateful for you as well. This community is a special place, and we hope it will be for many generations to come.

The trustees have responsibility for governance of the subdivision. We are a not-for-profit entity. We manage the eight common ground parks and work with a management company to keep everything humming along. We currently are comprised of three trustees for the 1,159 homes within our boundaries.

We wanted to give you a quick rundown of some important things that happened in 2024. First, we held a subdivision wide vote to raise our assessment from \$50/year to \$100/year and it passed. You will see this reflected on your assessment fee for 2025. The trustees promised that if the vote passed, we would invest the money into our park infrastructure and have already been meeting with contractors to get bids. Second, we voted to increase the number of trustees from three to five. We currently have two open positions. Please reach out to the trustees for more information on what the positions entail. If we have candidates, we will hold a vote at the meeting in March.

## **Block Party**

We held the third annual block party BBQ on September 14<sup>th</sup> at Fleet Park. We had a petting zoo and attendees enjoyed grilled hotdogs and sides prepared by volunteers. We want to express special thanks to our gracious volunteers who spent countless hours fixing up Fleet Park so we could lean back and enjoy each other's company on the beautiful fall day. We plan to host the annual picnic again in 2025 so please watch out for signs and notifications on the Nextdoor app (Saint Charles Hills Subdivision) or on our Facebook page.

## **Subdivision Finances**

The trustees spent time this year working with our attorneys at Martin, Leyhe, Stuckmeyer to collect assessment fees from those unwilling to pay subdivision dues. This does not bring us pleasure, but is necessary to keep the subdivision solvent. As a result, we ended the year in good financial condition. Our total collections for 2024 were \$ 79,586.82 and our total expenditures was \$ 75,196.23. Please remember that a fee of \$15 is accrued for each month one is delinquent on their fees. We do this only to ensure we are able to meet our financial obligations. Please visit the website for more information on what your subdivision assessment covers. We will provide detailed financials at the annual meeting or by request via email beginning in February, 2025.

## **Got Home Improvements or Alterations planned?**

For those neighbors who want to make updates to their properties, please review the indentures and if applicable, complete the HOA Architectural and Landscape form on the subdivision website. You can submit the form to our email address or via snail mail. Please do not begin construction prior to approval. This includes building a fence, shed, or any other structure. Please ensure your assessment fee has been paid or your request to make alterations may be denied.

## **Property Maintenance**

St. Charles County makes periodic assessments of properties and sends out notices to comply. Here are a couple of things to keep in mind about your property:

- **Yard Waste:** please do not blow leaves or sweetgum balls in the street or down the storm drains. It causes problems with the utility system. Remember, you own the tree and therefore the leaves. Please don't give them to others. Also, please DO NOT place yard waste in the common grounds. Violators will be prosecuted.

- Renters: if you rent to others, please check on your property to ensure it is up to code and inform your renters of their obligations to maintain curb appeal. Curb appeal starts with the owner. This includes (but it not limited to) torn screens blowing in the wind, trash carts sitting at curbs for extended periods of time, and noise control. Please utilize background checks and references.
- Please don't speed in the subdivision. Many streets do not have sidewalks and we have an abundance of adults and children who walk and ride bicycles throughout. Please keep them safe!
- Please maintain your fence line on both sides. There are many properties that abut common grounds that are unsightly or in need of TLC. Please make a positive contribution to the property values of our subdivision.
- There are specific rules around derelict vehicles, work trucks, trailers and boats. If you have questions, please the website: <https://www.sccmo.org/234/Property-Maintenance-Code>.

### **Landlords who lease properties:**

We kindly ask that you give a copy of the indentures to your tenants. We ask that all homes be in compliance with the subdivision rules. We have had struggles with tenants maintaining the yard or fence line or even notifying landlords of tree limbs on houses (which can cause substantial damage if there is a storm). It is important that our renters maintain the curb appeal of our subdivision. The trustees suggest that homeowners who are not local use a property management company to help maintain the property's value. Also, please inform your renters that they are in an HOA so as to avoid misunderstandings. Your renters are welcome at subdivision BBQ's and other social events.

### **Common Grounds**

St. Charles Hills Subdivision has 8 common ground parks located on central streets: Fleet, Ipswich, Janton, Orton, Essex, Lyme, St. Albans, and Ehlmann. Some of the parks have equipment and others do not. We invest heavily in groundskeeping so that adults and children can enjoy them. The trustees also spent substantial time clearing weeds and brush at Fleet Park in preparation for the BBQ. The trustees noticed that a storm drain was causing erosion at the Ipswich common grounds and were able to invite St. Charles County to assist. They pulled a large cooler from the drain that someone had purposefully lodged there. They also removed a large lawnmower that had been discarded in the park. Please do not dump garbage or yard waste in the parks! Help us keep our parks in good operating condition by reporting adverse events. Also, we will be updating park equipment in 2025 and would appreciate care and consideration as you utilize our common grounds.

When visiting our parks, please be responsible for your pets. We ask that you abide by local leash laws and clean up after them. If you see someone dumping, please contact the trustees so we can address the situation. This includes yard waste. If you see criminal activity, please contact the St. Charles County Police.

### **Subdivision Garage Sales**

Our subdivision garage sales will take place on May 10<sup>th</sup> and October 11<sup>th</sup>. Please prepare accordingly. The trustees will place signs at least 2 weeks before the sales and place ads in local newspapers.

### **Responsible Pet Ownership**

We have received numerous complaints over the past year about barking dogs, loose dogs, and neighbors who do not clean up after their pets. If you have a dog, please clean up their waste weekly so your yard does not become a nuisance to your neighbors. Also, please do not dump pet waste in the common grounds. One of the most important things you can do as a pet owner is take responsibility for your animal. We are seeing owners who leave dogs in yards and unleashed with the result being they attack others who walk by. Please help make St. Charles Hills a safe place for people and pets.

Finally, we value this community and our neighbors. Each of us creates community – be it good or not-so-good. Be the neighbor you would want to live next to you. Be kind. Be patient. Help those who can't help themselves. And in so doing, we all benefit and become a beautiful neighborhood.