

Regarding fencing on properties in Mount Vernon Manor:

I want to explain one of the functions that the MVMCA can perform to help our neighborhood. Occasionally we get requests to perform residential enforcement functions. We are a community association, not a Homeowners Association, so we have no authority to compel neighbors to make modifications to their residence. If you suspect that there is a code (or even criminal) violation involving a neighbor, of course we encourage you to work that out, then report it to the proper local government authority, and if you do not have success there you should bring these types of matters to the MVMCA Board of Directors/Officers (see contact info. at www.mvmca-va.org) so that we can get, as a community, the proper government resources involved.

Regarding the run down property on Gateshead Road:

Recently neighbors around the house at of 8718 Gateshead Road, belonging to a Mr. Strobel, reported to the MVMCA that the house was abandoned for many months and so is in disrepair. The complaint is that grass is overgrown, there is trash surrounding the property, and there is an abandoned car in the driveway. The neighbors have been in touch with the Fairfax County Code Enforcement authorities who have been out and left notices of noncompliance and are currently pursuing remedies. The neighbors have not seen movement on a solution, so they contacted the MVMCA for help. As an association we want the proper authorities to understand that this is a community issue.

I called the local police and asked them to check to make sure that no one was inside in need of assistance (or worse). The police had been out to the house and to the best of their ability determined that it is abandoned. Fairfax county code inspection has left notices on the door, so I called the POCs on the notices. They have one section that deals with the abandoned car, and another with the overgrown grass and trash. Both were aware of the problems at the property. The owner, Mr. Strobel, is somewhere in Florida and Code enforcement no longer has a contact number for him (or his family).

Code enforcement can and will schedule the county to cut the grass and remove the trash. This would be billed to the owner, and a lien put on the house for the expense if the bill is not paid. If the owner is deceased, the county will investigate who inherits the property and deal with them. If no one claims the property within a certain time frame, it can be taken over by the county and sold, at which point the county will recoup the penalties that have been assessed. The point is that this takes time. The county has to give at least 30 days for someone to respond to the notice, which was posted around the beginning of May, and then the process as described begins. The MVMCA will stay in touch with Mount Vernon District Supervisor Storck's office, who in turn will keep in touch with the proper county officials to give this matter some priority.

The MVMCA will continue to post updates on the website or via the ListServe and talk to neighbors.