



**Dufferin Park HOA
Survey Comment Results 2006 - Q&A**

Survey Question #6. "Would you support an increase in annual dues to fund legal services to pursue enforce covenant requirements, or work toward a consolidation and redraft of covenants?"

Question/Comment (Q/C) 1: I think they should just be enforced. We shouldn't have to pay extra to get legal services to enforce this.

A: Actually, we are referring to a "redrafting of the covenants". This is where we would streamline the covenants by making all of the additions governed under one set of documents, instead of 10 different sets for 16 different additions. We really wanted to know how people felt about this idea. This would be a major effort with a special committee/taskforce needed to address this issue. If you are one of those people, please let us know.

Survey Question #7. "Considering the existing covenants, do you feel the violators should be notified of their violation and fined a \$10 penalty?"

Question/Comment (Q/C) 2: Don't think they should be fined until they don't correct - what if they don't know?"

A: They are sent a warning letter detailing the covenant violation and given 30 days to correct the violation. If the violation is not corrected, then they are assessed the fine.

Q/C 3: Would want a list of which covenants are usually violated - and which ones are nuisance types.

A: See the website under the FAQ page, question #14.

Q/C 4: There seems to have been quite a turn over in the neighborhood and I would doubt the original covenant documents were given to the owners. Nor do I believe many of the existing owners have ever taken the time to actually read the book itself.

A: We have been checking the MLS on a monthly basis for homes that go on the market. When we see that the realtor has not listed the Association and the annual fees, we then contact the realtor to make sure they are aware of our existence. It is the **Homeowners** responsibility to inform any realtor or prospective buyer of all known items relating to their home. All of the covenants are on the website. All contact information has been sent to each property address on a yearly basis with all of this information. They are sent a warning letter detailing the covenant violation and given 30 days to correct the violation. If the violation is not corrected, then they are assessed the fine. In short, the board goes to great lengths to assure they are treated fairly in this process.



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Survey Question #8. **Considering the multiple Dufferin Park elements (mailboxes, monuments, plantings), what do you think is the #1 issue facing the HOA?**

- Question/Comment (Q/C) 5:** Unkempt lawns – City Issue
 Homes being rented – Redraft of covenants
 Corner at Overlook Drive and Dufferin – See Q/C 7 below
 Happy Harry Furniture Truck – File a complaint w/ our Management
 Trash cans in front of homes – City Issue
 Wood fences – to be addressed in 2006
 Speed Limit – City Issue
 Too many cars – City Issue
 Mowing the boulevards – City Issue
 All of the above

Survey Question #10. **"What would you improve, regarding the DPHOA? Are there areas within the development that you might identify as a candidate for inclusion in the common area maintenance?"**

Question/Comment (Q/C) 6: "Is there a way to put in a sprinkler system along both sides of Bridgewater Dr. covering the "common grass area" around and over the Credit River Bridge? The grass gets very brown during the summer and is an eyesore. Sod has already been replaced once because it died. It is now healthier, but takes a beating during the dry spells in the summer."

A: That area is the property of the city of Savage. The HOA has no jurisdiction over that property. We have never been aware of this as a problem and would have to look into the specific details surrounding this area. But this is a great idea!

Q/C 7: "I think something should be done regarding the lot at the corner of Dufferin Drive and Overlook Drive. Although I appreciate the efforts put into the perennial garden done by the selected homeowner, I am wondering if it would be feasible to have the area sodded for a more manicured appearance."

A: The HOA has an agreement with the city of Savage regarding this parcel. The city had strict restrictions on what we could and couldn't do it. They would only allow the extent of the area currently used, to be modified from the natural plantings that already exist. The HOA felt that an area that was as "maintenance free" as possible would be the best way to proceed with it at the time. The strip of grass along the sidewalk was all that was allowed as a green area and we have included that into our maintenance agreement with our vendor.



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Q/C 8: "Any area around the 'wetlands'. Not regular maintenance - just as needed. (Clearing hazardous brush...) I am not sure - maybe the city is responsible for this but it isn't being done."

A: We can look into this. It will most likely be a call to the city forester (who should be here tonight) and he might be able to give some insight.

Q/C 9: "What are we paying for if the rules are not enforced? Why not make the plantings perennials so they do not need to be replaced every year - or a combination if more color is desired. Get rid of the planting on the corner of Dufferin and Overlook, it is degrading to the overall look of Dufferin Park and is not being properly maintained. Just replace it with a monument announcing the wildlife area."

A: We are paying for: a) insurance on the monuments; b) maintenance of common areas; c) a management company that fields all of the phone calls, provides contacts for legal consultation, all of the billings and financial reporting, mailing and office costs, etc.; d) annual plantings; and e) utilities. Perennial plantings tend to cost the same over time, and the annuals are much more colorful than perennials and most homeowners appreciate the annual plantings. The minimum price of a monument (4'x4' including foundation and lighting) would be at least \$4500, and we can't because of the agreement with the city of Savage (see above Q/C 7).

Q/C 10: "Find a way to identify those seeking to move into DP, and proactively give them the links and information about DPHOA. Can we leverage partnerships with realtors or the state or county to identify those making offers on houses?"

A: This is a lot more complicated then it appears. The mere fact of getting that information is not easily acquired or available. We do have a welcome letter on the website, and when Larry @ Wensmann/Cornerstone becomes aware of new owners, he does mail them a copy of the letter.

Q/C 11: Fences must be addressed as common areas. Improvement of the water quality (look) of the ponds.

A: We are looking into the fence issue. It is complicated and subject to personal preferences and perceptions. We are working on a fence policy, which should be ready this year. The ponds are a city issue, since we don't control city owner outlots. You can reach the City of Savage at 882-2660, and are sure someone there can answer that question.



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Q/C 12: Perennial plantings would be preferable, as well a low growing so as not to block the "Dufferin Park" signage."

A: Previous feedback from homeowners has weighed heavily toward the annual color that we plan in the spring and summer. Perennials tend to be more expensive and end up requiring just as much maintenance in the long run to keep them from over-growing the signage. We agree with your point on the signage from the existing perennials and are working with our maintenance vendor to have this addressed and budget allows.

Q/C 13: Little quicker on the warning letters if you are going to send them out. We received the threatening letter weeks after the items had been removed from the driveway and nobody responded to my phone calls. Very frustrating!

A: The complaints or calls are directly received by the management vendor. The letters are sent out as quickly as possible. They are not intended to be threatening and are written to be informational. The first letter is a warning, and allowing for 30 days to correct the violation. All homeowners have access to the covenants on the website. It is the homeowner's responsibility to become educated if they are not aware of their responsibilities. We apologize for the lack of response from our property management company and will pass on this feedback.

Q/C 14: "The development of a responsive culture. One that helps homeowners enjoy their home and neighborhood, answers questions promptly and works with the homeowners to correct problems. We don't need another police department."

A: We fully agree that we don't want to be policing the streets on a daily basis; however, there are certain covenants that are not covered by city ordinances. We have to do our part to maintain them, for the integrity of the neighborhood. Not all people follow the rules, and it is the responsibility of the HOA to handle this.

Q/C 15: "The corner of Dufferin and Overlook needs more trees. Some kind of evergreen would be nice, or something that would screen the back yards of the families to the East. I don't think the "natural look" works in that particular area."

A: See above Q/C 7



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Q/C 16: "We only have one city park w/in Dufferin park (or on the edge of it) - O'Connell. Could the HOA "adopt" it? It could use some visual improvement – (i.e. more plantings, more trees, more benches....) not just sports amenities like ball fields and skate parks. This is a valuable amenity to Dufferin Park, but could be made more visually appealing."

A: NO, it's owned by the city and they are logistically and financially liable for the maintenance and improvements. Feel free to contact the city regarding this issue.
A comment on how the land is planned: If we would have been here when DP was developed, we might have been able to have had more opportunity to voice our opinions regarding the locations of parks and passive green spaces. Developers come in and develop the land, and the city makes decisions regarding the details. Planning and Park & Recreation commissions have this opportunity to create the green spaces of the future. By the time property owners finally get to comment on their neighborhoods, it is typically too late.

Q/C 17: NO rental property allowed.

A: This would be an amendment to the covenants. Please see the FAQ page on the website Question # 6, or Q&A answer # 1 for commentary to amending these documents.

Q/C 18: "I would be interested in Homeowner Association type dues that would be optional for older residents so that they can stay in their homes longer. For instance; snowplowing, mowing, shrub & tree trimming and annual bed planting."

A: I don't think our neighborhood would be able to do this. This is also a covenant amendment issue. Please see the FAQ page on the website Question # 6, for commentary to amending this document.

Q/C 19: Install signs for children playing throughout the neighborhood.

A: This is a city issue. They have a philosophy on this topic; please call the City of Savage at 882-2660.

Q/C 20: The fences bordering the development entrances make the development look run-down. The fences desperately need to be power washed and re-stained. I am embarrassed by the look of our development entrances and feel this maintenance is long overdue.

A: This will be addressed during 2006 and will be evaluated, look for news regarding this issue.



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Q/C 21: Bridge areas over Credit River.

A: This is also a city issue. Contact the City Forester, Jon Allen on this topic. 882-2660

Q/C 22: I think you are doing a good job. You seem to be headed in the right direction to maintain the development.

A: Thank you! We appreciate the positive feedback and hope to hear more of that.

Q/C 23: "Does the fence along Hanrehan Blvd in the Dufferin park area belong to the Dufferin park association or the homeowners whom have the fence running thru their yards?? It needs major staining, looks all dried, and weathered. It is one of the first things you notice when driving onto Bridgewater Drive. Who would need to be contacted about the upkeep for that fence?"

A: All fences are the responsibility of the property owner (with the exception of a small section along Cty Rd 27), please see above Q/C 20.

Q/C 24: "Yard maintenance, overgrown lawns with heavy weeds such as dandelions. Work trucks, vans, trailers and equipment parked in driveways and streets overnight and weekends. Garbage cans and grills kept in front of houses and on driveways. These things are an eye sore for the Dufferin Park neighborhood. A few small changes could help the appearance and value of homes and the neighborhood."

A: The City of Savage has an ordinance regarding the length of your lawn, weeds and other items. Please contact Colleen Johnson; Ordinance enforcement officer of the Savage Police. Parking vans & trucks in a driveway is a DP issue, if the vehicles are less than 22 feet in length. We are maintaining a "complaint" based system. If you see a specific violation, report it. All reports are confidential. Please give your contact information, in case of questions that might need to be asked or clarified. Wensmann Management is a professional company with ethics and integrity, and will not give out personal information of a violation reported, even to us as board members.

Q/C 25: Find some way to make sure all dues are paid.

A: Please see the "Collections" section of the 2005 annual meeting minutes.



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Q/C 26: "I would like to see an increase in sound abatement for homes bordering heavy traffic areas, (i.e. additional plantings, taller fencing, etc)."

A: This is an interesting comment. This has been addressed last year when we had contacted Scott County regarding the evergreens that were planted in 1999 along Cty Rd 27. Most of them had died due to the location of the plantings. They were too close to the roadway and received salt spray. We negotiated 80 lilac trees and 30 evergreens to replace the plantings that died. Scott County paid for the plantings. We can look into these issues on a case by case basis.

Q/C 27: "Communication - The Police reports have increased my interest in opening the DPHOA email and reviewing. I noticed a block party west of us - Band & street block - Nice to see the community at work. Have a kids parade - Like the city of Lakeville - Kids pull wagon, decorated as a float - Local Queens vote on floats - Not sure how it all works, but it's cute - Get our park more active - Ice cream social - We have a ton of walkers on Dufferin Park - My daughters love to bike to the park - I grew up in Cherokee Park in St Paul - We have many events in the park that helped to grow the community spirit, funded by local business - with this spirit we could see increased pride and maybe even cooperation of covenant guidelines. Just some thoughts... "

A: Thanks for your thoughts. We need property owners to offer positive and constructive ideas on how to make a better neighborhood. We would also need volunteers to drive them. Any interest?

Q/C 28: Notice about the web site was helpful. Due to the apparent increase in mail fraud, would it be worth considering locked mailboxes to replace current ones?

A: Locking mailboxes are much more expensive than the standard mailboxes. We understand the current problems of identity theft. We had discussed this, and at this point in time, it doesn't seem to be a realistic (\$\$) solution. Suggested solutions are buying a shredder, buy a PO Box, starting a Crimewatch neighborhood and just being more aware of your neighborhood.

Q/C 29: Bike trails throughout the development that lead to the regional park.

A: This is part of a city plan, to evaluate what exists and where to add these trails. Contact your city council members and let them know your ideas. The only way things change, is by speaking up. www.cityofsavage.com



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Q/C 30: "I love being in the association. Although, our cul-de-sac needs help!"

A: We are addressing all cul-de-sacs, monuments, and common areas with our maintenance vendor. If attention is needed, let us know and we will have them take a look and offer potential solutions.

Q/C 31: Mailbox replacement should be part of the DPHOA fees. The look of rusty mailboxes or unmatching replacement boxes distracts from the look of the neighborhood. Also mailbox replacement is something the homeowner sees and they can then see a tangible value to their DPHOA fees.

A: See the "mailbox assessment" portion of the 2006 annual meeting minutes.

Q/C 32: "I would like to see a "club house" and/or pool for the area. I would support additional fees for this (within reason)."

A: We would all love to see that too. We can look into it, but this would require a land purchase, and that would mean land that is available. I don't think there is land available for this. Any other ideas are welcome.

Q/C 33: Creation of a playground in the empty lot on Dufferin and Overlook or sell off the property for new homes. Speed bumps on Edgewater drive.

A: See above Q/C 7.

Q/C 34: The fences should not be the responsibility of the homeowner.

A: Unfortunately, we have no control over how the original documents were created by the original developers and little ability to change them. We do agree that the maintenance of the fences is an issue and is being discussed but we've not yet come to any resolution.

Q/C 35: I think keeping the monuments looking nice. The uniform mailboxes are a good idea.

A: Thanks, we will keep everyone posted as things progress.



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Q/C 35: Perhaps a "welcome to the neighborhood" packet for all new homeowner's to introduce the benefits and obligations - and increase the likelihood of covenant adoption.

A: See above Q/C 10

Q/C 36: Reduce the speed limit to 20 mph and enforce it. Work with city to put a plan together for safe roads. Too many people drive through the neighborhood as if their hair were on fire.

A: The speed limit is a state issue. We all agree that people drive too fast, and sometimes without regard for safety. Take action and contact the city of Savage (882-2660) to find out what your options are. Unfortunately the HOA has no jurisdiction in this area.

Q/C 37: I think the Overlook /Dufferin corner is a complicated issue. Maybe the plan should be modified with input from the folks who originally did the planting. Anybody who wants to do more should volunteer their time to help.

A: Good idea to include the original planner of the corner, and it would be nice if the people making the comments would be willing to help out.

Survey Question #12. "Do you have any other comments? Would you like to submit your email address, so we can contact you regarding the DPHOA newsletter, board positions, to answer your questions, or any other reason? "

Question/Comment (Q/C) 38: New lights at the entrance of Ottawa and Dufferin look great. Thanks! How about keeping them on year around?

A: Thank you! We are trying to enhance the neighborhood and make tangible improvements. As far as year round, interesting suggestion and we will discuss this idea.

Q/C 39: Perhaps the association should be looking into choosing a replacement mailbox that locks (there are several on the market with different features). These mailboxes allow normal delivery of the mail, but to retrieve it, the mailbox must be unlocked first. A locked mailbox would prevent thieves from stealing mail when homeowners aren't at home (or during the night when no one notices the activity). Theft from our mailboxes has obviously become a problem in our development and in Savage. I know that the DPHOA chose a "replacement" mailbox last year (?), but now that this theft problem has surfaced, I think that the association has an obligation to start looking for a more secure alternative! "

A: We have not been able to find a box replacement that isn't cost prohibitive, but will certainly continue to search as time allows. Also see (Q/C) 28.



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Q/C 40: Increasing the dues just because it hasn't been and the fact that inflation has gone up is not valid. The only question should be does current budget meet current needs.

A: We wouldn't do it just for that reason alone. The question on the survey was worded that way to see what people were thinking. We carefully discussed the issue at several meetings to try and determine "what was the best course of action, for the benefit of the HOA". We increased the annual fees to cover several of the upcoming issues. The mailbox replacement idea was discussed at the annual meeting. This also funds the "replacement reserve" budget, because as time goes by and the development ages more maintenance is required.

Q/C 41: Greg Lind does a very good job of putting out timely and informational e-mails. Thank you!!

A: You're welcome! We are just trying to increase the communication to the group.

Q/C 42: "Thank you again, very much for taking care of the overgrown dogwoods and dead tree in our cul-de-sac! It is a MAJOR improvement for safety and looks! :) The new landscaper is excellent, personable and cares about what he is doing! KEEP HIM! Wensmann Management is doing a good job, has a much better reputation than the last! Again, thank you!"

A: You're welcome!

Q/C 43: "I would like to see a clearer picture of what the dues that are collected actually are used for, as I recall the association always seems to have a high balance of funds each year. Perhaps it is a misconception on my part, but a lot of my neighbors voice the same opinion."

A: You can do this by either, a) attending the annual meeting; b) reading the annual mailing; or c) contacting us directly with your questions.

Q/C 44: "Who polices the non-motorized vehicles parked in driveways and not properly built sheds in the neighborhood? It seems some get warnings quickly, yet see sheds going up that do not match their homes exterior and boats/trailers parked along and behind homes for weeks/months and nothing seems to be happening. How does DPHOA have the right to put a lien on your home if you do not abide by the covenants?"

A: See above (Q/C) 24 regarding the covenant violations. Regarding the sheds, this would be a complaint that needs to be forwarded to the City of Savage, as this would be an ordinance violation. Regarding the lien, we DO have the right; see our Bylaws on the website.



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Q/C 45: "Homeowners are doing a poor job of shoveling snow from sidewalks and also cars are parked overnight on the sidewalk. When will we get a common garbage hauler who picks up on same day for entire development? Walkers and Joggers using street because of homeowners not maintaining sidewalks, i.e. ice, shoveling."

A: Not shoveling your sidewalk is a city ordinance violation. Parking your vehicle over any sidewalk is also a violation of the city ordinance. Please call Colleen Johnson at the city of Savage 882-2660.



Q/C 46: "Been a Member since the beginning. The enforcement of the Covenants is a problem. We currently have Board Members (Rodney) who have boats in there driveways - all year including right now! If we had \$10 (or more) for every violation submitted we may be rich. The residents in violation know that nothing will come of it so they don't respect the covenants."

A: Please read the covenant violation policy and report the violators when you see them. This is the best way to efficiently achieve this goal.



Q/C 47: "No more speed bumps! The current ones are a complete pain. It just increases the speed of the drivers after they get past them. In addition, it has the potential for slowing rescue vehicles trying to get into the neighborhood. We've never been happy about them and when reading there was a potential for more, that just annoys us further."

A: If you find that the speed humps are a pain, you are going too fast! The city approved the speed humps and installed them; therefore the city is OK with them. Most people are OK with them as well, since more than 50% of those homeowners signed a petition for the city to evaluate the situation. Contact the city if you feel it should be re-evaluated.



Q/C 48: We should revisit the trash haulers count and explain the damage caused my multiple OVERWEIGH trucks on our roads, they won't be nice for long with that abuse. The city planning info has been nice - thanks for keeping us informed. I bet you have wood workers that would volunteer to cut posts for mailboxes. The handyman types would probably enjoy sharing their expertise. Raising fees to cover, may not get the vote from those who have an OK looking box, sure we need to spend the dollars on the Dufferin sign on the mailbox, and the post could be expensive. Let's ask if folks are interested in doing some volunteering to build boxes, and if any would admit to being talented enough to show others how to do it.... Thanks for keeping the neighborhood looking good."

A: We welcome anyone who volunteers their valuable time to benefit their neighborhood. If these resources become available, we would utilize those talents.





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Q/C 49: "We need more trails. How many cars are allowed in driveways? It should be no more than 3. The boat, snowmobile trailers needs to be monitored more as well."

A: The "trails" and number of vehicles parked in a driveway are a city issue; please contact them as they need to hear that (882-2660). Regarding the boats & trailers, contact our management company every time you see that violation.

Q/C 50: Was the proposal of a trail behind the houses on Edgewater drive the creation of the board or the city?

A: The city of Savage approached us to make a presentation to our property owners. This would directly benefit and impact the DP residents. Since this is a DP issue, we felt that this was an important enough to add this to our agenda.

Q/C 51: The holiday lights are great. Definitely keep the mailboxes uniform as it gives our neighborhood a more cohesive and upscale feel, contributing positively to our property value.

A: Thanks for the comments, please see above.

Q/C 52: I would like to see the property owners be more active in the community. Too many of them have an issue that directly affects them, and that is why they show up to a meeting. When it comes to anything else, they put their blinders back on and go on there merry way. It should be required that any issue should be solved by those that complain, and the actions taken would be discussed and approved by the acting board. Trails are a great asset to any community, and should be evaluated on a case by case basis. Mr. Lind did a good job bringing the level of communication higher than it was 5 years ago.

A: Interesting comments and we do try to involve the complainant in as many matters as we can. Thanks for the other positive comments!

Q/C 53: Whoever is in charge of communications this year is doing an impressive job. In the 5 1/2 years we have lived here, I have never been so well informed, nor have I felt so in touch with the association. THANK YOU!!

A: Thanks for the positive comments!
