



# Village Woods Newsletter

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## Village Woods Pet Policy

At the February Annual Meeting, the issue of dog ownership in Village Woods was raised. The assumption for many years has been that dog ownership is prohibited in Village Woods. With increased ambiguity around the issue of "emotional support dogs," the Board had already asked our law firm to look into the issue. We recently received their response. Their opinion is that Village Woods created their prohibition against dog ownership inappropriately. The Declaration of Condominium is the controlling document for most issues and there is no prohibition against pet ownership in it. Several decades ago, The Village Woods Board of Directors used its authority to create "Rules and Regulations" to prohibit dogs. The opinion of our law firm is that prohibiting dog ownership, or any animal, is not something that can be accomplished in a "Rule and Regulation." It must be done through an amendment to the Declaration of Condominium. An amendment to the Declaration of Condominium requires the agreement of 2/3s of all owners to pass.

The Board believes an outright prohibition on dogs or other domestic animals in Village Woods will be very difficult, if not impossible, to accomplish. We have historically had a very difficult time getting responses from owners, many of whom are absentee. The Board believes we will be more successful if we direct our efforts toward passing pet guidelines and limits. Therefore, over the next few months, the Board will attempt to amend the Declaration of Condominium through a vote of 2/3s of owners.

The amendment is being developed by our law firm. When it is finished, we will be explaining its implications and informing owners of the steps involved in the amendment initiative. While opinions differ among owners about the pros and cons of animal ownership in Village Woods, we believe it is in everyone's inter-

ests to place some limitations and guidelines around animal ownership. This is important not only from a safety standpoint, but from a quality of life standpoint, we well. Any amendment will apply to renters as well as owners.

The right to own an emotional support dog or a service dog is a right that is given to owners by Federal laws. That right is separate and will not be impacted in any way by this proposed amendment to our Declaration of Condominium, regardless of whether the amendment passes or not.

In other business, the Village Woods insurance policy will renew shortly. The Board is reviewing proposals from several insurance companies to ensure we receive the best pricing and service.

The Board received a quote from Canterbury Farms Nursery for new plantings and landscaping on the two Memorial Gardens in Village Woods. The Board voted to table any action on that issue for now. The gardens were intended to be maintained by volunteers, so if anyone has an interest in improving these gardens, please contact one of the Board members. Any assistance would be greatly appreciated.