

Dear Fellow Neighbors,

As we start 2010, I want to express the Board's appreciation in the opportunity to serve each of you. Before I address our general agenda for this year, I want to make it clear that we understand that we are here for you and expect that you may have opinions from time to time – please feel free to contact any of us with your questions or comments. As a continuation, I promise that your concerns will be received with the respect that we all deserve.

Your new Board is committed to addressing every issue this year with consideration of increasing your **Property Values** through improving your **Quality of Life**. Brookfield is an attractive Neighborhood given its uniqueness – created by location, size, and age. Our general strengths will always be a basis of outside attraction, but only our interaction with each other and shared goals can drive our Quality of Life. In that spirit, we have identified three primary goals for 2010:

1. COMMUNICATION

Improving the quality of our communication is probably the single most important task at hand for 2010. Improving Communication is going to involve a great deal of dedication on our parts and those who volunteer to help our collective efforts. One idea is to revisit the concept of Block Captains – allowing the Board to channel (both ways) information to neighbors who live within a short distance of each other. Another way is to improve our monthly newsletter, website, and opportunities for neighbors to interact.

2. CREATE A 5 – YEAR VISION for BROOKFIELD

This year we are going to be proactive in finding ways to do things we all find to be detriment to our Neighborhood's health – things that we all can participate in creating together. In doing this, we are forming a special committee of Board Members, BCC Board Members, and other volunteer Neighbors to create a **5-year Vision for Brookfield**. The committee will start with creating a survey to find out what is important to each neighbor. In addition to providing valuable feedback in creating the 5 year Vision, the survey will give the current Board better data on immediate issues to address.

An example of topics for this Committee is our Entrances. Everyone agrees that our entrances are the "Gateways" to the community, creating a direct expression of the health of our neighborhood. Many of you feel that our efforts in early 2009 did not work (call it a lack of communication or lack of funds), this committee will re-address the Entrances. The committee will determine the design and also address the realities of cost.

3. IMPROVE BROOKFIELD HOA's FINANCIAL HEALTH

If one took a look at Brookfield's Annual Budget, no one would disagree that we risk our needs falling short of our means. Given that Brookfield's history provides for "voluntary" participation in the Home Owner's Association; unfortunately, Dues available to maintain or improve the neighborhood are subject to a fluctuating participation year-to-year. For example, in 2009, Brookfield had a 51% participation – roughly, 14 members short of meeting our annual obligations. The rule of thumb is to have your Annual Dues cover your annual expenses plus a 25% allowance for unforeseen expenses. In addition, HOAs should budget 25% for improvement projects that may be needed every 3 – 5 years. Currently, Brookfield's HOA participation (therefore budget) is NOT aligned with a progressive, healthy neighborhood where property values will increase. In an effort to prevent the need to address our "voluntary" nature, we as a neighborhood have to increase our **Neighbor Participation in the Home Owner's Association**. First, your Board plans to provide a better opportunity/environment for everyone to voice their opinion without casting an opinion by withholding their Dues – which only puts the burden of covering our operating budget on the neighbors who pay.

Secondly, during our January Board Meeting, we approved increasing our Annual Dues. In order to meet our current annual expenses and budget for the unforeseen expense (25% of annual expenses), the increase equaled a needed \$25 – raising the current dues to \$100. The increase was based solely on the number of Members in 2009. The increase is effective immediately, but as an incentive for paying on time, dues will be \$75 until March 31, 2010 – an extension of 30 days from Brookfield’s current deadline of March 1st. The discount and extension are given in consideration of the recent vote’s timing, allowing everyone at least the same 60 days to pay dues on-time without being affected by the increase. The increase is necessary to meet our monthly obligations; it is an example of the pitfalls of disconnecting as neighbors. As participation increases, as it will, the additional fund will be allocated directly to fund any special projects (the Entrances, as an example) approved within our 5-year vision.

In closing, I want to ask that each of you help in defining your Vision for Brookfield. Please express your thoughts and volunteer where you can. All meetings for the **5-year Brookfield Vision** will be open to **ALL** neighbors – member or not. We want everyone’s participation and we feel that inclusion will open the door for better participation. 2010 is going to require a great deal of commitment from you and this Board – our long-term success relies on the first step being one of becoming a *Community with One Vision*..

Thanks for your time –

Clay Thomas