

MAILBOXES AND STREET LIGHTING

About three years ago, the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) was asked by our Board and General Manager to make recommendations for replacing all the combination wood pole lights/mailboxes which provide street illumination for the south section of Hunters Ridge. Specifically, this includes all 183 home sites on both sides and south of Hunters Ridge Drive and the 134 South Villas. Currently, all south tract homes and villas get their street illumination from spherically shaped lights mounted on wooden posts with either single or multiple mailboxes attached to the post. The ARC was asked to investigate replacement of the pole lights due to the continuous rotting of the wood posts and their various ages ranging between 20 and 25 years. Each home site's common area budget has been periodically tapped for several thousands of dollars each year to replace rotted post lights, glass light fixtures and/or damaged mailboxes. Please note that the Condo Associations (Grand Pines, Pheasant Hollow and Lynx Pass) have never paid for the maintenance and replacement of wood post lights and mailboxes as they each have commercial grade clustered mailboxes.

The ARC made a recommendation to the Board last spring to install a prototype aluminum pole light with twin mailboxes. If we had proceeded with this concept, the average cost per home site would have been between \$400 and \$500, including the costs of electrical, demolition, installation of mailboxes and residential pole lights.

Before considering this recommendation, the Board President contacted the City to find out if there were any codes or restrictions related to the proposed south tract pole light and mailbox replacement project. Serious restrictions were found. In particular, the City's Dark Sky Ordinance, which restricts what type of light fixture for street and exterior lighting, including residential pole lights, applies to our situation. In short, HRCA was informed that the residential pole lights would not have complied and we were advised that, by 2020, all exterior lighting for streets and parking lots **would need to be upgraded to comply with this Ordinance.** We also discovered that very few, if any, commercially available residential pole lights complied with the Dark Sky Ordinance. Those fixtures that might have complied would have been significantly more expensive than the originally recommended project fixture installed cost of \$400-500 per home site. The City then suggested we consider using Florida Power & Light (FPL) street lights which do comply with this Ordinance and which most newer residential communities in the region are using. This made sense, given the declining condition of our existing pole lights and mailboxes, their increasing annual maintenance costs and the fact that the City would not approve their replacement. It became apparent that the best, most economical solution for everyone and the most attractive way to move forward was to install FPL street lights.

Following installation of the FPL street lights, all mailboxes and old wood posts in the south tract of Hunters Ridge as well as all mailboxes and posts in the north tract will be replaced. North tract single family homeowners' mailboxes are sun-aged and about 10 years old. More importantly, replacement matching posts and other parts are no longer available and it is time to consider replacing these mailboxes. Posts and mailboxes get damaged every year by cars and trucks and spare parts need to be readily available to replace damaged ones in order to maintain a uniform look throughout the neighborhood and community.

This final solution has reduced the cost from between \$400 and \$500 per home site to either \$130 per home site for two mailboxes on one decorative post including installation or \$200 per home site for one mailbox on one decorative post, including installation. Once the installation of FPL's street lighting is completed, its annual operating costs including the electric bill will be between \$36 and \$42/member. This cost is based on FPL's charge of \$15/street light per month which includes the charge for electricity used.

The installation of the FPL pole lights will cost HRCA up to \$35,000 in order to do the preparation work required by FPL, which includes such expenses as adding additional transformers, trenching, "jack and boring" under roads and drives, etc. After 10 years, FPL will then charge HRCA only for the electricity used.

Installation of FPL street lights will begin this coming fall, first in the south tract and then a few months later in the north tract. The lights will be low pressure sodium fixtures similar to fixtures on Fox Ridge Drive, but will be painted a dark bronze to match our new street and traffic signs. Street lights will be staggered on both sides of all residential streets. When completed, this should provide sufficient lighting for walkers and bicyclists after dark. Please note that the diagonal distance between the staggered poles, from one side of the street to the other, will be about 180 feet. Our spacing of FPL's street lights will be similar to that of both neighboring communities Palmira and Worthington which were measured by HRCA. Street lights on Hunters Ridge Blvd and Fox Ridge Drive will be mostly on one side of the street so that poles will be about 150 feet, center to center, to provide adequate illumination.

Mailboxes will have gold street numbers. The homeowner's name can be added to the box as an option. The name is printed on a rectangular aluminum plaque in dark bronze which can be ordered and installed by those who want this feature. The optional name plaques will be mounted on top of the mailbox similar to those on some of our existing mailboxes.

No further action will be taken by the Board on the configuration of mailboxes and approval to purchase/install until a single family home member mailbox survey has been issued by the Single Family Home Committee and the Board and survey results have been analyzed. The Committee will meet to discuss the results of the survey, receive additional single family member input and formulate their recommendations to the Board. The Board will then review the Committee's recommendations at a future Board meeting. At that Board meeting, the Board will formally approve or disapprove moving forward with the replacement of all mailboxes, their installation schedule and the method of paying for the new mailboxes and decorative posts. The Board will evaluate and determine the best payment solution, keeping in mind that 110 members from our three Condominium Associations will not be replacing their commercial grade clustered mailboxes. This future Board meeting will occur during the late August to early September period and **will be posted at least 14 days in advance to allow those interested members to make plans to attend.** We trust that most of the above information will answer your questions surrounding the replacement of mailboxes and FPL's street lighting project.

The HRCA Board of Directors: Fred Forbes, Joanne Schoen, Dick DeCoste, Don Wirsbinski, Bill Bell, Bob Moe and Lorrie Holly



FPL Street Lights



NEW MAILBOXES (DOUBLE)



NEW STREET SIGNAGE