

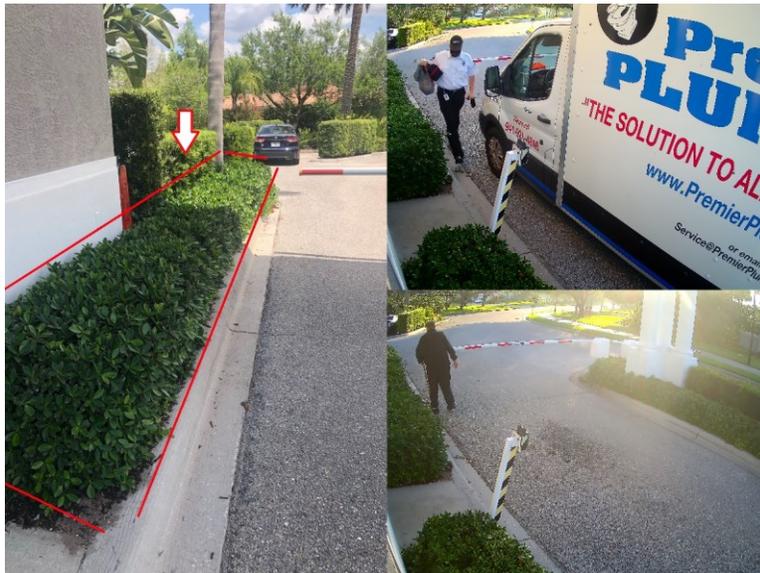
LakeRidge Falls

4200 LakeRidge Blvd.
Sarasota, FL 34243

05-14-2021

Here are the more important stories we had this past and upcoming weeks:

Gatehouse Safety – A few weeks ago, during a routine inspection of the security cameras, something caught our eye. During a shift change, we saw one of Allied Universal Security Services, LakeRidge Falls’ security company, officers coming in for his day shift. What was alarming in the footage, as can be seen in the collage picture below, was that the officer had to pass through the narrow passage between the arm gate and the line of shrubs and thereafter “squeeze” his way to the gatehouse because a delivery truck was waiting to be admitted. This reality led to the realization that we are facing a safety concern. Therefore, this incident was brought to the attention of both the Board of Directors and the Security Committee.



Because of this potentially hazardous condition, the Board of Directors instructed to act without delay directing to remove the line of shrubs and install a path that will provide a safer path to enter the gatehouse. Wasting no time and knowing that, Mr. Ron LaCivita, the owner of a building & concrete construction company, was on-site working on replacing some of the raised sidewalks in the community, the approval was given to remove the line of shrubs and install a small concrete path. With the help of Mr. Victor Martinez, West Bay’s Irrigation Tech, we removed the shrubs and adjusted the irrigation lines. Once completed, Mr. LaCivita and his crew poured fresh concrete creating a path, as can be seen in the picture below, which gives all who wish to visit the gatehouse a safer way of doing so.

It is important to note that Mr. LaCivita graciously enough agreed to perform the work and provide the materials at no cost to the Association. We hope that what could have been a costly reality will now remain a hazardous-free environment.



Gatehouse Shades – On a related issue, the Buildings Committee recommended to the Board of Directors a few weeks ago to install roll-up shades in the gatehouse. The recommendation came about after the committee learned that during some parts of the day the sun impacts the security officers’ vision and made their space hotter. Rather than installing the same blinds that were previously installed, the committee investigated a long-term solution to the situation. After some research, the committee determined that the best solution to address these two issues are solar shades. After the committee reviewed a few proposals, it recommended to the Board of Directors to accept a proposal from Window Décor & Design, a local window solution company, to install three roll-up solar shades. And indeed, the Board of Directors reviewed and accepted the recommendation. Following the approval, the three shades were ordered. We are happy to say that the three shades were installed last week and now the security officers at the gatehouse enjoy a cooler room while having means to block the sun’s glare while still having an excellent view outside.



2020 Financial Audit – Reminder, the 2020 Audit of LakeRidge Falls’ financials has been completed and copies are now available. As in the last few years, the audit was performed by Braxton & Holway, P.A., a reputable CPA firm located in Bradenton. It is important to note that Braxton & Holway is a member of both the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and of the Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Braxton & Holway informed the Association that nothing out of the ordinary was discovered and it was said that LakeRidge Falls conformed to generally accepted accounting principles.

Buffer Zone Around Mitigation – For those who may not be aware of it, most of the even-numbered houses along Stirling Falls Cir as well as all the homes along Bowen Falls Place are encompassing an area that is considered to be a stormwater wetland mitigation area. In general terms and without going into too many details which will surely put you to sleep, the stormwater wetland is a shallow marsh area that is designed to control the stormwater runoff volume. You see, the Association’s 15 manmade ponds, i.e. minus the one near the back gate, creates a stormwater control system designed to prevent rainwater from flooding the community. When rains come and the ponds are getting full, they are designed to drain to the next pond in the line. The runoff from all 15 ponds eventually finds its way to the wetland mentioned above and once the water level reaches a certain level it is designed to discharge into a catch basin and from there into the Pearce Canal.

In order to protect the water quality in the mitigation and the natural habitat it provides to many of Florida wildlife, the State mandates a buffer zone between developed land and wetland. To define this area, selective plant materials are being installed, such as pine, oaks, and wax myrtle trees, along the buffer zone. Like all landscapes, also the buffer zone requires maintenance. Therefore, LakeRidge Falls used, and actually still using, specifically certified and licensed lakes and mitigation maintenance companies to perform quarterly maintenance on the buffer surrounding the mitigation. These maintenance visits are designed to enhance the growth of beneficial native species and eliminate the growth of nuisance or exotic species, such as vines and/or Brazilian Pepper trees.

A couple of years ago, the Roads & Grounds Committee and the Board of Directors realized that like most plant material also the plant material at the buffer zone can die and/or get too big. Realizing that maintenance efforts and therefore costs are increased, the Board of Directors asked and thereafter the Roads & Grounds Committee composed a plan a couple of years ago to mulch the entire buffer zone. Unlike the mulching project known to most residents in the community, mulching the buffer zone means using a forestry mulcher, which resembles a small bobcat tractor, to grind all dead, overgrown, and unwanted plant material into small pieces of mulch. As in enhancing a landscape bed, the idea of mulching the buffer zone is to enhance its look. After all, looking at an untouched habitat is more appealing than looking at overgrown and dead plant material.



The project was supposed to take place last year but was postponed for several reasons, i.e. as rain, COVID-19, etc. Nevertheless, the Board of Directors is obligated to executing this project. A window of opportunity was opened on Wednesday night when the company chosen to perform the work advised us that they have an opening Thursday morning. Capturing this opportunity before the rains start, i.e. the area can’t be mulched if the grounds/plant material is wet, the Board of Directors gave its blessing to start the project before the contract is officially approved. Therefore, some of Bowen Falls Place residents were surprised to see yesterday a forestry mulcher working behind their homes. Unfortunately, the forestry mulcher blew a seal on the mulching head after about 300 yards and had to stop until this issue will be fixed, hopefully, no later than early next week.

Even with only 300 yards of work done, one can see the significant difference in the look. We can write more on the issue, but a picture is worth a thousand words.



Have a healthy and safe weekend.

Sincerely,

Oded Neeman - CAM

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