

Carmel Views Community Association
Annual Meeting
January 26, 2023, at 6:00 pm via Zoom or Call-In
Minutes

Meeting called to order at 6:04 pm by President Laura Speakman

Guest Speakers: Krista Ostoich, CVCA attorney, and Cal Fire representatives Shayon Ascarie and Frank Espinoza

Summary: Cal Fire and the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection are changing the requirements for hardening our homes against the risk of wildfire. We are already familiar with the requirements for reduced fuel and fuel ladders in Zone 2 (30-100 ft from structures) and Zone 1 (5-30 ft from structures), but they are adding a Zone 0 (0-5 ft from structures) that will have even more stringent requirements for ember resistance. The most notable of these requirements is that no combustible materials are allowed in Zone 0 (including mulch, wood structures like fences, firewood, trash bins, vehicles, etc.). The other main takeaway is that if one of your neighbor's hardening zones falls on your property, you are responsible for maintaining the requirements of that zone. For example, if your neighbor's home is only 40 feet from your property line, then you would need to clear the dead brush on your property to make sure they have a hardened 100-ft Zone 2 around their home. Cal Fire would like any hardened areas you make along your property edges (along public roadways and property edges that fall in neighbor's hardening zones) to be at least 30 ft wide to assist fire fighter access.

Some clarifications were made based on member questions. 1. Cal Fire will make yearly inspections and provide reports listing needed changes. At this point, they want to work with homeowners on solutions and will not require full compliance within 90 days as stated in the regulation. You can call and request an inspection at any time so they can come out and guide you in the steps to take. 2. Cal Fire would like all the recent fallen trees and branches cleared if they are within 100 ft of a structure. Since this is a daunting task in our community, we are asking for clarification on what size tree trunk can be left since larger trunks are less of a fire hazard. Also, if a fallen tree within 100 ft of a structure is on CVCA common land, please report it to the CVCA so that it can be added to the fire abatement crew's list of trees to be cleared. 3. The regulations require clearing your property of combustible fuel within 30 ft of public roadways. But the County should be responsible for part of this work since they own a 30-ft swath from the center of the roadways. We need to follow up and see if we can get the County to shoulder some of the work along our neighborhood roads. More details and diagrams can be found on the CVCA and Cal Fire websites, and we will be updating members on some of the other questions that were raised as we get more clarification from Cal Fire.

A. **Roll Call and Establishing a Quorum:** Inspector of Elections Tom Surbridge let us know that we did not have enough proxies for a quorum. This means we can't count votes or conduct official business, but we can still discuss community issues. Bud pointed out that we will be able to vote to approve minutes and establish Board members at a second membership meeting where only 25% of the membership is required for a quorum.

B. Reports by Board Members

a. **Finances and Budget:** President Laura Speakman reported for absent treasurer Mal Schwartz. We stayed within our budget in 2022, with only mailing expenses costing a bit more than expected. We will maintain a very similar budget in 2023 so that we can continue the main objective of the CVCA which is fire mitigation. We are expecting slightly higher legal fees in 2023, and we are currently budgeting \$2000 for legal fees. If you did not receive your packet in the mail that contained the budget, annual dues, and administrative paperwork, please email CVCA.

b. **Fire Abatement:** Vice President Michelle Nix would like to thank Bud Miller and Larry Arthur for their help with the huge workload of fire mitigation in CVCA. We continue to work on eight main common areas across the Carmel Views, clearing 30 ft along the edges for fire breaks (see map on website). In continuing the fight against genista, which is invasive and fire prone, we had crews pull the weed rather than cut it to hopefully reduce workload in future years. Of the eight contractors we approached for bids, only one bid. It was the same contractor (Integri Tree) that won the bid last year so they are very familiar with our common areas. We should be getting started earlier this year which hopefully will help us get a jumpstart on genista control. Larry mentioned that this will probably be one of worst years ever for genista sprouts due to rain. Try to pull the young plants on your property while they are small and the soil is soft. The volunteer fire abatement committee continues to meet once a month and work in conjunction with the Firewise group in our neighborhood. Please send an email to CVCA to become involved.

Firewise thanks everybody who has been doing work on their properties for fire safety and reporting it so we could maintain our Firewise status. Lynn Berardo is trying to help homeowners identify and learn to remove genista as part of fire preparedness. If you have receipts to show work for fire preparedness from after November 2022, they can be turned into Firewise. Michelle has requested an additional chipper day since we have so much downed brush in the

neighborhood. Once we have a date, and a clarification on the size of branches they will accept, we will send out an email.

- c. **Infrastructure:** Bill Vogelwohl reported that 15 street lights are out and new potholes have developed from the storms. Residents have been concerned about the power outages caused by trees falling on power lines and power surges that damage appliances and electrical devices. Avner Cohen will help organize a petition to PG&E about mitigating surges (possibly installing voltage clamps). We will inquire about burying power lines and look for a consultant who could work with PG&E on solutions. Other residents have found some success installing whole-house surge protectors, installing grounding rods, and using plug-in surge protectors in series so there are more barriers before surges reach costly equipment.

 - d. **Communications:** Charlie Wahle reported on our advisory committee for County Service Area (CSA) 47. The committee was set up by the Monterey County Board of Supervisors to advise public works about local infrastructure issues. The current priority of our CSA is establishing alternate egress route in case of fire. We are hoping for action in the near future. Members wondered whether the advisory committee could also take up the issue of burying power lines. Bud Miller reported on our Cal Fire grant to establish a fuel break between our neighborhood and the unmaintained private property to the east. We are down to 15 properties that meet all the requirements for grant, and many have opted in so far. Homeowners have to pay half the cost of constructing the fuel breaks and the grant will pay other half.
- C. **Additional Reports and Comments:** Laura Speakman: we are hoping to return to in-person meetings soon. Bud Miller: We would like to update the CVCA bylaws so we can hold the annual meeting in February for better attendance and change some of the bylaw's out-of-date sections. Larry Arthur: Thanks for getting all this work organized. Residents should trim plants and bushes back from the gutter to avoid diverting water onto the asphalt where it erodes the roadway. Trimming also keeps the roadway as wide as possible. Bud suggests visiting the infrastructure page on the CVCA website. It has instructions for contacting the County about problems with the roads and gutters. It helps to send them pictures of the problems. Steve Dyer thanks everyone for the tremendous amount of work they do.
- D. Adjourned 7:34 by Laura Speakman