

WEST HIGHLANDS



Q4

2023

2024 Assessments

- Single-Family Homes Detached \$1,400 Annually
- Waysome Way Homes \$2,250 Annually
- Townhomes Attached \$250 Monthly



Single Family Lots: Owners with a zero balance as of December 31, 2023 are given the opportunity to pay the 2024 Annual Assessment in two (2) equal installments of \$700.00, which will be due and payable on February 1, 2024 and August 1, 2024. Exception: Waysome Way Lots two (2) equal installment amounts are \$1,125.00.

Owners who fail to pay either installment in FULL by the dates set forth above shall forfeit their right to pay the 2024 Annual Assessment in installments. In such event, the entire remaining balance of the 2024 Annual Assessment shall immediately become due and payable. Please be advised that late fees and interest will be charged against all past due amounts.

An account with a balance as of December 31, 2023 is not eligible for Split Installment payments. The FULL 2024 Annual Assessment is due on January 1, 2024.

Accounts placed in legal status are assessed an initial \$225.00 collection fee, monthly interests and late fees. A lien will be placed against the property and a lawsuit filed – further incurring hefty legal fees. Additionally, the HOA will suspend access to the amenities.

A fee of \$150 is assessed to unsuspend access to the amenities plus a 30-day waiting period to process and confirm the reactivation of access after an account has been paid in full.

Please visit [sentrymgt.com](https://www.sentrymgt.com) to view your account and explore payment options. The 2024 budget can be found on our website: <https://www.westhighlandsatl.com/documents/>

COMMUNITY STANDARDS



WEEDS

- **Unsuccessful in managing weeds?**
 - It's time to add Pre-emergent herbicides to help prevent weeds from growing or sprouting when applied on the lawn prior to weed seeds germinating.
 - Contracting with a professional lawn service that specializes in abating weeds is an economical way of receiving all of the necessary applications throughout the year.
 - Visiting HOA website: westhighlandsatl.com/documents for lawn care tips.

EXTERIOR MODIFICATIONS - Require PRIOR Approval from the Architectural Control Committee (ACC)

- **Replacing Roof?**
 - Submit ACC request for approval
- **Repainting house with same colors or different colors ?**
 - Submit ACC request for approval
- **Adding or Replacing Fence, Walkway, Retaining Walls, Gates, etc.?**
 - Submit ACC request for approval
- **Changing Landscape (i.e., changing type of grass/ groundcover; adding/replacing softscapes and hardscapes; removing/replacing trees, etc.)?**
 - Submit ACC request for approval
- **Modifying Structure (constructing/installing/enclosing/extending additions, decks, patios, setbacks, etc.)?**
 - Submit ACC request for approval

STAY IN THE KNOW



Neighborhood Planning Unit – G meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. (no meetings are held in July and December). Please note that future meetings may start at 6:30 p.m. and be held in-person at Atlanta Fire and Rescue Station 28 located at 1925 Hollywood Road NW Atlanta, GA 30318.

Please regularly check the link below to view meeting format, time and agenda.

<https://www.atlantaga.gov/government/departments/city-planning/neighborhood-and-npu-contacts>

Tonight's agenda includes a presentation regarding the redevelopment of Gun Club Park. The plan will have a definite impact on the West Highlands community

What is a Neighborhood Planning Unit?

The City of Atlanta is divided into twenty-five Neighborhood Planning Units or NPUs, which are citizen advisory councils that make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on zoning, land use, and other planning issues. The NPU system was established in 1974 to provide an opportunity for citizens to participate actively in the Comprehensive Development Plan, which is the city's vision for the next five, ten, and fifteen years. It is also used as a way for citizens to receive information concerning all functions of city government. The system enables citizens to express ideas and comment on city plans and proposals while assisting the city in developing plans that best meet the needs of their communities. Neighborhood Planning Unit G (NPU-G) also known as NPU-Great! is located northwest of downtown Atlanta and includes the following Neighborhoods:



The November HOA Meeting was conducted on November 11, 2023. Questions submitted before the meeting and during the meeting are included in each this quarter's newsletter.

West Highlands Update

- Currently building out new lots for sale which consists of 55 homes. Parcels that are in the permitting phase are located on Johnson Road and slated for 100 townhomes which has about another year longer before construction begins. The 2000 Perry Blvd extension, a 7 acre site, is being designed for a combination of 75 single-family homes and townhomes.



COMMON AREA REQUESTS

- Can we add a bike rack by the pool parking lot? **Yes. Responding to a suggestion from the previous HOA meeting, a bike rack will be installed at the pool facility. It should be installed before the next opening of the pool season.**
- Can we add benches and/or picnic tables around the Samples LN pond? **Benches are planned for this area, but the board will keep this idea in mind as future improvements for the community become feasible.**
- Can we add a dog waste receptacle by the new Samples LN pond? **Yes. The HOA will plan to have one installed at this location.**
- Can we add a dog waste receptacle by the pool parking lot? **Animals are prohibited on the pool site by Fulton County Board of Health regulation. As such, it was determined that a waste receptacle that close to the site would violate the regulation.**

POOL QUESTIONS



- If we applied for pool passes recently will that also not happen until March? **Pool passes will be distributed starting in April through the pool season.**
- What's the rationale for continuing to use a reservation system for the pool? **The reservation system is meant for monitoring the usage of the pool with more precision and, if necessary, for restricting the total number of users at any time.**
- I hear a lot of complaints about the pool security guards telling people their bathing suits are out of compliance but it seems subjective and different people get treated differently. Has this been addressed with the security guards? **Security has been granted discretion to discern the appropriate, modest, and properly fitting swim attire. Patrons will be required to change into appropriate attire, or otherwise will be asked to leave the premises if their attire is deemed unsuitable.**

TOWNHOME QUESTIONS

- I've seen a copy of the letter sent to the owners of Proctor Oaks, Proctor Ranch, and Westmoreland Circle townhomes and would like clarification on the type of insurance policy the HOA has taken out on the townhomes. The letter says the policy expires at the end of the year. Is this policy for every townhome or just this specific section? Will the cost of the policy be reduced from 2024 dues? Do we all still have a termite bond covered by the HOA? What is the responsibility of the townhome owners vs the HOA for the townhomes? Is everyone (townhomes and SFH) required to repaint their exterior every 6 years? **Effective January 1, 2024 the HOA will no longer maintain the exterior on all of the townhome units except what is explicitly stated in the covenants. On this same date, the HOA will no longer provide insurance coverage for the townhome units. Each townhome unit owner will be responsible for obtaining and ensuring full coverage on their entire townhome unit. With this change to the townhome policy, the homeowners in West Highlands will be responsible for maintaining the exterior of their structure which includes repainting when paint has faded or deteriorated. There is no specific minimum time duration set for exterior painting. Again, repainting should be conducted when there are signs of fading, chipping or other signs of deterioration.**
- A special assessment was initially levied against the Westmoreland Circle Townhomes for exterior painting and repairs back in September. That assessment was later retracted and the homeowners were instructed to find their own contractors to complete work and repairs that were never clearly stated or defined. Will those necessary repairs be disclosed specific to each unit prior to receiving a violation? Are we expected to repaint the entire exterior of our townhomes (siding, doors, trim, etc)? It was never clearly stated what work was to be done to each unit by the contractor initially assigned to do the work. Sentry has been difficult to reach on this matter and I want to ensure my home meets the requirements defined by the HOA. **A special assessment or specific assessment was never levied as the work was never performed by the HOA at the request of many of the townhome owners. Each townhome owner needs to have their unit inspected by their contractor to determine repairs and repainting needs specific to their units. The HOA paint contractor did inspect the units and determined that all of them need to be repainted.**

WEST HIGHLANDS QUESTIONS

- With significantly more townhomes planned as part of the buildout of the community, should townhomes be split from the single family homes for HOA governance and management? **No. Townhomes were and will always remain part of West Highlands diverse housing stock.**
- The Board has failed to comply with the requirement to deliver notice of the annual meeting and proposed budget at least 30 days in advance of the meeting for at least three consecutive years. What safeguards do we have to ensure this will be corrected going forward? **West Highlands HOA Bylaws state that notices shall be mailed or delivered not less than ten (10) days before the annual meeting. The covenants state that the budget for the following year is to be delivered at least fifteen (15) days prior to the annual meeting. The HOA combines both: meeting announcement and budget which were delivered by mail by Monday, October 23 and was confirmed to be received by members of the community.**
- What is the status of the transfer of roads within the neighborhood to the City of Atlanta? **Atlanta Housing Authority, who owns the private streets in the West Highlands, is working on the transfer. No date has been confirmed.**

BUDGET



- Why are income/expenses associated with the cost sharing arrangement with Columbia Residential not accounted for in the financial statements? **At this time Columbia Residential is absorbing the full expenses for maintaining the common areas that are part of the cost sharing agreement. When the arrangement changes, it will reappear on the budget.**
- The 2024 budget includes a payment of \$120,000 for “BrockBuilt Note.” Combined with the payment in 2023, this represents over \$600,000 in payments to BrockBuilt from the HOA in addition to the \$2,000,000 loan approved in 2016. How was such a large loan taken on without an additional vote of the membership? What is the maximum the Board can commit to without membership approval? **The monthly note of \$10K commenced on July 2022 to Brock Built for work performed on the pool project. Various funding sources for the pool project included a loan, HOA accumulated funds and upfront work at cost from Brock Built to be reimbursed - all which were approved by 2/3 of the voting members. Cash loans from a financial institution require a vote.**
- There is a \$25,000 expense for “Onsite Management Support.” What is provided as part of this charge? Is this inspection services? If so, can we consider going back to homeowner volunteers? **As the community continues to grow, so does the need for more management support – handle more inquiries, more ACC requests, more account collection and legal management, more vendor management, etc. At this time the HOA board does not have enough volunteers who are able and willing to inspect 600+ lots on a regular basis and manage the resulting administration and communication for all these properties.**
- Can the documentation around the loan we took out with Brock be uploaded as well so we can see who approved that and when? **Brock Built performed work for the HOA and the HOA is paying in installments. No loan was taken out and no interest is being paid.**

BUDGET Continued

- Will there be a financial impact to our HOA Fees when the HOA takes over these AHA Common Areas? **Yes. As the HOA absorb more common areas and provide more amenities there will be a financial impact to the HOA fees.**
- Why is the pool phone line \$3,600 (so expensive) but we are only paying \$265 for CPA services? **These costs include for a commercial telephone line which is required and internet for security and wifi.**
- How do we get a copy of the budget? **The HOA budget for the current year and the previous year is on the HOA website, as always.**

COMMON AREA QUESTIONS

- Why does the Samples LN pond concrete pathway not encircle the pond in full? The concrete path stops halfway around.? **During the laying of the concrete, the contractor was informed that concrete cannot be laid on top of the dam part of the pond. Now it is too costly for the new concrete to be removed. The HOA board would encourage members of the community to reach out to Atlanta Housing Authority and express your concerns and ask they have it removed since it was their design and their funds that were used for this project. The more members of the community that communicate issues to the AHA and the more persistent they are, the more responsive this government agency may be.**
- Why does the Sample LN pond entrance by the Proctor Creek trail have a raised wood step bridge that is not level with the rest of the concrete pathway? This wood step bridge is not ADA friendly and poses a hazard to both bikes and strollers. **The pond project is not the doing of Brock Built or the HOA. This is an Atlanta Housing Authority project. The HOA board suggests that you reach out to AHA and express your concerns regarding the timeliness of the project and the less than desirable standards of the project.**
- The field across from the Westmoreland Circle Townhomes as well as the land near the retention pond has seen significant upgrades over the summer and has turned out beautiful. Unfortunately, it has not been mowed or maintained since all that work was done and the sod has become overgrown with weeds from the previous field sprouting up from below the sod. When will this start being maintained? Also, there is a large section of silt fence in that same area that has not been removed - when will this happen? **At this point, Atlanta Housing Authority still owns and maintains this land. The HOA board would encourage members of the community to reach out to AHA and express your concerns and ask they have it mowed and maintained.**
- What is the plan for light poles on samples lane near the pond? Also the rest of the street? **The HOA suggests to continue to reach out to Brock Built and have them work with Georgia Power to have street lights installed.**

COMMON AREA QUESTIONS Continued

- What is the status of the pond? The work began back in March and one of our prior newsletters stated that whatever work was being done would be completed by the end of the summer. I have not seen anybody working on the pond for months and it is, quite frankly, an eye sore to the community. The homeowners are held to a certain standard with respect to our homes and having to timely handle maintenance and aesthetic requirements of the HOA. The HOA and Brock should similarly have to complete these types of jobs in a timely manner, as I would argue the pond is not to the standard that we, as homeowners, are held to. **The pond project is not the responsibility of Brock Built or the HOA. This is an Atlanta Housing Authority project. I suggest that you reach out to Atlanta Housing Authority and express your concerns regarding the timeliness of the project and the less than desirable standards of the project.**
- While I appreciate the park playground finally being renovated, unfortunately it was basically useless during the summer as there is zero shade and the plastics get very hot. **The playground project is not the responsibility of Brock Built or the HOA. This is an Atlanta Housing Authority project. I suggest that you reach out to Atlanta Housing Authority and express your concerns regarding the less than desirable standards of the project.**
- What is going to be done with the empty sites at Stanford Dr and Ln. if they cannot be built on are they going to be made green spaces that are maintained. Also there are multiple curbs and sidewalks that need to be fixed, what is being done about that. Including an example pic That shows weeds and missing side walk for over a year. **Empty parcels and infrastructure are owned by either Brock Built and Atlanta Housing Authority. You can reach out to Brock Built and Atlanta Housing Authority to inquire about the plans for those areas and any timelines.**

COMMON AREA QUESTIONS Continued

- What is the board doing to maintain common areas? There are multiple areas where the grass is not treated for weeds, grass is not replanted, trees and bushes are not replanted? Homeowners must maintain their yards but the HOA does not maintain common areas to the same level. **Please submit your concerns to Sentry Management so they can work with the landscape maintenance contractor to address the issues. The HOA board appreciates members of the community communicating landscaping issues to Sentry, in detail, so these can be passed on to the landscape contractor and tracked. Effective January 1, 2024 a new landscape contractor will start to maintain some of the common areas for West Highlands HOA with the goal of improving the landscape. Please keep in mind the Heman E. Perry Park and Hollingsworth Blvd greenway will still be maintained by Columbia Residential. The HOA board would encourage members of the community to reach out to Columbia Residential and to Atlanta Housing Authority (which ultimately owns this property) and express your concerns and ask they have it removed since it was their design and their funds that were used for this project. The more members of the community that communicate issues to the Atlanta Housing Authority and the more persistent they are, they more responsive this government agency may be. Keep in mind that lots underdevelopment are Brock Builts responsibility to maintain, but due to construction, each lot is unlikely to be treated for weeds until it is completed.**

ACC/SENTRY MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS

- What should a homeowner do if no response is received from the ACC for more than 30 days? The covenants say to assume the request is denied but it seems like a waste of time to simply re-submit the documentation with no feedback or response from the committee. **On rare occasions ACC is unable to meet within 30 days to review requests. You can follow up with Sentry Management before the 30 days has expired or resubmit a new request.**
- Sentry has been taking photos and issuing violations for items in the back of homes with shared driveways. How are homes without shared driveways being inspected from behind to ensure equal enforcement? **Only violations that are visible from a street, alleyway or passersby are captured by Sentry's personnel. If neighbors observe violations that may not be observable from the street, they can assist Sentry by reporting these violations themselves to ensure more complete and equitable enforcement of violations for all homeowners.**
- Can we be fined on things that aren't in the community standards? **The Community Standards document explains that examples listed therein are not exhaustive. If you feel a fine is a mistake or should not have been issued, please politely indicate you wish to appeal the fine.**
- If you are simply refreshing your previously approved ground cover (i.e., mulch or pine straw--same color), do you still need an ACC request? **No.**
- Why are photos not always included in the ACC violations letters (only sometimes)? Sometimes it's hard to know what they are talking about if a photo is not included. **Sentry should be sending photos with the violation notices. They are working on increasing their level of service which includes consistent processes.**
- If I am reinforcing a retaining wall but making no changes to the wall itself, do I need to submit an ACC request? **Yes.**
- Why haven't the ACC volunteers from the spring meeting been included in the ACC? **We are hoping to get them involved in the ACC process soon as we ramp up for the Spring and Summer seasons when ACC requests increase. Unfortunately, schedules did not permit enough time to hold meetings and trainings.**

ACC/SENTRY MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS Continued

- My question/concern is with how ACC is hanging fining for weeds. While I agree that weeds are a year around concern, the way that fines are handled aren't realistic. Weeds are nearly impossible to completely avoid pop ups of weeds, especially after rain or with neighboring lots. Even having biweekly yard service won't eliminate them. Violations should be for persistent issues across notifications, not pop ups that are months apart. Especially when common areas are usually even worse. Fines are being added too liberally when it's not a continuous issue, three weeds spotted in a year doesn't mean that someone is neglecting their yard. There's also the issue that there doesn't seem to be a way to inquire or contest fines (with over a month response times with Sentry about fines). **The HOA has added information on best practices on how to keep from getting weeds and on how to abate them once you have them. Please refer to the website at westhighlandsatl.com to find best practices on how to abate weeds. Additionally, you can ask neighbors who don't have weeds in their yards on how they maintain a weed-free yard all year round. The HOA gives two warnings before assessing fines for yard maintenance violations. Once you have abated all of the violations you can reach out to Sentry to appeal the fines.**
- I'd request a bit of a common sense approach to some non persistent violations (like weeds). It's nearly impossible to completely eliminate weeds from ever popping up (especially after a rain) and when there's months between incidents it shouldn't trigger an escalation of warnings to fines, especially if generally resolved within a week or two. **Weeds can be eliminated by contracting with a professional lawn care service that specializes only in weed abatement on a continuous annual basis. Even with a heavy amount of rain, weeds can be abated. Lots that are cited for weed violations tend to have a substantial amount of weeds that are easily visible from the street.**
- My challenge is the owners are held to a higher standard than the HOA managed lands. **The HOA works hard to finding affordable and quality landscapers for the common areas we maintain. We are introducing a new landscaper to part of the our neighborhood to incentivize better results from our existing landscaper or replace them entirely if need be. However, large sections of common area are not under the HOA control and the HOA shares your frustration with the difficulty in having the responsible parties maintain the properties to high standards on behalf of our neighborhood. When you see issues in these areas, please reach out to the responsible parties and politely request they maintain their common areas.**

ACC/SENTRY MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS Continued

- Is there a grace period for new homeowners? We received a violation 10 days after we closed on our new house. **The initial notice is a courtesy that allows a grace period to correct the violation.**
- Is it possible be more transparent on who is receiving violations, how do we know certain areas aren't more targeted than others? **We do not disclose homeowner violations due to privacy and legal concerns.**
- What is being done about the responsiveness from Sentry and does the West Highlands board have office hours to respond to the homeowners? **The HOA Board is working with Sentry Management to have a quicker response time on inquiries. Sentry is working on having a dedicated email address just for West Highlands homeowners so that we can monitor the flow of inquiries (ex: date stamps of when inquiries are received; responded; resolved; closed, etc.). We are also looking into set open office hours when a homeowner can meet with the property manager in person.**

Social Committee



The 8th Annual West Highlands Holiday Decorating Contest achieved success, with newcomers adding charm and seasoned participants elevating their displays. The photos may not fully capture their beauty, but congratulations are in order for all the deserving winners.

Communications Committee

- We will continue to provide quarterly newsletters to keep all homeowners informed of important information. Newsletters are distributed via email and posted on the HOA website.
- Any urgent/time-sensitive information will be distributed via email.
- If you are not receiving HOA emails, please update your Homeowner Profile at Sentry's website and opt into emails.
- Our website can be very helpful if you have questions about Parking, Community Standards, Pool Rules and Regulations, ACC request forms and more <https://www.westhighlandsatl.com/>

Reminders

- All life-threatening emergencies, crime or suspicious behavior should be reported to an Atlanta Communication Dispatcher at 911
- Protect Security patrols the West Highlands Community daily from 10:00 A.M. until 10:00 P.M.
- Security schedule: one officer from 8 A.M. to 10 P.M. at pool (during the pool season), and one rotating throughout the community. Columbia Residential has their own security officers.
- West Highlands HOA Patrol Officer Phone Line (470) 825-1460
- If you have reached the voicemail during regularly scheduled patrol hours, please leave a detailed message which includes your name, address, telephone number and the reason for your call. A Protect Security Patrol Officer will be dispatched and return your call as soon as possible. If your message is left outside of the scheduled patrol hours, a Patrol Officer will return your call at the start of the next shift.
- Making changes to the exterior of your home? Re-painting, Re-roofing, Re-decking, Re-planting or any other exterior modifications **requires** prior ACC approval before performing the work. ACC Request Forms can be found on West Highlands website.

Reminder:
Keeping lawns weed free is a year long process. Pulling weeds as they appear won't treat the problem.

How to get parking decals and guest overnight parking permits:

Visit our website:
<https://www.westhighlandsatl.com/parking/> and complete either the necessary forms and submit to:
atlantanorthcompliance@sentrymgt.com

Complete the form entirely, including your signature and the date.

Please observe all parking rules and make sure your guests are following all parking rules.

West Highlands parking decals and overnight parking permits will be delivered to your West Highlands property address.