

SVHOA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 8, 2026, 2:00 PM, via Zoom

Present:

Kevin Kelly, President

Rana Singh, Vice President

Suzanne Lyman, Secretary/Treasurer

Kim Van Horn, ARB liaison

Chris Stas, member, Playground Enhancement Committee chair

Michelle Johnson (Mill House), Property Manager

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM:

A quorum was met.

Open comments:

Southern Village homeowners Ian and Katarzyna Jamieson appeared before the board to appeal the decision by the ARB to remove the artificial mulch in the “devil’s strip” (the area between the sidewalk and the street) in front of their property.

Current ARB guidelines state: “Mulch may be used in conjunction with interspersed plantings, ground cover or grass. All mulch utilized in the Strip Area must be brown in color. Mulch must be composed of a natural wood bi-product.” The Jamieson’s current mulch is rubber.

Mr. Jamieson presented several power point slides detailing the history of their struggle with this area and its resistance to growing grass, and his frustration with the movement of natural mulch in that area due to weather. He stated that over a period of 12 years, they tried several remedies and about 5 months ago settled on the current rubber mulch. Mr. Jamieson showed before and after pictures. Mr. Jamieson says his current artificial mulch does not slide down the sloped area or drain into the sewer system.

Mr. Jamieson said it would cost him about \$6000 to remove the mulch and about \$1200 per year to use a wood-based mulch. Kevin thanked the Jamisons for their presentation and said that the board would make a decision and respond directly to them.

Easement:

The Town of Chapel Hill and its attorney contacted Michelle, asking to meet in person with the Board president (Kevin) regarding SV HOA granting the Town an easement, so that it can build an express bus lane along 15-501 near the Arlen Park entrance, to improve public transportation. Kevin expressed his concerns about representing the board as well as all of the Southern Village residents at the proposed meeting. There was discussion about eminent domain and that the town probably has the right to just take the land it needs for this project at some point anyway. Chris stated that he was in favor of the easement since it would improve public transportation; Kim agreed. Kim suggested Kevin move forward with the meeting to find out exactly what the town wants, and it was agreed by the Board that Kevin would go ahead with the meeting and see if he could record the meeting via Zoom so that he could share it with the Board.

Landscaping contract:

Ruppert provided Maintenance Contract Extensions for 2027-2029. The cost of landscaping for the SV common areas, Highgrove, Townhome I, Townhome II and Courtyard as well as Southern Village recycling will remain the same as 2026 for the years 2027 and 2028 and will increase 3% in 2029. Michelle has asked Flores Landscaping for a quote, but has not heard back. Suzanne said she believes that Flores is a smaller operation and perhaps could not satisfy weekly work on the whole neighborhood, and noted SV has enjoyed a good working relationship with Ruppert. The Board questioned Michelle on her opinion of working with Ruppert, and she reported they were great and quick to remedy problems that arise. The board voted unanimously to approve the Ruppert contract for 2027.

ARB Guidelines:

The ARB recently updated the ARB guidelines which the board needs to approve. A sticking point for the Board is the need for homeowners to get ARB permission to remove trees and/or plant new trees. As an ARB member and liaison to the Board, Kim plans to ask ARB committee chair Oris Weiner to attend the November 17th meeting to explain the ARB's position on the tree removal/planting issue.

Playground Enhancement Committee:

Chris updated the board on the installation of the previously purchased nest swing for the soccer field area. It will be delivered on Friday, September 11, 2026 and installed by Ruppert. Chris reported there were insufficient funds in the 2026 budget for the previously proposed permanent concrete ping pong table; Suzanne said she expects there would be funds for it next year as well as \$20-\$30K for additional playground enhancement.

The Playground committee meets monthly and has no shortage of ideas for playground enhancement. Chris mentioned ideas such as placing lighting in the basketball court and noted that there are cracks in court. Suzanne said addressing issues like cracks in the court should be funded using the common area maintenance budget and not the Playground committee budget; Kim agreed. Kim said she thought our current playgrounds look worn and shabby and expressed her opinion that funds should be allocated for painting and repairing fences, installing more ground cover, etc. Kevin suggested the possibility of a neighborhood fundraiser to pay for additional playground initiatives, and Chris reported that some of the committee members also thought this might help fund the playground enhancements.

Suzanne will send a mock up of the 2027 budget including a Playground Enhancement Committee budget to board members in mid-October for comment and review.

Town of Chapel Hill Greenway Project:

SV Board members Kevin, Chris and Suzanne met with Town of Chapel Hill representatives concerning the expansion of the greenway. The town's proposal to extend the trail showed it tracking close to the SV soccer field and also directly behind some residents' houses. It also extended into Dogwood Acres and seemed to just drop users into 15/501.

Kevin wanted high usage portions of the greenway to be considered by the town. These include access to UNC and crossing 15-501. It was noted that students in Dogwood Acres attend Culbreth

Middle School and may walk to school via the current path. It was also noted that the proposed trail to Culbreth would benefit Southern Village.

Pond 4 Dredging:

Triangle Ponds, the contractor who has been working on the SV retention ponds for 3 years, submitted a quote to dredge Pond 4 in early 2027 for \$35,000.

This is the last major pond project needed to satisfy the agreement SV HOA entered into with the Town of Chapel Hill to meet the town's pond requirements since the 4 SV retention ponds failed the town's inspections. Suzanne noted that Ian Peterson, the engineer from PS Ponds who has been overseeing all the pond work for SV, assessed the project and determined that 75 cubic yards needed to be dredged, along with restoration of the walking path. The Board voted unanimously to approve the payment.

Miscellaneous:

Board expressed the wish that SV homeowners attending NC Symphony concert on the SV village green on Sept 12 be told that \$5,000 of their HOA dues goes towards this popular event; Michelle followed up post meeting (via email) confirming that Craig Merriga, who will give introductory remarks before the performance, will mention that.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:19 PM.