

The Common at Sinnott Farm, Inc.

HOMEOWNERS GUIDE

General Information and
Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Common at Sinnott Farm?

When the builder first developed Spice Bush and Quail Run Lanes (and later developers finished Spring Hill, Arrowwood and Timothy Lanes), a homeowners association, known as The Common at Sinnott Farm, was created. It is a legal corporation filed with the State of Connecticut in 1988. The documents you received when you bought your house include the Declaration that established the Association.

Why have an Association?



The developers wanted a common look to the community and they set up Rules and Bylaws to make sure the neighborhood would be kept up and so there would always be a consistent appearance.

There are also common areas around the pond and streets that are owned by the Association and need to be maintained for the benefit of the whole community. The lanes are private and not maintained by the town, so the Association needs to keep those up, too.

Can I opt out of the Association?

No, when you buy property on these lanes, you automatically agree to be in the Association. Every new buyer is provided with a Certificate of Resale to ensure that they know they are buying into an Association that affords them certain rights and obligations under the Association's Rules and Bylaws. The Certificate of Resale also discloses whether the Association holds any liens against the property.

What are the fees for?

Your fees pay for maintenance such as street plowing, mowing of the common areas, erecting and repairing street signs, landscaping in the cul-de-sac circles and elsewhere in the common areas, electricity for street lights, and insurance – anything that has to do with the common areas. Your fees also pay for the employment of a professional property management firm that assists the Executive Board in running the Association. A portion of your fees also goes toward a capital fund that exists for big expenses such as street repaving or emergency repairs of things such as storm sewers.

How much are the fees?

The homeowner fees are determined annually by the Executive Board and are paid quarterly throughout the calendar year. The fees are an integral part of the Association's finances and budget. You can get a copy of the Association's budget on request or on the Association's website (www.sinottfarm.com).

Who runs the Association?

An Executive Board elected from among the homeowners in our community is responsible for managing the affairs of the Association. In addition, a professional property management firm has been hired to assist the Board in implementation of its decisions.



You vote for the Board members, all of whom are residents

and volunteers, every year. Homeowners have some rules and requirements to adhere to, and the Board in turn has obligations to each homeowner.

Homeowner Requirements – What to Keep in Mind

It's a neighborhood. We live close together, and we all want a community we enjoy and can be proud of. The Declaration requires that Rules be established to assure that the conduct of residents and the appearance of homes foster the semi-rural character of the community that is defined in our founding documents. The Rules help keep Sinnott Farm the attractive neighborhood it was always intended to be.



Outside appearance matters. The Declaration and the Rules were written to make sure the community has an open, consistent look. That means no fences, outbuildings, sheds, house additions, decks, or other outside structures are permitted. In addition, there are Rules that address landscaping of individual homes. However, a homeowner may request a variance to the Rules from the Bylaws/Covenants Committee.

We're a residential community. There are no restrictions on the number of cars that may be parked in your driveway, but all cars must be in working condition and registered, and nothing may be up on blocks! There is no overnight parking on the lanes between the hours of 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. And commercial vehicles are not permitted except when work is being performed and then only during business hours.

You can rent your house out under a long-term lease. Make sure the renters have a copy of the Rules and Bylaws and that the Board has a copy of your lease agreement.

You can run a business out of your home, but you can't employ people in that business who will regularly come and go each day. Examples of an acceptable business would be e-Bay selling or personal consulting.

Property values matter to everyone. Maintaining the common areas and the look of our neighborhood helps keep home values high, but it requires the work and expense of the Association. Every homeowner plays a part, too. We all appreciate a well maintained home and yard!

The Board's Obligations – What They Must Do

Publish meeting dates and minutes. The Board must take notes whenever they meet in open session to do Association work. The minutes are available on request and are published on the Association's website. The dates of all Board meetings must be published, and homeowners can attend in person if they wish. Meetings are held in the homes of the Board members on a rotating basis; therefore, if you wish to attend, you are asked to please let the Property Manager or a Board member know in advance.



Conduct a Homeowners Meeting. Once a year, the Board must hold an annual meeting for all homeowners to elect members

to the open Board seats and to review the finances and business of the Association. Our annual meeting is traditionally held in November.

Provide for the collection of fees and adhere to the budget.

The Board establishes a budget annually, and expenditures of the Association are guided by the budget. Information about the Association’s finances and expenditures is available to all homeowners upon request at any time.

Establish working committees. The Board oversees but does not generally run the day--to--day activities of the Association. This is done by the Property Manager.



In addition, the Board may set up committees of volunteers to make sure important functions in the community are being taken care of. All of these committees are made up of homeowner volunteers, not elected officials. Homeowners simply need to volunteer their time in an area of interest. Current committees include: Bylaws/Covenants Committee, Website Committee, and Welcome Committee.

FAQs:

How do I request a variance?

Your request must be made in writing and sent in advance with your proposed plans to the Property Manager or directly to the Bylaws/Covenants



Committee. The committee then has 14 days in which to reply. The committee may approve the request, deny the request, or ask you for additional information. There is an appeal process should you disagree with the decision of the committee.

The Bylaws/Covenants Committee is charged with determining whether your structure or landscaping fits in with the common look of the neighborhood and conforms to the best interests of the entire community. All of the information regarding requirements and the process is available on the Association’s website.

How do I report something that violates the Rules?

You should contact the Property Manager or a Board member via phone or email. It is always helpful if you cite the section of the Rules or Bylaws that you believe applies to the situation you are reporting. The issue will be researched, and the homeowner will be contacted if any action needs to be taken to correct the problem.

What if I sell my home?

When you are ready to sell your home, let the Property Manager know. State law requires that a Certificate of Resale be provided by the Association to a buyer in advance of the sale of a home. The certificate explains the Association and how it operates – no buyer surprises!

How do I request special consideration for fee payments?

You should contact the Property Manager as soon as possible. Don’t wait to fall behind on your payment! The Board is

committed to working with you if there is a genuine financial hardship.

What should I do if I want to have a tag sale?

Tag sales may be held at any time providing permission has been granted by the Bylaws/Covenants Committee. There are specific guidelines to follow, so please be sure to consult the most recent Rules.

How can I volunteer for a committee?

You can volunteer for a committee by contacting a Board member or a member of the committee for which you wish to volunteer. Committees are always willing to accept new members and would enjoy the opportunity to welcome you aboard!

How do I contact the Board?

Board members can be reached by logging on to the website at www.sinnottfarm.com and sending an email.

Homeowners can also contact the Property Manager with questions or concerns. Contact information for each Board member as well as the Property Manager is listed on the Association's website.