



## Increased Neighborhood Identity – Improved Safety & Security

New street sign toppers and automobile stickers increase the identity of the Sherwood Forest Neighborhood.

One of the key objectives of your Sherwood Forest Neighborhood Association (SFNA) has been to increase a sense of identity for our neighborhood. We realize that when neighbors feel a sense of 'belonging' they are more likely to get involved in neighborhood activities and get to know their neighbors better. That in turn leads to improved neighborhood safety & security as neighbors become more aware of what is going on around them. Aware and involved neighbors are willing to help each other out by watching each other's property and reporting suspicious actions to the police.

Recently, we completed a major portion of our neighborhood identity program with the purchase and installation of street sign toppers that identify our neighborhood. You have probably noticed these new brown and white signs atop the street signs at all our intersections. The design with the 'old oak' tree logo identifies our Sherwood Forest neighborhood as being established in 1940 (based on city records research). The signs and the brackets to attach them cost \$1,132.52, of which \$1,000 was paid for through a City of Columbia mini-grant. Your association dues paid for the remaining \$132.52. This project was completed primarily with the dedicated efforts of Lewis Kirk, our webmaster, chair of our communications committee, and coordinator of our Block Captain program. Our past president and current VP, Larry Hembree, submitted the mini-grant request. Thank you, Lewis and Larry!

We have had neighborhood association stickers for your cars for some time, and have routinely passed them out at social events. We are in the process of buying new stickers with the 'old oak' logo, and those will be provided free to all residents (not just association members). The police tell us that having the sticker on your car helps them identify cars that belong in the neighborhood, especially when they are searching for suspicious activities or criminals. The stickers also help you identify fellow neighbors when you are out and about. We are planning an association membership canvas of all residences in the near future to educate everyone on what our association does, and we will be passing out information packets that include the stickers for your cars.

If you see suspicious activity in your neighborhood call 911 if it is an emergency, or **252-2911** for non-emergencies. Both numbers are answered by the 911 operators, so if the **252-2911** number doesn't answer right away please be patient as they may be handling emergency calls.

If you wish to report code violations or have other issues that do not involve the police, please use the **Columbia 311** service by dialing 311 or completing the form on their website at [http://www.govhost.com/columbia-sc/default.asp?comp=GovHost\\_ServiceRequest\\_UI.ServiceReqUI&func=CreateRequestMainPage&SiteId=30](http://www.govhost.com/columbia-sc/default.asp?comp=GovHost_ServiceRequest_UI.ServiceReqUI&func=CreateRequestMainPage&SiteId=30). This is a totally confidential process that protects your privacy while allowing the city to address neighborhood concerns. Examples of 311 issues include overgrown and/or abandoned property, trash dumped in street improperly, abandoned vehicles, front yard parking, street lights out, animal services, water pressure or discoloration issues, and many more. Check out the website for a detailed list of issues that 311 handles. It is a great service that is underutilized.

The City of Columbia has assigned support staff to our neighborhood to expedite resolution of neighborhood issues. Therefore, whenever you use the 311 or 911 services make certain to mention that you are in the Sherwood Forest Neighborhood, and that will help get the correct city staff and police referred to your issue.

**Remember, we are the Sherwood Forest Neighborhood. Let's be proud of that special identity!**

Ed Tilden, President SFNA