

## The Role of Critics in a Well-Run HOA

Good organizations will always have critics. Critics play an important role in helping balance conversations and keeping officers and directors on track. Both those in power and those in the opposition have, as their stated goal, the betterment of the organization. In the UK Parliament, those in the minority parties are referred to as His Majesty's Loyal Opposition. Debate is often vigorous but all parties and coalitions understand the need to work together for the common good—not always agreeing, but following rules of communication and fairness that are in the best interest of the realm.

Members of the opposition can provide constructive, responsible perspectives, and thus make an important contribution. The essential contract in this type of democratic organization is that both parties will do their best to advocate for their positions in ways that are factual and fair.

In The Village of Garrison Creek's homeowners association's (HOA's) careful re-drafting of its key governing documents and its recent presentation of those new documents for members' review and approval, the goal has been to continue to improve our association, enhance members' ownership of the organization, and increase participation in the life of the community and the value of their individual investments in their own homes and in our shared assets.

The Master Property Management Association (the long name for our HOA) has had its critics in this endeavor. You may have heard from some of them. They have every right to express their points of view. As a result of questions and concerns raised, it now appears that an insufficient number of votes were cast to constitute a quorum. The questions resulted in slowing the process and that may be a good thing. Members of the your HOA Board want every member to be clear in their understanding as we move forward.

The opposition to the new documents and current Board of Directors has given our members several things that are helpful to us all.

1. **ADDITIONAL TIME FOR MEMBERS TO ASK QUESTIONS AND FURTHER CONSIDER THE NEW DOCUMENTS:** According to Washington State law, the deadline for casting ballots in support of or against the new governing documents may be extended, as needed, up to eleven months, so as to facilitate additional conversation and understanding. The MPMA Board has voted to extend the deadline for voting.
2. **OPPORTUNITY TO CLARIFY THE CONTENTS OF AND THE REASONS FOR THE PROPOSED CHANGES.** All community members are invited to engage in this process. Since the HOA Board that directed this years-long process of updating our charter and procedural documents in harmony with current Washington State law (RCW 64.90), its members have underscored the importance and necessity of these changes at this time.
3. **AFFIRMATION OF THE RIGHT TO HAVE ANSWERS THAT ARE CLEAR AND CONCERNS THAT ARE ADEQUATELY AND FAIRLY ADDRESSED.** Members can expect open meetings where all members may speak, ask questions, express concerns, and listen carefully to one another and to those responsible for drafting the proposed changes to our documents. Many of these opportunities have already taken place. More opportunities are described in this mailing.
4. **A BETTER INFORMED MEMBERSHIP AND FREEDOM FROM FEAR OF VOTING.** Members are invited to speak to areas of concern, listen to all sides of the issues, and then cast their votes in favor of or against the proposed changes according to their best understanding. We all "win" when we interact with each other with integrity and respect. Your HOA Board is committed to these values.