

March 1, 2019

In my last message I spoke about change in our community and how hardly anything stays the same. We had a lengthy board meeting yesterday with lots of conversation that arose from possible changes. I think maybe this will be the “year of transition” for De la Mesa. Some will embrace it while others will resist it. Even so, I hope we can all work together for our common good.

Two topics from yesterday’s meeting are at the forefront of my mind. One, our common walls and our park gazebo both are in need of attention. It’s been a long time since any major upkeep was performed on those two items. Unfortunately, it will likely be expensive, and we don’t have budget money allocated for it. We do have a sizeable reserve fund, but it will be largely depleted if we bring the gazebo and the walls up to par. We are re-evaluating the budget. The second topic deserves a paragraph all to its own, so read on folks.

*Painting.* Just say that action verb and it elicits emotions that run the spectrum from happy to angry. The board has the responsibility of deciding when to begin this next painting cycle. We have no signed contract with a painter, but we did say verbally we’d accept their bid without committing to start time. If we don’t start this year, the bid may, or may not, increase. But we also are considering if the common walls and the gazebo are more pressing than painting. Again, emotions surface. Most of us are not aware the common walls in some places are starting to crumble. And the support wooden posts for the gazebo are rotting at the bottom just as the metal plates under them are rusting thin. Now let’s add in that the recent resident survey, which had 69 responses, showed that the clear majority of responses want to change, or would consider changing, the base color. Interestingly, those supporting a possible change were nearly split equally between newer residents and long time residents. There are good reasons to consider changing colors, with perhaps the largest being realtors have suggested our property values would increase with colors that were more snappy and contrasting. Now we really have emotions running at supersonic speed I suspect. To be fair, there are many voices who wish to not see our colors change, and as your board president, I respect those choices. I will ask you who wish to stay the same color to please be open to listening to other voices as we work through this possibility. Yesterday the board voted (with three ayes, and two abstentions) to organize a paint color committee to investigate changing our base paint color, which COULD also include changing the trim color again. We’re currently looking for interested residents to serve on that committee. So the bottom line is we are kicking the decision to start painting down the road while we settle major maintenance expense issues and possible color change decisions. By the way, ANY color change will have to be approved by a clear majority of residents...the board cannot/will not make that decision alone. And officially no colors have been suggested yet. That will be for the committee to decide with resident input.

So there we have it. Lots of controversy at the beginning of a new board that I hoped would silently slide into 2019 hardly noticed. I do appreciate the large attendance at our board meetings, and I encourage you all to attend. We meet monthly through May. And who knows, we may need to meet this summer also. Whew! Tell me again why I said I’d do this 😊