

2011

River Rock Commons



COMMUNITY
MANUAL

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River Rock Commons

Community Manual for Residents and Owners

Welcome!

We're glad you're here! Whether you are new to River Rock or a long time resident, this document will help acquaint you with the ways of living happily and cooperatively within the River Rock community.

As with many things at River Rock, this document is more of a process than a stone tablet. Consider it a living document, and feel free to give feedback to the Process Team at any time.

Values and Guiding Principles

River Rock was created under the auspices of Wonderland Development and under the direction of the Co-Housing Network, which worked with the original members in setting up a process and a vision that this intentional neighborhood wanted to live by. In addition, many particulars of our life together have been created or developed over time and will continue to be so. Community meetings are the primary forums by which this happens.

Participation

River Rock Cohousing is administered, maintained, and managed almost entirely by the residents. It takes a lot of work to run a complex this size and keep improving it. But in Amish style, the work itself is what builds our community and makes it strong.

Vision Statement

We wish to:

Welcome and honor people of all circumstances who share our common co-housing vision, without regard to gender, age, ethnicity, religion, family status, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, political persuasion, and mental or physical abilities.

Nurture a sense of community by caring for and about each other, while respecting everyone's need for private time and space.

Provide a safe, rich and educational environment in which to raise our children.

Cooperate in the everyday tasks of living, and in managing and maintaining our community and common facilities.

Make community decisions in ways that allow all opinions to be expressed and all concerns to be addressed.

Protect the environment by our local actions, for example by using efficient, non-toxic construction, solar orientation, and climate appropriate landscaping.

Enrich and support each other's lives through community meals and events and individual acts of kindness.

8/22/2004



Everyone is expected to participate in the work and life of the community. At the same time, we honor the fact that people have different levels of availability and need to make decisions for themselves about participation, and that one's participation will vary from year to year as we live our lives. Participation is broadly defined to include a full spectrum of activities from social planning and participation to regular maintenance or committee participation. We have occasional workdays as well as permanent and *ad hoc* committees. There are special events, annual events, and special projects. Cleaning the Common House is done by all households on a rotating basis.

Committees and Clubs

The following committees and clubs are currently active (as of late 2010). Generally, committees serve and support the entire community and are funded by our condo dues. Clubs are open to the whole community but many in the community choose not to participate, so benefits and costs are generally shared among the members. Membership and leadership fluctuate and therefore are not listed here but can be easily obtained from other residents at RRC or on the private side of the RRC website. In addition, *ad hoc* committees can be formed for specific purposes for a limited time. Any member can join any committee or club, and anyone can attend any committee or meeting, unless noted below. Meeting locations, times, and agendas are posted on email in advance.

Committee or Club	Purpose
Maintenance Committee	Responsible for maintaining common areas.
Common House Committee	Manages the operation and maintenance of the common house.
Meal Clubs	Organized by volunteers, one or more evening meals per week in the school year, rotation of cooking and cleanup responsibilities. Accommodation for vegetarians and vegans is typical.
Social Committee	Social interactions, holiday events, summer potluck meals, annual Confab
Design Review Committee (DRC)	This is a legal entity, required by our by-laws. Reviews changes to common areas and land, building exteriors, and LCEs. Only owners participate in this committee.
Finance Committee	Manages the community's common finances; paying bills, collecting dues, enabling annual budget process, paying taxes, supplying lenders with HOA information
HOA Board	This is a legal entity, required by our by-laws. Delegates most responsibilities to appropriate committees. Maintains our insurance policies.
LanLords Committee	Responsible for maintaining the community computer network and the DSL & cable connections to the Internet (not individual computers). The name of the committee is a play on words from the acronym LAN, which mean "Local Area Network."
Landscape Committee	Responsible for all outdoor areas and organizes whole community work days
Exercise Room Club	Maintains equipment, cleans exercise room
Chicken Coop Club	Manages the chicken coop and shares eggs
Community Garden Club	Coordinate community garden on south side of Building 2
Pet Action Team (PAT)	Mitigates specific pet problems
Healthy Resolution Team (HRT)	Provides a safe space for dialogue between community members for conflict resolution and works proactively for a healthy community. These meeting are only open to HRT members and the involved parties.
Contact Team	Answers inquiries about River Rock
Process Team (Committee)	Schedules Community Meetings, helps community work out processes for running its affairs and living together harmoniously
Standby Team (Committee)	Emergency decisions between regular Community Meetings: one representative from each building

The most up-to-date list of committees and clubs is available on the private portion of the River Rock website (www.riverrock.org/rrc-only). Emails can be sent to any committee from that web page.

Administration of the Community

Home Owners Association Board

As a condominium association, River Rock is legally required to have a Home Owner's Association (HOA) board as our official governing body. There is a big notebook in the common house sitting room with all of the Condominium Declarations. We follow the legal requirements of the HOA, but the practical decisions come from our community meetings.



Your HOA dues are payable monthly. They cover water, heat, trash, gas, landscaping, insurance on the buildings, and common facility expenses. Maintenance of the outer structure of your unit is also covered by HOA dues. So things like your roof and siding are covered, but you're expected to handle simple preventive maintenance such as staining your deck railings and trim. Dues also include putting money aside (reserves) for future repair and replacement of parking lots, roofs, outdoor painting, and other things. Our approach is to fully reserve for these eventualities and try never to have a special assessment. Our Treasurer would be happy to supply you with a financial summary and budgets.

The amount of your dues is calculated according to several factors, including the number of people living full-time in your unit. If someone is living in your house on the first of the month (other than short term house guests), that person counts as an additional person in your household. Let the HOA board member who collects the dues know if that number changes. Also, collecting dues by automatic electronic debit is the norm, so please contact the Treasurer or HOA Board member to arrange this.

The HOA insures the structure of our buildings and the Common House and land, but all homeowners (whether resident or renting) need to secure their own homeowner's insurance. This type of policy is referred to as an HO-6 policy and provides for liability insurance, contents coverage, and some building coverage. It is recommended that renters secure renter's insurance.

Financial

Each homeowner pays dues to the HOA that are unique for each unit based on the size of the unit, how many people live in it, and whether or not a garage or carport is owned. Generally the dues range between \$170 to \$300 per month and include all gas for heating and hot water, all water, building insurance, trash, sewer, Internet, TV antenna signal (not cable), Common House upkeep, and building maintenance. The owner is responsible for the electric use inside their unit, cable, and landline telephone, if desired. Dues have been quite stable over the years and we do a pretty good job of budgeting. Homeowner's are invited to arrange for their dues to be collected electronically.

River Rock maintains the exterior of the buildings, boilers, and structural things (balconies, for example) and the owner maintains internal plumbing, appliances, thermostats and heating components, window treatments, and paint inside the unit.

Our heating systems are radiant floor heat fed by central boilers in each building. This is a highly efficient design and means that no furnace or hot water heater is needed inside an individual unit.

The Finance Team coordinates a community process each fall to establish a budget for the next year. In addition to budgeting for the expense of running River Rock, we also budget and set aside about 30% of our budget for reserves to pay for future external painting, roof replacement, parking lot maintenance, and Common House upkeep. Our approach of fully reserving for future eventualities means that we are unlikely to ever require a special assessment to the owners. Information about expenses and reserves is available from the River Rock Treasurer or Finance Team.

Decision-making Process

Major decisions are made by the community at Community Meetings, through a process of consensus, voting, discussion, and other means. Two time-slots per month are generally reserved for Community Meetings. For the year 2011, the meetings are the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 PM and the fourth Sunday at 3:30 PM. Meetings are only held when the community has business.

Occasionally, the Process Team sponsors a topic for a *values discussion*. At this meeting no decisions related to the topic are made. The team solicits topics from the community for these discussions.

In order to streamline our decision-making process, we have a number of standing committees that bring agenda items to the meeting. The intention is to do as much of the processing in these smaller forums as possible so less time is consumed in general meetings. If an individual wishes to propose a topic and it falls within the parameter of one of these committees, it should be taken to the committee first; the committee then brings the agenda item to the community meeting. Special committees may also be created to take on a specific topic. These “*ad hoc*” committees are given a time frame in which to get their work done, and then they report back to the community. If they are a subcommittee of a standing committee, they report back to that committee. See Appendix B: “Empowerment of Committees.”

It is considered courteous to provide input during the planning stage of projects rather than wait until something is brought to a Community Meeting. Committees are required to inform folks by email of plans as they are proposed and modified. Residents should make an effort to stay in the loop on projects dear to their hearts. Having diverse points of view on committees helps them make robust proposals to the community.

For a detailed description of the steps involved in the decision-making process, see Appendix E: “River Rock Commons Process Steps.”

Conflict Resolution

Conflict is an unavoidable component of being alive in a human body. Put close to 80 people on four acres, all trying to forge communal connections – while raising families, holding down jobs, living full lives – and there are bound to be occasional clashes. Take comfort in knowing that people moved here in order to have deeper connections with neighbors. If you have an issue with a neighbor, approach him or her and try to discuss it. You might be surprised at how open people are to hearing your point of view.

For situations where discussion is difficult or adequate safety in conversation is missing, individuals may request assistance from the Healthy Resolution Team (HRT), to create safe space for dialogue. The HRT will facilitate dialogue, record agreements, and follow up on commitments, all with the upmost in confidentiality. If issues require further escalation, a mediation and arbitration process will also be managed by the HRT. See information on the internal website for background, membership, and process information on the HRT.

Standby Team

A Standby Team comprised of a representative from each building exists for emergencies or when quick community decisions must be made (fire or natural disaster, typically) between community meetings. See Appendix F: “Standby Team” for the details of how the Standby Team works.



Management of the Land

Land Use

The Design Review Committee (DRC) guidelines state that the Limited Common Element (LCE) is the outside space designated for use by each household.

Each unit has a private backyard that extends 20 feet (in most cases) out from the rearmost wall and is the width of the unit. All other land is held in common, which means the community needs to be involved in determining uses. An extension of an additional 10 feet can be approved for private back yards as long as there is not a previously determined "high" priority use for the community. When ownership changes, the extensions previously granted do not continue to apply, but must be re-requested. Front yards beyond each unit's deck belong to the community, but we have agreed with the City of Fort Collins that each household will landscape and maintain the front yards up to the sidewalk.



Our site was a railroad service yard for many years. A toxicology report on soil contaminants was conducted prior to construction and some mitigation measures were used to reduce the toxins. Before gardening or planting trees or bushes that bear fruit, you may want to review the report, which is available in the Common House sitting room. The soil in the raised bed gardens has been imported.

Common Land

All River Rock property is common land. It has to be landscaped and maintained by residents directed by the Landscape Committee. Individuals have offered to steward certain areas. Each unit is responsible for its own LCE, as well as the area between the sidewalk and front porch deck.

Monthly Work Day

From late spring to late fall, we have a monthly work day when everyone is requested to give at least two hours to basic maintenance and improvement of common land and property. Most of this has involved landscaping or Common House maintenance. Doing this keeps our dues lower; what we do for ourselves does not have to be hired out. It's a wonderful way to get to know your neighbors while improving the environment for everyone to enjoy.

Lawn and Landscape Care

For several years we have hired a company to mow the central lawn and the grass along the west end of River Rock on Sherwood Street. We employ only those companies with electric or biodiesel mowers. Fertilizer used on the grass is 100% organic. One member serves as the Lawn Ranger and keeps the community apprised of the lawn watering and mowing schedule so that the lawn can be cleared of items. Parents play a key role with their children in assuring the removal of toys from the lawn before the mowing crew arrives.

Each year we spray a minimum amount of insecticide, herbicide and fungicide for tree pests, plant diseases, and weeds. We keep this to a practical minimum and provide 24-hour notice via email to all residents of upcoming use.

Watering

The sprinklers operate on a regular schedule that is published during watering season. Toys and bikes need to be removed from the lawn the night before watering is scheduled.

Some people have "adopted" common areas near their units for weeding and for the watering of trees and shrubs.

If you have questions about the sprinkler system or adopting a common area, contact the Landscape Committee.

Snow Shoveling

The Landscape Committee has arranged for a contractor to plow our parking lots when snowfall exceeds three inches. City law requires that we shovel our walks (including the ones bordering the north side and west side of our property) within 24 hours after the end of a snowfall. We all need to help with shoveling—this includes the walks in the commons, front walks, porches, the sidewalk on Sherwood Street, and the walk between River Rock and the ball fields of Lee Martinez Park. Residents often help others who are unable to do their own shoveling.



Parking

Enough parking spaces (including garages and carports) exist for each unit to have two spaces. However, parking gets tight when we add renters and guests. Condominium Declarations state that garages and carports constitute one parking space for a household; they cannot be used for storage that prevents their use as a parking space. When you sponsor a special event at the Common House, request that your guests park in the Lee Martinez Farm or Park parking lots and walk to the Common House.

Design Review Process

If a household wants to make structural changes to the outside of their building or their LCE, and if these changes affect common land or might have an impact on neighbors, a process has been set up to address how a homeowner can gain community support for their ideas.

See Appendix D: "Design Review Process Details" for the levels of design review.



Management of the Common House

Every household owns one thirty-fourth of the Common House that is located on the northeast end of River Rock. Residents are encouraged to use the Common House – kids play in the basement, people play the piano, groups have impromptu brown bag lunches, bakers use the ovens, seamstresses have sewing bees, or people just hang out. A guest room is available for visitors (see Guest Room, page 8) and an exercise room provides an opportunity for guests and residents to work out. It's meant to be used!



To reserve the Common House for your personal use, mark the calendar in the Common House foyer. Remember to designate the specific space that you need (kitchen, dining, basement, etc). Outside groups may use the Common House *only* when a community member sponsors them. Also, the member must be personally and physically present at the event. There is no fee for use and the facility is not available for rent. Guidelines about Common House usage, scheduling, and priorities are posted in the Common House foyer. Remember that this building belongs to everyone and be considerate before scheduling private events.

Cleaning the Common House

Every resident over 15 years of age is responsible for cleaning the Common House three or four times per year. Exemptions are made for those with serious illness or over 80 years of age. Residents may pay to opt out of direct cleaning responsibility by paying into the arrangement that hires Foothills Gateway, a non-profit group, to do the cleaning on a regular basis. If you would like an exemption or to pay for cleaning, contact the Common House Committee.

Cleaning is done every weekend between Friday and Sunday by a crew of four people. The schedule is set by the Common House Committee and sent out periodically via email; it is also posted on the bulletin board beside the Common House kitchen. Cleaning tasks are defined and posted on the bulletin board. You may sign up in advance for the task(s) you prefer to do.

Please check the bulletin board to see when you are scheduled to clean. If you are unable to clean on your assigned date, you have two options:

1. Contact another resident to switch dates with you.
2. Pay \$20 to our cleaning company, Foothills Gateway, to do your part of the cleaning. You must arrange this option with the Common House Committee in advance of your scheduled weekend.

If you do not clean or arrange for someone to take your place by 5:00 PM on the Monday after your designated weekend, you will be charged \$25.

In addition, whenever you or a group you are connected with uses the Common House, you are expected to leave the facility in a clean and orderly state. This includes doing any laundry you have created.

Access and Lock-up

The Common House has a combination lock on the front door. Contact the Common House Committee for the current combination. The residents in Unit 1 have agreed to be responsible for locking up the Common House every evening, so you do not need to worry about locking up when you leave.

Meals at the Common House

One of the joys of community living is shared food. Anyone can set up a community meal by posting a sheet on the bulletin board in the Common House. You set the menu and the price, do the shopping and cooking, and can even have a sign-up for additional cooks or cleaners. People will then sign up. We often have a community meal after the Sunday meeting.

Groups of people have also organized a "Meal Club," which is a regular series of meals on a set date for a cycle of three to six weeks. As part of the Meal Club, you sign up to share with others of a meal team the responsibility for one meal during the rotation. Throughout our history there has been at least one Meal Club during the school year.



Basement

The basement of the Common House has a children's play area, a sitting area, a guest room, and a tween/teen room. The main room also has a ping pong table and a movie area for kids and adults. Common storage of River Rock equipment is at the west end. It is not available for personal storage.

Guest Room

The basement guest room is similar to a small hotel suite with a queen bed, single bed, television, small refrigerator, and private bath. Guest room use is based on a first-come-first-serve basis to guests of residents. Each household can reserve up to 14 days per year for their guests. The resident host is responsible for cleaning the room and washing sheets and towels when his or her guest leaves. There is no cost for this room, though sometimes guests make a gift contribution. The Guest Room Notebook in the foyer of the Common House contains a sign-up calendar for reservations, guidelines for usage, and the contact information for the Guest Room Coordinator.

Details of Living at River Rock

Resource Sharing

One of our values at River Rock is to reduce the unnecessary duplication of resources. Before you buy something, ask around or send an email to the community at coho@riverrock.org. Lots of trading occurs around here. You can trade for services such as child care, pet care, sewing, massage, bike maintenance, tutoring, etc. You can borrow or trade items like knitting needles, cars, cameras, camping equipment, even cups of sugar, etc. If you do lend an item to a neighbor or to the community, mark your name on it so people know where to return it. Commonly shared items include ladders, tools, bicycles, automobiles, cooking utensils, toys, and garden tools.

Renting at River Rock

Renting at River Rock is different than renting an apartment or single-family house because the day you move in you become part of a vital community – a kind of family – where each individual's choices impact the others around them. The best way to have a positive impact in your new community is to become involved in what is happening within it.

Because responsibilities are assigned to households, renters who rent an entire unit take on that household's community work responsibilities. Renters who share in a household are also encouraged to participate in all activities to get the full River Rock experience.

Owners are required to provide orientation to their renters and help to facilitate their integration into the community. Absentee owners are encouraged to find a contact person who resides at River Rock to help with orientation.

As per agreement with the City of Fort Collins, we are not allowed to split existing units into separate apartments or rental spaces. One of the defining elements not allowed is the creation of a new kitchen.

Membership Directory

The directory of residents at River Rock Commons is updated periodically. It contains telephone numbers, email addresses, birthdays, and emergency information. It is available to residents online via the private portion of the River Rock website at www.riverrock.org/rrc-only.

Recycling

River Rock has a long history of active recycling. We try to minimize our landfill contributions by actively sharing, reusing, and recycling. We carefully follow Fort Collins' recycling regulations. Fort Collins has a good website about recycling at <http://fcgov.com/recycling>.

We currently have six 65-gallon bins for single-stream recycling of glass, plastic, paper, newspaper, and cardboard. The bins are labeled with recycling instructions, please read them carefully. For example, cardboard must be cut to fit into the bins. The recycling bins are emptied on Thursdays. We also have a dumpster that is emptied once a week on Tuesdays. We collect used batteries and CFL bulbs in marked baskets in the Common House foyer, and we keep a "free to a new home" bin there as well.



It's good to recycle, but not everything is acceptable. When in doubt, throw it away. And when you move in, it's very helpful if you transport your moving boxes to the City of Fort Collins recycling center at 1702 Riverside Avenue or ask if someone else needs them.

If you have large items like furniture to discard, ask about borrowing another resident's pickup for use in taking it to the landfill. If you are putting an inordinate load into the dumpster, you may request an extra dumpster pickup through our Treasurer and contribute the \$30 extra charge. For comparison, a pickup load to the landfill costs about \$20.

Pet Policy

Many residents of River Rock have pets. As in most communities, people have varying attitudes about pets—their own and their neighbors'. While pets bring much joy and liveliness to our community, they have also been a source of friction and much discussion. The two values statements about pets that the community has reached consensus on are included in Appendix C: "Values Statements about Pets."

The City of Fort Collins has leash laws for both dogs and cats. That means no cats or dogs may be outdoors unless they are physically contained in an LCE or on a leash. A copy of the City ordinances is

available online via the city's website at www.colocode.com/ftcollins/municipal/chapter4.htm#sec4d7. The community hopes that we can accommodate pets without setting stringent rules. A group of neighbors has inaugurated a Pet Action Team (PAT) as an informal group to offer practical solutions to specific pet situations that arise in the community. Thus, someone experiencing a problem with a pet (even a non-River Rock pet) can call upon the Pet Action Team which seeks and implements ways to mitigate the problem (successful example: cat feces in a window well stopped when rocks were strategically placed).

LAN Hook-up and List Serves

A great deal of information at River Rock is exchanged via email, including committee agendas and minutes, announcements of events, and discussion. To facilitate this, a number of distribution lists have been set up, a complete list of which is available on the private portion of the River Rock website.

Although we have great internet connection through our DSL modem, this access is shared by all units. A River Rock group called the "LAN-lords" has created usage policies that *do not* accommodate such things as file-sharing and movie downloading. These activities bog down our connection for other households. See the list of rules and guidelines on the River Rock website. If you anticipate heavy usage, you are encouraged to contract individually with service providers for DSL or cable modems.

To get hooked up to the LAN or for help with your network connection, talk to one of the LanLords. However, remember that they are all contributing their own time to maintain the community's LAN, which can be a lot of technical work at times. If you'd like help setting up your personal computer and email account, you might want to arrange a trade of some sort with one of the LanLords (meals are always popular).

River Rock has an active website (www.riverrock.org) where you can read email archives, see the directory, learn the members of committees. The website has a public portion and a private portion. To access the private portion while inside River Rock, simply click on the Private link on the opening page. If you are accessing the private portion from the outside of River Rock's LAN, you need to obtain a username and password from LanLords.

Historical Information

Construction Interface Team

During the construction of River Rock Commons, the Construction Interface Team (CIT) worked with the builder, Denny Sovick, and the developer, Wonderland Hills, to hammer out problems. Known CIT members were Don Bunn, Carol Seger, Becca Austin, Alan Baer, and Don Flick. These members may be helpful when detailed questions about unit and Common House construction arise.

Some interesting CIT details include:

- The water table on the site is quite high, so provision for pumps was built in to the foundations to keep the basements dry.
- Fire code required installation of sprinklers in the A units.
- A large water pipe that funnels water to Greeley runs under our common green. A large sewer pipe also runs under the common green.
- The infrastructure for passive radon ventilation exists in all basements because high levels of radon have been detected on site. It is the occupant's responsibility to test for radon and convert to active ventilation.

History of the Site

Source: Dave Graham (email 8/7/2003)

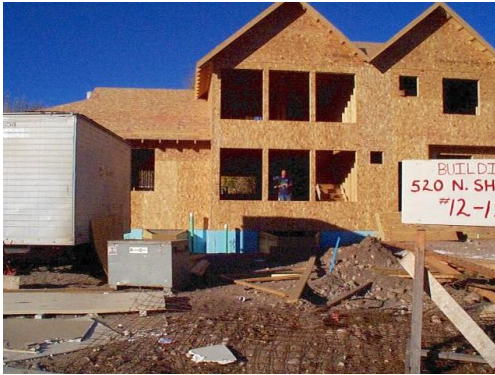
The Colorado Central Railroad arrived in Fort Collins in 1877 from Boulder and was controlled by the Union Pacific Railroad. In 1881, the Greeley, Salt Lake and Pacific Railway was founded and built the right of way that is just south of the property. It appears that the GSLP was based in Fort Collins and exchanged cars with Colorado Central. It was at that time that our property was first laid as a railway yard.

The property remained a railway yard for approximately 90 years. The west end also served as a small open dump in the 1960s. There was a 4-track locomotive service facility built on the site around the turn of the century. A picture circa the 1920's of the facility can be seen in the Library archives.

At some point in the 1970s, the site was razed, leveled, and used as parking for the Lee Martinez Park.

In preparation for the building of River Rock, the site was tested and mitigated. An extremely large pile of blackened soil was removed from this site when stripped from the surface. Some black soil at the east end was mitigated by placing it under the roadway. A large pile of garbage was also dug up and removed from the site. Two locomotive service ramps were dug up, jack hammered, and hauled away. But the clean-up was not exhaustive; people are still digging up odd items and the occasional patch of black soil when planting new things. I have a piece of coal and a brick in my rock wall on the front of our patio to represent the heritage of the site.

Source: Don Bunn (email 8/11/2003) The PCBs that were detected and concentrated high enough were removed from the site, however ... PCBs actually exist everywhere.





Construction of the Common House

Source: Will Walters (email 5/10/2003)

After much searching, I found the beams [used in the dining room] from a recycled timbers distributor in New York or Pennsylvania (can't remember which). ... I believe they were originally part of a Canadian warehouse, and I think some or all of them come from a now virtually extinct species of American chestnut.



In Conclusion

Again, we're glad you're here! We hope you're not overwhelmed by how much there is to learn about River Rock Commons. It's an amazing place that has taken years to create. Give yourself time to get to know your neighbors and how the community works. Keep this manual in a place for easy referral.

We do our best to welcome people into our community. We don't always know what's exactly right for new people. If we do too much or too little, please give your input to the appropriate committee so that we can adjust.

Manual Revision History

Nature of change	Date	Name
Created	December 2001	Dolores Kueffler
Edited and expanded	June 2002	Jane Ellen Combelic, Nancy DuTeau, et al.
Revised with input from a dozen people	September 2002	Jane Ellen Combelic, Nancy DuTeau, Chris Hjelt, et al.
Updated and revised	November, 2003	Jane Ellen Combelic, Nancy DuTeau, Lu Wright, et al.
Updated and revised	December 2005	Nancy DuTeau, Mark Ottenberg, Tanja Andreas
Updated and revised	November 2010	Larry McCulloch, Teresa Smith

Appendix A: Resources for Folks New to Fort Collins

Residents of River Rock have compiled the following lists for newcomers to the area.



Utilities

- Land-line Telephone Service is available from Comcast (866-928-9135) or Qwest (877-748-4836).
 - If using Qwest, Qwest will connect phone line to the Common House when you call for service. You then contact the Common House Committee to arrange for the connection of the line from the Common House to your home.
- Your HOA dues payment includes water, trash, sewer and gas utilities.
- For electric service you must call the City of Fort Collins Utilities, 221-6785.
- Cable is available from Comcast (866-928-9135) or Qwest (800-475-7526).

Other Locations of Interest

- Food Co-op of Fort Collins, 250 E. Mountain Ave., 484-7448
- Beavers, 1100 W. Mountain (corner of Shields and Mountain), 484-2243
- Safeway Food & Drug, 460 S. College Ave., 484-0222
- Albertson's, 1636 N. College Ave., 416-5815
- Whole Foods, 2201 S. College Ave., 267-9200
- Post Office, 301 S. Howes, 800-275-8777

Websites to Visit

Address	Description
www.FortCollins.com	General website about the city with links to other sites
www.fcgov.com	City of Fort Collins government
www.poudrelibraries.org	Poudre River Public Library
www.psdschools.org	Poudre School District
www.colostate.edu	Colorado State University
www.frontrange.edu	Front Range Community College
www.larimer.org/elections/register_tab.htm	Voter Registration
www.fcgov.com/recreation	Recreation
www.downtownfortcollins.com	Event listings for Old Town
www.fcchamber.org	Chamber of Commerce
beetstreet.org	Beet Street – Arts and Entertainment in Fort Collins

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Appendix B: Empowerment of Committees

(Under Process Team review as of November 2010)

We look to our committees as the vehicles by which we give input, express concerns, keep informed of the business of the community, and initiate action. Accordingly, the following six clauses have been adopted by the community (consensus 3/15/00, explicit affirmation 3/26/00) in order to:



- more clearly define the empowerment of committees
- relieve the general meeting of some of the burden of decision-making

1. For issues that are known to be important to, or have an impact on, a large number of people, the committee or an individual will request a discussion of values and general guidelines around the issue at a community meeting. Then the designated committee will work with that input to make decisions about details and implementation.
2. For the community to feel comfortable empowering committees, they need to be kept informed. All committees will post agenda items (when known), time and place for meetings, and encourage anyone with input to bring it.

Note: We previously decided (consensus 2/27/00, explicit affirmation 3/26/00) that committees will post the minutes of their meetings on email and as a hard copy in the Common House.

3. If a committee wants to make a decision that requires spending community resources (time or money), outside the parameters of a committee budget, they need to present a proposal to the community at a general meeting.
4. When a proposal is brought by a committee to the community, it is for the community to accept the proposal as a proposal, or not. If not, it goes back to the committee to work with the input given. If the community so desires, it may modify a proposal in order to make it more acceptable and thus possibly arrive at a decision without having to send the proposal back to the committee.
5. A committee is empowered to make all decisions relevant to its normal operation except decisions mentioned in #3 above and following the requirements of #2 above.
6. Individuals who wish to pursue an issue should bring it to the committee level first, if one exists to deal with that kind of issue. If not, it can be brought to the general meeting. (The intent here is to empower committees, not to squelch personal initiative.)

AGENDA TICKET FORMAT

WHO: committee (presenter)

WHAT: issue (provide background information or refer to committee minutes)

HOW: discussion, presentation, and/or decision

WHEN: is there a deadline or time limit

HOW MUCH TIME

REQUESTED: time that you think you will need in the meeting

BUDGET IMPACT: cost, where will the money come from in budget, effect on dues

Appendix C: Values Statements About Pets

Values Statement About Pets (11/14/2000)

We Value Pets.

Pets are welcome members of our extended family at River Rock Commons. We believe that pet/people relationships are very important. Our objective is to maintain good relationships with community members that include both people and pets (including the birds of our next-door neighbor, Mother Nature).



We Value Safety.

Safety for children, adults, and pets comes first. Pet owners, parents, and other adults are expected to monitor "pet/child" interactions as well as "pet/pet" interactions and encourage safe, gentle behavior by both pets and children.

We Value Pet Owners' Assumption of Responsibility for Their Pets.

We value pet owners taking complete responsibility for their pets' behavior, both to prevent incidents and to deal with problems.

We Value Clean Common Spaces and Neighbors' Yards.

We value keeping our common spaces and our neighbors' yards free of pet pee and poop. Poop deposited in these areas is to be cleaned up immediately by pet owners.

We Value Direct Dialogue on Pet Issues.

Direct communication initiated openly and freely by all neighbors is strongly encouraged. We value open sharing about pet incidents in order to prevent rumors, present fair and accurate information, and create opportunities to offer support to those involved. We value showing continued sensitivity to neighbors' concerns and respect for others' points of view.

Values Statement about Cats (11/13/2001)

The question of outdoor cats in our community has been a very difficult one. We have struggled and done our best to resolve it. So far we have not succeeded. Please consider your neighbors' feelings, the city law, and the statement of value about pets before you bring an outdoor cat into the community.

Appendix D: Design Review Process Details

1. The Design Review Committee (DRC) is composed of five adult owner members of the community. All adult owner members are expected to serve at some time. All names go into a hat when a position opens up on the DRC.
2. The DRC reviews changes/improvements to outside walls and yards because the outside walls are repaired and maintained by the Home Owners Association (HOA) using our HOA dues; the yards impact neighbors' views, and community appearance. The criteria that the DRC uses to review improvements are consensed by the community.
3. There is a DRC notebook on the Common House lounge bookshelves that holds a description of types of changes, forms, and procedures to use.
 - Level 1 improvements do not need a form filed.
 - Level 2 changes need a form filled out, talk to neighbors, and form filed in notebook. The DRC will review them at the next meeting.
 - Level 3 changes need a building permit, talk to neighbors, and a form with information filed with the DRC. The DRC will call a meeting for 2 weeks from when the request is filed to give the community time to review the proposed changes/improvements. At the meeting, all present can ask questions and vote on approval of the request.
 - Level 4 changes/improvements go to the community as an agenda ticket. The DRC form is filled out, talk to neighbors, and file form with DRC. These are special changes that are not covered by guidelines from the community or Level 3 improvements that were not approved by the DRC at a meeting.



Appendix E: River Rock Commons Process Steps



Is a quorum necessary?

There is no minimum number of persons required in order for those present at a general meeting to make and/or affirm decisions (minutes 5/28/97, 6/11/97).

How does the consensus process work?

Our vision is to make decisions by the process of consensus whenever possible (vision statement 5/2/97, minutes 5/14/97).

Here's a definition of consensus from the book *On Conflict and Consensus: A handbook on Formal Consensus decisionmaking* by C.T. Butler and Amy Rothstein (online at <http://www.ic.org/pnp/ocac/>).

Formal Consensus has a clearly defined structure. It requires a commitment to active cooperation, disciplined speaking and listening, and respect for the contributions of every member. Likewise, every person has the responsibility to actively participate as a creative individual within the structure.

How do we know when we have reached consensus?

We know we have come to consensus when:

- A thorough discussion of the issue has occurred
- Those with concerns have spoken
- Everyone can live with the proposed decision
- The decision is in the best interest of the community
 - This last point is particularly important. Consensus is built on compromise. Not everyone is going to be completely happy with every decision. But on some occasions, people have set their own preferences aside for the good of the community.

How does a decision become binding?

The minimum requirements for a decision to become binding are:

- A decision is made at a community meeting (by consensus or another method)
AND
- The decision is affirmed explicitly (using the same decision method) at the next meeting
OR
- The decision is affirmed implicitly (automatically) after two meetings with no discussion of the issue (minutes 7/23/97, 8/13/97).

Can a decision be revisited?

For an affirmed decision to be reconsidered (and possibly changed), a minimum of three households must request it (minutes 7/23/97, 8/13/97). First, approach a committee if one exists to handle the issue, and have the committee submit an agenda ticket. If no committee exists, the three households together can submit an agenda ticket to the community meeting.

What decisions have been made in the past?

All community decisions are recorded in meeting minutes, which are stored on the River Rock server. Most community email since around 1997 is stored in the archives and/or notebooks in the Common House lounge bookshelves. Contact the LanLords committee for access instructions.

It is each resident's responsibility to stay abreast of decisions. They are sent in email, posted on the bulletin board in the Common House, and can be shared by community members. Do what you need to do to stay informed!

Between Regular River Rock Community Meetings

The following description is derived and condensed from a flow chart dated May 9, 1999. It reflects the process as understood by the Process Team as of October 2003.

- **Issue Needs Immediate Attention**
 - If the issue needs to be resolved before the next RRC meeting, it should be routed to the Standby Team (see Appendix F: "Standby Team").
- **Issue Needs Attention at Next RRC Meeting**
 - If a relevant committee exists, take the issue to that committee, or act as an individual to create an agenda ticket for the next meeting.
- **Issue Needs Attention in the Future**
 - Discuss the issue with a relevant committee, or if no committee exists, with community members. To schedule a community-wide discussion, for example a values discussion, talk to the Process Team.

At Community Meetings – Routine Tasks and Agenda Tickets

- Approve the agenda for the current meeting.
- Approve the minutes from the last community meeting.
- Affirm any decisions that were made at the last meeting.
- Affirm decisions made between meetings by the Standby Team.
- Make announcements about community or personal happenings.

Agenda Tickets

Agenda tickets can be presented by any community member, although they usually come through a committee. They can be informational, where members want to present information, introduce an idea, or discuss an issue, or they can involve a decision by the community.

In the case of an agenda ticket that involves a decision, either the proposal is a new one or three households have requested that an existing decision be revisited. The agenda ticket must specify what kind of decision-making process will be used; the default is consensus (see "Decision-making Strategies" below).

AGENDA TICKET FORMAT

WHO: committee (presenter)

WHAT: issue (provide background information or refer to committee minutes)

HOW: discussion, presentation, and/or decision

WHEN: is there a deadline or time limit

HOW MUCH TIME

REQUESTED: time that you think you will need in the meeting

BUDGET IMPACT: cost, where will the money come from in budget, effect on dues

Decision-making Strategies

Most decisions at Community Meetings use strategies 1 to 3 below. The following questions may help in selecting and applying the best strategy:

- What is the likelihood the issue will resurface if insufficient time is invested in the first decision?
- How many RRC members and others are affected by this decision?
- What is the intensity and diversity of opinion about the issue?
- What is the financial and long-term impact on RRC overall?
- Is the issue one of aesthetics? (If so, consensus is not the best method.)



1. Empower committee or individual to make the decision

Example: What kind of tree to plant on the northwest side. The community asks the landscape committee to make this decision.

Action: Assign the decision. Give parameters if any, and due date. Note decision in minutes.

2. Vote by members present

Select from the following:

- Simple majority (more than 50%)
- Super majority (more than 75%)

For strategies 2, 3, and 4, use the same basic steps:

- Review background and recommendations.
- Ask and answer clarifying questions.
- Discuss issue and/or use other process tools to generate and list concerns.
- Use “thumbs” for temperature taking.
- Address concerns.
- Write the decision and read it out loud.

3. Consensus

All members present at the meeting agree to the proposal in the agenda ticket.

1. Go through the basic steps (see strategy 2).
2. Then, ask the four questions:
 - Have all points of view been expressed?
 - Have all concerns been addressed?
 - Can we live with this decision?
 - Is this in the best interest of RRC?
3. Silence means agreement.

4. Vote by all adult RRC members

- Select from the following:
 - Simple majority (more than 50%)
 - Super majority (more than 75%)
- Prepare a ballot with the information and questions in the basic steps (see Strategy 2).

- Solicit and tally votes outside of the meeting. Put the decision in the meeting minutes or decision log.

5. Binding arbitration

Example: Dispute between neighbors that cannot be resolved.

Action: Refer to the HRT process.

Decision Results - Decision Made, Not Made, Blocked

1. Decision is made within the agenda ticket time limit

Applaud the process and the players.

2. Decision is not made within the time limit

There are eight alternatives, described below. The group decides by super majority (over 75%) which alternative to use.

Keep going now

- Continue discussion for a specified amount of time and then check in again (the group specifies the amount of time).
- Continue discussion in the current meeting until a decision is reached.
- Select a different decision-making strategy and continue discussion for a specified amount of time.
- Select a different decision-making strategy and continue discussion in the current meeting until a decision is reached.

Decide later

- Assign a team or individual to provide more information or recommendations, or to write a modified or new proposal.
- Continue discussion at a future regularly scheduled meeting or special meeting.
- Delegate the decision to a team or individual.

Suspend decision making

- Agree to disagree and suspend discussion. Move on with the rest of the meeting. The issue can be raised again at a later meeting.

3. A consensus decision is blocked (General Meeting 07/25/04)

First, dissenters are asked if they are willing to stand aside. If yes, a consensus decision has been reached; the blocking, standing aside, and reasons are noted in the minutes.

If dissenters are not willing to stand aside, members present vote for one of the following options (facilitator breaks tie):

- Assign a team or individual to provide more information or recommendations in order to generate other alternatives to resolve the issue by the next Community Meeting. Ideally, dissenters would help with this task. At the next meeting, an alternative plan will be presented for discussion and consensus. If no alternative is available, the original proposal will be voted on by supermajority.
- Agree to disagree and suspend discussion.

Selecting the Decision-making Strategy

If the recommended decision-making strategy is approved at the community meeting, the discussion of the agenda ticket begins.

Changing the Decision-making Strategy

The decision-making strategy can be changed if three members present at the meeting challenge the use of the strategy and propose using an alternate strategy. This can happen at any point during the meeting (during discussion of agenda or during discussion of the issue). In this case, the group proceeds in the following way:

- Members vetoing or wanting to change the recommended decision-making strategy explain their reasons.
- Each member present votes for one option
- Members present vote again between the top two options (if first and second options are tied with other options, all tied options are included in the second vote).
- The option receiving the highest number of votes is selected.
- If there is a tie after the second vote, the facilitator breaks it.

Appendix F: Standby Team

As decided by consensus on 10/16/2003, the Standby Team is comprised of seven RRC members, one from each building. As a group, adult owners from a building decide who will represent them and how often they will choose a new representative.

Standby Team membership will be noted on the RRC roster and posted near the Common House telephone.



Here is how the Standby Team works:

- Any RRC member, committee, or professional identifies an emergency or an urgent situation requiring a decision prior to the next RRC community meeting. That member, committee, or professional clearly announces to the community that he/she/they are calling upon the Standby Team to take action by a phone call to Standby Team member.
- Any member of the Standby Team acknowledges to the community that the Standby Team is taking over the situation with an email and posting on the Common House door. From that point on, it is recommended that the Standby Team conduct its business outside the realm of the listserv and post to the listserv only when a decision is made or input is needed.
- The Standby Team member who acknowledges to the community that the Standby Team is taking over the situation contacts the other six members of the Standby Team so the work of the team can begin.
- A minimum of 3 members is required to make a decision. If there are not 3 Standby Team members available, any RRC member can be recruited to fill in as a substitute for the immediate task.
- The Standby Team evaluates if the situation is urgent by reviewing the consequences of not deciding before the next RRC community meeting.
- If the Standby Team decides not to decide, it sends an email message to the community explaining the situation and their recommendation to submit an Agenda Ticket or to drop the issue.
- If the Standby Team decides an urgent situation exists, it decides how to decide, using options including but not limited to:
 - Standby Team gets additional input
 - Standby Team decides
 - Standby Team calls a RRC emergency meeting
 - Standby Team contacts all RRC members
 - Standby Team assigns the decision to a committee
- The Standby Team reports decisions to RRC via email and at the next RRC meeting.
- The Standby Team has the community's authority to act and its decision carries the weight of a decision made by the community at a general meeting.

In the interest of learning from our collective experience, the community may review decisions made by the Standby Team and may institute:

- additional guidelines for Standby Team decisions
- limits on the authority granted to the Standby Team

Limits of Authority

- \$1000.00 limit on the amount of money that the Standby Team can spend or commit to spend.

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