

Sandia Mountain Ranch

Sandia Mountain Ranch
Neighborhood Association
SMRNA
c/o 33 Western Trail Drive
Tijeras, NM 87059

SMR and SMRNA HISTORY

HISTORY AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE SANDIA MOUNTAIN RANCH NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION Originally Provided by Mike Chynoweth

As some of you know, I was one of the original homeowners who initiated the action to form the Sandia Mountain Ranch (SMR) Neighborhood Association (SMRNA). In this, a small group of five owners decided to form the SMRNA in May - June 2000 for several reasons:

- The most important factor was that we could not have a Neighborhood Watch without first forming an Association – a mandated requirement.
- A Neighborhood Association versus a Homeowners Association because of the significant differences in their specified definitions including the cost to members and the requirement that ALL residents must be members of a Homeowners Association versus a Neighborhood Association where membership is optional.
- A Neighborhood Association would be registered with Bernalillo County, which would provide the Association with monthly reports of planned zoning activities in our area – proposed, planned and approved.
- A Neighborhood Association provides a vehicle for the residents of SMR to plan for and discuss issues and activities within the SMR Development.
- A group of owners has more clout in presenting/representing the SMR Development than an individual.

Note: The By-Laws for the Neighborhood Association, drafted by this group, specifically avoided any mention of enforcement of the SMR Covenants, primarily because this activity was the responsibility of the SMR Unit 2 Developer IAW until 90% of the lots in SMR were sold and secondarily because in Unit 2 of the SMR subdivision the covenants specifically say that only individuals may take action to enforce the covenants.

The first meeting of the SMRNA was held on May 16, 2000 where the decision was made to formally create the Association, Elect Board Members and approve the Association By-Laws. In accordance with the Association's By-Laws, the Board Members later elected Association officers within 30 days.

So, the SMRNA became a reality and shortly thereafter a SMRNA Neighborhood Watch was formed as a subgroup/committee of the Association.

The benefits of forming the Association have paid huge dividends over the years. It provided a vehicle for the homeowners to communicate issues with the SMR Developer, Bernalillo County and other Neighborhood and Homeowners Associations. In the latter, the SMRNA was one of the original Associations involved in forming the East Mountain Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, which, as of 2008 comprised 30 member Associations and represented approximately 2,500 residents in the East Mountain Area.

In collaboration with the Coalition, we have successfully fought numerous proposed zoning changes in our area at Bernalillo County Zoning Commission Meetings which would have significantly devalued our property values, standard of life and negatively impacted our personal safety. I'll highlight a few of these, especially for the benefit of new owners:

- Stopped a proposed development of the property on the corner of RT 66 and HWY 217. A request for a zoning change to the SW corner of the intersection to build a 30,000

square foot and five 5,000 square foot structures and parking for over 300 vehicles was rejected.

- A proposal to expand the production at a rock quarry located on HWY 217 about five miles south of us which would have increased the truck traffic from 30 to 300 trucks per day was rejected.
- The operation of a dog kennel located on Saddle Spur Trail, approximately behind the south end of Jakes Place in our development, was rejected.
- A storage area for a house moving company located near the dance studio on RT 66 was rejected.
- A request for development of a property located on RT 66 between the Strip Mall and Turkey Track Sables was significantly modified before approval.

Our Association has also supported rigorous reviews of numerous other proposed zoning changes in the East Mountain area via the Coalition Membership over the years. In addition, the Coalition provided us with a forum to review the planned construction of a new bridge across Interstate 40 at Mountain Valley Rd., the planned improvements in Interstate 40 in the Sedillo Hill area, the planned improvements in Interstate 40 from Tramway to Sedillo Hill, etc. An example of Coalition influence was its review of the proposed reconstruction of Interstate 40, which prompted the NM DOT to incorporate median barriers into the final design plan.

What has the SMRNA accomplished within our development since its inception?

- It created a Directory of ALL residents (Association members and non-members), which is provided to ALL residents, the Sheriff's Department and Fire/Rescue.
- Transmitted frequent E-mail Bulletins to ALL residents regarding burglaries, lost pets, safety and security issues, etc. via the SMRNA E-mail data base.
- Created an Association Newsletter.
- Created a Newcomer Information Packet, which is provided to ALL new residents when they move in.
- Formed the SMR Neighborhood Watch Program.
- Organized annual neighborhood cleanups.
- Planned numerous block parties, which sometimes included representatives from the Sheriff's Department and Fire/Rescue.
- Planned Neighborhood Dining Outs at local restaurants, Progressive Christmas dinners and parties.
- Built and installed the Association Bulletin Board.
- Made improvements to the SMR Entry Sign including the addition of lighting.
- Applied pressure on the US Post Office in Tijeras to upgrade the security of our mail distribution boxes by installing new boxes of an upgraded design following numerous break-ins.
- Scheduled periodic briefings from the Sheriff's Department and Fire/Rescue at Association meetings.

You'll note that none of the above activities include enforcement of the Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&Rs) for SMR. The Association did request that the Developer carry out its responsibility of covenant enforcement over the years to no avail. The SMR Architectural Control Committee was established by a group of homeowners, which initiated action to assume responsibility of the Architectural Control Committee (ACC) IAW as provided for in the provisions of the Covenants, this was done separate from the SMR Neighborhood Association.

In closing, you can appreciate the numerous benefits of having and continuing to have a Neighborhood Association.

The major benefit incorporates the proven philosophy that an organized group of folks can achieve much more than an individual because strength in numbers merits more attention, especially when dealing with State and County Agencies. In this, our Neighborhood Association helped create and is an active member of the East Mountain Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, which further enhances the strength in numbers philosophy.

I believe my reputation and experience as a long time resident of Sandia Mountain Ranch (SMR), more than 12 years, member of the owners group which founded the SMR Neighborhood Association and as a previous Association Board Member and past President of the Association provide me with the background to encouraged ALL SMR residents to join the SMR Neighborhood Association (SMRNA). I hope that this History provided some top-level information regarding SMRNA's purpose and activities.

I hope the information provided above gives you a better understanding and appreciation for the need and benefits of the SMRNA and prompts you to become an active member. Your participation and that of other residents is a critical factor in preserving and improving the quality of life in our neighborhood.

You are encouraged to participate and join the Sandia Mountain Ranch Neighborhood Association by sending a check for the annual dues of \$50 made out to the SMRNA and mailed to the SMRNA Treasurer, Cheryl Smith or the dues can be paid using the PayPal "Send to friends and family in the US" option, using the following e-mail address: PayPal@SMRNA.org. Please do consider joining as these dues are used to help beautify and increase the safety of our community.

If you have additional information (or pictures) about the History of SMR or SMRNA, please contact Webmaster at Webmaster@SMRNA.org.

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