

Fairview Village HOA, Phase I – Mailboxes

(08.30.21)

Since the last Annual Meeting in 2019, some concerns for Mailbox Security have been brought to the HOA Board and ARB.

A number of residents would like to replace the current mailboxes with locking mailboxes. While this is an option, more thieves are breaking into both single and group locking mailboxes too. If we pursued this as a community, and we want to maintain the aesthetic of the same style and color for every unit, then owners will need to be given the facts about all aspects of any proposal before voting whether to proceed. Research of those facts includes at least the following items (it is not the duty of the volunteer HOA Board to do this research):

- Find out from the USPS if the proposal requires USPS approval.
- The plan and cost for professional removal of the current mailboxes and installation of new ones.
- The plan and cost to ensure uniform application of house numbers to the new mailboxes.
- If not USPS equipment, then the plan and cost for someone to do the following:
 - Initial handout of keys.
 - Ongoing management of keys (lost, new residents, etc.)
 - Ongoing maintenance of mailboxes.
- If proposing multiple mailbox units, then a map showing USPS, City of Fairview, HOA, and owner approval of the location of these new units.

Below are several options that any of us can do to improve the situation without changing the current mailboxes:

- **Deposit of Outgoing Mail** – we can limit the risk of theft by depositing outgoing mail in a secure USPS collection box that is on the route of our travels on a given day. Most suburban post offices have a drive-through collection box, and most shopping and business centers have USPS collection boxes positioned in convenient walk-up locations. Also, many people use the outgoing mail at their place of work.
- **USPS Informed Delivery®** – Informed Delivery® is a free and optional notification feature that gives residential consumers the ability to digitally preview their letter-sized mail coming to them, and to manage their packages scheduled to arrive soon. It can be used for mail and packages sent to your street address or a PO Box. More information is available at: <https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Informed-Delivery-The-Basics>
- **Post Office Box** – getting a PO Box is perhaps the most secure way to get your mail. USPS PO Boxes at the Fairview Post Office are available for these 6-month rental fees (as of August 2021): \$59 for a 3" x 5.5" box, \$83.00 for a 5" x 5.5" box, and \$142 for a 5.5" x 11". Many shipping companies offer Private Mailboxes (PMB's) at their stores. These function similarly to USPS PO Boxes and may be more convenient for your daily routine. While a rental box is very secure for all mail and packages, you have to go to the location to get your get your mail, and if you have a package larger than your rental box, then you will have to get it from an employee. Many of the owners in the HOA rent boxes of these types.
- **On-line Billing & Correspondence** – another way to avoid mail theft is to send and receive information electronically, although doing so also has some risks. Not a fix for all correspondence, as some important items still need to be received or sent by mail, but it can help to limit mailbox theft.
- **Mailbox Inserts** – locking inserts bolt inside your mailbox, and letters and folded magazines can pass through with limited ability to reach into it. There is also space on top of the insert for parcels and larger pieces of mail to still fit into your mailbox. No replacement is needed of your mailbox.