

Forest Home Improvement Association

President's Annual Report

October 2023 – September 2024

As I finish up my first year as president of FHIA, it has been a pleasure to work with many of you and witness the amazing energy and comradery that has driven our community for 200+ years. Here are some highlights of the activities conducted by all of you:

Directory of Forest Home residents updated, printed and distributed

Street captains worked to check whether residents had changed phones or email since the 2021 edition and to contact newcomers to see if they wanted to be included. Caroline Arms and Jeff Holden agreed on a technical process for tracking changes and producing drafts for street captains, who in turn double-checked the information. The directory was printed by Cornell Print Services and distributed by street captains in late May. Thanks to everyone who contributed.

Spring Roadside Cleanup

Thanks to Herb Engman and his band of volunteers, the roads in Forest Home have all been adopted by community members to remove trash and keep them clean. Thanks to all of you!

Park Maintenance

Connie Stirling-Engman coordinated invasive species removal in the Forest Home Walkway and Park (with Joe Talbut, Town of Ithaca) and maintained the flowers in two boxes. Thanks Connie!

Holiday Party

Caroline and Bill Arms once again shared their beautiful home for a well-attended holiday party in December.

Pleasant Grove Road Advocacy

Members of the FHIA successfully advocated for narrower lanes and a bike lane on the shoulder of the road when it was reconstructed by Tompkins County earlier this year.

Fall Planning

This Fall, under the spearheading of past-president Herb Engman, and assisted by Tom Campanella, David Kuckuk, Ruth Mahr, and yours truly, FHIA has undertaken a community listening process to gather ideas on how FHIA can best improve the quality of life for its residents over the next 5-10 years. Almost a third of FH residents have contributed to the process through attending a listening session at FH Chapel, responding to a survey of needs and aspirations, or sending comments by email. The group seeks to have a report on its findings early in 2025, which will then help us with next steps, which include: 1) recruiting volunteers to implement some of the ideas, and 2) seeking funding where needed.

RaNic Golf Course Situation

After publishing plans to add condominiums, a hotel and several for-sale private homes, the RaNic management changed course and offered to sell the property. This sale is still pending, and the future of the golf course is very much in question. This is an important issue for Forest Home because extensive development of the 100+ acres could add substantially to traffic in our neighborhood.

Annual Picnic

The Annual Picnic on September 14 in the Forest Home Park was a great success; just under 50 residents attended and enjoyed good conversation, lawn games, superb potluck food and, of course, ice cream. Many residents volunteered to make the event possible, and we are grateful to ALL of them.

Behind-the -Scenes Activity

There are many contributions to our community that occur quietly behind the scenes but are important to the FHIA. Caroline and Bill Arms maintain the website, with assistance from Jeff Holden for network configuration, and provide many of the alerts to residents. Bruce and Doug Brittain spend a good bit of time on the informal walkway from Crest Lane to Forest Home Drive, removing invasive species and improving the walking surface. They have also been active in monitoring a great number of projects that could have an impact on Forest Home. There are many more volunteers who leap into action when asked and are too numerous to be listed here. Finally, the officers of the FHIA – Valerie McAllister, VP (moved to Lansing in August); Valerie Hans, Treasurer; and Connie Stirling Engman, Secretary, and Herb Engman, past president – contribute far more than their titles imply, assuring the smooth functioning of the Forest Home Improvement Association.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlie Trautmann
President, Forest Home Improvement Association