

## **Introduction**

The 2013 Strategic Plan was developed through a collaboration with the sitting Board Members of the Stonegate Home Owners Association. The goal was to use it as a road map and strategies for the long term health and vitality of The Stonegate community. The Plan will be used by the Board, its committees to guide their operational and capital budget planning decisions and day-to-day implementation of these decisions. It will also serve as an education and communications vehicle for new members of those groups as well as members of the community.

The 2013 Strategic Plan is a living document and should be viewed as a permanent, continuous process of planning for the future and a vehicle for facilitating community consensus on important issues. While there are a number of committees mentioned in the plan the development of them should be prioritized as laid out in the plan.

The 2013 Strategic Plan was designed to be comprehensive and detailed. To facilitate the residents understanding, a summary of essential strategic goals underlying this plan is presented below.

## **Financial Implications of the Strategic Plan**

It is recognized that portions of the Strategic Plan may involve funding not presently reflected in the Stonegate HOA budget and for which no source of funding presently exists. It is our intention of the Stonegate HOA Board of Directors to implement the plan with the least financial impact to the members of the Stonegate HOA. The intent is to use the financial resources for current members and residents of the community. Emergencies should be handled through special assessments as permitted by the rules. The strategic plan and standing committee recommendations should be used as information and input into the Stonegate HOA financial budgeting process.

## **Strategic Drivers and Tactics**

The Strategic Plan recognizes that one of the strongest assets of the community is the friendliness and sense of community pride evident among its residents. It is important that the community's culture is supportive of the strategies and tactics contained within the Strategic Plan. Only through active community support and communications can the culture continue to evolve and reinforce the values and principles that are important to ensure that sense of community pride that is necessary to maintain "Stonegate" as a premier community. The eight principles (strategic drivers) of the Strategic Plan are outlined in the pages that follow.

## **Our Vision**

The Vision is that the Stonegate HOA exists to preserve and enhance Stonegate as the premier Wellington community of choice. The goal is that the percentage change of property values in Stonegate reflects a more positive outcome than any other Wellington community of similar status. This vision will be accomplished through tactics in nine primary principles of our strategic plan as follows:

- Managing security and safety as our top priority
- Enforcement of the HOA covenants and restrictions
- Effective management of financial resources
- Maintain and improve neighborhood appearance
- Maintenance of effective HOA operations
- Encourage active involvement of our members
- Effective management of the physical plant and facilities

- Participating in the greater Wellington community

Strategic planning will focus on both tangible (physical facilities and services) and intangible (community culture) aspects of the community.

Strategic planning will help drive financial and operational plans designed so community facilities and services are maintained to ensure Stonegate remains a top development, thereby enhancing property values.

Strategic planning will include recognition of the interlocking relationship between the Association and the Village of Wellington and create mechanisms for facilitating that relationship.

Strategic planning will recognize the importance of participating in local, regional and state political processes. It should also focus on business organizations both local and regional planning commissions, surrounding communities and other individuals or organizations that could impact the fundamental goals and vision of the HOA.

## **Managing Security and Safety as Our Top Priority**

Security and the feeling of safety are primary goals of the Stonegate community. As such, the Strategic Plan addresses both. The HOA and Board have responsibility to monitor the performance of the security measures in place.

To this end, the Association has a Neighborhood Watch Committee providing input and recommendations to the Board on all security matters. It is critical that the Neighborhood Watch Committee have access to relevant resources and skill sets on its committee in order to evaluate existing processes, technologies, and best practices related to oversight of the security firm's performance. Crime watch reports should be acquired from the Palm Beach Sherriff's Office (PBSO) in a format necessary to ascertain the status of security within Stonegate. In addition to encouraging the residents to watch for unusual events, the Neighborhood Watch Committee should also provide input to the Stonegate Homeowners Association Board on security operations, periodically evaluate security services in controlling access, providing out-of-town "house watch" between neighbors who wish to participate, responses to house fires and administrative data for validity and efficiency of use.

Security is essential to the goals of Stonegate therefore; tactics need to be evaluated for improved perimeter security via combinations of physical barriers, electronic surveillance. To ensure uninterrupted security, no electronic security devices should be installed without backup power. Gate access codes should be a tool that is utilized to enhance security, efficiency and control of visitor entry.

Equally important is the safety and perceived safety of the Association members. Tactics for this strategic imperative are monitored by the Architectural Review Board (ARB) and the Neighborhood Watch Committee. This strategic driver involves an on-going relationship and communications with the Fire Department (Pbfd) and the Palm Beach Sheriff's Office (PBSO). Fire protection and safety has become critical in the planning process. Similarly, the HOA will maintain good working relations with PBSO and Pbfd requesting assistance on issues when appropriate. Because the perimeter of the Stonegate is developed and inhabited, there are occasions when the assistance of PBSO is needed to address security, noise levels and other problems at or near our perimeter border. Perimeter security of Stonegate should be studied, recognizing the reality that full perimeter security of the community is presently not financially possible. Ongoing tactics with PBSO will need to be developed in this area.

The streets and sidewalks of Stonegate are wide and accommodate not only vehicles but walkers, cyclists, golf carts, joggers, etc. The safety of our streets and sidewalks is critical to the neighborhood. The Association must utilize all lawful means to enforce speed limits and other vehicle rules and regulations within the community. Continued use of speed limit signs and speed bumps has been used as reminders of the acceptable speed on our streets.

Rules regarding vehicle violations of safety should periodically be reviewed to insure they are creating the appropriate culture of safety. Care should be taken in reviewing rules to insure they are at a minimum in concert with Village of Wellington laws.

## **Enforcement of HOA Covenants and Restrictions**

The Stonegate HOA has developed into a desirable community because of an excellent set of covenants and restrictions which guide development and maintenance within the Community. It is critical these documents be administered consistently and fairly. Similarly, these documents need to be living documents and updated when necessary as new technology, changes in local/state laws and other environmental standards/conditions warrant.

The Strategic Plan calls for the HOA Board and the ARB to be diligent in administering the full intent of the covenants and restrictions. The Strategic Plan requires the ARB review existing developed structures as well as any lots not in compliance with the covenants and restrictions. The ARB will also recommend to the Board action, including legal action, necessary to ensure compliance. Similarly, the ARB will review new technology, such as solar power, and will determine the need to recommend to the board the need to modify building restrictions as a result of such technology.

The SHOA Board should be aware that state regulations governing home owners associations are updated on an annual basis usually in October.

## **Effective Management of Financial Resources**

The HOA Board holds the fiduciary responsibility for the financial resources of the Association. This fiduciary responsibility is administered through the Board Treasurer. The Treasurer seeks to cover a broad spectrum of financial and accounting functions which compliment the integrity in financial reporting with forecasting to enable the Association to meet both its operating and capital demands.

The scope of the fiduciary responsibility is accomplished on a two tier basis- Operations and Capital Budgeting. A comprehensive approach to monthly financial reporting incorporates all aspects of the current state of financial position, while drawing a comparison to the budgeted projected position. In so doing, the Board is kept fully apprised of the current financial position and can take a proactive approach to remedy any deviations that may likely occur. At each monthly meeting, the Board should be given monthly financial statements from the previous month's operations. Each month's financial statements become part of the permanent record for the Board. The annual financial statements are reviewed to prepare and post a tax return. The return when possible and financially feasible should be prepared by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA).

The Treasurer assisted by the bookkeeper should prepare annual reviews. The Board will approve and/or recommend changes to the yearly Operations and Capital Budgets. The Board votes to accept the presented Operations Budget in December of the year prior however a preliminary budget should be presented in October each year. Implementation of the next year's budget begins in January. Homeowners will be notified of changes in dues 30 days prior to the start of the year.

The Capital Budget is prepared and presented for vote on both a long-term basis which includes the long-term investment position and the yearly capital budget for targeted capital projects.

As part of the financial strategic driver, yearly review of our current costs should be performed to assess changes to spending assumptions, inflationary impact and rate of return to meet the projected fund balance.

Long-term capital planning is presented to the Board from the President after a input from existing neighborhood committees and Board members. Continuing long range planning is imperative to meet the challenging economic conditions and changing market landscape. Maintenance of our infrastructure provides the basis for maintaining property values within the community and assuring proper financial resources are planned. The priority of all infrastructure projects must be evaluated on a yearly basis to properly plan for the future.



## Maintain and Improve Neighborhood Appearance

Each year our operational Budget should include funding for the maintenance and improvement of the following:

### ❖ Camera System

- Cameras
- Conduit
- Wiring
- Poles
- Cable Connectivity
- DVR & Router
- Equipment Box with Fan and UPS

### ❖ Telephone System

- Gate Call Box
- RPE (Phones)

### ❖ Gates

- Entrance Gates
- Exit Gates
- Pedestrian Gates
- Gate Motors and Pads
- Gate Locks/Keys

### ❖ Fencing

### ❖ Roads

### ❖ Signs

- Community Stonegate Signs
- Roadway Signs
- Neighborhood Watch Signs
- Other

## ❖ Lighting

- Streets
- Island Accent
- Common Area
- Signs
- Lake
- Holiday Lights

## ❖ Lake

- Lake Fountain
- Lake Irrigation (Community Drains from runoff into Lake)
- Pumps

## ❖ Sprinkler Systems

## ❖ Sidewalks

## ❖ Mailbox Replacements/Cleaning

## ❖ Stone Entrance Walls

## ❖ Plants and Foliage

## ❖ Electrical

## ❖ Landscaping

## ❖ Web Site

## **SHOA Operations and Committees**

**SHOA Committees should be developed in the following priority:**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Committee</b>
1st	Neighborhood Watch
2nd	Financial Review
3rd	Security Camera
4th	Road Replacement *
5th	Neighborhood Outreach
6th	External Relations

\*Already formed.

## **Active Involvement of HOA Membership**

The Association must continue to expand its ability to promptly and effectively communicate with its members...communications must be two-way. The Association must utilize advances in technology and have infrastructure to enable the use of available technology to enhance communications. The use of the internet and an interactive website is essential. Newsletters, the HOA website, internet messaging, and message boards should be continuously enhanced and used. The HOA Board agenda and subsequent minutes will be posted on the HOA website as well as the Strategic Plan itself.

A Neighborhood Outreach Committee (NOC) should be created to “reach out” to the community through neighborhood outreach representatives acting as links to provide two way communications with the HOA on policy, decisions and concerns to the members in the neighborhood. This committee is a valuable interface with the Association and should be used as a focus/forum group to help develop tactics supportive of the Strategic Plan as well as a vehicle to communicate HOA policy. Thus our policies should:

- Maintain and enhance the HOA website for increased messaging to the Association membership as well as develop new capabilities to enhance usage such as an electronic directory, local maps, photo gallery, individual account management, etc.
- Welcoming new members to the neighborhood by sending out the standard HOA welcoming letter and providing them a welcome bag that is designed with efficient and effective tools to promote community awareness.
- Audit HOA systems and information sources used to communicate via letter or email to association membership. Review for completeness, accuracy, efficiency and update procedures as needed.
- Actively use various committees as a focus group/forum for strategic plan tactic development in all strategic pillars.

- Continue the concept of meetings to discuss very important topics affecting Association
- Maintain and audit contact information for each member in the community in order to communicate HOA policy decisions and neighborhood updates.
- Work in tandem with the members when planning special neighborhood events. These events will be oriented to community building and culture activities.
- Consider the use of an Association survey to get Association input on selected key issues under consideration and look for any significant or unmet needs.

## **Effective Management of Physical Plant and Facilities**

Infrastructure is a critical asset in maintaining the Association's vision of a premier community. The Association must fund for the maintenance and repair of all common property as well as enforce our covenants to ensure the preservation and protection of Stonegate property values.

Long-term improvement plans needs to be developed for landscaping of the common areas, refurbishment of the main entry, security camera infrastructure, irrigation infrastructure, refurbishment of the common areas, mailbox replacement, lighting infrastructure, lake maintenance, fountain maintenance, street repair and refurbishment. All of these plans need to be developed as part of Improvement Plan and updated accordingly. Based on the community's current needs the plan for street refurbishment should be completed first. All of these plans must be appropriately revised annually to determine funding necessary to achieve their goals. Secondary priorities such as lighting and mailboxes should be addressed next. Other improvement priorities include the water drainage system, water drainage conduits, and clearance of water drainage easements, street signs, roads and street lighting.

The HOA has established the ARB to help provide a review mechanism for architectural activities within the Stonegate community. The input from the ARB is critical in developing an effective Long-term Improvement Plan.

## **Participating in the Greater Wellington Community**

1. Appoint a Board member as Board Liaison to the External Relations Committee which is responsible for external relations with the Wellington community in general.
2. Assure that The Stonegate HOA has involvement and/or representation in all of the following activities. This list is not all inclusive as additional activities will be initiated over time.
  - ✓ PBSO
  - ✓ Pbfd
  - ✓ Village of Wellington Code Enforcement
  - ✓ HOA's for Surrounding Communities
  - ✓ Equestrian community
  - ✓ Palm Beach County School Board
  - ✓ Elections(Community/Local/State/Federal)