

The Difference Between Homeowners' and Neighborhood Associations

Homeowners' associations (HOAs) or property owners' associations are formal legal entities created to maintain common areas and enforce private deed restrictions. The significant point of an HOA is that property owners in the defined area are **required** to belong to the association, and are subject to the rules of the association. An HOA may impose *mandatory* fees on members in order to care for the public spaces in the area, and can also make rules about what homeowners can do with the exterior of their homes.

Neighborhood associations are voluntary collections of residents, with no power to assess fees or fine residents or control the residents' use of their property. City ordinances control use of property. **Despite its name, the Four Hills Village Homeowners' Association (FHVHA) is in actuality a neighborhood association.** Neighborhood associations are often focused on working together to improve and maintain the quality of life in its neighborhood and, as needed, representing the interests of the residents with the local government. This is precisely what the FHVHA is about: maintaining property values, promoting communication on issues of importance to our neighborhood, helping resolve differences among neighbors when they arise.

Features Of A Neighborhood Association:

- Membership is open to all residents and property owners in the neighborhood, but participation is optional;
- Dues are voluntary. All dues-paid members may actively participate;
- There is no inherent legal authority to enact or enforce maintenance or design requirements beyond those established by City ordinances.

Features of a Homeowners Association:

- Membership is mandatory for all property owners within the boundaries of the development;
- Members are usually charged mandatory dues;
- HOAs have the legal authority to enact and enforce maintenance and design standards in addition to those established by City ordinance.

FHVHA membership is a voluntary \$25 per household per year. Dues-paid members receive a quarterly publication, *The Four Hills Chronicle*, an annual *Four Hills Directory* listing Four Hills residents alphabetically and by street (and a map for ready reference), and has a Board that will work to help members with questions and issues. Our meetings are open to all dues-paid members.

The FHVHA has worked and does work within Four Hills to represent member interests, as well as serving as the recognized liaison between the neighborhood and local government. **The FHVHA is the only neighborhood association in Four Hills Village registered with and recognized by the City of Albuquerque's Office of Neighborhood Coordination.**

Architectural control and Covenants within the various Four Hills installments *do matter*. The FHVHA does not provide legal advice. It is the Board's understanding that enforcement actions may be taken by property owners within any installment against an offender in that installment. Per the Bylaws, the Board may elect to financially support such an action. Please visit the appropriate tabs on this web site. Call the Board with questions.