

The Board made available to homeowners proposed skateboard rules prior to the March 2009 monthly meeting in order to obtain comments. The following excerpts were read to the attendees during the March HOA meeting. The comments made by homeowners attending the meeting are also provided. These comments do not reflect the initial complaints received by the Board which were made over the course of the past two years.

**Written Comment 1:**

One homeowner “strongly opposed the rules” because (1) the kids move out of the way—maybe skateboarding could be banned after dark; (2) the kids are good, and it is better for them to play outside rather than watching tv all day.

**Homeowner Response:**

(1) The rules address skateboarding, and not specific individuals.

(2) Some homeowners have experienced skateboarders who are rude, and do not move out of the way.

(3) Skateboarders often can not be seen even in daylight hours by drivers (some homeowners have observed riders almost being hit by cars simply backing out of parking spaces);

(4) Many skateboarders do not live in our community—the rule is designed to legally prohibit anyone from riding in the community and damaging property;

(5) Exercise is a good thing, however, this activity must be balanced against the destruction of property (streets, pavers, Verizon electrical boxes, and vehicles) and the nuisance factor (skateboarders on the street after 11:00 PM making noise).

Opportunities for exercise currently exist nearby (across the street there is a fenced in area that the same individuals use for skateboarding), for example, Martin Luther King Park which contains a swimming pool and lessons, tennis courts, softball courts, walking trails, etc.

Ground will be broken on a recreation center located across the street (on April Lane) within the next year. The Board has been instrumental in advocating for a skate board park, and the Parks and Planning Department has revised the site plan to provide this area for all neighborhood children.

**Written Comment 2:**

One homeowner commented that the rule is “draconian in comparison to the severity and volume of any complaints,” and equated skateboarding with bicycle riding as a youth. The individual felt compelled to “voice [their] opinion as someone who remembers the

enjoyment of being a child allowed to play in [the] neighborhood and ride [their] bicycle.” The individual suggested that the “Board assess whether complainants are driving too fast...and whether some of us have “lost sight of what it meant to ride our bicycle ...in our own neighborhood within earshot of our front door and parents care.”

**Homeowner Comments:**

- (1) The complaints are severe and include: placement of large obstructions in the middle of the street (wooden pallets used to jump across); individuals using Verizon electrical boxes to jump off of; skateboards damaging vehicles and pavers, and creating a nuisance late at night. The complaints have been ongoing for the past three years.
- (2) Skateboarding is different than bicycle riding, Skateboarding is considerably more dangerous, and damages property. The individuals are not under any supervision.
- (3) It is not clear how the individual proposes that the Board assess car speeds.

**Written Comment 3:**

“...it is the responsibility of the parents of our neighborhood children to enforce these expectations rather than the HOA making one broad rule that excludes everyone. To my knowledge, the HOA has yet to appeal to the members of the community themselves to enforce better safety practices and to increase awareness of these concerns prior to imposing such a strict and exclusionary set of regulations.” Further, limiting our children’s “outdoor activities completely incorrect and irresponsible on our part.”

**Homeowner Comments.**

- (1) It is not the responsibility of homeowners to confront the individuals engaged in this behavior, particularly since many of them are unknown to us, and do not live in the community.
- (2) The rules are not geared toward “our children.” These are age neutral rules that address conduct, and applies to any person physically present on Gatestone property. Promulgation of the rules and posting signage will clearly “communicate concerns” to everyone, and establish responsible standards of conduct in the community.
- (3) The public streets were not designed for skateboarding, which is dangerous to the participants (who do not wear helmets or padding), others in the community and their property.

**Written Comment 4:**

A homeowner complained expressed “concern and frustration” over the number of skateboarders on White Oak Vista Drive near the Rabbit Run cul-de-sac. “Nearly every afternoon, between 3 and 5 pm, 5-10 skateboarders congregate on White Oak Vista Drive and skate for hours. This presents a clear hazard because they oftentimes don’t yield to on-coming traffic and they all put out props (i.e. ramps, bikes, etc.) in the road, which obstructs traffic. Also...they are often loud and make the

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neighborhood noisy. While I understand that older children need somewhere to play, I don't feel that it should be in the street nor disruptive to the neighborhood.”

**Comment 5**

One of the homeowners who lives on Southerland Hill Way called ProCam to complain that lots of individuals are playing on the street, instead of on the playground. They requested that this be recognized by the Board, and included in the next newsletter.