



History of Madera Vista Townhouses, Inc.

Written by former resident Kay McAllister October 14, 2010

There were actually five different builders who built in Madera Vista: Hickey, Herder, La Vista, Pierce, and Dorn.

When Madera Vista was originally being developed in the early 80's, it was planned to include what is now known as Madera Vista, Portillo Hills I and Portillo Hills II, comprising 82 acres and potentially 450 homes from Esperanza Blvd. to Continental Road.

Sometime shortly thereafter, the development of Madera Vista was taken over by Lawrence Hickey and Sons. On August 1, 1981, Madera Vista bylaws were adopted and a five member board was created; annual meetings were to be held on the third Thursday of February. The first board members were Edward Giesel, Richard Hickey, Robert Royal, Michael Stilb and Frederick Vogel. None of these first board members were homeowners.

(About a year later, on October 4, 1982, one of the most damaging rainfalls in local history hit the Green Valley area. All of the area arroyos were flooded. Several bridges were damaged. Hundreds of people were forced to evacuate their homes. Specifically, in the arroyo immediately north of Madera Vista, a new channel was cut behind the north retaining wall and at least 12 homes in Esperanza Estates were damaged, some severely.)

In August, 1987, Hickey filed for bankruptcy after building 49 homes. H.S. Pickerell, which had financed the project, emerged as the holding company for the remaining Madera Vista properties.

In October, 1987, Pickerell selected Herder to build and complete the development of Madera Vista homes on a lot to lot basis. Herder eventually built two models on lots 47 and 48 (880 and 890 W. Calle de Emilia, respectively). Late in 1987, Madera Vista homeowners were advised to withhold dues until concerns between Pickerell and Madera Vista were settled.

In March, 1988, Pickerell informed Green Valley Recreation, Inc. (GVR), that it would no longer contribute to the cost of managing the operations of the Madera Vista recreational facility; GVR decided to take over the financial and management responsibilities for this facility and it becomes part of GVR.

In June, 1988, dues were raised from \$348 per year to \$636 per year by Herder. Also in June, 1988, the Articles of Incorporation were amended to change the name from Madera Vistas Townhouses to Madera Vista Townhouses and to increase the number of board directors from five to seven. The existing board then (without a meeting) voided the directorships of all existing (non-resident) members and appointed residents J.E. Len President, Craig Cooper Vice President, and Elizabeth Elwell as Secretary-Treasurer of the new board. Further, an advisory committee consisting of residents Arthur Hall, Edwin Larson, Emerson Pelton, James Streck, and Jack Thomell was appointed.

In August, 1988, Pickerell arranged for Vista Homes of Tucson to complete 2 sold Herder homes and build eight other homes. In August, 1991, a newspaper article announced plans for Pierce Construction to build and Tower Realty to sell townhouses on all remaining Madera Vista lots. Pierce did build one model home (lot 52, 924 W. Calle de Emilia) but did very little to promote sales.

Most of the time the model was locked and empty. If prospective buyers wanted to see it, they had to bring a sales person over from Pierce's models in Portillo Hills. Only one other Pierce sale resulted from these efforts: lot 81, 1017 W. Calle de Emilia.

In February, 1993, Madera Vista formally petitioned Standard Charter Bank to terminate the construction arrangement with Pierce in favor of Dorn Construction. Dorn built three model homes and eventually completed all of the remaining 38 lots in addition to the three models. The final Madera Vista townhouse was sold on December 2, 1994 (lot 13, 370 Avenida de las Sabinas).

In February, 1996, GVR announced plans to construct a 780 square foot enclosed addition to the existing Ramada to be used for meetings, social activities, etc. This would use up the balance of the \$90,000 capital reserve created by the 1984 merger agreement. When it was built, Madera Vista residents thought it should only belong to the Madera Vista residents as it was Madera Vista's money that comprised the capital reserve. Jeff Ziegler (GVR president at that time) came to Madera Vista to tell the residents that the room belonged to GRV, not to Madera Vista, due to GVR's March, 1988, agreement to take over the facility. Also at that time, HOA dues were increased from \$190 to \$396 per year.

(Residents Ernie and Marge Petitmermet remember that on their first visit to Green Valley, they were impressed with Madera Vista, perhaps because it was close to the Green Valley Mall, the library and the church. We (Kay and Jim McAllister) moved to Madera Vista in September, 1994, at which time only about 40 homes were occupied. Sabinas had ten homes on the east side and only five homes on the west. There were no homes between Madera Vista and Continental. The neighbors were so gracious

and invited us to the first social affair at the club house (now called the Ramada); this was probably Neighbors Night Out in October, as it is now. I was told that in the early, turbulent years, Madera Vista had such a bad reputation with real estate offices that they would not show any homes in Madera Vista. That was not an issue by the time we moved in.

Al Gese, who lived across the street from us, tells the story of walking in the neighborhood and noticing a house for sale. When it was shown to him, he thought it was nice, and brought Rayona over to look at it. She fell in love with the kitchen and the view. It had been empty for 2 years and this property was in the hands of the Bank of England. Al made an offer which was accepted and they were the new owners.

An old real estate brochure was brought to my attention that defined our streets' names: Avenida de las Sabinas means "street of Pine Trees"; Placita La Paz means "path of peace"; Calle de Emilia means "Emily's street"; and Placita de Caborca was named after a city in Sonora, Mexico.⁴

Sometime in the late 80's or early 90's, resident Marion Thomas chaired the Social Committee of Madera Vista. By the time we moved in in 1994, the social life of Madera Vista was very active and very popular. Marion knew lots of neighbors and planned great social activities such as pot lucks, lunch at Tanque Verde Ranch, Ladies Day at Foothills Mall, lunch at Tohono Chul, visit to De Grazia's studio, bowling, golf, and Christmas dinners. When Marion passed away in 1997, she left a legacy we had to continue, so we had social activities 11 months out of the year.

As you can see from this very short history, if it hadn't been for the persistence of our first board members and devoted homeowners, Madera Vista would not have become the great association it is today. This will only continue to be a great place to live in Green Valley if our future board members are as devoted. So remember, when one of the board members asks you to serve on our homeowners' board, you too can keep our association as great as the past devoted members have done.

