

# E K M A R K & E K M A R K, L.L.C.

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ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Thanksgiving is a natural time for reflection. We are thankful to be able to work with so many of you in an effort to help make communities better. People who live in community associations also have several reasons to be thankful.

First, community associations provide amenities that single homeowners would not otherwise be able to afford. Many community associations have clubhouses, tennis courts, pools, play areas and other amenities that are only possible due to the fact that a community association exists.

Second, community associations help retain and improve the standard of living and property values within a community. While all owners sometimes wish that a particular restriction did not apply to them, most are grateful that the restrictions apply to their neighbors. The restrictions prevent a neighbor from using his or her property in such a way that adversely impacts the surrounding homes.

Third, community associations help keep taxes low. Since many amenities and other things such as streets are installed within community associations and subsequently maintained by community associations, the municipalities have less to build and maintain. Residents within those municipalities benefit from lower taxes and can choose a community with more amenities (and higher assessments) or fewer amenities (and lower assessments).

Fourth, community associations provide for the most local control. The owners within each particular community can control their future by electing their own board of directors and changing their own rules and restrictions.

Fifth, community associations help with security and safety issues. Some community associations have gates and others have patrols. Many have facilitated block watch and similar organizations. The deed restrictions also provide some help in making the community safe.

Sixth, community associations maintain property that owners do not or cannot maintain themselves. Some associations take care of roofs and exteriors of buildings. Others take care of landscaping in the front yard. This is often valuable to people who cannot or do not want to undertake such responsibility.

Seventh, and most importantly, community associations can help build a sense of community. The trend is that more communities are hosting social and charitable events. This helps create and nurture a sense of community that makes people want to live in a certain neighborhood.

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