

STARWOOD HISTORY

1970's – From Dairy to Mobile Home Park Concept

In early 1973, Thomas Pickett and Douglas Dickinson, principals in the Bernard Corporation of Anchorage, Alaska, arrived in Central Oregon to search for development opportunities. [Bernard Corporation is referred to in Starwood Bylaws and CC&Rs as "The Declarant."] As a potential building site, they located two parcels totaling 300 acres formerly used as pasture by Bend Dairy. Pickett and Dickinson originally planned to develop an upscale mobile home park of more than 170 approximately one-quarter acre lots, to be laid out in clusters around cul-de-sacs. As this proposed use would require a zoning change, a perceived shortage of mobile home sites in the area was presented as justification for the change. The preliminary plat was presented to the Deschutes County Planning Commission on December 6, 1977.

Almost a year later, on November 28, 1978, Bernard Corporation was granted a Conditional Use Permit containing various restrictions. No more than 177 lots were to be developed. The then pasture area fronting the parcels was to remain zoned Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) and could never be developed. Additional delay occurred in August of 1979, when the hard-won Conditional Use Permit was challenged by one individual, Ralph Reynolds. After this challenge was defeated, the final proposed plat containing 178 lots was officially accepted by the Deschutes County Commissioners on February 19, 1980.

1980's – From Mobile Home Park to Adult Solar Community

Unfortunately, the lengthy delay in obtaining a permit to build had depleted Bernard Corporation's finances. Deschutes County real estate values had decreased substantially during a recession in the 1980's. For various reasons, Bernard Corporation decided to abandon the original mobile home concept, revise its plans, and instead market Starwood as an adult solar home community. They promulgated for Starwood a set of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&Rs) that included age restrictions and stringent solar specifications.

Construction and sale of Starwood's Phase One "Super Energy Saving" solar homes began in the spring of 1983. Originally, seven solar homes meeting the stringent solar specifications were built on Northstar Way. As the economic recession persisted, Marguerite Mitchell and several other homeowners challenged both the age and solar access restrictions in the CC&Rs. Further development ceased. Eventually, these two offending restrictions were rescinded. At this point, Bernard Corporation was foreclosed upon, and Susan McDougal, doing business as Lee Investments, Inc., became the new owner (Declarant) of Starwood. Development resumed.

1990's – Contemporary Starwood

McDougal retained the services of Douglas Dickinson to oversee construction of the infrastructure remaining to be developed: the streets and the septic system. Phases Two and Three then opened for the construction and sale of homes. To assist her in administering the Architectural Review Committee (ARC), McDougal engaged a builder named J.R. Reynolds. Together, they revised construction requirements to eliminate the strict solar provisions. The ARC rules their collaboration produced remain the framework for the construction requirements that govern today. As McDougal owned a majority of the unsold lots, she held the controlling vote in the Starwood Association until the lots remaining to be sold had been purchased by others. Sole control and ownership of Starwood passed to the Association homeowners as a collective group in 1997. No other entity holds any interest in Starwood.

When control passed to the homeowners, retired engineer William Cowan was the President of the Board of Directors. His painstaking research and vision for Starwood's evolution were instrumental in creating the community we now enjoy. As time passed, almost all his recommendations have been implemented by Starwood Association. Cowan's research had revealed that to comply with existing State law, Starwood was required to establish a reserve fund in order to properly carry out certain financial duties. He also discovered that a separate sanitary district with an elected board of directors was required to administer its septic system. The Starwood Board then took the actions necessary to establish both the fund and the District.

In the early 1990s, the Board of Directors gradually worked out effective solutions for knotty problems such as bringing existing homes into compliance with the applicable CC&Rs. An RV parking facility was established. Some of Starwood's water rights were sold to prevent their value from being lost. The Parks and Recreation Committee completed plans for a playground and picnic area on the common area between Starwood Drive and Saros Lane. The Board then approved the necessary funding, and these recreational facilities were built in the mid-1990s.

Starwood Today

During the 2000s, the Board of Directors, committee members and other volunteers have continued to maintain existing Starwood infrastructure, to review and revise Association governing documents and policies as needed, and to create a vision for Starwood's future. Projects completed or underway in the 2000s include: hiring an Association Manager in 2003, planting and harvesting different crops to maintain valuable water rights, lining a pond to conserve irrigation water, completing an appealing Walking Trail complete with permanent markers, renovating and landscaping the front entrance, creating a one acre dog park and adding steps down to the common area near the pond. There is also a Circle Trail around Galaxy Park which makes an easy walk.

Like each of our homes, Starwood is a continual work in progress.