



**GREATER OLNEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
2025-01-14 Representatives Meeting
DRAFT Minutes
APPROVED:**

The 2025-01-14 Representatives Meeting of the Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA) was conducted in-person in the Oak Ballroom, Sandy Spring Fire Dept, Sandy Spring, MD and online via Zoom Web Teleconference. President Irina Norrell called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm EST.

A quorum was present.. Those attending virtually are denoted by a V:

Officers

- Irina Norell, President (Norbeck Meadows)
- Curtis Chappell, First Vice President (Olney Square)
- Matt Quinn, Second Vice President (Cherrywood)
- Tina Craun, Treasurer (Individual) - V
- Kristen Quinn (Norbeck Meadows)
- Helene Rosenheim, Recording Secretary (Highlands of Olney)

Members

- Anastasia Adams - V ?
- Mindy Baden, (Olney Mill), Transp Comm Chair
- Bill Becker (Past President)
- Alden English (SEROCA)
- Paul Jarosinski (Cherrywood)
- Lee Kidd (Cherrywood) - V ?
- Carolyn Knight (Olney Oaks SF) - V
- Joe Krempasky (Brookeville Knolls)
- Tim Lighter (Oatland Farm)

- Diana Littlefield (Olney Acres)
- Mike Payne (Olney Oaks SF)
- Marlene Saulsbury (Forest Crossing)
- Jim Smith (Oatland Farm)
- Ann G. Strain (Cherrywood)
- Kate Thorton (Brighton Knolls)
- Jeff Weiler (Small's Nursery)

Guests

- Evan Glass, Montgomery County Council, At-Large
- Aaron Kraut, Chief of Staff, Dawn Leudtke, Montgomery County Council, District 7
- Jen Rusiecki, GOCA Green Subcommittee Chair
- Matt Post
- Paul Mele -
- Hilary Milla (Christie Estates) - V ?
- Kenneth Milla (Christie Estates)
- Darlene Saulsbury (Olney Mill)
- Craig Thorton (Brighton Knolls)

Approval of the January 14, 2025 Agenda - Agenda was approved with 1 addition of Public Policy and Community Affairs Committee report under Committee Reports.

Approval of November 11, 2024 Minutes - The minutes of the November meeting were approved with 2 corrections on page 2 in Matt Quinn's motion re: State Bill 2-25: changed "follow" to "oppose" and added unanimously to the end of the sentence..

Announcements

- State Senator Craig Zucker announced that the District 14 delegation has been working to get funding from the State to purchase the old Capital One bank building on the corner of Georgia Ave and Spartan Rd and turn it over to the Montgomery County government. And, now the State has approved an expenditure of \$2 Million, 1 for purchase of the building and 1 to renovate the building. The Delegation felt this needed to happen when the plans for the building to house the police substation was reduced from a 2-story building with community meeting space to a 1-story building because One Life did not want to give up enough of their parking to permit the 2-story building because of their success. They felt this long-time empty building could be used to replace the community space that was being eliminated from the new substation building.

A contract is being signed on January 15th turning the building over to the County. Renovations will be made over the next year, including installation of an elevator. The vault will be left because it is too difficult and expensive to remove it. The building will be managed by the County's Department of General Services and GOCA, the Olney Civic Fund and the Olney Chamber will be involved in the design of the renovations and the uses of the building.

- **Treasurer Report (Out of order)**

Tina Craun reported:

It is time for renewal time for our member associations and individual members. We have created an online form for submitting association information and a method for making online payments using a program called Zeffy.

In the past, we have asked for donations to the Olney Days celebration that we pass on to the Olney Civic Fund. This year we are, instead, directing our members to the Olney Civic Fund website, olneycivicfund.org to make donations directly to the Fund. We are continuing to collect donations for the Olney Police Substation that we pass along to the Olney Chamber of Commerce. We are still looking for a way to have those donations go directly to the Chamber.

- Paul Jarosinski asked if anything had been done to take up oCounty Executive Elrich's offer to come to a GOCA meeting to discuss his position on the Attainable Housing Strategic Initiative. Irina noted he was being invited to a future meeting. Joe Krempasky noted that Channel 7 News had reported that some County Council members are recommending a hold on the consideration of the Initiative because it is unpopular.
- Helene Rosenheim reminded everyone that we are now accepting nominations for the 2025 GOCA Awards. Nominations can be submitted online or by email to here by the end of the February 11 GOCA meeting. The awards will be presented at the joint community awards ceremony with the Olney Civic Fund and the Olney Chamber of Commerce on Sunday, March 30, 2025 from 2:00 - 4:30 pm in the Oaks Ballroom of the Sandy Spring Vol. Fire Dept in Sandy Spring.
- Jim Smith announced the 3rd Annual Barrel-Aged Beer event on Saturday, Feb 1st, 5:30 - 8:30 pm at the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on Rte. 108 at Olney Mill Rd. The beneficiary of the event will be the Olney Help organization.

Guest Presentation

Irina introduced and welcomed Evan Glass, Montgomery County Council At-Large member to discuss his environmental policies and priorities and his perspective on the recently introduced Bag Tax Bill 24-24.

Councilmember Glass noted:

- To date, no legislation has been introduced implementing any part of the Attainable Housing Strategic Initiative recommendations.
- WSSC has been called on to reduce water usage, but the Council had not done explaining this. 190 water mains have broken down recently due to cold weather which has lead to a decrease in water pressure in the system. The pressure has now been restored and restrictions due to the decreased pressure have been lifted. 46% of sewers in the County are over 50 years old and the County will need to make an investment to maintain this basic service of County government.
- The Council's Transportation & Environment Committee is making sure County built buildings are as green as possible. The Council passed Building Energy Performance Standards that the County Executive is now implementing. And, the Council is working with owners of large private buildings to incorporate similar standards..
- A Tree Conservation bill was passed last year to update fees that have not been keeping up with the inflationary increases in the cost of replacing trees removed from the tree canopy. The legislation was introduced to continue planting native trees.
- The Bag Tax bill would increase the fee for plastic bags used at registers and checkouts from 5 cents to 10 cents in an effort to increase funding available to make the County more green.. There was a

hearing earlier that day to eliminate these plastic bags. Similar action is being taken in Prince Georges, Ann Arundel and other counties around the State.

The following are points made during a Q & A period:

- The Bag Tax will not affect the thin plastic bags used throughout stores for merchandise like produce. The bill will include an automatic increase for inflation so they do not need to keep passing new legislation.
- Councilmember Glass will look into why it appears the County's tree replacement program is not being implemented in certain parts of Olney. And, there needs to be follow-up to ensure that trees planted under this program are replaced if they die at no additional expense to homeowners.
- Native Tree legislation has passed that would require new developments to plant 50% native plants. This would not apply to existing homes.

Committee Reports

Green Subcommittee

Jen Rusiecki, chair, reported:

- The Subcommittee currently consists of herself and Carolyn Wright, so she encouraged others to join their subcommittee.
- Olney Green is working with local schools to develop composting programs at the local schools, is considering focusing on native tree issues, and is looking at eliminating disposable containers in schools and replacing them with metal trays..

Transportation Committee

Mindy Biden, Chair, reported:

- She participated in a recent Maryland Remembers program where she and others talked about family members they had lost through traffic accidents.2 - People standing on the stage, with pictures of victims below them.
- The State's Holiday Task Force reported 180 DUI arrests in seven weeks.
- The Maryland Road Worker Protection Act of 2024 goes into effect June 1st and will increase speed camera fines from \$40 - \$80 in road work zones.
- Seven years into the Vision Zero effort, vehicular deaths are still hovering in the teens and so police will be cracking down more on unsafe driving.
- She was among 5 people who testified in support of legislation to help reduce speeding on the Inter-County Connector.

Public Policy & Community Affairs Committee

Helene Rosenheim reported:

As a result of the announcement that the Olney Golf Park property is up for sale and could be developed residentially, the officers decided that we need to move forward with efforts to remove the designation of the end of Georgia Ave from Norbeck Road to Rte. 108 as a transit corridor. Having that designation might not impact the density of development that might be possible on that particular property, it may impact other future development. That designation was based on the proposal in the 2005 Olney Master Plan for a Georgia Ave busway from the town center of Olney to the Glenmont Metro station. There does not seem to be any likelihood of this busway being constructed, so there is no longer a basis for that designation. So we have reached out to Councilmember Luedtke's staff to determine how to go about doing that.

Adjournment

Adjourned: 8:51 pm EST

Submitted by Recording Secretary Helene Rosenheim