



GREATER OLNEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

2024-4-09 Representatives Meeting

Minutes

APPROVED: May 14, 2024

The 2024-4-9 Representatives Meeting of the Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA) was conducted in person in the Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Department Ballroom and online via Zoom Web Teleconference.

President Irina Norrell called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm EST, with recording Secretary Helene Rosenheim present.

A quorum was present. Voting members denoted (*) as indicated. Those attending:

Officers

- Irina Norrell, President (Norbeck Meadows) (Transportation Committee)
- John Seng, Executive Vice President, Transportation Committee Chair
- Matt Quinn, First Vice President (Cherrywood)
- Curtis Chappell, Second Vice President (Olney Square)
- Tina Craun, (Individual) Treasurer*
- Helene Rosenheim, President (Highlands of Olney)

Members

- Mindy Badin (GOCA Transportation Committee) (Olney Mill)
- Alden English (SEROCA)*
- Joe Krempasky (Brookeville Knolls)*
- Diana Littlefield (Olney Acres Civic Assn.)*
- John Lippincott (Brighton Knolls)*
- Jim Smith (Oatland Farm)*
- Kate Thornton (Brighton Knolls)*
- Kelly Wasik (Tanterra)*
- Jeff Duce Norbeck Grove *
- Paul Jarosinski Cherrywood *
- Maria Bender Brookville Knolls *

Guests

- Daniel Rubenstein (Greater Olney Civic Association, Transportation Committee)
- Aaron Kraut, Staff, Montgomery County Councilmember Dawn Luedtke (District 7)
- Ira Ungar (Representative for Delegate Bonnie Collison, D 19)
- Kristin Quinn (Norbeck Meadows)

Approval of the April Agenda**Approval of March Minutes.**

Announcements: National Night Out, Earth Day, and events by local artists.

Eagle Scouts Presentation:

The meeting started with a presentation by three scouts, Andy Ferrera, Elijah Hillard, and Michael Watts, which focused on flag retirement and the importance of treating the national flag with respect.

Update on Bowie Bikeway:

Daniel Rubenstein (bio on the website) updated GOCA about the bikeway, which is currently halfway through the planning phase and set to begin construction in 2027 with a budget of \$29 million. The project aims to provide a critical connection between Olney and bikeways in the county. He addressed some concerns - like removing the trees that are in the way - and how they will be mitigated – for each removed tree there will be two or three planted elsewhere in Montgomery County. The project has been making good progress and just passed the mandatory referral. The construction is projected to end in 2028.

North High Street Extension Project:

Kathleen Donodeo (bio on the website) shared her insights about this project that GOCA and Olney Town Center Advisory Committee supported in the past. She discussed the benefits of connecting North High Street to Morningwood Drive and how it will enhance Olney's connectivity, especially the downtown area. She also emphasized that it's a cost-effective solution (\$2.5 million, which is not much for these types of projects) that will also maintain essential parking and sidewalks.

Chick-fil-A Redevelopment Proposal:

Jim Smith outlined the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC) recommendations for the proposed redevelopment. Chick-fil-A is shifting towards a drive-through model and proposes adding two drive-through lanes and four additional parking spaces. While OTCAC supports the new drive-through lanes, they advise against increasing parking spots and also have some concerns regarding the traffic turning into Georgia Avenue. OTCAC requested that GOCA support these recommendations when presenting them to the Planning Board. GOCA's members unanimously voted to support these recommendations.

Exploring the Attainable Housing Strategy Initiative:

Maria Bender attended a recent Planning Board meeting about this initiative and provided an overview (her detailed notes are available on the GOCA's website). The Initiative is seeking to enhance attainable housing in Montgomery County by permitting multi-family units within designated growth corridors. There was some confusion about the definition of a growth corridor and whether the Olney area is included in these corridors. Ira Ungar, the representative for Delegate Bonnie Collison of District 19, clarified that at a previous meeting, he was shown a map that clearly stated that Olney is not part of these corridors. The Planning Board is scheduled to hold bi-weekly hearings through June, concluding in a final briefing. Maria plans to attend these sessions and will continue to provide updates. She emphasized the importance of community involvement and urged everyone to participate, highlighting the significance of having a voice in these decisions.

Update on the Community Meeting on Rippling Brook Nature Preschool and Camp:

John Lippincott gave an update on the community meeting that the Camp's representatives held on March 23rd. At the meeting, Rippling Brook provided an overview of the project, the traffic study, water and septic usage estimates, and their site plan. The presentations themselves haven't offered much in the way of new information,

except the testimony of their own water and septic consultant. Who said that he didn't believe the site could sustain levels of water and septic usage by the summer camp. As a result, the meeting, which was supposed to alleviate the concerns the neighbors had, in fact, strengthened the opposition to this project. John thanked GOCA for sending the letter to the Planning Committee expressing the concern about the viability of the project. Brighton Knolls gave Helene Rosenheim who spent many hours on this project, and the rest of the members a standing ovation. The hearing by the Planning Board has been postponed by the applicant Rippling Brook Nature Preschool and Camp.

Treasurer's Report:

Tina Craun, GOCA's new Treasurer, introduced herself and presented the proposed 2024 budget. The budget stayed largely the same as it was in 2023. She emphasized the need for increased marketing and convenient payment options. A few online payment options like Zelle or Zepy, were discussed, and the Board will investigate this matter further to find the most optimal solution. There was a short discussion about minor budget discrepancies, which led to the agreement to adjust the contingency amount to balance the budget. Matt Quinn proposed the idea, which was seconded by most members, of hosting a debate/presentation of the School Board candidates for the upcoming November elections.

Transportation Report:

John Seng, the current EVP and Transportation Committee chair, is moving away. He asked Mindy Badin, a current member, to take over the Transportation Committee, to which she agreed. Mindy did her first committee report and discussed changes to the ICC bus route and recent legislative efforts related to reckless driving.

The meeting adjourned at 9 pm. The next meeting will be virtual only.