

Olney Oaks Single Family Homeowners Association Annual Meeting Minutes – January 24, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 by President Carolyn Knight. She welcomed everyone and introduced the volunteer board members.

President's Annual Report: Carolyn Knight

Ms. Knight stated that Olney Oaks had been more successful than surrounding communities regarding foreclosures. She then introduced Brett Linkletter, who is a resident of Olney Oaks.

Special Presentation:

Brett Linkletter, Chief of the Tree Maintenance Section of the Division of Highway Services of Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT).

Mr. Linkletter stated the County is responsible for over 450,000 trees in the county right-of-way. In 2012 the County planted 900 trees, pruned over 3500 trees and removed over 2,500 trees in the right-of-way.

His office has five arborists who do the tree inspections and 12 inspectors who monitor the contracted tree crews. Asplundh is the primary contractor they use. Pepco also uses Asplundh but those crews are completely different crews used for utility line clearance. Mr. Linkletter says the program operates reactively; a resident's call prompts an inspection. If the decision is to prune or remove a tree, it can take up to a year for the pruning or removal to be completed. If the situation is an imminent threat, Tree Maintenance abates the hazard within a few days.

The current tree removal backlog is 1,500 trees and the current pruning backlog is 1,000 trees. Additionally, 10,000 stumps are awaiting grinding, a four year backlog. The County froze the budget for stump removal and the current stump-grinding backlog would cost over \$4,000,000 to eliminate. If a family elects, at their own expense, to remove the stump adjacent to their property in the county right-of-way, they will be given a higher priority for a new tree to be planted.

In Olney Oaks only Morningwood Drive and Headwaters Drive have an adequately wide right-of-way to have trees under the County jurisdiction, which are primarily Pin Oaks. The developer planted most of these trees in the 1980's. Bacterial leaf scorch, a vascular disease, is insidiously killing the Pin Oaks. The disease is slow acting but drought will facilitate the acceleration of the disease. The disease is carried by a leaf hopper that spreads the disease from tree to tree. It can also be spread through the trees' interconnected roots.

Anyone can call 311 to notify his office of a County tree that appears unhealthy or to be unsafe. The office personnel check the inbox every two to four hours and assign high priority to those trees deemed most needing attention.

Answers to Questions:

1. The lifespan of the Pin Oak is typically ≤ 100 years, but the compacted soil along roads that is also tainted with sand and salt reduces the lifespan to 70 – 75 years.

2. Over time they will be replacing our Pin Oaks with Swamp Oaks because they are more resistant to insects and diseases and also are more adaptable to a right-of-way environment.
3. Some tree species have specific pruning timetables but most tree species can be pruned at any time of year.
4. Grass is a tree's enemy because grass grows well in high pH soil whereas pin oaks prefer low pH soil. Lime, which has a high pH and is commonly used to enhance grass growth, can cause pin oaks to become stressed and more susceptible to insect and disease problems.
5. Mulch should be applied in a doughnut shape around the tree, so that it is not piled up high next to the tree trunk and is not more than 3 inches deep.

Board Activities in 2012: Carolyn Knight

1. **Common Area Landscaping** - The homeowners association landscapes the southern half of the pipeline grass and Homeland Village does the northern half. Edging the recreational path and sidewalks is part of the work.
2. **Snow removal contract for 2012 – 2013 winter** – We no longer pay to have school bus stop areas shoveled; parents and those who live nearby are encouraged to assist the homeowner with shoveling.
3. **Tree trimming and removal** – A significant number of trees have been pruned or removed from common area property. This is a major budgetary expense. Some on this year's list have been moved to next year and are being watched.
4. **Installation of 3rd Olney Oaks entrance sign at Queen Elizabeth Drive** – The four wooden signs are less expensive than the original stone and wood sign that collapsed over the years.
5. **Pavilion roof replaced** – The entire roof was replaced including the plywood underlayment.
6. **Tot Lot Maintenance** - Cushioning mulch was completely replaced in the two tot lots (by the pavilion and on Carrisa Lane).
7. **Asphalt Recreational Path** - Selected asphalt repairs were made to the paths.
8. **Damage to Pipeline area south of Danube Lane** - During the storm Sandy, deep ruts were left on the pipeline area south of Danube Lane by Pepco trucks. We have learned that the only way Pepco can access their power lines south of Morningwood Court is by driving on the recreational path. Some cars have also driven on the pipeline. John Flynn said that when he was president, the homeowners association gave the County Police permission to drive along the pipeline. Carolyn Knight gave us the emergency phone number for Williams-Transco Natural Gas Pipeline, 800-440-8475, and recommended we put it into our cell phones so we can call if we notice any pipeline problems.
9. **Fall leaf removal** – The leaves were picked up the weeks of November 12th and December 3rd, and although some homeowners raked and removed leaves before the pickups or still had leaves after the second pickup, the dates worked fine for most.
10. **Townhouse area parking restriping/labeled** – Each family has two spaces, and the lot contains seven visitor spaces. Because some owners were using the visitor spaces as an extension of the two allotted spaces and others were parking in restricted areas, it has become necessary to enforce the rules. Adhering to the 2012 Maryland law to prevent predatory towing, Townhouse Board representative Matthew McGuire is revising the parking lot signs.

Treasurer's Annual Report: Jay Feinberg

- A handout was included in the meeting mailing that shows the current fiscal year's budget and the prior fiscal year's actual revenue and expense figures.
- **Income:** Total income from annual assessments and resale package fees was \$68,567, which was \$1,600 over the budget. This additional income was from late fees and settlements from households turned over for collections, which include legal fees. Assessments were eventually collected from all but one household.
 - The homeowner at 18112 Headwaters Drive owed us \$475 for three years of unpaid dues. As required by our covenants, we first placed a lien on the house and then sued to collect the amount due plus allowed legal fees in November 2011. The judge ruled in our favor, but we were unable to collect the amount awarded by the court. The homeowner subsequently declared Chapter 7 bankruptcy, which was approved by the court. His house was sold in a foreclosure sale last October. The bankruptcy and foreclosure wiped out our judgment. We lost about \$1,266 in unpaid dues and legal expenses, plus partial dues for this year. We will collect dues from the buyer starting from the October sales date.
 - For our current year, we have filed liens against two homes on Shallow Brook and have received a partial payment from a third homeowner on Leeds Hall.
- **Carryover:** For the prior fiscal year, we started out with a carryover of \$13,062. Out of this amount, \$3,000 was put in our general reserve account. We try to maintain a carryover of about \$8,000 to \$10,000 to cover possible expenses until new dues revenue is received.
- **Expenses:** Almost all expenses were close to the budget amounts for the year. Tree maintenance expenses at \$9,350 were over the budget for the year of \$6,000, but we cut back on miscellaneous grounds maintenance expenses to offset this overrun. The only grounds maintenance expense was for watering our landscaping plantings by our signs during the dry summer of 2011. We also increased the tree budget for this year to \$10,000 because we knew that we have a backlog of work to do. Our total expenses ended up being \$1,011 under the budget.
- **Capital Replacement:** The prior year expenditures also included \$15,209 for projects that provide multi-year benefits. This included \$7,779 for new entrance signs and landscaping by two of the signs as well as \$7,430 for part of the cost of replacing the pavilion roof. The cost was spread over two fiscal years, so the remaining roof replacement cost of \$4,015 is in this year's budget. The entrance signs were all ordered at the same time to contain cost and to ensure design continuity.
- **Current Budget (July 2012 through June 2013):** In addition to an increase in tree expenses and the remaining cost of the pavilion roof replacement, the budget also includes funding for path repairs, replacing the cushioning mulch in the tot lots, townhouse parking lot maintenance, and the installation and landscaping of the Queen Elizabeth entrance sign.
- The HOA's books were reviewed by an independent accountant and found to be in proper order.

Board Objectives for 2013

1. Common area landscaping – Largest single budget item.
2. Continued tree monitoring – Tulip poplars have weak roots and are very tall. White pines are weak in wind storms

3. Storm water management – Sediment removal and monitoring of water catchment – We are on the County’s list to have it removed.
4. Install 4th entrance sign on Morningwood Drive at Williams/Transco Pipeline
5. Community maintenance (tot lots, footbridge, pavilion, grassy areas, paths) – We need to build reserves for the aging tot lots, footbridge, and pavilion.

Greater Olney Civic Association – GOCA Update: Carolyn Knight

1. Our HOA pays \$300/year dues to Greater Olney Civic Association, which represents all stakeholders in Olney.
2. Developers present their plans to GOCA at monthly meetings, and GOCA assisted in blocking the building of a large church on Emory Church Road. The judge ruled in favor of the South-East Rural Olney Civic Association (SEROCA), which GOCA had supported.
3. The County Executive speaks at GOCA annually and state and county legislators give updates in the May meeting after the close of legislative session (January – April).

Community Comments

1. Mike Dorsey complained about seeing an adolescent riding a motorcycle and another driving a four –wheel drive vehicle along the recreational path five days ago. He took pictures and stated there was a confrontation initiated by the daughter of one of the board members when he told the two to stop. He demanded that the board member (the girl’s father) adhere to the rules or leave the board.
2. A resident complained about dogs barking at night and was told we would research the county noise rules.
3. A resident asked how to report a malfunctioning street light. Street light issues can be reported on the Montgomery County website or by calling 311.
4. John Flynn asked if the board had a long-term plan for replacing the footbridge and tot lots. Jay Feinberg said there is a Strategic Plan that needs to be updated.
5. A resident pointed out that the intersection of Headwaters Drive and Route 108 is very dark at night, and Ms. Knight said we would address this with the State Highway Administration and our County Council representative.
6. Cynthia Resnick requested that Olney Oaks HOA take steps to restrict flyers being hung on doorknobs. She was recently robbed while a flyer was on her doorknob for a few days while she was away.
7. Carolyn Knight said that mailboxes have been raided when red flags are raised and checks stolen. This is under ongoing investigation by County Police.

Election of Board Members for 2013: Mark Smith moved to accept the current slate of board members, and Stan Rosen seconded the motion.

2013 Board Members approved by a vote of the members at the meeting along with proxy votes:

Don Beeson, Jay Feinberg, Roger Grant, Dick Harris, Carolyn Knight, Nicole Lechner, Matthew McGuire, Marc Meltzer, Mike Nelson, and Theresa Kyne Robinson.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:55.

Meeting Attendees:

Donald and Luana Beeson, John Caha, Halopiyunlage (Jagath) Chandradasa, Jenny and Samuel Contorno, Joseph DeCicco, Michael J. Dickerson, Michael Dorsey, Jay Feinberg, John Flynn, Paul Geller, Robyn Graney, Kim and Roger Grant, Kenneth Grossman, Emily Grunwell, Richard Harris, Ken Irish, Carolyn and Roger Knight, Stephen Libster, Brett Linkletter, Lane McClelland, Mathew McGuire, Marc Meltzer, Errol Myers, Michael Nelson, Matthew Powers, Cynthia Resnick, Theresa Kyne Robinson, Stanley E. Rosen, Lester Schoonover, Marc and Vicki Smith, Camilla and Michael Smith, Susan and Thomas Tucker, and Dat Vu