



**GREATER OLNEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
2026-07-14 Representatives DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

APPROVED:

The 2026-7-14 Representatives Meeting of the Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA) was conducted in-person in the Sandy Spring Volunteer Fire Department, Oak Ballroom, Sandy Spring, MD and online via Zoom Web Teleconference.

President Curtis Chappell called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm [EST](#)

A quorum was present.. V= Attended virtually

Officers

- Curtis Chappell, President, Olney
- Matt Quinn, Exec Vice President (Cherrywood)
- Thomas Canavan, 1st Vice President (Hallowell)
- Nicolas Boss, Treasurer
- Kristen Quinn, Corresponding Secretary (Norbeck Meadows)
- Irina Norell, Immediate Past President (Norbeck Meadows)

Members

- Stacy Cummings (Tanterra)
- Brandy Heckman-Stoddard (Lake Hallowell) - V
- Tim Lighter - (Brookeville Knolls) - V
- Mike Payne (Olney Oaks SF)
- Lou Welantetz (Preserve at Small's Nursery)
- Carolyn Wright (Olney Oaks SF) - V

Guests

- Jose Antonio-Ortiz - V

Agenda/Minutes Approval

- July 14, 2026 agenda accepted with no additions or changes.
- June 9, 2026 minutes approved with no additions or corrections:

Guest Speaker

Montgomery County Executive, Marc Elrich

- The 2026-2027 budget has been the most difficult since Mr. Elrich has been County Executive
- The CIP was not adjusted for inflation so spending is now less than 20 years ago and that has created problems for MCPS and maintenance.
- Described advantages of the taxing system in Fairfax Co. that charges commercial and resident properties at different rates, using the additional funds from commercial properties to provide the needed infrastructure. He believes that if we do not increase taxing on commercial properties, the County will not be able to address the maintenance & construction needs of our school system.
- The County is much more diverse than it was 50 years ago and we have handled the transition well.

- Philip Burkholder (CEO, Sandy Spring Friends House)
- Madeline or Elinor Devine - V
- Doug Farquhar (Sandy Spring Civic Assn) -V
- Mary Fields - V
- ? Friends House - V
- Rita Grotsky (Olney Oaks SF)
- Aaron Kraut, Chief of Staff, Dawn Leudtke, Montgomery County Council, District 7
- Melanie Milner - V
- Roger Roark - V
- Joe Rockay - V
- Monique S.
- Hiaki S.
- Marissa Van Samen, staff Councilmember Will Jawanda's office - V
- Martha Young
- Julie ? - V
- Nancy ? - V

- Life sciences is still a key industry in the County and much is being done to recruit life sciences companies to the County
- The County has also handled the increased unemployment of County residents due to Federal layoff well.
- Transportation is still an issue. He has been trying for 12 years to introduce Bus Rapid Transit to the County, but he has not succeeded yet.
- There has been increased activity by the County in the East County area.
- He has concerns about Park & Planning's current approach to planning that tells people what they need rather than getting input from residents, using a top down approach that he hopes to change when he gets back to the Council.
- They are adding to the Drone Program the County Police are using. The pilot program has been very effective and they want to expand the program.

Proposed Rehab Facility in Tanterra Update - Monique S, Brookeville Friends

- Provided a brief history of the project proposed in Tanterra that they had come to GOCA for support last year.
- This project and 2 other similar projects in the County is treating them as residential rehab facilities, when under current State laws the proposed facility in Tanterra would be considered an institutional use.
- Currently, they are working to close a gap between State laws and County zoning laws for Residential Care Facilities through a proposed zoning text amendment (ZTA).
- County laws do not distinguish between the residential care facility and an institutional use in State law
- A zoning text amendment could introduce 3 changes that would incorporate the distinction made by the State into the County's regulations.

Irina moved that we approved the following motion recommended by the Brookeville Friends. The following motion was seconded by Matt Quinn and was approved, as presented, unanimously.

Be It Resolved that the Greater Olney Civic Association (1) supports addiction treatment and the rights of persons in recovery to live in residential communities as guaranteed by Maryland law, (2) finds that Montgomery County's Zoning ordinance lacks a definition of "halfway house", a method for counting the size of Residential Care Facilities operated across adjacent properties, and a distinction between low-intensity residential treatment and high-intensity clinical operations, (3) endorses the framework set out in the June 18, 2026 opinion letter of the Law Office of G. Macy Nelson, LLC, as a sound starting point for closing these gaps in alignment with State law, (4) requests that the County Council undertake active staff review of zoning text amendments to that effect, (5) requests that the County Council shares the result of their review and their plans to address these zoning concerns in a public forum and (6) authorizes the Association to communicate this resolution to the County Executive, the County Council, the Planning Board, the County's State legislative delegation, and fellow civic associations and to invite those organizations support.

- Marissa Van Samen, staff member for Councilmember Jawando noted he supports this effort and let Planning staff know they need help with the review of these provisions and drafting a ZTA, but she did not know what the timetable is for doing that. She will let us know when she has more information.

Sandy Spring Friends House Proposed Development Update, Philip Burkholder, CEO

- They are operating under a Montgomery County Special Exception issued in 1990.
- In 2017 the company modified the Friends House master plan to ensure their ability to continue as a business adding more apartments and independent living homes.
- The 2017 plan was stalled by COVID and they are now looking at what they can do to survive without relocating current residents.
- They have identified an area on the north end of their property where they are proposing an apartment building.
- The County wants to build senior housing and their marketing studies show most of their tenants will come from Montgomery County.
- The apartment building will replace the independent cottages originally planned for this corner

- The plan for access to Norbeck Rd and none into the property is being changed to give access with the property and not to Norbeck Rd, in part to provide access to a communal dining room.
- They are working with the County to reduce the environmental impact of roadway and determine the amount of tree buffering that will be needed to protect adjacent housing.
- They are working with the Parks and Planning Commission re: the changes to their master plan that they need to approve.
- They have begun marketing the units and already have 45 people interested in purchasing a unit.
- The Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission will hold a public meeting on this proposal.
- Doug Farquhar noted that the Sandy Spring Civic Association is opposing the proposal because of the location of the building which they feel negatively impacts the abutting properties, not the increase in the number of units in the building.
- The Bancroft Board of Directors is also opposing the height and style of the building that they feel is inconsistent with the rural character of the area and could possibly lower the value of their homes.
- Brendon Bonita requested that all of the units be provided with back up power systems in case of storms, but they do not need to leave the building.

Committee Reports

Public Safety and Governance Committee - Thomas Canavan, Chair

- The next Fun Run will be on August 16th.
- There was a consensus that Thomas should continue to look into the possibility of creating a system in our County where people could register so that door-to-door vendors cannot come to their homes as is done in a number of other jurisdictions in response to a complaint sent to the GOCA website.

Transportation Committee - Mindy Badin, Chair:

- Parts of the Metro Red Line will be closed to build a connection to the new Purple line.
- She testified before the County Council on a bill expanding State law on street takeovers.
- 700 drivers have had devices put in their cars with excessive speeding violations to prevent them from speeding.
- There are 3 new State laws to (1) reduce the requirement to clear sidewalks after a snow or ice storm to a reasonable effort (2) creating a pilot program to put speed cameras on stop signs in Gaithersburg and Rockville to detect cars not making full stops, & (3) affecting where speed cameras can be placed.
- There have been 6 accidents on Rte 495 that delayed traffic for more than 1 ½ hours and in which 5 people were hospitalized.
- There have been 9 pedestrian deaths in Montgomery County recently, so we need to do better.

Announcements:

- In lieu of an August meeting there will be a reception at the Brookeville Academy on August 11th.
- The next GOCA meeting will be on September 8th.
- National Night Out will take place on August 4th.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:20 pm

Submitted by Helene Rosenheim Recording Secretary