

February 28, 2021

Dear GOCA Members and Friends,

It is nearly Spring and time for an update from the Greater Oakton Community Association (GOCA). We hope everyone is maintaining their health and sanity! Thankfully, it appears as if we may all receive COVID-19 vaccinations in 2021.

We want to bring to your attention that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors is likely to approve a **major change in zoning** that particularly impacts suburban and residential neighborhoods. The zoning change acronym is "zMOD," and according to Act4Fairfax, the changes would include *"Major changes affecting neighborhood intensity and character...including abolishing the public hearings for accessory apartments in homes, abolishing the over55/disabled criteria, expanding home businesses (beauty parlors, barber shops, tailoring, repair shops, online sales, home food production)..."* Large signage would also be permitted. A summary of potential changes can be found at [ACT4Fairfax.net](http://ACT4Fairfax.net) or <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-development/zmod>. Supervisors will make the final decision and are scheduled to vote on March 9th. If you are so inclined, you can express your thoughts on this issue by sending a letter to Supervisor Palchik at [Providence@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Providence@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Other local Oakton area news includes:

- The new **Burnet Bridge** over Difficult Run in the Hunter Valley area of Oakton was installed in mid-February. The bridge was named in honor of Thornton and Mary Elizabeth Burnet, who were heavily involved with the area where the bridge now sits and the use of land around it.
- There is an online petition circulating for the **extension of the sidewalk on Hunter Mill Road** at <https://www.change.org/p/oakton-residents-sidewalk-extension-on-hunter-mill-road?signed=true>. If approved, the sidewalk would protect pedestrian safety for who seek to make Oakton a truly walkable community.
- **Blake Lane Park** has been removed from Fairfax County Public Schools' plans to use the land for a new public school ([www.saveblakelanepark.org](http://www.saveblakelanepark.org)).

**GOCA's accomplishments**, buoyed by your financial support, include the following:

- GOCA purchased a **lovely bench** from the Fairfax County Park Foundation which will be installed this Spring at the Oakton Park. The bench will be the first seating in the Park.
- Fairfax County Park Authority approved GOCA's request to plant **100 Spring bulbs** to beautify the entrance of the Oakton Community Park in the Fall. A generous Oakton resident provided the funds for the bulbs.
- GOCA submitted final design options for a **history marker** to be placed at the 250-300 year-old Oakton Witness Tree at 2911 Hunter Mill Road. We hope for

approval this Spring and will then use funds you donated to have the marker manufactured and installed.

- GOCA paid \$500 for a **health inspection** of the Oakton Witness Tree by Virginia's premier arborist.
- GOCA will upgrade and extend the current overgrown **trail in the Oakton Park** woods over the coming year and welcome hearing from anyone who would like to assist us in these efforts.
- We created a short survey asking you to identify your top community priorities for the **open field in Oakton Park** within the context of the 2005 Master Plan. You will receive this soon and we want to hear from you!

GOCA hopes to have another community gathering like the one sponsored by the Oakton Wine Shop in 2020 once the pandemic has subsided and it is safe to come together to celebrate our unique community.

Wishing you well,

Janet Tener and Patty Reed, Co-Chairs  
Greater Oakton Community Association  
[www.greateroakton.com](http://www.greateroakton.com)