

## GOCA Update, March 2, 2023

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

We hope you are enjoying being outside in this Spring-like weather! Please read below for an update on important community developments.

### Community News

**AT&T Site Development.** On **Thursday, March 23rd, at 7:30 pm**, the Planning Commission will hold a public workshop to address development proposals for Providence District (Oakton, Fairfax, Merrifield, and Vienna areas), including the AT&T site at the intersection of Rt 123 and Jermantown Rd. (Note: this date was changed from the 9th.) At the preliminary County meeting in January we learned that the proposal for the AT&T site entails building some 1,200 housing units in the form of mid rise buildings and townhouses, as well as two garages (one which is seven stories), retail shops, an office building, and associated amenities, and to have a new traffic light on Jermantown Road installed. After the upcoming workshop, presuming the proposal is accepted by County Staff for further study, the Planning Commission will review it for impact on traffic, schools, and other community interests. If you wish to share your views, you are encouraged to attend the meeting in the Board Auditorium of the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway. (Discussion of proposals for the Hunter Mill District--Reston and part of Hunter Mill Road—is also scheduled for March 23rd at 7:30 in the same venue.) Call 703-324-2865 to register to speak or register online [here](#) no later than 1:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. For further details on the process, please see [here](#). If you have questions, email County planning staff at [DPCSSPA@FairfaxCounty.gov](mailto:DPCSSPA@FairfaxCounty.gov). You can also reach out to Providence District Supervisor Palchik's office at [providence@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:providence@fairfaxcounty.gov) or the Providence Planning Commissioner Phil Niedzielski-Eichner at [phillip.niedzielski-eichner@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:phillip.niedzielski-eichner@fairfaxcounty.gov).

**Hunter Mill Sidewalk.** We have learned that the planned survey by the County that will help determine the priority of a new sidewalk along Hunter Mill Road, for which GOCA has been advocating, has been delayed until the summer. When we know more, we will post that information on our website and Facebook page.

### GOCA News

**Bluebirds to Find Homes in Oakton Community Park.** On March 4th, volunteers from the [Virginia Bluebird Society](#) (VBS) will install four bluebird houses around the meadow of the park. GOCA is incredibly grateful to the VBS and the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) for their support of this effort and their help with identifying the best locations for the houses. A VBS volunteer built and will install the birdhouses; and a team of trained VBS volunteers from our area will monitor the houses on a regular basis to check on bluebird nesting activity and to deter invasive species. Our monitors' reporting will be added to data the VBS collects from other sites to provide a picture of the health of the Eastern Bluebird species - once threatened by development but now thriving in our area.

**Breakfast with the Birds.** Do you know that 49 bird species have already been spotted in Oakton Community Park, and that the park is an eBird hotspot? Join us on **Sunday, May 7th at 8:30 am** for a birding walk in the park during the height of the Spring migration and help increase the number of bird species found for the park. Fairfax Master Naturalist and experienced birder John Wilson will guide us as we look and listen for different birds. You'll likely

find some new birds and improve your birdwatching skills. Plus, we'll visit the bluebird houses that will have just been installed around the meadow. After our walk, we'll enjoy coffee and donuts. All ages are welcome to this free event. Meet in front of the schoolhouse and just bring your eyes and ears - and binoculars if you have them. Please register for this event [here](#).

**Scout Installing a Butterfly Garden.** A local Scout from Troop #1983 will install a butterfly garden in the Oakton Community Park to complete her Eagle Scout award. This Scout is working with GOCA and FCPA representatives to design and install the garden in early April. Stay tuned for more details.

**Historian Jim Lewis at the Schoolhouse and on the Road.** Signups for Jim Lewis's presentation on the topic of "Oakton in the Civil War" on March 26th and the bus tour of the historic Hunter Mill corridor that Jim will be leading on April 15th have reached the maximum number of attendees. We are likely to have cancellations, however, so if you are interested, you are encouraged to email [contact@greateroakton.com](mailto:contact@greateroakton.com) to register for the waitlist.

### Community Items of Interest

**Invasive Plant Removal and Native Plant Installation in Oakton Community Park.** Upcoming dates are March 4th and April 1st. If you would like to be notified directly about these opportunities, please email [Mark Deaton](mailto:Mark Deaton).

**Girl Scout Sarah's Invasive Plant Removal Project at Difficult Run Stream Valley Park.** March 11th, 10 am - 12 pm: [click here](#); March 18th, 10 am - 12 pm: [click here](#).

**New Instagram page: Oakton\_Nature.** Visit this page to view highlights of local birds, wildflowers, butterflies, trees and much more. While the page creators are excited to share what they've seen, they are even more excited to see what others have found. Send your photos to Oakton\_Nature via Instagram direct message for potential inclusion in stories and posts.

**Chili Cook-Off** March 4 at 4 pm; **Spring Equinox Drum Circle.** March 24th, 7 - 8pm, Unity Church of Fairfax. Sign up for UCF activities [here](#).

**Friends of Oakton Library Book Sale.** April 18th – 20th and 22nd. For other upcoming activities and events at the Oakton Library [click here](#).

**"Kids Give Back" at Oakton United Methodist Church.** Kids Give Back is a not-for-profit organization for kids 6 - 12 to volunteer in their community. If you would like to learn more about "Kids Give Back" visit their [website](#) or email Oakton resident [Jayne Young](#).

Warmly,  
The GOCA Board  
Lauren Crum and Shelley Deutch, Co-Chairs  
Jody Bennett, Linda Byrne, Jackie Davey, Mark Deaton, Michelle Fisher, Janet Kerr-Tener (Founding Co-Chair), Kris Olsen, Robin Thurman, and Gary Wong  
[www.greateroakton.com](http://www.greateroakton.com)

*GOCA is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization, and 100% of your donations go to our community efforts. To donate, please visit our [Paypal link](#). If you would like to become more actively involved, email us at [contact@greateroakton.com](mailto:contact@greateroakton.com) and we can match you with the right opportunity.*