

GOCA Update - May 22, 2023

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

We impart a lot of information in this newsletter, but we especially draw your attention to Community News and our invitation to take action on a survey and two petitions.

Community News

AT&T Site Development. At its meeting on April 11th, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors adopted the 2023 Work Program for Comprehensive Plan amendments, including the nomination for the redevelopment of the AT&T site at the corner of Jermantown and Route 123. As a result, the Planning Commission has begun studying various impacts that the proposal to build 1,200 or more residential units, retail shops, an office building, and two parking structures would have on Oakton. GOCA intends to continue to communicate what it hears from Oakton residents to County officials and to keep our GOCA mailing list updated on key developments. We also encourage anyone wishing to get more involved in efforts to ensure that what eventually emerges serves our community well to reach out to a group focused on this development, Options for Oakton (O4O)—the new incarnation of the group that achieved the downsizing of the number of homes built on the lot across from Giant and the purchase of land for the Oakton Library. O4O has recently launched the first of a series of short surveys to ensure it has the data to speak on behalf of the community, which we encourage you to complete [here](#). More information on O4O can also be found at www.optionsforoakton.org or they can be contacted at optionsforoakton@gmail.com.

Effort to Prevent the Deforestation of Hickory Hollow. Homeowners on Hickory Hollow Lane are requesting that Oakton residents sign a petition they have launched to help convince the County and VDOT to not pave their gravel road and in the process remove a significant number of trees. The story is complex but compelling, and the details are well laid out in the [attached](#). Please consider adding your name.

Hunter Mill Road Sidewalk Update. The County process for determining which sidewalks will be funded is evolving, and it is no longer certain that it will involve a survey. GOCA is making the case for the Hunter Mill Road sidewalk, for which over 500 Oakton residents signed a Change.org petition. We believe that a sidewalk has the potential to reduce short, single occupancy trips from adjoining neighborhoods onto a very busy Hunter Mill Road, which is completely devoid of transportation alternatives. The County plans to give priority to “pedestrian generators,” of which GOCA argues there are many on this road, including the Park, the Library, two children’s centers, three churches, and two retail shopping centers. An extended sidewalk on Hunter Mill Road would both help alleviate some of the traffic problem and make it much safer for those who walk. We welcome your thoughts on this at any time, and if you have not already, please consider adding your name to the [petition](#).

Blake Lane Community Outreach Meeting. On Tuesday evening, May 30th, from 7 - 8:30 pm at the Providence Community Center, representatives from the Providence District Office, Virginia Department of Transportation, Fairfax County Department of Transportation, Fairfax County Police Department, Fairfax County Health Department, and Fairfax County Public Schools will participate in a community outreach meeting to discuss Blake Lane safety improvements and answer questions. Register via this [link](#).

GOCA News

Oakton Day in the Park Set for August. We are excited to be organizing the next Oakton Day in the Park, which will take place on **Sunday, August 27th from 1 - 4pm** in Oakton Community Park at 2841 Hunter Mill Road. This year, we are happy that local musicians Mark and Molly will perform during the event. We will also have Mountain Kim's demonstration team and Bob Brown's Puppets performing in the historic schoolhouse. Settle Down Easy Brewery will be serving its local brews again this year, and local restaurants Tony's Pizza, WNB Factory, and Ben and Jerry's will sell their specialties. Other activities include antique cars, "Teddy" the mini-horse, butterfly crafts and walks through the woods with an invasive plant specialist. If you would like to volunteer to help at the event, please email Mark Deaton.

Calling All Local Businesses! GOCA will be publishing an updated version of its community directory this summer. If you own a business, no matter how small, or know someone who does, please [get in touch with us](#) by June 6th. The directory will provide complimentary listings for all local businesses, or businesses owned by locals. Paid advertisements are also available.

Thank You to Unity Church. GOCA wants to extend a heartfelt thank you to our friends at Unity Church of Fairfax for donating 50 folding chairs to use in the historic schoolhouse. GOCA holds events in the schoolhouse several times each year and previously had to rent chairs.

With (More Than) a Little Help From Our Friends. You may have seen a focused effort earlier this year by the Invasive Management Area (IMA) team to remove invasive and non-native plants on the north side of Oakton Community Park bordering the Oakcrest Farms neighborhood. This effort was leading up to the planting of 40 trees and shrubs donated by the Pangelinan and Castro families, both residents in that neighborhood. Their generous donations will give the Park a jump-start on establishing the healthy regrowth of our forest habitat.

We are also grateful for the help given to the IMA team from Oakton resident Fred Singerman, who organized members of the Olam Tikvah Synagogue for an invasive plant removal session in the Park last month. This was a great event for everyone!

Attracting Butterflies and Birds. Valeria Castro-Rivera, a local Scout from Troop #1983G, installed a butterfly garden in Oakton Community Park to complete her Eagle Scout award. Valeria and her Scout friends planted nearly 30 plants in an enclosed area near the playground. We are so happy to now be attracting even more butterflies to the Park and congratulations to Valeria on successfully completing her project and her upcoming graduation from Oakton High School!

Oakton residents now have new opportunities to spot some of the 49 species of birds that have been identified in the area. In May, for instance, a group spent a morning with Oakton's own Fairfax Master Naturalist John Wilson, learning the songs and other identifying characteristics of the many birds they spotted. GOCA hopes to arrange additional tours in the future.

Other Items of Interest

Invasive Plant Removal at Blake Lane Park. The next sessions are May 20th and May 21st from 10am -2pm at Blake Lane Park.

Aidan's Eagle Scout Project To Restore Habitat in Difficult Run Stream Valley

Park. Sunday, May 21st at Miller Heights Rd & Miller Rd , 11am - 1pm ([register here](#)) and 2 - 4pm ([register here](#)).

Invasive Plant Removal at Oakton Community Park. The next sessions will be on June 3rd. If you would like to register for one of these sessions or be notified directly about upcoming opportunities, please email [Mark Deaton](#).

Friends of Oakton Library. The Fairfax County Public Library Summer Reading Program, running from June 16th through August 16th, is themed "All Together Now". The Oakton Library staff has assembled a full calendar of activities related to the program's theme which you can view [here](#). The Friends of Oakton Library fund this programming. For more information about the Friends, please visit [Friends of Oakton Library](#).

Sign-Up To Participate in Oakton United Methodist Church's Fall Craft Bazaar. October 7th from 9am - 1 pm at Oakton United Methodist Church. If you would like to participate, you can register by using [this form](#).

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

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 and we can match you with the right opportunity.