



29 May 2020

Dear GOCA Members and Friends,

We are proud to inform you that, our community, under the leadership of the Greater Oakton Community Association (GOCA), **has been successful in saving the 250-300 year-old Oakton "Mosby" Oak Tree!** The tree is located on VDOT's right-of-way at 2911 Hunter Mill Road next to the Giant shopping center. We sprang into action when we learned recently that VDOT was planning to remove the tree because a large limb fell last summer.

This tree is a symbol of our rich local history; it was part of an oak tree cluster that led the U.S. Post Office to name **Oakton** in the 1880's. Legend has it that the tree was a meeting place during the War Between the States as Union and Confederate troops battled for control of Hunter Mill Road and the W&OD railroad.

GOCA reached out to Allison Richter of VDOT, Senator Chap Petersen, Delegate Mark Keam, and Providence Supervisor Dalia Palchik to help save the tree. We requested that VDOT hire an independent arborist to do a second "risk assessment" of the tree, in addition to the assessment done by VDOT's staff arborist.

VDOT granted GOCA's request and contracted with renowned arborist Ed Milhous of TreesPlease. Mr. Milhous indicated that the tree had some issues but was otherwise "vigorous" and that the risk of "failure" was not overwhelming. He estimated that the tree could live another 11 to 25 years with pruning and periodic evaluations.

Allison Richter of VDOT, along with her staff members, considered the Milhous report. Senator Chap Peterson visited the tree and sent a letter encouraging VDOT to preserve the tree.

**On Friday, May 22, 2020, VDOT's Allison Richter notified GOCA and others that the tree would not be removed at this time and would be pruned of dead branches and inspected regularly.**

We want to take the next step and hire an arborist to ascertain whether any proactive measures might increase the longevity of this historic tree. Potential suggestions may include stabilizing the tree's heavy limbs, installing a working lightning rod, and treating the tree for potential fungus.

If proactive preservation measures are deemed feasible, then GOCA will **need donations to pay for these measures to keep the tree healthy in the years ahead.** We are all volunteers, and our organization is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that depends on your tax-deductible contributions. Our website, [www.greateroakton.com](http://www.greateroakton.com), has a PayPal link by which you can contribute.

We want to thank and praise our partners who were willing to consider options for saving the Oakton Oak Tree: Allison Richter of VDOT; Senator Chap Peterson; Delegate Mark Keam; Supervisor Dalia Palchik; and the owners of the George H. Rucker building adjacent to the tree. We also appreciate the numerous community members who played a significant role in achieving this outcome.

Thank you for your support,

Janet Kerr-Tener, Ph.D., Co-Chair  
Patty Reed, Co-Chair  
Greater Oakton Community Association  
[www.greateroakton.com](http://www.greateroakton.com)