



**OVERLEA  
COMMUNITY  
ASSOCIATION**

# Your OVERLEA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

**August 2014 • [www.OverleaRocks.org](http://www.OverleaRocks.org) • Join us on Facebook too!**

## A Message from the OCA President

As our new fiscal year begins as well as a change in officers I'd like to give you a few updates. I will remain as president of the OCA for one more year with my term ending in June of 2015. Pete Xanthakos is now our vice president. Many thanks to Doris Poling for handling that responsibility so well during the past few years. Doris will remain active on the Board, as the Communications Director, contributing to the accomplishments of the OCA.

A continuing challenge for the community is the Overlea Bus loop as well as surrounding properties at Belair Road and Overlea Avenue.

As most of you know, the Wells Fargo property has been vacant for a while now. The OCA has been working to ensure that the property is maintained by Wells Fargo. It has been a struggle for sometime going back to last year. Just recently we had a concern over the appearance of uncut grass at the former bank. Last year we attempted to communicate with Wells Fargo about the property. Some promises were given, but without sustainable action. We recently asked Councilwoman Cathy Bevins for assistance when the grass was over a foot tall. I am happy to report that Cathy was able to reach out to her contact and within 24 hours a profuse apology was offered and the grass was cut and the property cleaned up. We further learned that the weekly contract had for some reason, been dropped by their contractor. That has been rectified. Many thanks to Councilwoman Bevins.

Recently graffiti was painted on the former bank property as well as one of our flower pots. Direct contact by the OCA with bank management resulted in immediate action in removing graffiti from the bank and the flower pot. Thank you to Andrew Bertamini.

We have also contacted the State Highway Administration about the trash from the bus stop. Work crews do come through and clean the area and we have asked for that to be increased. Additionally, BARC clients come to Overlea twice a month to clean the turnaround, and have for many years. We are grateful for that contribution.

Recently we reported concerns behind the turnaround to Cathy Bevins as well. Residents reported that riders were using the fenced area behind the building as a bathroom. MTA has responded to Cathy's office by removing the wooden fence behind the building and have promised a heightened presence from MTA on site-and this has happened. MTA police have made a visible presence there.

The OCA is also in communication with Senator Katherine Klausmeier about the bus stop/turnaround in general. The

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## Join Us On

Starting January 1st, 2015, the Community Association will deactivate the Yahoo-news group. Nextdoor will be your one source for current information and communication regarding any issues concerns, events and updates in Overlea. This is an exciting way to keep in touch with your neighbors and to enhance our community! It is only for those who live in the Overlea boundaries. To join visit: [nextdoor.com/join/BFRWGX](http://nextdoor.com/join/BFRWGX)

## An Update on Belair Road Revitalization

*By Dennis Robinson*

A few months ago the State Highway Administration (SHA) hosted a meeting at Overlea High School to discuss the planned revitalization of Belair Road in the county from the city line to the Beltway. To sum it up, the communities along the corridor were well represented. The project is still in the design phase. You may have seen the survey team working along Belair Road for the past couple of months. The design is complex involving the road, curbing, drainage signal lights, turn lanes, crosswalks and utility poles as well as underground utility lines/pipes.

The primary focus is pedestrian and vehicular safety. Prior to construction, utility companies will participate in developing the most efficient and cost effective way to remedy challenges. The project also will require the settlement of right of way issues.

Funding is provided for the design phase but not yet for the actual construction phase. Construction will most likely not

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## OCA MEETING SCHEDULE

**NEXT COMMUNITY MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 9, 2014 • 7PM**

### SPEAKERS:

- **Major Rich Worley**, Commanding Officer of the Northeastern District Baltimore Police Department.
- **Robert Yochem**, Baltimore Field Director for Nextdoor. Mr. Yochem will be presenting a live demonstration of the on-line communication system the community is now using.
- Phillip Mills from Baltimore County Code Enforcement.

All speakers will be taking questions and concerns after their presentations.

### LOCATION: The Natural History Society of MD.

6908 Belair Road, Baltimore, MD 21206  
corner of Chesley Ave. & Belair Rd.

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OCA is, as are many residents, continually concerned about the trash the mass transit traffic generates coming through our neighborhood and the impact it has. We find it demoralizing as a community. Senator Klausmeier is highly responsive to our concerns and plans to meet with the OCA in the near future. Our desire is that the volume of bus patronage be reduced by changing or dispersing the junction of the bus routes to a level that the small intersection can accommodate. Finally on the topic of the bus loop, an Overlea resident has been removing regular graffiti from the stop for the past two years. The MTA will and has done it in the past but our desire is to remove it immediately. Another volunteer has removed well over 60 illegal signs posted on utility poles throughout our neighborhood. We have all seen them. They are the "we will buy your house" signs. If you see them posted on utility poles or public property please remove them. Baltimore County Code Enforcement has been asked to assist with this continuing problem.

Additional efforts with other property clean up on Belair Road and in the residential community are also underway. We are stepping up efforts to request more code enforcement from both the county and city code enforcement. This may result in warnings and subsequent citations for properties that are not being maintained. Please show respect for our community and neighbors by taking a critical look at your property and seeing how you may be able to enhance the appearance.

The Belair Road revitalization effort underway by the State Highway Administration is continuing. This will be going on for approximately the next five years. Curt Phillips has volunteered to be our liaison with the State for this massive project.

The old Overlea Station property is still seeking a tenant. There is a tentative applicant for licenses to operate a similar business at the site. More will follow when there is final confirmation. In the meantime we will continue to work with property management to clean up the location.

All of the above is just a fraction of what very few volunteers have accomplished.

We invite those concerned and interested in the OCA efforts on Belair Road to consider how you may be able to make a difference and help in these ongoing efforts.

The vision of an attractive "main street" has to be held onto and our efforts must be strong and steadfast.

The next OCA general meeting is September 9th, 7pm at the Naturalist Center, 6908 Belair Road. Come to meet police commanders, code enforcement agents, and to hear more about the Nextdoor network we are establishing for the benefit of Overlea residents. Please save the date, come and make a difference you are our greatest asset as a community.

Dennis Robinson Sr.

## FUTURE DUMPSTER DATES

Sept. 20 • Nov. 22

Mark your calendars! Our next Dumpster Day will be **Sept. 20th** with the dumpster located at the corner of Brook and Overlea Avenues. We are happy to see so many folks take advantage of the free dumpster. The OCA will send out reminders on the OCA yahoo newsgroup and Overlea Community Facebook page.

**NOT ACCEPTED:** oil-based paints, pesticides, herbicides, car and household batteries, drain cleaners, gasoline, pool chemicals, tires or any other hazardous materials.

**Dumpster Days are for OVERLEA RESIDENTS ONLY - NOT FOR COMMERCIAL USE.**

### SAVE THE DATE!

Overlea Community Christmas Tree Lighting Event- December 13th at 7pm. Santa will be arriving by firetruck!

### OVERLEA CITIZENS ON PATROL

Interested in seeing our community form a Citizens on Patrol like so many communities have in Baltimore City and County? Please contact Doris Poling at [dfpoling18@yahoo.com](mailto:dfpoling18@yahoo.com)

### IMPROVEMENTS COMING

Manor Ave. and Kenwood Ave. from Mannington Ave. to Dale Ave. will be receiving new curbs, gutters and sidewalks. Thanks to Councilwoman Bevins for requesting and receiving these projects and for the recent paving of Taylor Avenue.

### THANKS TO THE DINER

A big thank you to the Overlea Diner for allowing the OCA board to use their back room every month. Great food and company!

### IS YOUR NEIGHBOR TRASHY?

Does your neighbor improperly store garbage outside in plastic bags and not in cans with lids? What's the harm? RATS! Do everyone on your block a favor- REPORT THEM TO CODE ENFORCEMENT ASAP. Baltimore County: 410-887-3351; [Paieforce@Baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:Paieforce@Baltimorecountymd.gov) or online at <http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/permits/codeenforcement/codecomplaint.html> Baltimore City: Call 311. It can be done anonymously.

#### OCA OFFICERS AND NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

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P.O. Box 18895, Raspeburg, MD 21206



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*Expires 12/31/14*

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begin until 2016-2017 provided that funding is made available. It is a massive project due to the need to move utility poles, achieve ADA (Americans with Disability Act) compliance and widen the roadway. It may not be completed until 2019. This is a long-term project that will have benefits lasting for decades afterward.

A significant amount of design work is still necessary. SHA representatives were very helpful in responding to our questions and concerns from those present. In the future, an online site will be available by the Maryland SHA for updates. To show the unity of this project, representatives from the Baltimore City Department of Transportation were also present as well as Larry Simmons from the office of the County Executive.

Curt Phillips who was involved in the original task force has volunteered to represent the Overlea community in future meetings. Thank you Curt for stepping up to help with this as you have done in the past. Stay tuned for updates as this project moves forward.

## Transforming the Maryland Naturalist Center

By Amy Young, Natural History Society of Maryland (Board Member and volunteer)

In 2006, the Natural History Society of Maryland relocated its headquarters to 6908 Belair Road in Overlea, located near the Baltimore City – County line. Ever since then, our dedicated volunteers have been envisioning the building's new identity as the Maryland Naturalist Center. Our vision is to make this building into a natural history museum and nature education facility for the citizens of Maryland—a place where Marylanders and people from around the world can come to observe nature, learn from local experts, experience our collections, and realize the importance of the natural sciences.

First, our volunteers created a 1200 square foot multi-purpose room that has been used for numerous programs, as well as a regular meeting space for the Overlea Community Association and Baltimore Mineral Society. Recently, we have been reorganizing our natural history collections and creating more efficient workspaces. We're excited to announce the next stage in our transformation as we improve our curb appeal and implement more sustainable practices!

The Society's headquarters was selected as one of nine locations in Baltimore City and County to benefit from a \$1.5 million Maryland's Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Fund grant awarded to Blue Water Baltimore. Slated to begin in fall 2014, the project will implement innovative practices to decrease nitrogen and phosphorus pollution in local waterways while creating cleaner, greener spaces for neighborhoods. With over 80 percent of our property being impervious surface, reducing stormwater runoff is a high priority.

A variety of sustainable landscaping elements will be incorporated into the project design, as part of a final project for George Washington University graduate

student, Brian Harvey. Brian, who is working on his Masters of Professional Studies in Landscape Design with a Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Landscapes, has been conscientious about incorporating the Society's mission into the project. "The goal is to educate people about both the natural history of the site, and to show how effective stormwater management can help to preserve the natural history of Maryland," noted Brian. Emphasis will be placed on installing native plantings that will encourage more wildlife, such as birds and butterflies, to the site. All designs will be based on or look similar to naturally occurring systems.



## Commemorating the Women's Suffrage March of 1913

On June 9, we commemorated the important role our 'Old Overlea Town Hall' played in the Women's Suffrage movement. Many prominent Maryland women were on hand for the unveiling of the memorial plaque, sponsored by the Maryland Historical Trust and Maryland State Highway Administration, which reads:

*"Before the 19th Amendment was passed in 1920, American Women were not guaranteed the right to vote. The National American Woman Suffrage Association organized a large parade in Washington, D.C. for March 3, 1913. On February 12, a group of women called 'The Army of the Hudson' began marching from New York City to the Capital. They were met by supporters at Overlea Town Hall on February 23. After a journey of 230 miles, they joined the parade of 8,000, bringing national attention to voting rights for women."*

Special thanks to Senator Kathy Klausmeier (District 8) for establishing the Commission on the Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution. The memorial plaque in front of the Natural History Society of Maryland Naturalist Center, is the first site in Maryland to be acknowledged for its significance to the suffrage movement. Additional thanks to: Secretary Gloria Lawlah (Department of Aging), Diane Williams (Maryland Commission for Women), Dietra Luca (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) and Emily Oland Squires (Maryland State Archives). Many thanks to the Natural History Society of Maryland for hosting this historic event.



**2014 - 2015**  
**OVERLEA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**  
**MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN**

Dear Neighbor,

**YOUR** Overlea Community Association works hard on your behalf to make our community better for everyone who lives here and we need your support to keep it going for another year.

Your dues help to pay for the newsletters you receive, the [www.OverleaRocks.org](http://www.OverleaRocks.org) website, donations for using the facilities when we have General Meetings and this membership drive as well as various other operating costs. The people who serve you in the community are all volunteers and your dues are only used for operating costs so every dollar goes into making **YOUR** community better!

**Together we CAN make a difference! Your dues make your neighborhood a better place so don't wait! Join today!**

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OCA 2014-2015 MEMBERSHIP FORM    *YES! I WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN OVERLEA!*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check membership type and make checks payable to: Overlea Community Association

Member - \$10       Good Neighbor - \$25 or more       Business - \$50

MAIL TO: Overlea Community Association, P.O. Box 18895, Raspeburg, MD 21206

Dues can also be paid by PayPal on line at [www.OverleaRocks.org](http://www.OverleaRocks.org) membership tab.