

GOOD NEIGHBORS / GOOD NEIGHBORHOODS
Oakland Mills Neighborhood Enhancement Advisory Committee

MEETING NOTES
22 July 2015, 7:00-8:30 pm

This was the second meeting of the Neighborhood Enhancement Advisory Committee. Over 46 people attended.

A. The agenda began with introductions, during which people voiced their reasons for attending and their areas of interest and concern. These included:

1. Threats to property values
2. Foreclosed, abandoned, and condemned houses
3. Residential and commercial property maintenance issues
4. Long-term covenant compliance problems with no resolution
5. Maintenance of CA properties in Oakland Mills
6. Lack of covenant enforcement
7. Lack of communication re status of covenant enforcement/resolution
8. Lack of easy access to or information about the covenants -- What is or isn't a violation?
9. HOA responsibilities for covenant compliance
10. OM/CA/HC jurisdiction over problematic properties
11. OM/CA/HC jurisdiction over number of people residing in a house, number and parking of vehicles, etc.
12. Increasing 'curb appeal' of houses
13. Safety and security concerns
14. Storage of trash cans
15. Driveway maintenance
16. Newspapers in driveways

B. The goals for the meeting were outlined as follows:

1. Review the Committee's goals, organization, and accomplishments to-date
2. Review the outcomes of the 01 June 2015 meeting, including notes and suggestions *
3. Summarize research about issues and procedures in the other nine Columbia Villages *
4. Discuss the draft of proposed recommendations for the Village Board for updates to the Oakland Mills Covenant Compliance Process *

** NOTE: Electronic copies of these documents were sent to everyone on the NEAC mailing list; hard copies were available at the meeting.*

C. Review: Committee Goals and Accomplishments as of 21 July 2015

26 May 2015: The Oakland Mills Village Board established the Neighborhood Enhancement Advisory Committee (NEAC) as an official committee of the Board. The committee's proposed scope of work may include, but is not limited to, (1) identifying methods for systematically resolving problems involving foreclosed, abandoned, and deteriorating properties; (2) advocating on behalf of Oakland Mills before the Howard County Planning Board and other County departments; (3) advising the Oakland Mills Village Board about the plan for the New Town district and actions regarding the plan; (4) advising the Oakland Mills Village Board about Howard County ordinances regarding on-street parking of oversized vehicles; and (4) beginning discussions with the Howard County police department about re-locating the Oakland Mills police substation.

1 June 2015: NEAC held an initial exploratory and organizational meeting 2015, during which attendees raised dozens of concerns and made suggestions for solutions.

June-July 2015: NEAC reviewed processes followed in Oakland Mills and researched those followed in the other nine Columbia villages. The majority of villages other

than Oakland Mills have revised these processes within the past two years. In light of current market conditions, and as recommended by legal advice obtained by the Board, the Oakland Mills Covenant Enforcement Process is overdue for review.

22 July 2015: NEAC meeting to be held to consider a draft revision to the Oakland Mills Covenant Enforcement Process, based on research and review findings. An updated Covenant Enforcement should include tight deadlines, foster transparency, and respect the rights of all residents. When finalized, the proposed revision will be presented to the Oakland Mills Board for their consideration.

D. Review: Issues and Procedures in Other Columbia Villages

The draft proposed update of the Oakland Mills Covenant Enforcement Process was grounded in research into best practices followed by the other nine Columbia Villages, as well as the guidelines from the Columbia Association. A summary of the findings was handed out to all attendees for their review.

The following, from Wilde Lake Village, was brought forward by one attendees for consideration:

From time to time (approximately every three years), the Wilde Lake Community Association employs a Property Standards Evaluator to perform curbside inspections of properties within Wilde Lake. These evaluations are intended to be a "spot check" and to make property owners/residents aware of observed violations. Notification is normally via postcard and lists the items on the property that may need to be addressed. The Wilde Lake Community Association also maintains a copy of each property evaluation.

Wilde Lake Guidelines (rev. 2015)
<http://www.wildelake.org/forms/Guidelines.pdf>

A similar suggestion was put forward at the 1 June 2015 NEAC meeting.

After a lengthy and detailed discussion of pros, cons, and possible adaptations, it was **unanimously approved** that NEAC propose that to the Oakland Mills Village Board that OM institute an inspection procedure as follows:

Every three years, on a rotating basis (one neighborhood each year), the Oakland Mills Village Association will employ a Property Standards Evaluator to perform curbside inspections of all properties (single family, townhouses, condominiums, apartments, and commercial) within Oakland Mills. These evaluations are intended to make the Village Board aware of the prevalence and scope of issues and to make property owners/residents aware of observed violations. Notification will normally be made via postcard and will list the items on the property that may need to be addressed. The Oakland Mills Village Association also will also maintain a copy of each property evaluation.

E. Discussion: Draft Proposed Update to the Oakland Mills Covenant Enforcement Process

A copy of the draft proposed update was handed out to all attendees. The co-chairs led a point-by-point discussion of the proposal.

The NEAC Co-chairs as well as the current OM Architecture Committee Chair, the OM Village Board Co-chair, and the immediately past OM Architecture Committee Chair responded to all questions that were raised during the discussion. As a result, two additions and one correction to the document were made. A copy of the amended document is attached.

At the end of the meeting, those attending **unanimously approved** submitting the draft proposed update, as amended during the meeting, to the Oakland Mills Village Board at the 28 July 2015 meeting for them to take under consideration. Following the Village Board meeting, the proposal will be made publicly available to all Oakland Mills residents for their comments.