



Oakland Mills Community Association
The Other Barn | 5851 Robert Oliver Place
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February 12, 2026

Columbia Association Board of Directors Members
Shawn MacInnes, President and CEO
6301 Hillside Court
Columbia, MD 21046

Dear Members of the CA Board and Mr. MacInnes,

The proposed CA budget for next fiscal year includes \$350,000 for a “Community Gathering Space – Splash Pad Design” that is a precursor for conversion of a neighborhood pool into a splash pad. Based on the December presentation by Dan Burns, one of the pools up for discussion is Talbott Springs in Oakland Mills. We want the Talbott Springs pool to continue to serve our residents as it has been for over 50 years. Our Board would like to see greater use of this pool. We are against the proposed splash pad conversion.

Based on first-hand observations over a few years of CA pools with splash pads, the pads get little use. Furthermore, the Stevens Forest pool is just a mile from Talbott Springs and is often a top five attended pool. CA runs programs at this pool to attract attendance from throughout Columbia and has invested in heating the pool, adding a hot tub, and adding an event canopy. With strategic reallocation of programs and investments, attendance could potentially be more balanced between these two neighboring pools, while alleviating complaints our village board has received that Stevens Forest does not offer enough open swim time and is often overcrowded. Conversely, closing Talbott Springs would likely add to the crowding at Stevens Forest, which already is beyond capacity to serve as the home practice venue for the Oakland Mills CNSL team.

We have attached a letter from James Rouse to CA President Padriac Kennedy from 1993 concerning neighborhood pools. In the letter, he clearly states the function, purpose and importance of neighborhood pools. We feel those points are still very valid in 2026.

To increase use of the three targeted pools we suggest:

- Charging reduced fees for use of these pools
- Holding swimming lessons at these pools
- Making them ADA compliant and marketing the pools to that segment of the population
- Adding amenities that have been successful at increasing use of other pools

We also suggest that CA work with the 10 Village Boards to explore ways that the \$4.5 million it would take to demolish three pools and replace them with splash pads could be spent enhancing open space to increase the use of open space by our residents. Open space is the only amenity that residents get for their lien fee. All other amenities require additional fees. Increasing lien payers Return on Investment of their lien fee should be a major goal of CA.

We always look forward to working with CA on enhancing Columbia’s status as a great place to live, work, play and visit.

Sincerely,

Oakland Mills Board of Directors

Attachment

JAMES W. ROUSE

January 15, 1993

Dear Pat:

It is seldom that I have expressed opinions on a matter of issue in the affairs of the Columbia Association.

But the prospective action of CA in making the Bryant Woods Pool, or any other neighborhood pool, an "adult pool" seems to me to be so in opposition to the concept and the plan for Columbia that I write to express my hope that such action is not taken.

The pool in each neighborhood was provided as a neighborhood facility to provide family recreation as a part of the fundamental Columbia concept of building community among the people.

Surely, Columbia would not be willing to transform the use of the park or path system because there seemed to be a better market for some other use.

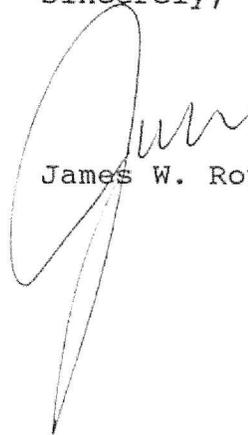
It is a strange new line of thinking that measures the use of a neighborhood pool by a market survey.

If this were a neighborhood survey, and the neighborhood chose to see the pool operated in a different manner, for the sake of the neighborhood, that would be more understandable. But I can find no justification for changing the operation of a neighborhood pool because it is not being used as much as other pools and there is a better market for some other use. The only valid question would be: "Does it serve the neighborhood?"

Please forgive my intervention in this matter and understand that my position is not influenced by our

residency in Bryant Woods. The fact is that Patty and I have never used the pool. But we consider it important as a neighborhood centering facility -- and one to which the neighborhood is entitled for its original intended use.

Sincerely,



James W. Rouse

cc: Mrs. Marcy Gitt

Mr. Padraic Kennedy
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