



Special Edition

As Americans, there are many competing responsibilities and obligations to be met in 2020.

Make sure these are at the top of your list:

- Stay Healthy! Stay Safe! Stay Indoors!
- Complete the Census; Be Counted.
- Vote as if your family's life depends on it.
- Take a Stand: ASSERT YOUR RIGHTS AS A CITIZEN.



April 2020

OLCAA of East Oak Lane

The East Oak Lane Paper

New OLCAA website: www.olcaa.org Check out our new format!

New email address: olcaa.eol@gmail.com

Save a tree — ask OLCAA to send your newsletter *electronically* via email.

The Members Only Dinner has been cancelled and will be rescheduled at a later date.

General Membership Meeting and Election

Wednesday, May 27, 2020

Time and Place — TBA

Special Thanks to our Contributors!

Eric Brice, Smiley Ferebee,
Freida Williams

THIS ISSUE

Production Staff

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The Importance of RCOs

By: Eric Brice

As residents know, East Oak Lane is a very beautiful and desirable neighborhood to live in and raise a family. For those who thought that this area was one of the city's 'best kept secrets,' they may be surprised to realize that this is no longer the case - if that were ever true. The diverse demographic and housing stock in EOL are an attraction that has caught the attention of both investors and developers alike. This can be a good thing, if it is monitored by the resident stakeholders, and a bad thing, if it is not. Positive development and investment in a community is welcome and often necessary for a neighborhood to evolve and grow toward its full potential. However, it is important that the neighborhood residents and/or stake-

holders have a voice in that evolution. That's where the importance of RCOs come in to play.

The Oak Lane Community Action Association (OLCAA) has been the 'Registered Community Organization' for East Oak Lane for nearly ten years now. It has consistently addressed housing and zoning issues through the city's 'RCO' mechanism that forces developers seeking zoning variance amendments for their proposed project, to meet with the appropriate 'RCO' designated by the District City Council. Though the current legislation has its flaws and is need of much improvement, it is all we have for now to keep us at the gate. With that in mind, it is

crucial that as a community, we support and show up when a meeting is called to address housing and zoning issues in our neighborhood. We keep our RCO designation for as long as we use it and deserve it - through participation.

As defined by *phila.gov*, "Registered Community Organizations (RCOs) are community groups that are concerned with the physical development of their community ... Organize and conduct public meetings where community members can comment on planned developments in their neighborhood."

2020 Election for OLCAA's Board of Directors

By: Smiley Ferebee

"Striving to Build a Better Community" is the Oak Lane Community Action Association's mantra. We are inviting all neighbors with integrity and genuine passion for our neighborhood to come and join our Board of Directors with the desire to participate as a team player in serving our community. Current OLCAA members, in good standing for at least one year, are encouraged to run for a seat on the Board of Directors. If you have a volunteering spirit and can commit to the responsibilities set forth, you are needed and welcome to make a difference!

A Board of Directors Application Form can be found on Page 3 of this newsletter. If you want to

be considered or would like to nominate someone for the OLCAA Board, please contact OLCAA on our hotline at 215-224-2777. Our address is P.O. Box 2926, Philadelphia, PA 19141. You can also email us at olcaa.eol@gmail.com.

The deadline for nominations is **Tuesday, May 19, 2020** and the Election will be held on **Wednesday, May 27, 2020**. The time and place of the Election and General Membership Meeting will be announced shortly. If you have any questions, please contact Sharon Wilson, General Membership & Election Committee Chair, at email s.wils@att.net.



OAK LANE COMMUNITY ACTION ASSOCIATION

OLCAA BOARD of DIRECTORS APPLICATION FORM

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL:

Requirements as per OLCAA By-Laws

By-Law #2.3 *The Board of directors shall consist of fifteen (15) directors, all to be elected by the members of the corporation. Each director shall hold his or her directorship for a period of two (2) years from the date of election, and no one may serve as director for more than three (3) consecutive two-year terms. The election of directors shall be staggered, so that in even years an election shall be held to fill eight (8) directorships, and in odd years an election shall be held to fill seven (7) directorships. (Amended as of October 2, 1996)

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR REQUEST TO THE ELECTION COMMITTEE BY MAY 15, 2020

1. How long have you been a member of OLCAA?
2. What interests and / or skills will you bring with your service on the OLCAA Board of Directors?
3. What OLCAA committees have you served?
4. What other organizations are you affiliated with?
5. Have you ever supported and/or participated in any OLCAA sponsored event? If yes, please specify.
6. Why do you want to serve on the OLCAA Board of Directors?

With Apologies to Dr. John: Wrong Place, Wrong, Wrong, Wrong, Wrong Time

By: Freida Williams

This information is to make you aware of a proposed development in East Oak Lane and to advise you of actions being taken by your neighbors in opposition to the development and what you can do.

In 2015, there were rumors that the Refuge Evangelical Church planned to build upon this site, which was formerly a church that burned down in 2013. It was conveyed to the Church personnel involved that any developments involving facilities or congregate buildings would not be welcomed.

The current proposal is for a 40 unit, 1 bedroom senior apartment building to be located at the intersection of North 12th Street and Oak Lane Avenue. This project requires a zoning variance, as the current zoning does not allow for multi-family dwellings, the proposed height allowance and stipulation for side and back yard clearances, and required parking spaces. The proposed height of the building is 44 feet, exceeding the requirement by 6 feet. The back and side yard allowances are under the requirement by 22 feet and 5 feet. The required number of parking spaces are 27, whereas none are proposed. A parking arrangement for two staff

members has been negotiated with Refuge Baptist Church, the sponsor of the project, along with a private developer, Conifer.

You may recall that Refuge presented a request for variance for a parking lot at this location back in 2016. This was approved conditionally at a Community Meeting and approved, with conditions, by the Zoning Board. The conditions were lighting, landscaping, erection of a fence - in accordance with community standards, availability for community use, and including benches for community use. Feel free to drive past the intersection to see what improvements have been made to the lot since 2016.

Notice for a Community Meeting was made via letter, public postings, an email notice, and a notice at the Oak Lane Library. The Community Meeting was held Wednesday, February 5, 2020, and the project was opposed by an 84 to 15 vote majority. A letter of this vote was sent to the Zoning Board of Adjustment, the City Planning Commission, and Office of Councilwoman Cherrille Parker. Individual letters were also sent to the Friends of the Oak Lane Library, The Tree Tenders, and

individual residents who live directly adjacent to the proposed development.

The Zoning Board Hearing was then held on Wednesday, February 12, 2020. At the hearing, over 25 residents took the time to travel into Center City to appear and/or testify at the Zoning Hearing. A statement of opposition from OLCAA, the RCO for the area, and testimony was given by multiple residents, including the near neighbors whose homes will be directly impacted and/or obstructed, was heard. A lengthy statement from Councilwoman Cherrille Parker was read in support of the development. Cited in the Councilwoman's statement was a report, which stated that a member of her staff sat at the intersection for an hour and no traffic issues were noted. Also included was the 2035 plan statement of need for senior housing, aging demographics, and a receipt of the opposition that was received in her office from only 22 or 23 neighbors.

Refuting the councilwoman's position, OLCAA would like to note the following:

- A one hour study does not, in any way, reflect the traffic flow.
- The East Oak Lane 2035 Plan clearly stated no

additional apartment dwellings or maintenance of zoning requirements requested, as well as the 9th District Plan, which calls for use of existing buildings for further residential developments.

- No survey of the affected demographic was completed to ascertain their desires regarding choice of living arrangements, rather a presumption was made as to their desire and then translated into this proposal. Current documented studies reveal seniors prefer to age in their own homes.
- If you have not already, please send your letter to the Zoning Board of Adjustment (see address on next page).

Documented and stated opposition to the project was based on the following:

Location: This is not well thought out, as it is on the same block as an existing multifamily apartment complex, which is already zoned to allow for multifamily units. These two buildings would bring, at minimum, 94 residents, in addition to the residents of the homes on this one block (allowing for only one tenant per unit at the proposed development).

Traffic: The intersection of North 12th Street and Oak Lane Avenue already supports traffic and parking from the Oak Lane Library and the

Ellwood School, in addition to traffic from the congregations and church activities of the Oak Lane Presbyterian Church and Refuge Baptist Churches at North 11th Street and Oak Lane Avenue. This new building would significantly increase traffic from its new residents, their families, friends and other service providers.

Parking: The lack of parking spaces will exponentially increase the demand for street parking spaces on the immediate and extended surrounding blocks.

Building Design: The design of this building, as proposed, is unappealing to many as it is a square, red brick building, which appears to be consistent with the design of the Refuge Baptist Church, rather than in harmony with the architectural history of buildings of Oak Lane. Conifer, a non-local developer, has erected other such squat buildings with no parking, suggesting form over function and fit.

Population and Building Density: There are already apartment complexes at 69th Avenue and North 12th Street and at North 8th Street and 66th Avenue. In addition, the rehabilitation of the condominium building at

6751 North 13th Street is expected to provide additional multifamily dwelling space. This area from North 7th Street to Broad Street and Oak Lane Avenue to W. Cheltenham Avenue is full of apartments, including illegal single family conversions, group homes, personal care homes, rehabilitation homes, and does not require additional congregate housing.

No Hardship: Would be caused to the church, as the income from the project will primarily go to the developer, per the funding arrangement. Sale of this land could well fund a project at another location. It was the church's decision to purchase the land and to plan a non-approved project upon it. It is not the obligation of the community to fulfil someone else's vision, even if that effort is unsuccessful. More members of the church appear to reside outside of the boundaries of East Oak Lane than within. Is it the will of the residents to be usurped by others? It is worth noting that Council woman Parker voiced support to the members of that community who vociferously resisted implementation of a safe injection site in their community.

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With Apologies to Dr. John: Wrong Place, Wrong, Wrong, Wrong, Wrong Time

By: Freida Williams

Continued from Page 5

Access: According to the funding requirements, no preference can be given to East Oak Lane residents, and though this is described as “affordable housing,” out of the 40 units, fewer than 10 units would be open and available for persons at the maximum income level of \$57,000 annually.

For residents who are not in favor of this development, who feel that it is not the obligation of the community to fulfill someone else’s idea, and agree that its building allows and promotes continuing and zoning noncompliance, adds to overcrowding, is an unnecessary addition to the landscape and the existing number of congregate units, will have an adverse impact on traffic and parking - resulting in a cumulatively adverse impact upon the near neighbors and the East Oak Lane Community as a whole,

we want to hear from you!

You are invited to appear at the next hearing, call the City Planning office, and/or send a letter, in writing, prior to the Continued Hearing Date on **Tuesday, April 21, 2020**, to:

Chairman Frank DiCicco,
Zoning Board of
Adjustment, 1515 Arch
Street, 18th Floor,
Philadelphia, PA 19102, or
email RCOZBA@phila.gov

Ian Hegarty, City Planning
Commission, 1515 Arch
Street, 13th Floor,
Philadelphia, PA 19102,
or email RCO_Notification@phila.gov

Councilwoman Cherelle
Parker, City Hall, Room
577, Philadelphia, PA
19107, or email
hilary.emerson@phila.gov

Email a copy of your letter to olcaa.eol@gmail.com, or mail a copy to P.O. Box 2926, Philadelphia, PA 19141. If you

would like, OLCAA will deliver your letter for you. Other ways that you can help are by signing the petitions that are being circulated and/or purchasing a lawn sign. If you have suggestions for desired or needed senior support services, please include that in the letter as well. Other ideas to present in support of community cohesion are welcomed.

Consider the Virtual Village Concept, expect to hear more about how neighbors serving neighbors can help to assist people to remain in their own homes, while retaining a sense of connection to their communities, without relocating and to be of help to current caretakers.

Be alert to other plans for imposing projects upon communities.

In Communitas: Shared, Interest, Vision, Goals



Please feel free to use this template when sending your letter to Mr. Frank DiCicco.

April 2020

Mr. Frank DiCicco
Chairman Zoning Board of Adjustment
1515 Arch Street
18th Floor, Room 18006
Philadelphia, PA 19102

RE: 1122 Oak Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19126

Dear Mr. DiCicco:

I am a resident of East Oak Lane and I have lived here for _____ years. I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed development of a 40 unit apartment building at the address above.

My reasons for opposing the development are as follows:

Please consider and accept these concerns in making a decision, which will affect my community for years to come, as a development of this nature is essentially a permanent addition to our neighborhood.

Respectfully,

Address _____

Phone Number _____

OLCAA Senior Survey 2020

In the interest of identifying and documenting the specific needs and desires of our diverse senior citizen demographic in the East Oak Lane community, the Oak Lane Community Action Association (OLCAA) has developed this 'Senior Services Survey.' The information this data will provide will give OLCAA the basis to effectively advocate for access to appropriate resources that would better serve the needs of our community's most treasured assets, in ways that are sustainable. Please take a moment to complete this brief survey.

WHO ARE YOU:

I am: Male Female Non-Binary Prefer Not to Answer
I am: 55-65 66-75 76-80 81-89 90 and Above
I am: Retired Semi-Retired Still Employed: Part-time / Full-time
I have been a resident of East Oak Lane for _____ years / months. (circle one)

List 3 things you would like to see in East Oak Lane to enhance, and or sustain your life.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

SERVICES:

I currently receive in-home (where I live) services: Yes No

What type services do you currently receive? Circle all that apply below.

- Home Health Aide
- Medical
- Therapies: OT, PT, Speech
- Errands/Shopping
- Transportation
- Companion
- Assisted Living

I would like to receive in-home services: Yes No

Which of the above listed services would you like for yourself or another that you do not already receive?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. I do not wish/need to receive services.

Are there any services you would like to have access to that are not listed here, what are they?

Reasons Services Are Not Currently Accessed (circle all that apply):

- Income Requirements
- Unaware of What is Available
- Do Not Know How to Access
- Cost

Would you accept volunteer non-medical services? Yes No

HOUSING PREFERENCE:

Rank in Order of Preference

_____ Reside with Relative, other than Spouse.

_____ Remain in Current Housing. Indicate which type below:

- Apt, House, Transitional, Congregate/group
- Senior Living Complex Multi Levels of Care
- Age Specific Senior Housing/ Retirement Community
- Non-Senior Apt Complex

Thank You for your participation!

Mail to P.O. Box 2926, Philadelphia. PA 19141 or send to olcaa.eol@gmail.com.

OLCAA is here to serve!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____



Oak Lane Community Action Association
MEMBERSHIP FORM

- NEW MEMBER**
 RENEWAL
 DONATION

The membership term runs from May 1 through April 30 of the following year.

Select your membership below; Includes subscription to OLCAA's newsletter (**add \$1.00 for mailed copy**):

Full

- Individual \$15
 Household (2 voting members) \$25
 Student (under 23) \$6
 Senior (65+) \$10

Associate

- East Oak Lane Business/Organization
 Non-East Oak Lane resident \$25
 This household has more than one OLCAA member. (Help us reduce mailings!)

I/We wish to make an additional contribution of:

- \$500+ (Oak Club) \$ _____
 \$100-499 (Maple Club) \$ _____
 \$50-99 (Willow Club) \$ _____
 \$1-49 (Spruce Club) \$ _____

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____

(Please print clearly)

Make check or money order payable to:

Oak Lane Community Action Assn.
 Fill in this form online and save. Email it to us as an attachment (Use as the *Subject* line: **Membership**). Mail us your payment.

 Or mail completed form with payment to:
OLCAA P.O. Box 2926 Phila., PA 19141

Member or Donor _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

ZIP Code: _____ **Phone:** _____ **Date:** _____

Email: _____

I would like more information on:
 Placing ads in the newsletter
 Contributing to OLCAA Committees (*Select from below*):

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beautification | <input type="checkbox"/> Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of Life |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crime, Safety, & Security | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Please send me email security alerts | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing & Zoning | |

I would like to earmark my additional OLCAA donation to the committee(s) checked above:

I would prefer to receive the newsletter select below:

- Via email
 Printed copy mailed to me **add \$1.00** to my membership

Join us!

How did you learn about OLCAA?
 Newsletter
 OLCAA website
 Word of mouth

Other: _____

Comments: _____

OLCAA is classified as a public charity under Section 501(c)(3). Donations are tax-deductible under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Contact us at the OLCAA Hotline: **215-224-2777** Website: **www.olcaa.org** Email **olcaa.eol@gmail.com**

Don't Sanitize Yourself to Death

By: Eric Brice

During the current health crisis, we are all encouraged to take appropriate measures to protect ourselves, our family and friends, as well as the society at-large from spreading the COVID-19 virus. Thorough hand washing and surface disinfection are what is required as daily practice by all. Be advised that 'cleaning' and 'disinfecting' are not synonymous, there is a difference. Just because a surface looks or smells 'clean' doesn't mean that it is free of germs and bacteria – especially if a 'disinfectant cleaner' wasn't used. With that in mind, be careful when using common household disinfecting chemicals. When used improperly, they can be hazardous/toxic to your health. Use only as directed by the manufacturer.

**CLEANING CAUTION:
Do Not Mix the following
common chemicals!!**

Bleach + Ammonia = Toxic chloramine vapors

Be sure to check the ingredients lists of your cleaning products to ensure you're not unknowingly using these products together. For instance, Windex comes in both ammonia and ammonia-free formulas.

Certain formulations of Drano contain bleach.

Why: Inhaling the vapors could cause respiratory damage and throat burns.

The worst that could happen: If ammonia is present in excess, toxic and potentially explosive liquid hydrazine may

be formed.

Bleach + Vinegar = Toxic chlorine and chloramine vapors

While the combination does create a good disinfectant, these two common cleaning agents should never be used at the same time.

Why: Adding any weak acid to bleach will release toxic chlorine and chloramine vapors.

The worst that could

happen: You can get a nasty chemical burn, especially of your eyes and lungs.

Bleach + Rubbing Alcohol = Chloroform

Why: "Ordinary household bleach contains sodium hypochlorite, which reacts with ethanol or isopropyl alcohol to produce chloroform, hydrochloric acid, and other compounds, such as chloroacetone or dichloroacetone."

The worst that could hap-

pen: You could damage your nervous system, eyes, lungs, skin, liver, and kidneys. Extremely high levels of chloroform exposure may result in death, while lower levels could result in dizziness and nausea, according to the EPA.

Hydrogen Peroxide + Vinegar = Peracetic Acid (corrosive irritant)

These two ingredients are commonly touted as natural cleaning methods but combining the two in the same container could result in a corrosive acid.

Why: You can use them on the same surface separately while cleaning, but don't mix them in the same container. You'll create peracetic acid which, despite being an effective sanitizer, is potentially corrosive and irritating.

The worst that could

happen: The health risks aren't well-known, but in high enough concentrations, peracetic acid "is very irritating to the skin, eyes, nose, throat, and lungs, with the potential for causing permanent scarring of the skin, cornea, and throat."



**Want to advertise in our
newsletter?**

Call us at 215-224-2777 or
see the **Contact Us** page on
www.olcaa.org.

Thank you for your support!

Clip and save for later!



Contact us!
Join us!

**Oak Lane Community
Action Association**

P.O. Box 2926
Philadelphia, PA 19141

Phone: 215-224-2777

Email: olcaa.eol@gmail.com

Website:

www.olcaa.org

Striving to build a better neighborhood

Thwart a thief! Remember — lock your car doors!

Stymie a scammer — verify before revealing your personal information!

OLCAA Calendar

2020	Board Meetings	Events
APR*	8	
MAY	13	27 - Election and General Membership Meeting
JUN	10	
JUL	8	
AUG*	12	
SEPT	9	18 - Oak Lane Day
OCT	14	
NOV	11	
DEC*	9	
2021	Board Meetings	Events
JAN	13	16 - Snow Ball
FEB	10	
MAR	10	

* Newsletter issues



Event Space Available

6635 North 11th Street

(Next to the Oak Lane Presbyterian Church, 11th and Oak Lane)

Do you need an indoor or outdoor venue for any of the following?

- Weddings, Showers, Rehearsal Dinners
- Book Clubs, Literary Readings
- Recitals, Art Shows, Dramatic Performances
- Family Reunions, Birthdays, Special Occasions
- Worship Services
- Community Meetings
- Retreats
- Workshops
- Social Clubs

Long-term office space is also available. Contact us for a tour!

Contact: Harriett Atkerson @ 215-888-9018 or Jon Weston @ 215-224-4547

papermanjdw@aol.com



Your OLCAA membership funds our efforts.
Thank you for your support!