



OWEN BROWN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.

6800 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045
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www.owenbrownvillage.org

ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS FOR FY2024

Dear Owen Brown Resident,

We are pleased to present to you this Annual Report which highlights the activities and services provided by the Owen Brown Community Association (OBCA) during the Fiscal Year 2024, which began on May 1, 2023 and ended on April 30, 2024.

As an owner or renter of property in Owen Brown, you are a member of the OBCA. OBCA is distinct from the Columbia Association, but is funded by a small portion of the annual assessment fee you pay to CA. OBCA uses its resources to maintain and enforce Owen Brown's architectural guidelines, run the Owen Brown Community Center off Cradlerock Way, advocate on behalf of village residents, and organize events for village residents.

Every April, OBCA holds an election to determine the Board of Directors for the coming year, which are volunteer positions. The Village Board oversees OBCA and hires a Village Manager to run OBCA operations on a day-to-day basis.

The Village Board wants to hear from residents. Residents may contact the entire Board via email at **obvillageboard@googlegroups.com**. Board meetings are open to the public and are usually held the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Owen Brown Community Center. To confirm a meeting date or for more information in general, please visit our website at **www.owenbrownvillage.org**, or call our office at 410-381-0202.

The office of the OBCA is located in the Owen Brown Community Center, 6800 Cradlerock Way. Office hours are M-F 9-5, Sat 9-12. Limited services are available evenings and weekends when open for rentals.

Sincerely,

The Owen Brown Village Board

COVENANT ACTIVITIES FOR FY24

The Owen Brown Resident Architectural Committee (RAC) members included: Peter Monahan, Marilyn Lepore, Dan McArthur, Betty Byrd and Jessie Stever.

The Executive Architectural Committee (EAC) members included: Sean Hammer, Laurie Weekly, Peter Monahan, Jane Parrish and Brad Butler.

The RAC members review applications for exterior alterations and in-home businesses, and the EAC approves all applications and handles any appeals.

RAC	FY 24	FY 23
Total RAC Applications	359	440
Total Approved as submitted	300	391
Approved w Amendments	35	29
Total Denied	17	17
Total Tabled	2	3
Total Withdrawn	5	1
Total appeals to EAC	8	19
Appeals Approved	6	11

Violations

Total Violation Letters	94	113
Cases Settled at Village Level	72	69
Cases Pending @ Village Level	36	47
ARC cases closed this year	5	11
Cases Referred this Year	4	4

Letters of Compliance

Number of LOCs	94	83
Number Non Compliant	80	70

Thank you to all of our volunteers for their service to the Owen Brown community.

FY24 FINANCIAL RESULT

Income

Total 01 CA Annual Share	325,497
Total 02 Lease and Rental	72,113
04 Interest	0
05 Special Events	3,084
Total 06 Fees	3,299
Total 07 Miscellaneous	210
08 Gain/loss on Disposal of Asset	125

Total Income 404,328

Expense

09 Staff Salaries	210,420
11 Contract Labor	4,680
12 Payroll Benefits	16,944
13 Payroll Taxes	17,901
Total 14 Janitorial Expenses	27,944
Total 15 Fees	7,041
Total 16 Operating Expenses	8,008
Total 17 Business Expenses	775
18 Insurance	6,615
19 Advertising	25
20 Newsletter	35,968
21 Other Printing	250
22 Donations/Contributions	7,000
23 Special Events	39,686
24 Taxes	917
Total 25 Utilities	23,372
Total 26 Repairs & Maintenance	9,829
27 Furniture, Fixtures, Equip	<u>1,766</u>

Total Expenses Before Depreciation 419,531

28 Depreciation 6,528

Total Expense 426,059

Decrease in Unrestricted Net Assets 21,731

BOARD ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR FY2024

Appointments

- ◆ Appointed members of our RAC and EAC to help enforce architectural standards, maintain property values, and update architectural standards
- ◆ Appointed member of the election committee to ensure this year's election is conducted in a fair manner
- ◆ Appointed an Owen Brown resident to CA's Tot Lot working group to support development of a new tot lot strategy for the community

Covenant Enforcement and Architectural Guideline Oversight

- ◆ Referred eleven covenant infractions to CA for legal action
- ◆ Closed five covenant infraction cases which had been resolved after referral to CA
- ◆ Updated our architectural guidelines with support from the EAC to ensure that guidelines remain aligned with modern standards and are written in enforceable ways
- ◆ Oversaw the completion of the first full four-year maintenance inspection cycle of every Owen Brown property

Budget

- ◆ Oversaw the association's budget and conducted quarterly financial reviews
- ◆ Attempted to garner support from other villages and encourage CA to reconsider its strategy for funding/investing in villages
- ◆ Approved new flooring for the Dasher Green room in the Owen Brown Community Center
- ◆ Approved permanent annual funding for OB CARES
- ◆ Solicited legal opinion on potential changes to OB governing documents
- ◆ Approved an advertising budget for the OB election
- ◆ Authorized purchase of a new ice machine for the community center

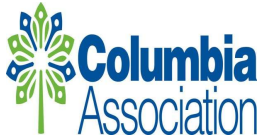
Advocacy

- ◆ Provided written testimony to the Board of Education asking them not to alter Owen Brown's current school districting underway due to the opening of Guilford Park High School
- ◆ Sent letter to CA supporting the changes to the Wishing Bridge tot lot
- ◆ Advocated to CA in support of building a new meadow in Hopewell Park while retaining large turf areas for unstructured activities
- ◆ Sent letter to CA highlighting the fact that it has been four years since both OB pools have been open for a full summer and asked CA to address this issue
- ◆ Successfully engaged the county to alter the initial plans for East Columbia Library Park to move lighting further away from residences and focus the park on the community rather than regional destination
- ◆ Successfully advocated for the county to address pedestrian safety concerns along Cradlerock Way
- ◆ Provided input to the county regarding the Gateway Master Plan
- ◆ Supported CA's application for a grant to install a new rain garden near Lake Elkhorn

Donated a total of \$7,000 to local causes including:

Atholton Athletic Boosters
 Oakland Mills Athletic Boosters
 The Village in Howard
 Owen Brown Barracudas
 Teen Time at East Columbia Library

Oakland Mills PTSA
 Atholton PTSA
 Talbot Springs PTA
 Lake Elkhorn PTSA
 Cradlerock PTA



END OF FY-2024 REPORT —SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS

From the desk of Andy Stack, former Columbia Council Representative

As I close out my term, it has been a successful year for CA and the Board. Some accomplishments include:

- The FY-2024 budget is ending on a positive note; all budget targets were met and CA improved its bottom line; the final results will be available in July 2024 after the independent auditors complete their analysis
- The independent auditors gave CA a clean opinion (which is the best you can receive) for the FY-2023 budget
- CA's 990 IRS Form (the non-profit tax form) was approved
- CA was able to place \$3,000,000 into the Emergency Cash Reserves Fund which brings the fund to approximately \$11,100,000 (the goal is \$19,000,000)
- Memberships to CA facilities continue to increase; working on reaching pre-pandemic level
- CA's Line of Credit (for short term borrowing) was extended
- The CA Points Program was extended to 20 schools (allowing more students to earn memberships)
- The budget process was enhanced to allow for more community input (including surveys) and community meetings
- The FY-2025 budget was approved which continues CA's recovery from the pandemic; \$13,000,000 will be devoted to Capital Projects and the budget target is for CA to have a positive increase in net assets and to place another \$3,000,000 into the Emergency Cash Reserves Fund; borrowing will be held to a minimum
- A CA Director Handbook (a first for CA) was approved; this gives incoming CA Directors information about processes for the Board (a "how to" manual)
- A new CA Director Orientation process was created; this will allow incoming Directors to be better informed and adjust more quickly to serving on the CA Board
- Maryland approved funding for a new permanent bandshell at the Lakefront (it replaces the temporary stage and tent)
- Howard County approved funding for a new CA outdoor fitness amenity on CA open space in the Gateway area
- A new digital kiosk was installed at the Lakefront
- Additional Electrical Vehicle (EV) chargers were installed
- CA successfully migrated from the Google environment to Microsoft 365 environment
- A new Play Area Policy was approved; replaces the existing Tot Lot Policy
- Enhancements to CA's Easement process were approved (providing for additional information, notification and communication with the community)
- Changes to Board operations were approved (moving to the New Business/Old Business format in place of work session/meetings format)
- A number of obsolete CA Board policies were sunset; this was the first step to revise over 150 policies to ensure that CA Board policies are up-to-date and do not conflict
- A revised Ethics Policy was approved and an independent Ethics Committee was established (to handle complaints against CA Board and Senior Staff members)
- Responsibility for CA Advisory Committees was transferred to CA staff
- An easement was granted to the State for construction of the new access road into the Merriweather area; this will help relieve traffic on Broken Land Parkway headed to Little Patuxent Parkway
- The Coral Reef activity, held in a CA outdoor pool, was successful
- The CA Art Center hosted the 2023 Congressional Youth Art Competition
- Three Change in Columbia speaker events were held
- Several successful Festive Friday events were held in December at the Lakefront
- A very successful Lakefront Live (the CA sponsored entertainment at the Lakefront) was held over the summer
- CA's Annual Trunk or Treat event was held at the Sports Park and over 1,000 people attended
- The 4th of July event was held at the Lakefront with great attendance
- CA helped sponsor the November Veterans Day parade and activity at the Lakefront
- A successful stakeholder event was held with the Village Chairs and Village Managers
- A new five-year Strategic Plan is underdevelopment; initial work was done this year
- A new CA President/CEO, Shawn MacInnes, was hired; he takes office in June 2024
- Interim CA President/CEO Dennis Matthey's contract was extended until the new President/CEO takes office; Dennis will then retire after 50 years of service to CA!
- A new CA General Counsel was hired

