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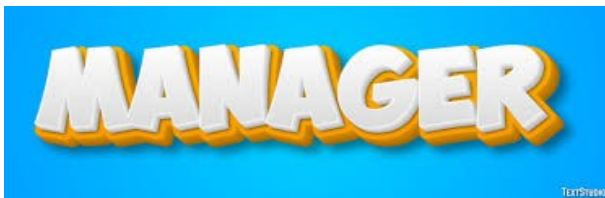
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Official newsletter of the Owen
Brown Community Association



MEET OWEN BROWN'S NEW VILLAGE MANAGER!

Hello, my name is Ilana Sambuco-Paul. I am happy to introduce myself as the new village manager for Owen Brown. I have lived in Columbia for 22 years, with 15 years living within a Columbia village (Kings Contrivance). My background is in business operations, management and marketing. Over the years, with my family, I have been involved within the community in sports, theater and musical arts. In my down time, you may find me walking or running on the Columbia Association and Howard County walking trails, or in the summer helping with concessions for the Kings Contrivance Waves Swim Team. I'm quite excited to meet and serve all of you. Please reach out with questions, concerns, comments or any community event ideas.



VILLAGE ELECTIONS ARE COMING SOON:

BECOME A CANDIDATE!

On April 26th, village residents will have the opportunity to elect **three** members to the Village Board for a two-year term, beginning in May of 2025. These elected volunteers oversee the operation of the Village Association and represent the interests and concerns of Owen Brown to both the Columbia Association (CA) and the County.

The Village Board oversees a \$400,000 budget and a six-person staff, who perform the work of covenant enforcement, management of the community center and hosting of special events for village residents. In addition, they serve as advocates to both the County and the Columbia Association regarding various issues that might arise.

Declaration of Candidacy Forms for the Village Board will be available beginning **March 1, 2025** at the Owen Brown Community Center or by emailing manager@owenbrownvillage.org.

CA PROPOSES CHANGES TO PLAY AREAS

The Columbia Association is seeking input about their proposed changes to two play areas (tot lots) in Owen Brown: OB-15 off near Brush Run and OB-17 off near Windbell Way. To view the proposed changes, go to our website at owenbrownvillage.org and click the button on the front page. To provide input or comments about the proposed changes, contact CA Open Space at 410-312-6330 or Open.Space@ColumbiaAssociation.org or attend the next village board meeting on February 4 at 7 pm.



OB DATES TO REMEMBER

OB Board Meeting	Feb. 4, 7pm
OB RAC Meeting	Feb. 12, 7:30pm
OB Board Work Session	Feb. 18, 7pm
Declaration of Candidacy	
Forms Available	March 1
OB Board Meeting	March 4, 7pm
OB RAC Meeting	March 12, 7:30pm
OB Board Work Session	March 18, 7pm



OWEN BROWN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.

Office Hours

Monday-Friday	9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturday	9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Village Office Staff

Ilana Sambuco Paul	410-381-0202
	Village Manager
Susan Sloan	Covenant Advisor
Kelly Kalal	Facility Coordinator/ Event Planner
Nick Bechetti	Asst. Covenant Advisor
Kelly Carney	OBserver Editor
Joann Allen	Facility Assistant

Village Board Members

Brad Butler	Board Chair
Linda Ortiz-Byrd	Board Vice-chair
Robert Golibersuch	Board Member
Mae Beale	Board Member
Adil Ahmed	Board Member
Michael Golibersuch	CA Board Rep.

Check us out on the web and Facebook at:
www.owenbrownvillage.org
www.facebook.com/owenbrownvillage

OBCA BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

from the desk of Board Chair, Brad Butler

Winter is in full swing — I hope you and yours had a wonderful holiday season. Our family returned from our holiday travel to enjoy several great days of sledding at the North end of Lake Elkhorn, and a Ravens playoff win!

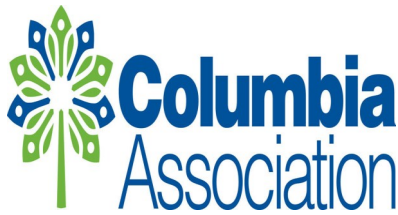
I'm very excited to introduce Ilana Sambuco-Paul as Owen Brown's new village Manager! Ilana comes to us with extensive nonprofit experience, deep ties in Columbia, and a strong background in operations and communication. We're thrilled that she's decided to join us and look forward to working with her. Please stop by the community center to say hello.

I'd like to extend my sincere gratitude to Craig Barton, who led the Owen Brown Community Association for twelve years before his recent retirement. Craig made a lasting impact on the village and its residents, leading the organization with a steady hand. While I'm sad to see Craig go, I'm excited to hear what travels he has planned. Craig, congratulations on your retirement!

At January's village board meeting, CA presented plans to replace two tot lots in Owen Brown. CA plans to replace OB-15 off of Brush Run with a sway bench overlooking the Lake Elkhorn forebay, and an activity panel. Due to the slope, the small size of the site relative to updated safety standards, and proximity to two other tot lots (Rustling Leaf & Deerpasture), it is impractical to install a larger play structure. CA plans to update OB-17 off of Windbell Way to its more modern metal "Rascal" fort structure, plus a 4-seat swing. Please contact CA Open Space with questions or comments, or attend our February 4th board meeting.

We also took several routine administrative actions including formally appointing our new village manager, and we referred four property owners to CA for potential legal action due to ongoing covenant violations. This is a step we only take after exhausting our attempts to work with the homeowners. Thanks to improvements in our processes in recent years, our number of open covenant violation cases and number of covenant complaints are both down dramatically from just a few years ago.

On tap this month, the Board will consider updates to our Architectural Guidelines, input to the county government on the Gateway Master Plan, and begin planning for next fiscal year (which begins in May). We are also looking for someone from the community to join the board, which meets two nights per month. Please reach out if you have any input, or feel free to attend our meeting! I look forward to updating you again next month.



GATEWAY MASTER PLAN TO TRANSFORM SPACE TO DENSER, MIXED USE AREA OVER 30 YEARS

From the desk of Michael Golibersuch, OBCA Columbia Council Representative

Happy New Year! At the time of writing this article (in mid-January), the most recent CA board meeting was held on December 12. That meeting covered topics including deer management, a presentation from Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning, and next year's CA budget. Like all open board meetings, this meeting was streamed and is available for viewing on YouTube.

Several Residents have recently raised concerns about deer overpopulation in Columbia. Our suburban environment—broken woodlands, abundant grazing, and a lack of predators or hunting—creates ideal conditions for white-tailed deer to thrive. While deer contribute to our natural beauty, overpopulation leads to issues such as driving hazards, damage to residential gardens, and the loss of native species. Long-term, excessive grazing on saplings could significantly alter our landscape and reduce tree cover. To address this issue, CA is collaborating with Howard County, which is ultimately responsible for local deer management efforts. Current initiatives include surveying deer populations, creating educational materials, and permitting future county management activities on CA property.

Representatives from the county's Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) provided an update on the Gateway Master Plan - the information presented was virtually identical to that provided at DPZ's public meeting in September. This plan aims to transform Gateway from a suburban office park into a denser, mixed-use area over the next 30 years, potentially adding tens of thousands of new residents. By the time this article is published, DPZ will have presented its Master Plan Recommendation to the public. I encourage everyone to review that and provide input to our council representative. While Gateway's development impacts on the entire community are more important than the impact on CA, there are some issues that CA will need to address in the future including: the use of CA-owned parcels, increased revenue from rising property values, expanded service needs from a growing population, and CA representation questions for new residents in an area that does not belong to any village.

The Board discussed CA's FY26 budget (May 2025–April 2026) and approved draft guidelines for the capital and operating budgets, as well as the Annual Charge rate and cap. There will be no change in the Annual Charge rate or cap (how your property is assessed), and there are no substantial changes to the operating budget nor the amenities and services it funds. The draft Capital Budget includes \$14.5M, most of which is allocated to maintaining and refreshing current amenities. If approved, in Owen Brown the most noticeable project will be the replacement of the Lake Elkhorn Boardwalk (which many of us refer to as "the boat dock"), as well as continued renovations at Supreme Sports Club, including remodeling the downstairs locker rooms. At Lake Kittamaqundi, there will be improvements to handrails, lighting, and the bandshell, as well as dredging in the lake itself. CA's staff is continuing to refine the budget, and the final version is scheduled to be approved in February.

By the time this article is published in the *OBserver*, the Board will have had an additional board meeting in late January - I will provide an update on that meeting in the next issue. As always, feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at michael.golibersuch@ca-board.org or stop me to say hello as I walk my brown-and-white dog (who looks like a border collie but isn't) around Lake Elkhorn.



Replacement of the Lake Elkhorn Boardwalk, or "Boat Dock," is an Owen Project listed in the CA draft Capital Budget for FY26.

Owen Brown Community Association

6800 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045

Office: 410-381-0202



Although snow is on the ground, Spring has Sprung here in Owen Brown! At the January event, Winter Sow with Milk Jugs, Master Gardener Christine Hipple and company presented a fun, easy and economical way to get a head start on spring using milk jugs and seeds to start sprouts!

