



College Heights Estates Association

Fall 2020

President's Letter and CHEA Newsletter

WWW.CHEAMD.ORG

October 19, 2020

Dear CHEA Residents,

I wanted to start this newsletter off with a topic that again has arisen in our country's conscience and consciousness – racial inequity. It is such a big issue that I admit that I have struggled with what to say, and how much to say, about it. I have clung to one idea – that it is important to do something more than repeat platitudes, so I decided to find the long-rumored, restrictive covenants that once limited who could own property in our community. I have heard rumors of their existence for years, and I wanted to shine a light on that history and do something about it.

I began by requesting the CHE subdivision plats, but there were no covenants there. I then searched CHE deeds in the Prince George County Circuit Court land records. After many evenings of searching, I finally came upon a CHE deed referencing another record which was entitled, "Declaration of Restrictions in College Heights Estates." The racism in this declaration could not be more stark. Here is a direct quote of the provisions that once applied to many of our homes:

*ELEVENTH, at no time shall the land included in this tract, or any part thereof, or any building erected thereon be used or occupied, by, or sold, traded, donated, demised, transferred, conveyed unto, or in trust for, leased, or rented, or given to negroes, or colored person or persons of negro blood or extraction or to any one of a race that has a higher death rate tha[n] that of the white or Caucasian race. Except that this paragraph shall not be held to exclude partial occupancy of the premises by domestic servants of the grantee, his or her heirs or assigns.*

.....

*FOURTEENTH, If the parties hereto, or any of them, or their heirs or assigns, shall violate or attempt to violate any of the covenants or restrictions herein, while they are in force, it shall be lawful for any other person or persons owning any other lot in said subdivision or development to prosecute any proceedings at law or in equity against the person or persons violating or attempting to violate any such covenant or restriction and either to prevent him or them from so or to recover damages or other dues for such violation.*

These covenants were incorporated into CHE deeds by the simple statement, “subject to the covenants and restrictions of record.” Reading the above provisions, we can see how the racial restrictions in housing systematically limited the ability of some families to accumulate wealth, especially Black families. Recently, there was an excellent article on this topic in the Washington Post (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/07/23/black-homeownership-gap/?arc404=true>) that explains the potential gain and damage done. It is also why I believe it is important to make clear that such restrictions do not apply to our community in any form.

Without minimizing our community’s ugly past, let me inject some optimism. My wife and I walk the half-mile “loop” made up of Commander Drive and Windsor Lane almost every day, and we are proud to see the diversity growing in our community. We are encouraged to see new and longtime Black, Asian, Middle Eastern, Hispanic and LBGTQ neighbors on the Commander-Windsor Lane loop. I know that we are far from racial equity in this country, but I am encouraged that (and hope) we can learn from past prejudices and, most importantly, take action to make our neighborhood inclusive and welcoming for all. Our “loop” gives me hope for the future of our community.

I encourage our residents to raise their awareness and dialogue about racial inequity, individually and as a community. It is my intention to add a new declaration to the land records, both repudiating and countering the declaration above. Not to erase history, but to make clear our intentions of equality. I will share our progress on this issue in future letters or announcements.

On another topic, it is my fervent hope that our country takes further steps to stem the pandemic, which has so changed our lives. I recognize that the risks and damages of COVID-19 are not spread evenly. They fall most harshly on minorities and the elderly. Of course, the burden can fall on anyone. If you need help finding assistance or if you have ideas for what our community can do to ease these burdens, please feel free to connect with the Board, and we will take what action we can to help.

Finally, I want to note that we are holding a virtual CHEA annual meeting on Thursday, October 22, 2020. More information and the Zoom link are set forth below. I look forward to “seeing” you at the meeting. We have planned some brief presentations on topics of interest.

I want to wish you all a safe and healthy Fall.

Warmest regards,

Chris Oehrle  
CHEA President

# College Heights Estates News

## **CHEA Annual Meeting**

A virtual CHEA Annual Meeting will be held over Zoom on Thursday, October 22, 2020 at 7:30-8:30 pm. We will have P.G. Council Member Dannielle Glaros give us a summary of important topics affecting our community. We will have information from P.G. County police and a brief overview of the current real estate sales market.

You may access the meeting at the Zoom link here:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://saul.zoom.us/j/95725523340?pwd=VDdIMVIFeTRhcm1STIVBTi8xTTIJQT09>

## **Local Up-coming Events**

**CHEA fest cancelled.** Sadly, due to COVID-19, we are cancelling CHEA fest for this year. This has been such a nice event for a neighborly gathering of our whole community. I always enjoyed meeting new people in our community. Hopefully, we will have a robust CHEA fest in 2021.

**Early Voting Coming Soon.** Early voting begins Monday, October 26th through Monday, November 2nd (7 am - 8 pm) Monday-Friday. On November 3rd, the polls will open from 7 am - 8 pm. The ballot drop box, early voting sites and November 3rd General Election polling places may be found here: <https://elections.maryland.gov/elections/2020/index.html>.

## **Local Real Estate Sales Information**

### **Real Estate Sales Summary for College Heights Estates**

The following list contains some of the houses sold in our community in the last 180 days. For further information about sales in our area, you may contact CHEA board member Jean Pirovic at [jean.pirovic@longandfoster.com](mailto:jean.pirovic@longandfoster.com).

3902 Calverton Drive, listed at \$724,000 - Sold on 7/16/20 for \$724,000.00

7214 Windsor Lane, listed at \$825,000 - Sold on 7/27/20 for \$825,000.00

7210 Windsor Lane, listed at \$650,000 - Sold on 6/11/20 for \$635,000.00  
4401 Holly Hill Rd., listed at \$669,500.00 - Sold on 9/29/20 for \$680,000.00  
(Seller Concessions: \$12,500)  
6914 Pineway, listed at \$699,997.00 - Sold on 7/28/20 for \$755,000.00 (Seller  
Concessions: \$3,150)  
6916 Oakridge, listed at \$695,000.00 - Sold on 5/5/20 for \$695,000.00

## **Update on Gilbane's Western Gateway Project**

As many of you know, this is a large project right on the northern border of CHE, which will include a five-story apartment building overlooking our houses. There are a number of issues that should concern all CHE residents, including those related to potential water drainage and traffic issues. Please be involved, so that we can mitigate the impact on our community. Below is an update, and, in sum, the main point is that early 2021 may be the time for us to have our say:

Recently, the County Council passed legislation that enabled the Western Gateway Project to proceed. In particular, the legislation enabled townhomes in the R-55 zone and lowered the allowable height of the multifamily building (current property zoning allows higher). These changes were supported by UMD and the City of College Park. CHEA filed comments, but it appears that our participation is more important in the next phase.

In speaking with Council Member Glaros' office, her office anticipates future community meetings as the project proceeds. When it is filed, they explained that there will be agency review, technical reports, and a planning board public hearing. This will be the time for residents to share their concerns. CHEA will do its best to provide comments, but it may fall hollow if residents do not add their voices. We need your support.

Additionally, Gilbane's representative provided CHEA with a brief update, confirming that it received the necessary zoning legislation and that it is in the process of preparing the necessary drawings to submit for planning review in the first quarter of next year. Gilbane committed to holding a virtual community meeting to go through the package and timeline moving forward and take any questions from the community before submitting its next phase. CHEA expects to send out an alert so that residents can attend this meeting.

CHEA will continue to monitor this project and intends to participate in the approval process. We cannot do this alone. This project will impact our community and will be in view of many of our residents.

## **News on P.G. Policing Policies**

These are excerpts on this important topic from our Council Member's office:

Prince George's County has been working for years to address policing policies. With that said, there is always a need for improvement. Systemic change never happens overnight. Racism is deeply rooted in America and consequently addressing it whether in police practices as well as health, economic, and education policies is a daily necessity, I believe. Funding has been provided for the police force to have body cameras by the end of the year. . . . Police cars in Prince George's County have vehicle cameras. There are several police policies that are in effect in Prince George's County which are critical to protecting the public and ensuring that appropriate force is only used when necessary. These policies are not in place everywhere in the country. They include:

- A Ban on Chokeholds & Strangleholds
- Require De-escalation. . .
- Require Warning Before Shooting
- Exhaust All Other Means Before Shooting
- Duty to Intervene. . .
- Ban Shooting at Moving Vehicles
- Require Use of Force Continuum
- Require Comprehensive Reporting. . .

These policies appear to be reasonable and will make policing safer for all of us.

## **Loud/racing/speeding Vehicles on Adelphi Road**

We are aware of the loud and dangerous driving on Adelphi Road. We are told that Prince George's County Police District 1 Commander Major Holland is aware of the situation. He is working closely with the Hyattsville and UP Police Departments to address the issue. This is a difficult issue to police, but hopefully there will be a resolution.

## **Landscaping Help Needed for Two CHE Entrance Signs**

Thank you to the two residents who offered to help with landscaping after the last newsletter. Thank you for volunteering, and it was unfortunate that we did not take these community-minded residents up on their offer, but the Board just did not want to put anyone at a health risk to do our landscaping. Instead, we hired a professional company. We are really hoping that we can safely have some help with the landscaping in the Spring because we still really need some help to make our entrance signs look great. We all benefit. It entails planting a couple of times a year and keeping things watered sufficiently. Of course, CHEA will pay for expenses of flowers, plants and other necessary items. If you have a green thumb and want to help our community, please email me.

## **Comments on CHEA Membership Dues**

CHEA receives most of its membership dues at the annual meeting and CHEA fest. This was a convenient time for members to pay dues and update their information. Unfortunately, due to COVID, we are not holding either of these meetings in person and expect that we have received very few dues. We would ask that you please make an effort to pay your dues, as set out below. CHEA puts this money to good work, fixing our nice street signs, landscaping entrances, providing entertainment for children at the CHEA fest and more.

**We encourage all residents to join the association for \$25/year by submitting dues for 2020. We hope to have an electronic payment option soon.**

**Send your dues to: Jie Zhang, CHEA Treasurer, 7250 Windsor Lane, College Heights Estates, MD 20782, [jiezhang\\_1999@yahoo.com](mailto:jiezhang_1999@yahoo.com)**

### **2019-2020 Officers and Board Members**

President: Christopher Oehrle, ([oehrle@verizon.net](mailto:oehrle@verizon.net))

Vice President: Earl Adams, Jr. ([earladamsjr@gmail.com](mailto:earladamsjr@gmail.com))

Treasurer & Membership Database: Jie Zhang ([jiezhang\\_1999@yahoo.com](mailto:jiezhang_1999@yahoo.com))

Secretary: Vacant

### **Board Members**

Ron Browning ([arkabee@verizon.net](mailto:arkabee@verizon.net))

Don Hein ([donhein@verizon.net](mailto:donhein@verizon.net))

Lisa Holt ([balloongirl@msn.com](mailto:balloongirl@msn.com))  
Matthew Kinnard ([mattkinnard36@gmail.com](mailto:mattkinnard36@gmail.com))  
Rick Macpherson ([Richard.Macpherson@apisource.com](mailto:Richard.Macpherson@apisource.com))  
Joseph Novello ([novelloj@verizon.net](mailto:novelloj@verizon.net))  
Kimberly Nugent ([kimberlynugent@gmail.com](mailto:kimberlynugent@gmail.com))  
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Jean Lee ([jeanslee51@gmail.com](mailto:jeanslee51@gmail.com))  
Webmaster: Ron Blunck ([ron@thebluncks.com](mailto:ron@thebluncks.com))

Visit our web site, [www: cheamd.org](http://www.cheamd.org)

**We welcome feedback on our newsletter and our service to the community.**

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