

Old Windermere

Old Windermere has been around for about 100 years and is one of the first neighborhoods developed off-peninsular. OWNA (Old Windermere Neighborhood Association) is our neighborhood's membership organization. OWNA stopped operating due to the pandemic. We relaunched in March of 2022 and have since engaged our residents with four simple principles: 1) making sure the residents are informed on important issues, 2) being a strong voice for the neighborhood, 3) protecting our beauty and character and 4) bringing residents together to connect. We represent all residents. Since that time, we have accomplished a lot but 2 key areas stand out; character preservation and stormwater management. Regarding character preservations, our efforts involve protecting what makes this neighborhood great. A prominent home at 8 Stocker was about to be demolished. Thanks to the effort of OWNA, preservationist, City officials, and with the commitment of the contractor, we were able to save the structure. This familiar structure is now being restored.



In response to this and to shape the neighborhood's future, a survey was conducted to identify residents' thoughts for long-term neighborhood character preservation. Approximately 70% of all residents completed the survey thanks to the OWNA Board going door-to-door. In all, 97% of the survey respondents think character protections should be enacted. OWNA will be working with City of Charleston Planning, Preservation, and Sustainability on this vital activity. When this "Character Area" is established, it will be the first one in the City in over 90 years. The other big effort has been around stormwater. Since our neighborhood's existing stormwater system dates back to the creation of the subdivision, it is woefully inadequate. Upgrades are needed to protect the neighborhood now and against future worsening storm events. A major stormwater project is planned for Old Windermere. The neighborhood wants to see this happen and to be engaged throughout the process.



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In November of last year, Ross Appel (our City Councilman) and Matt Fountain (Director of Stormwater Management), along with project consultants, held a meeting with the neighborhood to review preliminary plans. OWNA ensured neighbors were aware of the meeting and encouraged support be shown for this important project. The neighborhood turned out in a big way. For this and other stormwater projects, OWNA seeks to make the residents aware of what's planned and to have their voices heard.

In the immediate, neighborhood ditches have been cleaned and the main outfall where stormwater flows to the harbor is being cleared. The outfall work is happening thanks to the efforts of Sandy Senn and Leon Stavrinakis who obtained State funding and cleared a cumbersome and complicated regulatory process.



Change is rapidly occurring all around us. We are fortunate to live in a great area. We cannot stop change. But by having an engaged neighborhood association, with a strong voice, OWNA can help shape the change in a way that the residents of Old Windermere want to see.



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