

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

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March 2024



“The size of your success is measured by the strength of your desire, the size of your dream, and how you handle disappointment along the way.”

– Robert Kiyosaki

[Easy Solar for Condos and HOAs!](#)

[A Market Series Event by Montgomery County Green Bank](#)



Venue:

The Buchanan room on the 2nd floor of the Rockville Innovation Center at 155 Gibbs St , Rockville, MD 20850.

Details:

Wednesday, March 20, 4-6 pm

Description:

This Montgomery County Green Bank event is ideally suited for Common Ownership Community (COC) Associations, COC Board members, Condo Unit Owners and residents of Homeowners Associations, Solar Installers interested in installing for COCs, as well as lenders, policymakers, advocates, and contractors interested in learning about how COCs can install solar more easily.

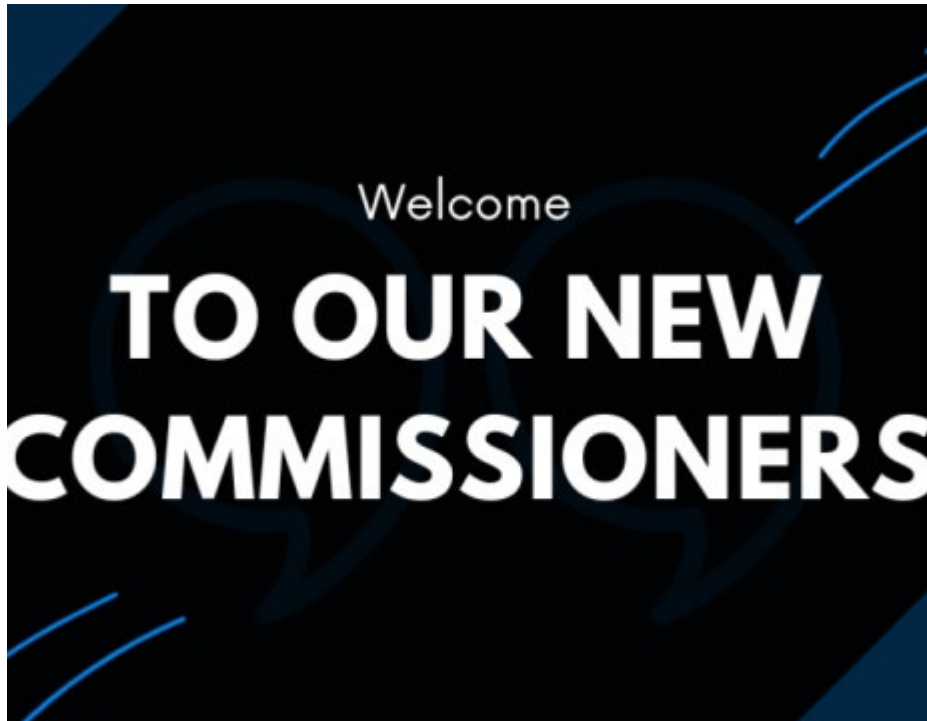
Members of HOAs and Condo owners may have an additional layer of permission to obtain in order to go solar. Condominium associations need to follow the Maryland Condo Act in order to sign a lease, and HOA residents need to follow the HOA's bylaws, which may include filling out a form and installing the solar PV system in a certain way. Learn from folks that know the process backwards and forwards, what resources are available to help, and how to advocate for more solar for COCs in Maryland!

Panelists:

- Mayor Monique Ashton, City of Rockville
- Brian Haaser, Representative, Glen Manor Condominiums
- Maris Burns, Ipsun Solar

Registration Link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/market-series-easy-solar-for-condos-and-hoa-residents-tickets-847010690777>

[Meet Our Newest Commissioners!](#)

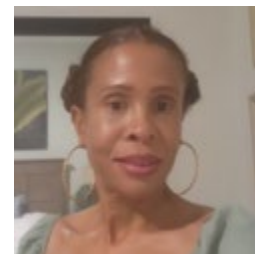


Denine Fernandez

"Hello!

My name is Denine Fernandez, and it's an honor to be chosen to serve on the Common Ownership Communities as a Commissioner in the year 2024.

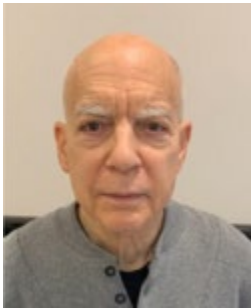
As a resident and owner in Montgomery County Maryland the past nine years I have always taken an interest in being involved in my community through volunteering and donating my time to many causes in the DMV. A New Jersey native at heart my parents raised me and my brother to have goals and to be passionate about what we do.



Presently, I am board treasurer for Villa Ridge Condominiums 2022, and I work for Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services since 2023. Occasionally, I volunteer my time as a grant reviewer for the Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser. Prior to Montgomery County, I worked as a Program Manager and Outbreak Manager for Baltimore City Health Department 2020-2023.

Working in government afforded many transferable skills in critical thinking, teamwork, problem solving, and collaboration to name a few. Educational background- Master of Arts in Education Leadership and Technology, Bachelor of Arts in Literature. Some of my hobbies are international traveling, exercising/running, gardening, painting, and of course shopping. In closing, I am curious and eager to learn this new role and to learn new things from the Commissioners."

Stephen Kraskin



"I have been a lifelong resident of the DC metropolitan area - born at GW Hospital. I've lived in Montgomery County since 1979.

My wife and I are "empty-nesters," and we decided to down-size last year. We ended up moving into a great common ownership community in December, 2022; I last lived in a common ownership community in 1999.

The community that we now live in is primarily a self-directed, self-managed HOA. My interest in serving on the COCC grew as a result of an experience I encountered when purchasing our new home, and a resulting concern that other Montgomery County homeowners buying homes in common ownership communities should not have to encounter similar concerns."



[The Architectural Question for Homeowners and the Board of Directors](#)

Homeowners would like to improve or change the exterior of their homes from time to time. Those changes can range from building structures on the lot such as decks, sheds, and fences to landscaping and painting. However, within Homeowner Associations making changes to the

exterior of the property is not as easy as one might imagine. There are procedures set by the governing documents that should be followed by homeowners before making any changes to their properties.

Architectural change application

Generally, homeowners need to submit what is called architectural change application to the Board of Directors and explain the nature of the change and reason for making improvements to their homes. They might need to provide additional information about materials, colors, size ..etc. These changes must be compatible with the provisions of the governing documents. It would be risky for homeowners to submit their applications after they have started making changes to the property before the Board's approval. At the same time, homeowners might need to obtain their local government permission before starting their projects. In such scenario, obtaining both permissions are required.[\[1\]](#)

Architectural change review committee

Architectural applications need to be submitted to the architectural review committee or the Board of Directors for approval whatever the case might be. A decision by the architectural review committee is deemed final but the aggrieved member might have an opportunity to appeal such decision to the Board according to a process laid out by the governing documents. In any case, application decisions usually need to be made within a specific time frame mentioned in the Association's documents. If the Board does not act upon an application on time, it may not be able to reject it later even by filing a complaint against the homeowner at the CCOC. On the other hand, in approving an architectural application, the Board should be reasonable and avoid making arbitrary decisions. Board decisions must comply with the requirements of the governing documents. It is also worth mentioning that architectural rules might change periodically, and the Board will make a final approval of those changes. When there is lack of a particular architectural rule in the governing documents, the Board can fill the gap by explaining whether those architectural changes are in harmony with the community's aesthetics.

Architectural violations and enforcement procedure

The governing documents of common ownership communities include provisions regarding imposing penalties against violating members. Associations must follow those steps carefully before making a final decision. State law requires that associations issue a notice about the nature of the violation and specify the actions that should be taken to correct the issue within a certain amount of time [\[2\]](#). If violations continue, the Board must provide the violator with a notice about the homeowner's right to request a hearing to be held by the Board before any sanctions are imposed. A complaint filed at the CCOC by an association would trigger its dispute resolution mechanism by giving the homeowner an opportunity to respond to the allegations of architectural violations. If the Commission accepts the dispute, it will conduct a hearing to resolve it.

Iman Hasanvand

[1] For more information see:

https://montgomerycountymd.gov/DHCA/housing/commonownership/regs_laws_you.html

[2] MD Code, Real Property, § 11-113; MD Code, Real Property, § 11B-111.10; MD Code, Corporations and Associations, § 5-6B-30



[Learn More About The Maryland Insurance Administration!](#)

Do you or anyone you know have questions regarding the Maryland Insurance Administration?

Please join us at our upcoming Commission Meeting at 7pm on April 3rd, 2024 to view and discuss the agency's purpose to provide effective support to those in the insurance industry and consumers of insurance products!

Presentation by Mary Jo Rogers

On April 3rd, 2024, at 7pm!

You may register for this upcoming zoom meeting using the link below!

[Commission on Common Ownership Communities > Monthly, Wednesday, April 3, 2024, 7 - 9pm - Calendar | DHCA \(montgomerycountymd.gov\)](#)

We look forward to seeing you!

[Click here to learn more information regarding Maryland Insurance Administration!](#)

[Annual Registration Information](#)

The Licensing & Registration Unit requires completion of the following:

- The completion of the [CCOC Registration Form](#).
- The completion and current copy of the governing documents.

- A list of the rental units in the community.
- A payment of the annual registration fee which is calculated based upon the number of units in the common ownership community.

It is the responsibility of each common ownership community to ensure compliance with this requirement.

Please feel free to contact the Licensing & Registration Department at ccoregistration@montgomerycountymd.gov with questions and/or concerns you may have.



The leadership of each common ownership community must register annually as a requirement as stated in Chapter 10B of the Montgomery County Code.

[Mandatory Board Training](#)



In July 2023, [amendments to the county code](#) continue to require all Board of Directors for common ownership communities to successfully complete the Commission's Board Training program, also known as Community Governance Fundamentals. The new provision requires Board members to recertify every *three (3) years*. Therefore, if you have not completed the training after July 3, 2020, you are required to fulfill this requirement. Information on the free training program and [schedule](#) may be found on the website or [click here](#).

COC Links and Shortcuts

[Office of Common Ownership Communities | DHCA \(montgomerycountymd.gov\)](#)- General information and resources for common ownership communities and homeowners.

[Common > "Community Governance Fundamentals" Training Program | DHCA \(montgomerycountymd.gov\)](#)- Mandatory training on Community Governance Fundamentals.

[Common > Registration of Common Ownership Communities | DHCA \(montgomerycountymd.gov\)](#) – Mandatory annual registration of common ownership communities.

[Calendar | DHCA \(montgomerycountymd.gov\)](#) – Calendar of Events.

[Common > Community Information | DHCA \(montgomerycountymd.gov\)](#) – FAQ's

Office of Common Ownership Communities

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[Email](#) or call 311 (240) 777-0311



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