

The Greater Timonium Community Council

Volume IX Issue III

9b Ridgely Rd., Box 276, Timonium, Maryland 21093
<http://www.gtccinc.org>

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***** NEWSLETTER *****

President's Message – Eric Rockel

WAIT UNTIL NEXT YEAR

In the last newsletter, I reported that there were several unresolved issues involving the Baltimore County School Board. Those issues included a decision by the State Legislature as to whether the School Board would be elected or appointed in the future, whether the School Board would select the Mays Chapel site as the location for a new 700-seat elementary school to ease overcrowding in the York Road corridor and who the School Board would select as the next superintendent for the system. Unfortunately, all of these three events have ended in varying degrees of controversy.

On the issue of an elected or appointed School Board, the Legislature seemed poised to craft a compromise that would address concerns from both sides. The most common reason for keeping the status quo is that many feared that an elected board would stifle diversity on the board and harm the education of minority populations within the system. Pressure groups, such as the Baltimore County branch of the NAACP and the Baltimore Jewish Council advocated for an appointed School Board. However, the Legislature suggested an alternative with a hybrid board that would contain six elected members, while the remaining members would be appointed. This compromise seemed to have broad support amongst the County delegation, but the measure remained in the House Ways and Means Committee until it was too late for the bill to make it to the floor for a vote on the session's final day.

Proponents of an elected or hybrid School Board bemoan the fact that the appointed Board has not been transparent in its governance and that there is little accountability by the present board to the public. Those themes of accountability and transparency were on display in the public hearing concerning the Mays Chapel school site. Not all School Board members were present to listen to the comments from the public at the hearing, and there was no attempt by any board members to ask questions or clarify content from those who spoke. The Save Mays Chapel Park group provide considerable written information in addition to their oral testimony, yet less than 24 hours later the School Board cast its final vote to select Mays Chapel as the school site. How can the public believe that the School Board is accountable when there was no give and take, no questions asked of the public, in the run up to that vote?

Furthermore, certain information disseminated by one Board member was factually incorrect concerning another possible site, Dulaney Springs. Yet due to the procedural structure of the School Board meetings, the public was not able to challenge that misinformation prior to the vote. The School Board demonstrated all too clearly why a significant element of the public is demanding an elected board.

Within several weeks of the school site controversy, the School Board once again ignited passions by selecting Dr. S. Dallas Dance as the new Superintendent of the school system. Critics of the board point out that Dr. Dance is only 31 years old, and that he did not have the State of Maryland-required three years of classroom teaching experience in order to qualify for the Superintendent's position. Nor does Dr. Dance have any experience in educational administration within the State of Maryland, although his resume demonstrates increasing administrative responsibilities for school systems in Virginia and

Texas. I for one am willing to ignore these issues and hope that Dr. Dance is the rising, energetic star that the School Board believes. But I do agree with the critics that the process used to hire the new Superintendent was not a very transparent one. Howard County provided for a meeting wherein the public could ask questions of the two finalists for its Superintendent's position prior to the Howard County School Board vote. One of those finalists, incidentally, was Dr. Dance. Baltimore County, on the other hand, held no such public meeting. While Board President Lawrence Schmidt has defended this procedure by stating that the public was able to ask questions of the Board, via the internet, prior to the interview process, there is no certainty that the public's questions were ever answered by the candidates. This was just another example of why there is so much fervor for an elected school board, and by the way, in coming to Baltimore County, Dr. Dance leaves a school system in Houston with an elected school board.

For those who feel upset about these and other actions of the current School Board, start strategizing for the legislative session of 2013. This School Board appears incapable of operating in a manner that will involve the public, and a change is long overdue.

GTCC General Meeting & 'New' 2012 Meeting Calendar

The GTCC will hold their Next Meeting' on **Wednesday, May 9th, 2012 at the Cockeysville Library Meeting Room**, with meetings STILL beginning at 7:00 PM. **Our next Meeting is on May 9th, 2012 at the Library !**

The Greater Timonium Community Council, Inc. (GTCC) is an umbrella organization with memberships of over 50 area Community Associations which collectively represents some 60,000 residents throughout a 25 mile perimeter of the Greater Lutherville/Timonium/Cockeysville area. We are a vibrant organization which tries hard to maintain and improve the quality of life in our area. We pride ourselves in working with our elected officials, businesses and Community Associations to achieve these goals. Please feel free to attend one of our upcoming meetings and by all means, bring one or more of your Association members with you we look forward to seeing everyone there !!!

GTCC		
<i>The purpose of the GTCC is to coordinate a united council of Community Associations to enhance and protect the quality of residential life within the community.</i>		
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<u>NOTICE !!!</u>	CALENDAR 2012	<u>NOTICE !!!</u>
	***** <u>Meeting Schedule</u> *****	
<u>Board of Directors</u>	<u>7:00 pm – 9:00pm</u>	<u>General Membership</u>
		<u>7:00 pm – 9pm</u>
February 08, 2012 April 11, 2012 June 13, 2012 August – No Meeting October 10, 2012 December 12, 2012		January 11, 2012 March 14, 2012 May 09, 2012 July – No Meeting September 12, 2012 November 14, 2012
<i>All Meetings are <u>NOW</u> Scheduled at the "Cockeysville Library" Meeting Room, on the DATES NOTED ABOVE.</i>		

Agenda and Speakers - GTCC May 9th, Meeting

1. Introductions
2. Featured Guest: Delegate Stephen Lafferty: Regular Legislative Session 2012 & Special Session
3. Report from Precinct 7 on Public Safety
4. Old Business:
 - a. Upcoming County Council Hearing on CZMP
 - b. Mays Chapel School Site
 - c. Appointment of New School Superintendent, Dr. S. Dallas Dance
5. New Business
6. Adjourn

Annual 2012 GTCC Membership Dues – Frank Regan

GTCC '2012' Membership dues of \$50 dollars for the year is due at this time. We had a great response from (50+) Associations contributing their Annual Membership dues payment last year! Already, over half of our Members have contributed their Annual Dues..... Yeah !!! Dues notices for 2012 were mailed out in March, so if you didn't receive one or if you need a copy, please don't hesitate to let us know. Also, we have posted our "**Dues Notice Form**" on our GTCC website at <http://gtccinc.org> and then at the "**About Us**" section. Please send your 2012 dues payments to **GTCC, 9b Ridgely Rd., Box 276, Timonium, Maryland 21093**. Also, a Big "Thanks" to all our contributing Associations for all their dedicated support for the ongoing work of the Greater Timonium Community Council.

Membership & Annual Dues Report – Frank Regan

The GTCC has always had a great representation from the many Associations that exist in our geographic area which encompasses about 25 perimeter miles. This area is roughly bound from Dulaney Valley Road & I-695 to Falls Road & I-695, then north on Falls Road to Shawn Road, then east over to York Road, then up Ashland / Papermill Roads to the Loch Raven Reservoir boundary then over to Old Bosley Road and then down Dulaney Valley Road to I-695. Each year we have been fortunate to increase our participation with a growing number of Community Associations. We are pleased to report that the GTCC now has over 50+ active dues paying Associations within its umbrella that represents over 60,000+ residents within our thriving neighborhoods. It is through the hard work and participation by each member Community Group that helps to enhance and protect the quality of residential life within our area.

Please find a list of participating Community Associations below:

Belmont Forest Condos	Falls Road Comm.	Monterey Imp.	Springlake Comm.
Brooking Court Condos	First Mays Chapel HO	Orchard Hills Comm.	Stapleton Court Garden Condos
Burncourt Condo	Fox. Chapel Comm.	Pine Valley / Valleywood	Stratford Comm.
Chapel Hill	Holly Hall Garden Condos	Pot Spring Comm	Tullamore Condos
Chapel Gate HO 1-2-3	Hunt Meadow Comm.	Ramsgate Comm.	Valley Crest Civic
Chapel Gate 4-5-6	Huntridge Comm	Rockfleet Garden Condos	Valley Garth
Chapel Ridge Comm.	Kilcolman Garden Condos	Rosslare Ridge Condos.	Wakefield
Coachford Comm.	Lutherville Comm.	Shepherd's Knoll Garden Condos	West Timonium Heights
County Home Park Comm.	Northhampton Comm.	Sherwood Hill	York Manor
Dulaney Forest Comm.	Mays Chapel Village Garden Condos	Springdale Comm.	Yorkshire/Haverford Comm
Dulaney Valley	Mays Chapel Townhouse HomeOwrs	Limerick Condos	Longford
Jennifer Ridge	Mays Chapel North, Inc.	Topfield Condo	Tralee Forest Condo
Roundwood Ridge I & III	Overlook	Pebble Creek HO	Dunloy Condo
Longford North	Wellington Valley	Towns Of Doolan	Mays Chapel North
Foxford	Dulaney Gate	Ballinrobe HO	

The Captain's Corner – Captain Dave Moxley

We have invited our Cockeysville Precinct "7" Commander, Captain Dave Moxley, to provide us with an article for our newsletter in the form of 'The Captain's Corner' on any issue(s) that he feels might be of interest to our membership. The following article this month is from Captain Moxley:

I would like to remind our residents and community leaders that not only does spring bring us warmer weather; it unfortunately is the time of year that we typically experience an increase in deception burglaries and home improvement scams. In addition, we also see an increase in shed burglaries during this time of year. Therefore, I strongly recommend for our residents to review the Baltimore County Police website:

http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/police/media/crimeprev_homes.html

This site provides excellent crime prevention tips that can most definitely save residents, not only monetary lost, but also the emotional trauma of being a crime victim. Within the last two weeks, our Precinct experienced its first deception burglary of the year. This case involved an elderly resident who had a large amount of money and jewelry stolen from her home, by two individuals posing as home improvement contractors. This case is currently under investigation by our Burglary Unit.

On the upside, there have been several exceptional case clearances by members of this command within the last several months. To highlight a few:

Several weeks ago, while on routine patrol in the early morning hours, Officer Gibbons stopped a suspicious vehicle coming from behind the shopping strip located at Ashland and York Rds. As a result of Officer Gibbons' training and his relentless pursuit for the truth, his efforts ultimately resulted in discovery of one of the most sophisticated indoor marijuana grows this county has ever seen. This indoor grow was located in a commercial garage in the 200 block of Warren Road, not five miles from the Precinct. Over 181 mature plants were seized. It is estimated that this grow could yield 300-400 pounds of marijuana a year, with an estimated street value close to a million dollars.

In April, an armed robbery occurred at the Alpha Gold Exchange on York Rd. Two armed suspects stole money and jewelry during this braising take over robbery. Immediately after the robbery, a description of the suspects was given to the police. While fleeing, the suspects were involved in a single vehicle accident, disabling their vehicle. Both suspects were apprehended by our officers as they attempted to flee. These individuals are also being investigated for several armed robberies in the State of Pennsylvania.

Officer Berg, our school resource officer assigned to Dulaney High School, recently had two very noteworthy cases. Officer Berg cleared a graffiti destruction of property which occurred on the school property, involving inappropriate painting of graphic words and pictures. This case would not have been solved without her dedication and persistence. Also, Officer Berg assisted the school nurse, Mrs. Eyler in administering first aid to a student who was not breathing and had no apparent heart beat. Officer Berg deployed the Automated External Deliberator (AED). The AED indicated there was no heart beat, and shocked the patient. After continuing CPR, a heartbeat was established. Due to the actions of Officer Berg and Mrs. Eyler, the student had a good heart beat and was breathing when transported to the hospital.

Thanks for your support in the community.

*Dave Moxley
Commander, Cockeysville Precinct*

New Water Pipe for York Road – Frank Regan

Baltimore County's contractors are replacing 9,500 feet of old water line in York Road, between Ridgely and Padonia. The new 24-inch line, double the diameter of the old line, is expected to cost \$5 million and take one to two years to install. The project, say County engineers, is designed "to build redundancy into the system. The County's contractor, Burgermeister Bell, started the project April, 2010 and should be finished by June or July 2012. The project is about 71 percent finished, say engineers. The State Highway Administration plans to re-surface York Road, between Ridgely and Timonium roads, in the near future.

The Librarian's Corner – Mollie Fein

We have also invited our Cockeysville Library Manager, Mollie Fein, to provide us with an article for our newsletter in the form of 'The Librarian's Corner' on any issue(s) that she feels might be of interest to our membership. The following article this month is from Mollie:

“Goings on at the Cockeysville Library”

Each year the Maryland Humanities Council chooses a book as part of the 'One Maryland, One Book' program; this year's choice is the critically acclaimed book by Steven Galloway, 'The Cellist of Sarajevo'. The theme for 2012 is "courage and unity in times of war". The Cellist however is about much more than war; it is also about the power of music, humanity, and civility. A spare and haunting, wise and beautiful novel about the endurance of the human spirit and the subtle ways individuals reclaim their humanity in a city ravaged by war. A novel of great intensity and power, and inspired by a true story, The Cellist of Sarajevo poignantly explores how war can change one's definition of humanity, the effect of music on our emotional endurance, and how a romance with the rituals of daily life can itself be a form of resistance..... A highly recommended summer read or, better yet, a provocative book club choice.

Telephone: 410-887-7750 **Hours: Monday through Thursday,** 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. **Sunday,** 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. (October - April)

Highway Improvements – Delegate Susan Aumann

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) is opening a new acceleration/deceleration lane along I-695 West (Baltimore Beltway Outer Loop) between Exit 26 – MD 45 (York Road) and Exit 25 – MD 139 (Charles Street). The new acceleration/deceleration lane will improve safety for vehicles entering and exiting I-695 West between York Road and Charles Street.

Weather permitting, crews will change the traffic pattern on I-695 West beginning 8 p.m. Thursday, May 3 and the new lane will be open to traffic on or after 5 a.m. Friday, May 4. There will be lane closures in effect along I-695 West during the traffic pattern change; there will be a single right lane closure at 8 p.m. and a double right lane closure beginning at 10 p.m. and ending at 5 a.m. the next morning. In case of inclement weather, the new lane will be opened on or after 5 a.m. Monday, May 7.

The new acceleration/deceleration lane is part of the State's \$38 million project to replace the Charles Street Bridge over I-695 and make safety and operational improvements throughout the interchange area. The project began in winter 2009 and will be complete late summer 2012, weather permitting.

The State's contractor for the interchange project is the Six-M Company of Delta, Pennsylvania. Citizens who have questions about traffic operations along I-695 and Charles Street may call the SHA project field office at 410-296-9041 or SHA's District Four Office Construction Division at 410-229-2420 or toll free at 1-866-998-0367.

Citizens may view the I-695/Charles Street project web page on SHA's website: www.roads.maryland.gov.

The Legislator's Corner – Annapolis Legislative Updates - 42nd & 11th Districts

We have invited our State Representatives to provide us with an article for our newsletter in the form of 'The Legislator's Corner' on any issue(s) that they feel might be of interest to our membership. The following articles have been graciously submitted by the following legislators for this Newsletter Edition from the 42nd & 11th District's within the GTCC:

NOTE: Gov. Martin O'Malley, this past Friday, announced he will call state legislators back into session May 14th to deal with lingering state budget issues. The session is suppose to focus on balancing the state budget and eliminating more than \$500 million in cuts that were part of a so-called "doomsday budget" that passed at the end of this year's 90-day legislative session. The following "End of Session" articles from our legislators are being published prior to this "Special Session".

Thank you for contacting my legislative office during the 2012 session of the Maryland General Assembly on an issue or issues of interest to you. I'm pleased to provide this end-of-session wrap-up of the major issues we debated and voted on, including how I voted on each issue.

As you know, the legislature adjourned in a cloud of controversy. We did pass a budget, the so-called Doomsday Budget, but the majority party is very likely to call a special session to pass a "real" budget, one that has tax and fee increases attached to it. These increases were NOT passed before adjournment at midnight on Sine Die, April 9th so the "default" position was to enact the Doomsday Budget. Keep in mind that this budget still increases State spending by roughly \$500 million from last year – hardly a doomsday scenario, in my view.

So, hold on to your wallets, Mr. and Ms. Maryland taxpayer: before the fiscal year begins on July 1, 2012, it is very, very likely that we will be called back into session to pass a budget that has a \$1 billion increase in spending, supported by higher income taxes, and a plethora of smaller increases in fees and taxes.

When you serve as a fiscally and socially conservative Republican delegate in a legislature dominated by liberal Democrats, you find yourself voting "No" on a wide array of bills that wind their way through the legislative process during the 90-day session. These bills, in my view, are bad policy decisions for our citizens, and I voted against them, as explained below.

The State Operating Budget - SB 150 - Maryland's total operating budget has grown to \$35.8 billion, up significantly from \$28.7 billion in 2007. Essentially, Maryland's total operating budget grows by about \$1 billion each year. This year was no exception.

The House Republican Caucus introduced a fiscally responsible budget that proposed level funding with last year's budget. In other words, we would spend in FY 2013 essentially what we spent in FY 2012. This is basically what most Maryland families have done during the economic downturn. State government should do likewise.

This GOP alternative was presented in a series of budget amendments on the House floor. All were rejected, most on largely party-line votes. However, it was important for the minority party to present a credible and comprehensive alternative to the prevailing tax and spend mentality in Annapolis. This we did.

I voted for all of the Republican-sponsored budget amendments, and against the final Democratic-O'Malley budget product. Remember, we are currently in "doomsday" territory until the special session "fixes" it with tax increases.

The State Capital Budget – SB 151 -- This budget supports major construction and capital projects impacting public schools, higher education facilities, health departments, state agencies, hospitals, and other projects. Much of the funding is well-spent and necessary. Often, however, projects of questionable merit are included. This year, about \$150 million was included in this category, in my view. In addition, we are rapidly reaching our limit on debt capacity, which the credit rating agencies watch very closely. The State is imprudently borrowing too much to build too many buildings in this weak economy. We may regret it soon.

A legislator cannot vote for some of the projects, while rejecting others. The entire capital budget is on an up or down vote. Based on several wasteful projects, I believe the responsible vote was no, which is how I voted.

Maryland Offshore Wind Energy Act of 2012 – HB 441 -- In my opinion, this was the most politically motivated bill of the session. Our governor wants to further his national political ambitions by passing a "green energy" bill, while ignoring the unproven and extremely expensive technology associated with wind power. Under the bill, wind turbines will be placed more than 20 miles off Maryland's coast at enormous cost to Maryland's utility ratepayers. The bill would have cost electricity customers \$4 billion over the next 20 years.

The bill passed the House, 88-47. Fortunately, the Senate Finance Committee never considered the bill for a vote, and it languished there at session's end. Even though the bill was watered down from last year's far-worse version, I still strongly opposed this misguided and pie-in-the-sky bill.

Civil Marriage Protection Act - HB 348 – The bill allows same-sex couples to marry in Maryland. Our state currently recognizes gay marriages performed in other states. In previous years, the bill was assigned to the Judiciary Committee, but this year, passage in Judiciary was considered very uncertain. So House leaders devised a slick maneuver by jointly assigning HB 348 to both the Judiciary and Health and Government Operations Committees, where passage was a near-certainty. The move worked, and the bill received a favorable vote, sending it to the House floor, where it passed narrowly, 72-67. The Senate passed it 25-22.

This controversial measure will certainly be on the November 6th general election ballot, where the voters of Maryland will properly decide this issue. I voted against the bill, both in committee and in the full House, because I am strongly convinced – more than ever – that marriage should remain between one man and one woman. There are ways to grant same sex couples important legal rights and safeguards without redefining the institution that is the bedrock of our society.

Finally, this issue generated more constituent input than any other during the last four years. Emotions, obviously, run very high on this topic.

The Maryland Health Insurance Exchange Act of 2012 – HB 443 – This is Maryland’s first step in enacting the federal Affordable Care Act (ObamaCare). The bill creates a Health Benefit Exchange, a website that allows individuals to shop for health insurance online. The Governor’s proposed FY 2013 budget includes \$26.5 million in funding for the Exchange. HB 443 expands the scope of the Exchange by establishing the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) and navigator programs for the business and individual exchanges. Navigators will be licensed or certified personnel that assist individuals and businesses to make insurance choices from qualified plans. Although the extent of the Exchange is to make health insurance more affordable and accessible, there are many concerns primarily related to cost. Religious liberties are also a concern, as well as the fear that fewer doctors will accept Medicaid patients. Ultimately, the Supreme Court will rule on the ACA’s constitutionality. The Exchange is likely to result in higher taxes, higher federal deficits, while not eliminating the problem of uninsured residents. The bill passed the House, 94-44.

Public-Private Partnerships – HB 358 -- When done properly, Public-Private Partnerships are generally good and positive initiatives, and we should encourage the private sector to work with local and state governments to develop capital projects, while saving money and bringing projects on-line more quickly.

This particular bill, however, drew many concerns. First, the bill significantly changes the manner in which procurement is addressed in Maryland. The bill also gives private industries the ability to set and increase tolls on roads and bridges they may build with no government oversight or input. Also, any projects that receive a portion of state money would require unionized employees only. The House passed the amended bill, 91-45 but the Senate took no action before the deadline, killing it for the year. I opposed it, based on the concerns expressed above.

Education – Maintenance of Effort – SB 848 – This bill significantly alters the waiver process that Maryland counties must comply with to maintain their MOE spending on public schools. Originally passed in 1984, MOE requires local governments to provide local school boards with a consistent level of per-pupil spending. In 1996, a waiver provision was added to allow counties to apply to the State Board of Education for partial or temporary waivers from the MOE requirement. The waiver requirement was not used until 2009 when a combination of the economic downturn and cuts in other State funding put serious strain on county budgets. SB 848 changes the waiver process, and allows the state to intercept a county’s local income tax revenues if they’re denied a waiver.

SB 848 also discourages counties to fund at a higher level in better fiscal times, as several counties have been able to do. When counties fund above the MOE level, they do not receive credit. Instead, that amount is added to the total amount they owe the following year. This constantly ratchets up spending without any additional accountability and is a disincentive for counties to ever give more when times are good. The bill also gives the State the authority to override county tax caps passed by referendum – a tremendous overreach by government. I opposed this bill, which passed the House, 93-44.

Hunting Licenses – Raising Fees – HB 1419 --In a rare defeat of a bill on the House floor, HB 1419 was rejected, 62-69. The bill would have significantly increased fees for hunting licenses and stamps, increasing a basic hunting license fee \$24.50 to \$40. An outcry from sportsmen across the State and a spirited debate on the House floor sealed this bill’s fate. Every so often, Annapolis does listen!

Baltimore County School Board – HB 481 I strongly supported a locally elected school board for Baltimore County. HB 481, which would have enabled the registered voters of Baltimore County to elect school board members beginning in 2014,

passed the county's House delegation by a strong bi-partisan vote. The Senate passed a significantly different version, essentially a hybrid board, in which 6 members are elected by newly drawn districts, while 5 are appointed by the County Executive. As a compromise position that I believe moves us forward, I support the hybrid approach. The bottom line for me is that the status quo is unacceptable, since there is virtually no accountability with the current all-appointed school board.

County Executive Kamenetz worked vigorously to oppose both the elected and hybrid boards, and in the end, with only the hybrid bill on the table, it was defeated. This issue will definitely be back next year.

Bay Restoration Fund – HB 446 – This bill doubles the flush fee from \$30 to \$60 annually, except for areas outside the Chesapeake Bay watershed (parts of Garrett County and the lower Eastern Shore). The Fund has been raided by Gov. O'Malley multiple times over the past several years to cover budget shortfalls. The bill fails to protect raids in the future; there is no guarantee that the monies raised by the increase will go to fund wastewater treatment upgrades. If these guarantees were in the bill, I could have supported it. I believe most people recognize the need to clean up the Chesapeake Bay. I voted for the original bill in 2004 as introduced by Gov. Ehrlich. Without these guarantees, however, I voted "no." It passed the House 89 -48.

It was a tough session for Maryland taxpayers, property owners and citizens in general. We're spending too much money, taxing and regulating businesses and individuals too much, and we have a decidedly anti-business image across the country. This makes it more difficult to attract new companies and jobs to our State. I will continue to support fiscally responsible approaches to government spending.

Thanks for corresponding with me on issues important to you. Please continue to keep me informed of your opinions on public policy issues affecting Maryland.

42nd District – Delegate Steve Lafferty

The Maryland General Assembly has just ended its legislative session, Sine Die. However, we left without completing some important business, due to disagreements between the House and Senate over casinos and taxes. This was the most demanding and stressful Session I have experienced while serving in the House. Although several good pieces of legislation were not addressed, there were significant achievements.

I have been, and remain, honored to serve the 42nd District and the State of Maryland. I want to thank all who contacted me during the Session with your opinions, concerns and suggestions. There were many difficult and contentious issues that generated a lot of letters, emails and phone calls. I also want to thank my Legislative Aide, Marsha Tracey, for her tremendous support and assistance.

I want to highlight some of the General Assembly's work for you. For more information on the work of the General Assembly, please go to the web site, www.mlis.state.md.us.

State Budget and Taxes

The State Budget

The legislative "budget package" included an operating budget and revenues to reduce the structural deficit and to fund the budget. House and Senate members met for days to come to agreement on both. However, their efforts failed at the very end of the Session so that the next year's budget will have \$512 million in cuts. This includes:

- \$230 million from education, including a reduction in per pupil funds
- Elimination of law enforcement grants
- A 10% reduction in public higher education
- A \$20 million reduction in funds for community colleges
- Eliminate provider increases for foster care, the developmentally disabled and mental health placements
- Lay off 500 state employees
- Reducing agency spending by 8% to save \$50 million

Disagreements between the House and Senate prevented a revenue bill from passing so as to prevent these cuts. It does seem that we will be called into a Special Session to address and, likely prevent, these cuts.

No Gas Tax

I received a great deal of emails, letters and calls expressing concern about the proposed gas tax. No gas tax was passed this year. The advocates for the Governor's 6% sales tax on gasoline made a very compelling case for the need for added funds, describing the deficient roads and bridges, the aging transit vehicles and the potential for significant job creation. However, I believe such an increase, at this time, would have had a too dramatic financial impact on so many businesses and individuals. I could not support the Governor's proposal.

The Passage of Marriage Equality

Other than the budget, the passage of the Civil Marriage Protection Act was probably the most significant piece of legislation we passed this year. We recognized the civil rights of same sex couples to marry and to share in the rights and benefits of all married couples. Maryland became the eighth state to approve marriage equality. In doing so, Maryland went further in separating religious beliefs and services from the civil marriage rite. Religious organizations are protected from a claim of discrimination should they determine that they cannot provide services or facilities to same sex couples.

Education

Selection of the Baltimore County Board of Education

After years of debate and discussion, the General Assembly again failed to support a change in the way our Board of Education is selected. Members are currently appointed by the Governor. Many wanted to keep the existing system, while many other parents and school advocates weighed in for a hybrid with 6 elected members and 5 members appointed by the Governor.

Efforts to make the proposed change were both emotional and politically challenging since the County Executive opposed any change and the Chair of the responsible committee did not want to see it passed. While her committee did "concur" after 11 p.m on the last day, there was not enough time to get it passed. This is a huge disappointment for me because I have work for five years to improve the system to ensure greater accountability.

Keeping Students in School until they are 18

Late in the Session, the legislature passed a bill to require that, except in certain circumstances, all children must stay in school until they are 18. Currently, a child can "drop out" at age 16. There was much debate about the purpose of keeping youth in school, the need for educational alternatives for those who want to leave, and the funding. I saw both sides of this issue but finally supported the bill as an important tool for better preparing young people for work and the world outside of school.

"Maintenance of Effort"

Maintenance of Effort ("MOE") is a decades old requirement that county public school systems must maintain, at least, the same level of funding that existed in the previous year. Each county provides funds but also relies on extensive state support for its schools. Over the past few years, however, more and more counties have reduced their contributions and expected the state to provide *an increase in the required funds!* This is unsustainable.

I supported [HB 1412](#), that requires each county meet its MOE, limit the ability of the counties to reduce its contributions and, if the county does not meet MOE, enables the state to redirect the county's piggyback income tax from the county to the school system. This is a serious attempt to get each county that is not meeting MOE, or committed to providing needed funds, to take the responsibility for local public education. It is an important educational and fiscal issue for the state.

Environmental Successes

The legislature passed many good pieces of legislation to protect the environment. In some respects, the environmental legislation was the brightest part of the Session. Here are just some of them.

Recycling in Apartment Buildings and Condominiums

I was very pleased that the legislature passed my bill, [HB 1](#), which requires apartment complexes and condominiums to provide recycling for their residents. As the number of renter's increases, we want to provide more opportunities for them to participate in recycling. We cannot continue to add to our landfills but must support recycling.

Funding Chesapeake Bay Restoration

The Bay Restoration Fund was created with the "flush tax" of \$2.50 per month to reduce pollution in the Bay and its tributaries. These funds have supported the upgrade of 40 wastewater treatment plants, extensive planting of cover crops on farms, and replaced thousands of failing septic systems. However, we do not have enough to meet our federally mandated goals and to substantially reduce pollution that goes into the Bay.

Following extensive and heated debate, the legislature passed [HB 446](#), to increase the "flush tax" to \$5 per month to meet our legal obligations to clean up the Bay. Since western Garrett County and Ocean Pines do not send water into the Bay, their fees will remain \$2.50 a month. I proudly voted for this increase. The need for upgrades is so great and we are under legal requirements to address Bay pollution. Every county will be required to establish "hardship provisions" for those unable to pay. These monies will allow the upgrade of wastewater treatment facilities, including Back River, fund upgrades to more failed septic systems and add funds so farmers can plant more cover crops.

Managing Stormwater Runoff

Storm water runoff remains one of the biggest problems in the urban and suburban communities. "Storm water runoff" results when rainwater carries pollutants into the storm drains and into Bay and rivers. Reducing stormwater pollution is very expensive. After five years of discussion and debate, the legislature passed [HB 987](#), to require ten counties, including Baltimore County, to establish a stormwater remediation fee to address this problem. These counties are already required to address stormwater as part of their Phase I Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System permit. Baltimore County will determine its appropriate fee. Getting better control and management of stormwater is very important so I voted for this legislation.

Sustainable Growth and Septic Systems

Another environmental victory came with the passage of [SB 236](#), which will further restrict development on septic systems. While acknowledging local planning control and authority, it is a step towards greater protection of farmland, reducing pollution in the Bay and managing future growth. It is not nearly as strong as I wanted, and worked for, but it advances the issue of better planned growth in Maryland.

Arsenic

In order to further protect the environment, the legislature set Maryland apart by banning the use, sale and distribution of Roxarone and other arsenical additives to chicken feed. However, the law will be abrogated if the federal Food and Drug Administration finds that these additives are not harmful to the environment, animals or people.

Fracking and the Marcellus Shale

The issue of drilling for gas miles below the surface with hydraulic fracturing (or "fracking") was first addressed in 2011. The Governor set up a commission to thoroughly review the process, benefits and potential impacts. This year, we had ten bills regarding this process. Since the Commission has not completed its recommendations, most were not passed. One, [HB 1123](#), was adopted to set an impact area to provide protections for homeowners whose water wells may be contaminated by this natural gas drilling.

Ethics

[SB 920](#), was one of many bills introduced to address legislative ethics. Legislators and Executive appointees must file ethics' forms and financial disclosure statements. SB 920 will require that the ethics forms and the employer of the legislator and his/her spouse will be listed on-line to provide greater transparency and accessibility. Further improvements to ethics laws will be addressed by a study group this year. This is a good and important action that I supported.

Housing

Lead Paint Poisoning

Maryland's Lead Poisoning Prevention Program has had huge success in eliminating lead paint poisoning of children. However, since the Court threw out the law last year, we took steps with [HB 644](#), to further safeguard children by requiring all rental properties built before 1978 to comply with lead testing requirements and created a presumption that landlords have provided a lead safe or lead free unit. In order to encourage compliant landlords to stay in business, the legislature will be examining ways to provide insurance coverage.

Foreclosures

The General Assembly passed two important bills to improve Maryland's foreclosure picture. [HB 1374](#), will provide for mediation with the lender earlier in the process in order to mitigate the number of foreclosures. Also, [HB 1373](#), will create a registry of foreclosed upon properties so that neighborhoods and local governments will be able to find out who is responsible for vacant houses. This is a very important step to prevent destabilization of communities.

Source of Income

Under current Maryland law, a landlord can reject a potential tenant solely based on their source of income. Whether that source is inheritance, Veteran's vouchers, alimony, retirement income or unemployment, there is no prohibition. I think this is wrong and have had bills for two years to change it. Unfortunately, opposition in the Senate prevented the bill from going forward again this year. However, it is a very important issue that I will continue to pursue.

Health Care

The Maryland Health Benefit Exchange Act of 2012, [HB 443](#), expands the structure of the Exchange to authorize it to contract with health insurers, to create a framework for a Small Business Health Options Program, establish standards for qualified health care plans and qualified dental plans and establishes a 'navigator' program. This year's bill builds upon prior years' work to create a Health Care Exchange in order to reduce the number of uninsured Marylanders, provide health insurance for small businesses and to provide additional options.

This was truly a demanding session. There were many difficult issues and many political and fiscal challenges to be addressed. Although the 2012 legislative Session is over, I will continue to work on those issues important to the 42nd district. If you wish to contact me, you can email me at Stephen.Lafferty@house.state.md.us or call 410-841-3487. Please note that during the interim period, our office is staffed only three days a week.

11th District – Delegate Dan Morhaim

It remains an honor for me to serve as the only physician in the 188-member General Assembly and as your District 11 representative along with my colleagues Senator Bobby Zirkin, Delegate Jon Cardin, and Delegate Dana Stein. I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to all of you who contacted me during this session.

This session was challenging, with the continued discussion of many controversial issues and the budget dominating many debates. As you may know, as we adjourned the 2012 General Assembly Session, there was still much uncertainty about the state budget for Fiscal Year 2013. It is extremely disappointing that the Governor and the Legislature could not find common ground. Despite these obstacles, I advanced many important initiatives that will improve the lives of Maryland citizens.

Building on the findings of a broad-based stakeholder work group - which included law enforcement, health professionals, researchers, legislators, and patients - established after last year's session to design a medical marijuana program, I introduced **House Bill (HB) 1024** and **HB 1158** that would provide safe and accountable ways to responsibly provide **medical marijuana** to patients. Although both bills had the support of the medical marijuana work group, at the eleventh hour the Governor withdrew his support for either bill citing liability concerns for state employees administering the program. I did not agree with his position, nor did numerous legal experts. Despite this setback, a third medical marijuana bill, **HB 15**, was amended to allow legal **protection for caregivers** who are assisting patients using medical marijuana.

With budget discussions delaying many bills, HB 15 passed the House but time ran out to attempt passage in the Senate. However, two related bills passed: **HB 350** which reduces the penalties for a small quantity of marijuana possession and Senate Bill, **SB 422** which allows a police officer to issue a citation for marijuana possession. Patients, however, face numerous challenges without a true medical marijuana program as was evident in the testimony of many patients who came to Annapolis to support this issue.

(Patients Speak Out Video - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldaklgwaWQI&feature=youtu.be>). I ask you to keep patients in mind by continuing to advocate for a medical marijuana program.

As a champion for environmental issues and as part of my continuing work on environmental issues, I sponsored two **electronic recycling bills**, **HB 448** and **HB 879**, both of which passed. HB 448 requires the State to meet certain environmentally friendly standards when purchasing and recycling electronic products. This would support local businesses that safely and responsibly recycle computers and electronics. HB 879 improves the existing Statewide Electronics Recycling Program. I also sponsored **HB 1237** which would have created a pilot program to encourage the use of **solar technology** on public school buildings to generate electricity. I hope to introduce this again next year since great progress was made on the topic this session.

I introduced **HB 1118** which **protects older Marylanders** in nursing homes and related institutions. This bill passed both the House and the Senate.

As **Chair of the Government Operations Subcommittee**, I continue to fight for efficiency in government as a viable alternative to increasing taxes and fees or cutting valuable programs. You might have heard about the recent audits of various state agencies (<http://www.ola.state.md.us>) where millions of dollars were squandered as a result of mismanagement. I introduced **HB 1473** that will allow for **state agencies to take corrective action more quickly** when an audit has raised concerns about financial management or operations. Greater efficiencies can also be achieved through deliberate purchasing strategies such as the coordinated volume **discount purchasing** that I proposed in **HB 992**.

House Joint Resolution (HJ) 3, which I sponsored and which passed, will **ratify the 17th Amendment** of the U.S. Constitution that provided for the direct election of U.S. Senators by popular vote. While this has long been in practice, the State had never actually approved of the 17th Amendment. This was a bipartisan opportunity to clarify our state law and join the other states in ratifying this important amendment to our Constitution.

I **secured funding** to install security cameras at Franklin, Woodlawn, Lansdowne, and Hereford High Schools. These cameras will help to assure that the recent investments in their upgraded athletic fields will be protected and available for our community to enjoy over the long term.

As the **House Deputy Majority Leader**, I worked on many bills that did not receive much media attention. All bill information is available at <http://mlis.state.md.us/>. Below are some that passed, almost all of which I co-sponsored, followed by bills introduced by my colleagues in District 11:

Health

- **HB 243** requires health insurers to cover oral chemotherapy drugs the same as injected chemotherapy drugs.
- **HB 439** (Senate crossfile SB 234 passed) designates health enterprise zones that target state resources to improve a community's health.
- **HB 443** creates the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange to expand access to health care.
- **HB 1055** establishes a work group to study access to habilitative services to treat autism spectrum disorders.
- **HB 1149** requires health insurers to provide coverage for various telemedicine services.
- **HB 1207** creates a licensing classification and regulations for clinical professional art therapists.
- **SB 72** removes legal barriers so that health care providers can more quickly treat runaway and homeless youths.

Various Topics

- **HB 131** creates full disclosure requirements for dogs in pet stores and gives purchasers more rights.
- **HB 440** prohibits a company that invests in Iran from participating in a contract with the State.
- **HB 1257** requires banks and other financial institutions to report suspected financial abuse of an older adult.
- **HB 1370** extends the Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) program.

District 11

- **SB 82** (Senator Zirkin) increases the maximum payment from the Maryland Automobile Insurance Fund.
- **HB 173, 694 and 1103** (Delegate Cardin) reform aspects of election and campaign finance regulations.
- **HB 515** (Delegate Stein) creates the Financial Education and Capability Commission.

Finally, I would like to thank my full-time, part-time and volunteer staff who did an outstanding job this session. Michelle Bernstein, Shannon Frattaroli, Clarence Lam, Keshia Pollack, and Meghan McGinty all worked hard to respond to constituent concerns and to advance legislation to improve the District 11 community and our great State.

I look forward to continuing to hear from you. Sincerely, Delegate Dan Morhaim

11th District – Delegate Dana Stein

The 430th session of the Maryland General Assembly ended at midnight on April 9th, after 90 days of whirlwind activity. The legislature grappled this session with difficult budget issues and controversial bills on a variety of topics. We made progress on many important issues, though it is likely that the Governor will convene a special session later this Spring to address unresolved issues on gambling and taxes.

I want to thank everyone who emailed, wrote or called to express their opinion on the bills that we considered this year.

My Legislation: I am pleased to report that the General Assembly approved six of my bills:

HOUSE BILL 313 -- Child Seating and Safety Seats Requirements. Maryland has always been a leader in child safety. Consistent with new recommendations from the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration and the American Academy of Pediatrics, this bill requires children under age 8 to remain in a safety seat unless they are 4 foot 9 inches tall. (Currently, children can move to seat belts if they weigh 65 pounds.) It is a child's height (not weight) that determines if he or she can safely transition out of a booster seat.

HOUSE BILL 515 – Establishment of Financial Education and Capability Commission. One of the issues I've spent much time on is working to improve the financial education of Marylanders. I co-chaired the State's Task Force on Financial Literacy, whose accomplishments included adoption by the State Board of Education of a financial literacy curriculum for grades 3-12. To continue our work on financial education, this bill establishes a commission to monitor the implementation of public and private initiatives to improve financial education; recommend how these initiatives can be improved; and make recommendations on how State agencies can coordinate their financial education initiatives.

HOUSE BILL 860 – Sexual Abuse Definition Alteration. This bill amends the definition of "sexual abuse" in State law to specifically include human trafficking, child pornography and prostitution of a child. This change will allow a child sex trafficking victim to be considered an abused child and a "Child in Need of Assistance." The change in classification will allow child victims to be brought within the existing protections and services of the Department of Human Resources, such as child protective services.

HOUSE BILL 1058 – Project Open Space -- Funding for Development. Local jurisdictions use Program Open Space funds to purchase undeveloped land and build recreational facilities. This bill provides counties with more flexibility in their use of Program Open Space funds for recreational facilities.

HOUSE BILL 929 – Recycling Rates and Waste Diversion – Increase of Statewide Goals. Recycling requirements for counties were established in 1988 and are very low. Consistent with advances in recycling collection methods and expansion of the number of products that are recyclable, this bill will increase recycling requirements. Counties with more than 150,000 residents will need to recycle 35% of their solid waste and counties with fewer than 150,000 residents will have to achieve a rate of 20%. State agencies will need to achieve a recycling rate of 30%.

HOUSE BILL 940 – Building Performance Standards – Hotels – Mandatory Master Control Device. This bill builds on prior legislation that encourages energy efficiency in building construction. It requires newly-constructed hotels to install a master control device that turns off room lights at least 30 minutes after the occupant has left the room. The device may also regulate the heating and air conditioning settings in hotel rooms. This proposal is both environmentally friendly

and very cost effective. Energy costs are the lodging industry's second-biggest cost, and this bill will reduce those costs significantly.

In addition, the legislature approved my:

HB 844 – Acorn Hill Children's Playground Bond. This bond bill will help fund the creation of Acorn Hill playground which will offer children's activities and programs. The playground will be located in the newly reopened Robert E. Lee Park, which serves as a destination for walkers, runners, bikers, and dog owners in Baltimore County. The addition of this playground will offer additional outdoor recreational opportunities for area families.

One of my bills that did not pass was **HB 864 - Community Energy Generating Facilities and Net Energy Metering.** This bill would have allowed groups of residents or businesses to jointly own renewable energy projects, called "community renewable projects." Right now, only a single household or business can own a renewable energy project such as solar panels. Under the bill, each owner of a community renewable project would get a credit on his or her utility bill for part of the energy generated by the project. Several states, including Delaware and Colorado, have already adopted community renewable legislation. Although the bill did not pass, committee leaders are sending a letter to the Public Service Commission (PSC) asking the PSC to review this issue and make recommendations to the legislature.

The Budget

The budget continues to be affected by the slowly recovering economy. As passed before adjournment, the budget is balanced through hundreds of millions of dollars of cuts (the "doomsday" budget), since the legislature failed to enact a tax measure that would reduce the spending cuts. Some of these cuts are likely to be reversed if, as is likely, the legislature returns to Annapolis for a special session.

Despite the uncertainty over the operating budget, the capital budget is in place. As passed, the fiscal year 2013 capital budget will:

- **Maintain a stream of funds to our public education system** – The budget provides \$326 million to build and improve classrooms.
- **Protect our environment** – The budget provides funds for Chesapeake Bay restoration programs, open space preservation and agricultural easements.
- **Increased funding for higher education** – Over \$300 million is budgeted for improvements in higher education facilities.

Gambling and Taxes

One of the issues that dominated the last weeks of the session was expanded gambling. At the end of session, the Senate approved an expansion of gambling (slots/table games) to National Harbor in Prince George's County and authorized table games at the other five sites approved for slots parlors in the State. However, the House did not consider this legislation and the topic is likely to be taken up in a special session. On taxes, budget negotiators approved an increase in the state income tax for individuals with taxable income above \$100,000 (and couples with taxable income above \$150,000) -- the tax rate increase would have been between 1/4 and 3/4 percent, depending on income – but the legislature did not approve the measure.

Environment

Chesapeake Bay

The legislature passed two important measures that will reduce Chesapeake Bay pollution. **HB 446** doubles the "flush tax" from \$30 to \$60 per year. The flush tax supports the Bay Restoration Fund, which underwrites improvements in wastewater treatment plants, septic system upgrades, and cover crop planting. All of these programs reduce the nitrogen and phosphorus pollution of the Bay. **SENATE BILL 236** creates planning mechanisms for use by local jurisdictions that should slow the growth of housing that is served by septic systems.

Off-Shore Wind

Increasing Maryland's use of renewable energy resources is an important issue and a priority of mine. The House passed **HB 441** which set up the framework for development of off-shore wind, should a wind company apply to the Public Service Commission for authorization. This bill would have helped the state of Maryland utilize its vast offshore wind resources off of the coast of Ocean City. Unfortunately, the Senate did not pass the bill.

Fracking

One of the major environmental issues in Maryland is natural gas drilling or "fracking" in the Marcellus Shale area of Western Maryland. Fracking has caused problems in the past and the process involves the injection of thousands of gallons of fluids containing toxins and carcinogens. A task force is in the midst of a three-year study of the potential impacts of natural gas development and a de facto moratorium on drilling is in place. To provide safeguards in the event the State does authorize "fracking" in the future, **HB 1123** provides protections for homeowners whose wells have been contaminated by natural gas drilling.

Driver Safety

The legislature considered several bills that built upon previous efforts to improve driver safety. We passed **HB 55**, which clarified that the prohibition on texting while driving applies to drivers under the age of 18. A separate bill (**HB 104**) would have made use of a hand-held cell phone while driving a primary offense (it is currently only a secondary offense). While the House of Delegates passed the bill, unfortunately it died in the Senate.

Same Sex Marriage

With the passage of the Civil Marriage Protection Act, Maryland has become the 8th state in the Union to legalize same-sex marriage. I am proud to have voted for this legislation. This act will give committed same-sex couples the right to be married in a civil ceremony while also protecting the rights of religious institutions to practice their faith as they see fit. Committed same-sex couples, their children and families will be able to enjoy all the rights, benefits, and legal protections of marriage. The Act is likely to be petitioned to referendum this fall, when the voters of Maryland will decide the issue.

Baltimore County Schools

After several years of debate in the County and in Annapolis, the House and Senate passed legislation authorizing an elected school board. The House of Delegates passed **HB 481**, which would have established a nine-member elected school board. The Senate also approved a bill that would have established a "hybrid" school board (six elected members, five appointed members).

As chair of the Education Subcommittee of the Baltimore County House Delegation, I was proud to have supported these bills. I have always been a supporter of increasing the strength of the community voice within our school board. Unfortunately, as the legislative session wound down, the House of Delegates did not conform **HB 481** to the Senate bill, despite the House delegation's request. As a result, no bill passed, which is a great disappointment. Next year, we will try again to pass legislation authorizing an elected school board, and hopefully we will be successful.

Lead Paint Issues

Maryland's Lead Poisoning Prevention Program has been a success by any measure – we've reduced the incidence of lead poisoning in Maryland by 98% – but there is more to be done to ensure our children are safe from lead hazards and that property owners who comply with state and federal regulations are not subject to lawsuits. **HB 644** expands Maryland's lead-paint regulations to rental properties built before 1978 (current law applies to properties built before 1950) and creates a presumption that landlords who have taken proper lead safety precautions are not liable in a lead paint poisoning lawsuit. **HB 472** requires the Maryland Insurance Commissioner to establish a work group to make recommendations on lead liability protection for owners of pre-1978 rental properties.

* * * * *

I am proud to be representing you in Annapolis and to be a part of the District 11 legislative team. Please contact me at 410-841-3527 or dana.stein@house.state.md.us if I can ever be of assistance.

Urgent Alert: May 4, 2012 - Senator Bobby Zirkin, & Delegates Dana Stein, Jon Cardin, Dan Morhaim

Columbia Gas Proposing Construction of Major Gas Pipeline Through Owings Mills, Greenspring Valley, Falls Road Corridor, and Northern Baltimore County. Pipeline Threatens Environment, Wildlife, and Individual Homes Across Area

We are writing to alert you to a proposal by Columbia Gas to construct a major natural gas pipeline through many parts of our District. The route being proposed by this Corporation may have serious impact on many of our homes, communities, and natural environments in the 11th District. We are writing to you with serious concerns and urge you to educate yourself about this project. A number of constituents and community organizations have raised questions about the impact of this project. We are working to insure that everyone is as fully informed as possible and that citizens know where to raise those concerns.

The proposed pipeline by Columbia Gas would involve digging ditches across a 21 mile path, impacting over 300 acres, following a path of their current line which was built many decades ago. Columbia is not required to follow this path. Construction of this magnitude would impact natural environments in its path, necessitate clearing of trees and vegetation, cross streams and wetlands, and impact wildlife. Although lobbyists from Columbia Gas assure that they will mitigate damage, we are not convinced of this. Environmental impacts could be severe and long-term.

Further, the project will have a serious impact on property rights and individual homes. If approved, Columbia can add an additional 25 foot easement on properties. This means that Columbia would essentially take for their own an additional 25 feet of someone's property. Citizens will be forced to deal with many months of heavy construction throughout our area. Homes may be forced to deal with the loss of forest and the natural environment. If the project is approved by FERC, citizens could be forced to remove structures such as playgrounds and decks. Citizens may face the choice of being paid money for the removal of such structures or eminent domain.

We are not at all persuaded that this project is necessary. Even assuming that a line is necessary, we believe that any line should be built with minimal impact on the environment and the community. In addition, we believe that to date, the process followed by Columbia Gas has, at best, met a minimal standard of transparency.

Please take the time to educate yourself and your community on this issue. Whether you are personally affected or not by the specific route, we all share in the tremendous value of our beautiful environment and community and we should be united in this effort.

Columbia Gas must make application through the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the national agency that regulates interstate energy matters. We are working hard to understand how state and local governments, community organizations, and citizens can impact those decisions.

It is important to send written comments to FERC. They may be sent to: The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Attn: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, 888 First St. NE, Room 1A, Washington, D.C. 20426. You can also comment on line at www.FERC.gov and follow the link to "Documents and Filings." There is an "eFiling" link that may be followed. In any comment, reference Docket Number PF12-6. This is critical as comments must be filed by May 16 in order to be taken into account in the "pre-filing period."

There are two meetings scheduled on this issue where you may offer testimony as well as learn details. The first is May 8 at 7:00 pm at Oregon Ridge Lodge, 13401 Beaver Dam Road, Cockeysville, MD 21030. The second is May 9 at 7:00 pm at Youth's Benefit Elementary School Cafeteria in Fallston.

Because FERC is a federal agency, we recommend contacting your federal officials. Please contact Congressman John Sarbanes (202-225-4016), Dutch Ruppersberger (202-225-3061), Elijah Cummings (202-225-4741), or Andy Harris (202-225-5311). Also contact U.S. Senators Ben Cardin (202-224-4524) and Barbara Mikulski (202-224-4654).

Columbia Gas fully intends on moving forward with this major new gas pipeline in our community if FERC allows them to do so. Note that this is for gas transmission only and it will not provide any benefit to our community in any way. Your utility bills will not go down as a result of this project at all. Constructing the line in the heart of our area will have serious impact from Owings Mills to Greenspring Valley to the Falls Road Corridor to Cockeysville to Northern Baltimore County to Fallston.

As this is a federal interstate project, it is unclear what impact our efforts will have. But we believe it is critical to try to influence this process before FERC grants approval and it is too late.

Please contact me at 410-841-3527 or dana.stein@house.state.md.us if I can ever be of assistance on this matter.

Today's Modern Medical World - Dr. Dan Morhaim

Doctor Dan is one of our Delegate's from the 11th District and as many of you know he is an Emergency Room Physician at Sinai Hospital right off I-83 near W. Northern Parkway. He has recently written an acclaimed book that you may have some interest. The following is a note from Dan:

Friends, I want to let you know about my new book "The Better End: Surviving (and Dying) on Your Own Terms in Today's Modern Medical World" (Hopkins University Press). The book has earned endorsements from Maya Angelou, Dr. Ben Carson, and others, as well as excellent reviews. Please see below and www.thebetterend.com for complete information.....Thanks, Dan

While modern Americans strive to control nearly every aspect of their lives, many of us abandon control of life's final passage. But the realities of twenty-first-century medicine will allow most of us to have a say in how, when, and where we die, so we need to make decisions here, too. Through compelling real-life stories and practical guidance, this book helps readers navigate end-of-life care for themselves and their loved ones.

The Better End is about hope, empowerment, and inspiration. What we choose for our end-of-life care depends on accurate information and on our personal values. We need not only to understand new medical advances but also to appreciate the wisdom of humanity's past and present.

Dan Morhaim, a practicing physician and Maryland state legislator, guides readers through the medical and legal maze of end-of-life care. He details the care choices available to patients and explains why living wills and advance directives are a necessity for every American. He tells readers where to find free and readily available living wills and advance directives and why it is so important for everyone—young and old—to complete them.

Dr. Morhaim helps readers keep decisions in their own hands and spare their families the uncertainty and trauma of guessing about their end-of-life wishes. With this book, he breaks down the barriers to a difficult but essential topic, helping readers to open this often avoided discussion with their loved ones and providing the information and guidance needed to ensure that deeply held values are reflected and honored.

iWatch, iReport, iKeep Us Safe – Frank Regan

iWatch Baltimore County is a neighborhood awareness program created to educate and encourage citizens to vigilantly watch around them and report suspicious behaviors that may have connections to crime, as well as local, state, or national security threats. The Baltimore County Police Department has initiated this community partnership to help and assist local neighborhoods in staying safe from crime and possible terrorist activities. Together we can make our streets safe for our families and children, and can prevent our communities from being the target of possible terrorist attacks.

Subscribe to iWatch Crime Alerts: <http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/police/media/iWatch/index.html>

iWatch crime alerts provide information about wanted criminals, missing persons, criminal arrests, and other significant cases. In many of these cases the public's help is requested to help identify or locate a suspect. You can make a difference by alerting police to information you may have about crime trends and wanted criminals. Receive iWatch crime alerts directly in your e-mail inbox when you subscribe to this free service. iWatch crime alerts provide the most immediate information available to the public from the Police Department and are also available on the County web site.

Report Suspicious Activity !!! Citizens are encouraged to report activity that just does not fit. You can now use our web tips form to submit a tip or report suspicious activity to police. Information can be sent from your cell phone, hand-held device, or computer 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Tips can also be e-mailed to: iwatch@baltimorecountymd.gov. However, to report an emergency or a crime in progress call“911” immediately.

GTCC Website - <http://www.gtccinc.org> - Frank Regan

The Greater Timonium Community Council maintains an active website to provide everyone information related to our organization and many activities of Community interest. Our main website access has been changed to **GTCCINC.ORG** instead of **GTCCINC.COM** web addresses.

Regular and New Helpful Items – Frank Regan

- ***Balto.Co. Executive Updates*** - The Office of the County Executive periodically has information to provide to community leaders. A number of community leaders have expressed a desire to receive this information in an email format. If you would like to receive these emails, please register using the following website:
<http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Subscribe>
- ***Balto.Co. E-Community Newsletter*** - Baltimore County has unveiled a new County service, the E-Community Newsletter. The county will publish seven monthly letters, one for each County Council district, detailing planning, zoning, development and public works decisions and their impact on communities. The first issue will be published in mid-August. Residents can register for the newsletter at:
<http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Subscribe/updates/index.html>

GTCC Trivia – Did You Know?

There is so much history and tradition here in both the greater GTCC and the Baltimore County areas that books could easily be written and filled with all the information. However, from time to time we will provide a source for the lighter and interesting sides of our many Communities.

There is so much history and tradition here in both the *Greater GTCC and the Baltimore County* area that books could easily be written and filled with all the information. However, from time to time we will provide a source for the lighter side of our many Communities.

See if you know the answers to these few trivia factoids:

1. The first deed in Baltimore County was filed in 1664. Where was the property?
2. What is “Towson’s Light-House”?
3. Who were the last five County Executives?

Please don’t hesitate to send any of our Board members a trivia fact and we will try to include them in our next Newsletter. (See Answers Below)

1. In 1664, the property of Captain Thomas Todd, known as “Todd’s Inheritance” was recorded. The original house on old North Point Road was burned by the British during the War of 1812. This structure was supposedly built of English brick that had served as ballast on tobacco ships that came directly to the plantation to load. For several years after the War, the Todd family lived in a granary on the property until a new brick house was finished in 1816. This structure can be seen today.

2. A genuine hero of the War of 1812 was native son General Nathan Towson who had a 40 year career in the army and was considered to be the “ablest artillery officer” in the United States. He was born in Towson in 1794 and was primarily a farmer until he joined the Baltimore militia when the British attacked the frigate Chesapeake in 1807. During the War of 1812 he fought in the Lake Erie theater and rose quickly through the ranks. His battery unit won the day in two important engagements in 1814 and became known as Towson’s Light-House from their constant flashes of rapid fire.

3. The last five County Executives were Hutchinson, Rasmussen, Hayden, Ruppertsberger and Smith.

Strawberries, asparagus, onions, lettuce, peaches, spinach, chicken, beef, ice cream, milk, honey, flowers, baked goods and more!

Apples, peaches, spinach, tomatoes, corn, honey, eggs, flowers, garlic, beets, baked goods and more!

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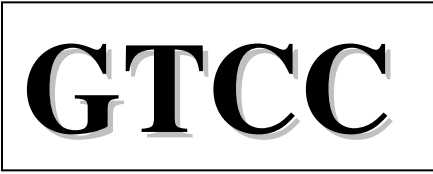
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The Greater Timonium Community Council

The Next GTCC General Meeting is scheduled for May 9th at the Cockeysville Library at 7:00 pm

CURRENT ISSUES

Hampton Inn & Suites: Hotel is proposed on lot (6) at Texas Station Court. The Development Review Committee approved that this project would not require Community Input Meeting and Hearing Officer’s Hearing despite objection raised by GTCC. Thus far the project has not moved to the construction phase (E. Rockel)

Aylesbury Road: Owner is proposing a mixed use project for the property on the north corner of Aylesbury Road and Business Park Drive. Residential, commercial and office uses are proposed. This project has not moved beyond the preliminary concept stage. (E.Rockel)

York Road, Timonium Condo Project: Recently land owner A&A Global Industries notified GTCC that the condo project proposed by Keelty & Company will not proceed. A & A Global is examining other possible uses for the site, none of which at this time would include a high rise residential development. As of February 2012, the owner notified that he is attempting to lease the remaining building for commercial uses, and the first tenant will be a ceramic tile store. (E. Rockel & GTCC Executive Committee)

Pot Spring Road, South of Old Bosley Road: A ten acre parcel is under contract to a developer who wishes to construct an “over 55” age restricted development. Originally proposed as a four, 4-story building complex, the plans have been changed to call for 33 carriage style units. This parcel would require PUD approval because the number of units exceeds the density permitted under the current zoning. At a community meeting on the proposal, nearly 200 residents expressed opposition to the increased density on the site. Ultimately, Councilman Huff elected not to allow this project to proceed as a PUD. As a result, no more than 13 dwelling units may be built on the property. Councilman Huff reports the developer intends to move forward with the 13 unit project.(E.Rockel, Dulaney Gate HOA, Springlake HOA, Timberline Park HOA)

Spencer’s Crossing, West Timonium Road: This housing development, just west of the I-83 interchange, had originally been proposed to be a large day care center. Through negotiations with the developer and an offer to support increased housing density on the site, a residential housing development became approved in lieu of the day care facility. One unit was completed, as well as a model home, and several units are partially completed. Recently, it was learned that the property has gone up for foreclosure, and a public auction took place on March 9. The lender failed to sell the property at auction.(E. Rockel and PVVW Community Assoc.)

Comprehensive Zoning Map Process, 2012: Go to the GTCC website for a full list of properties requesting to be rezoned. As of the end of the open filing period, there was one more property requesting to be rezoned compared with a similar point in 2008.

Michael’s Café & Grill: The owners received zoning approval to enlarge the outdoor patio area on the southwest and south sides of the existing building. A stone- clad wall, approximately five foot high, will surround the patio seating area. (E. Rockel & Yorkshire / Haverford C.A.)

Former Sterling Chemical Building, West Timonium Road: This property is now under the control of St. John Properties, who plan to convert the former warehouse into retail shops and a restaurant, consistent with its manufacturing zoning. St. John Properties recently underwent a zoning hearing in which they petitioned to seek relief from the parking requirements and to reduce the side yard setbacks. The Administrative Law Judge has ruled to allow the reductions to parking and the reductions to side-yard setbacks.. (E.Rockel)

WaWa Convenience Store, York Road at Halesworth: This site, formerly part of the Anderson Automotive PUD, was the subject of a hearing to amend the previously approved planned unit development. The Monterey Community Association and GTCC supported this amendment; however, several other nearby owners opposed the plan. The hearing has been continued to provide for more testimony. (GTCC and Monterey C.A.)

ON-GOING ISSUES

Texas Station – Jacoby Properties sold property to Peter Angelos. Zoning changed in 2004 Comprehensive Zoning Cycle from ML-IM to BM (Business Major). GTCC continues to monitor this property. (E. Rockel, F. Regan, GTCC Executive Committee.)

York & Ridgely Roads: The former Lincoln/Mercury dealership has been converted to a Walgreen Drug Store and pad site. The pad site recently received approval for the proposed building to be enlarged by approximately one third. (E. Rockel)

Galloway Avenue and Texas Station: Recently the Development Review Committee postponed consideration of a decision to allow two-way traffic at the entrance from Galloway Avenue into Texas Station. Both GTCC and the County Home Park association questioned two-way traffic in light of the original development plan restrictions on the site. Before any change takes place, an assessment of the York Road and Galloway Avenue intersection should take place. (E. Rockel)

Timonium Fairgrounds: Both the GTCC and adjoining neighborhood associations hope that the next Councilman will rectify the rezoning error in which 60 acres of this property were zoned for commercial usage during the Comprehensive Rezoning Process of 2008. During the open filing period for the 2012 CZMP, the GTCC requested that these 60 acres be returned to the prior zoning, MR-IM.

COMPLETED ISSUES

1131 McCormick Road: The owner has received a variance to construct signage larger than permitted under zoning regulations. In conjunction with the Sparks/Glencoe Association & People's Counsel, GTCC opposed the variance. The County Board of Appeals, in its public deliberation, gave indication that the variance would be denied, but in its written decision, the Board of Appeals upheld the variance. The People's Counsel has asked for a reconsideration of the ruling in light of the public deliberation comments. This case ultimately went to the Circuit Court, where the Judge ruled that the signage variance was not appropriate, and the tenant will have to remove certain signage on the building...(E. Rockel)

10 Aylesbury Road: A special hearing recently granted permission to open a commercial recreational facility in the space formerly occupied by LAX World. The operator informs that this facility will exclusively serve children age 13 & under, accompanied by an adult, for recreational activities and children's parties. Look for the business to open later this summer. (E. Rockel)

Jessup Property – The County Landmarks Preservation Commission has approved placing the Jessup House on the landmarks list. The Baltimore County Council would have to also approve the inclusion. As of August, the developer's attorney indicated his client was reviewing how this would impact the proposal. Regardless of the Landmark's issue, the developer has not submitted a development plan for County review. Longford North was to hold a fundraiser in early November to help pay for its legal expenses. The developer has submitted a revised development plan in December. The Hearing Officer's Hearing was held in April with Longford North, Pine Valley/Valleywood, Huntridge and GTCC offering comments on the plan. A consistent remark from all was that the number of units, 103, needed to be reduced. The hearing officer approved the 103 unit plan. The Longford North Community reached a compromise with the developer and has dropped any plan to appeal the development. Over the Summer of 2011 the developer started the rough grading and utility construction for the subdivision. (E.Rockel, Longford North)

Hampton Manor: This property is located on the east side of Scott Adam Road and is an existing multifamily residential development that will be adding more units. Concept Plan Conference scheduled for 11/6/2006 at 10:00 am in Room 123 County Office Building. Community Input Meeting will be scheduled thereafter. The community input meeting demonstrated several objections to the plan. The most common objection was a proposal to connect Southfork Road with the existing roads in the apartment complex. Residents on Southfork are concerned about additional "cut thru" traffic. A compromise may have been reached at the start of the Hearing Officer's Hearing. Both sides will examine making the Southfork connection a gated entrance. At the Hearing Officer's Hearing, Baltimore County agreed to allow Southfork Road to be a gated entrance. (E.Rockel)

302 North Avenue, Lutherville: The property owner was given a side yard variance in order to subdivide this parcel and construct a second house on a newly created second lot. The creation of the second lot will allow the owner to afford to rehabilitate the existing Victorian dwelling on the initial lot. (E. Rockel)

1928 Greenspring Drive: Plans to create a commercial recreational facility within the existing building to host birthday parties, corporate outings and other events. The recreational uses will include laser tag, cosmic miniature golf and other high tech gaming activities. (E. Rockel)

Anderson Automotive: Dealership wishes to reconfigure its site layout by establishing the Honda dealership on the current GMC site and moving the GMC trade to the Hummer site. The site at the corner of York & Halesworth would be sold for another usage. At a Hearing on January 15th, Deputy Zoning Commissioner Thomas Bostwick approved the amendment of the previous PUD plan (E.Rockel, J. Rogers & People's Counsel)

Potin Stil Restaurant Zoning Variance Appeal – Zoning Case 02-165-A, 2323 York Rd, Variances to Parking Regulations as to number required, island sizes, aisle space dimensions. Zoning Commissioner granted all variances. GTCC filed an appeal with the Board of Appeals. Appeals Board reversed the Zoning Commissioner's order by a 2-1 vote. Petitioner made request for Judicial Review to Baltimore County Circuit Court. GTCC and Peoples Counsel of BC filed in opposition to request. Circuit Court Judge agreed with the

Board of Appeals decision reversing the variances granted. Director of Permits and Development and Code Enforcement has not exercised the Circuit Court's order of July 5, 2005. Request, if granted by the County, for any future meeting to be held, to participate in settlement of this case. Engineer for the owners has requested a refinement to the development plan to correct this violation. Lou Miller attended the DRC meeting, and Baltimore County did not approve the DRC request. The matter is rightfully considered a zoning violation and not a development refinement. Don Rascoe, Deputy Director of Permits & Development Management recently reported that the owner has corrected the parking violations and that the owner has now complied with the Board of Appeals order to correct the problem (E. Rockel, and GTCC Executive Committee)

YorkRidge Shopping Center, York & Ridgely Roads: Owners of the property seek a variance from the parking requirements in order to add a free-standing pad site at the shopping center. The pad site associated with this variance is estimated to be two to three years away from any development. Additionally, long range plans call for re-development of the service station site at the corner of York and Ridgely. The variance hearing on the parking is scheduled for mid November. The owners received the parking variance, but no immediate plans are in store for building the pad site. (E. Rockel)

Hunt Valley Crossing, 11119 McCormick Road: This existing Verizon-owned warehouse property is being proposed to be redeveloped as a 262 unit apartment complex under the Planned Unit Development guidelines. The project's architectural design attractively fits into the Hunt Valley Business Community landscape. A community input meeting to learn about the project produced no objections to the project from nearby residential communities. However, nearby businesses did raise some objections. In response to the concerns expressed by nearby manufacturing businesses, Councilman Todd Huff has reached a compromise wherein the developers of the parcel will not proceed with an apartment use for the property.(GTCC Executive Committee)