



# The Greater Timonium Community Council

Volume XII Issue II

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

March 2010

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## \*\*\*\*\* NEWSLETTER \*\*\*\*\*

### President's Message – Eric Rockel

#### Winter Doldrums?

I don't know about you, but I have been ready for Winter to end since the start of the New Year. In even a normal Winter, I get tired of the cold weather and snow very quickly. Along comes the Winter of 2009-10, and we get record amounts of snowfall, with temperatures below normal for almost the entire month of February. Yes I have a bad case of cabin fever, and the only remedy is the heat and humidity of a Baltimore August. I guess I will just have to patiently wait this Winter out.

One of the redeeming features of these heavy snowfalls has been to see neighbor helping neighbor dig out of the mess. On many streets throughout the area, the neighbor with a snow blower helped those without one. Here in Lutherville, one neighbor with a snow plow cleaned out several of his neighbors driveways and did not receive anything in return other than a heartfelt "Thank you". Younger residents looked out for the seniors by lending a hand at the shoveling. If you wanted to see a tangible demonstration of community spirit, the help one another attitude, you could find it as we dug out of this record snowfall of February 2010.

Recently, I have attended two planning sessions for the "Western Baltimore County Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Plan", sponsored by the Office of Planning. Walking and bicycling are often afterthoughts in developing the transportation network for a community or a region, but some jurisdictions throughout the nation, including cities such as Portland and Seattle, have recognized that the pedestrian and the cyclist should be given more awareness. Should our roadways include a dedicated bike lane for cyclists? Although many streets already have sidewalks, a large number do not. Does this absence of sidewalks impact the walking environment and discourage a very convenient way for many people to achieve better levels of fitness? Should the County provide more opportunities for off-street, multi-user trails for joggers, runners and off road cycling? Here in the Timonium area we have many opportunities associated with Loch Raven Reservoir, but do the communities adjacent to Loch Raven want some greater interconnection for walkers and cyclists? The Office of Planning will be holding several workshops/hearings to generate discussions and hear opinions about this topic. The workshop for our area is tentatively scheduled for the evening of April 21 at either Loch Raven High School or Lutherville Elementary School. As of this writing, the final location had not been established. We will post the final location on our website, when announced.

Finally, I wanted to highlight two events aimed at raising money to fight cancer. The Maryland Half Marathon will be held on Sunday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> and the event starts and finishes at the Timonium Fairgrounds. One hundred percent of the net proceeds from this event goes to the University of Maryland Marlene and Stewart Greenebaum Cancer Center. If you are a runner, think about participating and raising money for the University of Maryland. Even if you are not a runner, there is a wonderful after-race festival held at the Fairgrounds that is open to the public. The festival includes two bands, vendor supplied food and ceremonies to honor the runners and many cancer survivors. Even if you cannot attend the post race festival, you can support the event by donating to the Cancer Center or by cheering the runners along the race course. For more information, including registration information and a course description, go to [mdhalfmarathon.com](http://mdhalfmarathon.com).

The second event is the Cool Kids 5K Run and 1 Mile Walk through Historic Lutherville on June 12. The Cool Kids Campaign is a charitable organization aimed at assisting pediatric oncology patients and their families. For more information on this event, contact Nadia Peel or Monica Enoch at coolkids5k@verizon.net.

**NEXT GTCC MEETING: MARCH 10th, 2010 at 7:00 PM**

**\*\*\*\*\* PLEASE NOTE OUR MEETING ROOM LOCATION ! \*\*\*\*\***

**Starting January, 2010, the GTCC is now meeting once again at the Ridgely Middle School - Meeting Room #103, just off Ridgely Rd., Lutherville, Md.** .....with meetings STILL beginning promptly at 7:00 PM. Use the Administrative parking lot and building entrance off Lynncrest Road just off Ridgely Road east of Charmuth Road.

**GTCC General Meeting – Wednesday, March 10th, 2010**

The GTCC will hold their ‘Next Meeting’ on **Wednesday, March 10th, 2010 at the Ridgely Middle School Meeting Room - #103**, on Lynncrest & Ridgely Roads with *meetings STILL beginning promptly at 7:00 PM.*

Construction improvements are now complete at the school; therefore, we have arranged to meet there once again on a regular basis as we have done in the past. We are all looking forward to seeing everyone there !

**GTCC**

*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.*

**NOTICE !!!**

**CALENDAR 2010**

**NOTICE !!!**

\*\*\*\*\* **Meeting Schedule** \*\*\*\*\*

**Board of Directors 7:00 pm – 9:00pm**

**General Membership 7:00 pm – 9pm**

**February 1, 2010  
April 14, 2010  
June 09, 2010  
August – No Meeting  
October 13, 2010  
December 10, 2010**

**January 13, 2010  
March 10, 2010  
May 12, 2010  
July – No Meeting  
September 08, 2010  
November 10, 2010**

*All Meetings are **NOW** Scheduled at the “**Ridgely Middle School**” Rm-103, on the **DATES NOTED ABOVE !!!***

**Annual GTCC Membership Dues** – Marge DiNardo

GTCC ‘2010’ Membership dues of \$50 dollars for the year are due at this time. We had a great response from (51) Associations contributing their Annual Membership dues payment last year! Dues notices for 2010 have been mailed out in January so if you haven’t received one or if you need a copy, please don’t hesitate to let us know. . Please send your 2010 dues payments to **GTCC, 9b Ridgely Rd., Box 276, Timonium, Maryland 21093**. Thanks to all our contributing Associations for all their dedicated support for the ongoing work of the Greater Timonium Community Counsel!

**Agenda and Speakers - GTCC March 10th, Meeting** - Tentative Schedule.....

1. Introductions
2. Update on Annual Membership Drive
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Featured Speaker: Ms. Sue Levin, Department of Aging, Cockeysville Senior Center Programs
5. Zoning Items: Report on Anderson Automotive PUD Hearing,
6. Review of Local Legislation: Changes in the PUD Rules
7. Master Plan of Baltimore County
8. New Business
  - a. Maryland Half Marathon
  - b. Cool Kids 5K Run
  - c. Baltimore County Community PAC
9. Adjourn

**The Captain's Corner** – Captain Martin Lurz

*We have invited our Cockeysville Precinct "7" Commander, Captain Marty Lurz, 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 Lurz:*

The recently tallied crime statistics for 2009 have shown an overall 7.9% reduction of total reported crime in Precinct 7 compared to the calendar year 2008. Notably, there was an 11.3% reduction in robberies, a 2.4% reduction in burglaries and a 24.2% reduction in motor vehicle thefts. It's important to note that in August of 2009, I was very concerned about the number of burglaries that had been reported in the precinct. In fact, we were running at a pace which, had it continued, would have been significantly higher than the totals for 2008. We attacked this increase in two ways: 1) by shifting concentrated patrol – including the Traffic Team - into potential trend areas and, 2) by appealing to the public's help to increase awareness and to "harden" potential targets. By using that teamwork and making critical arrests, we were able to reduce those numbers during that August through December 2009 time span and end up *below* the 2008 figures. Some of those critical arrests were the direct result of residents paying attention to their neighborhoods and calling 911 to report suspicious activities. The officers at Precinct 7 "Thank You" for doing that because we cannot do our job without your assistance.

We did see a slight increase in thefts reported in the precinct during 2009. Part of the increase was due to a few sporadic trends of thefts – frequently GPS units - *from* motor vehicles. Residents need to know that the most common method used to enter a vehicle and steal items is by means of an unlocked car door. In fact, some thieves will randomly walk down a street or through neighborhood driveways and tug on a vehicle door handle. If it's open, it's easy in-and-out access with no glass breakage and no noise. It's the perfect scenario for such a thief, who generally strikes during darkness and does not want to be seen or heard. And yes, sometimes a window is broken out to enter a vehicle, but if noise and attention can be avoided by taking the easy way in, that's what the thief will generally do. With that in mind, I'm asking for the community – the same folks that came together to significantly reduce the numbers of "unlocked door or window" burglaries over the past three years – to spread the word about locking vehicle doors and leaving valuables out of sight. It's a simple thing to do and it works. Please help us reduce these types of thefts throughout the precinct.

Finally, I wanted to repeat our invitation to all residents of the "Cockeysville" Precinct to join the Precinct 7 Police and Community Relations Council. The PCRC, as it is known, presents an opportunity for all Precinct 7 residents to meet monthly with the Precinct Commander and the Community Outreach officers. Residents can bring community concerns and issues to our attention so we can develop plans for working together to improve the quality of life and reduce crime in their neighborhoods. Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of every month at the Bank of America Building on McCormick Road. For more information regarding the PCRC, please contact Precinct 7 Community Outreach Officer Kevin Geiger at 410-887-1863, or you may email Kevin at [kgeiger@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:kgeiger@baltimorecountymd.gov)

My thanks to the folks in the GTCC and the entire community for their support throughout the year!  
Captain Martin Lurz, Precinct 7

**Lou Miller - With Fond Memories** – by Eric Rockel

The GTCC family lost one of its most impactful members with the passing of Lou Miller, who suffered a heart attack on Wednesday, March 3. Lou is survived by his wife of over sixty years, Lea, a daughter, son-in-law and grandson.

Lou and Lea moved to their home on East Timonium Road in the Haverford subdivision in 1956, back when part of Timonium Road was still dirt and it did not run thru to Eastridge. Over the years Lou was active in the Yorkshire /Haverford Community Association, the church and many other civic activities. He worked for many years in hospital management, where he specialized in systems operations. Outside of work and his community activities, Lou and Lea showed pedigree cats for many years, and Lou loved to play golf and garden at his home.

I first met Lou a few years after GTCC had been reformulated by Matt Walker and Tom Kelly. By that point in his life, Lou had retired from his management job, and he had the time to devote a lot of energy to GTCC. He loved representing the community in zoning matters, and he spent countless hours trying to lobby our Councilmen about zoning issues in the Timonium area.

One of Lou's specialties in the area of zoning was child care. When a neighboring property owner wanted to expand her small child care operation into a much larger facility, Lou spent many hours analyzing the zoning laws related to child care centers. He also took hours of video to document that some parents who dropped off or picked up their children did not observe traffic safety rules. In the end, Lou prevailed and the child care operator was not allowed to expand the facility. Lou grew so passionate about the issue of child care facilities that he counseled other communities on the subject as well.

A few years later, the community of Pine Valley-Valleywood faced a similar child care issue when Kinder-Care proposed a large child care center on West Timonium Road. Lou spent many hours with the leadership of that community advising them of issues to address in their zoning case. In the end, the Zoning Commissioner ruled against the large child care center, but Lou's involvement did not end with the zoning victory. The owner of the property could have appealed the initial ruling, which would have cost Pine Valley another set of legal fees and no guarantee that the Zoning Commissioner's ruling would have been upheld. So Lou suggested that a win-win could be achieved by both sides. He helped broker an arrangement where the owner would not appeal the child care case and the community would support a higher density residential zoning for the property.

Lou was fond of saying "you win some, you lose some" with regard to zoning cases, but he won more than his fair share, the result of his attention to details to our County's zoning laws. He was successful at the Circuit Court level in denying a nursing home in east Timonium Heights, and he found similar success in a Circuit Court case over adherence to County parking regulations at a local restaurant. Never one to back down when he thought he was right, Lou always came prepared to represent the community viewpoint.

In his years as president of GTCC, one of his most lasting accomplishments was to set up our website with the help of his grandson. Over the years we have found the website to be an invaluable tool in disseminating information, and many neighboring communities have praised the content that the site provides.

Say a prayer for the Miller family tonight. Lou's death has left a void for his family and friends that is hard to accept. But we are all very fortunate that Lou left a lasting mark on the community that he loved.



**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. We took on the challenge of updating our website to enhance your surfing experience by providing an updated interface with more information and with greater ease to find what you may be looking for. Our main website access has been changed to **GTCCINC.ORG** instead of **GTCCINC.COM** however we have linked the two addresses together and you can NOW access our site through either of the above web addresses.

**The Councilman's Corner – Kevin Kamenetz**

*We have invited our County Councilmen to provide us this month with an article for our newsletter in the form of 'The Councilman's Corner' on any issue(s) that he feels might be of interest to our membership. The following article this month is from Kevin:*

**2nd District - Councilman Kevin Kamenetz**

Greetings to the Greater Timonium Community. I am most certain that I am not alone when I say that I believe that everyone in Baltimore County has had enough snow! One sure sign that spring is just around the corner is the return of the robins and I have seen them everywhere in my travel through out the county. The patience and understanding of everyone in dealing with this historical 2010 blizzard is greatly appreciated.

Recent matters of interest include the following:

**Planned Unit Development** – Bill 5-10 revises the process for the review and approval of a Planned Unit Development (PUD). The bill removes the Planning Board entirely from the PUD approval process. The Hearing Office will now review and approve all PUD's. The PUD application will still be required to be submitted to the Councilman in whose district the PUD is proposed to be located, and the Council will adopt a resolution approving the proposed site for continued review. The Council may still amend or modify the proposed densities or uses.

Two substantive modifications are proposed by the bill to this part of the process. First, the community benefit that the PUD application must recite is expanded and clarified. That benefit may be:

- \* An environmental benefit that proposes to achieve at least a silver rating according to the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Green Building Rating System;
- \* A land use benefit, including a higher quality architectural design or use of higher quality building materials that enhance the development for its residents;
- \* A capital improvement benefit to a nearby County-owned facility for the use by community residents, or a volunteer fire company that serves the planned unit development;
- \* A public policy benefit promoting economic development opportunities, or providing senior or workforce housing.

Secondly, Permits and Development Management (PADM) must post the property at the time the Council gives public notice of the resolution to approve the PUD review. In preparing its concept plan conference comments, the Office of Planning may make recommendations with regard to the site layout, types and intensity of uses, signage, landscaping requirements, or other aspects of the planned unit development, including requested modifications of standards, that the Director considers necessary for the planned unit development to meet the intent and purposes of the title and the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations.

With its development plan conference comments, the Office of Planning shall include a final report containing its final recommendations, and this final report together with the PUD development plan and pattern book is submitted to the Hearing office for review.

The Hearing Office conducts the PUD hearing, as he would for another development plan. His review is similar to that conducted under current law by the Planning Board. He has the authority to modify standards, but he may not alter any modifications imposed by the Council. Additionally, a general development PUD must be located inside the URDL.

**Tanning Facilities - Minors** – State law (Section 20-106, Health-General Article) prohibits the use of a tanning facility by a minor without written consent of a parent or guardian. These regulations do not preempt a county from enacting and enforcing more stringent measures to regulate the use of tanning devices by minors.

In essence Bill 3-10 mirrors that of the State by prohibiting a minor's use of tanning facilities without the written consent of the parent or legal guardian. The bill further requires such consent to be provided on the premises and in the presence of an owner, employee or operator of the tanning facility. The facility must use the consent form approved by the State Health Department. Civil penalties are provided for violations.

**Senior Assisted Living Services** - Approval is being requested of an Assisted Living contract for fiscal year 2010 with Best Care Assisted Living, LLC to provide services for eligible seniors 62 years or older. The proposed contract would bring the total to 14 such providers in Baltimore County. Client income eligibility could not exceed 60% of the State median income (\$30,252 for single households and \$39,552 for married households) with assets not exceeding \$11,000 for single or \$14,000 for couples with ineligibility for Medicare or Medicaid benefits. Services include 24-hour supervision 7 days per week, with 3 meals per day and evening snack along with personal care services.

This contract would run until September 30, 2010 and may be renewed for one additional year. Maximum compensation for all contractors providing these services is limited to the amount appropriated, which totals \$344,822.

In closing I thank GTCC for affording me the opportunity to share with you information that impacts all of us as a community and as a county. I look forward to our continued successful partnership in the future.

**The Legislator's Corner** – *Jim Brochin, Steve Lafferty, Sue Aumann, & Bill Frank*

*We have also 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. We rotate these requests through the Districts within GTCC. The following articles this month are from the 42nd Legislative District:*

**42nd District** – *Senator Jim Brochin*

As we reach the midpoint of the 2010 Legislative Session, I have been able to take the lead on various pieces of legislation that will have an impact on our local communities.

One of the major concerns of legislators during this session is protecting our children against violent predators. Many legislators have introduced legislation that aims to put away these offenders for longer periods of time or monitor them once released from prison. I have introduced a bill that would amend Maryland's propensity rule for child sex crimes, enabling prosecutors to admit prior acts of sexual misconduct involving a child at the trial of a defendant charged with the same crime. Under current law, this evidence is not admissible and the verdict too often depends on the word of the victim versus the word of the offender. The importance of this legislation is that it addresses the problem of convicting child sex offenders. It is a preventative bill that will help State's Attorneys throughout Maryland put more of these predators behind bars.

Health care insurance is widely covered issue these days and for good reason. Young adults age 19 through 29 are the largest growing age group at risk of being uninsured, accounting for 13 million of the 47 million Americans living without health insurance. Currently under Maryland law, insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and HMOs must allow a child dependent to remain on an insured's plan until age 25. This excludes a large subset of our young population, so I introduced legislation that increased the age of an insured dependent to 30. Other states, including Pennsylvania and New Jersey, have already changed their policies to include those individuals up to age 30 and I feel it is time for Maryland to follow their lead.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide you with this update. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 410-841-3648.

### **42nd District** – *Delegate Steve Lafferty*

First, let me express my sympathies to the family and friends of Lou Miller, a great champion of his community and of all people in the Timonium area. His death creates a void that will take time to fill. I was honored to know and work with Lou. His leadership and insights will be missed.

We are past the mid-way point in Annapolis. The budget issues, however, are far from settled. The Governor's budget has less general fund spending than last year's - something that is almost unheard of. At the same time, he is making efforts to keep public education funded so we can retain our position as the Number 1 public school system in the country. No tax increases are expected although many are pushing an increase of \$.10 per drink on alcohol. I do not expect it to pass.

The unstable economy and job creation are also at the top of the agenda. I expect that we will enact legislation to provide a \$5,000 tax credit for hiring unemployed people, stabilize the Unemployment Insurance fund, create a new micro-enterprise fund and provide guarantees for small business loans. These may be small steps but are important ones.

At the urging of hundreds of constituents, the Baltimore County delegation got deeply involved in a school reporting program called Articulated Instructional Module or "AIM". AIM would have created a huge burden on teachers and the schools without any notable improvement in the ability to evaluate progress or success. As a result of our intervention, AIM is dead for now.

One large environmental issue has also been on the table – implementation of stronger storm water management regulations. Developers and local governments have been fighting the regulations adopted last year, arguing that they are too difficult or expensive. Many have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars and, legitimately, fear this will be lost. Negotiations with environmental leaders look promising to reach a realistic compromise so that pollution can be reduced, water quality improved and developers investments protected.

I'll just close by telling about a few of my bills. One would require an elected Board of Education for Baltimore County. We need a Board that is accountable and responsive. I believe an election is one way to obtain those goals. I also have a bill to prohibit state government from posting social security numbers and driver's license numbers on line. Unfortunately, there are some posted documents with this information – a fertile ground for identity theft. I also have bills to enable smaller restaurants in Towson to have liquor licenses and to improve the way transportation funds are spent in Maryland.

It is an honor to serve you. Please let me know if you have any questions or want to share your opinions about legislation. I can be reached at [Stephen.Lafferty@house.state.md.us](mailto:Stephen.Lafferty@house.state.md.us) or at 410-841-3487.

### **42nd District** – *Delegate Sue Aumann*

The House and Senate members of the Baltimore County Delegation met on February 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss the AIM Program with Superintendent Joseph Hairston regarding the highly contested grading system. This issue has raised a number of questions over the past few weeks and because of this, the Superintendent stated he would discontinue the mandatory implementation of the reporting component of this program. Upon further pressing, Dr. Hairston said the data collection aspect of the program has been suspended, then followed up by saying AIM's reporting component would not be implemented. This was seen as good news.

The issues noted were in regard to the amount of time our teachers would spend recording the student's mastering of more than 100 specific skills collected on a per student basis and then recorded in a twelve page report. It was indicated this process would take one and one half hours of input per student. The AIM program would have educators set classroom instruction aside to complete the data input. Many see this process as duplicative in light of what has been required by the No Child Left Behind Act.

Many questions were posed to the Superintendent about the development and copyright issues surrounding the creation of this program. The Assistant to Dr. Hairston, Dr. Barbara Dezmon, has renewed her copyright six times, the latest in 2006 for the AIM Program. This creates a questionable ethics issue.

I have joined in with other delegates in crafting a letter to the State's Attorney's office asking for an investigation. If you would like a copy of the letter please let us know. As I stated in the hearing: "This program has caused a lot of harm and I hope that there will not be any retaliation to those teachers and staff that were not supportive of this program. Teachers need more time to teach and less time on data collection and I hope this never happens again."

### **The University of Maryland, Baltimore Audit**

The University of Maryland, Baltimore had quite an audit that came out late last week. It revealed that a senior management employee, Dean Karen Rothenberg of the Law school, received inappropriate payments totaling \$410,000. These payments breakdown into two categories: \$350,000 in FY 2007; \$60,000 over FY 2007-FY2009. The \$350,000 was characterized as compensation for a sabbatical that she had earned but did not take. In her initial appointment letter she could take a sabbatical after 5 years of service as Dean at full salary. The Chancellor's response included in his testimony indicated: "Due to work commitments, Dean Rothenberg felt she was not in a position to exercise this option. In order to keep her on a Dean of the Law School, President David Ramsay opted to provide her with this \$350,000 as payment for the unused sabbatical."

Poor judgment and the disregard of USM policies caused swift action on the part of the Regents and the Chancellor to insist that Dr. Ramsay step down by March 1, 2010. The interim president will be the Medical School Dean Albert Reece until July when President Jay Perman will take over. A letter was sent to Karen Rothenberg indicating that the \$60,000 in additional summer compensation she received be returned due to the lack of written documentation from her supervisor, President Ramsay, authorizing the payments. The investigation has been turned over to the Office of the Attorney General.

Chancellor Kirwan needs to address the policy governing the payments for summer research which in this audit equaled \$1.1 million dollars. The auditors tested 36 compensation payments made to employees during FY 07 to 09 totaling \$877,000 which was not disclosed or supported in UMB annual budget submission. The Chancellor is compensated by our tax dollars and for these types of issues to occur and not be addressed in a formal and timely matter is something he should be ultimately held responsible for. The lack of internal controls needs to be addressed so receipts and disbursements are properly accounted for. For the Audit Report of University System of Maryland, University of Maryland, Baltimore February 2010 see link: <http://www.ola.state.md.us/Reports/Fiscal%20Compliance/UMB10.pdf>.

I hope I never see another audit like this with disregard of our tax dollars in educating our students.

### **Sex Offender Laws**

The growing problem of Maryland's treatment of sexual offenders can be illustrated by the case of 11 year old Sarah Foxwell, who was abducted by a registered sex offender. She was taken by a sex offender who was recently arrested for breaking into a woman's bedroom – the man who abducted her had previous convictions that included molesting a 12 year old girl and raping a 16 year old, but was released the same day he was arrested on a \$10,000 bond. That very same day he was released on bond, he abducted Sarah from her Salisbury home. Governor O'Malley and many members of the Maryland General Assembly have proposed bills to respond to this problem to try to help keep children like Sarah Foxwell safe.

The Governor has proposed an initiative that would put serious sex offenders under mandatory lifetime supervision after they were released from jail, including the possible use of GPS monitoring. The Governor's office makes the case that, with this law in place this offender would not have been able to abduct Sarah because the arrest would have been in violation of his probation. There is proof from other states that lifetime supervision helps prevent the repeat of a sexual offense. Other bills that were introduced to the Judiciary Committee institute the practice of making sex offenders stay in jail longer by reducing the amount of diminution credits they can amass, these credits allow prisoners to get out of jail earlier.

Right now a sex offender can get out of jail in 19 years on a 25 year sentence through the amassment of diminution credits. The diminution credits should be excluded for all those convicted of a sex offense, to keep children safer from predators.

## **Balancing the Budget**

In my last week's newsletter, I talked about the State budget and the need to rein in excessive spending. Fixing our budget mess will not be easy, and it will require a bipartisan approach and solution. I was pleased to see the Democratic leadership invite the Senate and House Republican leaders to present specific ideas on ways to balance Maryland's fiscal year 2011 operating budget. House Minority Leader Anthony O'Donnell and House Minority Whip Christopher Shank presented their views – and the views of the House Republican Caucus – during a briefing on budget reduction recommendations on Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> before a joint meeting of the House Appropriations Committee and Senate Budget and Taxation Committee. Several legislators from both parties also attended.

The Republican plan, which received significant media attention, provides several specific recommendations to balance the budget, including cuts totaling:

- \$126 million by eliminating the Geographic Cost of Education Index (GCEI), an optional part of the Thornton education program that provides additional monies for teacher salaries in high-cost jurisdictions such as Montgomery County;
- \$29.9 million by eliminating 500 executive branch positions;
- \$12.4 million from stem cell grants;
- \$17.5 million by eliminating 1,000 positions in higher education;
- \$195 million from a 6% recovery in Medicaid performance audits;
- \$167 million by taking a more accurate count of school attendance figures throughout the school year;
- \$6.3 million by cutting 1% across the board in State agencies;
- and several more significant cuts

Overall, the reductions suggested by the Republican Caucus would save \$829.63 million in the first year. Newspaper accounts on March 1<sup>st</sup> also indicated that leaders from both parties are seriously considering relaxing the counties' required "maintenance of effort" provisions that mandate that each county annually must spend an additional amount on K through 12 education using a complex funding formula. Recognizing the continuing fiscal problems, these MOE provisions may be shelved for the upcoming fiscal year.

A far more controversial proposal is one offered by Sens. Pipkin and Brinkley that would transfer at least some of the cost of funding teacher pensions from the State to the counties. Currently, the annual \$900 million cost is borne completely by the State, a figure that is unsustainable in my view. I believe we should restructure the teacher pension plan in such a way that an increasing portion of the cost is shared by the counties. If this is done gradually and with a predictable timetable, the disruption can be minimized. This is an explosive issue, but we must have these conversations this year in an effort to solve one of Maryland's biggest long-term fiscal challenges.

## **Baltimore County AIM**

My office has received an avalanche of letters, phone calls and e-mails from frustrated teachers and parents regarding the implementation of Articulated Instruction Module (AIM), a system originally designed to follow academic progress of minority students. Many teachers have expressed their disdain for this system, as it forces educators to fill-out volumes and volumes of progress reports for every student in their class. The Teachers Association of Baltimore County has called AIM too time-consuming, complex, and redundant.

Two joint hearings were held on January 21<sup>st</sup> and February 18<sup>th</sup> with Delegates and Senators from Baltimore County hearing testimony from the Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) Administration. The most recent meeting featured a pledge by BCPS Superintendent, Dr. Joe Hairston, to make AIM a strictly voluntary program. Throughout the timeframe

that AIM was conceived and launched, it became very clear that extreme lapses in communication were making a bad situation worse. While Dr. Hairston was recovering from a double knee replacement for several weeks, the chain of command completely broke down and AIM was foisted upon the system as a *fait accompli*. This unfortunate episode has exposed several lapses in management that are unsettling and troubling. Further, BCPS teachers were never truly consulted in any meaningful way about a program that would place a significant time and resource burden on them.

At the same time, we never received a good answer as to how AIM would help improve student performance. Some educators believe AIM is an innovative and effective program, but they seem to be in the distinct minority. Moving

forward, it is essential that the BCPS Administration work with teachers, students, and parents to improve our county's already excellent school system. Our teachers are among the most talented in Maryland, and a valuable human resource we must treat with great respect.

### **Direct Wine Shipper's License**

This year, Delegate Krysiak of Baltimore City is once again the primary sponsor for the Direct Wine Shipper's License, HB 716/SB 566 (HB 1262 last year). With Maryland's current three-tier distribution system, Marylanders can choose from a wide variety of wines, but must purchase these wines over a retail counter. In the event that a consumer cannot find the exact wine that they want in a liquor store, they are powerless to obtain this wine directly from wineries. In other states, residents can use the Internet or telephone in order to purchase wine and have it shipped directly to them.

The fiscal and policy analysis for this bill has not yet been submitted, but this bill should augment wine sales in our state and have a positive fiscal impact. It is worth noting that the Bill has a majority of sponsors in both the House (80) and the Senate (26). Several constituents have expressed their sentiments both for and against this bill. The House Economic Matters Committee will hear HB 716 on March 5 at 1:00 PM, and the Senate Education Health and Environmental Affairs Committee will hear SB 566 on March 17 at 1:00 PM. If you feel strongly about these issues, you may want to consider presenting testimony to these Committees in Annapolis.

My view is that consumers should have the right to purchase wines directly from wineries or over the Internet, as long as they show proper ID. Many other states have implemented these direct shipping programs with little or no trouble. The concerns about minors obtaining wines illegally are vastly overblown. It's time for Maryland to adopt a direct shipping bill for wine.

### **Same-Sex Marriage Validity**

Attorney General Douglas Gansler rendered an opinion last week that same-sex marriages performed in other states must be recognized in Maryland. This opinion comes following the defeat of a bill by Delegate Emmett Burns which would have banned recognition in Maryland of same-sex marriages from other states. The bill was defeated in the Judiciary Committee by a vote of 12-8. I voted in favor of Delegate Burns' bill to ban recognition of same sex marriages performed in other states.

The Attorney General's opinion, which I have not yet read in its entirety, appears to rest largely on his personal support for gay marriage, rather than a strict reading of the law and the State constitution. Back in 1973, Maryland passed a statute stating flatly, "Only a marriage between a man and a woman are valid in this State." That seems pretty clear to me.

Obviously, this is a highly emotional and contentious issue. The cultural wars are raging throughout the country, and Maryland is no exception. While I strongly believe in traditional marriage, I also believe that on this most contentious and controversial issue, the people – not the courts, and not the Attorney General – should decide. They should decide either directly through a ballot initiative, or through their elected representatives. In all 31 states where a gay marriage initiative has been on the ballot, traditional marriage has been affirmed and upheld in every single instance.

### **BOAST Tax Credit**

This Wednesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, proponents of the BOAST tax credit (House Bill 946) will hold a rally on Lawyers Mall in front of the State House. I have been invited to speak at the rally in favor of this important tax credit that allows individuals and corporations to make contributions to nonpublic and public schools and receive a 75% tax credit.

BOAST stands for Building Opportunities for All Students and Teachers, and is modeled after a very successful Pennsylvania program that has raised scholarship monies for needy students in the Keystone State. Given the state's fiscal situation, a tax credit of this magnitude would be costly, if fully implemented, since it would drain revenues from the general fund. Given this reality, BOAST proponents are not insisting that the program be fully implemented in its initial year, but that the statute be enacted in law as a "placeholder" for a time when the fiscal situation improves.

### **Upcoming Legislation and Announcements**

I am pleased to report that HB 207, the "Castle Doctrine" passed on Thursday, February 25, by a vote of 136-1. The bill now will go to the Senate, where it was defeated last year. Unfortunately, HB 543, which would prevent people convicted of specific offenses from receiving a certain reward issued by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, was given an unfavorable report in the Judiciary Committee by a 13-8 vote.

I will continue to provide the results of my pieces of legislation as they progress through committee and in the Legislature. You may also go to <http://mlis.state.md.us/2010rs/sponsors/frank.htm> in order to see the current status of these bills. Please send me an e-mail at [William.Frank@house.state.md.us](mailto:William.Frank@house.state.md.us) or call my office at 410-841-3793 and voice your opinions on these issues, as well as other issues that are important to you.

### **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		

### **The Librarian's Corner – By Mary Gail Hare (reporter) - The Baltimore Sun, March 1, 2010**

“ Storyville II ” starts opening imaginations - Center is Baltimore County library's second just-for-kids learning facility.

When Cindy Ulrich's grandson bursts through the front door of her Bowleys Quarters home, he asks the same question: Is it library day? Ulrich says 3-year-old Dalton Scheckells looks forward to their visits to the Rosedale branch of the Baltimore County Library, where he can shop, cook, build and garden in Storyville, a child-scale village that he never wants to leave. "This is just a fantastic place, where there is no 'can't touch' and everything is their size," Ulrich said.

"Where else can you bring kids to play for free?" The pair have joined the more than 153,000 visitors to the county's first interactive learning center since it opened two years ago, a level of popularity that led the county to build another Storyville at its western end. Storyville II opens today, in a \$1.7 million, 3,200-square-foot addition to the Woodlawn Library. Library spokesman Robert Hughes expects the sequel to draw similar crowds. "The visitor numbers astounded everyone," he said. "For a time, they tracked ZIP codes and found people coming from all over Maryland and many from out of state."

The Woodlawn center is about 1,000 square feet larger than the original. Designers pursued a woodsy theme, filling spaces with forest creatures, a towering tree topped with a house, multicolored flowers that 'grow' at a child's touch and butterflies on poles that give them movement. "We built to give active toddlers a lot of room to move," said Marisa Conner, youth services coordinator for the library system. "They can crawl through a log or find a quiet space in a cave with a bear puppet." They will also hear the sounds of birds, frogs and squirrels and should eventually learn to match those sounds with letters. "Every activity has a purpose that is related to school readiness and developing lifelong readers," Conner said. "This is about learning through playing and it's all hands-on. There's nothing battery-operated here."

Staff members at the Woodlawn Library may also spring spontaneous story times on groups of children. "I think the hardest thing will be getting kids to leave, once they are here," said Christine Kamt, coordinator at the new site. She estimates the space can handle about 70 children at a time. In the event of crowds, she will follow Rosedale's example and hand out restaurant-style pagers to let patrons know when spaces open up. Kamt, who spent the past week preparing the various areas, said the baby garden, with its multi-textured seats and comfy beds that encourage "tummy time," was her favorite. "This garden encourages parents to get on the floor with their babies," said Kamt, an expectant mother who said she plans to be a frequent visitor with her newborn.

The wing, with its own entrance and parking lot, also features a trolley car that replicates, down to the original colors and the No. 35, Woodlawn's early public transportation. Passenger seats equipped with springs promise to keep toddlers rocking. At the Rosedale Library, enthusiasm for the original Storyville continues. "Storyville is just a great place to play, with so many activities," said Kim Tharp, a Perry Hall mother of 2-year-old twins, who were busily rearranging the contents of grocery bins and making their version of salad. "We will keep coming, even as their interests change, because there will be things for them to do." A group of Danish librarians who toured the site in December planned to take the concept back home. "We will disseminate the inspiration from the study tour for other Danish libraries," Lotte Duwe Nielsen wrote to Rosedale. "Your work will no doubt inspire development of library services for children in Denmark." Megan Grace read to her 11-month-old daughter, Violet, in the baby garden and watched as the toddler busied herself with mirrors on the floor, soft sculptured animals and child-size noisemakers. "This place is safer than most homes," said Grace, a Rosedale resident. "I was really taken back by all the detail that went into this, how it all works so well and how clean it all is." Caroline Tynan brings her three children from Severn to Rosedale every week. While Liam, 1, dug in the garden, his 3-year-old twin siblings, Kolbe and Eva, pattered in the kitchen. After a few hours of play, the family headed off to story time. "There is something here to appeal to all different age ranges," Tynan said. "It is all so age-appropriate and interactive." Her only dilemma now is deciding which Storyville is closer to home. "No matter where it is, this place is worth the drive," she said. Copyright © 2010, The Baltimore Sun

### **GTCC Trivia – Did You Know?**

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. What railroad served Baltimore County from 1901-1958?
2. What present day institution of learning stands on part of an early estate called Northampton?
3. This Baltimore County community lived up to its name in 1995 when the elementary school there burned to the ground. What is it?

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. The Maryland and Pennsylvania Railroad (Ma and Pa). Towson served as a major source of passengers. It carried coal into the State Normal School (Towson University). In Long Green Valley, it served the farmers who sent their milk to Baltimore.
2. Goucher College. In 1745, Charles Ridgely, a merchant, bought 1500 acres in the wilderness that lay north of Towson. He became an iron entrepreneur and established the Northampton Furnace. The site of this extremely successful enterprise lies under the Loch Raven Reservoir today
3. Sparks. A stop on the Northern Central Railroad established in 1837. It was named for a family who ran a store on York Road.

### **This & That – Regular and New Helpful Items**

- **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>.

You can find a weekly calendar of development- and zoning-related hearings and meetings for County:

**Council District 3** at: [http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/MeetingsandEvents/pdm\\_d3.html](http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/MeetingsandEvents/pdm_d3.html)

**Council District 2** at: [http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/MeetingsandEvents/pdm\\_d2.html](http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/MeetingsandEvents/pdm_d2.html)

**Full Newsletter** at: <http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/executive/executiveupdate.html>



The Greater Timonium Community Council

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*The Next GTCC General Meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2010 at Ridgely Middle School, Room 103 at 7:00 pm*

### **CURRENT ISSUES**

**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 have 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 have 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. To date, the violations have not been corrected, and Baltimore County needs to enforce the zoning violations. The engineer's revised plan has been rejected by zoning officials of Baltimore County. As of the end of April revisions to the plan have not been received. Lou Miller is writing a letter to County Exec. Jim Smith asking him to intercede to require code compliance. (E. Rockel, L. Miller, and GTCC Executive Committee)

**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. (E. Rockel)

**11311 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. The reconsideration was denied, and People's Counsel is considering an appeal.(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 planned. This project may take until 2011 to receive County approvals. (E.Rockel)

**2340-2342 York Road:** Request to expand a dentist offices, which necessitates variances to setbacks and driveway widths.( W. Timonium Heights)

**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. ( E. Rockel & GTCC Executive Committee)

### 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, L. Miller, F. Regan, GTCC Executive Committee.)

**York Rd. Widening, Seminar to Ridgely Rd.** Most work on this project has been completed with only a few items yet to finish in the Spring of 2010. This project took one year longer than the original estimates.(E. Rockel, GTCC Executive Committee)

**Beaver Dam Swim Club Property** – Development Concept Plan reviewed by GTCC. Plan calls for four (4) mid-rise residential buildings with fifty-five units per building, or eleven units per floor. Two hundred twenty (220) units ,with below grade parking for 528 spaces. Plan would occupy ten of the twenty-six acres. No plans given for the remaining acres. A PUD overlay zoning is required. Further discussion with Mr. Mark Hanley, Jr. results in no further action at this time. (E. Rockel, L. Miller, GTCC Executive Committee)

**York & Ridgely Roads:** The former Lincoln/Mercury dealership has been reported to be the future site of a Walgreen Drug Store and pad site. The property is currently being graded for the new uses. (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 Councilman Bryan McIntire will rectify the rezoning error in which 60 acres of this property were zoned for commercial usage during the Comprehensive Rezoning Process of 2008.

### COMPLETED ISSUES

**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. It has come to our attention that the original developer is trying to sell the property to a third party to develop. (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. Despite the owner’s willingness to eliminate the connection to Southfork Road, Baltimore County DPW and Fire Department officials insist on a second access. 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)

**2340-2342 York Road:** Request to expand a dentist offices, which necessitates variances to setbacks and driveway widths.( W. Timonium Heights

**Ames Store Building** – Land and building owned by Capital Enterprises. The DRC approved plan to change the building which should lead to the construction of a Giant Foods in place of the now vacant store. Despite requests from GTCC and Yorkshire/Haverford, Giant has not replied to a request to publicly present their plans. Former Ames building has been demolished, and Giant has successfully opened at this location. (L. Miller, F. Regan, 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)

**Padonia Swim Club:** Grace Fellowship Church announced plans to purchase the 29 + acre site of the swim club. Many nearby residents have expressed concerns that the church plans to build a 2,500 seat sanctuary on the site. GTCC members have voted to disapprove the site for the church’s intended use. In November, the Church announced that it would not build on the site. (GTCC Executive Committee & Community Organizers )

**1904 Pot Spring Road:** The owner has appealed a prior Zoning Commissioner’s decision, with restrictions, to allow a professional office in the dwelling at this location. The adjoining community associations wish to minimize any nonresidential intrusion into the residential community. The owner ultimately dropped the appeal, and only residents of the property will be able to work in the home office.( E. Rockel, Valley Crest C.A., Dulaney Forest C.A. & Valley Garth CA)

**Comprehensive Rezoning for 2008:** See the list of properties requesting a zoning reclassification under the Comprehensive Zoning Map Process by looking at the GTCC website. GTCC continues to work with Councilman McIntire on developing a unique zoning classification for the Timonium Fairgrounds. (E. Rockel, L. Miller & GTCC)

**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 15<sup>th</sup>, Deputy Zoning Commissioner Thomas Bostwick approved the amendment of the previous PUD plan ( E.Rockel, J. Rogers & People’s Counsel)

### *Baltimore County – Old Lutherville Views*

