



The Greater Timonium Community Council

Volume X Issue I

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

February 2013

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***** NEWSLETTER *****

President's Message – Eric Rockel

Zoning Changes Draw Heat

Recently the comprehensive zoning process that allows for zoning changes every four years has come under fire, and decisions made by Councilwoman Vicky Almond have been near the eye of the storm. Two of the more controversial decisions made by Ms. Almond involved lowering the zoning density on the Chestnut Ridge Country Club and failing to increase the zoning to allow for more commercial development at Greenspring Station. Neither property owner was satisfied with the result.

In the case of the Chestnut Ridge property I want to applaud Ms. Almond for her courageous decision. That property abuts the Dipping Pond Run, a trout stream that has important environmental value. Howdy Burns, president of the Falls Road Community Association, has spent many years and countless hours defending the stream from degradation, and had the former RC-5 zoning remained in place, Mr. Burns and others believed that the stream would face further decline. Fortunately, Ms. Almond held that same viewpoint.

In the case of Greenspring Station, Ms. Almond followed suit just as councilmen had done before her decision. She was not the first councilperson to turn down a request for that property, and she cited the fact that the owners did not provide a long range master plan for the property as a reason for leaving the zoning intact.

Not getting your way out of the comprehensive zoning process is not unusual; there are always winners and losers. But these owners' reaction to the losses is unique in the history of the process. The owner of Chestnut Ridge has instituted a lawsuit seeking \$10 million dollars in damages and a return of the previous zoning designation according to the Baltimore Sun. While in the case of Greenspring Station, according to the Sun, the owners have helped fund a referendum drive that would put all of the decisions for the Second Council District on the ballot in the election of 2014.

I am not suggesting that property owners should not have some form of redress, but both the lawsuit and the referendum are unprecedented. There is already a mechanism in place where the owners could go before the Board of Appeals and argue that the decisions made on their properties were in error. Yet neither property owner chose to go that route. Should the local election board validate the referendum petitions as satisfactory, a decision is expected within the next month, then all of the zoning map changes in the Second District will sit in limbo until the next election. No one knows how the real estate market will react to that type of uncertainty.

From a personal perspective, one of the more troubling aspects of the reactions from both dissatisfied property owners has been that they have assailed the practice of "councilmatic courtesy."

Councilmatic courtesy is the practice whereby the other six council members defer to the wishes of the single councilperson in whose district the zoning issue resides. There may be a better way for these zoning decisions to be made, but I like the aspect of having the councilperson answerable for their decisions. If you don't like those decisions, vote out the politician

who made the decisions and vote in someone whom you think will do better. That is a very direct form of responsibility. If six other councilpersons start getting involved in the decisions for your district, there is only minimal accountability because you the voter cannot have a direct say in the election of those other six councilpersons.

Like I said, if you can think of a better way please let me know because I'm open to different approaches, but for now I will stick with "councilmatic courtesy" and hope that we don't see too many more lawsuits or referendums on zoning decisions in the future.

GTCC General Meeting – Wednesday, February 13th, 2013

The GTCC will hold their 'Next Meeting' on **Wednesday, February 13th, 2013 at the Cockeysville Library Meeting Room**, with meetings *STILL* beginning **promptly at 7:00 PM.**

Be sure to join us for part two in our discussion about Smart Meters on February 13th - Your chance to hear the opponent's point of view.

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 2013 **NOTICE !!!**

***** **Meeting Schedule** *****

General Membership 7:00 pm – 9pm

February 13, 2013 April 10, 2013 June 12, 2013 August – No Meeting October 09, 2013 December – No Meeting	January – No Meeting March 13, 2013 May 08, 2013 July – No Meeting September 11, 2013 November 13, 2013
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All Meetings are NOW Scheduled at the "Cockeysville Library" Meeting Room, on the DATES NOTED ABOVE.

Agenda and Speakers - GTCC February 13th, Meeting

1. Introductions
2. Treasurer's Report
3. Cockeysville Police Precinct, Update on Crime and Safety
4. Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland: Liz Galea
5. Featured Guest- Jonathan Libber from Maryland Smart Meter Awareness
6. Old Business:
 - a. Update on Mays Chapel Park
 - b. AA Global Property
 - c. Hybrid School Board
7. New Business:
 - a. Sonic Drive In
 - b. Other
8. Adjourn

The Captain's Corner – Retired Captain Martin Lurz

We usually invite our Cockeysville Precinct "7" Commander 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. However, we thought we would re-publish one of Marty Lurz many past excellent articles especially in light of recent area auto break-ins. So, the following article this month is from retired Captain Marty Lurz:

Spring and the upcoming Easter holiday season is quickly approaching. This is a busy time of year for everyone and that *everyone* can include opportunistic thieves who prey on unsuspecting shoppers. You can help us help you by being aware and focusing on the importance of personal safety as you make your rounds through area shopping centers and parking lots.

Most thieves are opportunists who are looking for the right conditions to commit their crimes. In a way, they too are shopping – shopping for the right target...maybe a purse, or a car, or even your identity! If you can make the opportunities for crime more difficult and obscure by following some awareness and prevention basics, you can help reduce crime and send the bad guys packing.

How? Stay aware! Be aware! Look around you! Take that extra moment to get into the good habits of parking in well-lit areas, locking your car doors and by not leaving valuables inside your car in plain view. Many thefts from vehicles are the direct result of not locking the car doors! If you make several trips back and forth to your car while shopping, make every effort to place your valuables and gifts in the trunk...and make sure you don't lock your keys in the trunk when you do! Try to park in a well-lit portion of the parking lot. Many of the larger mall and shopping center parking lots in Baltimore County have security cameras mounted atop the light poles. Light deters thieves and the cameras take that one step further!

Many area malls and shopping centers employ uniformed security personnel who make their rounds through the parking areas. Many of the security vehicles have roof-mounted amber flashing lights. I always tell folks to wait for these vehicles to come their way if they are apprehensive about walking through a certain portion of a lot.

We are also asking that ALL citizens be aware of their surroundings when withdrawing money, cashing checks, etc., particularly at banks and ATMs. Always – no matter where you are night or day – take a second to look around and make sure you aren't being followed by anyone or that you're not walking towards a potential problem. If you feel that you are, wait to walk with a group or wait for the security officer to drive by.

Try this awareness exercise some day – The next time you're in a grocery store, walk up and down a few aisles and see how many unattended pocketbooks you see in shopping carts. The owner is usually standing only a few feet away but is distracted because of looking for a product on the shelf. If you were a thief, you could reach into that purse, take the wallet and be gone in less than five seconds. (Remember, I said "If" you *were* a thief...don't take the wallet just to time yourself. This is an experiment only!) My point is awareness. Know where you are, where your young children are, where your purses and wallets are.

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.

Lastly, I am simply reminding you of prevention and awareness, along with calling 911 to report suspicious activities. These are the key elements of keeping you and your neighborhood safe. In Precinct 7, we are fortunate to have the cooperative spirit of our communities working with us to prevent and solve crime. Let's keep working together! My officers and I truly appreciate your support.

Retired Captain Martin Lurz – Precinct 7

Annual 2013 GTCC Membership Dues – Frank Regan

GTCC '2013' Membership dues of \$50 dollars for the year are due at this time. We had a great response from (50+) Associations contributing their Annual Membership dues payment last year! Dues notices for 2013 will be mailed out in late February so if you don't receive one or if you need a copy, please don't hesitate to let us know. . Please send your 2012 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!

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 Chaple North
Foxford	Dulaney Gate		

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>

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.

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

1. Who was the County's second County Executive?
2. Which community in Baltimore County was the first to incorporate?

3. A manufacturing firm located on Chesapeake Avenue, east of Delaware Avenue in Towson became very busy at Christmas time years ago. What did it produce?

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. Christian H. Kahl (D) 1958-1962.
2. Lutherville, Incorporated in 1868.
3. Harry Heim's Christmas Tree Ornament and Glass Blowing Works was located on the site of the Towson Library Parking Garage.

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. This is especially interesting and timely since they are all in session at this time in Annapolis. The following articles have been graciously submitted by the following legislators for this Newsletter Edition from the 42nd & 11th District's within the GTCC:

42nd District – Delegate Bill Frank

We're into the legislative session, and I wanted to provide a quick update on some of the major issue facing our State.

Energy: The Governor will once again advocate for an offshore wind power generation bill, which would involve the construction of gigantic windmills off the coast of Ocean City. While lessening our reliance on fossil fuels – as well as our dependence on unstable foreign sources of energy – are laudable goals, the Governor's prior proposals were simply too expensive for ratepayers and too impractical to implement.

At the same time, Western Maryland's Garrett and Allegany Counties are home to vast supplies of natural gas, part of the vast Marcellus Shale deposits that cover much of the eastern U.S. Extracting these domestic supplies would lessen our dependence on foreign sources, exert downward pressure on prices, and create thousands of desperately needed jobs. Instead of moving forward like Pennsylvania and other states are doing, Maryland is studying and re-studying the potential environmental impact of "fracking," the process of extracting this natural gas resource. I would like to see more emphasis placed on natural gas production rather than tilting at windmills.

Transportation Funding: Several proposals are being floated to increase the state tax on gasoline to fund improvements to our highway system. The current state gas tax is 23.5 cents per gallon (plus 18.4 cents per gallon in federal tax). It is estimated that, by 2018, there will only be enough money in the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) to maintain existing roads and no money for new construction.

Increasing the gas tax would not solve the root problem, which is that a large portion of TTF funding is being consumed by mass transit projects of questionable merit. At the same time, the Governor and General Assembly have diverted over a billion dollars from the TTF since 2008 when the TTF's share of the sales tax revenue was diverted to the general fund. The TTF funding "crisis" has been largely manufactured by Annapolis politicians.

Gun Control. The tragedy in Newtown, CT has prompted many proposals regarding guns. As the father of three, I can't imagine a more awful scenario than what happened at Sandy Hook Elementary School. The solutions put forth by the Governor, however, miss the mark and, in fact, would have done nothing to prevent this tragedy.

It simply makes no sense to restrict the rights of law-abiding citizens to protect themselves, their families and their properties. While I have not seen the specific language in the Governor's bill, I believe a more workable approach is to enact a mandatory additional five-year or ten-year prison sentence when a gun is used in the commission of a crime. This is the tried-and-true approach that removes criminals from our streets. We also urgently need to address the problem of mental illness, and act more proactively while protecting the privacy and confidentiality of patients, a challenging and

expensive endeavor. Finally, and most importantly, we need to further secure our school buildings to protect our children and teachers. These will be expensive undertakings, without question.

Limits on Citizen Petitions: Under the Maryland Constitution, citizens can petition an act of the General Assembly to the ballot and enable voters to uphold or repeal a law. Such petitions are rare and have succeeded in bringing only 21 questions to the ballot in the last 80 years. However, in the 2012 election, three laws were petitioned onto the ballot (same-sex marriage, the Dream Act, and congressional redistricting), which was historic. While all three bills were ultimately upheld by the voters, the possibility that three major pieces of legislation could have been reversed by voters put quite a scare into the leadership of the State. Accordingly, it is possible that the Governor will propose to curtail the rights of the citizens to challenge actions of the Legislature. Any such proposal will be met with the strongest of opposition.

As always, please continue to keep me posted on issues that are important to you. - Delegate Bill Frank

42nd District – Delegate Susan Aumann

Response to Governor O'Malley's State of the State Speech

On Wednesday, January 30th at noon we listened to the Governor's "State of the State" speech which highlights the initiatives his administration is presenting to the General Assembly.

The Governor talks about how our "State had veered off course" with increased spending and lacking a revenue source to pay for it, leaving a \$1.7 billion deficit. I could not agree more. Each year since 2007 our operating budget increased by over a billion dollars or 26%. Remember that over 24 taxes and fees have increased since 2007 starting with a penny on the sales tax. If you looked at a bar chart that showed the growth in the Operating Budget, it would look like stair steps. The Governor claims that he cut \$8 billion from the budget; it doesn't look like that. What is assumed in his \$8 billion number are the proposals for additional spending that was not accepted by the General Assembly.

Transportation was lightly touched on in his speech outlining that our region has the worst traffic congestion in the country. It is true that we have long commutes between Baltimore and Washington. The Governor wants to build a 21st century transportation network while creating thousands of jobs. He did not mention the three mass transit systems that need funding to be built: The Purple Line, the Red Line and the Corridor Line. The Federal Government has funding available for these projects if the State can show they have a revenue source. Guess what? It will be a gas tax. Ninety two percent of Maryland's drivers pay for eight percent of the mass transit riders. Mass transit accounts for 48% of transit spending while 24% goes to road construction and maintenance. The Governor states "To govern is to choose". Revenue for roads and bridges raised from motor fuel fees and gas taxes have been diverted to non-transportation related projects as well as unprofitable investments in mass transit.

Jobs, Jobs, Jobs - The Governor wants to move forward with Atlantic off-shore wind in hopes that Maryland could be the new regional hub for manufacturing wind turbines. The cost to rate payers will be higher. The transmission lines will need to run through Delaware or Pennsylvania and come to Maryland. The cost to build the turbines in the ocean will be expensive but the cost of maintenance will be pricy as well. Unfortunately all those costs will be passed onto the rate payers. I prefer solar because it would be a clean, renewable energy that is abundant.

Here is this week's You Tube on the Governor's State of the State Address:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQz7o0S2sDg>

Annapolis Update:

A gun rally was held this past Wednesday with over 3000 attending. The Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee heard the Governor's, "Firearms Safety Act of 2013". The crowds filled Lawyers Mall in front of the State House as well as the Miller Senate Building.

The bill was cross-filed in the House of Delegates. I will keep you posted on the date it will have a hearing. Next week I will outline the highlights of the bill and present a more comprehensive review.

Thursday was the last day to introduce bills you can check out all proposed legislation at <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmLegislation.aspx?pid=legisnpage&tab=subject3>.

Delegate Szeliga and I filed an emergency bill “Consumer Protection - Payment by Credit Card – Prohibition of Surcharge. This hidden fee effective on January 30th, that allows Visa and Master card to impose a 2%-3% “swipe fee” to consumers who make a purchase with credit cards.

The swipe fee is the second highest operating expense for merchants and those increases will be passed onto consumers. These charges only affect credit card transactions and not debit cards, cash or prepaid cards.

These extra fees will have a harmful effect on purchasing power for consumers. Currently, there are 10 states that prohibit swipe fees from being imposed on their consumers.

An emergency bill becomes effective immediately after the Governor signs the bill into law. The bill will need to pass the House and the Senate committees before the Governor signs it into law.

School Construction

On Monday, Governor O’Malley announced \$336 million in State funding for school renovation and construction projects across the State, including \$25 million for air conditioning. The Baltimore County Executive, Kevin Kamenetz will seek support for the following education funding during the session including funding for air conditioning in several schools:

- \$123 million school renovation and construction
- \$16.8 million from Energy Efficient Grants
- \$5 million for Safe Schools Initiatives

Highlights

Tax Free Shopping for Marylanders

Qualifying Energy Star products will be exempt from Maryland’s 6% sales tax on Saturday, February 16 – Monday, February 18th. To find a list of tax-exempt products visit <http://www.marylandtaxes.com/>.

Drinking Water Advisory for Sunnybrook

Baltimore County is advising residents of the Sunnybrook Community in Jacksonville to boil their tap water between February 11 and February 15 while contractors inspect and upgrade the community’s water treatment plant.

42nd District – Delegate Steve Lafferty

Wow! Wasn’t the Raven victory great? Not only did it give us another reason to be proud of Baltimore and Maryland, but it has been a terrific moral and economic boost for all of us. Congratulations to the team.

On a sad note, Delegate Hattie Harrison, the longest serving current member, died at the age of 84. Del. Harrison was the first African American to chair a standing committee in the House and the first to chair the Rules Committee. Her knowledge and counsel will be missed.

On another serious note, you may have seen or heard about the House of Delegates’ public reprimand of Delegate William “Tony” McConkey of Anne Arundel County. This action was recommended by the Joint Committee on Ethics after it determined that the Delegate’s efforts to amend a bill last year was an ethics breach since it would have benefitted him directly. This is the first such ethics sanction in more than twenty-five years. It was a sad and sobering day in the House as we took action to uphold the integrity of the legislature.

During the past couple of weeks I have been visited by students, educators, business owners and advocates on issues of recycling, mental health care, veterans, historic preservation and non-profits. The Environmental Matters Committee finished up a series of briefings on the budget, growth demands and management, speed cameras and the Bay and has begun bill hearings.

Two of my bills will be heard Thursday: HB 263 providing for an increase in the percentage of historic preservation tax credits, and HB 108 which expands the opportunities for non-profits to raise funds through tax credits. The hybrid (partly elected and partly appointed) school board bill, HB 413, now has a hearing date of February 13. The County House delegation will hear the bill this Friday, February 8. If you are interested in submitting testimony on these or other bills, feel free to contact my Legislative Aide, Marsha Tracey, at 410-841-3487 to find out the best way to do so.

I filed a bill this week that would set new standards for recycling and to reduce the waste that goes into our landfills. Not only are we running out of land where we can deposit our waste, technologies are improving so that greater percentages of recycling and waste reduction can be achieved over the next fifteen years.

I have also received a lot of responses, and many constructive comments, on my positions regarding the Governor's gun, death penalty, wind energy and early voting bills. While I do not agree with the positions of all who wrote me, I appreciate hearing your specific feelings and opinions on some of the most difficult issues we will face this year.

I have been honored to have been named by the Speaker to the Baltimore Regional Revitalization work group which will examine state policies regarding the present and future of the Baltimore region. This allows me to use my knowledge and expertise to address issues that the Baltimore City and County's older suburbs face. I expect that we will look at a range of issues, including education, transportation, workforce needs and community redevelopment and stabilization.

And, back in the district, I have been able to attend a number of events. I was pleased to honor Neville Jacobs for his outstanding service as the President of the Pikesville-Greenspring Community Council. Neville has been a strong and creative leader. Also, I met two smart Carver High culinary arts students at the Charles Village Pub Chili Cook-Off. They made an excellent vegetarian chili that was the best of the group, I thought. I also had the chance to meet with representatives of St. Joseph's Hospital who are planning to engage the community as the "new" St. Joe's has become a part of the University of Maryland Medical System. I think the relationship with UMMS and the Medical School will be a terrific benefit to the Towson area.

Lastly, let me commend County Executive Kevin Kamenetz, Police Chief Jim Johnson and Schools Superintendent Dallas Dance for working together to develop a strong school security policy and program. School safety has to be at the top of our list for the well-being of children, educators and the community.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can reach me at Stephen.Lafferty@house.state.md.us or at 410-841-3487.

42nd District – Senator Jim Brochin

As the 2013 Legislative Session enters its second month, I wanted to share information with you about several pieces of legislation being discussed in the General Assembly this year:

Death Penalty

As many of you know, I have always supported the death penalty, and feel it is a valuable tool for prosecutors across the State. Several years ago when it looked like the death penalty was going to be repealed, I offered an amendment that said that the death penalty could still be used in cases where there was DNA or a videotaped confession. I thought this was a fair compromise. My amendment passed 26-21, and the repeal was overturned. Now, once again, opponents of the death penalty have brought this measure to the General Assembly. From a more practical perspective, the death penalty is a critical bargaining chip for prosecutors to ensure that murderers will actually remain behind bars for the remainder of their lives. Without the death penalty, we could see some murderers, who ought to be kept in jail for the rest of their lives, possibly reclaim their freedom in twenty-five years. This is an unacceptable price for the alleged benefit of saving a few dollars.

Speed Cameras

As we have learned from television investigative reporters, fairness remains a missing component from the enforcement of speed camera tickets. I am always troubled when policy seems directed more towards raising revenue than promoting safety. Like previous years, I have introduced legislation to tighten the regulations for when and where speed cameras can

be used and help ensure that a violation was actually committed, and can be verified. My legislation, Senate Bill 207, "Vehicle Laws - Speed Monitoring and Work Zone Speed Control Systems," would require sufficient information to allow for calculation of the speed the vehicle was traveling between the two time-stamped photos. The legislation would also require the placement of speed cameras within 500 feet from the property of the school, which would be limited to elementary and secondary schools. Finally, and most importantly, my legislation ensures that vendors, who engage in contracts with local counties, including Baltimore County, will not be paid on a per ticket basis. I do not believe these companies should have incentives to issue more tickets.

Guns

At a nine-hour hearing that accommodated thousands of citizens that came to express their thoughts on the Governor's gun control legislation, one fact, and perhaps only one, was universally agreed upon: what happened in Sandy Hook, Connecticut was one of the worst tragedies ever to befall our nation in recent memory. My priority is to make sure that the response to this unspeakable act is good public policy, not good politics. We can, and must, address gun violence. Throughout my career, I have done what I can to respect the rights of law-abiding citizens while attempting to decrease gun violence and ensure criminals serve their full sentences. To that end, I have proffered two ideas. First, and foremost, there are some aspects of the Governor's gun bill, Senate Bill 281, that make sense while others don't. For example, we already require gun registration, a background check, and a 7-day waiting period. Asking law-abiding citizens to go through an additional registration makes no sense to me. I am fairly cognizant that criminals will not be going through the legal registration process. While I will do my best to strike this part of the Governor's legislation, I do question the need for a magazine capacity that exceeds 10. Therefore, I will be supporting the Governor's proposal to limit magazine capacity to 10.

Unfortunately, I believe that the Sandy Hook tragedy has created a cultural change under which certain deranged people want to deliver as many bullets as possible to as many unsuspecting vulnerable citizens as possible. It is important to note that I realize that gun control efforts will do very little to prevent further tragedies like that of Sandy Hook. I have also introduced Senate Bill 382, which would require that individuals who have been involuntarily committed to a mental health facility to temporarily surrender their firearms. Preventing access to weapons from this high-risk group is one of the most fundamental things we can do to prevent mass shootings. In addition to this legislation, I believe that every school in the 42nd district and throughout every public school in Maryland should have a police officer on campus. It is statistically unquantifiable to know if this will really have an impact, but I believe that in conjunction with the other policy issues I have presented, it could make a difference.

I truly appreciate the opportunity to share this legislative update with you. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 410-841-3648. - Senator James Brochin

11th District – Delegate Dan Morhaim

OPEN MEETINGS OF GOVERNMENT ARE KEY - DELEGATE DAN MORHAIM, M.D. :

(I'd like to thank Sarah Sawyer, legislative intern and 2nd year law student, for her work on this issue.)

As the session moves into full swing, I have introduced a bill that speaks to the very core of democracy: enforcement of the open meetings law. Open meetings promote accountability and are essential for a functioning and informed society.

The Maryland Open Meetings Act was enacted to ensure the accountability of government (state, county, and local) to its citizens and enhance the public's ability to participate effectively in our democracy. The act requires all public bodies to hold their meetings openly (with only certain specified exceptions), give the public adequate notice of those meetings, and allow the public to inspect meetings minutes and certain other records.

Additionally, a free on-line course in Maryland's open meetings law is available to anyone: www.igrs.umd.edu/VLC/OMA

While this act helps foster transparency in government operations, there have been problems with enforcement. The Open Meeting Compliance Board is the agency that works to ensure compliance. But its opinions are advisory only, and the Board has no enforcement power. As a result, its findings tend to be ignored, and there may be little motivation for public bodies to comply with the Maryland Open Meetings Act.

And there have been problems, many of which have been reported in the media. There is an average of 30 complaints to the Board per year, some of which are found to be violations.

I introduced House Bill 331 - with bi-partisan co-sponsorship – to improve the enforcement of the act. The changes to the current law would force the public body to acknowledge their violation, make the findings of the Board admissible in any subsequent court hearing, and raise the possible financial penalty from \$100 to a fine not to exceed \$1,000 on the first offense and a fine not to exceed \$10,000 for any subsequent offenses within a three year time period.

Open government is essential to the maintenance of a democratic society. My hope is that passage of this bill will lead public bodies to comply fully with the law and to improve public access to the working of government.

11th District – Delegate Jon Cardin

CARDIN ANNAPOLIS REPORT - February 8, 2013

Last week, Governor O'Malley delivered his seventh annual State of the State address. While there is always have progress to be made, Governor O'Malley passionately and effectively argued to the legislature that the state of the State is strong. One notable statement was that “[n]o other state can say at once, that they are #1 in education five years in a row, #1 in holding down the cost of college tuition, #1 in innovation and entrepreneurship, #1 in human capital capacity, #1 in access to dental care for all children, #1 in PHD scientists and researchers, #1 in research and development, #1 in businesses owned by women and #1 in median family income.” While I am thrilled that Maryland is and likely always will be a leader in so many areas, including medical and technological innovation and education, I continue to worry that undisciplined spending and onerous regulations bog down economic growth.

On an unrelated note, we have seen a suspiciously low number of bills introduced this year. By this time in session, an average of 1500-2500 bills have typically been thrown in the hopper, but this year we have just over 700. The filing deadline is this Friday, and I expect a rush to the clerk's office later this week.

Jon's Featured Bills of the Week: EZ Pass Toll Violation Collection

Late last year, the Washington Post reported that the Maryland Transportation Authority has left more than \$6 million in EZ Pass toll violations uncollected. In an effort to shine light on MTA's efforts to collect these fines and to document the results of their efforts, I introduced House Bill 198, which required the State to report how much money from EZ Pass toll violations went uncollected by the State and what efforts were made to collect that money.

Through diligent work and negotiations with the MTA, they have agreed to increase the transparency of their EZ Pass violation collection program without passing this legislation. MTA has agreed to post their efforts to collect fines and the amounts of uncollected fines on its website. They will also provide an update on toll collection activities during the 2014 Session. I always prefer to achieve public policy without the need for passing legislation. Government works best when State agencies understand the concerns of the citizenry and then work with interested parties and legislators to address the needs of the people without legislative action.

Election Law Reform Bills

Next Thursday, February 7, 2013, the Ways and Means committee in which I am a member will hear a number of election law related bills. My bill, **House Bill 196**, which allows voting by mail in special elections is one of those bills. Voting by mail will save the State millions of dollars by limiting the amount of election centers and poll workers in special elections.

Other proposed bills by Delegate Rosenberg will expand the amount of time allowed for early voting while increasing the amount of early voting centers. I watched too many citizens wait for three hours or more to exercise the franchise last early voting period, and this is unacceptable. While I have concerns that expanding early voting may be less than equitable for the smaller jurisdictions, I believe that my Committee will work out these concerns and pass a bill that allows anyone who desires to vote early to do so in a manner that encourages more people to vote.

In addition, at the Campaign Finance Reform Rally I am holding tomorrow, I will be discussing the comprehensive finance reform bill that I will be introducing based on the recommendations of the Campaign Finance Commission on which I served along with Delegates Michael Summers and Ron George.

Gun Safety Update

As anti-gun control emails continue to pour into my inbox, I am still concerned about the lack of correspondence from gun safety advocates. While the voices of gun control advocates are conspicuously silent, I want to thank **Attorney General**

Doug Gansler for convening a forum on gun violence held Monday at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School Of Law, which highlighted many of the upcoming firearms bills as well as the important issue of illegal gun use in Baltimore and around the State. It is important to continue having these frank and rational conversations about what realistically can and cannot be done to keep our children and citizens safe from gun violence.

Finally, a thank you to our **Baltimore Ravens** is in order for bringing the Lombardi trophy back to Baltimore! Their improbable run through the playoffs captivated the entire State and their perseverance in the face of adversity has been an inspiration to us all.

Dates to Remember:

Join me, Delegate Rosenberg, Delegate Bobo, Senator Benson, Senator Ferguson and many other elected officials as well as invited guests Common Cause, Public Citizen, the League of Women Voters and other good government groups for a **Campaign Finance and Election Law Reform Rally on Tuesday February 7th at 11am on Lawyers Mall in Annapolis.** The rally will highlight the numerous voter access and campaign finance reform laws coming before my committee this Session. Some of these important measures include closing the LLC loophole, expanding early voting dates and voting centers and creating a system of public funding for certain State elections. I am very excited about this opportunity to share my passions with you, so please come out and join us!

I am also excited to announce this year's **Bicycle Symposium on February 24th from 9am to 4pm in the Miller Senate Building.** The symposium includes presentations by infrastructure and planning experts as well as the opportunity to meet with decision makers and other bicycle enthusiasts. I will be speaking at 11:45am just after Howard County Executive Ken Ulman addresses the symposium.

Finally, I want to thank all of you who contributed and participated in the **Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge** this past weekend. Special Olympics Maryland raised over \$2.8 million and my Maryland State Bar Association team contributed more than \$10,000 to help those special athletes in our midst. Check out this great YouTube video of me, Governor O'Malley, Delegates Aruna Miller and Herb McMillan and Olympic gold medalist Kimmie Meissner all taking the plunge!



The Greater Timonium Community Council

The Next GTCC General Meeting is scheduled for February 13th 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. The owner reported that a restaurant has signed a lease for the pad site on the property. (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. In August, 2012, a community input meeting was held to receive comments from the public. A development hearing has not yet been scheduled.(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. As of October, 2012, the developer plans to add a noise wall to mitigate the sounds of I-83.(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. The County Council vote occurred too late to be included in this newsletter. Check back at the GTCC website to see the outcomes.

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 sideyard 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. The Administrative Law Judge approved this use for a convenience store, but opponents have taken this case to the Board of Appeals. The Board of Appeals has ruled in favor of the plan. (GTCC and Monterey C.A.)

Giant Food Store: The Giant Food Store, across from the Fairgrounds, will be requesting to add gasoline sales within the shopping center grounds. This proposal will be reviewed by the Yorkshire/Haverford C.A. as well as GTCC.

Sonic Drive In: The abandoned fast food building at York and Belfast Roads is projected to become a Sonic Drive In. Before the conversion can take place, the owner needs to reapply for the use of commercial parking in a residential zone at the rear of the property. One resident has expressed concerns over traffic flow at the site. A zoning hearing is pending. (GTCC and Yorkshire/Haverford C.A.)

Hunt Valley Center: Greenberg/Gibbons, owners of the town center, have proposed a 300 unit residential development on the site of the former Walmart. Plans have not yet been received on this proposal. (GTCC)

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. Councilman Huff submitted legislation that creates a Mercantile Overlay District that will limit video gaming at the Fairgrounds, but he does not plan to change the zoning as requested by the GTCC.

COMPLETED ISSUES

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. 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)

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)

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)

1734 York Road (Ridgely Plaza Shopping Center): Neighboring businesses report that Mercy Medical will occupy the vacant space previously used by Giant Foods. A zoning hearing was held on March 3, 2011 to allow Mercy Medical to increase the size of the building by approximately 3,000 sq. feet. As of April 30th, this medical facility is opened. (E. Rockel)

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)

Timonium Fairgrounds: Assistant General Manager Andy Cashman informed us that a multi-purpose maintenance building will be constructed on the north end of the Fairgrounds in the coming months. This maintenance building is one story, and it backs up to the Turf Inn Office building. Cashman also informed us that they plan to replace the existing “event” sign due to its functional obsolescence.

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)