



greater timonium community council

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www.gtccinc.org

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DeHoff, Doug Dunlap, and Tim Carroll

**Our next General Meeting will be Sept. 16th, one
week later than normal due to the State Fair, in
the Vista Room.**

Random Thoughts from Over the Summer

Vice President's Message

According to the Baltimore Banner, Governor Moore spent 270 days out of state during his term in office, as of the end of June of this year. That's slightly over 20% of his time, and much of that time out of state was spent pursuing his own political ambitions, not on state business.

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Our national debt reached \$40 trillion in the month of August. In 2008, the national debt was slightly more than \$10 trillion. Shame on both parties for not doing more to control the national debt. Social safety net programs must be reformed to lessen our spending and reduce the level of debt.

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Please be careful if you are outside and come in contact with wild animals. Recently, there have been several incidents where rabid beavers have bitten unsuspecting children, and I wonder if rabies will spread to other species of animals in the future.

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No matter what way the state Democratic party tries to spin it, the recent special session of the legislature was nothing more than a further attempt to gerrymander our election district maps. If you go strictly by the numbers, the state should have at least two, and possibly three, congressional districts that are republican leaning, but instead we have one. If this referendum measure passes in November, the state will likely end up with no republican leaning congressional districts.

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The saga of the Warren Road Bridge is a mess! Delegate Michele Guyton was the first to call attention to the fact that the bridge needs serious, major repairs, or replacement. The bridge, along with the reservoir, is owned by the

city, and city officials showed no interest in spending the money needed to address the bridge's problems. As the problem got more attention, it came to light that the bridge had failed a series of inspections over the last decade. Now the city wants Baltimore County to use its allotment of available federal funds to replace the bridge. I say it's time for Mayor Scott and city officials to man up! The city owns the bridge and the land of the reservoir, and the city should be responsible for the bridge and its replacement. If not, the county's delegation in Annapolis should do everything in its power to make the city's life miserable during the next legislative session. Cooperation is a two-way street, but so far, the city wants to shirk its obligations.

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Recently I received an oversized postcard detailing all of the changes that will take place regarding water bills. Yet, a week later when the actual water bill arrived it was the same old format with none of the changes trumpeted on the postcard. Talk about putting the cart before the horse!

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The County's DPW&T has a contractor replacing curbs and driveway aprons in select locations in Dulaney Village, near Hampton Elementary School. Is it just me, or does the replacement work look less substantial, with lesser craftsmanship, than the previous curbs and aprons?

Eric Rockel

Students Still Struggling with Standardized Tests

In July, State education officials released the results of the standardized test scores for 2026. Known as the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program, or MCAP, these tests are administered to elementary, middle and high school students in the subjects of English, Math and Science. For the overall State, this year's results show 51.7% of students were proficient in English language arts and 27.1% were proficient in Math. These scores represent less than one percentage point improvement compared to last year. State Superintendent Carey Wright downplayed the modest improvement when she said "you're not going to see 10-point jumps in a year.... That is just not the way data works." Next year the MCAP tests will be replaced by a shorter test product, known as MSTAR.

The results for the tests in English proficiency in the GTCC area are listed below:

Hampton Elementary	64%	Lutherville Lab Elementary	68.1%
Mays Chapel Elem.	63.6%	Padonia International Elem.	28.9%
Pot Spring Elem.	55.8%	Pinewood Elementary	84.2%
Riderwood Elem.	94.4%	Timonium Elementary	78.4%
Warren Elementary	50.0%	Cockeysville Middle	58.3%
Ridgely Middle	77.0%	Carver Arts, H.S.	87.5%
Dulaney H.S.	61.1%	Towson H.S.	73.1%

Results for Math proficiency in our area are shown as follows * :

Hampton Elementary	47.8%	Lutherville Lab Elementary	46.5%
Mays Chapel Elem.	44.6%	Padonia International Elem.	28.3%
Pinewood Elementary	71.7%	Pot Springs Elem.	46.8%
Riderwood Elem.	78.2%	Timonium Elem.	69.2%
Warren Elem.	31.5%		

- *Due to different subject matter & learning tracks in middle school and high school math, scores for those schools were not available.*

One of the consequences of these weak test scores is that the State Board of Education has decided that all of the local school districts should increase the time spent on English and Math throughout the school week. That would mean courses such as Social Studies would be shortened in order to accommodate the increase in other subjects. The extension of time allocated for Math was to start in this school year, but the State Board just reversed its earlier dictum and pushed the extension time back to next year.

Residents Turn Out to Oppose Car Wash

Citizens from Yorkshire Haverford, Springlake and other parts of the Lutherville Timonium area, as well as GTCC officials, attended the zoning hearing for a proposed car wash to take the place of Nationwide Automotive at the corner of York and Timonium roads. The property, which will be leased to an entity associated with the Canton Car Wash chain, will need a special exception to allow a car wash in a Business Local commercial zone, as well as several variances, in order to operate. At the hearing a Yorkshire Haverford couple presented a petition signed by over eighty of their neighbors who opposed the car wash. Another point of contention is that the car wash would only allow in-coming traffic from a Timonium Road entrance, and all out-going traffic would exit from Cinder Road. Since the Timonium Road entrance is remarkably close to the York and Timonium intersection, many residents fear that congestion and accidents will occur at that point. Further, even though the lessee stated that the Cinder Road exit would have signage requiring a right turn out of the property, many people believe that motorists will ignore that signage and turn left out of the exit, which will promote more traffic into a residential neighborhood.

The hearing was also marked by a number of audio problems with the County's virtual transmission system. People who attended the hearing virtually reported that the sound system was plagued by echo problems, making the audio almost unintelligible at times, and general technical difficulties delayed the start of the hearing for approximately one hour.

Development Plan Hearing for 111 Schilling Road

MacKenzie and Associates, a longstanding local developer, petitioned a hearing to allow a mixed-use development of 220 apartment units and 37,000 +/- square feet of retail space on a site formerly occupied by Traveler's Insurance. The apartments, housed in a to be built four-story building, would be situated on the north end of the property, closest to Schilling Road, and the retail space would be situated more in the center and southern end of the property. Although no leases are signed for the retail space as of this date, the developer is hoping to attract one or more restaurants to the site, as well as a grocer.

This site, with convenient access to Shawan Road, I-83 and York Road, as well as the Light Rail line will not overburden local transportation. Only one resident attended the hearing. The Administrative Law Judge approved the development in a ruling issued on August 27, 2026.

Court Overturns Maryland Tax Law

Recently, the Maryland Tax Court struck down as illegal the “Digital Advertising Gross Revenue Tax,” enacted in 2021, as a violation of the federal Internet Tax Freedom Act. Under the tax, companies reporting gross global annual revenue of at least \$100 million were subject to a 2.5% tax, and the levies increased in 2.5% increments to a maximum rate of 10% for firms reporting more than \$15 million in revenue.

Governor Larry Hogan vetoed the law in 2021 after it was passed by the legislature. Hogan cited, in part, the fact that he was concerned with the legality of the law and that Maryland would be the first state in the nation to enact such a tax. The legislature, however, overrode Hogan’s veto. The tax act was projected to take in nearly \$250 million annually, but those projections never materialized. Monies from the tax were expected to fund part of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future, but now with the court decision, Maryland will need to return all monies collected by the tax, as well as interest on the money. As of this writing the state was still considering whether to appeal this ruling.

Councilman Holds Town Hall Meeting on Speeding along W. Timonium Road

Councilman Nino Mangione held a town hall meeting for residents of Pine Valley to discuss speeding and accidents along Timonium Road, west of I-83. Approximately 45 citizens turned out to the meeting. Also in attendance were members of the Bureau of Transportation Planning from DPW&T, and those members provided statistics and some context about current conditions and what can be done in the future. Transportation Planning officials reported that speeds on the road commonly exceed the speed limit by 6 to 11 mph, and statistics from the Police Department indicate there have been seven reported crashes over a five-year period. Residents pointed out that the problem is not just speeding, but that the road’s geometry restricts sight distance for drivers exiting the side streets and turning onto West Timonium. Officials point out that the data they have collected is preliminary in nature, and they want to gather more information once school starts and recreation programs get started in September or October.

So what could be done to mitigate the problems of speeding and accidents? One solution they ruled out is the installation of speed humps on West Timonium Road. The road is classified as a “minor arterial,” meaning it carries a heavy amount of traffic, estimated at 14,000 cars per day, and County policy is not to install speed humps on arterial roadways. The solution of a traffic light at Pine Valley Road and West Timonium also does not appear justified, according to Transportation Planning officials, because the numbers do not meet the minimums needed for justification. However, officials said they want to gather more data before they reach a final determination on that remedy. Members of the audience suggested a speed camera, but it remains unclear whether a camera fits within the rules that it be located within one-half mile of a school. The solutions that appear more likely are either a permanent, electronic sign to warn against speeding or a traffic circle as a means of slowing drivers down. More information needs to be gathered, and further discussions will surely follow.

Inspector General's Office Faces Further Drama

The drama began when County Executive Klausmeier failed to nominate Kelly Madigan for another four-year term as Inspector General. Some insiders speculated that this was an arrangement that Klausmeier made with former County Executive Olszewski in order for his endorsement. In any event, the County Council did not support Klausmeier's pick for the replacement, and when the dust finally settled, with the position still vacant, Klausmeier announced that she would wait for the next County Executive to appoint a replacement. In the interim, Steve Quisenberry, Madigan's deputy, served as head of the office, but he elected to retire in June of this year. Gregg Domroe, a former FBI agent, had filled the vacancy of deputy inspector general, but he announced that he was resigning from his post as of August 21. Domroe insists that the reason for his resignation is due to "personal reasons," but given the squeeze that the office has faced, one would not be surprised if there is more to this story. Domroe has indicated that he will stay on in a temporary, part-time basis until his successor is selected.

Domroe also went on the record to say, "there's a false narrative out there that we're a non-functioning office." That's furthest from the truth." Given the turmoil in leadership, and the slowdown in completed investigations and reports, Mr. Domroe's assurances do not seem credible.

Lutherville Station- Where Things Stand

There has been no more controversial subject over the last few years than Lutherville Station. Yes, the developer has offered several permutations of his plan, with as many as 540 apartment units at the start. His current plan proposes 325 "doors", or apartment units, and 120,000 square feet of commercial and office space.

Proponents of the development say that it will bring needed housing to the area and that the developer will take a currently deteriorating property and breathe new life and attractiveness into it. Opponents of the project believe that roads will face further overcrowding, that schools are near or at capacity without this project and that the current suburban character of Lutherville is just fine already.

If you are a casual observer, not familiar with all the ups and downs of this project, below is a summation of certain important history and where things stand currently:

In December 2023, the property did not have the zoning designation to allow for residential use. The property had a commercial zoning designation- Business Local- which did not allow for residential use.

The ability to use the property residentially changed dramatically in the Spring of 2024 when the Maryland State Legislature passed House Bill 538, the so-called Housing Affordability Law. HB 538 overrode the local land use and zoning designations by stating that any property throughout the state that is within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of a rail transit station can be used for mixed use purposes, including for housing, commercial purposes, and/or offices. So, this overruled Baltimore County's rules and zoning on land use. Further, the new law also said that if any property offered affordable housing within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of a transit station, that property could

receive a density bonus. In the case of Lutherville Station that amounted to a 30% increase, which is why the developer now proposes 325 “doors,” which equates to 265 density units.

The 2026 legislative session also saw another bill, House Bill 894, which further eroded local land use regulations. HB 894 stated that for any transit-oriented development within a certain distance of a transit station, there would be no parking requirements as to a minimum number of parking spaces unless a locality regularly conducted parking studies for commercial purposes. Baltimore County does not engage in that practice. The net effect of this legislation is that Lutherville Station faces no minimum parking requirements.

With the passage of the above-mentioned legislation, many of the obstacles in the development of Lutherville Station were overcome. The developer will still have to address adequate public facilities issues, such as adequate roadways, drainage, school overcrowding and water or sewer capacity.

Going forward, the developer has two methods that he can pursue to approve his development. The first is the standard development approval process. That process will require the developer to submit a concept plan, hold a community input meeting, receive comments/requests from County reviewing agencies, modify the concept plan, accordingly, submit a development plan and then go before an Administrative Law Judge for approval of his modified plan. Any deviations from standard county regulations would require asking for variances during the hearing. In this scenario, the community has truly little voice until the hearing before the Administrative Law Judge.

The second option is for the developer to pursue a Planned Unit Development, or PUD. In this option, the community input meeting and hearing before the Administrative Law Judge are still required. There is an extra step required- the developer submits the proposal to the County Council before submitting the concept plan for formal review. In this PUD process, there is a second community meeting held before the Council considers awarding the PUD designation. The public can provide written comments to the County Council member before the Council votes on whether to designate the project as a PUD. Additionally, the Councilmember in whose district the project is located can put stipulations on the project. One form of stipulation is a required community benefit. For example, the Councilmember could require that the developer improve a county-owned piece of property, such as new playground equipment in a county park. The Councilmember also gets to specify the density and/or uses that will be on the property or provide funding for recognized non-profits.

Currently, the GTCC is in dialogue with the developer to see if we can reach agreement to support a PUD. There are possible extra benefits that local schools, volunteer organizations and the area's infrastructure can receive if a PUD is pursued. If an agreement is reached, we would also want to restrict the developer from any increase in housing density on the site for a period of time in the future. In a perfect world, if the State Legislature had not created the two laws previously recited, this development may not have been able to proceed, but that is wishful thinking, and we are trying to craft the best outcome that we can under these circumstances.

Circuit Court Judges Overturn Legislature's Attempt on Congressional Map, But Maryland Supreme Court Rules in Favor of the Legislature

Both Judge James Sarbanes in the Circuit Court of Dorchester County and Judge Robert Thompson in the Circuit Court of Anne Arundel County ruled against the State Legislature in their attempt to change Maryland's congressional redistricting law. Both cases have been appealed to the Supreme Court of Maryland, and oral arguments will be heard on September 3.

One of the key elements in the cases, thus far, is the argument that the State Legislature failed to follow its own laws and rules by adopting a statewide ballot question after July 1. One of the plaintiffs in the Dorchester County case was Senator Chris West. After the ruling West stated "You simply can't amend the constitution by misleading voters."

The case next went to the State Supreme Court, who listened to oral arguments on September 3. The court ruled that the referendum question could appear on the ballot in November, but the supreme court did rule that the ballot question as written was unclear, and the judges ordered that the ballot question should be rewritten. Naturally, State Democrats are taking victory laps in light of this ruling.

U.S. News & World Report Ranks BCPS High Schools

That national publication rated some of Baltimore County's high schools as among the best in the state. Eastern Technical High was ranked as #1 in the whole state, and Western Tech was ranked #8. Closer to home, the Carver Center for the Arts was judged #10 in the review, Hereford High received the #25 ranking, and Towson High came in at #32. Dulaney High was the lowest ranked high school in the GTCC area, standing at #56.

Rankings are based on a number of factors, including college readiness, state assessment proficiency, standardized testing, and graduation rates among other factors.

Join Us for Our Next General Meeting on September 16th

We will be back at the Vista Room for our meeting on September 16, and although we start at 7:00 PM, we encourage all to arrive early to meet and talk with candidates for elective office. We will have candidates for County Council, District 42 B and School Board to speak at our meeting that night, and if you arrive early, you may be able to ask the candidates about issues that matter to you.

Enjoy the State Fair

Did you know that over 565,000 people attended the State Fair last year? Whether it be racing, the amusement rides, the exhibits and demonstrations or the many other attractions, the Fair ranks as one of the largest events in our state every year.

There are just two more weekends to enjoy the fun. Remaining dates are September 3-7 and September 10-13.