

WESTERLEE COMMUNITY NEWS



Westerlee: A Proud Covenant Controlled Community

www.westerleenews.com



Editor & Designer: Bob Propper

March 2013

President's Letter



Catonsville, population 41,000, is historically a streetcar suburb. Older suburban communities that have grown around traditional dense development patterns today have a second lease on life fueled by "smart growth" and the latest demographic shifts. The "millennium generation" prefers urban, walkable and authentic development over suburban, drivable and synthetic. So do, increasingly, aging baby boomers growing too old for suburban lawn care. This process manifests itself in many small but critical steps and begs for some big ideas as well.

The fragility of "inner ring" suburbs

Older "inner ring" suburbs have been in danger of exhibiting many of the same ailments that plague the core city Baltimore: Shrinking populations, property values, incomes and education levels. Yet, Catonsville is holding its own, it even grew by 4% in the last decade. It should, in fact, have a bright future, let's see how and why.

For decades county administrations and local business leaders have been aware of the risks facing inner ring suburbs. The County declared Catonsville to be a "Commercial Revitalization District", more recently a "Community Enhancement Area" and also seeks State designation as a "sustainable community".

The local Chamber of Commerce installed task forces, in 1990 "Catonsville 2000" and now "Catonsville 2020" which prepared reports about how to position "the village" for the future. However, it may be actually the past combined with private investment that comes to the rescue of those historic "villages" like Catonsville, Pikesville and Essex which have developed in pretty dense grid patterns oriented towards a commercial center.

Private development as game changers

The dynamics that propelled Catonsville into the league of the more successful older inner ring suburbs came from the private sector. Some would ascribe the pivotal moment to Atwaters opening a bakery with the crusty Old World style breads en vogue among yuppies. Some would attribute it to Catonsville Gourmet starting a restaurant with built-in fish market that serves food above the home-style cooking level which was such an instant success that the same owner opened a second restaurant down the street ("Regions").

Lately a new bike shop rounds out the most visible indicators and catalysts for change. These new businesses prove that attracting younger and more affluent people works not only for the core cities but also for suburban centers. A suburban "Main Street" doesn't have to be limited to selling nick-knacks, antiques and ice cream while evoking old times with old fashioned lamp posts and old English spelling of the word shop. There doesn't have to be anything wrong with catering to evolving trends. Every one of

WESTERLEE COMMUNITY, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Klaus Philipsen

kphilipsen@archplan.com 410-685-2002 (W)

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those new businesses in Catonsville is eminently more local, authentic and "idiosyncratic" than McDonald's, Friendly's, or the gas stations that had replaced some of the original Catonsville businesses. They very nicely complement the traditional anchors such as Bill's Music or Jennings Cafe.

The Politics

Tom Quirk, the new local councilman, a Democrat, understands the need for positive change in the heart of the village. He actively sponsored bills that promote smart growth and infill development. He and the Republican Towson Councilman Marks created a "commons overlay" zone for the protection of open space, revised Planned Unit Development (PUD) rules to require community input before a PUD can be introduced to the council. Quirk supports the "complete streets" concept that adds pedestrians and bicyclists back into the equation for road planners. He has started a dialogue with the president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County Campus (UMBC).

University President Freeman Hrabowski is hugely successful in repositioning his school (he was named one of the 100 most influential leaders in the world by Time magazine). What better way to offer his students which are isolated in a pretty ghastly campus a better quality of life than through good connections to a real historically grown village center and "main street"?

Here a clear "win-win" constellation offers itself up. It remains to be seen if local property and business owners will seize it. At a recent meeting atop Atwater's bakery when Catonsville 2020 members publicly discussed the report that they had funded, the suggestion to capitalize on college students was considered an interesting idea but kindled little enthusiasm.

The older members still like to discuss two topics the most: Traffic and parking, the very forces that first fueled the suburbs in the first place and then, in a strike of justice, destroyed the historic suburban centers the same way it had destroyed the city centers. In the case *(Cont'd on Pg. 2)*

of Catonsville the historic artery to the west, the “turnpike” moved from Frederick Road to the “National Pike” on US 40 and then, in a third strike, to what is now I-70. In each case, business went with the traffic. Today US 40 presents itself as the typical non-walkable US commercial strip that looks like “Anywhere USA”. Even the latest generation retail, the gigantic Security Square Mall that adorns the I-70/beltway interchange is now on a downward trajectory.

Time to re-think traffic as the main engine for community development. The Catonsville 2020 report names pedestrians first and before cars. Rightly the report requests to allow new development in the old village, even if the central intersection fails, a condition typically blocking new development until relief is created. This mechanism, called “adequate public facilities ordinance (APFO)” regularly but unintentionally pushes development away from where it should occur, either because of congestion, school overcrowding or inadequate sewers.

The Big ideas

By far the biggest project that was ever discussed for Catonsville is local developer Steve Whalen’s dream project, “the Promenade”. 1.2 million square feet of mixed use development including movies, housing, restaurants and large scale shopping. However, it is questionable what this would do for Frederick Road or the historic village.

Instead of building strong connections to UMBC or recycling under utilized commercial lands it would string along the Baltimore Beltway I-695, cutting down the wooded buffer and use up large open spaces, some 25 acres associated with the former Spring Grove mental hospital site, land that the State still owns and has just recently in part been declared “surplus property”. Although with this declaration some of the land can now be discussed for future use, proposals that seem to have traction involve public open space, such as a “regional” park rather than private development.

Maybe even less likely, but more in keeping with “smart growth”, would be an “urban” mixed-use center on the site of the ailing Security Square Mall. This, of course, isn’t Catonsville but Woodlawn, where suburban subdivisions, shopping centers and office parks are much more pervasive than in Catonsville.

Because the federal government placed its eastern US Social Security and Medicare Headquarters (SSA and CMS) with 12,000 jobs here, the Baltimore Red Line surface/subway light rail line is planned to terminate there and not in Catonsville. This is ironic since Catonsville flourished when streetcars ended there. But we have to see things in a regional scale today.

Here at Security Square Mall and between SSA and CMS, a new regional town center in the scale and ambition of Clarendon in Arlington County would be very useful for conversion of “auto-oriented suburban” into “walkable urban” development. Such a new mixed use town center would replace acres of derelict pavement and a tired mall with fewer and fewer anchor stores with a valuable asset for communities from Pikesville to Arbutus and beyond. Just as this area was a growth area before, it could capture development generated by the new urban centric millennials that wouldn’t fit in the old village core.

Thus, such a new town center could be competitive with Howard County’s Columbia and provide Southwest Baltimore County residents the kind of retail services and housing that are currently missing, the progress in old Catonsville notwithstanding. Meanwhile historic Catonsville will catch the historic opportunity presented to it right now and continue with the many small improvements that will keep it vital and attractive for coming generations.

This letter is an adaptation of an article on Klaus’ blog named Community Architect. (www.archplanbaltimore@blogspot.com)

Klaus Philipson, President Westerlee Community Inc.



By Fred Hickok

Director, Benjamin Banneker Planetarium
CCBC Catonsville Campus

April 28 - Saturn at Opposition. Saturn will be at its closest approach to Earth. A medium-sized telescope will allow you to see Saturn’s rings and a few of its brightest moons.

May 4, 5 - Eta Aquarids Meteor Shower. Meteors will radiate at a rate of up to 30 per hour from the constellation Aquarius, but can appear anywhere in the sky. Shock waves from high-speed ice and dust particles left behind by Halley’s Comet knock off electrons from atoms high in the atmosphere. When the electrons are re-captured by the atoms, they lose energy in the form of light. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight.

May 28 - Conjunction of Venus and Jupiter. The two bright planets will be within 1 degree of each other in the evening sky. The fainter planet Mercury will also be visible nearby. Look to the west near sunset.

Source: http://www.seasky.org/astronomy/astronomy_calendar_current.html

New Grocery Markets Arrive

You all know what a great location Westerlee enjoys as far as food shopping goes. Remember when Giant was the only game in town? Now we have lots of competition and market diversity. Many cultures and choices are represented, each available to put food on our tables.

Now we have three more food markets vying for our attention. **Weis** supermarkets has an excellent variety and at good prices. **Lotte** has a wide selection of food choices from a number of cultures, and with excellent prices. **Aldi** has an interesting setup with lots of packaged foods at good prices. Have fun shopping around and save yourself some of your hard earned income.

Heads of Westerlee Committees

Social Committee: Karen Straughn

Architectural Review Committee: Klaus Philipson

Code Violations Committee: Klaus Philipson

Block Captains Committee: Karen Straughn & Wanda Richardson

Welcoming Committee: Bob Propper

Advertising Rates in Our Newsletter

We welcome your advertising in our Newsletter. You'll find it's a very good bargain in advertising your services to 164 Westerlee families—plus their friends and family relations who see the newsletter or hear by word of mouth what you do and what services you can provide to home owners.

Our rates are very low for the advertising exposure you receive in our Newsletter. Plus there are a range of ad sizes to fit any advertising budget.

Our rates are listed below:

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1 full page Black & White: \$95.00 either in the newsletter or as an insert: \$95.00

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Contact: Bob Propper at: rapropper@hotmail.com

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Ever wonder about the hospital you're thinking of entering for health care? Ever wonder how good they are in the specialty you're going in for?

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healthgrades.com

To Report County Code Violations:

**[http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/
needtocontact/codecomplaint](http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/needtocontact/codecomplaint)**

Westerlee Community Association, Inc. January 17, 2013

The board meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

Present were officers Klaus Philipson (President), Wanda Richardson (Vice President), Chris Goatee (Treasurer) and Fred Hickok (Secretary) and board members Bob Hoffman, Fred Kirk, Bob Propper, Joe Reid, Chuck Sprague and Karen Straughn. Joan Goudy was absent.

Minutes: The minutes of the October 25, 2012, board meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Chris presented her report, which follows on the next page. She said that she should have outstanding dues figured out soon. Klaus suggested sending invoices for earlier years and waiting until the end of April for 2012. Fred K. moved that the Board affirm the practice over the past years of not collecting dues from new residents during their first year or part thereof. The motion passed.

Welcoming: Klaus said that as chairperson of the Welcoming Committee Bob can use help of block captains.

Holiday Decoration Contest: Wanda gave the results, which will appear in the March newsletter. Chris mentioned that she will buy gift cards for the winners. Wanda suggested putting together a rating checklist for the judges to use next time.

Newsletter: Bob P. announced a February 15 deadline for submissions for the March newsletter.

Web Site: Karen reported that more work needs to be done before switching to the new site.

Community Sign: Klaus agreed to write a letter asking specific homeowners for permission to mount signs on their properties. Wanda said that she will send the letters.

Code Enforcement: Regarding the gravel parking lot Klaus reported that the contact person at the County Code Enforcement Office was evasive about Russel Toyota's responsibilities. Klaus said that he found the original document and will follow up with the County official and Councilperson Quirk.

Rolling Road Traffic: From a meeting with Quirk, Klaus reported that the County wants four lanes for traffic while Quirk wants a comprehensive traffic plan for the County. Since changes will be expensive, Klaus advised not to expect any action until at least next year.

Annual Meeting: Wanda and Joe agreed to make arrangements with Emmanuel Lutheran Church. Fred H. suggested Tuesday, April 9, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Klaus said that he will see about getting an update on the Red Line. Karen volunteered to arrange for a group from the State Attorney General's office to give a presentation on the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. Klaus said that he will invite a representative for the County Executive, council person Quirk, presidents of the Westview Park and Valley associations, a Baltimore County Police representative and a representative for Baltimore Gas and Electric. Karen said that she will summarize the social activities. Fred K. suggested having pictures of activities projected. Chuck said that block captains should be recognized and Wanda agreed to introduce them. She also said that she would have a date for the yard sale to announce. Klaus suggested that Fred H. explain the Architectural Review procedure, Chris give the treasurer's report and Chris and Joe collect dues and have people sign in at the welcome table.

Sympathy: Klaus remarked that the purchase of sympathy flowers should not exceed \$50. Chris commented that in most cases a card should be sufficient. She said that she will obtain a debit card and coordinate purchases for sympathy occasions.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Fred Hickok

Next Meeting: 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 18.

Dues

Westerlee Community Association
Dues for 2010 and 2011 (\$15.00) and
2012 and 2013 (\$25) can be sent to:

Chris Goatee, Treasurer
2118 Cedar Circle Dr.
Baltimore, Maryland 21228

Many thanks to those who have already paid their dues.

Have You Ever Wondered About This Situation?

FROM MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

A tree or parts of a tree fell on my property - Who is responsible?

In Virginia and Maryland, the general rule for fallen trees, or similar accidents that may be qualified as an "Act of God," is that the affected owner is responsible for the damages to their own property, including clean up, removal and similar expenses. Such accidents are normally covered by the affected owner's insurance, and are usually resolved by reporting the claim to his or her insurance company. Please note, however, that the exception to the general rule is that the owner of the property where the tree originated will be responsible for damage to a neighbor's property if the owner knew or had reason to know that the tree presented a danger to adjoining properties.

For example, if a tree was diseased and had been weakened by previous storms, it may be fair to say that the owner had reason to believe that the tree would fall and, judging by its size, damage a neighbor's property. Otherwise, the accident is considered an "Act of God" and the affected owner is therefore responsible for the damage to his or her property.

I want branches removed that are overhanging my property but the tree belongs to my neighbor. Who is responsible?

Maryland follows the "Massachusetts Self-Help Rule". This rule states that a property owner can cut off branches which are intruding over his property as long as he doesn't kill the tree.

If the tree is already down on the ground, does the person need to be MD Licensed Tree Expert to remove the tree?

No, if the tree is already on the ground the person removing the tree does not need to be a MD Licensed Tree Expert. If the tree is being cut into firewood to sell, the person doing the work needs to be a licensed forest product operator.

Who should I hire to do tree work on my trees? Should I ask about insurance?

In order to do tree work in Maryland, the tree care professional must be a Maryland Licensed Tree Expert. The Maryland Tree Expert Law addresses tree care work done for compensation on private or public property in Maryland. The purpose of the law is to provide a layer of consumer protection by licensing qualified and insured tree care companies and individuals. Maryland Licensed Tree Experts must maintain insurance that covers the tree work not just "bonded and insured" as stated in business advertisements.

For further information contact: Marian Honecny Supervisor,
Urban and Community Forestry MD Forest Service 580 Taylor
Ave E-1 Annapolis, MD 21401
410-260-8511 FREE 410-260-8511
mhonecny@dnr.state.md.us

On the evening of December 20th, Joe Reid, Wanda Richardson and Karen Straughn got together to judge the neighborhood holiday decorating contest. We all secretly assigned every illuminated house with a number between 1 and 5 based upon our personal taste. When we were finished the first run through the neighborhood we tallied our ratings. We then came up with our top 3 winners. Third place went to Mr. and Mrs. Allan Snyder at 2113 Chantilla Road. The Snyders won a \$10 gift certificate to Giant. The second place winner was Mr. and Mrs. Ric Goatee. The Goatees won a \$20 gift certificate to Giant. First place went to Richard Brooks at 2104 Chantilla Road. Mr. Brooks won a one year membership to the homeowners association worth \$25.

I was very impressed by the number of people who participated this year. The neighborhood did a great job at spreading holiday cheer by decorating their homes beautifully. I hope to see even more participation next year.

Karen Straughn

2012 Year End TREASURER'S REPORT

Period Beginning: January 1, 2012 Ending December 31, 2012

Beginning Balance: \$4021.35

Income:	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
Dues Received	1480.00	460.00	50.00	125.00	<u>\$2115.00</u>
Ad Revenue	93.00	60.00	48.00	240.00	<u>\$441.00</u>
Interest	.23	.13	.12	.12	<u>\$.60</u>
<u>Total Income:</u>					<u>\$2556.60</u>

Expenditures:	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
Newsletter	295.90	231.80	250.35	*(231.80)	<u>\$778.05*</u>
Christmas Décor Prize	30.00	*free yr dues		55.00	<u>\$85.00</u>
Yard Sale		68.75			<u>\$68.75</u>
Annual Mtg.		62.76			<u>\$62.76</u>
Insurance			100.00		<u>\$100.00</u>
Community Party				151.75	<u>\$151.75</u>
Website				107.88	<u>\$107.88</u>
Misc:	174.52	142.79			<u>\$317.31</u>
<u>Total Expenses:</u>					<u>\$1671.50</u>

Ending Balance: \$4906.34

*231.80 reflects payment for newsletter, not cleared on statement as of 12/31/12

Disclaimer

Westerlee Community Newsletter is not responsible for the accuracy or errors in any of the ads in the Newsletter, nor do we necessarily recommend any services or products provided by our advertisers. Any questions about ads should be addressed directly to the advertisers.

Westerlee Community News is published by the Westerlee Community Association, Inc., and is edited by Bob Propper.

For further information or to submit articles for publication, contact Bob at rapropper@hotmail.com

How to Submit Material to Our Newsletter

DO NOT submit text files in pdf or in any other file except .doc files. All text must be in Times Roman typeface, Microsoft Word files. All photos must be in JPEG files. Send me the files as attachments to your email. Send to me, R.A. Propper, at: rapropper@hotmail.com

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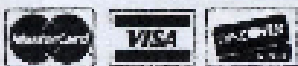
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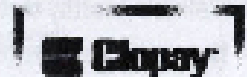
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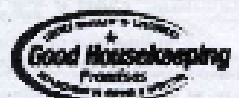
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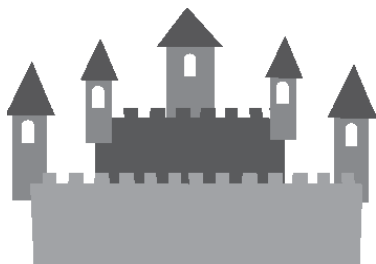


DOOR SERIES

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Construction Plans Must Be Submitted for Approval



Our covenants state that all external changes to our homes or lots must be approved by the Board of Directors in order to maintain the integrity of the architecture and landscaping in Westerlee:

“No garages, outbuildings, fences or other structures shall be erected without prior permission of Westerlee Community, Inc., its successors or assigns, or its duly appointed agent, and no building shall be built closer to the front street than forty (40) feet, no closer to the side street than twenty-five (25) feet.”

For that reason, an Architectural Review Committee studies all plans and submits their findings and recommendations to the Board only at the regular quarterly meetings. That means that you must plan ahead if you wish to add an addition, a shed, or even a fence. Architectural plans must be submitted four weeks before a board meeting to give the Architectural Review Committee and the Board adequate time to review the plans. The dates for the upcoming Board of Directors meetings are listed elsewhere in this newsletter.

The committee requires a full set of architectural drawings for any changes to the exterior of your home. If you contact one of the Architectural Review Committee members:

Klaus Philipsen at (410)747-5351
or by e-mail at: kphilipsen@archplan.com

Chris Goatee: cgoatee@verizon.net

Fred Hickok: fredhickok@verizon.net

Burglary Prevention Tips

Secure Doors and Windows

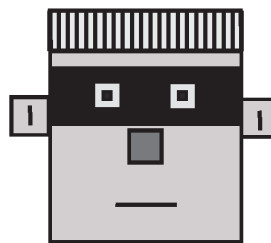
- * All outside doors should be metal or solid wood and fit tightly in the frames
- * All outside doors should have a dead bolt lock
- * Install a peephole or wide angle viewer
- * Sliding glass doors need to be properly secure, install pin locks and/or use a broomstick or dowel inside the track to jam the door
- * Install pin locks on double hung windows, install a Charlie bar device on sliding windows
- * Make sure all windows and doors are locked upon leaving your residence
- * Instead of leaving a hidden key, give a key to a trusted neighbor

CHECK THE OUTER PERIMETER OF YOUR RESIDENCE

- * If there are bushes around your home cut them in such a way that you can see through them and over them. They should be cut below your windows and away from doors
- * Install outside lights and leave them on at night, motion sensor lights are a great option
- * Make sure your house number is clearly displayed on your house
- * Consider an alarm system
- * Check with several different companies before you buy so you can decide what level of security fits your needs
- * Make your home look and sound occupied
- * Leave interior and exterior lights on when not at home
- * Make use of timers on lights and radios to give the appearance that someone is home day or night

**KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR YOUR NEIGHBORS,
CALL 911 IF YOU SEE SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY**

**CONTACT YOUR COMMUNITY OUTREACH
OFFICER FOR A FREE HOME SECURITY SURVEY
AT: 410-887-4714**



8 ways to prevent elder financial fraud

1. Make it a policy not to buy from or contribute to solicitors. The Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement suggests using the following script with callers or people who knock on your door. "I never buy from (or give to) anyone who calls or visits me unannounced. Send me something in writing."
2. Shred all receipts with your credit card number or other personal information.
3. Never give out any personal information over the phone unless you initiated the call. That includes your credit card, banking or Social Security numbers as well as health insurance or Medicare information.
4. Use direct deposit when you can to prevent checks from being stolen.
5. Know where your documents are kept and what they say. Stay organized and make sure what the literature says jibes with what brokers or representatives are telling you.
6. Check out your broker, and never make a check out to an individual for investments. Write checks out to a company or firm to make sure your money is going where it's supposed to go. You can check out brokers and their firms on securities regulator FINRA's BrokerCheck page.
7. Don't isolate yourself. Maintain connections with others in your community, such as friends, neighbors, clergy or even your letter carrier, so you have people with whom you can share your complaints or suspicions.
8. Hire an elder law attorney. If you work with a lawyer, make sure he or she is a member of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, who have special training in legal issues facing seniors.

And if you suspect that you or a loved one is a victim, experts recommend calling Adult Protective Services immediately.

EDITORIAL

Spring is in the air. Where have you heard that one before? It's an old expression of hope that's been around—maybe since cave man days. Time to take off your bear skins, put the fire on low in the cave, and come out of hibernation.

We dodged some bad snow storms this winter that wreaked havoc with other communities. Due to the efforts from a number of homeowners associations, BGE seems to have gotten the message that better service is in everyone's best interest. We only have to look at Staten Island, NY, to see where things went horribly wrong. Perhaps it is an example of things to come due to global warming.

Spring cleaning is coming up including our back yards, trimming bushes, and cleaning our property boundaries. In general, Spring is a season of renewal, gathering up our energies to do those things we promised ourselves with our New Year's resolutions.

Our Newsletter has had success at attracting more advertising to defray Westerlee's expenses. Helping with our Newsletter advertising is easy. All it takes is a word or two to our contractors, preferably while they are working on our house, to let them know that our Newsletter is available for their advertising—and at attractive rates. I would be happy to send you our digital advertising brochure in a file to pass on to any of your contractors. All you have to do is email the contractor and attach the file. We also have a recommendation column for contractors you have been happy with. It's always nice to know capable people that can help you maintain your house and property.

This year our annual meeting is on Tuesday, April 09, 2012, 7-9 PM. Please mark your calendars. We have only one meeting a year and it's important to all of us to see and understand what's happening in our community, and this affects the value we have put into our homes and properties.

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting and, most of all, we want to hear from you. Believe me; we are all in this together.

Bob Propper, Editor

Community News and Alerts

The Westerlee Inc sends occasional e-mails with community news and alerts. In emergencies or developing situations this is a quick and simple way to reach many residents and give them necessary information. The e-mail recipients are not visible to all and the list will not be shared with anybody. If you are interested in receiving those e-mails, please send a brief e-mail notice to: kphilipsen@archplan.com and you will be added to the list. If you signed up before but you have not received any notifications at all, there may be an error in the way your address was recorded. Please send another request. This method of communication will be most effective when most residents are on the list.

SPRING 2013 HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION EVENT (Baltimore County residents only)



SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 2013

9:00AM – 1:00PM

**Baltimore County Resource Recovery Facility
Intersection of Drop-Off Drive & Warren Road
Cockeysville, MD 21030**

ACCEPTABLE ITEMS (will be recycled or disposed of properly): Unwanted household chemicals, paints, pesticides, swimming pool chemicals, medicines, mercury thermometers, fluorescent light bulbs, re-chargeable batteries, ammunition, fireworks, and automotive fluids. **No trash will be accepted at this event.**

HHW COLLECTION:
(April - November)
Eastern Sanitary Landfill
6259 Days Cove Road
White Marsh, MD 21162
Monday - Saturday, 7:30am - 3:30pm

FALL 2013 HHW EVENT:
Sunday, November 10, 2013
9am - 1pm
Western Acceptance Facility
3310 Traceway Road
Halethorpe, MD 21227

**QUESTIONS? Call EPS at 410-887-3745
(Mon-Fri, 8am - 4pm)**

**Baltimore County Executive Kevin Kamenetz and the Baltimore County Council
The Department of Environmental Protection & Sustainability (EPS),
in cooperation with the Department of Public Works**



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IT 411



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