



Community Updates

Summer 2014

A slight changing of the guard on the Montgomery County Council

Environmental statements from District 3 and District 4 nominees for County Council

On June 24th, in a record low voter turnout for the primary election, all incumbents for At Large Council seats were re-elected and District candidates in all Districts except D-3 and D-5 were re-elected. Both District 3 and 5 seats were open races due to the departure of Phil Andrews (D-3) and Valerie Ervin, who vacated the D-5 seat to take a job in the nonprofit sector in January of this year. (Councilmember Cherri Branson is holding the D-5 seat until a new Council is sworn into office in January 2015.) Since Montgomery County is primarily a Democratic County, presumably the primary election decides the makeup of our County Council.

Sid Katz, Mayor of Gaithersburg, and State Delegate Tom Hucker are familiar faces. Both won the Democratic nomination for their Districts in the primary. Below are their environmental statements delivered prior to our April Green Forum in Silver Spring. Note: CM does not endorse candidates; we inform residents of all candidate positions.

Congratulations to Council incumbents who survived a bruising primary campaign season. We hope that we can count on your support to protect local natural resources. Most of all, we hope that our Council will become more collegial and collaborative in the future -- with two new members and possibly a fresh approach to working relationships on the Council.

Sid Katz, District 3 Democratic Nominee



We must be certain that we do not take our natural and environmental resources for granted. Whether it is safeguarding our drinking water, reducing pollution or protecting our food supply, the earth needs to be appreciated and the way we show our appreciation is by protecting it.

We also have a duty and an obligation to tackle these environmental issues head-on in Montgomery County. It is nearly impossible to select the most pressing need because so many need to be addressed including deforestation, renewable energy, clean air and clean water. However, Montgomery County can and should do more to reduce carbon emission and carbon footprint.

In 2009, Montgomery County published a *Climate Protection Plan* prepared by the Montgomery County Working Sustainability Group. A starting point should be to conduct a review of this plan to measure progress both in the private and public sector. Once a review is complete, we can discuss whether we need additional legislative solutions in order for the County to achieve its goals.

The County government must also become more energy efficient in the operations of all county buildings and facilities including installing smart meters to measure energy usage. We must do more to address the carbon footprint of government offices and installations. We cannot wait – we must act now.

Tom Hucker, District 5 Democratic Nominee



Environmental issues have been central to my life for 25 years, beginning with campaign jobs during college fighting nuclear power, cleaning up hazardous waste, and improving drinking water testing. After college, I spent seven years running campaigns to strengthen the Clean Air Act and other federal legislation on behalf of the Sierra Club, U.S. PIRG, the National Environmental Law Center, and other groups.

I have one of the longest records of environmental accomplishments in Annapolis, having passed at least nine significant environmental laws and helping lead efforts to pass Clean Cars legislation and the most ambitious greenhouse gas law of any state.

- In 2009, I passed legislation to clean up the most significant source of mercury pollution -- electric switches in old cars.
- That same year my HB 800 authorized Montgomery County to pass its successful roadside tree law.
- Developers often use SLAPP suits (Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation) to silence civic activists. After the late Wayne Goldstein was hit with a frivolous lawsuit by a developer, I passed HB 1250 to protect environmental activists from civil liability for exercising their free speech rights.
- From 2009-2012, I introduced bills to require counties to create a stormwater remediation fee. Despite powerful opposition, the Polluted Runoff bill passed and is considered one of the state's most important environmental laws.
- In 2010, I introduced groundbreaking legislation banning roxarsone, an antibiotic containing arsenic that was fed to Maryland chickens - over the objections of Pfizer and the chicken industry. The FDA followed Maryland lead and banned roxarsone.
- From 2010-2013, I introduced successful legislation to build an offshore wind farm off Maryland's Atlantic Coast, dramatically reducing our dependence on fossil fuels.
- In 2013, I passed three WSSC bills: one requiring WSSC to test drinking water for 28 new contaminants and to share the results on its website; another to post notices of dangerous sewage leaks in parks and playgrounds, and a third to notify municipal officials so the public is well-informed.

I am endorsed by the Sierra Club for the Montgomery County Council. I also serve as the Co-Chair of the Public Line Caucus and serve as a Trustee of the Montgomery Parks Foundation.

I will:

- protect critical environmental treasures like Ten Mile and Sligo Creeks;
- work to phase out the cosmetic use of pesticides by the County and M-NCPPEC;
- demand strong enforcement of the Environmental Site Design law (that I cosponsored);
- advocate to reopen Brickyard Educational Farm;
- continue to push improved transit including Ride-On, Purple Line, BRT and CCT;
- strongly prioritize transit-oriented development over any new proposed developments elsewhere;
- require higher impact fees for responsible development projects;
- insist on more green space as a condition of any new development;
- push to end the use of atrazine and other dangerous pesticides in the Ag Reserve, and
- communicate regularly with Conservation Montgomery and other groups to work together on environmental priorities.