



SUGARLOAF CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER 2006

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“Fighting to protect our rural legacy”

Visit our web site: www.sugarloafcitizens.org

You Are Invited to the 2006 Sugarloaf Annual Meeting

Sugarloaf will hold its annual meeting on Saturday April 22 at 10 a.m. at our Linden Farm Headquarters, 20900 Martinsburg Road in Dickerson to elect officers and report to the membership on our activities.

Our featured speakers this year will be Delegate Jean B. Cryor (R-Dist 15) along with Delegate Kathleen M. Dumais (D-Dist 15) and Delegate Brian J. Feldman (D-Dist 15)

The SCA Officers placed in nomination are:

President: Jim Brown;

First Vice President: Ellen Gordon;

Secretary: Claire Gunster-Kirby;

Treasurer: Jane Hunter

Mark Your Calendars!

Sugarloaf will be holding a major fund raiser in the fall in order to continue our mission of preserving this area from further intrusions threatening its agricultural character. Our plans are to hold a "silent auction" in the Sugarloaf Equestrian Center on Conoy Road on September 30th between 1 and 5 p.m. Anyone who wishes to volunteer should call Laura Van Etten at 301-972-7147.

Two Major Victories for the Master Plan

Any proposals to build in the AgReserve from institutions such as “mega churches”, or from organizations favoring overnight camping and lodging will alter the character of the Reserve. The construction of large institutional buildings or permanent lodging facilities will both remove more and more acreage from agricultural uses and also result in further encroachment when the operators of such facilities request an extension of public water and sewer in order to continue functioning.

It is Sugarloaf’s firm belief that any proposal for a change in the Master Plan for the AgReserve must be resisted (see Sugarloaf’s Mission Statement overleaf). We are therefore happy to report that Sugarloaf has been successful in persuading the Montgomery County Planning Board to uphold the Master Plan on two fronts. First, the Planning Board rejected a proposal from a “mega church” to build in the AgReserve. Secondly, the Board recommended to the County Council to defer indefinitely a proposal for a zoning text amendment which would have allowed institutional overnight camping and in turn would have opened the door for hotel and motel operators to establish themselves in the AgReserve. The decisions by the Planning Board to uphold the original Master Plan by rejecting building proposals from institutional developers were indirectly confirmed by the County Council when it later decided to deny an extension of public water and sewer to any large institution, be it a church or otherwise.

The Piedmont Environmental Education Foundation

As we reported last year, Sugarloaf’s successful legal intervention in the Mirant power plant expansion included a commitment by Mirant of financial support for a foundation that will sponsor environmental education projects for teachers in Montgomery and Frederick counties and the District of Columbia.

We have recently received approval from the IRS to move forward with this Foundation. It remains our hope to send out solicitations for proposals from ecology teachers with the goal of making out first grants for student environmental projects this fall. The Piedmont Board members are: Steve Arabia, Joyce Bailey, Jim Brown, Jim Choukas Bradley, and William Price. If you are interested in making a tax deductible contribution to the Foundation, please send it to our address on Martinsburg Road.

Sugarloaf Citizens' Association, Inc.
Newsletter 2006

President: Jim Brown
Vice President: Ellen Gordon
Secretary: Claire Gunster-Kirby
Treasurer: Jane Hunter

Other Board Members:

Tina Brown
Anne Cinque
Jay Cinque
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Tom Proctor
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SUGARLOAF NEIGHBOR

COMING UP!

Sugarloaf's Annual Meeting, April 22nd

SEE INSIDE!

Bridge and Techway Remain Serious Threats

Sugarloaf and many other organizations weighed in strongly with the Council of Governments (COG) in November last year when it was discovered that the Virginia Department of Transportation had quietly included another study for a new Potomac bridge crossing and outer belt way in their five year transportation plan. Councilman Mike Knapp (D-Dist 2) and other council members supportive of our position to keep an outer beltway and bridge out of the Agriculture Reserve secured assurances from COG that no funds would be expended on such a study without a vote of COG members. It is important to remain vigilant since Virginia's newly elected Governor Kaine has expressed support for this type of transportation project. Councilman Knapp will head COG's Transportation Planning Board during 2006 and is also a vice chairman of COG's Board of Directors.

Success in Keeping MARC Boyds and Dickerson Stations Open!

As a result of legislation introduced by our Senator Rob Garagiola and Delegates Cryor, Feldman and Dumais, M-DOT reversed the decision to close the Boyds and Dickerson MARC stations. These stations will now remain open at least for another year. Our thanks to all SCA members who weighed-in on this illogical M-DOT decision. The favorable result is evidence that our legislators will listen if we take the time to call or write.

Sugarloaf's Mission Statement

The Association's mission is to preserve a rural agricultural tradition in upper Montgomery County and to protect the viability of the Agricultural Reserve. Our members are committed to preserving rural open space and a healthy environment for residents in the region, and we take action when these goals are threatened. We follow the activities at the Montgomery County Council, Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and legislation before state and local government. When development interests apply for a permit that would open the Ag Reserve to industrial expansion or endanger the rural density zone, we testify on behalf of the community. We testify at special exception hearings, County Council hearings, Park and Planning hearings, and at the Council of Governments, and we intervene legally when necessary.

Sugarloaf Citizens' Association Annual Membership Drive

Donations allow us to continue our efforts to protect and enhance life and the environment in Sugarloaf country

Name: _____

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Please send your tax deductible contribution to: **SCA, Linden Farm**
20900 Martinsburg Road
Dickerson, MD 20842

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