

SCA Newsletter
February 2010

As I write this Newsletter column, we are all digging out from another major snow storm. While the entire region was impacted with the historic amount of snow, people in the Agriculture Reserve experienced special challenges by living in a rural area. Some residents lost power, others were stranded away from home and all of us had to dig ourselves out just to be able to leave our properties.

The usually severe challenges of this storm brought out the best in our rural community. Neighbors helped each other, many people volunteered to assist people who could not fend for themselves, and when we did see each other again in a public area, we all shared our blizzard stories. Our neighbor dug us out twice and demonstrated that we were never alone in spite of whatever nature was throwing at us at any given time.

While similar acts between neighbors surely occurred in the urban centers, our appreciation of a rural quality of life was reaffirmed many times over during the recent storms. It renews the spirit that drives us to protect the Agriculture Reserve from the advances of more urban development.

It is in this context that we once again protest the plans of the Global Mission Church to impose a mega church complex into the rural countryside of southern Frederick and northern Montgomery counties. The Frederick County Board of Appeals has kept the potential for the massive church alive by siding with the church's legal team that the denial of the Frederick Planning Board was unfair.

The issue involves the county's limit of discharge into a septic system of 4,999 gallons a day. Even though the church leaders and their attorneys acknowledge they want a new church to expand their congregation, they argue that water saving fixtures and the use of disposal plates and tableware in the 500 seat dining hall will save enough water to never exceed the legal limit. We argue that a church of this size will not be able to meet the daily limits on the septic system and there are no monitoring agencies to make sure the church is in compliance.

We urge the Frederick Planning Board to once again deny the construction of this facility that threatens the rural nature of our community. Once again, we plead with the Global Mission Church to find a location in our region that has city water and sewer systems to accommodate their needs.