



Baltimore Sierran

Serving Members in Baltimore City, Baltimore County & Harford County May 2006

Sierra Club mission: Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Seeking:

A Treasurer for the Greater Baltimore Group!

If interested, contact Ron Henry at ronlhenry@msn.com or 410-838-9119.

Executive Committee Members!

Nominate yourself (or someone else) to run for election for the Greater Baltimore Group's Executive Committee (Ex Com). Our 9-member Ex Com meets quarterly and is responsible for running the Group. Send a one or two paragraph biography to: Ron Henry at ronlhenry@msn.com or 40 E. Jarrettsville Rd., Forest Hill MD 21050-1630. Describe what you'd like to accomplish and any relevant experience, education, skills, training, etc. Your bio and those of other candidates will run in the next issue of the newsletter along with a ballot.

Sparrows Point LNG Proposal

By Ron L. Henry, Sierra Club GB Group Chair

The AES Corporation, a global power company based in Arlington, Virginia, proposed a \$400 million plan to develop a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal and storage tank facility at the site of the former Sparrows Point shipyard in Baltimore County. Included in the proposal is an 87-mile pipeline to transport the natural gas from Dundalk in Baltimore County to southern Pennsylvania. AES invited various environmental, conservation, and community organizations to participate early in the planning process. I attended their "kickoff" meeting on February 6, 2006 in Annapolis. An overview of the project proposal was presented, followed by discussion of the process.

I expressed my position that although



LNG is far preferable environmentally than other fossil fuels, I have extreme reservations due to threats of devastation from a fire aboard ship en route to Sparrows Point or from terrorist sabotage of the three storage tanks at the terminal. I was given analytical reports to review about this issue, which corroborated my concern. I reviewed additional reports to glean more data about the severe fire hazard. Since the data are analytical and based on severely limited and old test

data, I am requesting additional data in order to evaluate storage tank designs that may mitigate the severe negative effects from sabotage.

The fire hazard on shipboard while en route and near other vessels or populated areas is in the purview of the Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security. I'm certain they share the same concerns about terrorist threats and the potential for severe devastation in that scenario.

Also of concern is ensuring that any negative events at Sparrows Point can be safely contained in the terminal and storage tank areas. The Sparrows Point facility would be less than two miles from the Turners Station neighborhood. Of concern to Baltimore and Harford County residents is where the proposed pipeline will run through their areas and the related

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Opportunities for Involvement

(see inside for more information):

July 6 - Outings Planning Meeting

July 10 - Executive Committee Public Meeting

2nd Thursday of each month - Young Sierrans Socials

Saturday after 2nd Thursday of each month - Young Sierrans Outings

See Outings Schedule in newsletter and on website

In Search of Newsletter Contributors:

The deadline is **July 10th** for submissions to the mid-August Baltimore Sierran newsletter. We are seeking contributions from environmentalists of **all ages** and interests. We need articles, news, ideas, photographs, or poems related to the environment, conservation, or outings in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, or Harford County. Send contributions or ideas to Mary Corddry at XxDiTz4LyFxx@aol.com or 75 Perryfalls Place, Nottingham, MD 21236.

Environmental Issues for Campaign 2006

By Mary C. Corddry

On April 5, members of the Political Committee for the Sierra Club's Greater Baltimore Group met with leaders of other environmental organizations. Discussed were local and regional environmental issues, initiatives, experiences, ideas, successes, and challenges. The information was needed for the development of questionnaires and for interviewing the candidates running for Congress, the State legislature, and local offices during the 2006 elections. Local elections include the County Executive and County Council for Baltimore and Harford Counties.

The following issues were discussed:

* The transfer of 91 park rangers to become police in the Department of Natural Resources (DNR)—This has resulted in

few rangers to supervise the parks and oversee activities. Volunteers are now required to run the parks. Also, DNR police are now being involved in anti-terrorism activities.

*The under-funded State Parks—Since there is not enough money to maintain the parks, there is an incentive to make money from the parks, such as by logging the trees for timber or raising usage fees. Parks should not be forced to pay for themselves.

* Reduction by one-third of the staffing for the DNR's fisheries—This is not enough to manage the fisheries.

* Violation of "Smart Growth"

* Proposed development next to Black water Wildlife Refuge—Since this

natural resource belongs to all of us, the Dorchester County Council should not have the last word. This development will have significant impact on the refuge.

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FROM THE CHAIR – APRIL 2006

Hi To Everyone!! It is hard to believe, BUT, Yes it is spring and April 2006 already! Welcome to the busy season of the year for most of us at least! Time to be outside enjoying Mother Nature during which many consider to be her finest season!

It continues to be a busy time for the Executive Committee (Ex Com) and particularly all of those involved in the workings of the Political Committee in preparation for Election Year 2006. Special thanks are due them for their interest and contributions. The political committee has met several times and has successfully striven to engage other like-minded community, conservation, environmental and other citizen groups to assist us in generating candidate questionnaires. Those questionnaires, which reflect the combined viewpoints of the

groups just cited, will be mailed to each candidate in early May and interviews will be scheduled, as indicated, from the responses. Endorsements will be published in the MD Chapter SC newsletter, "The Chesapeake".

REMINDER: It is of immense importance to all of us to be completely proactive in this year's election process! We must ensure that all of those myriad of things that affect our environment will be completely supported by those candidates we endorse. This places both a tremendous opportunity and a formidable task for us Sierrans! We are charged with ferreting out the best possible candidates for elective office; THOSE WHO ARE TRULY COMMITTED to not only recovering, but sustaining and greatly improving our environment. Much has been done to date and your help is very much needed to support the candidates who are endorsed. Please volunteer to assist in their election campaigns!

Solicitations have been made in our newsletters for participation on various committees. I am very happy to report that two additional members of the Baltimore County Group (Janet Schollenberger and Bob Stoner) stepped forward and have made valuable contributions through their efforts and insights. Thanks!

However, we are in dire need of a "TREASURER"!! Our current treasurer graciously extended his services for an entire year. He has rightfully stated that he will be leaving 30 June 06. WE DESPARATELY NEED SOMEONE TO STEP FORWARD AND FILL THIS CRUCIAL ROLE! PLEASE CONSIDER DOING SO!!

Now on to another topic! There have been a few instances during the last several months wherein Sierra Club members (when contacted for volunteering for a task or with follow-on calls after attending an ExCom meeting) stated their displeasure or disappointment concerning Sierra Club and their expectations of what the ExCom function is or should be. Let me state upfront that I appreciate those members stating their displeasure concerning the Sierra Club since nothing can be done if it is not known that something is amiss.

It seems that many members believe that just putting in a call to the Chair or an ExCom member or bringing a matter before the ExCom in person is sufficient in itself to resolving the issue or concern or at least placing it with someone and it will be thus attended to. While on some occasions that may well be the outcome, that will be rare! THIS IS BECAUSE THE EXCOM does not lend itself to functioning in that manner! The ExCom is made up of all volunteers, just as the general Sierra Club membership is. Each ExCom member became one because they had particular issues, concerns or interests that they wanted to actively pursue in consonance with Sierra Club policy and mission.

For example, I was the Harford County Representative on the ExCom

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Upcoming Greater Baltimore Group Meetings

Executive Committee Public Meeting

Sierra Club members and non-members are invited to attend the next quarterly public meeting of the Greater Baltimore Group's Executive Committee. The meeting is scheduled for **Monday, July 10, 7:30 – 9:30** at the Maryland Presbyterian Church near Towson. Light refreshments are served. We will be finalizing political endorsements for the 2006 elections. Come to participate in the discussions and planning.

Take the Baltimore Beltway (695) to Exit 28 (Providence Road). Take Providence Road north. The church building is on your right just outside the Beltway. Parking lots are in front and at the side of the building.

Outings Planning Meeting

The next meeting of the GB Outings Committee is scheduled for **Thursday, July 6 at 6:30** in Perry Hall. New and prospective outings leaders are welcome. Pot luck dinner at 6:30 p.m. Call Jack at

410-256-3963 for directions. Come plan new outings and meet other outings leaders. If you're interested in leading outings and are curious about what is involved, come and talk with the outings leaders.

Young Sierrans Socials and Outings

The Young Sierrans Group of the Greater Baltimore Area holds monthly **Socials** on the **second Thursday of each month at 7:00: June 8, July 13, and August 10**. Since locations are being rotated, check the Young Sierrans' website for the next location at: [http://maryland.sierraclub.org/baltimore/
youngsierrans](http://maryland.sierraclub.org/baltimore/youngsierrans) or contact Kathy Harget, Young Sierrans Chair, at 410-440-9896 or hargetk@yahoo.com. Stop by and have a cup of coffee, a drink, or some food with like-minded folks. These socials provide an informal way to meet other young people concerned about environmental issues and interested in organizing group hikes, activism activities, and other outings.

The Young Sierrans **Outings** are scheduled for the **Saturday after the monthly Social on the 2nd Thursday of each month** (2nd or 3rd Saturday). For details, check out the Young Sierrans web site at [http://maryland.sierraclub.org/
baltimore/youngsierrans/](http://maryland.sierraclub.org/baltimore/youngsierrans/)

Population Efforts Must Be Based on Rights, Not Numbers, Says Club's Top Population Staffer ***By Cliff Terry, GB Sierra Club Population Chair***

Given education and the freedom to decide, women have fewer children, the Sierra Club's top population staff person told a Towson University audience on March 1.

Annette Souder, the Club's senior Washington representative in its Global Population and Environ-

mental Program, spoke to an audience of 50-60 in the University Union, nearly all of whom appeared to be students. John Nugent, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Maryland (PPM), joined her for a question and answer session. The event was sponsored by PPM, Voices for Planned Parenthood at Towson University (VOX), and the Greater Baltimore Sierra Club.

Following are some highlights from Ms. Souder's talk:

She reminded the audience that the U.S. is the world's third most popu-

lous country. But she also said we can't protect the world's biodiversity "by working within our borders" (perhaps meaning "by reducing U.S. immigration," on which the Sierra Club says it takes no position), because the places where biodiversity is severely threatened by population growth are all over the world.

Regarding the contribution of births to U.S. growth, she said 61% of high school seniors have had sex, and almost half of all pregnancies are unintended. Among the remedies she recommended were requiring health insurance plans to cover contraceptives,

and also sex education that does not simply urge abstinence.

Ms. Souder also reminded the audience that falling birth rates (in some European countries well below the level that would maintain a constant population in the long run) do not mean growth has stopped or soon will. That is because of "population momentum," the fact that the disproportionately youthful societies produced by recent rapid growth will continue to have more births than deaths until the societies gradually assume the proportions of different

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Area Transportation News ***By Patrick McMahon, GB Sierra Club Transportation Chair***

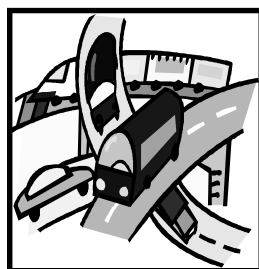
Baltimore City Bicycle Master Plan

The Baltimore City Bicycle Master Plan will be presented to the Planning Commission on May 4, 2006 at 1:30 p.m. for final adoption at 417 E. Fayette St, 8th Floor, Baltimore, MD. This is the action that will make the Master Plan official city policy. Individuals are welcome and encouraged to attend this meeting and will have the opportunity to offer testimony. As reported in the last newsletter, the plan has many strong elements. But it also still needs some work, including a greater commitment to fund staff for bicycle planning in the City and speeding up improvements in lower-income portions of the City. I encourage members interested in bicycling to write the Mayor and Planning Department to express the importance of following up the planning with implementation.

FY 2007-2011 Transportation Improvement Plan

Every year the jurisdictions in the Baltimore region develop a Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) to list the transportation projects that will receive federal funding over the next five years. The list of projects in the FY 2007-2011 TIP includes added capacity projects, preservation projects, and transit operating needs. There are 41 new projects including:

- *Widen MD 295 near BWI Airport



- *Planning for the Red and Green Lines

- *New buses for local and State transit systems

- *Baltimore City bike routes

The public is invited to review and comment on the TIP projects. The review period opens on Wednesday, April 19 and continues through Monday, May 22, 2006. You can view the TIP database of projects online at: http://bmc.baltometro.org/tips_web/login2.asp

Written comments must be received by the close of business on Monday, May 22, 2006. Please submit all comments to the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board, Attention: Public Involvement Coordinator, 2700 Lighthouse Point East, Suite 310, Baltimore, MD 21224-4774. Comments may also be submitted by fax at 410-732-8248 or e-mail at mhaines@baltometro.org. No public meeting is scheduled at this time; however, anyone can request that their testimony be submitted verbally. If you would like to provide your comments in person, please notify Monica Haines no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, May 12, 2006. While it is worth writing to express support and/

or disapproval of specific projects, it is exceedingly unlikely that any project (such as the widening of I-95 from Baltimore City to the Susquehanna River) will be changed or stopped at this point in the process.

May is Clean Commute Month & May 19th is Bicycle To Work Day

During May, everyone is asked to think about the impacts of their transportation activities and to try and reduce the environmental impact of their transportation to work. May 19th is Bike to Work Day and there will be rallies in Baltimore City, Towson, Bel Air, and Annapolis with t-shirt giveaways and information about bicycling. Sign up to attend the rallies at <http://www.Bike2workCentralMD.com>.

Also during Clean Commute Month there will be free clinics where technicians will inspect your car to ensure that you're driving as safely and cleanly as possible. More info about the car clinics will be at <http://www.cleancommute.com/>.

Bicycling Legislation

In 2006, the Maryland General Assembly passed a bill changing equipment requirements for bicyclists in Maryland. Cyclists are no longer required to have bells on their bikes, and may use a flashing or solid light in addition to or replacing the rear-mounted red reflector that had been required by Maryland law. Bikes must have a braking system capable of stopping from a speed of 10 miles per

hour within 15 feet. These changes are significant safety upgrades for cyclists in Maryland.

Language was removed from the bill exempting bicyclists from the requirement to ride only in bike lanes and shoulders, which would have brought Maryland into compliance with most states, allowing cyclists to use discretion as their own safety when riding in traffic.

Our thanks goes out to One Less Car, Maryland's campaign for bicycling and walking, for their dedicated work on this issue.

Upcoming Transportation Meetings & Events

Find out about upcoming meetings and events related to transportation and development by going to: <http://www.baltometro.org/eNews/BMoreInvolved.htm> You can also sign up there to get regular updates about important meetings coming up in the Baltimore region.

For more information about these or other transportation issues contact Patrick McMahon, Transportation Chair, at patrick@mcmahon.com or 410-599-5123.

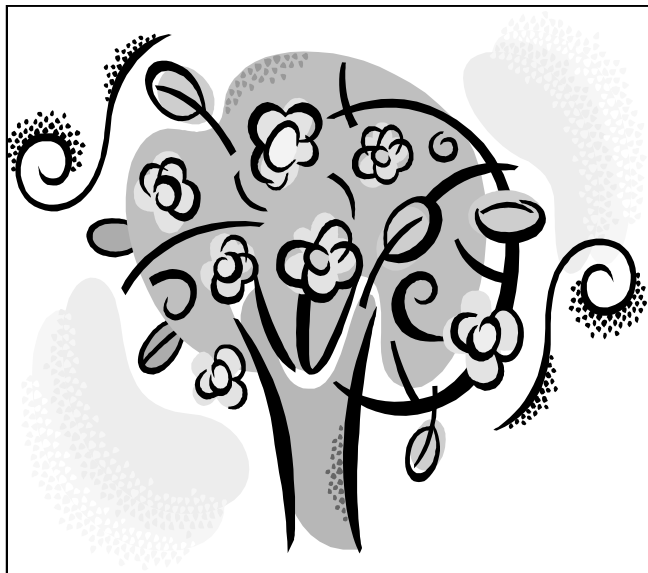
Harford Land Trust Enters New Phase

***By Mary U. Corddry,
Editor of the Harford
Land Trust News***

For 15 years since its founding, the Harford Land Trust has managed to preserve islands of open space from the marshes along Bush River to the upper reaches of Deer Creek at the northern end of Harford County. With the relentless tide of growth and development closing in around the county's remaining rural countryside, the Trust is meeting the uncertainties of Harford's future with a new Director, a new President, and an optimistic spirit.

The new Director is Margaret (Peg) Niland, past director, for 15 years, of the American Chestnut Land Trust, Inc. in Calvert County (named for a real live Chestnut tree there). Under her dynamic leadership, the Calvert Trust amassed the membership and foundation grants for the acquisition, preservation and management of 3,000 contiguous acres, some in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Peg Niland was drawn to Harford by long personal ties and anticipates great opportunities ahead.

Harry V. Webster, the new President, has a contagious fervor for the relationship of his community and its land. His involvement began in 1992 when the Harford Land Trust embarked on its first project. That was the purchase of 145 acres of undeveloped lake, tidal inlet and woodlands near the Bush River and creation of the Forest Greens Lake Preserve. The Preserve is under conservation easement for permanent ownership and management by the Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation. Harry Webster, who is in the insurance business, has a home on Bush River. At the time, he was president of the Forest Greens-Perryman Community Association



Inc., confronting problems raised by the surrounding industrial development. His vision of the relationship of man and nature has continued to widen since.

Undoubtedly, the best known, and most photographable, achievement of the Trust has been Kilgore Falls, the second-highest waterfall in Maryland, located on a tributary of Deer Creek in the northern end of the county. With leadership by students of the Ecology Club at North Harford High School and financial support from Maryland's Program Open Space, the Trust purchased the 23-acre tract on Falling Branch where the falls are located. Later, in June 1997, the Trust purchased a 62-acre farm adjacent to the falls. It sold 22 acres to the Maryland Park Service as a buffer, and the remaining 40 acres to a private owner. Any summertime visit to the falls, alive with mothers, young children and youthful swimmers and picnickers, attests to specialness of the place.

The most costly Trust transaction was the purchase of 32 acres of woodlands, wetlands and shoreline surrounding the Anita C. Leight Estuary Center on the Bush River at the opposite end of the county. This is a center for educational and scientific research programs and an integral partner of the Otter Creek National Estuarine Sanctuary of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The adjacent protective property was acquired by the Trust for \$650,000 with foun-

dation grants and loans and was later sold to Harford County's Department of Parks and Recreation.

The Trust holds easements on some properties and has sold others with restrictions. One that it is holding on to is an isolated 75-acre woodland property with a rustic cabin on a tributary of Deer Creek in the northern end of the county. It belonged to the late James R. Kelly, who used it as a weekend escape from a high-pressure life in Washington and called it "The Gulch." Its possibilities belong to the future of the Trust.

Last November the Harford Land Trust, together with the Deer Creek Valley Watershed Association and The Manor Conservancy, sponsored the 4th Annual Deer Creek Valley Trail Ride. It is a successful fundraiser for the three organizations, but

more than that. The riders, 116 of them last year, have a rare opportunity to cross the privately owned rolling farmland and woods across 2,000 scenic acres along Deer Creek. For the riders, as for any Sierra Club hiker in the State's remaining protected lands, there is little question about the significance to our lives of the natural world.

As stated in the Harford Land Trust brochure, "The American dream means more than personal wealth and success. It is about the community as a whole, about the family and home."

For more information, you may contact the Harford Land Trust at 410-836-2103 or www.landtrust.harfordhasit.com.

Baltimore's North County Institute

By Irving Spitzberg, President, North County Preservation, Inc.

North County Preservation, Inc., a non-profit umbrella group for preservation and community association leaders in northern Baltimore County, convened this spring the North County Institute to illuminate the planning issues that will affect the future of northern Baltimore County. Our purpose has been to explore the larger planning horizon beyond current crises and controversies, in order to think critically about future land use challenges. Our theme has been "Planning the Future of North County."

Pat Keller, Director of Planning in Baltimore County, led the initial session on the last Sunday in January. He provided us with a variety of data that illustrated past trends and future projections. We were surprised to see that the Department of Planning assumes that population growth in Baltimore County will be leveling off in the next decade. Pat said this was because of the limitations of the Urban Rural Demarcation Line (URDL) and its prohibition of development in rural areas and the fact that the rest of the County will be built out. The projections assume no significant changes in zoning. I indicated that I thought this is a risky assumption given the addition of more than two million people to the mid-Atlantic by 2025 and the impact of the movement of military and support personnel to Maryland from base closings elsewhere. Pat

responded that the County is channeling future development to the eastern Baltimore County sector away from the northern County.

Chris McCollum, from the Baltimore County Office of Economic Development, led our second session in February. He made clear that the Office of Economic Development is committed to the restrictions of the URDL and makes that limitation clear when potential developers come to them with a proposal. He also identified the programs offered by the Office for low interest rural loans. In response to

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Harford County Zoning Review Update

By Ron L. Henry, Sierra Club GB Group Chair

Much has been going on with respect to the Greater Baltimore Sierra Club's collaboration with Friends of Harford (FOH) during the Harford County Comprehensive Zoning Review process. On February 14, 2006 after tacking on over 100 amendments, the Harford County Council passed a Comprehensive Rezoning (CRZ) bill. In so doing, they effectively authorized developers to build both high-density residential communities and businesses outside the planned "Development Envelope," some of which are very large scale. This is ABSOLUTELY AGAINST the County's Land Use Master Plan adopted in 2004 by the same County Council and supported by many Harford County citizens.



I have been working with FOH and Sierra Club members from each Council District to research the many rezoning requests and present comments and recommendations to the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Department and County Council.

P&Z agreed with us on most of the issues, which was reflected in their recommendations to the Council. The Council, however, did not listen to the people of Harford County or P&Z and voted to approve an unbelievable amount of commercialization in Harford County. Basically, Routes 924 (Emmorton Rd.) and Rte. 22 (Churchville Rd.) will be businesses from one end to the other if the CRZ bill becomes law.

FOH and other interested citizens immediately inundated County Council members and the County Executive with e-mails, phone messages, and letters expressing their discontent and urging the County Executive to veto the bill, which he did several weeks afterwards. After the veto, the County Executive introduced Bill No. 06-11 to suspend the procedural requirements for CRZ. Purportedly, there will be provisions in a future

CRZ bill to rectify most of the major negative impacts. A hearing on the bill is scheduled for May 6. It needs at least 4 votes out of 6 to pass the County Council.

If the bill is passed immediately after the hearing, and that's a big IF, it cannot take effect until 60 days after the bill becomes law. If the County Executive signs the bill immediately, an updated CRZ bill could be introduced at the July 11 Council meeting. This would shove the second hearing into August, and the Council would have to vote on the bill in August or September. That, of course, is not particularly politically palatable, since it is very close to the September 12th primary and the November general elections, at which the citizens will vote on the County Executive and County Council members.

So at this point, it's a "wait and see"!! If nothing is done, the County's zoning will revert to the 1998 plan. Although not the best, this plan is far better than the CRZ passed by the County Council and vetoed by the County Executive. It is quite possible that this will be put on hold for the next elected Council to deal with.

Was this partnership of the Sierra Club with FOH a success? I think so, particularly since the Harford County citizenry came together in a bipartisan endeavor and their recommendations were heard. Now it is in the hands of the County Council and County Executive – the electorate is watching!

North County (Continued from page 4)

my question, he estimated that the average rental income for agricultural use received by an owner of rural property in the northern County is about \$61 per acre per year. I interpret that this low number assumes almost zero land value to the farming economy. It raises serious questions about the economic viability of farming when there is ownership turnover from the current generation of farmers retiring in the next decade.

Bill Hughey, the Baltimore County Planner for District 3, brought lots of maps to the March session of the North County Institute. He reviewed the variety of rural zones and the limitations of each on development. One of his maps showed already authorized in-fill development under existing zoning and the ownership by more than 5,000 potential additional residents. He, like Pat Keller and Chris McCollum, reiterated that Baltimore County is committed to the maintenance of the URDL. He also emphasized Councilman McIntire's contribution to down-zoning during the last two CZMP exercises.

On Sunday, April 30, the North County Institute will continue by focusing on "Deja Vu All Over Again: Fighting Preservation's Battles – History and Future." Experienced land use activists Judith Waldman, Paul Hupfer, and Lynne Jones will initiate a discussion of tactics and strategies open to conservationists in northern Baltimore County.

On Sunday, May 21, Councilman Bryan McIntire will convene the final spring session of the North County Institute. All of the prior presenters will return for a mini-summit with our veteran attendees. All of us will consider land use planning priorities for the coming year. Since this last session will assume knowledge of the thread of conversation that has emerged in past sessions, only those who have attended at least one prior session of the Institute will be invited to join us. This session will end with a pot-luck supper and celebration of the future of the North County.

We Need Your E-mail Addresses!

The Sierra Club is most effective when our members show up at community meetings or hearings or contact their elected officials to voice their opinions and advocate for the environment. We can use e-mail to contact you more than the four times a year this newsletter affords us, in order to let you know about upcoming meetings or important legislation. **If you want to join this environmental hot-mail**, give your e-mail address to Cliff Terry at: Cliff.Terry@maryland.sierraclub.org.

If you don't want to rummage around looking for outings schedules before each weekend, get on the **e-mail notification list for upcoming outings**. Send your e-mail address to Alan Penczek at: f-pencze@mail.vjc.edu.

Plant the Green

The **Growing Home Campaign** was announced by Baltimore County in April. The campaign's slogan is: "*The Greening of Baltimore County begins in your own back yard.*" This is an important part of the County's "Green Renaissance." The goal is for 10,000 new trees to be planted on private property this year. Through a unique County-Retailer-Homeowner partnership, homeowners are being offered a \$10 Growing Home coupon, redeemable through June 30th toward the purchase of a new tree at participating nurseries and garden centers. The coupon is included in the "Plant Your Own Tree" brochure, which is available at all county libraries, senior centers, recreation and parks facilities, and the Campaign's internet site at www.baltimorecountymd.gov/go/trees. The brochure provides useful information about the importance of planting more trees, how to select species of trees for your yard, and how to

plant and maintain the trees.

The Campaign is coordinated by the County's Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management and supported by the County Executive and County Council. Part of the funding comes from the Chesapeake Bay Program and its federal partners including the grant administrators from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Environmental Protection Agency. For more information, contact Diana E. Cohen, Coordinator of the Growing Home Campaign, at 410-887-4488, Ext. 287 or at dcohen@co.ba.md.us.

Baltimore City is proposing to more than double its tree canopy—the total area covered by leaves—in the next 30 years by encouraging the planting of trees in parks and other public places, along streets, and on private property. As of 2001, trees covered about 20% of the City's land, as compared to an aver-

age of 23% in the country's cities according to the U.S. Forest Service. The City's Forestry Division of the Department of Recreation and Parks now maintains about 500,000 trees on 5,700 acres, more than two trees for every three citizens. The City was granted \$83,000 by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to produce an urban forest management plan by March 2007. Property owners will be given incentives for planting trees.

According to a study by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the tree canopy saves Baltimoreans \$3.3 million in energy costs by acting as a shade umbrella. The City's trees remove about 10,800 metric tons of carbon from the air and water annually. Trees control storm water runoff, prevent erosion of stream banks, improve air and water quality, provide a bulwark against wind, and increase property values due to their esthetic value.

FROM THE CHAIR

(Continued from page 2)

for several years (and still am) prior to accepting the Chair of the Group. I did so because I was interested in conservation and environmental matters that affected Harford County. Being a Sierra Club member, and an ExCom member as well, enabled me to have a stronger voice and bring greater strength to other like-minded conservation, environmental, ecological and community groups interested in bringing meaningful force on local political leaders' decisions concerning Land Use Master Plans and Comprehensive Rezoning Reviews.

Each person on the ExCom is there from some area of expertise and interest. Most of us wear several hats so-to-speak! I also am a MD Chapter ExCom member and Conservation Committee member and locally I fill in as the Energy Chair. In short, although it may appear that our ExCom should take on all appropriate issues that come to us (we do try), it just can't work that way because there aren't enough of us.

This is a primary reason that we solicit for volunteers from our membership to be proactive in issues we know about and we encourage all to bring issues forward to the ExCom. But, if the issues are important enough to bring forward, their importance should signify a commitment of time and effort from the presenter also. The ExCom will assist to the greatest extent possible with approval of projects; funding as indicated, appropriate and permitted; and helping to find volunteers. BUT, the ExCom function itself is not for the ExCom members to take on each project that comes forth! WE are too small to do so! We need the membership at large to be proactive in conducting projects that serve the Sierra Club's mission! I hope this serves to clarify! Please contact me for further information or comment if it does not!

Cheers,
Ron Henry



Recognition of Green Schools and Green Centers

Are your community schools recognized as "Green Schools"? Since 1999, the Maryland Green School Awards Program, administered by the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE), has recognized public and private pre K-12 schools, in order to promote an integrated approach to environmental education. Nature centers and other organizations may apply for recognition as "Green Centers."

As of 2005, 112 Green Schools and 10 Green Centers statewide have achieved this recognition, including 36 Green Schools and 4 Green Centers in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Harford County. Baltimore County, with 19 Green Schools, has the most of any jurisdiction.

Green School and Green Center awards are non-competitive and are intended to recognize the school's or organization's accomplishments over a two-year period. Applications are

accepted each spring. In late spring, an annual awards ceremony and reception recognizes newly awarded Green Schools and Green Centers. The recognition must be renewed every three years. Applications are available online at www.maeoe.org. The MAEOE website also provides information about the program, the annual conference, workshops, etc.

Applicants for the Maryland Green School recognition must complete an application to document how they have met the following requirements over the past two years:

*Use their school site and curricular instruction to prepare students to understand and act on current and future environmental challenges facing all Marylanders--integration of environmental issue instruction in curriculum and instruction, professional development, and celebration

*Demonstrate environmental best management practices (BMPs) in building and landscape design, maintenance, and operation--water conservation and pollution prevention, energy conservation, solid waste reduction, habitat restoration, structures for

environmental learning, responsible transportation, and healthy school environment

*Build and sustain partnerships with the local community to enhance environmental learning and to design and implement projects and programs that result in a healthier environment--by being active in the community or bringing the community to the school

Applicants as Green Centers complete an application to demonstrate how they model conservation best management practices, support environmental education, champion the Maryland Green School concept, and provide assistance for potential and existing Maryland Green Schools. According to Steve Heacock, Coordinator of the Environmental and Outdoor Education program for Carroll County Public Schools, his program applied as a Green Center to receive recognition in the community and beyond for its work and the work of participating students and to set an example for others. The program intends to assist the Carroll County Schools and others in "being Green."

Campaign 2006 (Continued from page 1)

Also, providing potable water for such a large development may result in saltwater in-trusion into the local wells.

* Proposed Terrapin Run development in Allegany County—Providing water for this large development will be a problem, since wells and streams already run dry in the area. A racetrack was approved for the same valley.

* Need for adequate funding to monitor water systems and stream resources—The monitoring systems must be able to keep up, in order to get a handle on the status of the water supply. Development should not be approved without assuring adequate water supply. The Maryland Department of the Environment issues permits to drill wells without seeing whether water is there.

* Need to limit impervious surfaces (roads, parking lots, and other paved surfaces such as playgrounds)—Such surfaces cause rainwater to run off and create problems, rather than soaking into the ground for ground water recharge to provide moisture for plants and crops and to restock wells and aquifers.

* Invasive plants—Trees are being pulled down and smothered along the water sheds by climbing vines and other types of invasive species. Although Baltimore City has a weed warriors program to help eradicate invasive plants, Baltimore and Harford Counties do not have such programs. Road and park maintenance staff should help with the eradication. Nurseries should be prevented from selling invasive plants, which “escape” from back-

yards and rapidly spread along roadsides and through woodlands and watersheds. The State law to prevent “noxious” species from going to seed should be enforced.

* Management of marine resources focused on exploitation by commercial fisheries rather than encouraging enhancement and abundance as a resource for everyone. The economic value of fisheries for recreation and tourism is far greater than its value for commercial fishermen.

* Goal of forestry plans is to make money rather than conservation—The economic value from recreational use of forests far exceeds the economic worth of logging.

* “Standing to Sue” – meaning whether community and environmental organizations are given the right to contest or appeal adverse decisions in court, such as related to non-enforced environmental laws, improper zoning, and development decisions.

* Other local issues—development, Smart Growth, zoning, transportation—Land use master plans should be enforced through the zoning code. Development should be contained in areas planned with the adequate public services (roads, sewer, water, schools).

Important questions for State and/or local political candidates include:

* How would you work with developers to improve/maintain water quality?

* How would you create financial incentives for “green” buildings?

* What do you feel the government should do to eradicate invasive species and stop nurseries from selling invasive plants?

* Do you support the constitutional amendment that will be on the November ballot concerning Program Open Space, which would prevent the Governor from selling public parkland with out the legislature’s approval?

* Will you support the restoration of adequate funding for management and staffing of the State parks, fisheries management, monitoring of the water supply, and soil conservation?

* What is your position on the proposed developments next to Blackwater Wildlife Refuge in Dorchester County and

Terrapin Run in Allegany County?

* What is your position on the Maryland Healthy Air Act passed by the legislature this year?

* What is the current recycling level in your area and what will you do about it?

* What do you see as the most intelligent planned center in your jurisdiction?

* How do you feel about enforcement of your jurisdiction’s master plan?

* What do you plan to do to protect agriculture, which is now being squeezed out by sprawl?

* What is your position on public financing of campaigns at the State level? Local level?

* What will you do to minimize further growth of the State’s population?

* What will you do to limit sprawl?

* What will you do to protect water resources?

* Do you support Smart Growth?

* What will you do to prevent transfer of development rights to farmland and to protect agriculture and environmentally sensitive land from development?

* Do you support an agriculture preservation district and down-zoning of farm land?

* What will you do to protect water sources and watersheds, groundwater and surface water?

* What will you do to prevent contamination of well water by the gasoline additive MTBE?

* What is your position on the proposed site for a liquid natural gas terminal?

* What will you do to encourage the planting of trees and expanding the tree canopy?

* What is your position on the proposed Red Line?

* What is your position on Transit Oriented Development?

* What are your positions on other transit issues (bus restructuring, trolley proposal, etc.)?

* What is your position on the concept of a regionally funded and controlled transit agency?

* What is your position on funding for implementation of Baltimore City Master Bike Plan?

* What is your position on funding for implementation of Baltimore County Pedestrian & Bicycle Access Plan?



Sparrows Point (Continued from page 1)

safety/security issues. The project may also impact the fisheries in Baltimore County, due to dredging required for the channels to accommodate the tankers that will be the length of several football fields.

On April 4, 2006, AES obtained permission from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to begin the first phase of the process, the pre-filing review process. During this phase, which will take 6 to 8 months, FERC staff will work with federal, State and local agencies to identify issues and develop the necessary analytical documentation to fully assess the proposed project’s potential impacts. AES will be re-

quired to complete numerous studies intended to address all of the important issues relating to the proposed project, including potential impacts on safety and security, the environment, public health, land use, property values, and waterway users, and historic sites. This pre-filing phase is intended to identify and address issues before AES submits its formal application for project approval to FERC. Then, the second phase will take approximately another year to complete.

AES has stated that they will continue providing information to community organizations and other stakeholders over and above the requirements of the pre-filing process.

During April and May, AES held six public “open house” meetings in Maryland and Pennsylvania to provide information about the proposed terminal and pipeline. The company sent more than 1,700 letters to property owners within a half-mile on each side of the proposed pipeline, notifying them of the project.

Various elected officials oppose the proposal, including Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski, Rep. C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger, Baltimore County Executive James T. Smith Jr., and Baltimore County Council Chairman John A. Olszewski Sr.

Under the company’s plan, shipments of super-chilled liquefied natural gas would arrive at the Spar-

rows Point terminal by tanker and be discharged into three storage tanks at the facility. The substance would be transformed into gas and pumped through an underground pipeline to Pennsylvania, where it would be distributed through the Colonial pipeline along the East Coast. AES says that 90 percent of the pipeline, to run through Baltimore and Harford Counties and end about 30 miles west of Philadelphia, would be within the rights-of-way for other utilities.

I will continue to review any documentation, attend appropriate meetings, and keep you updated in future newsletters.

New Master Plan for Baltimore City

By Mary C. Corddy

Between February and April, nine public hearings were held on Baltimore City's first Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) in over 30 years. The plan is called Live · Earn · Plan · Learn: A Business Plan for a World Class City 2007-2012. It is organized around those four themes and the goal to become a world-class city.

According to the City's fact sheet for the CMP, "There has been no formal and holistic direction for land-use, economic development, education enhancement and quality of life initiatives." The last zoning plan was issued in 1968 and updated in 1971. At a public hearing, Otis Rolley, III, Director of Planning, describes the current plan as "obsolete, complex, and confusing" and that "you need an attorney to understand it."

The Baltimore City Planning Commission and its staff at the Planning Department developed the CMP as a business plan, not as just an urban planning document. This six-year plan is action-oriented for use as a policy guide to decision-making about economic development, land use, zoning, and capital investment for numerous aspects of city life--parks, recreation, housing, transportation, education, employment, and quality of life. It analyzes present and future trends in population, land use, housing, recreation, tourism, and job growth. Over 100 specific strategies are presented for coordinating and leveraging the City's investment, policy, and programming to maximize economic opportunity and quality of life for all citizens. The CMP provides the blueprint for spending the \$2.4 billion capital budget from city, State, and federal sources between 2007 and 2012. Also, it paves the way for an overhaul of the City's zoning code over the next two years. Director Rolley said that the City "now has over 90 urban renewal plans as band-aids for what should exist in zoning codes."

The public hearings on the new plan

were held in each of the City's nine planning districts, to generate comments about needs and concerns from all concerned parties—neighborhood residents, business owners, nonprofit agencies, etc. Publicity about the hearings asks, "Are you part of the plan to make BaltiMORE than ever?"

The Planning Commission's adoption hearing on the plan was held on April 20. Then, the plan was submitted to the City Council, which will have one or more public hearings. If the plan is adopted by the City Council (possibly in June or July) and signed by the Mayor, it becomes law.

The planning process began in 1997 when the Fannie Mae Foundation and Annie E. Casey Foundation partnered with the City to support outreach efforts for public input. More than 2,000 citizens attended a dozen meetings and workshops. A draft PlanBaltimore was released for public comment in April 1999, but the plan was not formally adopted. It provided framework and policy recommendations for making Baltimore a World-Class City. The new plan adds flesh to that framework by proposing implementation strategies and discrete, attainable goals.

The City's population has leveled off after five decades of decline. There is great growth potential. Since the City has housing and infrastructure for a population of 1 million, but currently has about 642,000 residents, the City's goal is to "comfortably absorb" 172,200 new residents. Therefore, the City is participating with other Baltimore Metropolitan Area counties to plan and develop a marketing strategy for new residents who will come into region as a result of the Pentagon's base realignment and closure process (BRAC). Within the next six years, the State is expected to gain about 40,000 to 60,000 private and public defense-sector jobs, concentrated at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Harford County and Fort Meade in Anne Arundel County. The Area is planning for how to accommodate these new residents

with housing, schools, transportation, and other infrastructure.

The LIVE section of the CMP presents the strategy for retaining current residents and attracting new residents. It highlights the potential for growth and increased investment beyond those neighborhoods that are already experiencing renovation, rehabilitation, and new development. The goals are to strengthen neighborhoods, elevate the design and quality of the city's built environment, and improve transportation access and choice. The City has unique and diverse architecture, but much of the housing was built for the working class. The need is emphasized for moderately priced, quality housing to attract and retain diverse households.

The EARN section presents strategies to meet employment needs of residents and local businesses and to cultivate six growth sectors—health care and social assistance; bioscience; business services; construction; computer, internet, and data and software-related services; and hospitality and tourism. The plan examines increasing residents' labor force participation by training and connecting them with jobs. To encourage biotech and other job opportunities, tracts of land will be established for commercial or industrial development near transportation centers. The zoning code and capital budget will be retooled to better meet market demands.

The PLAY section of the CMP highlights strategies to increase funding for parks and recreation in order to increase the attractiveness of the City's natural resources and open spaces. It proposes strategies to make the City's rich cultural, historical, entertainment, nightlife, recreational, and natural amenities accessible to more residents in the Baltimore region, and to introduce these resources to visitors, as part of the vision of a 24-hour world-class city. In 2004, 15.76 million tourists visited the City, more than Disney World, but most only stayed for the day. The City has many historical districts and landmarks, as well as more than

7,000 acres of parks at over 400 different properties. A lot of valuable open space was bought with public open space funding.

Peter Auchincloss, President of the Baltimore Planning Commission, stated at a public hearing that they "thought green in this plan and spent a lot of time on trails and greenways."

There are three objectives for the Plan's goal to increase the attractiveness of Baltimore's natural resources and open space:

1: Maintain a well-managed system of parks and open spaces

- *Locate funding sources for the \$60 million of deferred maintenance for the City's parks and cultural assets

- *Create a zoning designation for parks and open space to replace the current residential zoning, so that green space and open space will not be used for other purposes

- *Improve park stewardship and safety by expanding and enhancing the 34 partnerships with private organizations

2: Protect and enhance the natural habitat and environmental resources

- *Establish a forestry management plan and urban tree canopy goals, to increase the number of trees and tree canopy size

- *Install 10 trash interceptors at storm drain outfalls over three years, to catch trash washed off the streets before it enters streams and the Harbor

- *Reduce trash in parks, neighborhoods, streets, and open space

- *Restore and protect all floodplains and stream valleys

- *Complete the Greenway trail system by completing the Jones Falls and Herring Run Greenway Trails and connecting them to the Inner Harbor Promenade

3: Ensure public access to the waterfront

- *Complete the Harbor Promenade and Middle Branch park/trail systems, to extend from Canton Crossing to the Museum of Industry

(Continued on page 10)

