



DEB'S DISTRICT UPDATE

Deb Jung • District Four

February-March 2023

Greetings

It is Women's History Month and as a life-long advocate for women's rights, it is important to me to mark events of historical significance to women. Two recent occasions fall into that category: one is of national significance, the other is right here on the local level but has ties to the first.

On March 4, I served as a judge for History Day, sponsored by the Howard County Public School System. Two female Chinese-American students presented their projects on the historical figure of Anna May Wong. I learned that Anna May Wong, a second-generation Chinese-American, was one of the first Asian-American female actors in Hollywood in the 1920s during a time when Caucasians were often cast to play stereotypical Asian roles. The two students focused on Anna May Wong's efforts to gain a foothold in the film industry and to break barriers for Asian actors.

Fast forward more than 100 years and two related and remarkable events have occurred in the past year: Anna May Wong has earned a place on our quarter coin, and, the first Asian woman, Michelle Yeoh, won an Oscar for best actress on Sunday night.

Upon hearing about Michelle Yeoh's Oscar win, I thought back to the palpable pride both young women had when describing Anna May Wong's fight for recognition as an Asian-American actor and her recent selection to be on the US quarter. I hope when these two students learned of Michelle Yeoh's Oscar, they were just as proud and celebrated the breaking of another barrier.

So to Michelle Yeoh and the students who were inspired by Anna Mae Wong's accomplishments and verve, happy Women's History Month; may we all continue to tell HerStory.

Deb

Council Updates

Library Investigation

On February 14, the Auditor released a report about an investigation into the misuse of funds by the Library. Click [here](#) to read the updated report.

In response to the original report, Councilmembers Dr. Jones and Rigby issued a statement calling for the Auditor to be fired.

I received many emails from constituents stating support for the auditor, support for firing the auditor, and general confusion. I also received requests that I should issue my own statement on the matter. Before honoring those requests, I wanted to report to the public any and all remedies that have occurred to date or are ongoing that address the communities' concerns.

I have been informed that the following actions have been taken or are underway:

- The Auditor has issued an apology to the private group mentioned in the report and to the Howard County African American Roundtable. His written apology has also been shared with all five of the Councilmembers. I, too, apologize for the hurt caused to the community.
- The Auditor's office is scheduled for its three-year peer review after the Covid

pandemic pause with the Association of Local Government Auditors (ALGA). The Auditor explained to me that a peer review provides assurance that an audit organization is following established policies and procedures and applicable auditing standards, including ethical practices.

- The Auditor's Office will receive implicit bias training from the County's Office of Human Rights and Equity and sensitivity training from a private consultant who can offer more individualized attention. It is my belief that this investment in diverse perspectives will positively benefit the Auditor's Office.

Investigations feel like an assault. They cause embarrassment regardless of the merit of the allegation or the reputation of the investigated. Most investigations by the Auditor deal with government or government-affiliated entities that know the rules and the consequences. Previous investigations have dealt with infractions ranging from purposeful to accidental. In one case the infraction was a deliberate act of human kindness for a terminally ill employee. The rules are inflexible even in the face of suffering.

In the Library matter, the allegation was that a public facility was closed early for a private

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Council Updates

Library Investigation (continued)

event, which is against the organization's policy and deprives the public access to a public facility. Investigations like this are solely focused on public resources and only the direct recipients of those resources are responsible for the decisions or are the subject of the investigation and, in this case, the private group was not investigated.

I understand the communities' outrage and hurt at the original report. That report used racially insensitive language when describing the reasons for concluding that sufficient evidence existed to support the anonymous tip.

The report included the name of the group holding the event and by doing so unfairly implicated them in the investigation that they knew nothing about. I have communicated these grievances to the Auditor and he recognizes the hurt it has caused the community. I have also spoken with the group's president and we discussed the situation.

Following up on their public statement, Councilmembers Dr. Jones and Rigby late-filed CB11. See the following page for a description of the bill.

Upcoming Council Meetings

- March 20, 7pm — Public Hearing
- March 22, 6:30pm — General Plan Work Session
- March 27, 9:30am — Work Session
- March 29, 9:30am — General Plan Work Session
- April 3, 7pm — Legislative Session

April Budget Sessions

- April 17, 6:30pm — County Executive's Budget Presentation to the County Council
- April 18, 6pm — Preliminary Public Hearing, Capital Budget Education & General County
- April 19, 9:30am — Capital Budget Work Session #1
- April 21, 9:30am — Capital Budget Work Session #2
- April 24, 6pm — Public Hearing, Education
- April 26, 9:30am — Capital Budget Work Session #3



Council Updates

CB11 Revoking the Independence of the Office of the Auditor

This bill is sponsored by Councilmembers Dr. Jones and Rigby. It strips the Auditor's Office of the industry standards of independence and freedom from outside influence by requiring the Auditor to meet with the Council in a Closed Meeting to discuss the following parameters on reviews or investigations:

- Allegations to be reviewed or audited and any known facts;
- Rationale for the review or audit;
- The administering of oaths;
- Audit standards to govern the review or audit and how the review or audit would meet the standards;
- Timeline of the review or audit;
- A list of witnesses that will be interviewed;
- A list of records or other materials being sought by the County Auditor in connection with the review or audit; and
- Other information the Council may require.

According to Councilmember Rigby, the intent of the bill is to "allow the County Council to be fully informed of the work plan and any results or conclusions without interfering with the work or influencing conclusions."

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) publishes a professional standards book known as the "Yellow Book," which contains examples of circumstances that create undue influence (described as "threats") over an auditor or audit organization. Enabling an outside authority to review an auditors' work product creates the opportunity to exert inappropriate influence over the auditor or the content of the report. Independence and neutrality are the cornerstones of the auditor's role in government and actions that diminish this are considered incompatible with Federal government auditing standards.

CB11 would be classified as a threat under the GAO's auditing standards since it requires the Auditor to disclose information about work in progress. It is designed to enable the Council to directly influence the Auditor's work and potentially derail any review that could involve those with personal connections to the Councilmembers. The bill shields these activities from the public in a meeting behind closed doors.

It is unlikely that any auditing organization in the Country is subject to the requirements proposed by CB11.

Current legislation: click [here](#).

Sign up to testify: click [here](#).

Council Updates

FEBRUARY & JANUARY LEGISLATION

February's legislation was introduced on February 6 and was voted on March 6. January legislation was introduced on January 3.

COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S LEGISLATION

CR33 Solar PILOT Chaberton Solar Lime Kiln LLC is seeking a tax abatement on both real and personal property taxes for the construction of a community solar project at 11959 Lime Kiln Road, Fulton. Solar arrays will occupy 14.5 acres of the farm and will generate two megawatts of electricity; the property is not in agricultural preservation. *Passed*

CR34 Solar PILOT Community Power Group is seeking personal and property tax abatements for a community solar project at 14777 Roxbury Road, Glenelg. Solar arrays will occupy six acres and generate 1.5 megawatts. *Passed as Amended*

CR35 & CR36 Solar PILOT Chaberton Solar and St. Mary Coptic Orthodox Church are seeking personal and property tax abatements for a community solar project on 13 acres that will generate two megawatts of power. A companion project will construct solar arrays on four acres and generate 0.5 megawatts for an aggregate net metering project, for one primary subscriber. *Passed*

Solar providers receiving PILOTs will receive higher tax abatements if they have 50% or

District 4 Appointments

I am very thankful for the service that my two recent appointees from District 4 will be providing to our County:

- Lynn Foehrkolb to the Board of Appeals (CR9, passed)
- Beth Johnson to the Alcoholic Beverage Hearing Board (CR42, introduced in March)



more subscribership in Howard County. This was an amendment that I put in place with previous solar PILOTs to ensure that Howard County taxpayers receive economic benefits from green energy initiatives.

CB1 Agricultural Land Tax Credit Automatic Renewal This bill allows qualifying participants in the State and County's agricultural preservation program to receive the tax credit in perpetuity. *Passed*

CB3 Expanding Clean Energy Loan Program Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) provides financing for clean energy construction. The bill updates the modifications made by the General Assembly that increase minimum loan amounts to \$50,000 and add environmental remediation and water efficiency projects. *Passed*

Council Updates

COUNCILMEMBER'S LEGISLATION

CB4 Transportation Services Network Fund

This bill adds a \$0.25 tax on trips for rideshare services, such as Uber and Lyft. I sponsored a successful amendment to require funds to be used for transit Capital projects or zero-emission vehicles. *Christiana Rigby; Passed as Amended*

CB5 All Electric Buildings - Building Code Report

This bill requires a report recommending changes to the building code to enact all-electric standards for new construction, major renovations, and additions. I sponsored a successful amendment (Amendment 13) that focused on environmental justice and climate goals. See page 3 for a table of amendments. *Christiana Rigby; Passed as Amended*

CB6 (ZRA 203) Age-Restricted Housing to Office Transition Zoning District Demeril Plaza on Old Frederick Road submitted a Zoning Regulation Amendment petition to add age-restricted housing as a matter of right in the low-density commercial zoning district of

Office Transition (OT). There is currently only one OT-district but it is a floating zone that can be applied to other properties. Age-restricted housing is allowed by right in Business Local (B-1) and Planned Office Research (POR). It is a conditional use in Rural Residential, Rural Conservation, and Planned Golf Course Community. The petitioner has contributed \$1500 to the Calvin Ball Team, per the campaign contributions disclosure. I voted against this bill for the reasons stated above and such a zoning change is more appropriate for Comprehensive rezoning, which will occur very soon. *Passed*

Zoning Board Updates

Rules Rewrite A public hearing for the adopted Rules of Procedure occurred on March 1, 7pm. The Board also held a meeting to discuss amendments on March 15.

Click [here](#) for more.

A resolution (CR49) adopting the new Rules of Procedure was introduced in March.

M A R C H 1 S
WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



Council Update: CB5 Amendments

Amendment #	Sponsor	Description	Outcome
AM1	CR	Defines “Net Zero Energy” and offer recommendations for net-zero energy standards for County buildings. “NET ZERO ENERGY” MEANS THAT 100% OF THE OPERATIONAL ENERGY USE ASSOCIATED WITH A PROJECT IS OFFSET BY NEW ON-SITE RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY, AND IF THE MAXIMUM ON-SITE RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY IS INADEQUATE TO FULLY OFFSET THE OPERATIONAL ENERGY USE, OPERATIONAL ENERGY USE IS OFFSET BY USING OFF-SITE RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY”	Passed
AM2	CR	Requires an inventory of county buildings and their energy sources	Passed
AM3	DY	Removes types of construction from report’s recommendations. RECOMMEND CHANGES TO THE BUILDING CODE NECESSARY TO ENACT ALL ELECTRIC BUILDING STANDARDS FOR ALL NEW CONSTRUCTION, MAJOR RENOVATIONS, AND ADDITIONS;	Failed
AM4	DY	Clarifies that “combustion equipment” doesn’t mean fireplace, outdoor grill, or generator powered by gas or oil. Calls for the evaluation of exemptions for fireplaces, outdoor grills, or generators.	Failed
AM5	DY	Includes system capacity in the report evaluations. Adds the findings and recommendations of the State Building Codes Administration’s report to our report. Sets the report deadline 90 days after state report released.	Passed
Am1: Am 5	OJ	Changes the date to 30 days after the State report.	Passed
AM6	LW	Requires recommendations on achieving climate goals of Executive Order 12-2022.	Passed
AM7	LW	Requires recommendations on amending permitting and approval standards for non-renewable energy infrastructure to align with our climate goals.	Failed
AM8	LW	Requires recommendations on using Infrastructure investment and Jobs Act and Inflation Reduction Act to reduce emissions.	Passed
AM9	LW	Requires recommendations on incentives for net-zero energy, passive house design standards, heating and cooling energy consumption, primary energy source, airtightness, and air quality.	Failed
AM10	LW	Requires recommendations on rebates on renewable energy appliance replacements for low and middle income residents.	Passed
AM11	LW	Makes the County Executive responsible for the report to the County Council. Also makes clarifications that the report will provide an evaluation of exemptions.	Passed
AM13	DJ	Requires the report to make recommendations on stretch codes that provide flexibility in exceeding State minimum standards. Also asks for an evaluation of electric resistance heating units typically used to reduce construction costs in affordable housing projects but increases operating costs for the consumer.	Passed

FY24 Budget

Planning Board Meeting

The Planning Board approved the following new and changed Capital projects on February 16. Review of Capital projects that meet these criteria are part of the preparation process for each fiscal year's Budget.

Click [here](#) for more.

County Projects

C0369 Centennial Park Maintenance Building Replacement The building was constructed 40 years ago and is not ADA accessible, energy efficient, or meeting capacity needs. The total project cost is under \$10 million. The project will consider a new access road to Route 108.

C0370 Route 1 Corridor Safe Streets Starting in 2024, a shared-use pathway along Route 1 will be constructed with intersection improvements, medians, roadside landscaping, and lighting. There has been a recent increase in pedestrian and cyclist accidents on Route 1. The project will receive \$8 million in grant funding and \$2 million from FY23 set aside.

K5070 Dobbin Road Shared Use Path The project was created from K5066 and will improve connectivity along Dobbin Road.

N3980 Elkhorn Park This 10-acre site was acquired through a land swap with HCPSS. A feasibility study will be conducted. There are plans for pickleball, volleyball, pavilions, and

playgrounds but no no plans for sports fields.

N3981 Ilchester Park and Recreation Center

The former Camp Ilchester will receive funding in FY24. The Planning Board requested consideration of non-vehicular access to the site and permeable paving materials.

School Renovations & Additions

- **E1058 and E1059 Renovations and Roofing** These are routine school projects with new identification numbers.
- **E1060 Faulkner Ridge Regional Learning Center** This site will be renovated for use as a full-day PreK. Funding starts in FY29. The site may be available to community groups after the school day. There are no current plans for a Boys & Girls club.
- **E1061 Murray Hill MS Renovation/Addition**
- **E1062 Applied Research Laboratory Renovation**
- **E1063 Thomas Viaduct MS Addition**



FY24 Budget: School Construction Projects

School	CE Pass-Thru Request 9/19/22	HCPSS IAC Request (CR189-22)		CE Pass-Thru Request 2/14/23	FY24 Capital Budget Planning Board Review	
	FY24 Funding Proposal	Funding Request	Funding Year	FY24 Funding Proposal	FY24 Funding	Funding Year
Oakland Mills MS renovation/addition		\$4.4 m	FY 2024			
Dunloggin MS renovation/addition		\$4.4 m	FY 2024			
Systemic Renovations	\$3.3 m	\$42.2 m	FY 2024		\$42.4 m	
Oakland Mills HS renovation/addition	\$9.975 m	\$10.19 m	FY2026			
New ES (Turf Valley)		\$4.46 m	FY2028			
Centennial HS renovation/addition		\$9.8 million	FY2029			
Faulkner Ridge Regional Learning Ctr	\$21.725 m	\$2.6 m	FY2029	\$22m	\$0	2029
ARL renovations				\$12m	\$0	2033
Murray Hill MS renovation/addition					\$0	2031
Thomas Viaduct MS addition					\$0	2030

Tackling HCPSS’s school capacity needs is always a focus of the County’s Capital Budget. Last year, the State appropriated \$35 million in pass-through funds for school construction to be used at the discretion of the County Executive. The County Executive wrote two letters identifying preferred schools projects and funding levels (CE Pass-Thru Request columns). Every year, HCPSS submits its funding request to the State’s Interagency Committee on School Construction (IAC) for the upcoming fiscal year and future five to 10 years (see HCPSS IAC Request column). The Planning Board reviews and recommends certain capital projects from the County Executive (see FY24 Capital Budget Planning Board review column).

FY24 Budget

D4 BUDGET REQUEST

I presented the following FY24 Budget requests to the County Executive on January 30.

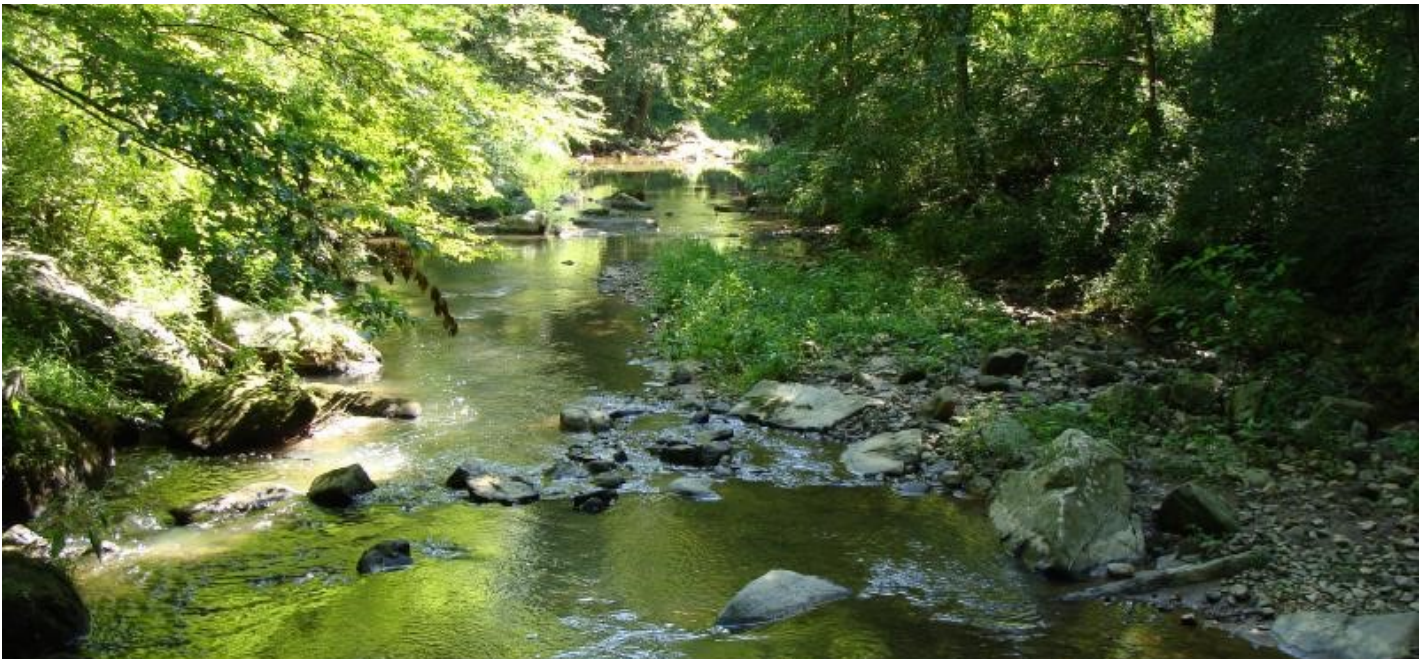
Stormwater Projects & Capital Infrastructure

- Fund the rehabilitation of Faulkner Ridge into a regional pre-kindergarten center and Boys and Girls Club/community center.
- Fund Capital Project W8336, which would address aging water mains in the Longfellow area. Include Green Streets rain garden and bioretention features to capture stormwater runoff at the source level.
- Increase incentives for improving stormwater management on commercial property to avoid destructive stream restoration.
- Install a Wayfinding sign for the Wilde Lake Middle School Trail at the intersection of Little Patuxent Parkway and Faculty Drive near the old Columbia Flier Building.

- Collaborate with the Columbia Association for technical assistance for the Wilde Lake-Beaverbrook Stream Restoration project, including Green Streets source mitigation.

Resident Services

- Increase funding to the Citizens Election Fund (CEF) as requested by the CEF Commission and new State legislation.
- Match State grants and Columbia Association's contribution towards funding an elevator in the Historic Oakland Manor.
- Support micro-transit services through NeighborRide or other nonprofits to connect seniors to cultural/social events.
- Invest in a public library to serve the Maple Lawn-River Hill communities.
- Increase funding for non-profit organizations that receive Medicaid reimbursements in order to meet minimum wage requirements and a tighter labor market.



One of D4's many waterways that need increased protection from unmanaged stormwater runoff

FY24 Budget

Housing

- Fund a robust rental assistance program through the Housing Opportunities Trust fund to offset the unsustainable increases in rental rates in Downtown Columbia and beyond.
- Re-engineer the County's homebuying program so that home purchases result in building of equity and generational wealth.
- Fund additional counselors for the Housing Commission's tenant outreach program to aid families needing wrap-around services.

Transit, Transportation & Road Safety

- Fully staff the newly created Traffic Enforcement Division of the Police Department. The majority of constituent complaints I receive deal with speeding and unsafe driving along Maple Lawn Boulevard, Eliots Oak Road, Great Star Drive and State highways, to name a few.
- Pursue a State commitment and fund a County match for sound barriers along Route 32 from Route 29 to Route 108. This area is already dealing with overhead plane noise and should be provided some relief from surface car noise produced from this expanded highway.
- Implement the Hickory Ridge Bike Corridor improvements with priority given to Hickory Ridge Road east of Martin Road including the Broken Land Parkway intersection.
- Increase multi-modal improvements for Cedar Lane from Route 32 to all the way to Harpers Farm Road.

- Improve multi-modal connections from Owen Brown Road east of the Martin Road circle to connect the Clemens Crossing neighborhood west of Martin Road. There are approximately 200 households in this area that would benefit from a safe pedestrian and cycling connection.

Below are requests received last year that would benefit from continued attention:

- Improved walkability and transit links, including crosswalks and sidewalks around the Columbia Mall.
- Continue to fund deferred school maintenance at the highest level possible.
- Fund the renovation of the Rose Price House next door to the Howard County Center of African American Culture.



FY24 BUDGET CALENDAR

County Council Hearings & Worksessions
Click [here](#) for more.

Climate Action

More About Heat Pumps

As we move towards all-electric homes, there has been debate about the capabilities of heat pumps to provide affordable and efficient heat in sub-freezing temperatures. According to research by the Department of Energy, heat pumps do become less efficient as temperatures drop and there is less heat in the outside air for its extraction process. But modern heat pumps are able to heat homes better than electric furnaces or space heaters. In Northeastern climates where homes have traditionally been heated by gas or oil, recent pilot programs are incentivizing homeowner's adoption of electric heat.

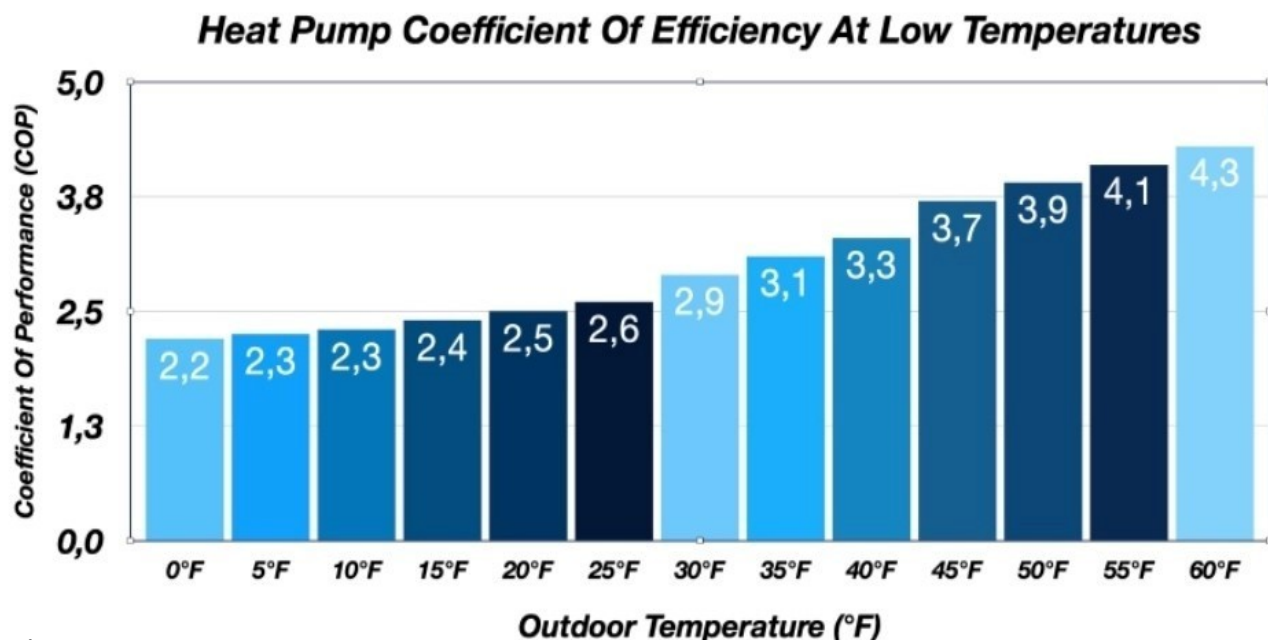
Click [here](#) for *New York Times* coverage of increasing heat pump sales.

Inflation Reduction Act: Home Energy Incentives

This Federal climate action law includes tax credits, rebates, and programs to help households pay for energy efficiency upgrades, electric vehicles, electric heating and cooling systems, and certain electric appliances. Click [here](#) for more.

BGE Grid Updates

BGE has filed its second multi-year energy infrastructure investment plan with the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC). The plan details how BGE will invest nearly \$2.3 billion annually (from 2024 to 2026) in the electric grid and natural gas system in order to enhance reliability, safety, and resiliency for its 1.3 million electric customers and 700,000 natural gas customers in central Maryland.



Source learnmetrics.com

BWI Noise Updates

FAA NextGen Advisory Committee Meeting

For the past two years, I have testified at the annual FAA NextGen Advisory Committee to urge the FAA to consider the harmful effects of the NextGen navigational system on residents underneath the concentrated flight paths. This year's testimony follows:



February 28, 2023

Dear Members of the NextGen Advisory Committee:

My name is Deb Jung, and I am the District 4 Councilmember for the Howard County Council in Maryland, as well as the County Council's representative on the BWI Roundtable, a volunteer position that I have held for more than four years. I came before this group last August to express the frustrations that the hundreds of thousands of people feel from the noise generated at all hours of the day and night by the "NextGen superhighway in the sky" emanating from BWI-Marshall airport.

Since I was last here, a state-funded study titled "Projecting the Health and Economic Burden of Aircraft Noise," authored by Dr. Zafar Zafari and Jeong-eun Park at the University of Maryland's School of Pharmacy, calculated that the health costs suffered by communities living under the concentrated flight paths at BWI-Marshall airport would be more than \$40 million per year over the next 30 years. These public health costs (based on hospitalizations, medical care, and lessening of life outcomes) significantly impacts the industry's economic advantages to the region and warrants immediate noise mitigation.

These health concerns and associated costs have not been a part of the conversation at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) or at this public meeting. Yet there are millions of people nationwide who, through a variety of Roundtables, are pleading with this agency, the airlines, and associated industries to reexamine the technology, flight paths, and flight procedures and to take into account the health and well-being of all of the residents in this country who live under NextGen flight paths.

Unfortunately, I am in the position where I have to repeat my ask from the last meeting when I addressed you: Please take all steps possible to speed up the PBN process, not only at BWI-Marshall airport but throughout the country. The BWI Roundtable has been engaged in this process for five years. We sent our request for technical changes to the FAA in December 2019. It is now February 2023, more than three years since we submitted the Roundtable's PBN. We are the first in the nation to get to this point and if this process is what other Roundtables should expect, then the system for addressing the noise problem is not working. We all need to work together to keep our passengers and airline employees safe, support the business of flying people and cargo throughout the country, and protect the health of the people who live under Next Gen flight paths.

Keeping up with Deb



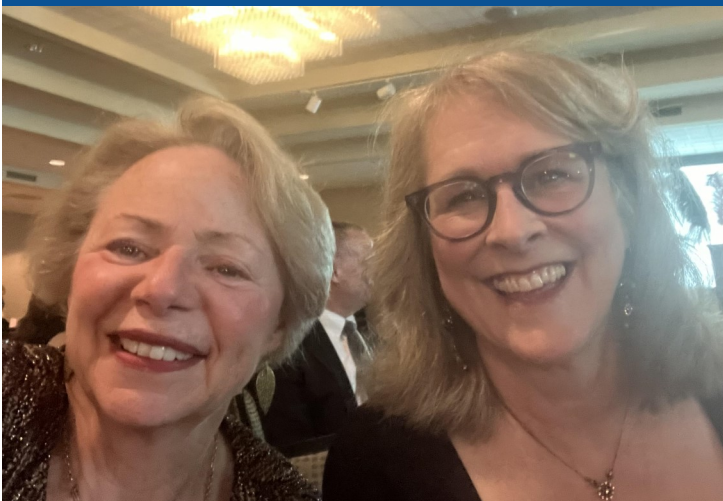
Howard County Center of African American Cultural



Evening at the Stacks

Palestine & Israel Discussion

MLK Day of Service



Howard County Autism Gala

County Updates

HoCo By Design

The draft recommendations for the General Plan, HoCo By Design is now complete and will be submitted to the County Council in the spring of 2023. Click [here](#) for more.

HoCo By Design will now go through the Planning Board on its way to the County Council where it will be submitted as legislation.

- Planning Board Public Hearing: March 9, 7pm; click [here](#) for more. The Department of Planning and Zoning Staff Report on the plan can be found [here](#).

A Vision for Columbia

In January 2021, The Columbia Association reviewed “planning principles and practices applicable to redevelopment, reinvestment, and preservation of mature master planned communities, as well as the constraints and impacts of municipal regulations, private covenants, and market forces” in the Columbia Planning and Visioning document. Click [here](#).

DPZ Digest: Stay in touch with DPZ’s current and upcoming news and initiatives.

- Click [here](#) to sign up for the newsletter.
- Click [here](#) for the latest newsletter.

Zoning Regulation Amendments (ZRA): ZRA petitions are submitted to DPZ, reviewed by the Planning Board, and then filed as Council bills. Click [here](#) for a list of current ZRAs.

Highlights include:

Housing Vision Plan: Balance Downtown Village Center redevelopment, non-village parcels, and commercial corridor redevelopment to identify the best fit for new housing.

Village Center Focus Area Plans: Village centers should be regenerated with housing solutions at an appropriate scale and density.

Housing with Multi-Use Redevelopment: Columbia Gateway and Dobbin-Snowden area should be pursued for housing opportunities.

Low Income Housing Distribution: This housing is too concentrated in several villages and should be de-centralized across Columbia and Howard County.

Equitable Student Distribution: Social equity and clustering of high FARM student populations should be addressed in future housing strategies.

DPZ Notify: Access pre-submission meetings, capital budget hearings, and other planning-related initiatives. Click [here](#).



School Updates

School Start Times

I am disappointed to report that the Board of Education (BOE) voted unanimously to start high schools at 8am instead of the science-supported 8.30am or later. Click [here](#) for more.

High School #13 Naming

On February 9, the BOE voted unanimously to name the new high school Guilford Park High School. Click [here](#) for more.

FY2024 HCPSS Budget

Capital: Click [here](#) for more.

Operating Budget: Click [here](#) for more.

The Howard County Board of Education unanimously adopted the Operating and Capital Budget Requests. Click [here](#) for more.

FY2022 School Activity Funds Report

On February 9, the BOE received the annual report of school activity funds. Activity funds are used by schools to cover field trips, staff appreciation, athletics, clubs, class activities, and more. Click [here](#) for the full report.

HCPSS Donations Report

The BOE reviews donations reports listing monetary awards to schools exceeding \$500. Here's a snapshot of donations for District 4 schools approved by the BOE on February 23:

- River Hill HS: RHHS Boosters, weight room equipment to support the athletics program, \$1500

- Wilde Lake HS: Handy Information Solutions, t-shirts for staff appreciation, \$3,149.14

HCPSS publishes an annual report summarizing the fundraising and donations activity for each school. The FY2022 Fundraising and Donations Activity Report was presented to the Board of Education on February 23. Click [here](#) for more.

Psychologist of the Year

Congratulations to the Howard County School Psychologist of the Year, Dr. Chandra McKnight-Dean, a Wilde Lake High School psychologist. She was also recognized by the Howard County School Psychologists Associations for excelling in each area of the National Association of School Psychologists Practice Model. Click [here](#) for more.



Community Updates

Tax Preparation Assistance

On-site tax preparation is available for free at the County's 50+ centers. Make an appointment by calling 443-741-2372.

- Bain: Mon, Tues, Wed & Friday, 9am-2pm
- East Columbia: Tues, 2-6pm & Thurs, 1-6pm
- Elkridge: Wed, 10am-4pm
- Ellicott City: Mon & Fri, 9am-3pm
- Glenwood: Mon & Thurs, 9am-2pm
- North Laurel: Tues & Thurs, 11am-4pm

COVID Utilities Protections Expiring

Starting April 1, many of the COVID-related deadline extensions and supports put in place to assist households dealing with income challenges and outstanding utilities bills are going away. Customers will now have only 14 days to resolve their bill after a turn-off notice. Payment plans will now require a down payment.

Community Action Council Requests

- **Diaper Drive:** Community Action Council (CAC) is inviting Howard County residents to donate diapers and wipes to their food bank location. Virtual donations are also accepted. Click [here](#) for more.
- **SNAP Benefits:** On March 1, recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) will lose the emergency allotment that was authorized in response to the pandemic. SNAP recipients may also see a decrease in benefits as cost-of-living adjustments are made to Social Security. Most households will experience a net gain but

some might lose their food assistance if the Social Security increase disqualifies them from the SNAP income eligibility. With increased food costs, CAC is inviting Howard County residents to contribute to the County's Food Bank. Click [here](#) for more.

Tax Credits for Homeowners & Renters

Deadline October 1

The Homeowners' Tax Credit sets a limit on the amount of property taxes any homeowner must pay based upon their income. It is recommended to apply for the credit by April 15 so that credits can be deducted before the initial July tax bill.

The Renters' Tax Credit provides tax credits for renters based upon the relationship between rent and income. Under specified conditions, the renter may receive a credit of as much as \$1,000.

- Click [here](#) for the Homeowners' Tax Credit
- Click [here](#) for the Renters' Tax Credit



Community Updates



Operation Clean Sweep: Litter Clean Up

MDOT SHA teams are picking up litter along highly traveled areas of I-95, I-70, Route 29, Route 32, Route 100, Route 1, and other state roadways. MDOT SHA plans to purchase additional mowing equipment and develop contract resources to enable increased mowing and litter removal. The Adopt-a-Highway program is

also available to help keep Maryland beautiful; call the Dayton Shop at 410-531-5533 for more. Report litter [here](#).

Route 108 Construction Update

As of February 1, 65% of the project is complete. A traffic switch was completed last month on MD 108. The southern portion of Route 108 east of the intersection is closed to traffic so crews can construct a median. Traffic coming out of Beaverbrook Road is temporarily reduced from two lanes to one until spring. A base level of asphalt was paved on along with wedge paving along the shoulder. Drainage work on the western side of the project is complete. Work continues on the median of Centennial Lane. There will be frequent lane closures with a flagging operation on eastbound Route 108. Click [here](#) for more.

Care App

The Health Department has a new portal that connects County residents with community programs and services for food, health, housing, education and more. Click [here](#) for more.

Home Repair Program

Howard County homeowners may be eligible for loans to assist with home repairs, including system upgrades to meet code requirements as well as some cosmetic projects. Click [here](#) for more.

Parenting little ones is hard. We can help.

A Howard County Family Support Center is opening August 2023!

9790 Patuxent Woods Drive, Columbia 21046

► Family-Centered and Community-Based Programming

SCAN ME
Explore the possibilities!



Leading Maryland's Family Support Centers



MARYLAND FAMILY NETWORK



Howard County
Office of Children and Families

children@howardcountymd.gov • 410-313-CARE (2273)

Upcoming Events

The Columbia Orchestra: Symphonic Pops

March 18, 7.30pm

Jim Rouse Theater

Cinema's most celebrated music will grace the Sym-

phonic band and feature vocals by the versatile and accomplished Shaun Mykals. Click

[here](#) for more.

Shaun Mykals, vocalist



Slayton House

Click [here](#) for more.

- **Cantare Latin American Music**

March 23, 10am

Rainbow Theater presents music programs for preschoolers and their guardians.

- **Bernice Kish Gallery Talks**

March 15

Marcie Wolf-Hubbard discusses her pandemic inspired art, including views of the world from her window.

- **Summer Theater Camp**

June, July, & August

Sessions feature The Lion King organized by the Columbia Center for Theatrical Arts and the popular Schoolhouse Theater Arts.

Rep Stage: Falsettos

April 27-May 14

Horowitz Center, HCC

William Finn and James Lapine's Tony Award-



MERRIWEATHER PARK
AT SYMPHONY WOODS

April 2023 Schedule

April 22, 5 pm	MARYLAND WINDS
April 23, 12 - 5 pm	DOWNTOWN COLUMBIA MAKER FAIRE
April 29, 11 am - 6 pm	JAZZ IN THE WOODS
April 30, 12 - 4 pm	HOLI FESTIVAL

www.innerarbortrust.org

winning musical premiered on Broadway 30 years ago and follows a gay man's journey from the early 1980s to the early days of AIDS crisis. Click [here](#) for more.

Wine in the Woods

May 20 & May 21

Symphony Woods

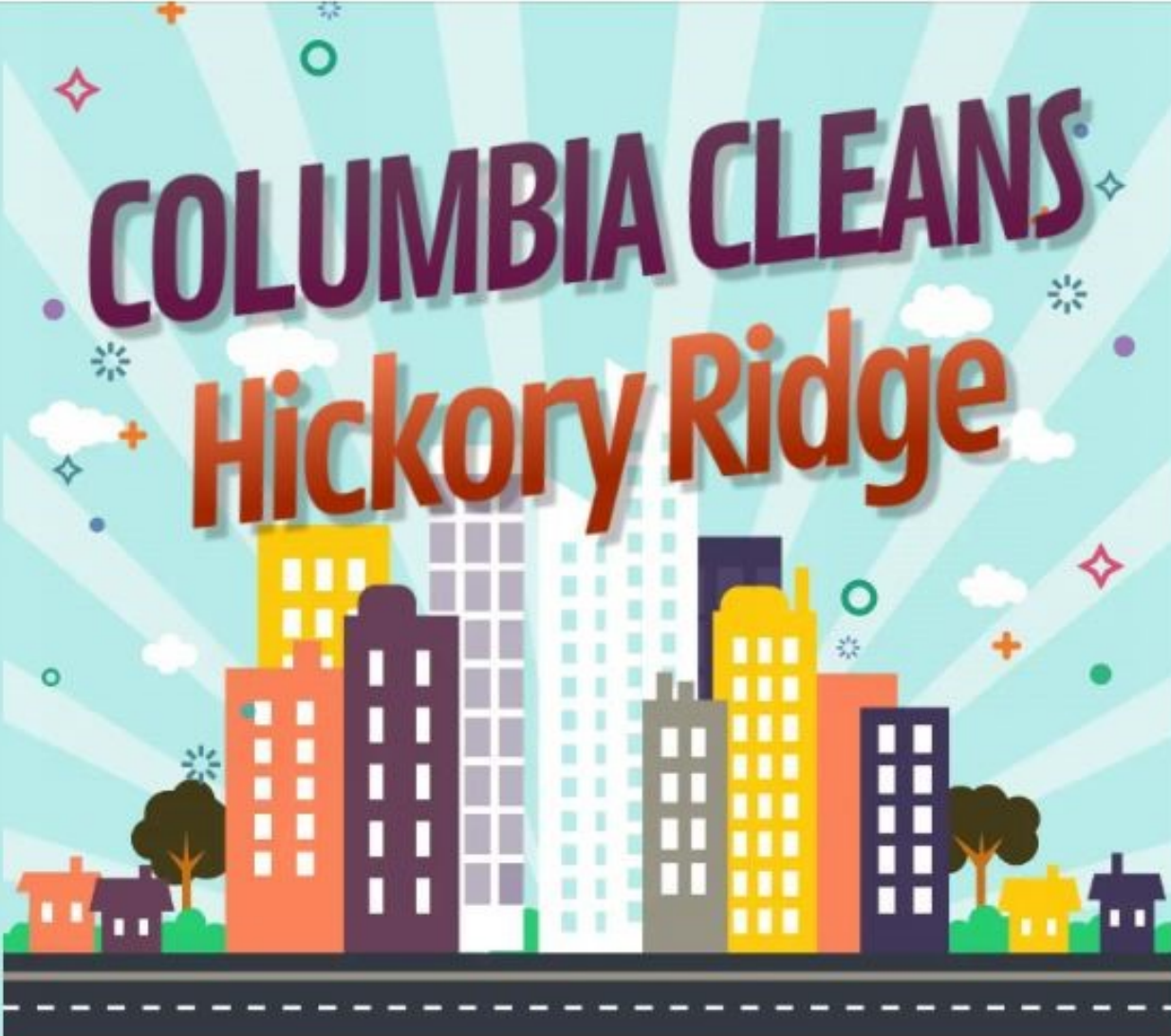
The Department of Recreation & Parks will host its annual event with an even bigger and better Explorer Village. Click [here](#) for more.

Lakefest: Columbia Festival of the Arts

June 16-18

Summer is right around the corner if you wish hard enough, so is Lakefest.

Upcoming Events




COLUMBIA CLEANS Hickory Ridge

Meet at the entrance of the CA pathway off of Quarterstaff Road
next to Cleamens Crossing Elementary School

Neighborhood Cleanup
Everyone is Welcome-you do not need to be a resident of Hickory Ridge to attend
Supplies & Continental Breakfast Provided

Saturday, March 25 9-11am

For more information or to register, please email
events@hickoryridgevillage.org



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