

Green Space

A publication of Greater Sandy Spring Green Space, Inc.

Volume 2 Number 2

July 2000

Letter from the President - John Chirtea

**Summer is here, and the fields are green,
Let's keep them that way, if you know what I
mean.**

**Green Space is working on saving the land,
And your Board of Directors deserve a big
hand.**

**The hours are long, and the pay's not too fat,
But to keep open spaces, we'll go to the mat.**

**Development won't stop, but we can have a say,
That good communities can happen in more
than one way.**

**So we'll continue to work with each builder in
town,
Keeping a minimum number of trees from
coming down.**

Well! If you promise to work with us finding new opportunities for preserving open space in our community, I'll promise to give up poetry! We have enjoyed the chance to work on three of the largest new communities in our area: Ashton Preserve, Dellabrook, and Bancroft. GSSGS continues to have input on the development plans for each of these properties. We are now beginning to target specific properties in the greater Sandy Spring area on which conservation easements can be placed.

You will hear more about these efforts in future newsletters. Perhaps you know of a specific property which the owner might be interested in preserving as open space. GSSGS can work with land owners to achieve this objective. Please call us if you know of any properties that you would like to see remain in open space, and we'll go to work getting the job done. We appreciate your continuing

ADVISOR

Green Space Represented on Legacy Open Space 2000 Advisory Board.—Beth Brent

Green Space Board President **John Chirtea**, and Secretary **Aleen Starkweather** were recently appointed to serve on the Advisory Group for the Functional Master Plan for Montgomery County's **Legacy Open Space Program**. John Chirtea was named co-chair along with Royce Hanson of Montgomery Village. The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) program will receive 33.1 million in county funds over the next 6 years for the purposes of:

- Safeguarding thousands of acres of high quality forests,

- wetlands and scenic corridors.
- Protecting historic sites, including early Quaker sites, Underground Railroad sites and farming communities.
- Assisting farmers to maintain agricultural uses on at-risk farmland.
- Connecting new and existing open spaces to form a 100 mile "ribbon of green" from the Potomac River to the Northwest Branch to the Patuxent River.
- Contributing to the protection of water supplies by reducing development on thousands of acres of land in the Patuxent River Watershed.
- Creating "green boulevards" by

- adding trees and other foliage alongside major county roads.
- Reclaiming closed school sites for use as neighborhood parks.
- Planning for a new mid-county regional park.

The Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan will establish the process and criteria for selecting and prioritizing the acquisition of properties or easements in areas of exceptional value for protection of natural resources, water supply, heritage resources, farmland, trail connections and urban open space in Montgomery County. Sandy Spring is home to several of the targeted conservation areas, top among these being Quaker and Underground Railroad sites. (cont. on p. 2)

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About the *Green Space Advisor*

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Greater Sandy Spring Green Space, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)3 corporation, established in 1997 to promote the preservation, protection and balanced use of natural and historical resources in Eastern Montgomery County through public education and the placement of conservation easements.

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Editor
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The Board of Directors meets at 7:30 pm the last Tuesday of each month at our 3rd floor offices above Garcia's Service Center (next door to Sandy Spring Museum). All are welcome.

ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

—Aleen Starkweather

Our first annual meeting of the twenty-first century was held on March 28 at the Sandy Spring Museum. Michael Ma from MNCPPC gave an entertaining presentation about the planned "Rural Legacy Trail" which we are all hoping to see come to fruition. As part of the trail, Winchester Homes is putting in a bridge over the stream, and they are waiting to commence development of the trail until they get the details of the bridge worked out. Michael Ma has developed some very effective computerized graphics to illustrate his talk – those in attendance thoroughly enjoyed his presentation.

The following directors were re-elected to new 3 year terms: John Chirtea, Tony Cohen, Barry Newton, Richard Rismiller, Jean Snyder, and Alan Wright. A new member, Roger Wolcott, was elected. The Board has staggered terms with 1/3 of the Board coming up for election every year. Dick Rismiller chaired the nominating committee.

President John Chirtea introduced our new executive director, Beth Brent, and she reported that our 1999 year end fundraising campaign netted over \$30,000. We now have Board Committees: Executive, Program, Finance, and Membership. We are in the process of establishing guidelines for identifying, processing and stewarding properties that are candidates for potential conservation easements. As we move into the year 2000, special emphasis will be placed on membership development and services.

John Chirtea presented the newly completed Walking Tour Map and Brochure, thanking those who contributed to it becoming the beautiful and useful resource that it is. Those present happily received copies. See the related article in this newsletter for more details.

Everyone is invited to our Board meetings the last Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. and our next annual meeting on March 27, 2001, at 7:30 p.m. Come to our 3rd floor offices above Garcia's Service Center (next door to Sandy Spring Museum). Put it on your calendar!

NEW YOUTH MEMBERSHIP

Young people of today will become the land stewards of tomorrow. In this spirit we now offer two new membership categories: A \$10 annual membership category for students and youths over age 12, and a \$3 membership category for youths under age 12. We hope that you will encourage the young people in your life to give to the community through their Green Space membership. More details will be forthcoming as we further develop our membership categories. Please use the enclosed remittance envelope to secure your membership today!

*(GSSGS on Legacy 2000 Board cont
from p. 1)*

Relying on a mix of public and private funding to be spent over a six year period, initial support will come from County general obligation and park bonds, and approximately 30% of future revenue will be solicited from corporations, state and federal agencies and private gifts.

For more information including dates of upcoming meetings and/ or a copy of the Phase I report, contact Mary Dolan at the Montgomery County Regional Office, Information Center: 301-495-4552 or los@mncppc.state.md.us.

News from the Executive Director: Beth Brent

Along with the warm winds of summer, May and June brought with them an opportunity for me to attend two trainings and the Mid-Atlantic Land Trust Conference.

You will notice in this issue of the Green Space Advisor a remittance envelope. This is a product of my attendance at a three day Land Trust Alliance fundraising workshop. The workshop was a tremendous opportunity to learn from professional fundraisers and colleagues new ways of building mutually beneficial relationships between Green Space and the constituency we serve—YOU. Fundraising is in large part about communicating with your constituency—keeping them informed about the work you are doing, and providing opportunities for individuals to contribute.

A Green Space member attending our March annual meeting asked why we weren't soliciting more memberships given the importance of our work—he expressed a belief that most people would want to be involved with preserving the community's invaluable natural and historic resources. I absolutely agree.

We are in the process of accomplishing several initiatives which will improve membership

outreach and enhance member services. Top on the list is updating our communication pieces to include producing a quarterly newsletter, updating our informational brochure, and developing a member outreach package. We are also looking for the pro-bono services of a graphic designer to develop a Green Space logo, and do layout and design for the brochure.

Essential to any membership organization is a functional database. Board member Barry Newton is diligently working to institutionalize our database so that we can more effectively engage in outreach activities. The second training, attended by both Barry and me, focused on database management using a software product called e-base. E-base is a free database product initially developed for use by environmental organizations for tracking members, volunteers, donors, etc. For more information about e-base go to <http://www.ebase.org>.

You can be of great service to our membership development effort by contacting me with the names and addresses of potential new members, and joining yourself if you are not already a member. The Mid-Atlantic Land Trust Conference was an opportunity to

network with other land trust professionals, and learn from experts in the field. I attended workshops on negotiating land conservation transactions, the future of conservation easements, working with local governments, Governor Glendening's Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation initiative, green infrastructure, farming forestry and ecology, and mapping using computer generated models.

I came away from these trainings impressed with the knowledge, skill and dedication of those working on land conservation, but more importantly, moved by the palpable presence of the spiritual foundation from which land trust professionals are doing their work. At a time when we are losing over 3.2 million acres of farmland and wildlands a year to development, the parallel growth in the number of land trusts in the U.S. from 132 in 1965 to over 1,000 today is not surprising. I feel humbled to be a part of this historic movement, and encourage full community participation in the shaping of what we hope to be a GREEN legacy.



TREE FREE PAPER

The paper you are holding contains real seaweed reclaimed from Italy's Venice Lagoon. Removing the seaweed helps to restore a natural habitat for the lagoon's marine life. Once harvested, the seaweed is dried and then mixed into the paper pulp. Prego. Prego. Please contact us with suggestions of other ways we can contribute to conserving the earth's limited natural resources.

MID ATLANTIC LAND TRUST CONFERENCE

By Aleen Starkweather

On May 19 and 20 there was a Land Trust Conference in Shepherdstown, WV, which I, and our Director, Beth Brent, attended. It was nice to learn what other land trusts are doing, particularly the Piedmont Environmental Council. Their director led the Membership workshop I attended. To quote: "...advocacy work can only be successful when supported by a membership base...membership is incredibly important to land trusts that work on a community-wide basis to protect landscape, or a county."

The workshop that I was most impressed with refreshed the knowledge of why we are in existence, why we have membership. It was on Green Infrastructure and Greenways. This workshop, and the keynote speaker of the conference, stressed that we must look at the larger picture of Infrastructure. We have long-range transportation plans, airport, sewage, storm-water, growing community plans – but do we have plans to preserve the life-sustaining natural infrastructure? The network of open space, woodlands, wildlife habitat, parks and other natural areas sustains clean air, water, and natural resources and enriches our citizens' quality of life. Today people are coming to realize that green space is a basic community necessity and it should be planned and developed as an integrated system.

Landscape fragmentation is one of the results of haphazard planning. We need landscape linkages, large protected natural areas that connect existing parks, preserves our natural areas and provide sufficient space for native plants and animals to flourish while serving as corridors connecting ecosystems and landscapes. Landscape linkages can also provide space for the protection of historic sites and opportunities for human use such as hiking. We have the potential for a greenway right here in Sandy Spring with the development of the Rural Legacy Trail. We are working with MNCPPC on the development of this.

Noted in the Planning Commissioners Journal/Winter 2000, in an article by Edward McMahon on 'Green Infrastructure:' "Montgomery County, Maryland, has just proposed a 10 year, \$100 million initiative to complete a county-wide network of open space comprised of protected farmland, stream valley parks, ecological reserves, trail corridors, and green space preserves." MNCPPC has formed a new Legacy Open Space Advisory Group and our President, John Chirtea, has been appointed co-chairman of this group along with Royce Hanson, former Planning Director. I will serve on the committee also. Exciting things are happening in our area, won't you come and join us?

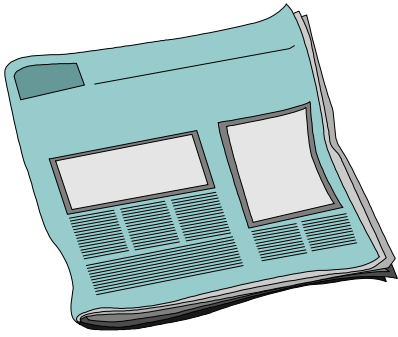
BANCROFT DEVELOPMENT

—John Chirtea

The latest proposed development in the Sandy Spring area is the 44 unit Bancroft project at the corner of Doctor Bird and Norwood Roads. The developer, Mitchell Best, has met with the Board of Directors of GSSGS, as well as with a number of community organizations to explain their development plan. The plan has gone through a number of changes from the original submission as Mitchell Best has attempted to meet the concerns of the State, the County and the local community. The project will have approximately 70% of its area remaining in open space.

The major issue confronting the property relates to the improvements to Doctor Bird Road as it runs south. The County's Department of Transportation is requiring a widening of Norwood Road, which unfortunately leads to the removal of a significant amount of the hedgerow along the roadway. The Sandy Spring/Ashton Master Plan was very specific in calling for development in this area to be done in a manner to preserve the rural character of the community. The "arterial" designation given to this road in the Master Plan might require certain improvements that are in conflict with the basic premise of maintaining the rural character of the community. GSSGS's board has given comments to the County urging restraint in requiring improvements to Norwood Road. We will continue to work with the County, the developer, and other community groups in monitoring this project as it moves forward.

GREEN SPACE



IN

THE

NEWS!

Sandy Spring's Legacy Trail Halfway to Becoming Reality

Michael Ma, a lead planner for the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) outlined the MNCPPC's steady progress in creating the Rural Legacy Trail at the annual meeting of Greater Sandy Spring Green Space, Inc. "The Trail will run between Woodlawn Manor, located off Norwood Rd., north to an undetermined ending point in Sandy Spring." The dirt trail will be 4 feet wide with two-foot shoulders on either side... A wooden bridge will cross the stream that runs between Sandy Spring Friends School and the Hoffman property.

April 5, 2000---The Olney Gazette

"Support for Open Space Strong in County Council"

GSSGS President John Chirtea spoke at the Montgomery County Council meeting in support of the Legacy Open Space Program, and distributed copies of our new Sandy Spring Legacy Trail brochure to council members.

Feb. 8, 2000. The Olney Gazette.

"State to Fund Regional Park—Sandy Spring Venture Opens Recreation Space"

"A new, 46-acre regional park preserving open green space in Sandy Spring won state funding last week. The State Board of Public Works granted \$463,807 to purchase three properties... directly located behind Sherwood High School and running south to Norwood Road."

"A local land conservation group, Greater Sandy Spring Green Space, Inc. was instrumental in getting (a commitment to have) the historic site (the Sandy Spring) transferred to the museum and getting the park established..."

February 16, 2000 -- The Olney Gazette.

Background: Green Space will eventually hold a conservation easement on approximately 50 acres of the park to include an easement on the one acre of land surrounding the Spring. Much of the parkland will remain active agricultural land complementing the Rural Legacy trail that will wind along the perimeter of existing fields.

Background: Winchester Homes will give Green Space a conservation easement on approximately 50 acres of farmland through which the Trail runs. Green Space continues to work with Park and Planning to complete the Trail project.

Free Walking Map Highlights Scenic Historic Treasures

"Last week, it (GSSGS) unveiled the Sandy Spring Walking Tour Map of nearly 40 historic sites...The non-profit land and heritage preservation group hopes to open some eyes to the type of rural landscape it is fighting to protect since forming two years ago."

April 5, 2000—The Olney Gazette

GREEN SPACE WISH LIST: Can You Help?

Computer hard drive and monitor

Computer printer

Scanner

Services of a graphic artist to design a logo and brochure

Green Space Advisor

Greater Sandy Spring Green Space, Inc.
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WALKING TOUR MAP NOW AVAILABLE

The much admired Walking Tour Map of Sandy Spring is now available at the following locations: The Sandy Spring Museum, Friends House, Montgomery County Tourism Office, Cricket Bookstore, Olney Library, Olney Chamber of Commerce, The Trust for Historic Preservation, One Swanky Shop, and the Montgomery County Historical Society. You can also call us at 301-260-8860 and request that a copy be mailed to you.

Needless to say, the response to the map and self guided tour has been overwhelmingly positive. Although the project was funded in part by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, The Historical Preservation Commission of Montgomery County, and local realtor IKO Companies, producing the map would not have been possible without the financial support of many individuals like you. In addition to thanking you for your loyal support, we encourage you to use the enclosed remittance envelope to renew your support of Greater Sandy Spring Green Space. THANK YOU!