



# Green Space Advisor

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## Message From The President: Bobby Berg

A box of notes left behind by Don McCandless taught me about the beginning of Greater Sandy Spring Green Space. (See the article in this issue about Don.) In 1997, citizens in Sandy Spring were alarmed by the pending development of 300 acres off Meeting House Road south of Route 108. That summer, Anita Virkus, Marie Ferington, Don McCandless, John Chirtea, and others organized a meeting that brought in state and county elected officials (including Ike Leggett), representatives of local civic and religious groups, and speakers from the Maryland Open Space program, the Maryland Environmental Trust, and the county planning department. There was hope that, with help from the state's Rural Legacy Program, the acres in question could be kept entirely rural through an outright purchase. That hope later proved to be out of reach, but the option of acting through a land trust became reality by the end of the year. The result was limited, clustered development and a series of conservation easements placed on parcels that are now part of

Ashton Preserve, Auburn Village, and county parkland.

John Chirtea served 10 years as president of Greater Sandy Spring Green Space, Inc. He had many good ideas, an enthusiasm that never wavered, and a network of contacts that seemed to me magical in its effectiveness. After John's move to Delaware, your land trust has not only survived, it has prevailed in its mission of preserving open space in eastern Montgomery County. See the article in this issue about the conservation easement pending on Batchellors Forest Road in Olney.

John correctly emphasized the importance of a large, active board of directors. If you managed to read this far, you clearly have energy and an interest in our mission, and I urge you to contact Joli McCathran about attending one of our board meetings. The board meets one Tuesday evening each month.

## Executive Director's Report 2010: Joli A. McCathran

You are invited to attend our Annual Meeting on March 23, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. in the Miller Center at Friend House. Everyone is welcome – members and non-members alike. In fact, this is a great opportunity for us to meet and for you to learn more about the important work of Greater Sandy Spring Green Space. Please see the information about this event

in the Advisor and consider this your personal invitation to attend. We hope to see you at this fun and enlightening event.

Our work is never done! We have the responsibility of monitoring easements held by Greater Sandy Spring Green Space, and, in continuing our mission, to seek out more easements in the greater Sandy

Spring Green area. It takes many people for this organization to succeed. I am grateful to the dedicated Board of Directors and to members who help with their support.

We also are pleased to work with other organizations including the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Land Trust Alliance, and the Olney Chamber of Commerce. Our web site has a list of

additional organizations with whom we are associated. I invite you to visit our web site at: [www.sandyspringgreenspace.org](http://www.sandyspringgreenspace.org) to learn more.

Thanks to all of you for helping us to work together to make Greater Sandy Spring Green Space a viable entity in our community and for making our community a wonderful place to live, work, and visit.

**Greater Sandy Spring Green Space  
Annual Meeting  
March 23, 2010 @ 7:30 pm**

**Speaker: Dr. M. Irvil Kear**  
**Title: From the Canon Envirothon to Saving Resources**  
**Place: Miller Center, Friends House**  
**17340 Norwood Road, Sandy Spring**

Please clear your calendars and join us at the Miller Center on the evening of the 23<sup>rd</sup> to hear Dr. Kear speak about her experience with the Canon Envirothon where she served as the Massachusetts State Envirothon Coordinator in 1995. The Canon Envirothon is a non-profit organization established to provide an environmental education program for high school students throughout North America. The environmental education program consists of the annual Canon Envirothon Competition in which winning teams from participating states and Canadian provinces compete for recognition and scholarships by demonstrating their knowledge of environmental science and natural resource management. The competition focuses on four universal testing categories (soils/land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, and wildlife) and a current environmental issue. Dr. Kear has been a judge for the Canon envirothon on four occasions and has volunteered at six Canon envirothons. This year, she will participate as an associate member of the State (Pennsylvania) Committee. Dr. Kear will share with us her experiences with these high school students, share some of their ideas, and give us a sense of how these ideas may apply to our local area.

For more information about the topic, please visit: [www.CanonEnvirothon.org](http://www.CanonEnvirothon.org).

As further background for our speaker, Dr. Kear has been a lifetime educator, teaching English since 1961. She holds advanced degrees in Education (MS) from University of Maine and English (DA) from Idaho State University. Her other employment opportunities have included working for Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts, and Oregon State University's Office of International Agriculture (now O.I.R.D.), which supported Agricultural Development Support Programs in Sana'a, Yemen Arab Republic.

# A Pending Conservation Easement For Green Space

Bobby Berg

Development happens even during a recession, and last July the Montgomery County Planning Board approved the site plan for Oxbridge's "Batchellors Forest" residential development. This new neighborhood, which will be located on Batchellors Forest Road across from Farquhar Middle School in Olney, will have 32 single-family houses and 5 townhouses. The property is zoned RNC (Rural Neighborhood Cluster), which means that about two thirds must be set aside as open space. The conservation easement for the 65 acres of open space will be held jointly by the county and Greater Sandy Spring Green Space, Inc.

At the planning board hearing, four advantages were cited for a third-party conservation easement, specifically with Greater Sandy Spring Green Space: (1) The easement could be adapted more efficiently to the property's features. (2) It would ensure periodic monitoring for compliance with the

terms of the easement (as we do already for our other easements). (3) Greater Sandy Spring Green Space would automatically have standing to contest in court any violation of the easement. (This assumes that discussions with the violator fail to resolve the matter, of course.) (4) A third-party easement would assure potential house buyers and their neighbors that the easement would survive future turnovers of the county council and the planning board.

This will be the first conservation easement jointly held by Greater Sandy Spring Green Space. The advantage for us is assistance from the county in the unlikely event of a court challenge. The advantage for the county is assistance in monitoring the property; at present, the county lacks resources for comprehensive monitoring of its thousands of easements.



## Olney Farmers and Artists Market

Sharon Dooley

Janet Terry had a vision for a farmers market in Olney which became a reality. After visiting an outdoor market in Charleston, South Carolina, she decided that a similar entity would work in Olney. She brought the idea to friends and to GOCA and got community buy-in. Many meetings were held, a fundraiser provided seed money, GOCA contributed and merchants chipped in. Together with a volunteer steering committee (*I was a member and became the Market VP*) this group of local people managed to pull this market together and launch it in October 2007. Located then in the parking lot of an Olney Shopping Center, it boasted about half a dozen produce vendors and several artists and some food vendors. All produce vendors were restricted to be among those coming from a local growing area within a radius of no more than 150 miles from the Olney area. All market shoppers and volunteers were entertained by volunteer musicians, mostly local. The market incorporated as a non-profit and became an Olney institution in short order.

During the interim – the local members pulled in the community for a Local Flavor fundraiser held at Sandy Spring Friends School with other nearby interests such as the Sandy Spring Museum and garden club, among others. Again this initiative was successful and the Market moved toward its first full season. The next year, opening in May for a full season of 27 weeks, the complement of farmers, artists and food vendors increased and a children's tent was added where children could do crafts safely as their parents shopped. Several produce vendors now touted their certified organic produce and the variety included goat cheese and added chefs demonstrations. Some of the chef's vendors actually included candidates from the popular TV Show, Top Chefs contests as well as others from local restaurants. The local Roots Market also brought demonstrators to showcase local produce organically grown.

The 2009 season has just concluded and it was the most successful ever – showcasing over 30 plus vendors weekly with thousands of visitors for the full 27 week run. A donation from the Sandy Spring CSA helped launch the season and led to the opening ceremony which featured County Executive Ike Leggett and honored Robert True of Ashton. New food and produce vendors and superb artists were there weekly under the colorful tents that have become the market trademark. Janet Terry is still the Market Master and is now known as an authority on locally grown produce. This year the Market partnered with Project Change and networked with the Manna Food Bank. Leftover produce donated by vendors and collections by Project Change youth volunteers added to the thousands of pounds of necessary fresh food transported to Manna each week.

The Market also allows non-profits to have a tent presence on a one-time basis each year to promote their efforts. Greater Sandy Spring Green Space, Sherwood High School Artists, and Friends of the Library have all taken advantage of this free opportunity. Volunteer musicians have continued to make the Market a real happening place on Sunday mornings in Olney.

Now the Market has a problem for the new season due to start in May of 2010; it has lost its parking lot location due to the remodeling and the new construction of the Freeman Shopping Center it had called home. Currently an application for special exception is before Montgomery County that will allow the Market to operate under the trees next to the Montgomery General Thrift Shop at Route 108 and Prince Philip Drive in Olney. Montgomery General, a Med Star Hospital, is promoting wellness and healthy eating and has generously offered to help the Market and promote these healthy eating initiatives. As of this writing, those of us who have been involved with the Market from the beginning are hopeful that this initiative is successful.

After the Shopping Center construction is completed in the summer of 2011, it is hoped that the Olney Farmers and Artists Market will relocate to

the Shopping Center where it will complement the Harris Teeter Market and other new ventures.

## **Rustic Roads Are A Special Local Feature In The Greater Sandy Spring Area**

Green Space Board member, Robin Ziek, was appointed by our county executive to sit on the Rustic Roads Advisory Board in 2009. This is a three-year appointment, and provides us an additional opportunity to support our rural character, as mentioned so often in the Master Plan. The RRAB reviews proposed changes within the right-of-way to designated rustic roads, and can also comment about viewsheds, which provide on-road visitors views across special landscapes.

Several roads in our area are already designated as "Rustic," including parts of Tucker Lane, Howard Chapel Road, and Zion Road. Most recently, Bentley Road has been recognized as qualifying for this classification because of the three associated historic properties and the rural character of the road. In an upcoming amendment to the County's transportation master plan, Bentley Road will be among several proposed for formal recognition as "Rustic."

## **Sandy Spring Rallies To Support Future With Rural Village Character**

The County Council responded quickly to local concerns after several large institutional and big-box businesses suggested they could fit into our small village center! As always, Marilyn Praisner quickly understood the fact that our Master Plan failed to adequately define appropriately scaled businesses for our Rural Village, and she proposed a Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) in 2008. After her untimely death, her husband took up the banner and when he passed away, Councilman Marc Elrich sponsored the proposed legislation. Similar legislation is considered all the time, in recognition that Master Plans are "broad brush" in approach, and

that there may be something special about particular sites or areas, as noted by Councilman Leventhal during the public hearing last April. The legislation passed and became effective on October 27, 2009 as Ordinance No: 16-40. The community strongly supports economic development in the village center, but stands behind the rural village concept for small and personal businesses that bring jobs and new friends into Sandy Spring. Greater Sandy Spring Green Space was specifically incorporated to provide a way of preserving our rural character, and the amended Master Plan has been strengthened towards this goal.

### **Don McCandless**

Don McCandless, a founding member of Greater Sandy Spring Green Space, Inc., died June 6, 2009. Don was an active member of the board, and we could rely on him both for enthusiasm about our cause of preserving open space and for warnings about not paying attention to the details of real estate.

Most of the board members knew that Don had lived in Sandy Spring for a long time (since 1980), that he had worked as a real estate appraiser, and that he was active in issues of land use. For example, Don had also served on the advisory committee for the Montgomery County Heritage Area. However, some of us did not learn about his love of singing until at his memorial service. Don sang with a variety of choral groups, including the Rockville Chorus, the Choral Arts Society of Washington, and the DC Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society. The barbershop group gave a moving performance at Don's service.

We miss Don. He is survived by his daughter, Marjorie Siegelman of Germantown, a son, David McCandless of Nantucket, MA, seven grandchildren, and one great-grandson.

**Green Space Advisor  
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**Greater Sandy Spring Green Space  
Board of Directors**

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**ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE INSIDE!**

**[www.sandyspringgreenspace.org](http://www.sandyspringgreenspace.org)**