



## *Protecting our Rural Legacy*

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December 7, 2013

Dear Member of the Sugarloaf Community,

Warm greetings of the season from Sugarloaf Citizens' Association! 2013 has seen both significant achievements and significant challenges for the Ag Reserve.

In January, over 250 area farmers, stakeholders and policymakers attended the two-day Farming at Metro's Edge ("FAME") conference to identify the factors necessary to maintain and develop agricultural activity in the Ag Reserve. Sugarloaf is proud to have helped support this event, and several of our members participated. The FAME report was issued in September and identified education--both of the county-wide public and future farmers--as one of the keys to the future of farming in the region. To this end, SCA has been exploring with Poolesville High School and County Councilmember Craig Rice the possibility of bringing Ag Education back to the curriculum of Poolesville High School.

In September, the plans of the **Global Mission Church** to build a facility in southern Frederick County and northern Montgomery County were put on hold as a result of a court ruling in which SCA participated determining that GMC's proposed emergency access road could not be built where designed. There are additional upcoming legal hurdles in this case, but until all outstanding legal issues are settled, no permits can be applied for or issued.

Sugarloaf Citizens Association also supported the efforts this year to save **Ten Mile Creek** through two ad hoc coalitions: Liveable Clarksburg Coalition and Save Ten Mile Creek. At this writing, Park and Planning made recommendations to the County Council for development at the headwaters of Ten Mile Creek in Clarksburg which have been scientifically proven to compromise our region's water supply. The County Council held public hearings on this issue on December 3 and 5, 2013, and will be holding committee work sessions in mid January.

In the area of **Zoning**, SCA has continued advocacy surrounding the ongoing County-wide **Zoning Rewrite** as it will affect the Ag Reserve. Most recently, SCA has requested a special study group for the Agricultural zoning area in the new re-write, as the current proposal would allow heavy agricultural processing facilities (such as slaughterhouses or wood milling operations) within 100 feet of existing homes "by right" rather than by applying for a special exception.

SCA continued our support of the Poolesville High School **Global Ecology Magnet Program** by again recognizing and awarding selected senior projects in May and again this year welcoming the Global junior class to learning and stewardship field trips to Linden Farm. We welcomed Montgomery County's former Planning Board Chair, Royce Hanson to our **Annual Meeting** in April; continued to monitor the construction activities and operations at the NRG Energy Inc (formerly **GenOn**) **power plant** and the production activities at the **Dickerson Composting facility**, maintained a **Newsletter** in *The Monocacy Monocle*, and managed both meetings and stewardship activities at our **Linden Farm headquarters**.

We want to welcome **YOU** to SCA to help support the policies, campaigns and legislative actions that protect the agricultural and natural potential of our area. To encourage **membership** participation, the SCA Board of Directors has established an annual membership fee of just \$15 (\$30 per couple).

Most of SCA's work is conducted with volunteer action and labor; but sometimes (as now, with Global Mission Church and strong efforts to save Ten Mile Creek) we need legal services, the testimony of expert witnesses and/or other special expertise, all of which require **significant financial support**. *This year we are making a special effort to raise additional funds to support our anticipated legal efforts in these two major areas:*

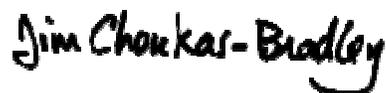
**The proposed Global Mission Church**, a building the size of the Nashville, Tennessee convention center, would be located just off the I-270/Route 109 intersection and smack in the viewshed of the Eastern overlook from Sugarloaf Mountain. With the potential of between 800 and 1500 church members on site at the same time, the impact on traffic, our sole source aquifer, a never-before-built giant sand mound septic system just next to Little Bennett Creek, and acres of new impervious surface in the watershed, would be catastrophic. *Sugarloaf has committed to the effort to prevent this inappropriate development by the Global Mission Church.*

**Proposed development in Clarksburg at the headwaters of Ten Mile Creek** threatens the viability and integrity of not only our sole source aquifer, but the area-wide drinking water supply which was established over forty years ago. **Included with this letter** is a copy of the opinion published in the November 17, 2013 *Washington Post* Metro Section, page C4, written jointly by John Menke (who served as SCA's first President in 1973), Scott Fosler and Royce Hanson. These three leaders helped establish the Seneca Reservoir 30 years ago. When you read their opinion, you will better understand the enormous implications of this proposed development in Clarksburg. *Sugarloaf has committed to the effort to protect Ten Mile Creek and our area's back-up water supply.*

This season, as we all reflect on and express our gratitude for the treasure of our Ag Reserve which we call home, **please consider making an additional tax-deductible contribution** to help support these two legal battles. SCA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization; we provide acknowledgement for all donations and comply with IRS requirements. You may use the membership form below, or now you can also **donate online** by logging on to [www.sugarloafcitizens.org](http://www.sugarloafcitizens.org), click "support" and both renew your membership and donate with a major credit card or PayPal.

As our region experiences phenomenal growth, be assured there is a strong citizens' organization dedicated to protecting the agricultural legacy of the Montgomery County Ag Reserve and the Sugarloaf region. If you have special interest in or knowledge of any of the issues we've outlined, or have other concerns, I hope you'll contact me to become involved and share your expertise. **At SCA, we welcome your input, your insights, and your involvement.**

Sincerely,



Jim Choukas-Bradley, President  
Sugarloaf Citizens' Association

### ***Sugarloaf Citizens' Association 2013-2014 Membership Contribution Form***

**NOTE: All donations postmarked by December 31<sup>st</sup> may be deducted from 2013 tax returns. Please update your contact information, and help us be "green" by providing your primary e-mail address.**

Last Name(s): _____		First Name(s): _____	
Mailing Address: _____		City: _____	State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone number(s): _____		E-mail address(es): _____	
Select Membership (check one) – Individual: _____ \$15    Couple: _____ \$30    Other: _____ x \$15			

• Please use the line below to reflect any tax-deductible donation you are including with your membership fee:  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$25    \_\_\_\_\_ \$50    \_\_\_\_\_ \$75    \_\_\_\_\_ \$100    \_\_\_\_\_ \$250    \$\_\_\_\_\_ (other tax-deductible amount) \$\_\_\_\_\_

Sugarloaf Citizens' Association is a tax-exempt organization – I.R.S. Code Sec. 501(c)(3).  
All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law