

County Councilman David Marks Fifth District Newsletter

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MESSAGE FROM COUNCILMAN MARKS: **A PLAN TO PRESERVE THE BOSLEY MANSION**

In 2016, the Presbyterian Home of Maryland announced plans to cease operations at its West Towson site. The future of the stately Bosley Mansion and its expansive lawn was in doubt.



Since that time, I have remained in close contact with the property owners, residents, and historic preservationists. There were several bidders that offered different plans for this property. Last spring,

the Presbyterian Home of Maryland announced its choice: Marty Azola and Delbert Adams, a development team with a record of preserving historic properties.

This summer, Azola and Adams submitted a proposal for a Planned Unit Development that would adaptively reuse the mansion, with up to 45 luxury condominiums built in and around the property. That plan is supported by three key stakeholder organizations: the Southland Hills Improvement Association, the Greater Towson Council of Community Associations, and the Preservation Alliance of Baltimore County.

I believe this proposal is the most realistic plan for preserving the mansion and as much of the green space as possible. Both the state nor county governments is likely to buy this property, and if this proposal collapses, I am concerned about the mansion rotting away with an uncertain future. Therefore, I have submitted a resolution to begin the formal review of this proposal. I am open to all suggestions as the Council considers this resolution, but again, I want to emphasize that I believe this is the most realistic proposal to saving this property.

COUNCILMAN MARKS SPONSORS CHARTER CHANGE TO IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION

Councilman Marks will sponsor legislation to replace the county's Department of Public Works with a Department of Transportation and Infrastructure. The new agency would look more broadly at safety and mobility, including bicycle infrastructure and pedestrian improvements. The legislation would require a charter amendment approved by the voters.



SAFETY PROBLEM FIXED IN FRANKLINVILLE

Councilman Marks was contacted by Judy Beard, who had worked to make Franklinville a historic district. She informed Marks that trucks were improperly accessing the bridge at Vinegar Hill Road, which cannot accommodate large vehicles. The county has relocated warning signs.



RENOVATIONS PLANNED AT JOPPA ROAD WEIS MARKET

The Weis Market at Joppa Road and Seven Courts Drive will benefit from a \$1.5 million renovation in the summer of 2018. The renovation will include new fixtures, lighting, and other interior improvements. The Weis Markets store, which opened in the 1980s, is located in Downtown Perry Hall. The supermarket employs more than 100 people.

COUNCILMAN MARKS FORMS TASK FORCE TO RECOMMEND IMPROVEMENTS TO KLAUSMIER ROAD AREA

Councilman Marks has formed a task force to recommend improvements to the road network in and around the Klausmier Road area. The task force has been created in the wake of the announcement that the Klausmeier family plans to sell their 28-acre farm west of Gunpowder Elementary School for a housing development.

“I will do everything I can to mitigate any impacts from this development,” Councilman Marks commented. “A housing development here was certainly not my choice, but it is my responsibility to do whatever I can to improve the transportation

system in and around the project.”

Councilman Marks has already asked the Maryland State Highway Administration to investigate the difficulty drivers face when turning from Klausmier Road onto Belair Road during “rush hour.”

“I am open to all suggestions, but want to make it clear that I will not support a reopening of the proposal for the Gunview Road extension,” Marks added. Baltimore County had planned to extend Gunview Road through Gunpowder Falls State Park to Belair Road, a proposal that Councilman Marks helped defeat after his election in 2010.

COUNTY COUNCIL REQUESTS AUDIT OF BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

On January 30th, all seven members of the Baltimore County Council sent a letter to the Maryland General Assembly requesting an audit of the school system’s procurement policies. The letter reads as follows:

“The Baltimore County Council requests that the State Legislative Auditor conduct an independent audit of Baltimore County Public Schools’ no-bid contracts with education technology firms, including the procurement process and ancillary costs associated with these contracts (e.g., travel, professional development, perks/promotions, and other financial transactions deemed appropriate).

We suggest the audit cover the period from 2012 through 2017. We believe the State Legislative Auditor is the appropriate authority to conduct an audit of this State-regulated agency. Any audit findings and recommendations can help ensure the transparency and accountability of the significant investment Baltimore County makes in its school system.”

To learn about upcoming legislation and other issues before the Baltimore County Council, visit the Council’s Web Site at <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov>.