

County Councilman David Marks Fifth District Newsletter

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Proudly Serving Carney, Kingsville, Loch Raven, Parkville, Perry Hall, and Towson

MESSAGE FROM COUNCILMAN MARKS: **CONSTANT VIGILANCE NEEDED TO CONTINUE PROGRESS ON CRIME**

In January, I attended a press conference in which the Baltimore County Police Department announced historic progress in reducing crime. Over the past four years, Baltimore County has recorded fewer homicides than during any four-year period since Jimmy Carter was in the White House. I would like to thank our police professionals for their hard work in making Baltimore County safer.

We need constant vigilance to continue this progress. As County Councilman, I am in close contact Chief of Police Jim Johnson and our Towson, Parkville, and White Marsh precincts, as well as our Citizens on Patrol volunteers and neighborhood leaders.

Much has been written about recent events in Downtown Towson. I applaud County Executive Kamenetz for committing additional resources to the Towson precinct. Here are ways our office is working to improve public safety:

Expanding our Neighborhood Watch Program. This summer, we helped establish a new Western Towson Citizens on Patrol program. A Downtown Towson COP unit is now being created. Our goal is to eliminate as many gaps as possible so we have COP coverage throughout Greater Towson. Learn more at <http://towsonareacop.wordpress.com>.

Better Lighting. This fall, we created a task force to look at safety along Burke Avenue, where there have been several incidents. The county has already been looking at lighting here and throughout Downtown Towson.

A Closer Look at Small Electronics. Many of the thefts in Towson and Parkville involve smaller electronic devices. I applaud General Growth Properties for removing cell phone



recycling kiosks from Towson Town Center and White Marsh Mall while the County Council reviews legislation that looks at the recycling of small electronics.

Even if you do not live or work in Towson, you should remain aware of the ways the Police Department makes Baltimore County safer. I encourage you to consider joining the Baltimore County Citizens' Police Academy. Applications are being accepted right now. Visit the following page for more details: <http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/agencies/police/community/citizensacademy.html>.

Baltimore County Councilman

Three Area Schools Will Pilot Digital Conversion

The Baltimore County Public School system recently announced the first ten “lighthouse” schools, in which students will receive digital learning devices and educators will implement new teaching techniques. Three of the ten schools are in the Fifth District: Rodgers Forge Elementary in Towson; Halstead Elementary in Loch Raven; and Joppa View Elementary in Perry Hall. Learn more here:

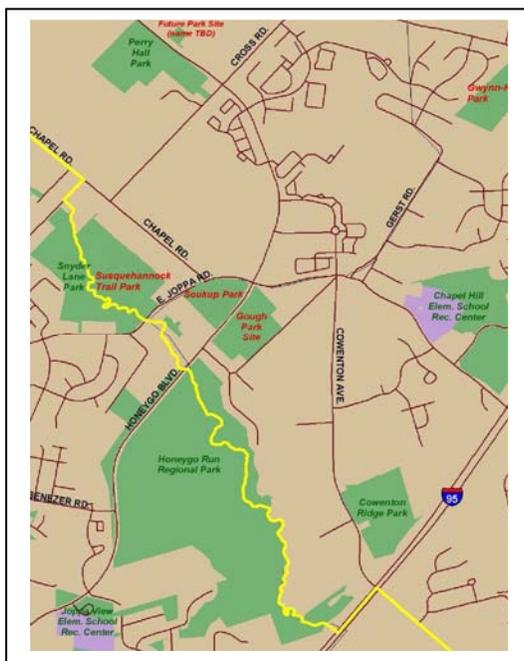
<http://www.bcps.org/news/articles/article4477.html>

New Perry Hall Park Names Reflect Local History

The County Council passed a resolution sponsored by Councilman Marks that names three future park sites to reflect local history:

- The future 20-acre park site northwest of Joppa and Chapel Roads would be designated Susquehannock Trail Park in honor of the Native American path that eventually became Joppa Road.
- The 17-acre property near Forge and Forge View Roads would be named Gwynn-Harvey Park in honor of the African American families that settled along Forge Road in the Nineteenth Century.
- The future 10-acre park west of Honeygo Boulevard and south of Joppa Road would be named Soukup Park in honor of Jerry and Pat Soukup, longtime volunteers with the Perry Hall Recreation Council.

About 64 acres of new parkland will be developed over the next decade in Perry Hall.



Future Park Sites in Perry Hall

Council Passes Legislation to Reform Animal Services

The County Council has passed legislation that makes changes to the way the Animal Hearing Board handles complaints. Under an amendment sponsored by Councilman Marks, the penalty for animal cruelty would increase from \$100 to \$250 per day for each occurrence of animal cruelty. Councilman Marks also supported amendments that require the county to keep accurate records on how many animals are euthanized and adopted, and that require the county’s animal shelter to provide fresh food and water, sanitation, and veterinary care for animals.

Council Passes Food Truck Legislation

The County Council has also passed legislation that will allow food trucks to operate in Downtown Towson. Under the legislation, sponsored by Councilman Marks, food trucks will be allowed to operate in a zone 200 feet from established restaurants throughout the county.

Legislation Prohibits Digital Signs on Scenic Byways

Councilman Marks and Councilwoman Vicki Almond have introduced legislation that would prohibit digital signs on a National Scenic Byway such as Charles Street in Towson. National Scenic Byways are unique routes that have been recognized by the U.S. Department of Transportation for their beauty and cultural significance.

Information about Smart Meters Installation

Councilman Marks has received numerous inquiries about Smart Meters. BGE is encouraging customers with indoor or inaccessible meters (such as those behind a locked gate) to schedule your smart meter appointment by calling the installer who is working in your neighborhood; this number is included in postcards and letters you may have received. Meters are installed by BGE-authorized vendors who will carry identification. If you have questions about any technician coming to your home, or wish to know which vendor is servicing your neighborhood, please call BGE at 800.685.0123.

If you do not wish to have a smart meter installed, you can request a temporary delay, or deferral, by contacting BGE in writing or via email. The Maryland Public Service Commission is in the process of determining the specifics, including monthly fees, for customers who do not want a meter. BGE will communicate any next steps when the PSC makes a final determination. To request a deferral, please include your address, account number, phone number and email address and send request to smartmeterdeferral@bge.com.