



December 2012

Volume IX, Issue VII

President's Message

I have heard from many of you who were as shocked as I to see the unexpected and rapid development of a solar farm directly behind **Boarman's Country Store**. We have checked with **Howard County Planning and Zoning**, and the County has approved the solar farm as an accessory use to the store.

To that end, **GHCA** has met with **George and Georgie Boarman** to offer suggestions and assistance in improving the proposed County landscape plan to eliminate the unattractive and obtrusive nature of the installation along Highland Rd.

The Boarmans were receptive to our concerns and George acknowledged that the rear view of the panels on Highland Rd. was "ugly" and that he was surprised at the visual impact that had been created. Further, the Boarmans were unaware of the inadequate nature of the proposed County landscaping plan, and they are anxious to reduce the intrusive nature of the solar array on Highland and the immediate surrounding properties.

GHCA suggested a berm reflecting the recent treatment to screen the parking lot of the Highland Inn directly next to the Boarman's solar farm (by the way, the Highland Inn will be opening early 2013!). This option was made possible by **Highland Inn's Greg Phillips and his partners** through their generous offer to provide the dirt and the grading as a contribution to the appearance of the streetscape of Highland Road. The Boarmans could then use their funds to concentrate on providing evergreen landscaping on top of the berm to obscure the solar panels, rather than the deciduous low growth shrubs required by the County.

The economic conditions that face the country are not without impact in Highland. George and Georgie advised that the pressure from readily accessible retail grocers in the area have had a substantial impact on the financial viability of the store. They have taken internal steps to control costs, including the SKU system for inventory control. However, energy costs have been an increasing expense jeopardizing the store's viability. Simply put, the solar panels will relieve some of the financial pressures on the store's operation.

The Boarmans and GHCA will work together to develop the berm/evergreen screen to preclude the view on Highland Road. We will work together to make this happen as soon as possible and welcome your input on how to improve this process going forward.

GHCA Website

Webmaster **Chuck Gait**, whose column appears in the **Howard County Times**, continues to improve the **GHCA site**. Visit the site, <http://www.highlandmd.org/> and send your comments or suggestions to **Chuck** at: Chuck.Gait@gmail.com

!!! THE SCOOP -- SIGHTINGS – RUMORS – BARGAINS

- The pace of work has picked up at the **Highland Inn** as evidenced by all the trucks and the new landscaped berm that completely shields vehicle lights from the parking area. What do you think? The opening is planned for 2013, as early as possible.
- **Crossroads traffic study**: no word from **SHA** regarding the study conducted 9/13/12
- **Holiday Trash**: One day later after Wed. for Christmas and New Year's.
- **Howard Magazine, Best of Howard**: Kudos to **Serendipity** (boutique), **Highland Groomery**, and **Pro-Built** (remodeler). **Honorable Mention**: **Oaklawn Landscaping**, **Pro-Built** (builder), **Little Builders** (Child Care).
- Send items to Dan: danielol@aol.com or 301-854-9424

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Membership Special Appeal: We are now representing GHCA's position on **Comprehensive Rezoning** and related issues. I ask every current member to bring at least one neighbor to our next meeting and to join; we need double our numbers and clout in 2013. Please join or rejoin GHCA. The Membership is **\$50** for the calendar year. Dues received after Highland Day are good for 2012 and 2013. **Now more than ever your participation and membership is needed to support the continued efforts of GHCA to represent your interests before Maryland/Howard County government, development interests, and community events.**

Name: _____
Email: _____ (very important! Save postage, and keep informed)
Address (only if not on your check)

Make Your Check Payable to GHCA
Mail to GHCA, PO Box 235, Highland, Maryland 20777

**THE GHCA CANNOT SUCCEED WITHOUT MEMBERS AND WITHOUT THE GHCA
WE'RE ALL ON OUR OWN!!!!**

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*** Twist & Turn Tavern – Pie-Eating Contest**
