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The Right of Petition Thwarted by Legal Ploys? Delay is denial and defeat of citizens' rights!

President's Message

The fight to preserve the petition for referendum continues. Lawyers for the citizens, **Susan Grey and Allen Dyer** continue to battle with lawyers for various developers, **William Erskine** and **Sang Oh** whose strategy is to delay long enough to negate the efforts of various groups that gathered almost 7000 signatures in a short period to place on the ballot a number of specific issues in the controversial **Comprehensive Rezoning Bill of 2013**.

The apparent attempt to intimidate the 80 or so collectors of signatures continues. Pro-bono attorneys **Gray and Dyer** have appealed the use of subpoena, and advised clients they need not appear while under appeal. **Erskine** has responded by filing for "Writs of Body Attachment" for 26 of the collectors, which if issued, would allow **the Sheriff** to arrest and detain them. Meanwhile, **Judge Tisdale , HC Circuit Court** says he is too busy to hear an emergency case until late July, and the **Court of Appeals, (COA)** has not yet ruled.

And the clock ticks on.... The precise ballot language must be given to the Board of Election by August 18, 2014. This presupposes a favorable ruling by the Appeals Court directing the BOE to place the referendum on the ballot. To this end, Gray and Dyer are suggesting language to the **HC Solicitor** and the **COA**.

It is way past time for the County Executive and Administration to request **Judge Tisdale** to render decisions in all matters pending before him so that the referendum is placed on the ballot or the matter can be expeditiously appealed to the COA. It is not enough for **Ken Ulman** to say he supports the right of referendum, he must do all in his power to see that Howard County Government insures the intent of the law is not undermined by deliberate delay or procedure by any branch of the government. He should be in **Judge Tisdale's courtroom on Monday morning** moving that the issues be settled fairly and forthwith. **Delay is denial and defeat of citizens' rights.** A copy of this newsletter is sent to his office. **Ken Ulman's email** is: kulman@howardcountymd.gov

Allnutt Farm and Firefighters Museum

Many of you know of **Scott Shearer's efforts to restore and preserve the farm and the buildings on the site known as Hi-Land Farm on Highland Road**. The sign posted on the property is not for development but to preserve the current buildings and uses there. The **Howard County DPZ** has required him to apply for a conditional use for a museum to house and maintain his antique firefighting equipment. The museum will open to the public only once a year on **Highland Day**. To support Scott, come the hearing before the Hearing Examiner on **September 11, 2014 at 6:00PM** at the George Howard Building 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City.

Highland Day X

Yes, this will be the 10th. festival under the auspices of GHCA and recently HBA. The Steering Committee has been meeting for a couple months now and plans for **Highland Day X** are progressing. More details to come; **it's Saturday October 4**.

Highland Post Office

A number of members wrote to lament the loss of **Postmaster Bill** and the condition of our PO. Completely at the initiative of **Steve Thomas**, the regional supervisor, **Edward Williamson** met with **Steve, Greg Weldy, John Lehman**, and me on July 11. Greg offered to cut the high grass, but his tractor overheated the next day and Mr. Williamson said a new contract would be let to insure proper maintenance, he also acknowledged by email that the following list drafted by Steve would be attended to: Hats off to Steve and the others!

1. *"A new flag has been installed and the Post Master will make sure that the flag is in good condition at all times.*
2. *The light for the flag will be repaired.*
3. *The strap for the flag weight will be ordered and installed.*

4. The concrete by the two mail boxes will be repaired.
5. The broken-up concrete parking block by the flag pole will be removed.
6. All the exterior wood trim on the building will be repaired and painted.
7. The two outside mail boxes will be painted.
8. All the grass on the property will be cut on a regular time frame.
9. Mulch around all trees on the property once a year.
10. All the old grass clips in the gutters will be cleaned up.
11. The dead trees on the property will be removed.
12. The interior of the building will be kept neat and the trash cans emptied as needed.
13. An inspection will be done to make sure that all the exterior light poles are on.
14. A contract will be awarded to make sure that all the grass is cut on a regular time frame."

GHCA Website

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

Membership Special Appeal: 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 2014. Please join or rejoin GHCA. The Membership is **\$50 for the calendar year**. 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)

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