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Issue #457

GPCA Newsletter

May 2026



Happy Mother's Day!



GPCA General Meeting
Monday May 11, 2026 7:00 pm



Social Hall, Granite Presbyterian Church
10637 Old Court Road

Topic: Baltimore County's People's Counsel – Understanding their role in land use issues

Speakers: Emily Jolicouer, People's Counsel and Stephanie Mathioudakis, Deputy People's Counsel

Upcoming Meetings:

June 8, 2026

Topic: Wells and Septic – Ensuring safe well water and maintaining your septic system

Speaker: Andrew Lazur, Ph. D – MD State Extension Water Quality Specialist

No General Meetings July and August -

Sept. 14, 2026 - TBA

Please come join us

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President's Note



May is one of the best times of year in our Greater Patapsco community. The trees are full, the days are longer, and there's a real sense of momentum as we head into the summer months. It's been great to see so many neighbors out and about, reconnecting and taking pride in the place we all call home.

A big thank you to everyone who participated in our annual community cleanup. Your time and effort truly made a visible difference, and it's always inspiring to see our community come together for a shared purpose. These moments are what make GPCA special — neighbors helping neighbors and taking ownership of our surroundings.

Looking ahead, we're excited to welcome a representative from the People's Counsel as our featured speaker at our upcoming May General Meeting. This will be a great opportunity to learn more about how Maryland residents are represented on utility matters, energy costs, and consumer protections — topics that continue to impact all of us. I encourage everyone to attend and bring your questions.

We're also continuing to build toward an important milestone — the 40th Anniversary of GPCA. As we reflect on the past and look ahead to the

future, it's clear that this organization continues to thrive because of the people who show up, stay involved, and care deeply about this community.

Thank you for your continued support and participation. I look forward to seeing many of you at our May meeting and throughout the season ahead.

We may be small, but we are mighty.

Warmly,

Chris Brock

President, Greater Patapsco Community Association (GPCA)

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Last Month's Meeting

Dear Members,

GPCA has an open-door policy for candidates to speak at our monthly General Meetings. (2nd Monday of the month, except July and August).

At our last General Meeting, April 13th, Nick Stewart came out to talk about his candidacy for County Executive. Nick is married, a father of four and works as an attorney. He served on the Baltimore County School Board; the County's Workforce Development Board and he is on the board of Southwest Visions Foundation.

Nick co-founded "We The People", an advocacy group focused on housing reform, smart growth and community revitalization in Baltimore County. He is running on a platform of affordability and inclusion. He said one of the main problems of Baltimore County is losing people due to shrinking income and expensive housing. He supports the Urban Rural Demarcation Line (URDL).

He is against new Data Centers since they rarely create jobs and use a lot

of resources. He advocates for rooftop solar development. He wants to create a standalone Office of Agricultural Services to better serve Baltimore County Farmers. Nick is endorsed by the Police Union of Baltimore County.

If you are a candidate and want to speak at one of our meetings, please contact the GPCA.

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Public Affairs

9043 OLD COURT RD - PROPOSED COMMUNITY SCALE SOLAR GENERATING FACILITY

Thanks to Maryland legislation enacted in 2025, Baltimore County is complying with State requirements to expedite approvals of solar facilities that generate 1 to 5 MW of electricity. This legislation overrides the County's prior limitations on community solar development to 10 sites per district generating up to 2 MW of electricity each. Six of those 10 sites in District 4 are online and within the nearly 19 sq. miles of GPCA's boundaries.

Today there is no limit to the number of facilities within a district and the maximum capacity has been raised to 5 MW on any individual parcel or in combination with an adjacent parcel. This proposed facility borders the existing facility at 9155 Old Court Rd. (across from Polly Hill Ct.) and together they will generate 3.98 MW.

The MD Public Utilities Code now prohibits local jurisdictions from enacting laws that prohibit construction of solar facilities and from denying site development plans that meet the State's requirements. Further it requires expedited review and approval of solar development plans and applications are processed as a permitted use NOT by Special Exception. What does that mean? No public meeting or community input required to develop the facilities.

The County does however exclude development of solar facilities on land

encumbered by Agricultural and/or Environmental Preservation Easements and in Forest Conservation Easements. Important to GPCA where the vast majority of land zoned RC-6 exists, the facilities are also excluded from the conservancy areas in that zone.

Typical lease rates for these projects average \$800-\$1,000 per acre per year incentivizing property owners leasing 10 acres to earn at least \$160,000 - 200,000 over a typical 20 year lease term. Expect more of these commercial solar projects coming on line in the months and years ahead.

~Cathy Wolfson, Public Affairs/Zoning

gpc.treasurer@hotmail.com

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Granite Historical Society

May 31st GHS History Hike

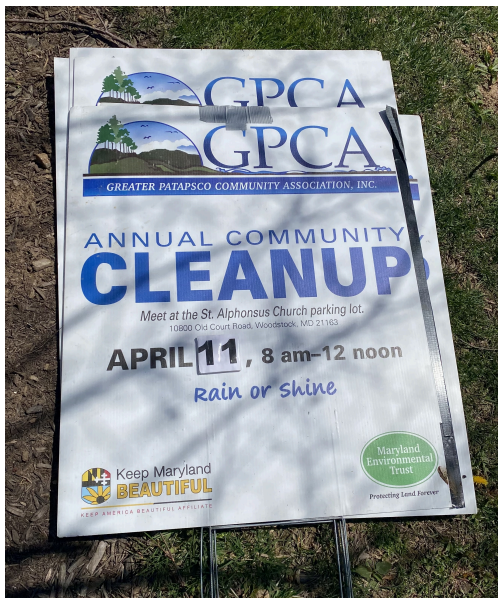


The Granite Historical Society Spring History Hike is planned for Sunday May 31st. We will hike along a State Park Trail from Marriottsville Road to the down-river area of Liberty Reservoir, below the dam. The trail is an easy walk, pretty flat, about 1 ½ miles to the dam and back again. We will assemble at the Granite Presbyterian Church parking lot at 1PM sharp and then consolidate into a few cars for a drive to a parking destination close to the beginning of the trail.

GHS members and non-members alike are invited to participate in the hike. Please register your interest in attending by contacting the GHS website at www.granitehistoricalsociety.org or by emailing our Treasurer, John Brantley, at treasurer@granitehistoricalsociety.org. You will then be contacted a week or so before the hike date with some historical background on how Liberty Dam came about and the town of Oakland Mill, sacrificed to the water.

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A Message from the Cleanup Committee Chair



Thank you for supporting the April 11 Annual Cleanup

GPCA extends a sincere thank-you to everyone who supported and

participated in our Annual Cleanup on April 11. The event was a great success—and a meaningful step toward keeping our scenic area clean and preventing litter from washing into the Patapsco.



What we accomplished

- Filled **four dumpsters** with roadside and household refuse
- Removed **tires** collected at **Old Court Rd.** (collected by Baltimore County)

Where teams worked

Teams of community members cleaned up along:



- Old Court Road
- Dogwood Road
- Hernwood Road
- Davis Avenue
- Granite Road
- Offutt Road
- Many side streets off these main roads

Volunteer support roles



- Collected roadside trash and delivered it to the pickup site
- Monitored dumpsters at the collection site
- Guided participants and assisted with check-in

Special thanks

- **St. Alphonsus Rodriguez Church**, for allowing us to use their property to host the event
- **Officer Makowiecki and Baltimore County Precinct 2**, for patrolling the cleanup areas, slowing traffic, and helping keep participants safe
- **Baltimore County**, for providing funds for the dumpsters and collecting the tires at Old Court Rd.

Thank you again for helping make this a great way to spend a Saturday—and for improving our community.



More cleanup opportunities this year

The Cleanup Committee will be scheduling additional “spot” cleanup events throughout the year. Please watch for announcements, and feel free to reach out with questions or suggestions for future annual or spot cleanup locations.

~Jim Raistrick, Community Cleanup Chair

Contact: communitycleanupgpca@gmail.com

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A Message From SWCC

At the March GPCA meeting, Dave Scheurer presented a summary of the work the SWCC has done from 2020 through 2025.

For those who missed the presentation, here are some of the highlights. With limited funding, the SWCC water quality program has been sustained by a wide network of dedicated volunteers who have logged an impressive 1,500 hours. The community now has a robust baseline of monitoring data on the health of the streams flowing through their backyards which lead into the Patapsco River and eventually Chesapeake Bay.

The good news is that the overall health of the streams is generally positive when compared to other streams in the region and against established water quality criteria. Some streams, however, do have elevated or atypical values such as high salt levels that persist throughout the year or periodic high levels of phosphorous and bacteria. Ongoing studies conducted by the SWCC are attempting to determine potential causes and possible ways to mitigate impacts to stream health.



Perhaps the most valuable aspect of the program is that we now have the capacity to monitor for changes over time and to understand the value and benefits to being outside the Baltimore County “growth boundary”.

Small Watershed Conservation Committee (SWCC) Stream Health and Water Quality Report Card							
Water Quality Parameters (Average Value – 2020 to 2025) ¹							
Sample Locations							
	Temperature (°F)	pH (units)	Conductivity (uS/cm)	Nitrate (mg/L)	Phosphate (mg/L)	Bacteria (colonies)	Benthic (score)
Bens Run	71.1	7.9	388	0.81	0.04	158	7.7
Brice Run	71.0	7.6	341	1.68	0.15	306	9.9
Dogwood Run	71.0	8.1	733	0.51	0.09	99	7.9
Granite Branch	68.3	7.6	230	1.14	0.05	252	8.7
Normal Range	(<68)	(6.5-8.5)	(<800)	(<2.5)	(<0.05)	(<200)	(>9)
Sample Size	26000	70	70	70	70	34	8
¹ Temperature – Water temperature average during summer period (6/1-8/31) (2021,2022,2024) ¹ Bacteria: Average measured cell counts after 48hr incubation period (1/2023 – 12/2025) ¹ Benthic: Average of Fall and Spring sample periods (2022-2025)							

~Laurie Donnelly, SWCC Chair

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MD GUBERNATORIAL PRIMARY ELECTION **– JUNE 23, 2026**

Are you ready to vote? This year we elect our Representatives in Congress as well candidates for all of our state and local offices.

Last year the seven member Baltimore County Council established by the County Charter in 1956 was expanded to 9 members to represent a population that's more than doubled in the intervening 70 years. Due to the redrawing of councilmanic district lines GPCA's boundaries now lie entirely within the newly formed District 2.

Of the existing 7-member council two Councilmen are retiring and three are running for County Executive. Only Councilmen Marks and Ertel are running for re-election ensuring at least 7 seats will be filled by new Council members.

Who represents us on the Council will:

- Enact and repeal local laws and ordinances

- Make the final decisions on petitions to change zoning on individual properties throughout the county every 4 years during the Comprehensive Zoning Map Process (CZMP)
- Adopt the County's annual operating and capital budgets

So who is running to represent us on the County Council and how do you contact them to learn more? They are:

Ruben Amaya – Democrat

District 2 Council Candidate

P: 410-541-6840

Website: www.rubenamaya.org/

facebook.com/rubenforcouncil

instagram.com/_rubenamaya

James Amos – Republican

District 2 Council Candidate

P: 410-262-4578

E: jim.amos.21207@aol.com

Tammy Soulama – Democrat

District 2 Council Candidate

facebook.com/BaltimoreCountyCandidateTamSoulama

Tiktok.com/BaltimoreCountyCouncil2

Danita Tolson - Democrat

District 2 Council Candidate

P: 443-377-3376

E: info@dtolsonforbaltimorecounty.com

Website: www.dtolsonforbaltimorecounty.com

facebook.com/dtolsonforbaltimorecounty/

instagram.com/dtolsonforbaltimorecounty/

Lawrence Williams – Democrat

District 2 Council Candidate

P: 443-841-6475

E: info@lawrencw.com

www.lawrencew.com

For information regarding your polling place, voter registration and a sample ballot of all candidates visit the Baltimore County Board of

Elections website at www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/elections

Vote. It's your right!

~Cathy Wolfson
Public Affairs/Zoning
gpcatreasurer@hotmail.com

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Elections 2026

(Some Additional Information on this Important Topic)

Find all voting information here [Voting in Maryland](#).

Maryland Primaries will take place in seven weeks on Tuesday, June 23rd. With early voting from Saturday, June 11 to Saturday June 18. Only those people who are affiliated with a party can vote in the primary election. You don't need to be a member of that party to vote, it is enough to indicate your affiliation on your voter registration.

In Maryland it is easy to register to vote, change your affiliation or update your voter registration. You can do all this online by using link:

<https://voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/OnlineVoterRegistration/InstructionsStep1>

All you need is your driver's license/StateID and some personal information.

If you want to vote via mail-in voting, you can either mail the ballot via the postal service, drop it off at voting office or put it into a ballot drop box.

Find your closest ballot drop box here

[2026_Primary_Drop_Box_Locations.pdf](#)

If you want to help with the election, see this link on how to get involved:

[Getting Involved Introduction](#)

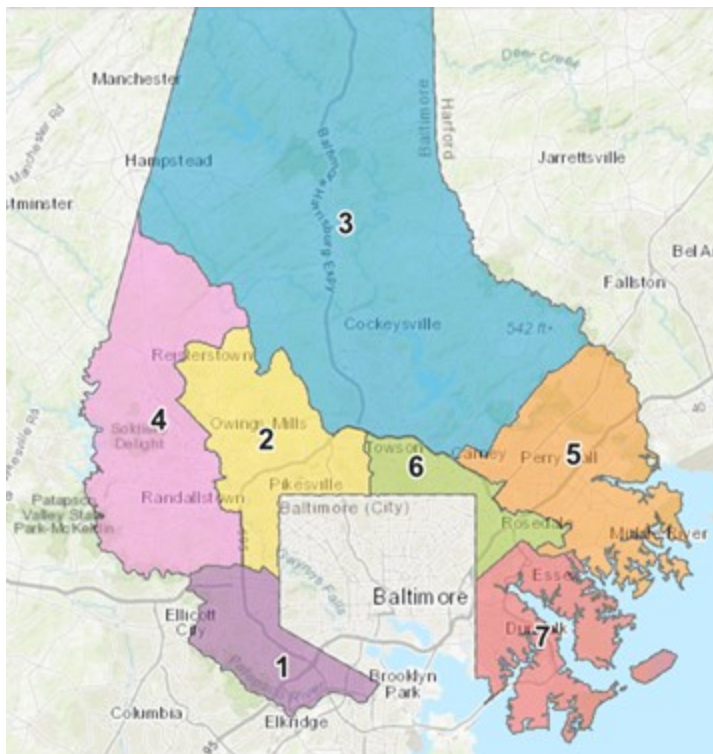
New Baltimore County Council Districts

In 2025 the Baltimore County Council decided to expand the council from seven to nine districts. The GPCA area was moved from District 4 to District 2 in its entirety.

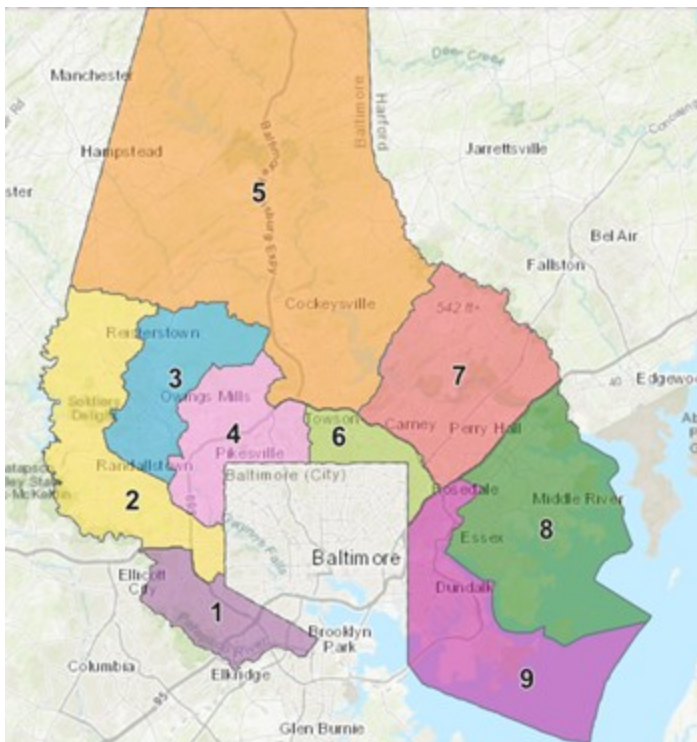
The layout of the old and new districts is available here:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/d02f1f6ff47a4e3c9366a927fb901a73/page/Home>

Previous Map



2026 Map



With all new districts and only two incumbents running for their respective

new districts, the race is wide open and will create a Baltimore County Council with mostly newcomers.

Candidates

The following candidates are running for **County Council** in our new District 2:

Ruben Amaya – Democrat - www.rubenamaya.org

Tammy Soulama – Democrat - [Elect Tammy Soulama | Reisterstown MD | Facebook](#) (accessible without Facebook account)

Danita Tolson – Democrat - www.dtolsonforbaltimorecounty.com

Lawrence Williams – Democrat - www.lawrencew.com

James Amos – Republican - jim.amos.21207@aol.com (no webpage available)

The following candidates are running for **Baltimore County Executive**.

There is no incumbent because the current County Executive Kathy Klausmeier is not running for election.

Julian Jones – Democrat - www.julianejones.com

Izzy Patoka – Democrat - www.lzzypatoka.com

Mansoor Shams - Democrat - www.gomansoor.com

Nick Stewart – Democrat - www.nickforbaltimorecounty.com

Pat Young – Democrat - www.patyoung.us

Patrick V. Dyer – Republican - <https://friendsofpatdyer.com/>

Kimberley Stansbury – Republican - www.electkimstansbury.org

Rob Daniels – unaffiliated - www.voterobdaniels.com (not part of the primary)

~Gabriela Summerer-Herndon

GPCA Board Member

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GPCA at the Serenity Ridge Earth Day Festival

Despite some wind and chill in the air, representatives from GPCA set up a table and provided information to attendees and visitors that came to Second Annual Earth Day Festival hosted by Serenity Ridge Natural Burial Cemetery and Arboretum on Saturday April 25, 2026. Numerous tents and tables representing various nature, sustainability, and ecological organizations, wildlife rehabilitation, canine search and rescue, as well as gift, personal care, and food vendors were also present.



Free tree giveaways, seminar demonstrations, a memorial tree planting, yoga sessions, and even basic hands-on instruction in fly-fishing casting happened throughout the day.

Children enjoyed rock painting, face-painting, and collecting ink stamps from each tent, table, and vendor they visited.

Despite the brisk weather, the event was well attended. Many event visitors noticed and showed great interest in SWCC's poster explaining the value of the GPCA's citizen monitoring of the four streams located in our Patapsco River watershed.



Many thanks to the intrepid members that staffed the GPCA table on a brisk Spring day, and everyone who attended the event!

Thank you!

~Pam Germain, GPCA Board Member

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Around the Neighborhood

Granite Presbyterian Church (GPC) Community Food Truck Event and Yard Sale

GPC will be hosting a community food truck and yard sale event this month on Wednesday May 20 from 4 pm to 8 pm. (see attached flyer for details)

Patapsco Heritage Greenway Key activities include a Family Fun Run (May 16), trail cleanups, tree maintenance, spring history hikes, and local farmers markets.

For up-to-date information, the Patapsco Heritage Greenway events [calendar](#) is the best resource for events in the immediate area.

Native Plant & Seed Share (May 30): The **Howard County Conservancy** in Woodstock is hosting a community plant exchange where gardeners can share native Maryland plants and seeds.

And for the Woodlawn Precinct latest news and information

visit: www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/police/community/precincts/2-woodlawn

What's going on around the neighborhood, along the roads or near you?

Let your community know!

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Baltimore County Government News

A Message From Yolanda Gregory Our District 4 Planner

Community Events and Resources

Protecting the Vote: Join Us May 6 for a Critical Community Summit (Revised Link)

Date: May 6, 2026

Time: 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Location: Virtual (Zoom/Webinar)

Register

here: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ULT2CB9YQj-qvEZps4bT6g#/registration>

The Randallstown NAACP Branch #7032-B remains committed to ensuring our citizens have access to the knowledge and resources necessary to protect their voting rights and civic voice.

This segment will provide clear, practical next steps, including:

- Checking and updating voter registration
- Understanding voter ID requirements
- Preparing for early and absentee voting
- Accessing voter assistance resources

Baltimore County Council Candidate Forum

Thursday, May 7 | 5:00–8:00 PM

Owings Mills Public Library 10302 Grand Central Ave, Owings Mills, MD
Community members are invited to attend a Baltimore County Council Candidate Forum for Councilmanic Districts 2 and 3.

PUBLIC MEETINGS & HEARINGS

Your voice matters join us and be part of the plan! More information can be found on the [website](#)

Data Center Public Input Meeting

The Public Input Meeting will be on Thursday, May 21st at 5:00 PM. It'll be hybrid, so folks can attend in person (105 W Chesapeake Avenue Jefferson Building Hearing Room) or via Webex. Additional information on the meeting, including how to register to speak, is available online here: <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/planning/events/planning-board-meeting-may-21st>. The Webex link will be posted closer to the meeting date.

Additional Hearings & Participation Information

Click here for [District 4 Hearings](#). For the full, updated schedule of

Baltimore County Zoning and Development Hearings, visit the [Zoning and Development Hearings Calendar](#). *Please note these pages are updated multiple times monthly; so, I encourage visiting periodically for updates and changes.

Kindest Regards,

Yolanda Gregory

District 4 Community Planner
Baltimore County Department of Planning
Community Planning Division
Jefferson Building
105 West Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 101
Towson, Maryland 21204
P: 410.887.3480 ext. 7939

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gpc21163@gmail.com

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