



Drum Point Light

Drum Point Property Owners' Association

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Proposed STD Receives Favorable Nod

Two well-publicized community forums, held October 22 and November 2, 2011, were attended by more than 90 community members. Straw polls taken at each of the forums indicated better than 80 per cent support of the petition.

The current Special Tax District 3, as amended, will end on June 30, 2012.

As most community members recall, STD 3 as amended, was reduced from the original \$192 per lot per year to \$50 per lot per year with the mandate of "spending down" what was considered as an excess in funds being held as reserves and for future projects.

As of the end of September, 2011, some

\$281,000 remained of these funds, which have been allocated for some \$48,000 in storm water management projects. \$20,000 for storm cleanup after Irene, Calvert Drive erosion control, \$40,000 (estimated), repair and repaving of Harbor Drive and Deer Drive for \$55,000 in estimated costs. A contract has also been signed to complete the Dry Hydrant parking area at Lake Vista for \$5,000. This leaves a **projected** \$113,000 in *possible* carryover for 2013.

The Petition proposes a "Must Do" list of projects that include: rejuvenation of about 7.5 miles of road; storm water control, repaving of some roads and swale repair projects as well as beginning the rebuilding of a Reserve Fund. This translates into a cost of \$166 per lot per year for the projected two year life of the Special Tax District.

Before formal submission to the Board of Commissioners, the final document will be presented at the December General Meeting.

Plans are to have the Special Tax District Petition completed by the end of December, 2011 and submitted to the Board of County Commissioners in January, 2012. This will allow adequate time for the Board of County Commissioners and

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President's Column

Gary Heal, President

DPPOA Board of Directors



It seems that Mother Nature is testing us, what with earthquakes, rains and a hurricane. But we have persevered. We came through in relatively good condition compared to our neighboring communities. That was due to some good reasons:

- We trimmed our road rights of way to keep tree damage to a minimum,
- We had established a strong Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and a Community Emergency Service Center (CESC),
- We pulled together,
- Many of you went out and worked to clear downed trees and brush,
- Some of you checked on your neighbors and did what you could to help those who needed it.

There is an article in this newsletter about some youngsters who “stepped up.” I think we can all take a lesson from them. They took the time off to help the community by volunteering their time

to benefit everyone. Maybe there is something you can contribute.

As I write this, we are in between our two Community Forums. By the time you read this, they will be over. The reason we held them was to involve the community in the Special Tax District process. We had a good turnout, and many of you contributed to the Forums by giving your opinions. Some of your suggestions were incorporated into the final Petition which will be submitted to the Commissioners.

The take away for your Board of Directors was that the majority of you supported our work. The final STD Petition will be posted on our WEB site, and taken forward to the County Commissioners for their consideration. You will receive notice of the Public Hearing which will be held by the Commissioners, and we strongly urge you to attend. If you are unable to attend, make your wishes known by sending a letter or an e-mail to the Commissioners. Have a Great Winter.

Gary

Cont. from front page

STD petition - from page 1

staff to study the proposal, schedule a public hearing and make their decision and negotiate a formal agreement well before the end of the Fiscal Year.

With the proposed \$166 per lot per year, a resident who wishes to pay the Association Dues of \$60 per year will pay a total of \$236 per year in fees to Drum Point, far less than most communities in the area.

The meetings held thus far only mark the

beginning of the need for Community Support of this proposed submission.

As of the preparation of this newsletter, two petitions are being circulated throughout the community, one supporting the Board's proposal and the other opposing.

Those wishing to support the proposed STD should stop by the office and sign the petition there. This will become a vital part of the package submitted to the Board of County Commissioners.

Highlights of Proposed STD

Preparing for STD 2013-2014 is a knife-edge balancing act for the Planning Committee.

For the past three years, the Special Tax District was set at \$50 per lot per year, due to the County Commissioners' mandate to "spend down" what was considered excessive funds being set aside for Reserves. Budget projections, provided by the Budget Committee indicated that without a substantial increase in funding, Drum Point would not be able to provide basic services for more than two years.

Our Administrative Costs are basically a "fixed" amount, unrelated to Capital Expenses or Maintenance Costs. These expense items total utilities, insurance, legal fees, liability insurance, postage, office equipment, taxes, newsletter costs and payroll. This totals approximately \$86,000. Of that amount, some \$56,000 is paid by STD Fees and the rest is paid from DPPOA dues.

Operations and Maintenance are also basically the same each year, totaling some \$60,000 and includes trash cleanup, mosquito control, common lot maintenance, street lighting, pothole repair, tree trimming, road signs and bush hogging of our rights-of-way.

15 Years

In the 15-year duration of the Drum Point Special Tax District, the Drum Point Property Owners' Association has:

- **Repaired and improved, or replaced all 5 Causeways**, conserving their functions as dams and roadways (includes partial FEMA funding for Bay Drive Causeway repair);
- **Brought all 15.3 miles of roads to acceptable standards**, with asphalt on firm bases, and use of the Rejuvenation system to conserve asphalt surfaces;
- **Engaged professional employees to manage and coordinate DPPOA and STD work** as planned in all STDs, as well as to coordinate budgets and/ accounting

These two "Expense" items represent about \$112,000 of the STD Budget and some \$34,000 of the DPPOA budget.

The remainder of the budget is allocated for the following: Storm Water Engineering, \$5,000; Storm Water Construction, \$20,000; Asphalt Rejuvenation, \$46,000, Storm Repair/ Reconstruction, \$3,000, Reserve Fund, \$40,000; and Snow Removal, \$35,000.

In preparing the budget, the Budget Committee and the STD Planning Committees recognize the impact of the increased STD on all members of the community. Although it is an increase in the amount from \$50 per lot per year to \$166 per lot, we have spent close to \$160 per year over the past three years in the "spend down", leaving little for an emergency such as the infamous "snowmegadon" and Tropical Storm Irene.

A complete detail of the STD Budget and the proposed petition can be found at www.dppoa.org. Any Board member can also answer specific questions (Board contact info is available on the website).

- **Upgraded street signs;**
- **Rebuilt the Community boat ramp**
- **Inspected and cleared or repaired numerous under-road pipes;**
- **Improved accessibility for emergency vehicles and school buses;**
- **Established a Community office** with centralized archives and records, and implemented up-to-date IT capability for records, e-mail, fax and internet;
- **Established a Sheriff's Substation** to increase police presence in Drum Point.

BAD NIGHT IRENE WREAKS



Classic Storm Damage-This Jeep, was smashed by a falling tree and is entangled in electric power lines and communications cables is typical of damage done in Drum Point.

borhood at the height of the storm, identifying downed trees and power lines for clearance. By 8:00 p.m., Karl Bowen, our tree removal contractor, was on the job, cutting trees and removing them from Drum Point roads. Earlier in the year, he had identified many trees in the rights-of-way that appeared to endanger power and communications lines. With DPPOA approval, he removed these trees and trimmed many branches that were overhanging the power lines. This one action undoubtedly kept Drum Point from having the disaster



Mill Creek Area –It was estimated that more than 30 trees were downed by Irene. Unfortunately since many power lines were entangled, it took several days for SMECO contractors to “safe” the area for tree removal allowing vehicle access to many homes.

Where else can a person be involved in an earthquake on Wednesday, a tornado warning on Thursday and a Tropical Storm on Saturday?

It appears to be southern Calvert County in the last week of August. All three of these events occurred and each was another warning to our community. Although there was little damage from the earthquake, other than some shattered nerves and the tornado did not actually appear, Tropical Storm Irene hit Drum Point head-on, beginning Saturday evening.

The CERT, Community Emergency Response Team, group went into high gear that evening. Several volunteers were out driving the neigh-

borhood at the height of the storm, identifying downed trees and power lines for clearance. By 8:00 p.m., Karl Bowen, our tree removal contractor, was on the job, cutting trees and removing them from Drum Point roads. Earlier in the year, he had identified many trees in the rights-of-way that appeared to endanger power and communications lines. With DPPOA approval, he removed these trees and trimmed many branches that were overhanging the power lines. This one action undoubtedly kept Drum Point from having the disaster

that many other communities faced following the storm. Late Saturday afternoon, the Community Emergency Service Center at the DPPOA Office was activated and radio communication established through the Calvert Amateur Radio Association before electric power was lost. During this time, we were able to talk to the County Emergency Operations Center using normal telephones with a radio backup.

Shortly thereafter, power was lost as well as land line telephone communication, and the cable lines were lost due to the loss of power. Cellular telephone circuits were overloaded.\

Throughout the night, volunteers drove through Drum Point as did Karl Bowen. By sun-

HAVOC IN DRUM POINT

rise Sunday, most roads were passable and tree debris removal began in earnest. Despite calls to the County EOC, SMECO, and Comcast, the CESC was unable to obtain much specific information on when crews would arrive to clear downed power lines or restore power. Local radio stations were providing information regarding St. Mary's County but little Calvert information.

Telephone calls to SMECO, Comcast and Verizon were not successful in obtaining "hard" data regarding outages, and the Calvert County EOC was telling the Drum Point ESC to just wait until SMECO crews arrived.

By Wednesday, crews had arrived; power and communications were restored throughout most of the community. In contrast, some areas of CRE were without power for about 8 days.

Volunteers saved the day in Drum Point. John Ivancik, as CERT volunteer put in many hours surveying the community for damage, as did Roark Shallow, Mark Webster and Gary Heal. Members of the Drum Point Radio Club and the Calvert Amateur Radio Association helped maintain contact and provided yeoman service. Our Community manager, Rhea Webster also gave of her time and talents in keeping the overall operation going, monitoring telephones day and night. Ironically, Voicemail could be retrieved from a land-line with a cellular telephone calling in.

The major impact of the Storm is what was learned at the County and local levels.

Immediately after the storm had calmed down, Drum Point drafted an 'after Action' report which was filed with Calvert County and the Maryland Emergency Management Agency.

In this report, the following items were included for future discussions and planning:

- ⇒ No liaison with SMECO during storm for updates on critical issues such as roads blocked by downed power lines – answer given by County EOC was to wait for SMECO to contact you.



Shocking? Perhaps - The danger, in this example, is the downed electric power line entangled in trees. Until declared "dead" by SMECO, downed lines such as this must be considered "life threatening" and not touched by the layman.



Impassable- A veritable maze of tree trunks, branches & electric lines blocked many of Drum Point Roads on early Sunday morning after the storm. Within hours, Drum Point was able to clear most of its roads for community access.

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Teens to the Rescue

8 Days of Cleaning Up

By Terry Tkacik

On Sunday morning after Irene, Austin Benson, Cobey Grimes and Tabor Grimes were out cutting branches off trees to clear the roads. They spent 14 hours riding up and down Mill Creek Drive on two different tractors hauling debris to dump stops.

When the SMECO, Verizon, and the Comcast crews came through, Tabor who was working all the time with his brother, set up a red wagon with hot coffee, creamer and sugar and provided the cups.

The reason I love living up on the hill is because the children and parents are wonderful. One must understand these kids worked everyday for almost eight days straight, working long hours. They refused money from the neighbors they helped.

"We knew Ms. Tkacik everyone was in a bad condition. We aren't doing this for money. These are our neighbors." said Austin. "I wanted to let the crews from Pennsylvania, Alabama and Georgia how much we appreciate their help" said Tabor, offering coffee to the work crews from out of state.

Even the work crews said they were surprised how thoughtful everyone was to them as we had been without electricity for 8 days and many were without flushing toilets. I wish I had the photo of all of the ladies and girls standing on the corner blowing kisses to the crews when the work was completed.

The lights flickered on in one house and then the next thing you know, Matt on his bike rode over to his mom and with great enthusiasm said, "Mom, the lights are on, the lights are on!"

Those of us on Mill Creek, Calvert Dr. and Hilltop offered to serve them BBQ but alas no one had food in the refrigerator

Two young men from Drum Point's Calvert Drive area, Austin Benson and Cobey Grimes along with Cobey's brother, Tabor, and friends Noah and Matt helped clean up their neighborhood after Irene.

Cont. from Page 5 **Irene Wreaks Havoc**

- ⇒ County switchboard was closed on Monday, local stations had stopped giving updates
- ⇒ Need to have list of willing volunteers for manning EOC during emergencies
- ⇒ There must be amateur radio licensed operators on duty at all EOCs. Ham radio is the ONLY reliable communications available.

NEEDS:

- ⇒ Is it possible to have a short range FM station set up for Drum Point?
- ⇒ Possibility of purchasing mobile speakers to inform community of situations should be investigated.
- ⇒ The County EOC should have informed dedicated community liaison personnel for direct contact. This is especially true of Drum Point and CRE, which constitute about 20% of the County population.
- ⇒ All recon during an emergency should be done with two people for sake of safety and complete evaluation of situation – four eyes are better than two, especially when one person is driving.

An after-event meeting was held with Jackie Vaughan, County Director of Public Safety and Bobby Fenwick, Director of Emergency Management, to evaluate how the County and Drum Point might improve coordination during and after disasters in the future. Ideas for better integration of services was also discussed.

"Light travels faster than sound. That is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak." **Alan Dundes**

Covenant Vote

TKO Due to Non-Votes

As a recap, the ballot to change the Covenant Voting failed—again.

With approximately 3 weeks to mail ballots, property owners representing 696 lots returned ballots. There were 1641 lots eligible to be voted. Forty-eight ballots were deemed invalid by the Tally Committee.

Some 435 lots were voted “Yes” and 213 voted “No”. Eight hundred twenty-one “Yes” votes were required to pass the Initiative.

Not only did the vote fail under present voting requirements, it would not have passed under the proposed change requiring a majority of the lots to be voted and two-thirds of those approving the change.

The fact that those who returned a ballot in favor of the measure outnumbered those who voted against the idea, shows support by the community of the belief that the Covenants should be changed and also that our present voting procedure allows the non-voter as much authority as those who participate.

Reviewed the Website Lately?

Find out everything you ever wanted to know about Drum Point by reviewing the website, www.dppoa.org.

This site not only has copies of minutes, meeting announcements, & information as well as governing documents it has something new - announcements of Drum Point residents who have recently passed. Please pass along to Rhea at the office, any info you may have about the passing of community members.

Clean-Up Day

The semi-annual Drum Point Clean-up Day in October proved once again that this is a worth-while effort for the Community.

Three large dumpsters were filled with everything from furniture, microwaves, lawnmowers and trash to broken aquariums.

STD Presentation to Community Scheduled

The DPPOA Board of Directors will present the final Petition for the next Special Tax District at the December General Meeting, scheduled for December 10, 2011.

At this meeting the Board will present the changes to the Special Tax District proposals discussed at the two Community Forums held in late October and early November. Following those meetings, the STD Planning Committee made substantive changes in the proposed tax district based on community input.

The explanation of how the proposed \$166 per lot, per year amount will be included. The proposed petition for the next Special Tax District will also have several appendices attached, including an explanation of efforts made to obtain Community Support for the proposed increase as well as both the proposed STD Budget and Drum Point Property Owners' Association Budget.



Jennifer Youngerman displays some of the cupcakes prepared for the Annual Drum point Day Festivities on September 17th.

Volunteers from the community put on another day of fun for residents of Drum Point at the Drum Point Club. pulled pork barbecue, hot dogs, beans and potato salad with soda were served as the meal of the day.

Drum Point Day is jointly sponsored by DPPOA and the Drum Point Club.

Per the vote at the September General Meeting,
the December meeting will be conducted according to the Maryland Code cited below:

General Membership Meeting

December 10, 2011

All meetings will be conducted according to Maryland Code, Corporations and Associations, Title 5, Sub Title 2, section (§) 5-206. which states, If the number of members present at a meeting does not meet the requirements of a quorum, those present may call another meeting to meet quorum requirements. At the additional meeting, the members present in person constitute a quorum.

General Membership

Meeting Agenda

Saturday

December 10, 2011

10:00 a. m.

Southern Community Center

Call to Order

President's Remarks

Approval of Minutes

New Business

Appoint Nominating Committee

STD Petition Presentation

Treasurer's Report

Old Business

Public Comments

Adjournment

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**Drum Point Property Owners' Association
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