



County Executive Bob Cassilly eNewsletter

December 2023

As my administration's first year in office comes to a close, I wanted to take a moment to thank you for the opportunity to serve you and the county I love. I hope you're able to gather with family and friends this holiday season and celebrate the blessings of the past year.

With best wishes for a happy and healthy 2024,

Bob Cassilly

Harford County Executive

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Volunteers, donations needed for Wreaths Across America December 16

Wreaths Across America on Saturday, December 16, is an opportunity to lay a wreath at veterans' graves to honor their service and teach the next generation about the value of freedom. In Harford County, volunteers are needed at events planned for 2 p.m. in Havre de Grace at Mt. Erin and Angel Hill cemeteries. Volunteers are also welcome at 12 p.m. at Bel Air Memorial Gardens, and APG North and APG South cemeteries. Unfortunately, wreath donations are down this year. To donate locally, [click here](#) and search for one of the participating cemeteries in Harford County.



New law limits apartments in business-zoned district

Before I came into office, apartments were being approved and built in business districts throughout the county without safe access to sidewalks, transportation, supermarkets, and retail stores. Allowing these structures in a business district also makes planning extremely difficult because we don't know if a site may become home to families with children, or a business that places no demands on our schools or recreation facilities. That's why I proposed legislation to limit apartments in districts zoned B-3 for general business. The legislation was later amended and approved by the County Council to ban mid- and high-rise apartments in B-3. [Click here for details.](#)



Planning begins for 1,200-acre waterfront park system

County-owned properties on the Oakington Peninsula in Havre de Grace include more than 1,200 acres of natural beauty that will one day become a public park system for all to enjoy. This peninsula on the Chesapeake Bay includes Swan Harbor Farm, the Carlson-Feltman Conservation Area, Belle Vue Farm, Eleanor & Millard Tydings Park, and the Mullins property - all of which are now owned by the county. An initial site assessment has been completed and we have formed a work group including multiple community organizations to create a draft master plan. Opportunities for public input on the future of the park will also be part of our 2024 master plan process.



Abingdon Business Park appeal

Early in my administration, we revoked Abingdon Business Park's grading permit and site plan approval and issued a stop-work order after the Maryland Supreme Court ruled that the project's forest conservation plan was deficient. Late last month, the Circuit Court reinstated the deficient plan, meaning that the developer can resume work. The following day, [my administration appealed the ruling](#). In our view, the developer's forest conservation plan violates state and county requirements. It is important that proposed developments follow the law to adequately protect our citizens and the environment.



Public safety on the Ma & Pa Trail

After the horrific murder of Rachel Morin, whose body was discovered in August on the Ma & Pa Trail, I directed my staff to work with security experts to develop a video camera system to improve safety for trail users. Installation of the security system began last week. After it goes live in mid-February, the system will be able to quickly detect unusual activity and locate a specific person or vehicle of interest. When you use the trail, please also be aware of your surroundings, walk with a friend or group, tell others if you're walking alone, carry a cellphone, and report anything suspicious to 410-838-6600 or call 9-1-1 in an emergency.



Toys for Tots collection drive

My administration is proud to help the Marine Corps with this year's Toys for Tots collection drive by providing a county facility to warehouse and distribute donations by appointment. We have also placed collection boxes at county facilities, including our administrative office at 220 S. Main Street in Bel Air. Please consider making a donation to help make the holidays a little brighter for local children in need. If you or your business would like to donate or get involved, visit the [Toys for Tots' Harford County website](#) for more information.



WATCH HarfordTV's "Inside Harford County" - My first year in office

This month on "Inside Harford County," host Mark Vernarelli and I take a look back at my first year in office. We get specific about my administration's work so far to improve the quality of life in Harford County and outline plans for the year ahead. The December episode of "Inside Harford County" is [available now online](#) and will air from 7:00 - 7:30 p.m. every Monday this month on Armstrong channel 7 & HD 101, Comcast channel 31 & HD 1084, and Verizon channel 31.



Holiday greetings

The Liriodendron Mansion in Bel Air is decked out for the holidays! Click on the image above for my holiday message and a view of this Harford County treasure.

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