



BALTIMORE COUNTY  
MARYLAND

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# OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

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## ***Builders for the Bay Roundtable to Review Building Practices and Regulations***

*Collaborative Effort to Reduce Environmental Impact, Lower Costs and Improve Quality*

Towson, MD – Baltimore County Executive Jim Smith will officially announce the Baltimore County *Builders for the Bay* Roundtable tomorrow afternoon, June 30, at 1:30 p.m., at the Baltimore Life Companies, 10075 Red Run Boulevard in Owings Mills. The yearlong collaborative review process will examine how development and environmental regulations created over the last 10-15 years can be updated to support Baltimore County's quality of life.

Development issues can often present conflicts among environmental proponents, communities, and developers. Baltimore County Executive Jim Smith, as part of his Green Renaissance initiative, is offering unique opportunities for interest groups and county officials to examine existing regulations and recommend changes that would better protect natural resources. For example, county requirements for commercial parking spaces and road widths appear to be in conflict with stormwater management goals of reducing the amount of impervious surfaces in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

“Embracing our green spaces and protecting resources is integral to our goal in Baltimore County of continuing to provide strong communities, affordable housing and a high quality of life for citizens,” Smith said. “We are rethinking the old approaches and inviting all sides to collaborate on solutions to keep us moving forward.”

“It is a myth to say that environmental protection is anti-business – it’s generally just the

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opposite; and this is an example of how we can preserve natural resources while enhancing efficiency,” said Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection Director David Carroll.

“As a businessman and farmer, I am very aware of the connection between a healthy business climate and the health of our land, air and waterways,” said Council Chair Joe Bartenfelder. “This program is a down-to-earth way to make sure that our construction rules and regulations have a positive impact on the environment.”

*Builders for the Bay* utilizes a roundtable process to evaluate issues and come to consensus on proposals for change. Major topic areas are expected to include site planning and lot design; streets, parking, and infrastructure; natural resource management; and stormwater management. Five roundtable committees will meet several times to develop recommendations and action agendas that outline specific implementation steps.

Smith’s Green Renaissance initiative includes a series of cutting-edge environmental programs that ensure the protection of natural resources through collaboration with communities, businesses, government agencies, environmental groups and the development community. In addition to the *Builders for the Bay* initiative, Smith announced in January that Baltimore County has been selected as the first urban/suburban jurisdiction in the country to be included as a local pilot for the US Forest Service’s Linking Communities to the Montreal Process, Criteria and Indicators project. DEPRM will utilize the Montreal Process framework as part of a collaborative process to develop a strategy for sustainable forests that are ecologically, socially and economically healthy.

*Builders for the Bay* is a collaborative effort with the Home Builders Association of Maryland, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, the Center for Watershed Protection, and Baltimore County.

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