



May 5, 2011

Attn: The Honorable Isaiah Leggett, County Executive

Re: Draft Forest Conservation Bill

Dear County Executive Leggett,

Five years ago a group of concerned and conscientious builders formed a communication initiative called **Renewing Montgomery**. Our purpose was to meet with citizen groups to have an informative discussion on the challenges associated with re-building our older neighborhoods. In addition we wanted every resident to get involved in pending legislation before it was introduced so that all stakeholders would have a voice at the table.

Our community meetings have proven to be a resounding success as all residents better understand the role they can play to ensure that current regulations are understood and followed, as well as encouraging successful practices that promote cooperation by the builder, the property owner, and the neighborhood. We also provide a forum to discuss pending legislation regarding home improvements. We have found that the average resident is often not well informed on pending legislation and its consequences.

We have reviewed the draft *Forest Conservation Bill* prepared by your Office which combines forest conservation for subdivisions with individual tree conservation. Tree regulation on single lots is a very complicated issue that must be considered from every stakeholder's perspective. There are also legal issues involving property rights that must be considered. We are currently meeting with community and industry representatives to discuss the issues of tree preservation and conservation, and are hopeful we will come to a reasonable compromise to present for your consideration.

Until we come up with a draft, we ask that no legislation be introduced to the Council concerning individual trees on private or public property. **Renewing Montgomery** is opposed to the current draft that combines Forest Conservation with an Urban Tree Bill as they are truly two completely different environments. We respectfully request that the Council include **Renewing Montgomery** in any discussions regarding trees in down-County areas. In addition we ask that you recommend us to any citizen group concerned with the rebuilding of our older neighborhoods so that we might schedule a presentation.

Your consideration of this request is greatly appreciated. If there is anything we can do to help please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Mimi Brodsky Kress
Chair, Renewing Montgomery