

FRONT PAGE

Newsletter of the *Carroll County
Land Trust*; March 2012 edition.
Edmund R. "Ned" Cueman, Editor

ATTENTION!

*****HOLD THE DATE*****

Wednesday, April 18, 2012

MEMBERS ANNUAL MEETING

6:45 P.M. Meet & Greet

7:00 P.M. Invocation & Buffet
Meal.

Place: County Extension Office Bldg.
(end of Smith Ave.) Westminster, MD

Agenda:

- + Short Business Meeting
- + Agricultural Land Preservation Update
- + Commissioners Landowner Recognitions
- + Alice Mildred Shipley Award

See **RSVP** form enclosed if planning to attend)

2012 ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Members' Annual Contribution Slip is enclosed along with notice above of the upcoming Annual Meeting. Please don't forget to make your **annual tax deductible contribution** for **2012**. As always, your contribution is vital to helping the Carroll County Land Trust carry out its **mission** of helping to permanently preserve Carroll County's agricultural land. **Many thanks!**

Senate Bill 236

**A bill [mis-] entitled:
"Sustainable Growth and
Agricultural Preservation Act of
2012"**

**----which is really concerned with
limiting where new septic systems can
be used and installed**

As reported by the Associated Press, Wednesday March 28, 2012, in the *Carroll County Times*, the Maryland Senate has approved a bill to regulate where and how many new septic systems can be located and installed, especially in rural parts of the state. The purported motivation behind this act is to reduce Chesapeake Bay pollution.

Opponents of the legislation of which there are many statewide, contend the environmental advantages are minimal, the credibility of the legislation is flawed, and the legislation is counter intuitive to the state and counties' voluntary agricultural land preservation programs. These programs currently and historically have functioned successfully because they are structured to recognize a landowner's equity in his land as well as the financial realities of being able to farm; i.e. farming is a business.

Opponents of **S.B.236**, strongly contend that coercive state acts like this, have the effect of reducing the market value of a farmlandowner's land, and in turn, his or her equity in the land, making it even more difficult to farm and operate a farm business.

S.B. 236 is also about the State using **pre-emptive land use control** over the counties. According to the Associated

Press article, Joseph Bryce, Governor O'Malley's Chief legislative counsel said discretionary state funding and programs are incentives for counties to **fall in line with the plan** [PlanMaryland recently adopted by Governor O'Malley] which is also at issue with many counties in Maryland. Most rural counties in Maryland, including Carroll, have been working together to secure amendments to S.B. 236 along with the Maryland Association of Counties (MACO). However, the Bill is now in the House of Delegates. The ramifications of the Bill as it now stands remains to be seen and the outcome of any final legislation will not be known until the House and legislative adoption process has been completed.

The General Assembly Session is schedule to end April 9 and the Carroll County Land Trust Annual Meeting is scheduled for April 18. An update on the outcome of this legislation and what it may portend for Carroll County and especially the County's Ag Preservation Program will be given at the Annual meeting. Likewise the next edition of *Front Page* will endeavor to keep members informed.

Happy Birthday—we're 21 years old!

As a local 501(c) 3 non-profit organization, the Carroll County Land Trust operates financially from individual contributions of its members and any sponsors. While it does not receive any operating funding from any government, it has been dedicated from its inception in 1991 to the present to doing everything it can to help the County reach its goal of 100,000 acres of permanently preserved farmland. Along with the Carroll County Farm Bureau

and the Grange, the Carroll County Land Trust serves as an advocate for the importance of permanent farmland preservation. It provides technical assistance without cost to eligible landowners volunteering to permanently preserve their land and will serve as a grantee and custodian of the easement either solely, or jointly with the County or Maryland Environmental Trust. Currently, the CCLT holds **38** easements totaling **2,438** acres of land (or **3.8** square miles of land).

USDA Federal Farm and Ranchland Protection Program

The Carroll County Land Trust is in the process of determining whether to apply for easement funds from USDA's Federal Farm and Ranchland Protection Program administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). As noted in previous newsletters, the Trust was successful in securing grant funds in prior years from USDA in excess of \$1.5 million dollars to match and leverage available county funds for the purchase of farm preservation easements in Carroll County. Board members Bernard Wentker and Ned Cueman are undertaking the leg work on this endeavor.

BEQUESTS

For those who wish to remember the Carroll County Land Trust in their wills, the following form is suggested:

*I give and bequest to the
Carroll County Land Trust, Inc., for its
general purpose the sum of \$_____.*

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