



January 23, 2014

Re: Ten Mile Creek Area Limited Master Plan Amendment

Dear County Executive Leggett and County Council Members:

The Montgomery County Water Quality Advisory Group is compelled to provide the following statement that represents the consensus of our group on the important issue of the Clarksburg Stage 4 Master Plan and the potential impacts on Ten Mile Creek.

Who we are. The Water Quality Advisory Group (WQAG) is composed of a cross section of Montgomery County -- including representatives of businesses, the academic and scientific community, environmental professionals and the public at large. Our charter is to stay engaged in issues that have a direct impact on water quality and provide advice or feedback to the County Executive.

Current status of county streams. The County is hard pressed to improve the many failing streams down-County; this is an important point when considering the County's sustainable future. Ten Mile Creek is a reference stream for the western portion of the County. Consequently, as one of the highest-quality streams in the County, this reference stream plays an important role in assessing the health of more-impacted streams.

Knowledge obtained through the study of reference streams is used to characterize streams County-wide for baseline ecological conditions, development of surface-water quality criteria, identification of water-quality-impaired streams, performance of County-wide water quality assessments and the formulation of restoration goals for environmentally degraded water bodies.

Values. The decision about the extent and degree to which a reference stream should be degraded is basically a question of values. County Executive Leggett has already publicly committed to forgoing development on the two county-owned parcels in the Ten Mile Creek vicinity. The County will not build an addition to the Clarksburg Detention Center, nor will it develop the County-owned Clarkwood site. We applaud that decision and feel it is a positive expression of the values of the County Executive.

Our recommendation. We recommend that the Council support developments near established transit centers and discourage development in environmentally sensitive areas -- unless the latter development is done in a manner that will not degrade water quality.

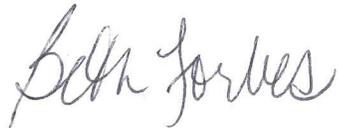
WATER QUALITY ADVISORY GROUP

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The County should balance the benefits of potential development with the environmental costs of that development and ensure that appropriate action is taken so that Ten Mile Creek maintains its reference stream designation. The County, and we as a society, must work together to protect the environment for our joint benefit and for future generations.

Therefore, the WQAG supports a decision on the development within the Ten Mile Creek watershed that (1) considers all of the interests involved, (2) is based on good science, and (3) takes into account the social values of ecological protection and sensible development. We believe that the common good demands no less.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beth Forbes".

Beth Forbes
WQAG Co-Chair