



Builder Bulletin



At the October general membership meeting, the FCBA hosted a forum for all candidates running for Alderman of Frederick City. The candidates answered questions about the recent annexations and their views about land use and permitting issues.

CHRIS SMARIGA

LAND USE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Congratulations to all of you that have made it through the year. When it all started, we knew it would be a long and busy one yet much different from years past. It was different and we are fortunate to be here. I know everyone is doing what they can to keep their doors open, to contribute to our organization and to help the Community and I appreciate your efforts. We will have to focus just as hard next year and let's hope things begin to turn in our favor.

We have seen much change at the County in terms of land use policies. The Commissioner's continue to work on the Comprehensive Plan and have adopted numerous text amendments such as those involving Road and School adequate public facilities. Each of these will have a profound impact on the developments we try to get approved; both commercial and residential ones. Let's hope the impact is not so severe that most projects cannot move ahead but that is yet to be determined.

In the recent City election we have seen the introduction of a completely new Mayor and Board of Aldermen. They have serious decisions to make involving the budget, yet cannot lose sight of the sewer agreement with the County nor the necessary revisions to the Land Management Code. They are essential to the City's future success. As always, we will be as helpful as possible to educate our decision

makers and try to ensure the economic success of the City. It is a great place to conduct business, live and play and it is where growth should be encouraged.

The Land Use Council is fortunate enough to have a great board that stays involved in all of these local issues and will continue to do so next year. We have been greatly assisted at the State level by Katie Maloney. Our FCBA staff has created weekly updates for our members which is a tremendous advantage to us all. It is an understatement to say things keep getting harder for our industry but they do, and we are equipped with the right people to respond. However, there is a lot of ground to cover. If you care as much as we do about our Community please stay involved. Have a great Holiday!

Members of the Year



Builder of the Year
Ross Ostrander



Associate of the Year
Brendan Madden

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**2010 FCBA
Meeting Calendar**

JANUARY

- General Membership Meeting – *Sponsored by LUC*, Tuesday, Jan. 5, 7:30 a.m. (State Legislative Update)

FEBRUARY

- General Membership Meeting – *Sponsored by SMC*, Tuesday, Feb. 9, 9:00 a.m. (TBD)
- Maryland State Legislative Luncheon
- LUC 20th Anniversary Celebration Dinner – February 25

MARCH

- General Membership Meeting – *Sponsored by FCBA*, Thursday, March 4, 11:30 a.m. (Economic Forecast)
- Home Show – Saturday, March 20 & Sunday, March 21

APRIL

- General Membership Meeting – *Sponsored by PRO*, Thursday, April 8, 4:30 p.m. (TBD)

MAY

- Awards of Excellence Dinner – *Sponsored by SMC*, Wednesday, May 5, 5:30 p.m.

JUNE

- General Membership Meeting – *Sponsored by LUC*, Tuesday, June 1, 7:30 a.m. (State Legislative Wrap Up)

JULY

- General Membership Meeting – *Sponsored by FCBA*, Thursday, July 15, 4:30 p.m. (Crab Feast)

AUGUST

- Annual FCBA Golf Classic – Friday, Aug. 6
- General Membership Meeting – *Sponsored by PRO*, Thursday, Aug. 12, 4:30 p.m. (TBD)

SEPTEMBER

- General Membership Meeting – *Sponsored by SMC*, Tuesday, Sept. 7, 9:00 a.m. (David Harper)

OCTOBER

- General Membership Meeting – *Sponsored by LUC*, Tuesday, October 5, 7:30 a.m. (County Election Forum)
- Choose Green Expo – Saturday, October 23 & Sunday, October 24

NOVEMBER

- General Membership Meeting – *Sponsored by FCBA*, Thursday, Nov. 11, 4:30 p.m. (Election & Silent Auction)

DECEMBER

- Installation Dinner – *Sponsored by FCBA*, Tuesday, Dec. 7, 5:30 p.m.



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SASHA SCAUN

SALES & MARKETING COUNCIL
PRESIDENT

Whew! I think many of us are relieved to see this year coming to a close. All the talk these past few years was that 2009 would begin the “beginning of the end” and that in 2010 we would begin to see real recovery. From what salespeople, realtors and lenders are telling all of us, we are seeing recovery and looking forward to a smoother ride.

We had some great speakers this year and I wanted to take a moment to recognize them and reflect on their expertise.

Jay Schulman of New Home Sales Connection who provided insight on Mystery Home Shopping.

Hanley Wood who gave us an awesome market update through the 2nd quarter.

Nancy Gainer, a national speaker who shed light on “Generational Selling”

The amazing David Harper whose inspirational words always measure up!

Carol Buckalew of Omni Homes Staging – a tool no one should be without!

Finally, Ken Wenhold of Metro Study who gave us great news and a hopeful look into the coming months!

We did discover over this past year that price did matter! As we learned at our meeting in

November those homes that are selling are town homes ranging from \$220,000-\$300,000 and single family homes from \$300-400,000. However we are seeing resurgence in the word “*value*” rather than just price. Additionally, we follow the Northern Virginia market by about 6 months. That market is well under way to recovery, even seeing price increases so we are expecting that to turn our direction in the coming months.

We saw a busy spring and even in the typical slow summer months, sales were to be had. The tax credit deadline of November 30 certainly brought people out of the woodwork and with the extension until July 1 of 2010 and expansion to other buyers – we are expecting to see more sales in what we consider typical slower months.

I have spent a lot of time of late shopping other builders and seeing who “does it right” and who still could use some training! I firmly believe that customer service and understanding your customer and their mind-set is the key to creating a positive selling experience for everyone!

We are looking forward to a new format of meetings in 2010 with Land Use Council, PRO, FCBA and SMC all contributing towards and sponsoring different the meetings. This brings new and different faces to our meetings and provides wonderful networking opportunities. At our last meeting, someone came up to me

and said “After all of these meetings, I just met some people and received a ton of new business. It has been so worth it!” That makes me so happy to see that we are sharing our respective trades with one another. That is what the FCBA and SMC are about!

Please do not forget Internet marketing is the way to go! Facebook, Twitter, Google key words, etc are not just the wave of the future – they are here now! Even if you are just heading to a meeting at our company’s main office, you can let people know. Keep getting your name out there as much as you can and people begin to relate.

I want to thank everyone for voting me to continue my reign as President. I look forward to doing all I can to help and continue a positive environment in 2010. Special thanks to my outgoing board: Betsy Cain Todd Walker, Jim McCormack, Gene Buckalew, Lynn Shanton, Juan Rodriguez, Leigh Sutton, Sarah Fretwell, and of course...Hugh Gordon! My new board Gene Buckalew, Vice President; Hugh Gordon, Treasurer; Shannon Hotchkiss, Secretary, Betsy Cain, Jim McCormack, Todd Walker, Lynn Shanton. We look forward to a great 2010 and have a lot of wonderful ideas to jump start the year!

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! See you next year!



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RECOGNITION, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BOOST MORALE AND PRODUCTIVITY

By Dennis DuRoff, Business Coach.
Courtesy of NAHB.

While layoffs are painful for all involved, they are a necessary reality of the recession and housing downturn. After the layoffs, however, it's more important than ever for owners and managers to do what they can to keep the remaining staff members at peak performance and maintain a positive mood in the workplace.

Two relatively simple ways to boost mood and performance are recognition and acknowledgement. Motivational expert Frederick Herzberg reported in the Harvard Business Review that recognition is 300% more important to motivate employees than the size of their salary or compensation package.

While most builders I've spoken with believe that they effectively recognize their staff members, most employees tell me they are under-appreciated for the work they do. Who's right? It doesn't matter. What does matter, however, is how effectively owners and managers can bridge that gap in perception and what steps they are willing to take.

Strategies for Acknowledging Employees

Builders can choose from a number of ways to recognize and acknowledge their staff members. Regardless of the form, however, be sure that the acknowledgment and recognition are deserved because acknowledging staff members for half-

hearted efforts and marginal results diminishes the power of recognition.

The following are several strategies for recognizing employees. Initiate the ones you are most comfortable with first, and then build from there:

Don't overlook small ways to acknowledge.

Don't wait for the big event to recognize staff members. When deserved, acknowledge them often and in small ways. An e-mail, quick call or even an "attaboy" in the hallway are simple ways to show that you appreciate their efforts.

Acknowledge in public. Public recognition inspires staff members and highlights behavior for others to model. Use memos, company newsletters, staff meetings or any company gathering to recognize individuals and their achievements.

Acknowledge in private. Employees also appreciate when their efforts are acknowledged privately.

Recognize employees in small ways. Send an employee a "thank you" note when warranted, or share a cup of coffee or a simple hand shake. Make recognizing others a part of your daily conversation, thinking and action.

Ask rather than tell. Develop the habit of asking questions rather than telling employees everything you think they need to know. This creates an atmosphere of collaboration and is also a powerful form of recognition because employees feel

respected and see that their opinions are valued.

Recognize an individual in relation to the company's core values. For instance, when an employee provides exceptional service, acknowledge that by saying something like, "That's exactly what we mean when we talk about customer service our way."

Double the impact of recognition.

Recognize both who your employee is as well as what he did in relation to his positive traits. For example, tell your employee, "You did a great job running the meeting last week. It demonstrated your people skills and leadership ability. Those are qualities we value."

Delegate to employees. Delegate responsibilities that expand your employees' contributions. Effective delegation increases trust and gives employees the sense that they are growing with the company.

Follow up and follow through on all promises. Under-promise and over-deliver. When follow-up on promises is consistent and timely, it demonstrates respect and value for the people you manage.

As with most business strategies, effective recognition works equally well outside of the workplace. Since the recession has taken its toll on more than your business and employees, take a moment to acknowledge loved ones and let them know how much they contribute to your life.

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Area Building

Special reviews from Strategic Marketing Group newsletters



The following notes and discussion come from my November 2009 newsletters. Call me at 301-831-6536 or e-mail at lshanton@edurostream.com if you want details about this column.

Residential Construction

Permits seem to be leveling, builders, PUDs, and residential types:

- **Advantage Homes.** Urbana Highlands [SFH/TH]
- **Dan Ryan.** Canal Run [SFH].
- **Drees Homes.** Canal Run [SFH/TH].
- **KHov.** Sun Meadow [SFH].
- **NVR.** Adamstown Commons/ Cannon Bluff/Clover Ridge/Glenbrook/Signature Club/Villages of Urbana. [CO/DU/SFH/TH].

Building Permits Picking up in County

fredericknewspost.com, November 22, 2009

The number of building permits issued so far this year is nothing to shout about, according to a local housing professional, even though Frederick

Table 1. Builders/Subdivisions (October 2009)

Builder	Subdivision
Advantage Homes	Urbana Highlands
Boyer Construction Inc	Carriage Hill
CMH Homes Inc	Emmitsburg
Dan Ryan Builders	Canal Run
Drees Homes	Canal Run
Insignia Homes	Canal Run
Jefferson House Builders	Frederick
K. Hovnanian	Sun Meadow
NVR	Adamstown Commons
NVR	Cannon Bluff
NVR	Clover Ridge
NVR	Glenbrook
NVR	Signature Club
NVR	Villages of Urbana
Robinson, Stephen	Frederick
Sheilds, Mary & David	Rocks & Stones subdivision
Stewart, Shila & Jessie	Barnett subdivision
Zavos Architecture & Design	Hope VI

Chart 1. Frederick City/County Residential Permits (Jan-Oct 2009)

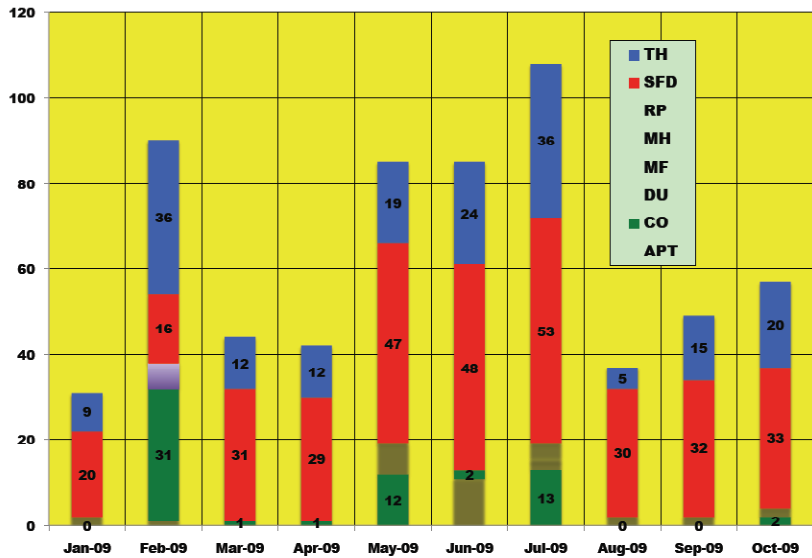


Table 2. Residential Permits (January-October 2009)

Month	APT	CO	DU	MF	MH	RP	SFD	TH	Totals
Jan-09	0	0	2	0	0	0	20	9	31
Feb-09	1	31	0	6	0	0	16	36	90
Mar-09	0	1	0	0	0	0	31	12	44
Apr-09	0	1	0	0	0	0	29	12	42
May-09	0	12	7	0	0	0	47	19	85
Jun-09	11	2	0	0	0	0	48	24	85
Jul-09	0	13	2	0	1	3	53	36	108
Aug-09	0	0	2	0	0	0	30	5	37
Sep-09	0	0	2	0	0	0	32	15	49
Oct-09	0	2	2	0	0	0	33	20	57
Nov-09									0
Dec-09									0
Totals	12	62	17	6	1	3	339	188	628

Source. Frederick City/County published data in P+D News (November 2009)

County's building industry seems to be rebounding.

John Lynn Shanton, president of Strategic Marketing Group, said while housing construction is down 10 percent nationally, "I see slow, but solid residential construction in five counties."

Those counties are Frederick, Howard and Washington in Maryland, Loudoun in Virginia and Berkeley in West Virginia.

Building permits are indicators of new home construction. Shanton, whose business sells data to the construction industry, said the economy has taken its toll on builders, including putting some out of business. A glut of foreclo-

sures has hit the building industry hard. With prices at historic lows for existing homes, appraisals for new homes have been depressed.

In Frederick County, 628 building permits have been secured through October, compared to 484 for the same period in 2008. A total of 545 residential permits were issued in 2008 in Frederick County.

In comparison, 1,054 residential permits were issued in Howard County through September; 139 in Washington County through October and 1,431 in Loudoun County through August. In Berkeley County, 487 permits were issued through October.

Shanton uses data from individual county planning and permit departments and didn't have up-to-date data for other counties.

"The drop in starts can be partially attributed to builders awaiting word of the extension of the home buyer's tax credit," said **Denise Jacoby**, executive director of the Frederick County Builders Association. That was echoed by the National Association of Home Builders. "Tight acquisition, development and construction lending, in addition to faulty appraisals and the local moratorium, continue to exacerbate progress," Jacoby said.

New construction in Frederick County was valued at about \$107.6 million through September, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce. Of that, \$99.5 million was single-family housing.

That compares to \$193.3 million total in Montgomery County and \$24.6 million in Washington County for the same period.

The majority of permits — 33 — were for single-family homes in October at 33, versus 20 townhomes. Seven single-family homes were being constructed in October at **Canal Run** at Point of Rocks, five were at by **Sun Meadow** in Walkersville. Eight townhomes were constructed in October at **Glenbrook** in Middletown, six each at **Canal Run** and **Urbana Highlands**.

A survey by the National Home Builders Association, taken prior to the extension of the tax credit for homebuyers, showed confidence among builders remained low. The extension, which not only covers first-time buyers, but some who have previously owned homes, is seen as a positive sign for the industry.

Another factor hitting the local building industry is the tight supply of lots in Frederick County. Some builders may have paid too much for lots, or not purchased them when available.

Lots Available

The latest residential lots available published by the county — 2,793 in the eight Planning Regions. Some are worth investigating in 2010. I have complete information on these lots...call me!!!

Table 3. Frederick Resale Homes (October 2008 & October 2009)

Variable	Oct-08	Oct-09	% Change
TSDV	\$47,025,319	\$57,727,075	22.76%
ASP	\$276,620	\$256,565	-7.25%
MSP	\$234,500	\$233,000	-0.64%
TUS	170	225	32.35%
SFD ASP	\$341,719	\$313,679	-8.21%
SFA ASP	\$214,717	\$192,464	-10.36%
ADM	157	121	-22.93%
ALPS	\$309,899	\$283,934	-8.38%

Legend

TSDV = Total Sold Dollar Volume. ASP = Average Sales Price (all types). MSP = Median Sales Price. TUS = Total Units Sold. SFD/SFA ASP = Average Sales Price (Detached/Attached). ADM = Average Days on the Market. ALPS = Average List Price for Sold.

Table 4. Resale Homes — Total Units Sold (October 2008 & October 2009)

Variable	Oct-08	Oct-09	Diff	%
Berkeley	71	118	47.0	39.83%
Carroll	82	132	50.0	37.88%
Franklin	99	118	19.0	16.10%
Frederick	170	225	55.0	24.44%
Howard	191	267	76.0	28.46%
Jefferson	45	62	17.0	27.42%
Loudoun	451	426	(25.0)	-5.87%
Montgomery	379	420	41.0	9.76%
Washington	89	112	23.0	20.54%
Totals	1,577	1,880	303	16.1%

Table 5. Resale Homes — Average Days on the Market (October 2008 & October 2009)

Variable	Oct-08	Oct-09	Diff	%
Berkeley	123	88	(35.0)	-39.77%
Carroll	130	128	(2.0)	-1.56%
Franklin	136	133	(3.0)	-2.26%
Frederick	157	121	(36.0)	-29.75%
Howard	110	79	(31.0)	-39.24%
Jefferson	148	97	(51.0)	-52.58%
Loudoun	97	61	(36.0)	-59.02%
Montgomery	90	56	(34.0)	-60.71%
Washington	184	158	(26.0)	-16.46%

Source. Monthly Trend Indicators published on the internet by Metropolitan Regional Information System (November 2009) and P+D News.

**Note — These are Resale Homes/not new homes!!!
As these homes are sold, the demand for new homes will increase! 2010 will be even better!!!**

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2009 FCBA Year-End Report

The FCBA kicked off 2009 with the hiring of a new Executive Officer, Denise Jacoby, as well as a lobbyist, Katie Maloney, who has been representing the FCBA at the local government level and supporting the Land Use Council in their initiatives.

2009 was also the year the association celebrated its 50th anniversary. At the Awards of Excellence banquet, an annual affair where members are recognized for their accomplishments in the past year, the honorees included the FCBA's very first President, Bill Brosius. A slide show brought back many memories of past membership events, and guests were entertained by Past President Howard Payne and former Executive Officer Bev Shelton, who recounted some stories from the FCBA's past.

As always, the association had many successful events to help members promote their business to other members and the public. The Home Show had a record year, and the 35th Annual FCBA Golf Classic was one of the biggest tournaments in town. Building Connections offered a direct exchange between builder and associate members, a New Member Breakfast introduced new members to association leaders and each other, and monthly gatherings helped build enduring business relationships.

To communicate with members more often and more timely, the Building Buzz weekly e-newsletter was developed. For its part, the Land Use Council started sending out a weekly Land Use update to keep their members informed of what's happening at City and County meetings. The FCBA website served as an interactive medium for

members to list and search for jobs, bids, and discounts, as well as providing industry and association news.

Expanding FCBA's Green Building commitment, the association became a NAHB Green Affiliate and started working on the Choose Green Expo. The Choose Green Expo, to be held in the fall of 2010, will help educate the public on green products and services to promote a sustainable future. A website, www.choosegreenexpo.org, was launched this summer in preparation for next year's show.

As part of the green effort, the Professional Remodelers Council educated remodelers on the use of solar water heaters to reduce a home's carbon footprint. Also, following a long-standing tradition, members participated in the annual Rebuilding Together project to fix up homes of the needy.

The Legislative Committee, with the help of Katie Maloney, worked hard to track close to 200 of the bills the Maryland State Assembly was considering this year. From environmental and land use issues, to tax initiatives and professional guidelines, the committee gave industry input and helped shape legislative proposals. In February, the committee hosted a luncheon with the Frederick County Delegation in Annapolis where members could meet with representatives and get a first-hand report on the happenings in the Legislative Session.

The Land Use Council provided input in the APFO/Roads process and made sure the County approved the 3 year vesting rule. Their general membership meetings featured local politicians and government agency representatives for regulation updates and an open exchange of ideas.

In their monthly meetings, SMC offered motivational and practical information for sales people of all backgrounds. Members could learn how consumers' finances, expectations, and attitudes have changed, and how to use the internet, home staging, and housing data to their best benefit. Speakers included the nationally renowned Nancy Gainer, Brian Flook, and David Harper.

A Commercial Builders Committee was formed to bring residential and commercial builders together and develop a stronger base to lobby for common interests.

On the educational front, the association helped members on their way to earn their Certified Graduate Builder or Remodeler designation.

In 2009, FCBA members saved money on both business and personal purchases through Member-to-Member discounts and the buying power of NAHB, and with the Home Builders Purchasing Program revenue sharing agreement, members' direct savings also helped support the association.

While 2009 was certainly a challenging year for all of us, we are happy to report that although our membership numbers dropped slightly, it was not nearly as dramatic as some neighboring associations have reported. (Frederick County members are used to working in a tough business climate!) Overall, we managed to accomplish a great deal with very limited resources, thanks to many of our members who volunteer their time, and to the financial stability provided by our esteemed Premier Club Members. We thank you all for your support throughout the year, and we look forward to a strong 2010.

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These are the members who make the FCBA stronger by recruiting new members. Thank you!

Would you like to become a Spike Club member? For each new member you sign up, you earn one point. Contact the FCBA office for details.

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Spotlight on Members



On November 12, **Advantage Homes** celebrated the official opening of three fully merchandised Energy Star-rated models in Brunswick Crossing. The opening drew over 500 visitors to the new community.

After the Urbana Library's garden was destroyed by vandals, **Clearwater Landscaping** owner **Mike Rempe** redesigned and replaced the fountain with a new bubbling water feature free of charge.

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