

## **Montgomery County Redistricting Commission to Hold Public Hearing on Thursday, Sept., 1, on Proposed Council District Map Changes**

- Release ID: 11-180
- Release Date: 8/17/2011
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- From: Council Office

ROCKVILLE, Md., August 16, 2011—The Montgomery County Redistricting Commission will hold a public hearing at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 1, in the Third Floor Hearing Room of the County Council Office Building in Rockville. The Commission, which has previously held five public meetings, is working on the once-in-a-decade task of redistricting the five County Council districts.

The Council Office Building is located at 100 Maryland Ave. in Rockville. Residents can speak at the hearing without signing up in advance. However, those who sign up in advance will be permitted to speak earliest. To sign up in advance, call 240-777-7803.

Commission members Henry Kahwaty and Don Spence have each proposed new maps that will be the focus of the public hearing. The 2010 Census showed significant gains in population in the Germantown and Clarksburg areas in the northern part of the County, both of which are now in District 2. New maps will apportion the County into five districts—each with approximately 194,000 residents. Each of the proposed new maps differ significantly from the current district divisions.

The mission of the Commission (as required by the County Charter) is to recommend five Council district boundaries based upon information provided in the 2010 Census.

The proposals by Commission member Kahwaty (a Republican) and Commission member Spence (a Democratic) each seek to place municipalities in single districts and communities such as Olney, Wheaton and Four Corners in single district. However, each plan takes significantly different approaches on how to achieve balanced districts.

Appointed by the County Council in January 2011, the Commission was tasked to present a redistricting plan and report to the County Council by Oct. 3. Within 30 days after receiving the plan, the Council must hold a public hearing on it. If within 90 days after presentation of the Commission's plan no other law reestablishing the boundaries of the Council districts has been enacted, then the plan, as submitted, will become law.

The County Charter requires districts to be substantially equal in population, compact, and contiguous. The new districts will be in effect for the 2014 Council election.

The Commission members include Lee Annis Jr., Cherri Branson, Henry Kahwaty, Carmen Ortiz Larsen, Jacqueline Phillips, Jonathan Shurberg, Don Spence, Jason Tai, and Patti Jo Witham. Mr. Tai is chair of the Commission and Mr. Kahwaty is the vice-chair.

Montgomery County's population of 971,777, according to the 2010 Census, makes it again the most populous jurisdiction in the state. Prince George's County, the second most populous County, has almost 110,000 fewer people. In terms of total population, Montgomery County grew more than any other jurisdiction since 2000, with an increase of 98,439 residents. The County's growth is equal to the combined population growth of Baltimore and Anne Arundel Counties.

A map of the current Council districts can be viewed at:

[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/csltmpl.asp?url=/Content/council/mem/district\\_map.asp](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/csltmpl.asp?url=/Content/council/mem/district_map.asp)

The Commission has established a Web page to help residents stay current on its activities. The page can be accessed at:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/csltmpl.asp?url=/content/council/redistricting/index.asp>

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