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**Panelists:** Barry Tevelow, RestoreUS.org founder  
Rebecca Miller, Glenelg High School Senior

**Candidates:** Harry Dunbar  
Chris Merdon  
Ken Ulman

(Does not include candidates' opening 3 minute statements)

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BT: Before we get to specific issues, please share your perspectives on the purpose of government.

HD: (I have) 40 years experience within government. Government. The people that run the government, that are selected by their electors are supposed to listen to the electors and provide what the electors want or need. My two opponents have not done that in the area of growth. We've had numerous local neighborhood groups form, spending time and treasurers struggling against growth. And their electors are not listening to them, giving developers what they want, more density, overcrowded schools. I want the opportunity to clean up their mess. They've had an opportunity. From my point of view, they have failed us. I'm a taxpayer in Howard county I do not like what they've done in regards to growth. I see growth and public schools as the two most important issues of this campaign. They've had an opportunity and they have failed. I'm asking you to give me an opportunity to straighten their mess out. Thank you.

CM: First, by the question, I think you mean local government. I stated before I think the purpose of government overall is to first help those who can't help themselves. We have people in society who need government for assistance in providing shelter, food and the basic services. So I'm always cognizant of that first. Beyond that, our government is there to protect the citizens, to provide a quality education for our citizens and also to manage growth. We can do a lot more in managing growth. Since I've been on the council serving district one, as a council member I was able to successfully get five new schools to solve the overcrowding problem that we've experienced just the northeast. Since I was on the council we've been able to provide a number of new road improvements to help with congestion in the northeast. Not only in the northeast

but that's also happened countywide. One minute is a little tough to answer all questions about what the county's government's role is. But, to manage growth, to provide an excellent education system and to protect citizens.

KU: It's a great question. I actually was at Clemens Crossing Elementary school yesterday talking to a group of fifth graders who were doing a lesson about the common good. And I think that gets to the root of what government should be about and I think Mr. Merdon gave some good answers as well. But, I think it's important to know that government is in the business of providing for the common good so we were talking to students about well even people who don't have kids in schools pay money into a pot that pays for schools because we believe it's important to educate kids.. We believe it's important to have fire stations even if you don't need them. And so, when it comes to land use, when it comes to quality of life. It's important to listen to communities and to provide solutions for those communities. It's also important to understand the overall impact on any decision you've made. Now, let me just make one other comment. I was very surprised in Mr. Merdon's opening that he referred to my belief in quality of life. Let me say that that answer came from someone who obviously has experience in cutting from the budget all the things that I mentioned. Let me also say, my family created the Ulman cancer fund, a non-profit that runs support services, I see someone rolling their eyes, but real quick, when my younger brother was diagnosed with cancer, we formed a non-profit, that we founded in this community he now works for Lance Armstrong. I served on the Board of Grassroots the

Grassroots crises center in Howard County and for someone who has never served on the board of any non-profits in Howard County to make a point that somehow I don't understand the role that non-profits play in this community, let me tell you, I understand more than anyone up here the role of non-profits play in this community. And I have experience doing that. Thank you.

RM: We hear a lot of managed growth, smart growth and slow growth. Many issues seem to come back to growth. Is growth inherently good or bad and could you point to a growth model that's been utilized elsewhere that you would like to see repeated here in Howard County?

CM: Growth is good when it is predictable. Howard County residents want to be able to move to Howard County, pick a piece of property, look around them, and understand what's going to happen to them, happen to their immediate property and the surrounding community. Growth becomes bad when the rules start to change and people feel like their constantly battling county government from zoning changes. Here is an example, on North Chatham Rd. there is a piece of property that was zoned to have 8 houses. The County Council, during the comprehensive rezoning process, changed that to 82 homes. Councilman Ulman voted for that proposal. So the family that was living next door contacted us (my assistant Terry who is in the back row here) and talked to Terry and was very concerned. An elderly couple, they lived in Ellicott City their entire life and they always anticipated the property next to them was going to be developed. They always knew that, but they thought, according to the rules the 7 to 8 houses they expected. Now they were faced with 82 units. That effects their quality of life. Again, Councilman Ulman disregarded their feelings and approved that package anyway. We need to be more sensitive to the type of zoning we are approving and making sure it doesn't affect our quality of life, it doesn't continue to overcrowd our schools, it doesn't continue to congest our roads. And that's a big problem with the zoning changes that Councilman Ulman has approved during the comprehensive zoning and I look forward to talking more about that.

KU: It's a good question. I get the feeling we could go back and forth all night and I could mention my opponent voted for the redevelopment of the corner Freetown Road and Cedar Lane and changed his mind

and voted against it, or when he voted against the Blue String development on Route 1 and then last week voted against it, but I don't want to get into that any more will have six months to do that. Let's talk about growth and you asked about whether there's a model that could work better and I think that's a great question because I think we are all struggling, is growth good or bad? We all live in houses that used to be a farm, it used to be something other than the house. We all go to work in offices that used to be something before our office was built on. So, growth isn't good or bad but poorly planned growth is bad and well planned growth can be good. And so growth when the infrastructure is there to handle it can provide the amenities and the good things that can come along with it can be good. We need to engage citizens in a new way at an earlier stage. We need to have community driven planning. When we first got elected, the Rouse Company came to the zoning board and requested hundreds and hundreds of units in downtown Columbia and told us that no matter what we did they were going to close Merriweather Post Pavillion. And we said no and we fought to save Merriweather Post Pavillion. And Merriweather is going to have the greatest year of its history this year, I believe. We wanted a great plan, at least I wanted a great plan, so we started a community based planning process that has worked well in some fashion and in some things hasn't worked as well. And we are still working through the plan. But, for the first time we engaged people. We asked citizens, what do you want. I think that is remarkable it was the first time we did it and we are moving towards a model to engage citizens at an earlier stage at a more detailed level and that is the only way we are going to get any more growth that we can handle. Thank you.

HD: I have not seen a model that I would adopt. However, I feel that these two gentleman are responsible for the most growth Howard County has seen in its history, during their terms in office. I would like to have an opportunity to do something about that. For example, Doughoregan. My sense is that they both support the development of Doughoregan for between 200-300 homes on that site. I don't want to see that site disparaged with homes. My recommendation for that site would be to have our U.S. Senators, our U.S. Congressman to write a special bill to purchase the property and make it a National Park. By doing that we don't waste Howard

County taxpayer money in paying \$40,000 per acre on that property. I'm against extending the water and sewer to Doughoregan, and I feel my opponents support that effort. I'm opposed to extending the water and sewer on Trotter Rd. The Trotter Rd. area in which my opponent, Mr. Ulman resides in, he's not hearing his constituency. They do not want development on Trotter Rd. Historic, beautiful old historic Howard County road they are destroying it. Also, the entity in Elkridge, I oppose the water and sewer to the property that's under discussion, Belmont, Thank you sir, nobody seems to know, the County Executive didn't seem to know the developer had slipped in \$1million, he expected to build senior housing on the site. I mean the community was not unaware of that, but the community smelled something, they smelled a skunk and they fought and they struggled to overturn that. And that's why I'm running for Howard County Executive because I support the various community organizations that have been struggling against these two gentleman's policies and our present County Executive policies. Thank you.

BT: Recently, County Executive Robey faced allegations that the county's web site is being used to promote his own political agenda. The county has a PR department, the school system has a PR dept., HCC has a PR dept.. How should the government use taxpayer money to get a message out? What is proper or improper usage of taxpayer money for PR?

KU: I think there's a fine line especially as you move into election season. I think something you may do in a non-election year, in an election year it may seem political even when it's not. So, if you see an announcement about a new piece of legislation, for instance, in an election year all those things are viewed through a political lens. What I would suggest is, that if it is appropriate for the county council to have a separate web site or separate content that's a decision which should be made by the next county council. I think any decision that's made over the next 6 months by any of us, quite frankly, will be viewed through a political lens and that would be unfortunate because there may be merit to looking at the way the web site is currently delivered. But unfortunately, for the next 6 months, or fortunately depending on what your perspective is, I think things will be seen through a political lens.

HD: I would agree with Mr. Ulman on what he said on that matter. One of the very few things I would agree on with Mr. Ulman. Thank you

CM: I agree with Mr. Ulman. It becomes a little bit more difficult in the political season to see what was truly used for government purposes and what was used for election purposes. We had a good discussion about the use of the web site and I think I led the discussion on that. The discussion was really framed as executive branch vs. legislative branch. And in Howard County we have a very strong executive branch, but the legislative branch is an equal partner in government and should have equal rights on the web site. It should be as important to know how the County Executive feels about a property tax cut as how the County Council feels about a property tax cut. So, I think that's really how the debate started and transformed into another issue about campaigning. But, as long as we are on the topic of web sites, I've worked very hard as a county council member to make sure that many government documents were posted to the web as much as possible. In fact, back in, I'm going to say 2000, I don't remember the exact year, I sponsored legislation that passed that required County Government to put more county documents up on the web site, so if you were up at 2 o'clock in the morning and you wanted to find out more about a development happening in your community, you could go on-line and find out. We've got some amazing tools on the county web site. Now you can go on, type your address and find out within a certain radius of your own house, how many developments are happening in your community or just outside your community. It empowers you as a resident to know more about county government. You can do more things on-line -permits etc. So, It's a really powerful tool, you shouldn't shy away from using it and I think Howard County residents have really benefitted from the amount of material that has been put out on the web site.

BT: I do have a followup. You've framed this in the form of a political season so it is very difficult and I certainly accept that. But, forget the political season, how about just any time, any day. When is it appropriate to use taxpayer money for a PR dept. What they put out, how they put it out, is it informational what should be going out there, anybody?

KU: I think it's important for the government to let its citizenry know what it's doing. So, there's lots, I mean it's important to let people know how to do recycling.

BT: Well, let me go to something specific. Planning and zoning covered the meeting in Columbia. It was a four hour meeting and they only put out 3 hours of it. They didn't put out the last hour where the public spoke. How would your react to that?

KU: They should have.

CM: I wasn't aware of that. I think they clearly should have. Are they aware they did that?

BT: I think it has been rectified after a public outcry.

CM: Maybe it was a technical issue more than. I don't know the answer.

HD: That's one of the problems I've had with the Charrette process. I think it was driven by Department of Planning and Zoning and they tend to favor the developers perspective more so than the electors or the residents and that's again why I'm running for Howard County Executive because I don't think the DPZ should be doing that. They should be putting forth all the information that was brought before them and the community.

KU: The other thing is the community based planning process that we engaged in was new, and so I hope no one refused to or didn't make things available on purpose. My sense is they made the sort of things together that the county, the planners and folks did when they were working through and whether things were taped and not put out, my hope is that now they understand this is a community process and it was a new process, and if you go to the county's web site and click on Columbia Town Center Planning there's a lot of information. But, we can always do better.

RM: This question concerns emergency preparedness. Howard County's Community Emergency Response Team has been proactive in preparing for emergencies. But, as we saw in Katrina, an important component of any emergency preparedness must include ordinary citizens. What policies and procedures need to be implemented to ensure ordinary citizens fully understand, cooperate, and participate in preparing for emergencies?

HD: I'm not sure what the policies are that they are using now. A couple of weeks ago, a month ago, I attended a Howard County Citizens Advisory

Committee meeting. We toured the emergency facility where the calls came in and how they could track the cell phone calls, and track where the police are etc. etc. Being a federal employee I know there are federal rules and regulations in regards to that. I was embarrassed by how the federal government handled Katrina. However, Harry Dunbar as Howard County's next County Executive would look at and be conversant in federal, state, and local preparedness rules and regulations and ensure that our personnel are prepared to do what needs to be done. Thank you.

CM: I think the administration has done a good job in preparing the public for potential disasters. The whole CERN initiative. Last night I was at the Howard Community College and the health officer of Howard County put on a great presentation about the Avian flu. I learned an awful lot about that. The county government's role is to educate the citizens as much as possible about potential disasters that can happen to the citizenry and how to react to this. So, much of the disaster that happened in Katrina, potentially that could happen here, could not happen if the public is educated. So, we learned last night about if the Avian flu does hit the area, just stay home. Make sure you have water, nonperishable foods available. Wait it out. Don't interact with other humans outside of your immediate family. That goes such a long way in preventing the spread of the disease, the Avian flu. That would help contain as much as possible in Howard County, the state of Maryland and the United States, contain the disease as much as possible. So, I think the administration has done a good job in the public education. There's been obviously a tremendous amount of focus at the federal and state level also for emergency preparedness. I'm also disappointed in the response by all levels of government in the Katrina incident. It's my hope that Howard County government would be better prepared to react in such a natural disaster. I know the chief of police is here and he has worked very hard in the administration making sure Howard County government is prepared. When I take over as County Executive, I'm going to take plans already in the works and make sure they continue over the next four to eight years.

KU: I'd echo a lot of the things that have been said. To a certain extent this is obviously one of the most important functions of the next County Executive. I think our county, Jim Robey, Chief Livesay, Chief Herr, the Fire Chief, so many have done frankly, remarkable work. I think we are ahead of the curve in a lot of areas. The Horizon Foundation which is a non-profit which was formed when the hospital was sold to Johns Hopkins, are involved as well in the CERN - Citizens Emergency Response Network - I was at an event at the Howard County General Hospital, for example, where we got a medical corps where we can locate all the doctors in Howard County and get them to respond immediately when there are local disasters. There's so many things are going well. The volunteer center for Howard County has volunteers signed up ready in times of disaster. But, you know, I'm not sure we can ever be fully prepared. You can always do better. One of the first things I'm going to do as County Executive is to really start running through scenarios to see where any gaps may be, if any gaps exist. Obviously, our location, the proximity to Washington D.C. to the port of Baltimore, to NSA, to Ft. Meade. We are in the middle of a very important region and a very target rich region. Not only are we a target rich region but we may be in a vacation situation where people are fleeing Washington D.C. for instance and coming right to Howard County. How do we move them on? Now, I talked to the Chief originally and I said do we have the ability to throw a switch and get the State highways and everyone on board, manning intersections and highways and moving people on. He indicated yes we have a lot of things in place but we can always do better. It's critically important. Thank you.

RM: Describe your management style and how will you get people to go along with your initiatives?

CM: Management style: I think you have to lead by example. Your subordinates look at you as an example of what to be. I have the experience of working as a Vice-President of a Fortune 500 company I supervise approximately 100 people. We set goals for those people on an annual basis. They see me work as hard as possible to try and accomplish those goals. My management style includes reaching out to my employees letting them have input into the process and letting them take ownership of the goals that we are asking them to accomplish. If you just take your goals and push it down on them, they are going to resent it. We want people to embrace goals and that's what I plan on doing as Howard County Executive. Being a manager in the public sector is a lot

different than being a manager in the private sector. In the public sector, you are not only managing your direct staff, the directors of each department, but you are also in a way managing the public. It's as important to reach out to the public, both republicans, independents and democrats and gain their support before you move forward on an initiative, when possible. There are times, as a manager, you have to take a hard stand. You know what's right and sometimes the public doesn't agree with you, sometimes your employees don't agree with you, but you know what your vision is, is the right vision, you need to have a heavy hand in some circumstances to make sure those people understand what you are trying to accomplish and they buy into what you are trying to accomplish. As I said in my opening statement, it is so important that the County Executive has management experience. Managing one person in your career does not give you the management experience to lead an organization of two thousand county employees.

KU: Kenneth Lay had a lot of management experience and look what he did for Enron. What this is about, it's about character, it's about values, it's about leadership and it's about vision. Those are all things I'm very proud of and I believe strongly in all those attributes. I'll put those attributes against my opponents any day of the week in this election. I will tell you, as County Executive I've got a vision for this county a vision for this county that I stated earlier. Where we start doing things in a new way, start engaging people at an earlier level. We do more detailed planning. We engage people and make decisions in a way that's never been done before. I will have strong, strong directors in my departments. We will set out a course, set out a vision. The answer of that's the always we've always done it, just isn't going to fly. We have to think more creatively, more innovatively. I talked about it earlier. Why do we think we are better than other jurisdictions? Why do we think we are immune to the forces that have eroded schools, eroded public safety, eroded quality of life in so many other jurisdictions. Were not. Were not. But, we can be smarter, we can be more creative. I will set a course for this county embracing those factors, embracing those values. Setting the kind of vision where we'll move forward together. We've got some great leaders in this county who are in county government. I'll leave at that. Thank you.

HD: I have served our federal government for 33 years in personnel management and labor relations. I am the only candidate in Howard County who has public service, government experience. What I would do - I would ensure and I don't know if Howard County does this or not, I would ensure every director, every individual have a position which would outline precisely their duties and responsibilities. I would make no attempt to manage the electors of the community. I would not be heavy handed as one of my opponents has suggested. I would encourage everyone to come to the table and we work these things out. So the citizenry is satisfied and does not have to fight government. We have too many citizens today fighting local government over schools, over growth, over congestion, over pollution etc. I will run Howard County government like it's never been run before. Thank you.

BT: At the federal and state levels we see money pour into political campaigns from trial lawyers and health care practitioners. At the local level, developers provide huge amounts of money to campaigns. Perspectives as to why this is?

HD: I love this question. This is my favorite question. I am the slow growth candidate [www.slowgrowthdunbar.com](http://www.slowgrowthdunbar.com). I don't accept money from developers. My two opponents have both pockets full of development money. Just ride down any street in Howard County and you see the developers having their way. The development community is running Howard County through the officials they support financially. I wouldn't take a dime from a developer. I ask for the opportunity to be Howard County's next executive. Again, I'm going to fix the mess they've created in regards to our overcrowded schools and all this development without adequate facilities. Thank you

KU: We've got a lot of financial support from a lot of different people from a lot of different areas. When people support my candidacy they are supporting my vision for Howard County. My record speaks for itself as far as fighting development, poorly planned development, standing up and fighting tooth and nail to save Merriweather Post Pavillion from having big box stores from going in its place. Standing up and fighting against a number of different projects around the county. I'll let that record speak for itself.

CM: I think you need to provide balance when raising funds. I think I've done that. You will not see both

pockets full of development money. Do we accept contributions from the developer community? Absolutely. Does most of money comes from citizens? You better believe it. Over 66%, according to the Baltimore Sun although I disagree with their numbers, I think it's higher, but over 66% of the funds raised comes from residents not related to building or the development community at all. My favorite check to the campaign is a \$20 check from a resident. It's not a large check from a developer or from a business, That \$20 check means that person believes in me. They know I'm a good leader. I'm going to make the right decisions for them as a resident. They may not have the means to give the larger check, but they wanted to contribute to my campaign in some small way and those are the checks I like the best. In fact we had a check from a 17 year old a few weeks ago who said I'm not eligible to vote but here's my \$20 check. This is my vote for you. I love that check. I'll always remember that contribution and that personal touch that that 17 year old student, was that you? I thought it was you, Eric right? So, here you go, thank you. Those three sentences, I can't vote for you, but I support what you are doing, I want to continue to support what you are doing. So, it comes down to balance folks. Look at my record, compare my record with any of candidates up here in managing growth. You will see I'm, by far, the most well-managed growth candidate that's up here.

KU: We get a lot of checks in a lot of different amounts. My favorite check is a guy who lives right behind what used to be Crown's pub on Route 108, it's now the Iron Bridge Wine Bar. He's a guy who when the pub was first being converted he emailed every day and he was so upset with what was happening and I don't know, maybe we didn't respond quickly enough, he emailed calling us all sorts of name and he was so angry. We went out and met him and he realized I was on his side. We worked together and we crafted a wonderful compromise with all the owners, which allowed the restaurant to expand slightly but be a good neighbor. He just sent a contribution in. He called the other day, he was having an issue in the neighborhood. He said, Ken you are the only person I trust on this issue. So, I guess we've come a long way. So, those are the checks that do mean the most to me, and I guess to Chris as well.

BT: Ken has to go in a few minutes so we'd like to have a bunch of a few short answer questions:

Do you approve of government publishing brochures in languages other than English?

KU: Yes

CM: Sure

HD: Every immigrant group that has come to America has learned to speak English. Historically, I don't believe, going back to the 30's and 40's, the nineteenth century, I don't believe government printed documents in foreign languages. Where as I'm not opposed to doing that, I would like to see all the immigrants, like the other immigrants in the past, learn to speak English.

BT: Washington, Jefferson, and other founders were adamant about elected office not becoming a career. They both turned down 3rd terms as president. Do you have aspirations for another office beyond County Executive?

CM: No, This will be the last time I am run for office assuming I win a second term this is the last office I will run for.

HD: I'm a retired federal employee - this is the last time.

KU: I got asked this question when I ran for County Council. My answer then was I will do the best job I can if I'm lucky to be elected.

BT: Do you favor giving taxpayer money to religious organizations to provide social services in the community?

HD: I believe in separation of church and state. I guess I'd rather not do that.

CM: Same answer

KU: Virtually the same answer. Religious institutions provide a lot of services, but it's a fine line between separation of church and state.

BT: Some jurisdictions are successfully implementing choice or rank voting which has been shown to spur higher turnout as even those voters who support a trailing candidate may have an impact and front running candidates limit their negative campaigning to attract a higher ranking from those who do not want them as their first choice. Courts have ruled choice voting is legal. Do you support choice or rank voting?

KU: I would need some more information. I know I've talked to some third party groups have talked about it.

CM: I have no idea

HD: I would like more information as well, but I'm not opposed to try something different or new.

BT: Trust seems to becoming more and more of an issue countywide. Belmont in Elkridge, the Charrette in Columbia, practices on the county web site all have citizens questioning the motives and practices implemented by our leaders. Do you believe violating a public trust should disqualify one from becoming an elected official?

HD: I'm running because I distrust my opponents. They should have the right to run and electors have the right to be fooled by them again if they so choose. (laughter)

KU: How do you answer that question?

CM: My answer is - as long as you are qualified, it's up to the electorate to elect that person or not, but if you meet the qualifications, you can run.

BT: Okay, next question. Is money the key aspect in receiving a quality education, if not, what is?

HD: I think that well motivated, well paid instructors, teachers are key, we have an educational gap with a number of students here in Howard County pub school even though the system is rated best in the state. I think we need to improve teacher benefits, their salaries, their pension plan, and their training as well.

KU: I think money is a very big piece of the equation. I think having families at home work with students, work on homework, be an active part in the student's life is probably the most important part. You can throw money at a school all day long, but if family support or desire to learn of the children isn't there, you are not going to get anywhere. But it's a major, major factor. Especially when you have schools that have significant challenges. I was recently at Phelps Luck Elementary School, where I went to school. My first grade teacher is still there and I spoke to her. I asked what is different now. She told me, one thing that is different now, we talked about language barriers earlier, 27 students showed up on the first day of class and couldn't's speak one word of English. So, it takes extra resources, extra bodies, extra teachers to help with those challenges. So, yes it costs money, but it is just part of the equation.

CM: Money is an important part of the equation for education, But parental involvement is extremely important. Time you spend with your child after school reinforcing what happens in the classroom adds so much to the child's education. I think you can really see that in the different areas within Howard County, and particularly within the state, Parent organizations with active PTA's you go to back to school night you park two miles away to get to school because there's such active involvement. You are going to see those are some of the higher performing schools. Where you don't have parental involvement in some schools the test scores are lower. So it's an important part. An equally important part is to attract highly qualified teachers. That means paying them well, it also means creating a great work environment for them to teach in, that includes facilities they teach in, that includes the management they work for, it means electing a school board that understand the needs of the Howard County School System. It's all part of the equation. You can't possibly single out one thing and say that's what makes education successful. It's all those things combined.

(At this time, Ken Ulman had to leave due to a prior commitment).

RM: Education takes up about 60% of the budget. But, safety, roads, recreation and parks, health care, social services, public transportation, affordable housing are also important, some especially to senior citizens. Funding some needs while pushing others back is difficult. How do you tell some constituencies "NO" and what are your priorities?

HD: My priority is to slow growth and that is what my opponents have not done. That is why we spend 60% of our budget on the public schools. I believe when I first came to Howard County, that was in '72, we were only spending 30 to 40%, I'm not exactly sure, on the budget. I've seen it go up up and up. It's increased dramatically during the Robey administration with these uncontrollable policies with these two young men on the council supporting this rapid unneeded growth. I'm going to slow the growth when I'm elected Howard County Executive. Thank you.

CM: I think the formula we have for public schools is appropriate. We have to invest in our school system. It's what makes Howard County such a great place to live. So many people move to Howard County because they have young children. A lot of people live in

Baltimore City, they get engaged, they get married, they live in the city for awhile, but as soon as they are ready to have kids where do they come? They come to Howard County because of our excellent education system. So, it's important that we make sure we fund the education system appropriately. However, we do have other priorities in the government that needed to be funded as well. The question was, how do you tell people no? It is part of the process. I've been in government for almost eight years now and it is part of the process. Every year we have to tell people no. We just don't have the resources. Either we don't have them this year, potentially we can fund them next, maybe we can fund you next year, but it's just part of doing business I think the people understand that and the balance that we have as elected officials. Councilmen Ulman mentioned before I have experience cutting the budget. Yeah, it's part of the job. As County Executive you are definitely going to need to do that. There's not been one year, That the County Executive, neither CE Robey, CE Ecker, I'm not sure about Bobo before that has ever fully funded the education system,, ever fully funded county government. It's part of doing your job. It's setting a reasonable tax rate for citizens, making sure we take that money and spend it in the most balance way to meet all of our public safety needs, our rec and parks need, preserving open space needs and yes importantly education.

HD: The police department and the library sytem, I feel over the years, in the time I've been here, they've received adequate funding I strongly feel the school board has used up too much of our resources because our government can not tell developers no. They can tell the senior citizens no, they can tell all the other entities that require funding from our tax dollars no, but they have been unable to tell developers no. And Harry Dunbar when elected County Executive will tell the developers no and will tell the developers right now to build elsewhere in Maryland. Thank you.

RM: What support will you give agriculture in Howard County?

CM: We talk an awful lot about agricultural preservation. The debate always tends to focus on the agriculture part. It's really difficult to be a farmer in Howard County. I think we use the term agricultural preservation, but what we really mean is preserving open space. I think people want to make sure government is being responsible for future generations and making sure people have a place to recreate, a place to look at open field, see some trees, and have a healthy part of our community dedicated to environment. So, it's important we dedicate county taxpayer dollars to preserving open space. It's a very, very competitive market. Developers are offering paying top dollar to preserve open space. Last night we increased the amount of money per acre from \$20,000 to \$40,000 to preserve agriculture or open space I think it was the right move. It's going to be tough though, because as soon as we offer 40,000 an acre, a developer will offer 42 or 44 we will never be able to catch up. But that doesn't mean we should just throw up our hands and quit. We have to keep at it, we have to make sure we continue to work with the farming community, tell them the benefits of entering into the program, tell them the tax benefits of entering into the program. County citizens clearly want more open space in Howard County. As County Executive it will be a priority of mine to ensure we attract as many as farmers into the program as possible. But, the reality is there are very few farms left that can enter into the program. I will do my best whatever is left gets put into the program to the best of our ability.

HD: I'm of the opinion the farmland preservation program there has been a failure in the Robey administration, along with the Ulman/ Merdon zoning board has not seen fit to purchase any sites during their 8 years in office. I have proposed, zoning reform, see [www.slowgrowthdunbar.com](http://www.slowgrowthdunbar.com), you need to reform the total zoning process here in Howard County. I will that is done. Thank you.

CM: I think it is just inaccurate, just to correct the record to say that no farm has been brought into the program in eight years. We have. There haven't been many but we've also tried other ways to be creative to create open space, not purely using taxpayer dollars to create open space. But, the way you craft different zones can create open space. For example in the planned senior community which is a new zone adopted a few years.

Planned Senior Community requires 50% open space on the property, so if you have 50 acres, 25 acres must be preserved as open space. So, there are creative ways of getting open space without using agricultural preservation program without having to use taxpayer dollars. We've been somewhat successful. Is there room for improvement? Absolutely. But to say we have not been able to preserve open space is an inaccurate statement.

HD: The best way, I think, to preserve farmland is to zone it. 50 acre zoning, 40 acre zoning zoning so the land can not be subdivided. Can not be bought by developers. We'll have to wait for a Mr. Ulman or Mr. Merdon to come along to purchase that farmland, someone who wants to enjoy looking at it. I would propose something like that to..because as Mr. Merdon says, you can't throw your hands up. You have to stop development if you don't stop the development we will continue on the same processes that we are on now, that is flooding the county with cars and people, this budget year watch the budget, I'm asking everyone to watch the budget. We are in trouble with trying to fund the public schools. We will not be able to do it this year. I'm betting we will not do it because too many children too much development we've got to have adequate public facilities first. These two gentlemen don't understand that. The Robey administration doesn't understand that. Thank you.

Unofficial Transcript of  
County Executive Candidate Forum  
04/05/06 Glenwood Library

Question / Comments / Suggestions

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