

## **Maintaining the Rural Character of Talbot County**

The Talbot Republican Central Committee shares the view that we have a special and valuable heritage in Talbot County. Our waterways, farmland and small towns are a gift for us and for those who come after. Governments at all levels have a responsibility to protect that heritage now and into the future. We support our agricultural industry. However, it must be mindful of its affect on county waterways and the seafood industry.

We support smart growth principles and the objectives of the Comprehensive Plans and zoning ordinances adopted by the county and towns that further these principles. Economic growth is central to the well being of our region. It provides jobs and a tax base for the towns and county. However, growth must be guided in a way that maintains the character of the county we cherish. Smart growth includes the focus on infill development in our towns where existing water, wastewater treatment, fire and police services minimize the need to add infrastructure.

The Talbot Republican Central Committee strongly supports the economic growth and viability of our community. We believe that those objectives can generally be accomplished within the existing boundaries of our towns. When annexation of farmland is required to support economic growth, the Committee believes that it must be accomplished in strict compliance with established comprehensive plans.

The Central Committee applauds efforts to improve the quality of water in the Chesapeake Bay. To achieve improvements in water quality, we encourage wise land use planning at state and county levels, upgrading sewage treatment plants, educating homeowners about decisions they make on their land and working with the farming community to arrive at effective buffer widths on farmland, increase the planting of cover crops, and increase research into the identification of profitable, less nutrient-demanding alternative crops.