

## **Forest Heights Makes Strides with Green Initiatives (Prince George's Sentinel, Aug. 15, 2013)**

Forest Heights, a community of more than 2,500 residents, is tucked away behind tall green trees that partially block it from the view of thousands of motorists who ride passed it during rush hour commutes.

It remains a secret that city officials would like to let more Prince Georgians in on.

"When I first moved here, I didn't have a clue that there were houses here," said Kathy Clark, a 38-year Forest Heights resident. "And, since I've been here, people will say, 'Oh, there's houses here, back up on that hill. I thought it was just woods and trees.'"

"Towns have to be marketed," Forest Heights Mayor Jacqueline Goodall said. "I want people to live here, Forest Heights, the best municipality in Prince George's County."

Events like "Forest Heights Day," held earlier in August, give Goodall and town officials an opportunity to promote the town and everything that makes it unique.

"In this area we have 495 and we have 295, that means there's a lot of CO<sub>2</sub> (carbon dioxide) falling down around us," Goodall said. "We have planted over 1,400 trees in the town of Forest Heights."

Goodall calls it an urban canopy, a stand of trees, which act as a shelter against excessive carbon dioxide from the nearby roadways. It also soaks up heat from sunlight that helps homeowners cut down on the electricity they use to cool their homes throughout the summer.

With the same philosophy of using greenery to help conserve energy, Goodall spearheaded an initiative to put a vegetative roof on the town hall, insulating the building from extreme temperatures.

"Mayor Goodall is really doing some great things ... trying to cut back on the use of electricity," said Everett Bradford, Alice Ferguson Foundation community liaison. "They have a really good green initiative."

Bradford said the foundation reached out to Forest Heights because of the town's reputation for green living, particularly in the way it fights litter. Much of the trash in the county makes its way into storm drains, ultimately leading into the Potomac River. Since the Alice Ferguson Foundation headquarters in Accokeek sits at the bend of the river, where much of the litter snags, the consequences of pollution has a disproportionate effect on the foundation.

Town residents commend Goodall for her trash prevention efforts.

“We had a drain put in, and most of our water is filtered before it goes into the river,” Clark said. “Mayor Goodall pushes us on a daily basis.”

Town officials are also concerned about excess storm water that helps push the trash into the sewer. In 2012, Forest Heights won a \$55,000 grant from the state to install a permeable pavement/water storage system outside of its town hall.

Goodall said this is all done in the name of improving Forest Heights’ infrastructure and making it a more livable community.

As reported by By Tauren Dyson in:

<http://www.thesentinel.com/pgs/forest-heights-makes-strides-with-green-initiatives>