



History Highlights of the Last of the Green Belt, the Committee to Save the Green Belt, and How the Greenbelt Forest Preserve was Born!

- **1935-39**- 800 acres of Green Belt acquired by the Federal Government for the Greenbelt Project.
- **1952**- 800-acre Green Belt sold to **Greenbelt Veterans Housing Corporation (GVHC)**, which later became **Greenbelt Homes, Inc. (GHI)** in 1957.
- **1954**- Green Belt, including **Parcel 1** (113 acres) and **Parcel 2** (72 acres), was sold to developers. All but Parcel 1 and 2 were developed.
- **1966-1978**- 62 acres of Parcel 2 and 10 acres of Parcel 1 sold to Prince George's County **Board of Education** for building a 3-school complex. Defeated by citizen's group **SOCS (Save Our Community Schools)**. The 72 acres was declared surplus land and deeded to the county.
- **November 19, 1987**- Greenbelt City Council met with representatives of Rocky Gorge, a company that had a contract to purchase the remaining 103 acres of Parcel 1. Rocky Gorge proposed to develop wooded land into town homes and detached homes.
- **November 1987**-headlines in the *Greenbelt News Review* alerted the community at large that their Namesake—the last of the original 800-acre Green Belt –was threatened by development. Concerned citizens came together one night at Leonie Penney's house to talk about how to save the forest from development through forming a committee.
- **November 1987**- The **Committee to Save the Green Belt (CSGB)** was created and led the way to saving the last of the original Green Belt. CSGB educated the city about the value of *passive recreation* for community health, peace and beauty.
- **1987-2003**- CSGB educated the community on the pre-eminent value of our community's forest. Promoted the highly valued and important concept of "**Keeping it Wild & Wooded.**" Weekly guided walks were led through the forest, affectionately known as "The Great North Woods."
- **November-December 1987**- CSGB, supported by the community, demanded that the City purchase as much of Parcels 1 and 2 as possible.
- **1988-1990**- CSGB repeatedly fills City Council chambers to pressure the City to purchase Parcels 1 and 2.
- **1988**- City purchases Parcel 2 (10 acres).
- **September 1988**- CSGB holds the first Labor Day Booth event to publicize efforts to save the woods. The Committee's booth becomes a big attraction over the course of 15 years, winning prizes every year.
- **October 1988**- CSGB hosts its first evening **Pumpkin Walk/Halloween Tour** in the woods, which becomes an annual Greenbelt pumpkin carving tradition with hundreds of participants over the years.
- **June 1989**- County transfers the 72 acres of "surplus" to the City on June 4th—Greenbelt Day. CSGB hosts a hike of the 72-acre land that same day.
- **1989** – Parcel 1 Condemnation Suit begins.
- **1990**- City purchases the remaining 103 acres of Parcel 1.

- **1990-2003-** With the City’s latest purchase, threats to the forest greatly intensified from a number of groups. City boards, staff and citizens began to discuss plans for using Parcel 1, Parcel 2 and the remaining 72 acres. All of these projects were defeated through the efforts of the CSGB. Proposals included:
 - A major ball field complex for the 72-acre tract to include 6-8 lighted ball fields, a 300- car parking lot, and snack bar
 - A Senior Cooperative Apartment Building in Parcel 2
 - Public works facility on the site of the garden plots in Parcel 2
 - Plans for a Perimeter Trail/Road
 - A biking destination for mountain biking clubs
- **1990-2003-** over the course of 13 years, CSGB works to obtain support in the community for protected status of the woods as a *wildlife and forest preserve*. They continue with petition drives, letter writing campaigns, hikes in the woods, the annual pumpkin walk, Labor Day booth and clean ups. Whenever needed they filled the council chambers.
- **2002-** CSGB, at the urging of City Council, held a community wide contest to the “Name the Green Belt.” Over 100 names were submitted and delivered to the City.
- **October 27, 2003-** City Council passes the **Forest Preserve Ordinance**, placing all of Parcel 1 and 2 and additional wooded areas (a total of 225 acres) into protective status. The Committee to Save the Green Belt had found a way for the Roosevelt “green town concept” to prevail and for the Green Belt to live on.
- **2003-Present-** A **forest preserve task force** was created to develop maintenance guidelines in keeping with the directive of the forest preserve ordinance to preserve the forest as primitive woodlands. A **Forest Preserve Advisory Board** was established and tasked with advising the City Council on policy related to ongoing issues related to the protected areas and with choosing a name for the forest.
- **2007-** Forest Preserve Management and Maintenance Guidelines were adopted.
- **2010** – The remaining Green Belt was named the “Greenbelt Forest Preserve.”
- **October 27, 2013-** 10-Year Anniversary Celebration of the Greenbelt Forest Preserve.

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