

**Sayers, Margery**

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**From:** JTK <jtk409a@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 3, 2019 3:37 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Support for CB11 Forest Buffer; Request for Amendments

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Dear Howard County Councilmembers:

Thank you for proposing CB11.

**Expand the Scenic Road Forest Buffer**

I am writing to add my strong support for CB11's expansion of the scenic road forest buffer to 100 ft. However, I hope that you will consider the following modification: for scenic roads that travel alongside streams, the 100ft forest buffer should start where the protected stream buffer set-back ends.

Many scenic roads are in watersheds, and several, like Bonnie Branch, Beechwood, and New Cut roads, have streams that travel alongside the scenic road.

For many years of rampant clearcut development of forested lands in District One, scenic road protections were just "guidelines." Developers did not have to accommodate their development to protect the scenic nature of these forested roadways in watershed areas. Although the guidelines were converted to regulations, it has become painfully obvious that they did not go far enough to protect our watersheds.

During the past few years, scenic roads along streams, like New Cut, Bonnie Branch, and Beechwood, have been destroyed by high velocity flood water runoff from infill subdivisions. The county has had to spend millions of our dollars to shore up the streambeds to maintain the integrity of the roads. These scenic roads now have ugly white rip rap stones along long stretches of eroded streambed.

This all could have been prevented if our regulations had been strong enough. They were not. It's not too late to try to stop further degradation of the last remaining areas of forest along scenic roads in the county. Retaining what forested areas we have left in the watershed is essential to soak up rain to prevent destructive flooding and filter freshwater headed to the streams and Patapsco River.

Please confirm in the regulation that changes will be effective immediately for all site development plans in process.

**Add Reforestation Requirement**

Given the amount of deforestation of scenic roads that has already been allowed to occur in District One, please consider adding a requirement that any development along a forested scenic road must be required to cede at least 100 ft frontage (starting from the stream buffer set-back if there is a stream) to the county as additional open space with an enhanced reforestation planting requirement paid for by the developer.

**Ingress/Egress Along Steep Scenic Roads**

In other parts of your bill, you address ingress/egress from scenic roads. Several scenic roads like Beechwood Road and Ilchester Road in District One have sections that are very steep. Allowing new infill development with ingress/egress along these steep areas will ruin the scenic nature of the road and be extremely dangerous. Please consider amending the regulation to address this.

**Urgent Need to Strengthen Stream, Wetland, Steep Slope Buffers**

I was heartened by Dr. Ball's tweet on February 27, 2019, where he said that "[w]e must have a sense of urgency to create a cleaner, greener, and healthier Howard County environment." I agree. We urgently need to strengthen protection of our watersheds from any further development. I hope that we will see proposals from the Council to substantially increase protected buffers for streams, wetlands, and steep slopes in your next round of proposed bills.

Thank you.

Julia T. Kovacs  
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