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Opposition to Bill 16-2017; public hearing February 21, 2017

AF 

Anna Farb <anna.r.farb@gmail.com>

Yesterday, 9:00 PM

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Greetings,

As the council did before, I ask that you reject Bill 16-2017, which would change the zoning of thousands of acres of farmland in western Howard County, from Tier IV (farming and conservation) to Tier III (housing development).

I grew up in Columbia, and I now work here on stormwater issues. I have seen my neighborhood and community change immensely, with only the newer developments having to address the resulting stormwater from impervious surfaces. And we all saw the devastation of the recent flood in Ellicott City, in part caused by uninhibited development upstream. Sprawl robs our communities of valuable green space, ecosystem services, and fertile farmland.

I second the Sierra Club's testimony that "building more housing developments will worsen stormwater runoff by adding more impervious surfaces (driveways, roofs, streets). Homeowners' lawns are not held to the same high environmental standards that farmland is. Farmers in the Agricultural Land Preservation Program are not only compensated for keeping farms in agriculture, but have plans for nutrient management, soil conservation, and water conservation."

Thank you for your consideration.

Anna Farb
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CB16-2017 Testimony - R. G. Tufts



Richard Tufts <tuftsdaaisy@verizon.net>

Yesterday, 4:46 PM

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Council members,

I regret my wife and I will be unable to present this testimony before you on February 21, 2017, but hope you will read it with the same sincerity as it is written.

We support our farmers one hundred percent. We support WHAT Council Bill 16 - 2017 proposes. We do NOT, however, support HOW CB16-2017 proposes to do it. We are, therefore, opposed to Council Bill 16 - 2017 and amending the current Growth Tiers map.

This legislation will open approximately 1,600 acres of land in the Rural Conservation District, which will allow up to 300 house to be built. This will result in more runoff, septic systems, and polluting of streams, rivers and most importantly... the Chesapeake Bay.

For years Land in Howard County has equated to Development. Wherever there's Land, "Build a house on it." Farm Land is Development Land when it is used to build houses. We believe we urgently need to preserve our Farm Land and use it for farming... NOT development.

Testimony given before the Planning Board by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation in April 2016, strongly expressed their concerns of the proposed tier map and text amendment. The facts given in their testimony have not changed. Rather than reiterate those facts, which we agree with, we have attached CBF's testimony below. The CBF stated, "The Chesapeake Bay, along with the Patapsco, Tridelphia Reservoir, and Centennial Lake watersheds in Howard County are listed on the Federal 303(d) list of 'impaired' water due to excess nutrients [i. e., nitrogen and phosphorus] and sediment." The Patuxent River can also be included on this list.

Nitrogen and phosphorus are the nutrients that pollute our waters. It is these nutrients from both run off and septic systems that cause algae blooms, less underwater grasses and negative impact on bay wildlife. Plus they can negatively contribute to decreases in Howard County tourism and recreation in the Bay.

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When did you or your children last swim in the Chesapeake?

This scientific knowledge is known by most yet continues to be ignored. Bad legislation continues to be proposed without apparent consideration to negative impacts on the environment. Rather than legislation that will have negative impact, we suggest an alternative that we believe will have positive impact and that most Howard Countians can and will get behind. **Farm-to-Table.**

The Office of Community Sustainability has a number of smart initiatives that encourage farmers to raise farm products for consumers to buy. And more are on the way. Efforts such as the Roving Radish put farm products on consumers' tables, in co-ops and local restaurants. This is just beginning in our county. With proper support and promotion, we believe this could serve as a viable alternative. We urge you to give it a chance. Successful Farm-to-Table movements flourish elsewhere (see the web site below *). They are enabling farmers to use their land for farming NOT Development, and to sell their products for tables. We believe consumers want this as evidenced by the popularity of Community Supported Agriculture farms and Farmers' Markets in our county. We strongly feel our county should continue to support, advertise and give the efforts a chance. Yes, it will take time whereas immediately amending the Tier map will not. But we like the consequences of the former rather than continuing to pollute our most precious resource.

We know from the results of scientific studies by Maryland's Department of the Environment that development pollutes streams, rivers and the Chesapeake. We know that opening land for development will add negative amounts of nutrients, nitrogen and phosphorus, to our waterways. We also know the Chesapeake Bay has been declared a NATIONAL RESOURCE. Howard County, along with our neighboring counties and states, has a responsibility to and MUST clean it up. It is everyone's responsibility!

Ladies and gentleman with all this information and knowledge, We fail to understand how responsible people can ignore and continue to pollute our most valuable resource - water. Moreover, we fail to understand why people who appear concerned continue to "kick the can down the road" and put off their civic and community responsibilities.

We urge you look upon this time as an opportunity to choose the better alternative - protect, support and promote Land for Farming and choose the smarter alternative.

Vote NO to Council Bill 16 - 2017.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

a/s: <http://appvoices.org/2016/06/14/the-miracle-of-harvest>

Respectfully,
Katherine G. Tufts
Richard G. Tufts
Daisy, Howard, MD

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ROLL BACK "TIER IV" PROTECTIONS ON 1,615 ACRES IN THE WESTERN COUNTY



no-reply@howardcountymd.gov

Wed 2/15, 5:28 PM

don.howell05@gmail.com

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First Name: Donald

Last Name: Howell

Email: don.howell05@gmail.com

Street Address: 2918 Florence Road

City: Woodbine

Subject: ROLL BACK "TIER IV" PROTECTIONS ON 1,615 ACRES IN THE WESTERN COUNTY

Message: In reference to the proposed "ROLL BACK "TIER IV" PROTECTIONS ON 1,615 ACRES IN THE WESTERN COUNTY", can you please advise the exact land tracts that are referenced and would be impacted by this bill ? Don Don Howell [2918 Florence Road Woodbine, Maryland 21797](#)

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