

Date: 18 June 2018

Subject: Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA Testimony on CB40-2018

Good evening. My name is Stu Kohn and I am the President of the Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA testifying on their behalf. We first and foremost want to thank Councilwoman, Jen Terrasa for her continued efforts to try and ensure “transparency” is not just a word, but has meaning which is the case of CB40-2018. We are in favor of the proposed Bill. Had this Bill been in vogue prior to the Planning Board hearing regarding the Settlement of Savage Mills case the public would have been much better off? The public would have had an opportunity to get educated and perhaps have their questions answered at a given Pre-submission Meeting as defined in this Bill.

Another case in point is the proposed 4-story storage unit on Guilford Road which is in the M1 district. We learned at a recent meeting organized by the Administration, because the residents within the area were quite concerned and irate about the prospects. Unfortunately there is currently no requirement for the public to formally discuss the issue with the petitioners, because there are no requirements to conduct a Pre-submission Meeting in either the M1 or M2 districts. This needs to be changed immediately. We recommend you consider an Amendment to this Bill simply stating that Pre-submission Meetings shall be conducted in the M1 and M2 districts.

One last suggested amendment is as follows: Whenever a Pre-submission Meeting is revised from the original heard Pre-submission Meeting on the same property because DPZ considers the revised plans to be substantial then the notification signs around the property shall have the word “NEW” or “REVISED” attached to the top of the original signs. This would ensure the public is fully aware of the change and perhaps would eliminate thinking that the sign is in place because it is old news. This amendment is a direct result of the Milk Producers property on Leisure and Gorman Road. The original meeting was held on 10 April and now the Petitioner has revised his plans and is conducting a scheduled Pre-submission Meeting this Thursday, 20 June. I have spoken to the Applicant’s lawyer, Bill Erskine and he has no problem with the suggestion as he told me to tell you this is a good idea. He did go one step further by placing yellow tape around the signs to try and distinguish for the public that something has changed.

Your attention in this matter would be appreciated. Let the passing of this Bill be a part of your legacy as it would benefit your constituents. Again Councilwoman, Terrasa thank you for attempting to do something positive by providing a little more transparency to the Pre-submission process.

Thank You,

  
Stu Kohn

HCCA, President



HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL  
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION  
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION

I, Stu Kohn, have been duly authorized by  
*(name of individual)*

Howard County Citizens Association to deliver testimony to the  
*(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)*

County Council regarding CB-46 to express the organization's  
*(bill or resolution number)*

support for / opposition to / request to amend this legislation.  
*(Please circle one.)*

Printed Name: Stu Kohn

Signature: Stu Kohn

Date: 18 Jun 18

Organization: HECA

Organization Address: P.O. Box 40 ELLICOTT CITY, MD

Chair/President: Stu Kohn



Good evening. My name is Sandy Roschli. I live at 6130 Hunt Club Road in Elkridge. Thank you for allowing public testimony in regards to Council Bill 40-2018, as proposed by Ms. Terrasa. I believe that I speak not only on behalf of myself, but also the many members of my community in Elkridge, as well as the larger community of Howard County, in support of this bill.

As you are aware, the citizens of Howard County have become increasingly concerned by what many view as the over development of several communities within our county, and the impacts this swift increase in development has both on our communities, and the infrastructure that supports it. In light of these concerns, I believe that ANY efforts to increase opportunities for the public to be involved within the planning process should be applauded.

Members of the public are stakeholders in this planning process. We have a vested interest, not only through those projects occurring in our neighborhoods and communities, but also those projects that are proposed within close proximity to open space or government-owned land. Certainly, such projects will have a direct impact not only the site on which the development occurs, but also the adjoining land and the communities that surround this development.

By requiring a pre-submission meeting prior to approval of site development, it allows for not only project transparency to public, but also gives members of the community a voice in the process BEFORE plans are finalized. When community members - those who know the area best - have the opportunity to ask questions, raise concerns, and give feedback from both a current and historical perspective regarding proposed development, this may lead to valuable improvements to the overall project that the developer may not have thought of on their own. These are significant benefits in the context of any development within a community, but they are perhaps even more important and necessary in the context of projects impacting public land.

As public servants, I urge you to pass this bill on behalf of your most important interests in this county, the individuals and families you represent.

Thank you.

Good evening. My name is Angela Shiplet and I live at 6250 Summer Home Terrace in Elkridge. I am here tonight testifying in support of Council Bill 40. I believe requiring pre-submission meetings for any project abutting a government owned property or open space is not only in the best interest of the wider community, but also in the best interest future owners and residents of that project. I am the neighbor of a government owned property- the Elkridge Elementary School/Elkridge Landing Middle School campus. As a neighbor I can attest that living near a government facility comes with many advantages and disadvantages. Having public input at pre-submission meetings can help minimize the disadvantages and foster a positive relationship with the public property and its new neighbors. Government properties should be accessible to the communities they serve. Having public input before plans are finalized can help maintain current levels of access and maybe even enhance public access to a facility. For example, community members can pinpoint where sidewalks or walking paths are needed to better connect the new project and existing communities to the facility or open space.

Pre-submission meetings are an important part of the development process because community members often know the surrounding area best. They can help pinpoint areas of concern or provide insights that may enhance the project. Citizens should also have the opportunity to voice any concerns they have that may impact a public space. As many of you are aware there are concerns with overdevelopment. I have seen firsthand how this over development has already impacted our parks. I am a regular user of both the Avalon area of Patapsco State Park and Rockburn Branch Park. Much of the runoff from surrounding communities is making its way into many of streams and tributaries that feed into the Patapsco. This runoff and the changes it has brought to the streams in park has effected many popular trails. As average fall amounts intensify we need to be more mindful of how surrounding development impacts our parks and open spaces. If given the opportunity at a pre-submission meeting users of a public space can provide valuable insights that may prevent detrimental impacts.

I urge the council to pass CB40-2018. The input a pre-submission meeting can bring will be of great benefit to not only the community that uses the public land or open space but also to the new project. Thank you for your time.