



Howard County

Internal Memorandum

Subject: Testimony on CB 36 2019
Amendment to Public Sites and Open Space Requirements to Accommodate Storm Water Facilities

To: Lonnie R. Robbins
Chief Administrative Officer

From: W Valdis Lazdins, Director
Department of Planning and Zoning

Date: June 20, 2019

The Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) supports Council Bill CB 36 which would amend the Howard County Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. The change would allow the optional lot size method for computing open space requirements for R-20 zoned developments, infill subdivisions, or resubdivisions creating fewer than ten lots. Consequently, this would allow accommodating stormwater management and flood control protection in certain circumstances on open space within the Tiber Hudson Branch and the Plumtree Branch Watersheds.

With the passage of CB#56-2018, also known as the Tiber-Hudson/Plumtree Watershed Moratorium, DPZ and the Department of Public Works (DPW) were tasked with leading a study to investigate "...the extent to which existing, planned, and future land use, storm water management, drainage infrastructure, and flood mitigation for property that drains in whole or in part to the Tiber Branch Watershed or the Plumtree Branch Watershed, and any other relevant factor, may contribute to flooding in each Watershed..." and submit "...recommendations about changes in law and procedures that may help protect the Watershed from the effects of future flood events."

DPZ and DPW have developed a proposal that would require enhanced stormwater runoff management for new development and redevelopment in the Tiber-Hudson and Plumtree watersheds; achieved through changes to the Howard County Design Manual Volume I (Storm Drainage). Modifications would require high intensity, short duration storms that produce 6.6 inches of rain in 3.55 hours to be managed in both watersheds. Additionally, managing the 10 and 100-year, 24-hour storm event would be required within the Plumtree. These design manual changes will be codified by a County Council resolution.

This Bill is necessary to accommodate more rigorous storm water management requirements, allowing facilities to potentially be located within open space areas. Without such modifications, in certain circumstances it may not be possible to accommodate enhanced protections.