

Sayers, Margery

From: Alan Schneider <ajs333@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 7:16 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: CB 13-2020 Affordable Housing

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

CB 13-2020 Affordable Housing

Council Members:

Citizens depend on you for changes to 50 year trends. What do we need?

In the 1070's most people were able to buy a home. What aligns with individual needs in Howard County? Is more subsidized or more rental housing the best long range plan?

You have an intellectual treasure in Howard County. You have an Affordability Task Force of knowledgeable, independent individuals. Connect with independent resources for research and answers.

Lower price homes in all Howard County neighborhoods will efficiently achieve the benefits of school and community diversity.

Few can afford owning a home. Most now rent. Average monthly rent is higher than a mortgage payment. Rent increases annually; mortgage payments are fixed term. At the end of the term, payments end. Home ownership provides stability, and built in home equity savings.

Home ownership has been promoted. Legislation in one state found it cheaper to build and to give homes away compared to the cost of numerous subsidies.

Land use regulations and restrictions are not an illegal "taking", so holds the Supreme Court. Howard County has experienced the highest growth rates. Taxes have gone up. Unregulated free enterprise has not achieved lower taxes. Public policy demands new options.

Establish goals for Howard County, and agree on measurements for reaching those goals.

1. **Decentralize affordable housing developments.** Concentrated affordable housing leads to perpetual poverty, negative quality of life, and stifles other types of economic development. See Denver's 5 year plan, and studies in Chicago, Boston, Atlanta, Texas, and California.
2. **Adopt policies and strategies to promote affordable/attainable housing options.** Green building affordable housing reduces expenses, has a smaller environmental footprint, and reduces expenses. Solar rooftops dramatically cut the rising cost of electricity.
3. **Enable creativity, flexibility and ease of use.** Combine university talents, data driven research, and policy options for effective long term solutions for all public sectors of Howard County.

4. **Recognize and give weight** to community advocates' testimony for policies that advance racial equality. Truly affordable housing benefits communities by attracting home care workers, police, fire fighters, teachers, retail workers, and service industry workers.
5. **Require measureable zoning policies** that will achieve disparate-impact requirements in the federal Fair Housing Act.
6. **Require feedback reports** that measure adherence to affordable housing priorities, and health and safety standards.

Thank you for your dedication to long term planning for the public in Howard County.

Alan Schneider

Sayers, Margery

From: Stu Kohn <stukohn@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 16, 2020 8:51 PM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Stuart Kohn
Subject: CB13-2020 Written Testimony from HCCA
Attachments: HCCA - CB13-2020 Affordable Housing.docx

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Councilmembers,

Please accept the attachment which is the Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA written testimony regarding CB13-2020.

We would appreciate confirmation that you received this email.

Thank You,

Stu Kohn
HCCA President



Howard County Citizens Association

Since 1961...

The Voice Of The People of Howard County

Date: April 16, 2020

Re; CB13-2020 -- The Affordable Housing Retention Act

The HCCA strongly opposes this bill and requests that it either be withdrawn or voted down.

The County currently has an effort underway that addresses Affordable Housing in the County; the Housing Opportunities Master Plan Task Force (Task Force). For decades the County has not had a comprehensive approach to siting Affordable Housing. The approach has been piece meal and the outcome for current Affordable Housing reflects that piece meal approach. Affordable Housing is now concentrated in older Columbia Villages including, Oakland Mills, Owen Brown, Long Reach, and Wilde Lake. Those existing apartment complexes are now 30 to 50 years old and therefore can be cheaply bought and in many cases are owned by the Howard County Housing Commission. The result has been a concentration of poverty and Free and Reduced Meal recipients in the county schools. This has resulted in a very contentious school redistricting in the last year. If passed there will be bad consequences since this bill will allow more older apartment complexes to be bought in existing low income and poverty areas east of US29 thereby continuing to concentrate poverty and negatively affecting schools. For example, Oakland Mills has four apartment complexes totaling approximately 980 units.. Approximately 40% are currently Affordable Housing. Four years ago the Howard County Housing Commission (HCHC) attempted to also buy Columbia Pointe that contains 324 units. Fortunately, after many meetings with HCHC, they were dissuaded from buying the complex. If that had occurred, 70% of the apartments would have become Affordable Housing and would have added to the concentration of low income and poverty issues in redistricting. Columbia Pointe was subsequently bought by a private company and they invested \$11 million in upgrading the units.

The Routes1 and 40 corridors have exploded in development with high density housing to meet the smart growth plans from the early 90s. Much of the density includes developments with 20 to as high as 50 percent affordable housing set aside. An example of this is the River Watch community in Elkridge. When you consider many of the developments along the corridors which consists of hundreds of units and at these percentages, the affordable housing has and will add up quickly. The county must be able to meet the needs of the social economic environment it is creating and thus far, it is struggling to do that.

The remainder of the County has not had much Affordable Housing even when new apartment complexes are built since developers can pay a Fee-in-Lieu instead of providing affordable units. The Fee-in-Lieu must stop. The result has been a concentration of Affordable Housing mainly east of US29. This bill would make this situation even worse under this Bill and not spread-out Affordable Housing throughout the County.

The established Task Force will hopefully provide a comprehensive approach to Affordable Housing. Let the Task Force come up with their recommendations especially considering the County Executive and the Council approved \$400,000 in consultant services. Although this will obviously take a longer to do, it will provide a much better outcome for Affordable Housing in our county then CB13-2020.

Please allow the Task Force to do its work and **WITHDRAW** or vote **AGAINST** this bill.

Paul Verchinski
HCCA Board of Director

Sayers, Margery

From: LINDA Wengel <lwengel@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, April 6, 2020 1:37 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: LWVHC SUPPORTS CB 13-20

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

(Resending testimony of March 10, 2020) The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Howard County has voted to support CB 13-20 based on our housing position which recognizes the need to increase the supply of affordable housing throughout Howard County.

As buildable land becomes scarcer in Howard County this legislation provides an important tool for converting or maintaining existing rental housing as affordable units. Offering the seller the opportunity to guarantee that at least 20% of the units will stay or become affordable, in lieu of offering for sale to the County or Commission is reasonable and puts these units on a par with the MIHU requirement for new rental housing.

The League is encouraged to see the Council addressing this vital issue.

Linda Wengel
Columbia, MD
Action Chair
League of Women Voters of Howard County