

Sayers, Margery

From: V4 Vermillions <v4savage@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 20, 2021 9:54 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Rigby, Christiana; Gelwicks, Colette
Subject: Further comments on CB-8-2021

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Dear Howard County Council Members,

Following up on my email of Feb 2, I would like to reiterate the point that CB-8-2021 undermines the essential "mixed use" component of Transit Oriented Development (TOD). The [TOD Institute](#) defines TOD as "the creation of compact, walkable, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use communities centered around high quality train systems. This makes it possible to live a lower-stress life without complete dependence on a car for mobility and survival." Reduced dependence on cars leads to less traffic congestion; fewer traffic accidents, fatalities, and injuries; and lower emissions and pollution.

However, by allowing the developer to reduce the required commercial square footage as proposed in CB-8-2021, the essential mixed-use component that provides space for grocers, dry cleaners, cafes, and other retail, dining, and recreation options is weakened. Residents of the development will have to get back in their cars to fill that void.

I'll also reiterate that the wording of the bill summary about how this reduction in commercial square footage can be done "if the Department of Planning and Zoning finds based on a market study submitted by the developer that the reduction is necessary for the financial viability of the project" raises questions as to who defines "financial viability." I'm concerned that it essentially prioritizes the developer's profits at the expense of the community's needs and the County's surrounding infrastructure.

I urge you to compare the plans for all proposed TOD sites in the County with the TOD Institute's components of such development, below. While there is flexibility within these components depending on the circumstances of each development site, if you allow projects to be approved under the guise of TOD and then whittle away at these components with bills such as CB-8-2021, you don't have Transit Oriented Development. You merely have development next to a train station.

COMPONENTS OF TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

- Walkable design with pedestrian as the highest priority
- Train station as prominent feature of town center
- Public square fronting train station
- A regional node containing a mixture of uses in close proximity (office, residential, retail, civic)
- High density, walkable district within 10-minute walk circle surrounding train station
- Collector support transit systems including streetcar, light rail, and buses, etc
- Designed to include the easy use of bicycles and scooters as daily support transport
- Large ride-in bicycle parking areas within stations
- Bikeshare rental system and bikeway network integrated into stations
- Reduced and managed parking inside 10-minute walk circle around town center / train station
- Specialized retail at stations serving commuters and locals including cafes, grocery, dry cleaners

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments. As a Howard County resident, transportation policy analyst, and MARC train rider for over 20 years, I appreciate your consideration of these points, and I do sincerely thank you for your service to the County.

Regards,
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