

Sayers, Margery

From: M. J. Loll and E. M. Salmon <wbnuhatch@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, March 15, 2021 10:30 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Testimony in Favor of CB22-2021
Attachments: CB22-2021_FAV_Revised.docx

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Good Morning Howard County Council Members,

I am a resident of Howard County District 3 and submit the attached testimony for your consideration.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Michael Loll
6642 Allview Drive
Columbia, MD 21046



CB22–2021 TOD (Transit Oriented Development) District site - moderate income housing units on the TOD site

Testimony before The Howard County Council

March 15, 2021

Position: Favorable

Good Evening Madame Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the County Council. My name is Michael Loll, and I represent the 700+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in **strong support of CB22-2021** which:

- Requires 15% of all dwelling units in a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) to be Moderate Income Housing
- Requires that these units be developed on the site of the TOD
- Prohibits the developer from paying a fee-in-lieu for the required Moderate Income Housing

Affordable housing in our region is difficult, if not impossible, to find. According to the latest US Census estimates, the median value of owner-occupied units in Howard County is \$455,700.¹ Data from MDOT ² shows 28% of the population surrounding the Dorsey TOD makes less than \$75,000 per year. For the Savage TOD, this figure is 19%. Significant portions of the population in these TODs make far less than the Howard County median household income of \$121,603.³ Proximity to public transit makes TODs attractive to lower income residents who may lack other means of transportation, so it is important that these districts have housing these residents can afford.

Let's remember that, Howard County's affordable housing deficit has been exacerbated by years of low MIHU fees-in-lieu, alternative compliance, and exemptions. All of these practices have contributed significantly to the compounding demand for affordable housing. Contrary to the popular orthodoxy, housing prices are not a simple function of demand and supply. It is not a commodity. Housing also relies on other factors. In communities with high quality public infrastructure, prices are high. In places of low quality infrastructure, prices are very low. Howard County's policy toward affordable housing has largely led to segregated communities as the county's zoning laws created low income and high income regions, by exempting MIHU housing from high income communities and concentrating them in certain areas.

We consider this bill a positive first step and commend Councilmember Rigby for introducing the legislation as well as Council members Jung and Walsh for co-sponsoring it. We urge you to support this legislation and hope to see that MIHUs are required at all projects across the county and that optional methods or alternative compliance to optional methods to MIHUs are prohibited.

Thank you for your time and attention.

We encourage a vote in favor of CB22-2021.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). *2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates Data Files*. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?t=Housing&g=0500000US24027&y=2019&d=ACS%205-Year%20Estimates%20Data%20Profiles&tid=ACSDP5Y2019.DP04&hidePreview=false>

² Maryland Department of Transportation. *Transit Station Area Profile Tool (TSAPT)*. <https://maryland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=5cc549f158954c259658a55ceadfdc6b>

³ U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). *2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates Data Files*. Retrieved from <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?t=Income%20and%20Poverty&g=0500000US24027&y=2019&d=ACS%205-Year%20Estimates%20Data%20Profiles&tid=ACSDP5Y2019.DP03&hidePreview=false>

Michael Loll
Columbia, MD



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

I, Hiruy Hadgu, 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 CB22 and CB23 to express the organization's
(bill or resolution number)

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

Printed Name: Hiruy Hadgu

Signature: 

Date: 03/15/2021

Organization: Howard County Citizens Association

Organization Address: P.O.Box 89, Ellicott City, MD 21041

P.O.Box 89, Ellicott City, MD 21041

Number of Members: 500

Name of Chair/President: Stu Kohn

*This form can be submitted electronically via email to
councilmail@howardcountymd.gov no later than 2 hours prior to the start of the
Public Hearing.*



Howard County Citizens Association

Since 1961...

The Voice Of The People of Howard County

Date: 15 March 2021

Subject: CB22-2021: MIHU requirements on Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

The Howard County Citizens Association fully supports this legislation and urges its passage. We commend the sponsor Councilmember Rigby and its co-sponsors Councilmembers Jung and Walsh.

Howard County's affordable housing deficit has largely been caused due to low MIHU fees-in-lieu, alternative compliance, and exemptions, that have contributed significantly to the compounding demand for affordable housing.

Contrary to the dogma, housing prices are not a simple function of demand and supply. It is not a commodity. Housing also relies on other factors. In communities with high quality public infrastructure, prices are high because people find those communities desirable. In places of low quality infrastructure, home prices are very low, because people with means will always find other places with good infrastructure.

The challenge is always how to create an equitable community that allows people with means and people without means to live in an integrated society. Howard County's policy toward affordable housing has largely led to segregated communities as the county's zoning laws created low income and high income regions by exempting MIHU housing from high income communities and concentrating them in certain areas. This bill will ensure the MIHU is built as required.

We echo the concerns raised by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) that the unintended consequence of this bill would prevent Disability-Income Housing Units (DIHUs) from being built.

But this is primarily due to CB50-2019, where a developer is allowed to substitute one MIHU with 0.33 DIHU for townhomes on site or 0.4 DIHU for apartments. This ratio does not make sense. Why pit one person in need against another person in need? We urge that the DIHU and MIHU be a one to one ratio. This is yet another example of how the deficit is exacerbated.

We urge passage of this bill with an amendment to substitute one DIHU for one MIHU.

Hiruy Hadgu
HCCA Board of Director