

Words matter
Images help

Petitioner presentation in support for ZRA196 (CB21)

By Kimberly Kepnes

From crisis and urgency in Old Ellicott City toward opportunity, UNITY and recovery

cri-sis

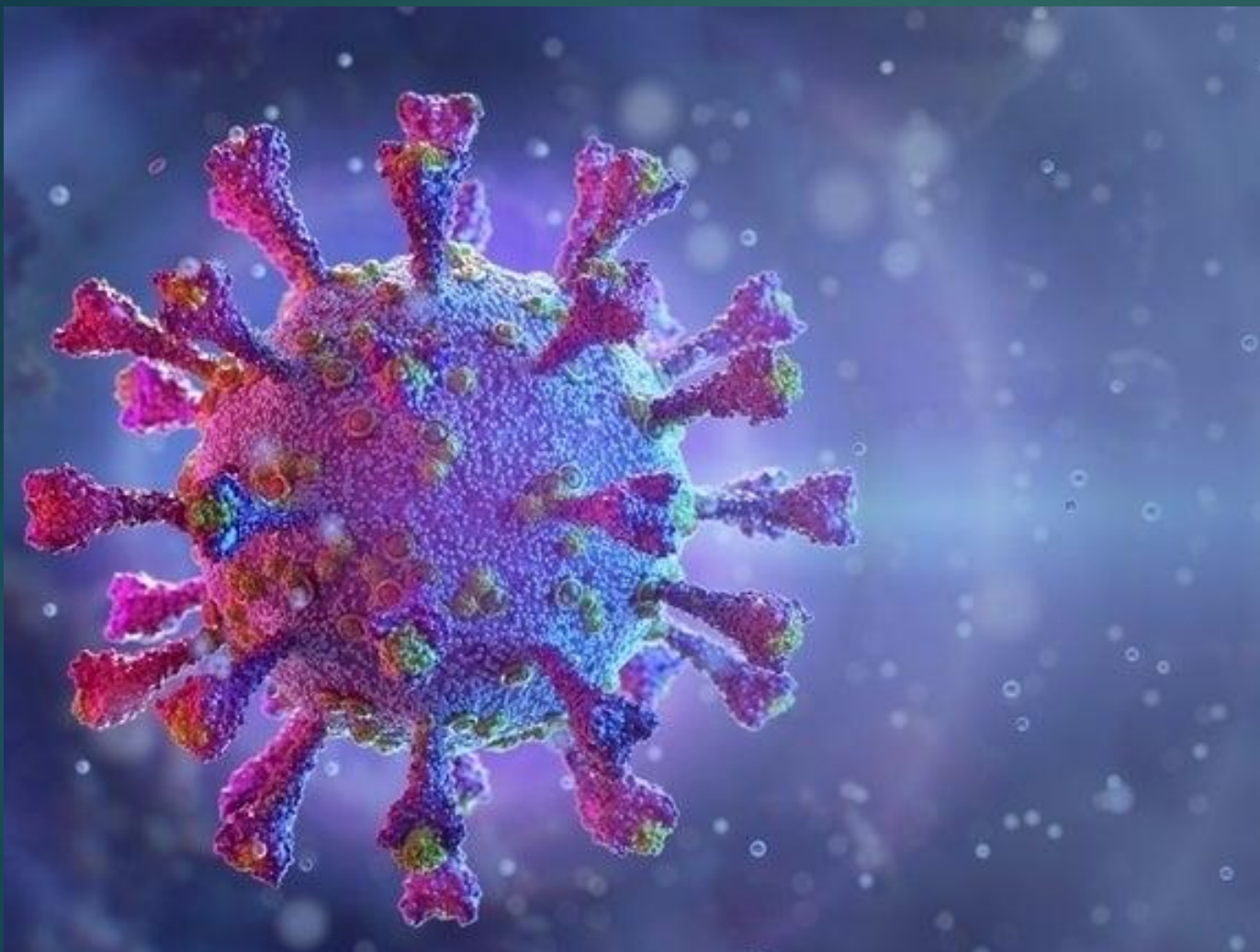
/'kr̩sɪs/

1. a time of intense difficulty, trouble, or danger.

“the crisis in Old Ellicott City”



Flooding in OEC is troublesome and dangerous, with flood mitigation intensely difficult

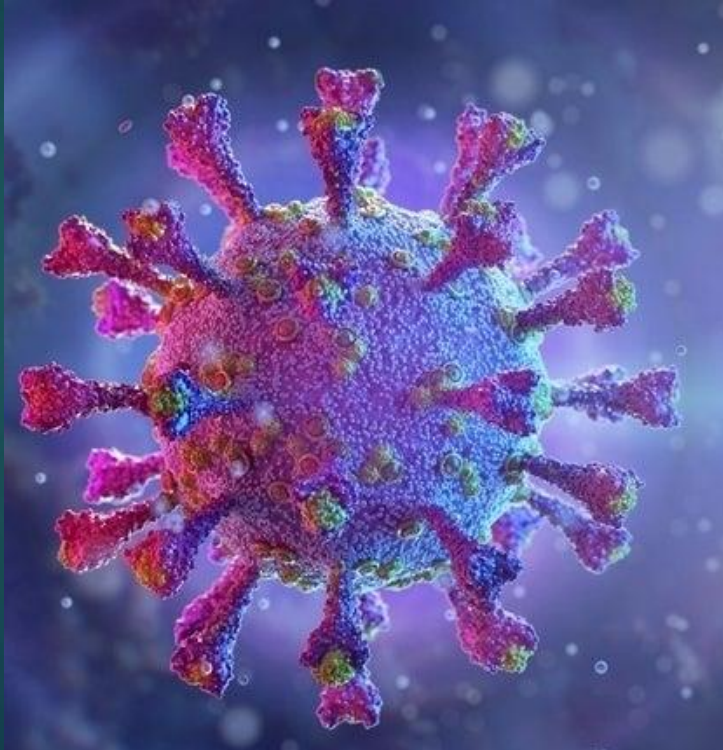


The COVID-19 virus is dangerous, creates intensely difficult operating conditions for business and is troublesome for those which are unable to operate in the same way or have futures uncertain.



News of the relocation of the Court House operation is troublesome for the community and area business owners in the Upper Court House district who will need to pivot from primarily office, institution, church and school uses.

Intensely difficult,
dangerous and
troublesome
circumstances have
Old Ellicott City in crisis.



ur·gen·cy

/'ɜrjənsē/

importance requiring swift action.

similar: importance, top priority, weight, gravity

"the urgent action needed in Old Ellicott City"

The States of OEC Urgency



Flood mitigation requires swift action and is a top priority in OEC



Support for business owners is also a top priority and requires swift action to keep existing business owners in operation and to avoid vacancy and waste.

Swift action is necessary to move our town forward out of crisis and toward recovery



The clock is ticking



op·por·tu·ni·ty

/,äpər't(y)oönədē/

1. a set of circumstances that makes it possible to do something.

“what opportunity do we have to help Old Ellicott City?”

Plan Summary: A Vision for the Future

MASTER PLAN GOALS

Building upon Recovery Phase studies and community input during the master plan process and grounded in EC Safe and Sound, six primary goals were developed to achieve the vision. Associated with each goal, a listing of desirable outcomes is provided. When future projects or activities are undertaken to implement the master plan, project managers should strive to advance these goals and work towards these outcomes.

1. Protect residents, employees and visitors

Safer buildings, advanced warnings of flood threat, clear access to high ground, greater preparedness, safer pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure

2. Manage water quantity and protect water quality

Broader awareness of the water's beauty and strength, national resiliency model, resilient infrastructure, reduced flood impacts, managed stream debris, healthy natural resources, increased green space

3. Plan for economic success

Variety of uses, diversity of businesses, new and existing business investment, thriving small businesses and entrepreneurs, opportunities for business expansion

4. Enhance the experience

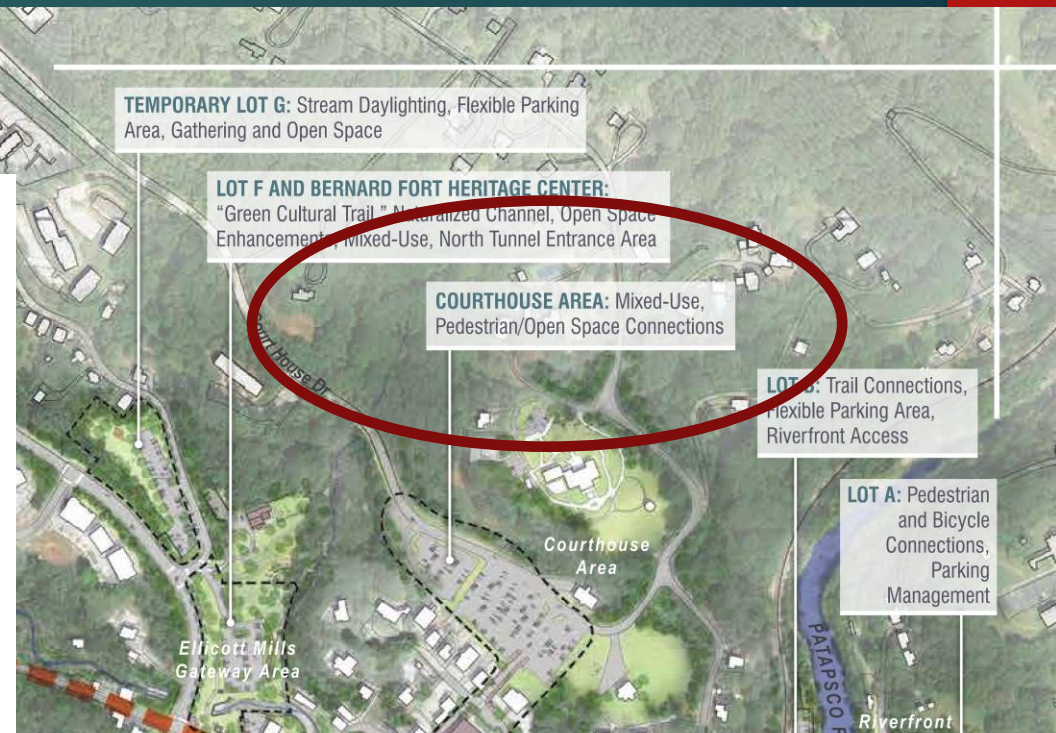
Welcoming and attractive downtown, walkable destination, more accessible physical design, improved public amenities, places for people

5. Preserve and promote the identity

Distinctive community, showcase for heritage, town setting, steep terrain and river valley, widespread appreciation for historic preservation, celebrated past, present and future

6. Organize for success

Sustained focus on Ellicott City, flexibility to adapt to the unforeseen, multi-objective mindset, new collaborations, regional partnerships, ongoing and multi-disciplinary partnerships



Adoption of the Watershed Master Plan makes it possible to do something.





Relocation of Court House operations make it possible to do something to reshape the identity of the district to support existing business and business development in the district and to benefit the economic recovery of our town.



ZRA196 (CB21)

Here ye, here, ye
Help Upper Court
House businesses
and our town...

ZRA196 to extend three (3) additional categories of business use to those already permitted in the Upper Court House zoning district will make it possible to do something to help businesses impacted by COVID and a dark Court House and will provide an opportunity to replace lost historic commercial property on lower Main with existing historic commercial property.

And We've Reshaped Portions of the HO Zoning District Before...

Historic Rockland College was redevelopment in the 1990's to revitalize the institution building to support the community with more residential housing along College Avenue.

ADVERTISEMENT



News

Old school converted into condos Greystone opens in Ellicott City

By **Edward Gunts**
THE BALTIMORE SUN

APRIL 14, 1991

For nearly a decade, the burnt-out stone shell of the old Ellicott City School languished like a ruin on a hill overlooking historic Ellicott City and the Patapsco Valley.

But this spring, after months of rehabilitation, the long-abandoned property at 3700 College Ave. has been transformed into Howard County's newest luxury residential complex, a 20-unit development called the Greystone condominiums.

A sales center and furnished model opened last month for the condominiums, which represent the first phase of a 4.5-acre, \$8 million development that will include 28 three-



The building was in ruin for nearly a decade before opportunity was realized. We cannot allow buildings to go vacant before taking action.

Opportunity Requires Zoning Permission

Current Zoning uses in the Upper Court House Commercial District include:

- ▶ Residential Use and Residential Apartments in Historic Buildings
- ▶ Institution and School Uses
- ▶ Churches, Banks
- ▶ Conference Centers, Carnivals
- ▶ Bed & Breakfast Inns
- ▶ Museums, Funeral Homes
- ▶ Fire Departments



ZRA196 will make it possible to do something to support the changing identity of the Upper Court House district as a government complex by adding three (3) commercial use categories to the existing commercial use categories:

- ▶ Country Inn
- ▶ Personal Service Establishment
- ▶ Specialty Store



ZRA196 is
NOT a Part
of the
County
Plan to
rezone the
County
Complex



Politics & Local News

HoCo Officials Seek To Rezone Ellicott City Courthouse Complex

Howard County will vacate its current circuit courthouse located at 8360 Court Avenue in Ellicott City this summer and relocate.



Kristin Danley-Greiner, Patch Staff 

Posted Wed, Mar 10, 2021 at 1:16 pm ET


What is the Difference?

ZRA196

- ▶ No zoning change
- ▶ Add 3 categories of business use to benefit all existing Upper Court House commercial buildings

Court House Rezoning

- ▶ Zoning Change from HO to HC
- ▶ Limited to the Parking Lot and County-owned property



What are the three (3) uses
proposed under ZRA 196
and what do they permit?

The Country Inn

A business,
**IN AN EXISTING HISTORIC
BUILDING** featuring:

- a banquet hall
- an inn for overnight lodging
- a restaurant or café

Country Inn also can
include:

- antique store
- bakeries
- specialty stores



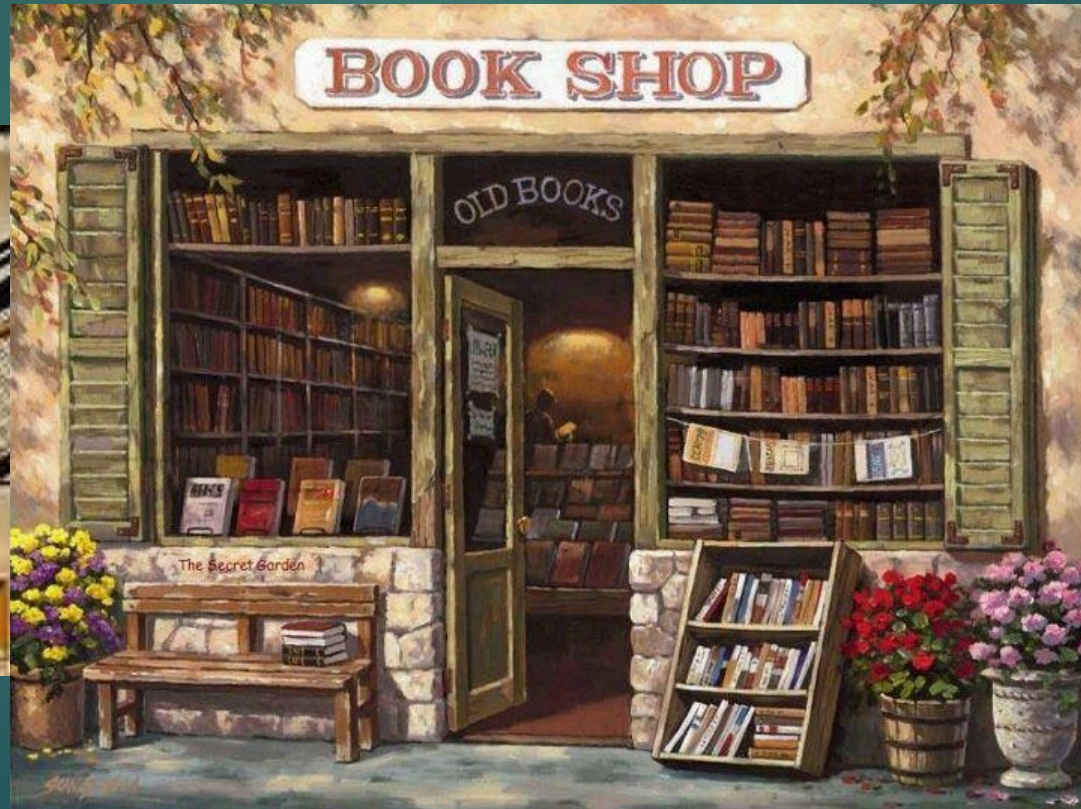
The Personal Service Establishment

A business which offers services including salons and spas



The Specialty Store

A business which principally sells a specific type or category of item.



Why expand with only these three (3) uses?

- ✓ To focus on revitalization and reuse of *existing* historic commercial buildings
- ✓ To attract complementary businesses to support residents and existing businesses



Band aids help

Why Should These Uses Be Allowed by Right?

- ▶ **Uses By Right**
 - ▶ Legitimize the existing, underlying commercial use zoning district.
 - ▶ Provide the certainty needed for business and owner investment.
 - ▶ Promote consistency across the district to attract similar uses.
 - ▶ Effective to support current and future economic growth.



Does “by right” Mean Without Oversight and Approval? NO!

- ▶ Any “Change of Use” for a business from one permitted use allowable by right to another permitted use allowable by right STILL requires an application with the Department of Planning and Zoning.
- ▶ A Site Development Plan or Alternative Compliance application will determine whether the building and property are suitable for the “Change of Use”



Department of Planning and Zoning

THE SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROCESS

WHAT IS A SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (SDP)?

An SDP is a detailed engineered drawing of a commercial, industrial, institutional or residential development project, showing existing site conditions and proposed improvements with sufficient detail for agency review, approval and subsequent construction.

Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning
Division of Land Development

ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE APPLICATION
[Alternative Compliance from Subdivision and Land Development Regulations]

Date Submitted/Accepted _____ DPZ File Number _____

I. **Site Description**
Subdivision Name/Property Identification: _____
Location of property: _____
(Street Address and/or Road Name)

This is a 6-8 month process. With 3-4 months for building permits, we may be waiting all year long to see the benefits of this economic initiative. The time is NOW to approve legislation for business development.

SHOULD WE CONSIDER LIMITING THESE USES TO “BY CONDITIONAL USE” ONLY?

Limiting ZRA196 uses to by Conditional Use:

- Creates confusion about the underlying commercial use district
- Creates doubt for business and owner investment
- Will result in negative business development
- Will not attract business or support economic recovery

NO!



Here's an Example:



If you wanted to buy a house, but could not move in until you made an application, had public hearing and received a “conditional use” approval from the County to do so, you would probably be confused.

AND.....



Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning
Division of Land Development
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[Alternative Compliance from Subdivision and Land Development Regulations]

Date Submitted/Accepted _____ DPZ File Number _____

I. **Site Description**

Subdivision Name/Property Identification: _____

Location of property: _____

(Street Address and/or Road Name)



**CONDITIONAL USE PETITION
TO THE HOWARD COUNTY HEARING AUTHORITY**
(This application will only be accepted after a pre-submission meeting. See attached)

1. **Conditional Use Request**

Conditional Use Category _____



If you were told the “Conditional Use” process could take 8 to 12 months and, **IF APPROVED**, you would then need to make a “Change of Use” application which might take an additional 6 to 8 months.....



There is little doubt you would see more limitations, less opportunity and, most likely, would go buy another house.



Lack of opportunity and limited zoning permissions lessen value and can result in vacancy and waste.



And, believe it or not, vacancy and waste is already chipping away at the edges of our town and down our streets.



They are almost invisible to us after so long, but visitors certainly take notice.



ZRA196

1. Focuses on the opportunity for revitalization and reuse of existing historic property in the Upper Court House zoning district,
2. Can replace lost commercial space along Main Street in the Upper Court House district with complementary uses, and
3. Will contribute to OEC recovery.




u·ni·ty

/ˈyoʊnədə/

1.the state of being united or joined as a whole.

“ZRA196 sparked recovery to help bring our Old Ellicott City CommUNITY together again”



According to the zoning regulations, our Historic District was established to permit a mix of office, commercial and residential activities with supporting cultural uses which encourage the reuse of existing structures along the character of the community.

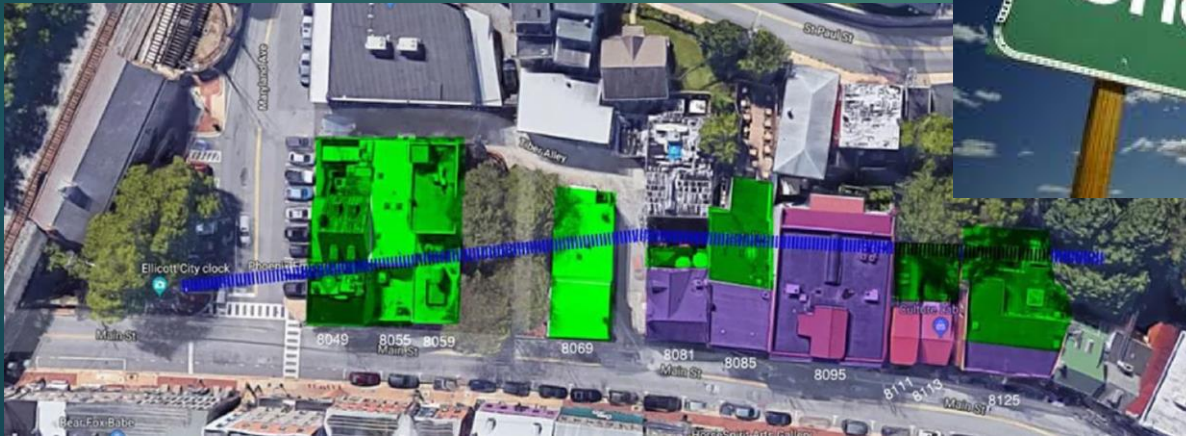
We're not the Brady Bunch but....

Businesses and residents
in OEC share

- Front doors
- Sidewalks
- Ceilings
- Floors
- Side yards
- Backyards and



We all share in the consequences of flooding, COVID and receding Court House




Anxiety, Anger, Alienation, Apathy, Paralysis

Our Values are Intertwined.



ZRA196 supports the vision of our town as a recovering place. This affirms and promotes investment and the value of each of the places we call home.



Let's UNITE and change the
conversation from consequence
to opportunity with ZRA196.

Ellicott City Watershed

III.12 Courthouse Area

DESCRIPTION

ZRA 196

one step forward in the long journey we are on *together* to move OEC out of crisis and forward toward economic recovery.

MAHAN RYKIEL
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
URBAN DESIGN & PLANNING
RK&K
LandStudies
Arnett Muldrow & Associates
Preservation Consulting
South Coast Consulting



Figure 209: Key Plan — Courthouse Area



Figure 208: The Lot E Staircase Creates a Memorable Link Between the Courthouse Area and Main Street

Visit
Howard County
Maryland



Advocates and Support for ZRA196 Include:



Howard County Department of
Planning & Zoning



Planning Board



Main Street Business Owner & Upper Court House Building Owner ZRA196 is a vote for small business in Old Ellicott City.

“

ZRA196 is the way to replace lost businesses and buildings along Main Street with existing historic property in the Upper Court House commercial district.

*Mojan Bagha,
Building Owner,
Co-sponsor and Supporter of
ZRA 196*

“

An enhanced retail district in Ellicott City will attract more visitors to town and will help the Historical Society with visitation at both the Museum of Howard County History and the Ellicott Mills Children's Museum.

Shawn Gladden, Executive Director,
Howard County Historical Society,
Co-sponsor & Supporter of ZRA196



Architecture by Design



“We so love the vibrancy of OEC and look forward to prospect of that into the Upper Court area.”

Judi Miller, Owner and Principal of Architecture by Design on Court Avenue, Supporter of ZRA 196

“

Economic recovery efforts are vital to support our business district and reinforce the attraction of wanting to spend a lifetime living here.

*Kimberly Kepnes & Nathan Sowers,
Residents, Business & Property
Owners, Co-sponsors and Supporters
of ZRA196*






Other area residents, business and property owners
and YOU!

re·cov·er·y

/rə'kəv(ə)rē/

1. a return to a normal state of health, mind, or strength.

“The passing of ZRA196 by the County Council will be a sign of support for economic recovery efforts in OEC”



Please support ZRA196 (CB21) to allow Country Inn, Personal Service Establishments and Specialty Store uses to be added to the existing uses available by right to the properties in the Upper Court House zoning district, HO.