

CB64-2021

Sayers, Margery

From: Jung, Deb
Sent: Monday, October 18, 2021 2:19 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: Fw: Legislation CB-64 Feedback

Testimony

From: V. Wirth <vwccnp@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, October 15, 2021 1:59 PM
To: Jung, Deb <djung@howardcountymd.gov>
Cc: vwccnp@yahoo.com <vwccnp@yahoo.com>
Subject: Legislation CB-64 Feedback

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

Dear Ms. Jung,

As property owners in Western Howard County, we strongly oppose to the proposed CB-64 bill. Instead of helping homeowners such as ourselves with removal of large, multi-ton, hazardous trees (which are subject of the CB-64 bill), the Council is trying to do just the opposite--make it more difficult and expensive for the homeowners to do so.

For years, we have been dealing with the problem of having large trees on our 1.1-acre residential lot. We have suffered extensive losses, damage, and insurance rates increases due to fallen trees. We have firsthand knowledge and experience of the danger, expense, and hassle of having these trees in close proximity to our house and other structures on the property. In the past, we had to get many hazardous trees removed (and some of our neighbors did the same) since these gigantic trees with their shallow roots are hazardous just by the nature of their sheer size and multi-ton weight and require an ongoing, very expensive management. Please note that we are tree lovers--for each removed tree, we plant several young trees that are safe, aesthetically pleasing, and appropriate to have on a residential lot.

This bill is bound to make our life even more difficult. Aside from the fact that the County clearly intends to chip away at our property rights by regulating trees on our property, there is also an issue of liability. If the County makes and enforces decisions as to which tree can or can't be removed, then the County must also accept the liability resulting from making such decisions for the homeowner.

Moreover, if mature vegetation generally adds value to the property, the enormous 100-200 ft high trees, however, are a liability according to the realtors. In addition, the hazardous trees, for which CB-64 provides special protection, deplete soil on the homeowner's lot as well as damage neighboring properties (including underground utilities and buildings' foundations). Sudden failure of huge branches or the entire trees is common, especially after storms, which presents a real danger to life and property and should be your primary concern.

As well, this bill will result in thousands of dollars of additional expenses to the homeowner in order to make their property safe. It is easy to see that in many cases, the homeowner may choose to do nothing because of the exorbitant cost and bureaucratic hassle that will result from CB-64. In addition, CB-64 will also exacerbate the neighbor tree disputes, which is another issue we have to deal with.

Obviously, the CB-64 bill is supported by people who either have no understanding of the danger to life and property that these enormous trees present or hope to profit from this legislation. The Howard County administration seems to be concerned with preservation of forests (which is an admirable goal), but preservation means constant maintenance of these resources. In our opinion, the County is currently incapable of managing trees in the public areas and along the roads thus making the county roads unsafe, of which we also have a firsthand experience when a couple of years ago, a dead branch from an overhanging tree fell on the roof of our vehicle and destroyed the antenna.

With this bill, the County attempts to undertake the task of regulating the most dangerous category of trees on all private property in the entire County. Please do your due diligence before pushing such ill-thought legislation on the county residents.

Thank you for attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

Valerie and Veitl Wirth
13575 Highland Rd, Clarksville, MD 21029