

Sayers, Margery

From: LISA MARKOVITZ <lmarkovitz@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, May 15, 2022 6:24 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: CR 75 and 78 2022

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

Dear Council Members,

CR75, the annual review of the rate of the Building Excise tax and CR78, the annual review of the rate of the fee paid in lieu of providing Moderate Income Housing Units, are capped (by Howard County Code), at the annual rate of the Construction Cost Index for the Baltimore Region, reported by the Engineering News Report, a journal for the building industry. The ENR rate should be part of the financial information shown online with the Resolutions. Each year, for a very long time, we have reached out asking if the Council is even given this rate to know what the cap is, so as to be able to opine as to the amount in the Resolutions being what percentage of the allowed increase. I have often heard you are not given that data. Did you get this year?

From what one can find online, which is not easy nor clear, it appears that this year's rates on these resolutions cap at about twice the proposed increases. It would be fine to do a lower amount, if the cap was charged more often over time. It should be considered to change our code to say this journal index should be a guideline, like in other jurisdictions, versus a cap, so that planning could be done over time, in a more economically feasible way for the County.

As for CR78, it stands to reason that if the MIHU rate were higher, more MIHU's would be built and spread out across the County more as well. That rate should always be increased to its cap every year.

Thank you,
Lisa Markovitz
President, The People's Voice