

1 COUNTY COUNCILMEMBER CHRISTIANA \* BEFORE THE  
 2 RIGBY, PETITIONER \* PLANNING BOARD OF  
 3 ZRA-204 \* HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND

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 5 \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \*

6 MOTION: Recommend approval of ZRA-204.

7 ACTION: Recommend Approval; Vote 4-0.

8 \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \*

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 10 RECOMMENDATION

11 On June 15, 2023, the Planning Board of Howard County, Maryland, considered the petition of County  
 12 Council Member Christiana Rigby (Petitioner) to amend the Howard County Zoning Regulations to modify the  
 13 definitions of "Parking Area, Parking Facility or Parking Use" and "Solar Collector, Rooftop" to allow solar  
 14 canopies as a matter of right in parking areas and on parking structures.

15 The Planning Board considered the petition and the Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ)  
 16 Technical Staff Report.

17 Testimony

18 Councilmember Christiana Rigby presented testimony stating that the intent of the amendment is to  
 19 allow solar canopies as a matter of right in parking areas and on parking structures. She stated that the current  
 20 zoning code definitions constrained a proposed parking lot solar canopy project in Gateway and that led to this  
 21 proposal. She also noted the additional positive impacts of using solar canopies to provide shade to parking  
 22 spaces and cars parked underneath. This amendment would make it easier for developers and proponents of  
 23 solar power to develop solar canopies.

24 Mr. Cecil expressed concern that height restrictions may prevent the installation of parking canopies  
 25 and recommended that solar canopies be exempt from these restrictions. Councilwoman Rigby concurred.  
 26 Regarding the landscaping concerns identified in the TSR, Mr. Coleman asked the parking canopies will be  
 27 reviewed on a case-by-case basis and whether the landscape requirements or the canopies will take precedent.  
 28 Mr. Conrad responded that the location of the parking canopies and landscaping will be determined during the  
 29 development review process, since site characteristics are location specific. Mr. Coleman stated that the current  
 30 landscaping manual requirement for buffering parking lots are inadequate to screen a 20-foot or higher parking  
 31 canopy.

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 33 No members of the public testified in regard to the proposed ZRA.

Board Discussion and Recommendation

In work session, Board members spoke favorably of the proposed amendments citing the need for renewable energy sources. Mr. Coleman stated his support, but expressed concern about the height of parking canopies and their potential visual impact.

Mr. Cecil motioned to recommend approval of ZRA-204, Mr. McAliley seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.

For the foregoing reasons, the Planning Board of Howard County, Maryland, on this 5th day of July, 2023, recommends that ZRA-204, as described above, be **APPROVED**.

HOWARD COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

DocuSigned by:  
*Edward T. Coleman*  
Ed Coleman, Chair

DocuSigned by:  
*Kevin McAliley*  
Kevin McAliley, Vice-chair

DocuSigned by:  
*James Cecil*  
James Cecil  
DocuSigned by: *Lisa Kenny* on behalf of  
Barbara Mosier  
Barbara Mosier

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:  
*Mary Kendall*  
Mary Kendall, Acting Executive Secretary