

Respass, Charity

From: Goldscher, Paige
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 9:56 AM
To: Anderson, Isaiah
Subject: FW: Council Bill-4

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Hi Isaiah,

I wanted to share this email with you so it could be added to the record!

Thank you,

Paige Goldscher (*she/her*)
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Howard County Council
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From: Joseph Rutter <jrutter_1@live.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 11:09 AM
To: Rigby, Christiana <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>; Yungmann, David <dyungmann@howardcountymd.gov>;
ojones@howarecountymd.gov
Subject: Council Bill-4

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I realize this may be considered testimony and placed in the record. I watched the Council Legislative Session and was appalled that the current Council leadership that has a history of attacking Council members now seems to endorse attacks by individuals testifying (the smirk on her face was obvious). It is obvious that the lack of support for ridiculous amendments to the General Plan is now going to trigger legislation to undermine the General Plan objectives.

With regard to Council Bill 4 I no longer manage large developments in Howard County. However, I do have a few long-term residents that approached me to help them with the process of subdivision. The lack of county staff working in the office and reducing or eliminating coordination of comments is devastating to owners and consulting engineers.

CB-4 removes all provisions for a fee in lieu for MIHU and does not make any clear grandfathering for projects in process.

Here are real life examples of "developers" under attack.

An elderly couple contacted me. They have a small farm in RR zone. They processed a SP plan and went into the school bin for the 5 year wait. The intent of the 10 lot subdivision was to provide funding for them to move out of state near a daughter where they could get help with care. During the 5 year wait dementia progressed and she was no longer able to provide him needed care. They were told there was no way to separate the existing house and keep the SP approval. In desperation they were referred to me for confirmation. I told them that was not correct. We processed a plan to separate the house and keep the remainder in process. They sold the house and moved to the daughter but kept me involved to finish the process since the cost of care cannot be endured much longer. The final plan is in process and they have entered into a contract with a purchaser that can manage the construction of the road and install wells. The family does not have the resources to install wells that are required before Final Plan approval. CB-4 would trigger the need for 2 of the 10 new lots to be MIHU. As you heard the only way to make that work is if the lots are free to the builder.

Another is a long-term resident of Columbia. His wife can no longer climb stairs, so the dining room is now her temporary bedroom. He purchased about 2 acres in the Ilchester area having been told it was large enough for 4 lots so he planned to subdivide and have the funds to construct a one-story house for them and use the funds from the other lots to cover the costs. I was contacted when he became frustrated. I explained why he would not get 4 lots but may get 3. We processed the minor subdivision plan and he went into the bin for a 5 year wait. He could build a house in an area that would later be its own lot so he got a building permit (fees over \$37,000 including MIHU) and has started the house but covering the mortgage on his current house and having funds for the new house that cannot get a mortgage because of the uncertainty on subdivision stopped construction. If CB-4 is adopted one of his 2 lots will be MIHU and he will be totally devastated.

I have other examples, but you get the fact that these are not evil developers. What seems to not register with supporters is "developers" do not lose anything with this kind of legislation. The market sets a value for a house. The builder sets a profit from the sale. The process is so complicated now a "developer" comes in to help the owner and the developer sets a fee for doing that. Sale price minus builder cost minus developer cost leaves what the raw land is worth. The one taking the hit for these targeted bills is the property owner. You supported infill development in the new General Plan and it is legislation like this that kills that process. Please vote no regardless of amendments.

The People's Voice, LLC

3600 Saint Johns Lane, Suite D, Ellicott City, MD 21042

Testimony on Howard County Council Bill 4-2023 – Support

There have been many commendable goals seen over time, to increase the number of affordable home units in the County. CB4 proposes to provide more units, and address discontinuance of their concentration, and adds low income and disability analyses and addresses longer term life of units.

In the past, we have not seen great success with affordable housing endeavors as they often are based on inaccurate assumptions to achieve stated goals. For instance, the notion that density equals affordable relies on a trickle down theory of increasing supply that will only add tiny increases in affordable unit numbers if we continue the focus on increasing market rate supply.

CB4 is important, because it attacks the problem at one of its core sources. Eliminating language that lessens the provision of MIHU's on site will increase supply across the County. Revamping the fee-in-lieu process is deeply needed so as to stop the avoidance of required provision. Real equity can be reached in this process by stopping the incentivizing of only providing these units in lower market rate areas.

This geographic concentration problem will only be exacerbated by the change in the way allocations are mapped in the new General Plan. Where once they had regional goals, now the goals are via zoning types. Thus, it is important that we take a very strong look at the fee-in-lieu process, and make it more equitable, and a more meaningful tool to help implement the County's affordable housing goals. As it is now, it thwarts them.

Presently, fee-in-lieu rates do not vary across market area values. The current program concentrates and minimizes supply.

As for the current fees paid in lieu, that create a fund that does much good work, we believe that those commendable supports be added to the budget directly, especially regarding assistance to individuals, versus any projects that don't end up providing what was promised.

We are hopeful that any concerns from Council Members regarding exemption needs to be allowed to pay fees-in-lieu will be addressed with proposed amendments and not just voting no.

Thank you,

Lisa Markovitz

President, The People's Voice

CB4-2024 testimony

I'm writing to you today not in my professional capacity as a historian associated with the newest history nonprofit but as an individual trying to secure affordable housing here. For the last decade, I have watched the affordable and moderate housing program issue reports to the public detailing new housing developments and the number of "affordable" units being built and the number not built due to the fee-in-lieu option exercised. By nature, I don't just look at issues as they appear in the present day. I've learned that one must look at how things got to be how they are in order to understand what went wrong relative to stated intentions. I can well-imagine that the call for changes to the program was met with swift resistance from those who decry "the way we've always done things here" who don't want to change things they think aren't broken. I've decided to use my voice to encourage the council to commit to examining this issue for the people who may be too proud to use theirs to ask. I decided to take a glance at some of the numbers you're seeing, and some you likely aren't seeing.

In the HoCo By Design document, the following is written for what constitutes "low income" (30-60% AMI) in the county which was calculated to be \$36,349-72,696 on the bottom left side of page DN-14. I wanted to take the liberty of giving you some county government employees to consider as you ponder what to do about this legislation. This was taken from the OpenPayrolls website, and is just a sampling of county govt jobs found:

Firefighter Recruit \$58,056
Operations Tech 3 \$56,097
Admin Support Tech 2 (police) \$41,600
" " 3 \$49,088
Utility Worker 4 \$56,388
Parks Maintenance \$58,240
Rec Services Coord \$48,235
Deputy First Class (Sheriff) \$59, 838
Maintenance Mechanic 2 \$43,900
Admin Assistant \$70k
Apprentice (Public Works) \$40,705 (aren't we pushing apprentice ed at HCC?)

Within the George Howard Bldg:

Regulation Supervisor (Inspect, License, Permits) \$63,695
Admin Support Tech 3 (County Admin) \$42,993
Admin Asst (County Council) \$63,573

Perhaps you can think about these people, and the many others both in our government and in the private sector who are looking for housing to fit these numbers of availability as disclosed in HoCo By Design. I'm one of them. Do you wonder if these people are even living in our county currently? Many do not. Doesn't even cover the contingent workers we have employed by government. People just do what they must in order to make it work, but you should know. Thanks for finally looking at this closer. It's past the time to stop kicking this can down the road.

	Studio	1BR	2BR	3BR	4BR	Active Adult/Seniors	Shadow Market	Total	Percent
Table 6-3: Rental Units Built Before 2000									
Under 30% AMI Very Low Income	0	255	377	116	43	337	1312	2,440	12%
30% - 60% AMI Low Income	0	564	351	61	0	759	874	2,609	12%
60% - 80% AMI Moderate	26	2,910	5,532	600	3	0	461	9,532	45%
80% - 120% AMI Workforce	0	1,598	1,224	340	9	0	1,149	4,320	21%
Over 120% AMI Market Rate	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,126	2,126	10%
Total	26	5,327	7,484	1,117	55	1,096	5,922	21,027	

	Studio	1BR	2BR	3BR	4BR	Active Adult/Seniors	Shadow Market	Total	Percent
Table 6-4: Rental Units Built After 2000									
Under 30% AMI Very Low Income	0	53	54	0	0	297	214	618	6%
30% - 60% AMI Low Income	0	167	148	96	0	1,176	9	1,596	16%
60% - 80% AMI Moderate	12	153	629	33	0	5	101	933	9%
80% - 120% AMI Workforce	80	2100	2647	501	0	202	271	5,801	56%
Over 120% AMI Market Rate	0	47	210	103	0	235	740	1,335	13%
Total	92	2,520	3,688	733	0	1,915	1,335	10,283	

Source: Housing Opportunities Master Plan, 2020

Marlena Jareaux

Respass, Charity

From: LISA MARKOVITZ <lmarkovitz@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 4:01 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Fee in lieu payment totals

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Watching the work session today, on CB4, the figures presented representing the per unit average of fee in lieu funds for moderate income housing units makes no sense to me. The current rate is \$3.65 per square foot. This would be a slightly higher rate than what was in existence in recent past years, but the increases were not large over time.

Since this is a square foot charge, if an average payment PER UNIT is being stated as over \$150,000 the units would have to have been 41,000 square feet in size! Obviously, some total amount received coupled with number of units being paid out of, are not being calculated over the same time, or something like that must be in play with those calculations.

We definitely need to get down the actual figures here. Especially, when using these figures to assume what budget amounts would be foregone without the fees.

Makes much more sense to figure out the average square foot size, then you can figure it out pretty closely without other funding issues, grabbed numbers, coming into play.

Thanks.

Lisa Markovitz