

6110 Covington Road
Columbia, MD 21044
May 1, 2015

Howard County Council
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Re: CR49-2015

Dear Council Members:

I would like to request that you do not confirm the appointment of Susan Garber to the Howard County Planning Board as is proposed in CR49-2015. My reasons are two-fold.

First, I am disappointed that current member Josh Tsuzker will not be allowed a second term. I have attended many Planning Board meetings and feel he is fair and empathetic towards all who come before him. He asks detailed and thoughtful questions of speakers and staff. Ultimately, he follows the rules and criteria when making a decision, even when it is one that may not coincide with his personal preference. In addition, he has been very supportive of the Downtown Columbia Master Plan. I would like to see him have further opportunity to participate in the implementation of the plan with which he is so familiar. His knowledge will be particularly useful as a new Planning Director comes on board.

My bigger concern is the temperament and the agenda of Susan Garber. I had never met her prior to our joint participation on the County Executive's recent DPZ Transition Team. I found her negative and downright nasty towards DPZ staff. I thought she was condescending towards the opinions of others. She was blatantly anti-developer during our conversations. I do not believe she would be a good face to those who visit the Planning Board, whether petitioner or protestant.

On the Transition Team, she repeatedly held herself and Stuart Kohn as the only “community representatives” on the team. Susan’s distrust of nearly everyone in the planning process, especially staff, does not bode well for productive discussions of zoning issues and implementation of existing zoning criteria that may not conform to her opinion of a project.

I urge the County Council to reject Susan Garber for a position on the Howard County Planning Board. Thank you for your consideration of my concerns.

Sincerely,

Joan Lancos

CC: Allan Kittleman, Howard County Executive