

## Habicht, Kelli

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**From:** Brian England <beengland@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 27, 2015 1:01 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail; Kittleman, Allan  
**Subject:** Affordable Housing Downtown Columbia  
**Attachments:** Affordable Housing.pdf

Sent from my iPad

Dear Council members and County Executive:

I am writing as the owner of British American Auto regarding the recent letter from the Chamber of Commerce regarding the Columbia Downtown Housing Corporation (CDHC)'s recommendations to the Council.

The Chamber of Commerce has come out against the CDHC's recommendations to the council to require workforce housing to be built in Downtown Columbia. As a Columbia business owner, and member of the Chamber I am writing to clarify that the Chamber's position does not represent the views of all of its businesses and organizations, and because more workforce housing would be good for business in Howard County.

Many of the people working in Howard County, including most of my own employees, cannot afford to live in the County because of the high costs of housing. During the five year automotive training period (apprenticeship) technicians wages are not enough to be able to live in Howard County. Growing a skilled workforce is critical for companies like ours, our employees commute from, Owings Mill, Towson and Carroll County and at one time Pennsylvania. This makes employee retention difficult after their training period because they have established lives in different communities. Housing that is affordable to these employees is crucial to creating stability in the workforce.

Affordable Housing for employees is also good for our local economy because more of the employees wages stays in our community.

The CDHC legislative recommendations are a vast improvement over the current agreement with Howard Hughes. Even with the improvement, the recommendations do not go as far as is necessary to address the dearth of workforce and affordable housing in our county, and should be 15% for the entire development. We should ensure that no more new units are allowed to be built unless they follow the 15% standard.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at: 410 952 6856

Sincerely,

Brian England. President