

CR49-2015

Good evening. I'm Susan Garber of 9100 Gorman Road 20723. It's nice to see you all again.

I'm pleased and humbled to have been appointed to the Planning Board. I look forward to involvement at a time when the County faces new challenges and great opportunities as it moves forward.

Since the only qualification listed for membership is county residency, I guess I should start there. We've been Howard landowners since 1973 and built our home here in 1990. Previously we had resided in Prince George's County in a garden apartment, a highrise nestled in a park, 2 townhomes and a single family house---- So you can see I've had first-hand experience with a continuum of housing types as our family's needs have changed. While the vast majority of homeowners in this room probably purchased from a developer, my family has also experienced the Howard County development and subdivision process from the perspective of a developer, subdividing and building on our land.

I mention these experiences as they go beyond that minimum requirement for Planning Board membership. To that list I would add skills developed over the 40+ years of my professional experience in special education and non-profit management. These skills are remarkably applicable to participation on the Planning Board and include:

- critical diagnostic/analytic skills,
- creative problem solving,
- sensitivity to other's needs and emotions,
- good written and oral communication skills,
- critical listening,
- business acumen,
- the ability to advocate and negotiate,
- lead while a team player,
- facilitate group processes,
- develop long range plans and a vision for the future -- not to mention an over-arching belief in fairness and leveling of the playing field for ALL people.

Whether in the classroom with special needs students or as a University professor—I always stressed certain behaviors with my students.

- Do your best.
- Follow the rules, especially the Golden Rule.
- Do your homework.
- And Don't forget to put your name on your paper.

As a planning board member I pledge to follow that advice.

- As a retiree I'll have the time to do my best-- for all petitioners and citizens.
- I'll apply the rules as written, guided by their stated intent "to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the community."
- I'll do my homework, reviewing staff reports and familiarizing myself with each case site.
- **I will uphold the high standards expected of Planning Board members, and will work within the guidelines, regulations and laws to render fair and impartial decisions *to which I will sign my name.***

As a senior citizen I bring experience, time, and the perspective of *the fastest growing demographic* in the County.

As a retiree I bring the perspective of a household on a fixed income significantly below the County's average.

As a grandmother I'm vested in assuring that Howard County will remain a great place for children to grow and learn --and settle here as adults.

I appreciate your consideration and welcome the opportunity to meet with you further if you have any concerns.

Thank you