

Testimony Regarding Bill 37-2015 (ZRA-155)

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To: Sigaty, Mary Kay; CouncilMail; Doug Isokait [isokait@verizon.net]

Dear Councilperson Mary Kay Sigaty:

As a resident of Rosemont Drive, I want to submit testimony encouraging the County Council to vote "no" to Bill 37 - 2015 (ZRA - 155). If approved the bill would encourage businesses such as Miller Construction to operate in residential zones.

I have experienced what this can mean:

Before the recent zoning violation, Miller Construction was frequently moving equipment that could be heard (backup beeping, engine noise, equipment noise) and seen from the back deck, disturbing outdoor activities and the relative quiet of the wooded back yard.

I do not want to see this activity resume. I believe that even if a Hearing Examiner imposes conditions on Miller Construction, the construction activity will negatively affect the neighborhood's outdoor environment and my wooded back yard which is a MD DNR Certified Maryland Wild Acres, and A NWF Wildlife Backyard Habitat.

As a taxpayer, I am also concerned about traffic and the effect of heavy trucks on residential roads. I should not have to experience residential-based construction equipment (trailers with front end loaders/bobcats and dump trucks) on neighborhood roads, nor should I be asked to pay for any street maintenance as a result. I am further concerned that construction yard activities may lower home resale values.

I believe that the "home-based contractor" as envisioned in the current regulations for R-20 intends to accommodate businesses such as plumbers, HVAC, and similar home services-not construction contracting yards and warehouses. Encouraging such businesses in residential neighborhoods, even through a Special Exception process, is not preferred.

Economic arguments that focus on the need to encourage business and jobs by co-locating construction related contractors in residential neighborhoods are simply false. Such operations have zones established for them. Miller Construction belongs in a commercial space, not literally in my backyard. I agree with the Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning's April 17, 2015 Technical Staff Report recommending denial of ZRA - 155, noting that the provisions for home-based

contracting businesses in County zoning arrangements support rational separation of land uses within established policy objectives. The current regulations seek to preserve community and quality of life in residential areas.

There are more appropriate zoning districts for construction contractors, and R-20 is not one of them.

Let's keep our neighborhoods family friendly and peaceful.

Kim