



July 12, 2016

Howard County Council
George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

The River Hill Community Association wishes to express our support for the passage of Bill No. 46 – 2016 (ZRA – 159) which amends the County's zoning regulations for Gasoline Service Stations. As you are aware, the Association expressed support as noted in the attached letter for the adoption of the Recommendations issued by the Fueling Station Task Force established by the County Council.

The Task Force was established to study the siting of motor fuel service stations within the County given the significant changes in the petroleum industry and the issues relevant to fuel station location such as environmental, health, safety and blighting impacts that affect all citizens and areas within the County. Its recommendations form the basis for the legislation before you. While some of the recommendations have been modified as a result of further public input following the issuance of its report, as well as the analysis and recommendations of the Department of Planning and Zoning and the County Planning Board, the provisions contained in the legislation reflect an important strengthening and enhancement of the zoning requirements for fuel station development, most notably the requirements that address environmental, health and safety protections.

The River Hill Community Association urges adoption of the Bill No. 46 – 2016.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Thomas".

Richard Thomas
Vice Chair

Cc: Allan Kittleman, County Executive



April 29, 2015

Howard County Council
George Howard Building
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Dear Council Members,

On April 20, 2015, the River Hill Community Association's Board of Directors voted unanimously to support the recommendations of the Fueling Station Task Force.

The Board has reviewed the recommendations and heard from members of the community on this matter. The Board understands and is concerned about the long-term impacts that fueling stations can have on public health and the environment. Establishing regulations that set minimum distances for these facilities from sensitive locations and populations, as recommended by the Task Force, is essential. The River Hill community routinely experiences traffic and safety issues that are exacerbated by the locations of existing fueling stations along MD 108 in Clarksville. Therefore, we recognize the impact that introducing additional fueling stations and other commercial operations can have on an area, particularly when a high-volume business is proposed.

As noted in the report, gasoline consumption is declining. When this is considered in conjunction with an increase in use of alternative fuel technologies and changes in the traditional business models of gasoline stations, the potential for blight due to abandoned or poorly performing stations increases. Environmental factors can further complicate the re-development of these sites and thus contribute to a decline in community vitality. Therefore, we support requiring a needs assessment prior to approval of new fueling stations. As new fuel technologies evolve and their use takes hold, regulations such as those recommended by the Task Force, need to be in place to ensure the future health, safety, and quality of life of all Howard County residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Esti Schabelman".

Esti Schabelman
Vice Chair

Cc: Allan Kittleman, County Executive