

Date: 15 June 2015

Subject: HCCA Approves Susan Garber to the Planning Board

Whether one is a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or a Vegetarian it does not matter. What does matter is that Susan Garber would be a tremendous asset as a member to the Planning Board and should unequivocally and unanimously be approved by our County Council. The Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA Board of Directors fully supports this nomination and your favorable vote for CR-49. HCCA sent you a letter of support on 7 April 2015 as appended in this testimony.

This nomination should in no way be considered political. It should be considered as to what is in the best interest of Howard County and all your constituents. I can guarantee you that Ms. Garber would be more than fair, ask the right questions that should be asked, and be very involved to ensure that attention to detail for both the petitioner and any protestant will be adhered to. This is what many of us have been asking for years. I know you are hearing concerns regarding misgivings about the Planning Board and misconceptions about Susan which need to stop. The latest objections with the Planning Board stems from the Chapelgate zoning case which I will not discuss tonight since you are sitting as the Zoning Board.

I know that Ms. Garber would be a major watchdog on the Planning Board to guarantee that procedural and Technical Staff Reports criteria are ensured to be followed as designated. We, citizens are hopeful that your approval of this resolution to appoint Ms. Garber will provide the hope that our voices matter. [*Refer to HCCA letter 2nd paragraph*]

I was extremely pleased to hear that Susan just received a most prestigious award that her community of Savage bestowed upon her at their annual festival. This is not just any award. The award was for a Lifetime Achievement Award from President Obama. That's right -- I said the President of the United States. It doesn't get any higher than that! If I didn't know any better the first lady, Michele Obama must have told the President to make sure you read to the County Council members tonight her quote as to the reason that Susan received this award. So don't be disappointed folks as the President sent me instead to read the quote. It reads, "We learned about honesty and integrity --that truth matters ... that you don't take shortcuts or play by your own set of rules, and success doesn't count unless you earn it fair and square." Well you can best believe that this quote totally depicts Ms. Susan Garber yesterday, today and I'm sure in the future whether she is approved as a Planning Board member or not.

We are very proud and thankful that she has always been a concerned citizen, very active, not afraid to voice her opinion, and can work with people. She is an asset in the Howard County community. She will be a tremendous benefit to the community when approved to the Planning Board. We look forward for you to simply say that you fully approve of this nomination especially since your approval of CR80-2014.

Thank You,

Stu Kohn
HCCA, President



Howard County Citizens Association
Since 1961...
The Voice Of The People of Howard County

Date: 7 May 2015

Subject: Appointment of Susan Garber to Planning Board

We, the HCCA Board are dismayed by the fact that pre-testimony is being posted on the Howard County website prior to Susan Garber's nomination as a Planning Board (PB) member is heard before the County Council. This should not be permitted as it is our opinion a very poor decision and should be dismissed because it is "choosing civility" at its worst. We are better than this. Whether anyone is for or against any nominee should only be documented at such time after testimony is heard. We would appreciate an explanation of the rationale. Is this the norm and has this ever been done in the past?

Since the qualifications for a prospective PB are apparently not posted on the County website we see no reason why Ms. Garber should not be approved to be a PB member. She is as qualified as anyone else especially when you review her resume. Her resume is impressive and stands on its merits. She has been involved as an activist for many years in the community and is extremely well versed on zoning policies, rules and regulations. Ms. Garber was selected by the County Executive to be DPZ/DILP Transition Team which HCCA was also a member. I can tell you first-hand that contrary to one critic; Ms. Garber was positive and not "nasty" towards DPZ staff. If one associates asking direct questions to the DPZ staff being negative then they are simply wrong in their analysis. It is tough questions that should and need to be required to articulate at PB meetings. I find it interesting because during our Transition Team meetings the developers and builders who were part of our team were educated by citizen's concerns and as a result we learned from one another. We were all respectful of each other opinions and although we agreed to disagree we often compromised which resulted in an outstanding comprehensive report. There is no doubt that Ms. Garber would be more than impartial, dedicated, and a good steward of fair play and follow the law as established by policy and regulations.

In conclusion, Ms. Susan Garber should be unanimously approved based on her good character, zoning knowledge, and not being timid by asking very germane questions. She would be a major asset as a PB member. Her appointment would be a very positive step for all and beneficial for the future of Howard County.

Sincerely,

Stu Kohn
HCCA, President