



# HCCA

## Howard County Citizens Association

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*The Voice Of The People of Howard County*

### **Subject: CB 36 (pre-submission meetings)**

HCCA was co-author of CB 36 which passed unanimously last night, expanding the requirement of a pre-submission community meeting to "non-residential" development proposals. That is, to commercial, institutional and government proposals if the site is within 200 feet of a residential zoning district line. The meeting would be held to review the Site Development Plan, which has sufficiently detailed information for the public to comment, as opposed to a sketch plan. The key revision is to 16.156 of Title 16 of the Planning, Zoning . . . Regulations." Previously, only residential developments required a community meeting.

We advocated elimination of the 200 foot limitation because it may exclude some proposals that have downstream impact. We will monitor this and revisit the issue in future if it is.

This is a significant step in implementing recommendations of the 2008 Public Engagement in Land Use (PELU) Task Force in which HCCA participated.

Note: The pre-submission meeting requirement does not empower the public to force a developer to do anything not required by the regs, but the bill strongly encourages finding mutually-agreeable solutions. The bill also requires that developers make a detailed summary of the meeting and address in writing any major concerns. The summary will be sent to the participants and entered into the official record. Participants may send any further comments for inclusion as well.

HCCA thanks everyone who contributed to the writing and enactment of CB 36. This includes Council Members Jen Terrasa and Greg Fox, who started the ball rolling at the request of the Concerned Citizens of Western Howard County (CCWHC) and HCCA. Council Member Courtney Watson was a co-sponsor; she and Mary Kay Sigaty engaged in dialogue with us, and Council Member Cal Ball sponsored a strengthening amendment and was co-sponsor for another. DPZ Director Marsha McLaughlin quickly provided key information when it was needed, in response to HCCA's request.

We understand the Chamber of Commerce chose not to oppose the bill and that developers have become used to pre-submission community meetings and may find them useful as well. It is heartening when various elements of the community can agree and move in the same direction.

I extend my profuse thanks to Dick Tufts and Ted Mariani of CCWHC with whom I spent many hours working on this legislation. We look forward to a continuing fruitful partnership.

Respectfully,

Bridget R. Mugane, President  
Howard County Citizens Association