

# Howard County Citizens Association

## Minutes of the Board of Directors

October 17, 2019

**Location:** BA AUTOCARE, 9577 Berger Road, Columbia, Maryland 21046

**Board Attendees:** Stu Kohn, President, JD Smith, Treasurer, Alan Schneider, Secretary, Brian England, Susan Garber, Hiruy Hadgu, and Howard Johnson. Absent: Lisa Markovitz, Jervis Dorton, Paul Verchinski

**Treasurer's Report** and the minutes of the last meeting were approved with amendments.

**Lawyers Hill Planning Board Meeting and what can be done about the injustice.** There were hours of expert testimony. Historic information was provided. Much information was provided for the Planning Board's consideration and deliberation. Closing statements highlighted information which needed to be considered in deciding. However, the Planning Board quickly issued its decision within about 20 minutes. Discussion ensued. Legitimate community issues are unfairly disregarded. The Planning Board process is broken. HCCA recommendations have not been adopted.

Discussion included failure to preserve historic areas, failure to protect forests, failure to protect specimen trees, and the lack of independent authority of Boards and Commissions to fully articulate and consider both sides of proposals. Concerns include conflicts of interest, lack of qualifications, limitations on the scope of their review, lack of criteria for removal from office, and serving "at the pleasure of" limits independence.

**CB 38.** AN ACT to prohibit certain waivers in the Patapsco Lower North Branch Watershed; to prohibit certain disturbance of land in the Ellicott City Floodplain; to prohibit specified activities in certain buffers; to provide certain open space requirements in the Patapsco Lower North Branch Watershed; to eliminate certain fees-in-lieu; to prohibit residential infill under specified circumstances; to prohibit the issuance of certain variances in the Patapsco Lower North Branch Watershed; adding certain requirements related to forest conservation plans; to limit forest cover clearing in the Patapsco Lower North Branch Watershed; to specify the afforestation level in certain cases; to alter requirements and procedures to control the adverse impacts associated with stormwater; and generally relating to subdivision and land development regulations.

At the October 7 County Council meeting eight amendments were introduced. All eight passed. It appeared that there was unanimity in passing the amended bill. Memorable was the discussion by Liz Walsh before her vote. She agreed to amendments to the bill she had thoughtfully introduced in July, so that the bill would be passed. However, the bill failed on a 2 to 3 vote. Liz Walsh and Deb Jung voted in favor of the protections proposed in the bill. Voting against were Christiana Mercer Rigby, David Yungmann, and Opel Jones even though all eight amendments were passed.

**Partnership with Other Organizations.** Discussions to be continued.

**Brian England** reported on the Royal Farms. Also discussed was failure to enforce covenants.

**Charter Review Commission Public Hearing.** Stu Kohn and Lisa Markovitz attended. Stu reported on the meeting. Additional meetings will be held.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM

The next Board Meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 7.

Alan Schneider  
Secretary