



Howard County Citizens Association

Since 1961...

The Voice Of The People of Howard County

Date: 21 October 2019

Subject: **HCCA Testimony of CB55-2019**

Good Evening. My name is Stu Kohn and I am the President of the Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA testifying on their behalf. We are very glad to say that we appreciate the efforts of Council Member Yungmann of trying to ensure that the right of his constituents is in no way jeopardized because of previous poor decisions by allowing solar in the first place on Agricultural Preservation land. Mr. Yungmann – THANK YOU for introducing a Bill which we believe ALL your colleagues should fully support by voting “YES.” HCCA has been working with the Concerned Citizens of Western Howard County, the Greater Highland Crossroads Association, and residents who would be drastically affected by Solar Facilities on Agricultural Preservation. They bought their properties on good faith regarding surrounding Preservation land. They deserve to be treated better than this! Those who participate in the Agricultural Preservation program should not be allowed to double dip. Having made money on the program and now leasing their property for a Commercial Solar Facility is not right. Why should the taxpayers of Howard County be penalized for other’s gains?

We only wish the Bill not be a temporary measure, but a permanent one to bring some semblance of sanity back into the picture which proudly is displayed behind you. Yes – a signature of our County that should be respected.

Please refer to the Bill on page 3, lines 17 thru 20 which are very compelling. It reads, “These conditional use petitions, if considered and approved under the present criteria in the Zoning Regulations, could lead to development which would be incompatible with surrounding agricultural uses.” This says it all. Now we have a recommendation. Please refer to page 4, line 4 and add the word “NO” prior to the word “Conditional”. After the word “petitions” add the words “SHALL BE PERMITTED.” On line 6 change the word “will” to “SHALL.”

Please refer to page 4, lines 9 thru 12 regarding the “Effective Date.” This date needs to be clearly defined in the Bill so all parties completely understand.

Mr. Mariani’s closing says it best when he states, “Deferring further action on all pending cases dealing with Commercial Solar Facilities (CSF) until the State Task Force has presented its final report to the Governor, which must occur within one year of the date of the Order, (no later than August 2020) is both prudent and logical. This bill would allow ample time for Howard County to reexamine its policy on the development of CSF’s are in conformance with State policy and protects our vital Agricultural resources.”

A profound quote from Theodore Roosevelt reads as follows: “Here is your country. Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, cherish the history and romance as a sacred heritage, for your children and your children’s children. Do not let selfish men or greedy interests skin your country of its beauty, its riches or its romance.” If you substitute the word “county” for “country” is this Howard County?

Hopefully each of you will vote in the positive as this would be the right thing to do. We ask for you to show your constituents that the word “preservation” is indeed meaningful. We also ask that there should be absolutely no “Grandfathering” allowed in this Bill especially considering that Council Member Yungman stated that Anne Arundel County and others does not permit anything on Agricultural Preservation.

Thank You,

Stu Kohn
HCCA President