



HCCA

Howard County Citizens Association

Since 1961... The Voice of the People of Howard County

Date: 27 May 2020

Subject: **Request Legislative Action for Redlines**

Dear Councilmembers Jung, Walsh, Jones, Rigby, and Yungmann

We, the Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA request your attention to fully review the use and process of Redlines used by the Department of Planning and Zoning, DPZ. This practice has gone on far too long without an investigation. In fact the public asked in the 2017 Development Regulations Assessment Comments Synopsis Database produced by DPZ “Will the Redline Revision Process be evaluated?” It is time that action is taken on this major issue. Questions about the Redline need to be addressed such as the following:

- Why is it used and how long has this practice been going on?
- What is the definition?
- What is the criterion?
- What is the definition of “Minor” and where is it found?
- Why is it not very intuitive on the DPZ website?
- Why is the Redline not a part of the Zoning Regulations?
- Where does one find a comprehensive list of the number granted over the years and for what reason?

Why are communities not informed from the Petitioner by conducting a pre-submission when major so-called Redline changes are obvious? A case in point was the Planning Board (PB) case heard on 21 May 2020 regarding the Starbucks expansion on Snowden River Parkway. How could this major development be classified as a Redline? In fact we were not the only organization asking this question as the Columbia Association and the Owen Mill Village testified asking the same. You can see the attachment which was written testimony of HCCA and The People’s Voice submitted to the PB.

The HCCA would like for the Council to consider a legislative act to correct the aforementioned situation for the purpose of promoting transparency and to gain a thorough understanding for all your constituents. We would like to have a meeting with you to fully discuss the possibility of legislative sponsorship to correct a wrong by including the Redline in the Zoning Regulations.

Note: We are not saying that Redlines should not be used for what really are “Minor” considerations.

Thanks in advance for hopefully acting on our concern.

Stu Kohn
HCCA President