



# HCCA

**Howard County Citizens Association**

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

Good evening. My name is Stu Kohn from Laurel and testifying as President of the Howard County Citizens Association.

First, we appreciate Councilmember Deb Jung for listening and acting on our concerns on CR26 when we testified on 21 March and the extensive questioning by Council members Jung, Walsh and Yungmann, but as all of you know our zoning process is a major disaster. CB50-2022 will do no harm, but of course is not the fix for the essential problems we have all experienced in the zoning process.

Unfortunately, as you have heard tonight and previously as they say in the play, “The Music Man” - “We have problems in River City.” The lack of due process, the misreading of the rules of procedure by the Office of Law and the action taken by the Board of Appeals led to the Planning Board on June 16 not knowing what to do regarding the Lakeview case. Their total dissatisfaction, disillusionment of the situation and their responsibilities was questioned which was very disturbing to them and us. A Planning Board Member on 7 July stated, “what are our responsibilities” after hearing from the Board of Appeals.

The Board of Appeals decision to remand the case back to the Planning Board put a dagger in the heart of the Planning Board. They were like a deer in the headlights. Just watch the video. For both 16 June and 7 July. Can it get any worse? It is and continues to be deplorable. The Board of Appeals 3 to 2 decision attributable to the Office of Law ‘s attorney, Barry Saunders was pathetic even though the members were in extensive discussion about the potential outcome.

It is high time to take the necessary action now! We strongly suggest all Council members support a “No Confidence” Resolution regarding the Office of Law. HCCA calls on the Council to hire legal counsel unburdened by the inherent conflict under the current arrangements. Enough is enough. The Board of Appeals and their legal adviser have lost the public’s confidence It is out of control! How much longer are you going to tolerate an unfair system while your constituents continue to be burdened by the consequences?

We are counting on you to resolve this major problem in an expeditious manner. Yes - a complete review and overhaul is due and appropriate. We have suffered far too long. We are appealing to you to do something.

Stu Kohn  
HCCA President