



Date: 20 February 2024

Subject: **CB8 2024 Favorable with Amendments**

Chair and members of the County Council,

My name is Brian England, I represent the Howard County Citizens Association. We support CB8 2024 but with amendments that will “protect and enhance the environment”.

My background is that I have worked closely with and hired experts over the last 20 plus years that are experienced in Stormwater Management. I was chair of the Columbia Association Watershed Committee and was on the committee that selected the vendor who wrote the **Columbia Watershed Management Plan**.

Over these years I have seen many so called “watershed restoration projects” implemented that have been counterproductive and fail to “protect and enhance the environment”. I have seen many that have cost millions of dollars. Millions of dollars have literally been washed down the drain.

Here are just a few examples where projects failed to “protect and enhance the environment.”

The MPEA New Country Lane project cost \$300k and the area still hadn’t recovered after over a decade. The erosion gully is now twice as large and tons of soil has gone into the Middle Patuxent River.

Red Hill Branch project in Ellicott City failed dramatically, CA Watershed Manager John McCoy took me on tour of the site after the first storm and all the newly planted trees and scrubs along the stream had been washed away! In May 2021 the Center for Watershed Protection along with the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin reported in their study of the effectiveness of restorations said....

“The Red Hill Branch displayed consistently worse biological health than the control watersheds”

More recently in Columbia \$2,000,000 was spent on a project that destroyed acres of trees and vegetation that was effectively soaking up stormwater from 4 parking lot outfalls. As part of this project a giant hole was dug that quickly filled up with groundwater, now this site is a lake, and it has totally failed to “protect and enhance the environment”.

A year ago, I hired Richard Klein of Community & Environmental Defense Services (CEDS) to evaluate the effectiveness of 10 watershed best management practices (BMP's). He found that most projects were failing because of lack of maintenance. When this was pointed out to the county administration, he was told there was a lack the staff to enforce regulations. I find this ironic because over the last 25 years our company BA Auto Care has always had regular Howard County inspections to ensure our Stormwater facility continued to perform as designed.

CB 8 is a partial step in the right direction. More needs to be done.

What needs to be done?

HCCA suggests two amendments that will further fulfill your responsibility to “protect and enhance the environment.”

Amendment 1

All watershed projects must include ALL stakeholders working together.

1. All county departments including but not limited to, Bureau of Environmental Services, Office of Sustainability, Bureau of Highways, Bureau of Utilities, Department of Public Works. Residents
2. Other property owners
3. Columbia Association

Amendment 2

Specific Objectives of projects should include a description of how the project will improve or align with each of the following measurable and quantifiable goals regarding.

1. Biological Uplift
2. Ecological Uplift
3. Chesapeake Bay Water Quality
4. Forests Conservation
5. Climate change

HCCA is available to provide further input to assist achievement of Maryland's Policy goal “to protect and enhance the environment’.

Respectfully,  
Brian England  
Howard County Citizens Association