



HCCA

Howard County Citizens Association

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

Date: 17 November 2025

Subject: HCCA Testimony Regarding CB74-2025

Good evening -- I am Stu Kohn still residing in Scaggsville representing the Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA as its President.

We wholeheartedly support the testimony of Joan Pontius and feel for the quality-of-life issues she and her neighbors have endured with more than enough heartache. It is inexcusable! They never should have experienced this because of the lack of enforcement by the Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ)?

This Bill is allowing far too many events to take place in a monthly period and on consecutive dates. The Bill does not prescribe any criteria for disallowing the permitting of events regarding roads and specific capacity uses.

How will residents get relief. Agricultural preserved land should not have been carved out for driveways or building excessively on the land as the whole point is to save land for agricultural uses, not more development.

What exactly is the intent of this Bill and why now? How does CB74 benefit communities and based on the Hearing Examiner's decision, how can DPZ be trusted after reading the Manor Hill Decision and Order (D&O)? These questions need to be answered before you think about approving CB74.

It wasn't until the D&O dated 6 November 2025 that the residents could possibly receive some well-deserved relief. Especially as their legal fees are now - would you believe \$54,000. We say might because will DPZ now follow through with the Hearing Examiner's edict?

Unfortunately, it took iterations of going before the Hearing Examiner to get the verdict which Manor Hill deserved because of DPZ's failure as noted in the D&O. The Hearing Examiner lambasts DPZ. Because of my allotted time I don't have time to read the conclusion, but it is extremely compelling and finding DPZ guilty. The fact states the Inspector completely ignored the cited violations speaks loudly to the problems. There was no enforcement! The HCCA strongly recommends DPZ documents their inspection process for conducting so the public knows exactly what to expect especially since it seems that enforcement is missing in action. We are recommending this as an amendment to this Bill.

You need to unequivocally strengthen this Bill by adopting the following suggested amendments and responding to our questions otherwise it should not be approved. It is all about accountability which this Bill lacks.

Refer to Page 9 - Lines 6 thru 12 - it is a must to define the meaning of the word “small group” and “limited attendance.”

Refer to Page 28 - Line 28 - what is the rationale for adding Bed and Breakfast Inns in the R-SC - Single Cluster District?

Refer to Page 35/36 - Lines 28 thru 30 and Lines 1 thru 6 - speaks about days and hours of operation. We suggest a major amendment to include stating the PENALTY if these clauses are not adhered.

Refer to Page 30 - Line 7 - why does it begin with I?

Refer to Page 36 - Lines 7 and 8 - what is the PENALTY if the owner does not appear on the premise as required?

Refer to Page 36 - Lines 9 thru 14 - what is the PENALTY if the owner does not comply with the responsibility of maintaining logs regarding noise levels for all music events?

Refer to Page 36 - Lines 14 - after the word “zoning” add - “and any party who files a noise complaint.”

Refer to Page 36 - Line 29 - the term “Adequate Offsite Parking” needs to be completely defined.

Refer to Page 37 - Lines 21 thru 25 - what is the PENALTY if the number of visitors exceeds the limit and how if exceeded the complaint will be handled by DPZ?

Refer to Page 37 - Line 25 - what is the rationale for allowing events 25 times yearly?

The Manor Hill community and others need full assurance that a strict process is in place where we can all have confidence.

The HCCA has a very strong suggestion to ensure it is mandatory for DPZ to be at any Hearing Examiner or Board of Appeals cases to discuss their actions and findings. At your last Monthly meeting some of you were very surprised with this status. This adoption would save all parties from speculating as to what DPZ meant, which has happened far too often. Secondly, it would save time and money by reducing legal fees and officials’ stipends.

We only hope our future will be much brighter. Please zone into the issues as your constituents cannot afford to have any more setbacks. Enough is enough!

Thank You,

Stu Kohn
HCCA President