

**INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM  
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**ZONING HEARING EXAMINER OFFICE**

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**TO:** Jackie Brown, Director  
Planning, Housing, and Economic Development

**FROM:** Maurene Epps McNeil  
Chief Zoning Hearing Examiner

**DATE:** July 8, 2022

**RE:** CB- 61-2022

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. As drafted, the legislation raises the following concerns:

- Less words are better whenever possible. I question the need to add all the section headings to the bill description lines on page 1 and would urge that we continue our current process of simply noting what the bill is about – in this instance it would be “Pre-Application Neighborhood Meeting Requirements.”
- This bill was discussed thoroughly in our internal committee review of the Zoning Ordinance rewrite drafts. We all agreed that the purpose was to provide an informal process that ensured those within the neighborhood of a proposed zoning application could be provided details about the application before any hearings are held and decisions rendered. The Zoning Hearing Examiners objected to any mandatory inclusion of the meeting summary in the record for two reasons: all decisions made by the Examiner are to be made based on the record, and all testimony is subject to cross-examination. Accordingly, inclusion of the meeting summary would either be inadmissible on the ground of irrelevancy (since the actual application could be totally different after all

interested persons weighed in at the neighborhood meeting) or found not credible (if the persons that commented are not present at the quasi-judicial hearing to present sworn testimony).

- Given these possible limitations on admissibility it would also be unfair to citizens to have them believe the summary would be introduced as evidence and they then decide it unnecessary to become a Person of Record and participate in the hearing itself.

The Zoning Hearing Examiners are, therefore, opposed to the requirement that the written summary of the discussion generated at the pre-application neighborhood meeting be made part of the record in the actual case, and would ask that the new language on page 2, line 13 be stricken, and the purpose clause amended as necessary.

There is no objection to the new language on page 5, lines 7-8.