



MEMORANDUM

TO: Prince George's County Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee (PHED)

FROM: Natalia Gomez, AICP, Planner IV

VIA: Lakisha Hull, AICP, LEED AP BD+C, Planning Director

SUBJECT: **CB-42-2025 (DR-2C)**

DATE: September 17, 2025

Background

Upon review of the updated draft bill DR-2C, the Planning Department offers the following comments on the proposed CB-42-2025 (DR-2C), at the request of PHED, post-Planning Board's recommendation.

AN ORDINANCE CONCERNING APPLICATION, PREPARATION, SUBMISSION AND REVIEW PROCEDURES AND DECISION STANDARDS - DETAILED SITE PLANS AND SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS for the purpose of amending certain definitions; amending pre-application requirements to require applicants to demonstrate the proposal's conformance with applicable master plans; amending pre-application procedures to allow applicants to hold an informational consultation with relevant council members; amending pre-application procedures to make neighborhood meeting notices publicly searchable; amending pre-application procedures to allow neighborhood meeting participants to become persons of record; amending certain development application submittal requirements to demonstrate the proposal's conformance with applicable master plans; and amending the decision standards for approval of detailed site plan and special exception applications to include master plan consistency as a required standard for site plan approval.

The current draft of the bill (draft 2C) is significantly different from the original LDR-61-2025. As a result, the Planning Board did not have an opportunity to review this draft and provide



feedback. Additionally, the proposed draft includes elements that were originally included in separate legislative draft requests: LDR-89-2025, LDR-111-2025, and LDR-112-2025. On September 4, 2025, the Planning Board voted to oppose the proposed text amendments in those drafts and provided associated comments. The Planning Department offers the following comments in furtherance of the Planning Board's position.

Regarding the inclusion of master plan consistency as a necessary standard for site plan approval, the Department reiterates the comments previously provided to PHED in a memorandum dated August 5, 2025, which is attached herein. Additionally, the Department would like to highlight that none of its comments or proposed amendments were considered for DR-2C.

Regarding the pre-application consultation, the Planning Board opposed LDR-89-2025, which required consultations between Council Members and applicants. While Council members should be informed about development projects, the proposed amendment still mandates meetings by requiring applicants to submit materials for County Council assessment to determine whether a consultation is needed. This differs from the Planning Board's recommendation, which was either opposition to holding such a meeting or a non-binding informational meeting at the applicant's discretion. Such meetings may undermine the appearance of fairness and potentially violate due process, as noted in the technical staff report.

Furthermore, the Board expressed concern that imposing additional mandatory steps in the pre-application process, especially when neighboring jurisdictions have adopted optional staff-led procedures, would conflict with the Council's goal of streamlining and improving the efficiency of the development review process. The proposed amendment now requires consultations as an additional step before the pre-application conference, which is inconsistent with the recommendations of Plan 2035 and several master, sector, and transit district development plans aimed at streamlining and expediting the development review and permitting process.

The Planning Board raised concerns regarding the proposal in LDR-111-2025, which would allow neighborhood meeting participants to be designated as a "person of record." They expressed worries about imposing requirements on individuals without their knowledge or consent. Additionally, the Board noted that registering someone as a "person of record" could restrict individuals' rights to communicate with government officials.

Concerning the proposed amendment to require the Planning Department to publish on its website a searchable database of informational notifications of pre-application neighborhood meetings; and ensuring that electronic versions of the informational notifications comply with web accessibility guidelines, the Planning Board considered that such request would impose



substantial unfunded costs on the Planning Department, particularly through the requirement to maintain a searchable electronic database for neighborhood meetings. While these meetings, traditionally held in proximity to proposed developments with mailed notices to stakeholders and posted notices, serve important public engagement purposes, the addition of such a database is unlikely to significantly enhance public awareness. Instead, it would impose a fiscally irresponsible burden on the Commission's staff and budget.

Lastly, the Department would note that the intent of CB-42-2025 (DR-2C) would conflict directly with the Executive's Elevate Prince George's Initiative, which aims to reduce regulatory burdens to investment. As such, the proposed bill as drafted inserts individual County Council members into the administrative review of development applications that our competing jurisdictions review at the staff level and elevates the regulatory role of master plans without corresponding state enabling legislation.

As always, the Planning Department is happy to assist with any questions or revisions the Committee may wish to discuss as this request proceeds to the Planning Board for consideration.