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May 28, 2020

The Honorable Todd M. Turner
Chair
Prince George's County Council
County Administration Building
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

Re: CB-20-2020 and CB-22-2020

Dear Chairman Turner: *Todd*

Thank you for providing the Planning Board an opportunity to review and comment on proposed District Council legislation. During the May 28, 2020 Planning Board meeting, the following positions were adopted in accordance with the planning staff's recommendations on the proposed legislation. A **Planning Board Analysis of each bill is attached for your consideration and a brief excerpt from each report is provided below:**

CB-20-2020 amends the Subdivision Regulations to clarify the authority for approval of Public Safety Surcharge fee waivers in Prince George's County.

Planning Board Recommendation: Oppose as drafted with explanation.
(See Attachment 1 for full analysis)

The Planning Board is not clear on whether the intent of the bill is to waive the Public Safety Surcharge fee or the Adequate Public Safety Facilities Mitigation Guidelines. The purpose of the Public Safety Surcharge fee is to collect revenue for police, fire, emergency medical services, construction or rehabilitation of buildings or the purchase of equipment or communication devices used in connection with public safety services. In addition, CB-56-2005 presents the test for adequacy during the time of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision review which is a test of the response times for police, fire, and emergency services. If the response times are not adequate the applicant is required to pay a fee or build infrastructure to ensure adequacy in accordance with the Adequate Public Safety Facilities Mitigation Guidelines.

It should be noted that waiving the Public Safety Surcharge fee or the mitigation fee for specific projects reduces collected revenue for police, fire, emergency medical services or the ability to address public safety infrastructure adequacies throughout the County.

The bill should be clarified to determine what fee the County Council intends to waive. If the intent is to waive the Public Safety Surcharge fee, then revisions to the bill should be made to Section 10-192.11 (Public Safety Surcharge.) not within Section 24-122.01 (Adequacy of public facilities.).

CB-22-2020 amends the Zoning Ordinance to permit employment and institutional uses in the Residential Suburban (R-S) Zone, under very limited circumstances, and provides procedures for the amendment of approved Basic Plans to allow these new uses. The bill allows all uses that are permitted in the Employment and Institutional Area (E-I-A) Zone to occur on a qualifying property.

Planning Board Recommendation: Oppose with explanation.
(See Attachment 1 for full analysis)

As discussed below, the Planning Board believes that only one property in the County would qualify. This bill was drafted for an approximately 639-acre property, located north of Leeland Road and east of a freight line owned by Consolidated Rail, and identified in tax records as Parcel 30, tax account 0670737. The property is also known as Willowbrook and has an extensive approval history under its existing R-S Zone.

The 2006 Bowie and Vicinity Master Plan recommended suburban intensity residential development at this location. Residential development in the low range of the R-S Zone was considered a suitable transition between adjacent neighborhoods. The intent was for development at the Leeland Road location to be more intense than the development to the west (Oak Creek) and less intense than the development to the south (Beech Tree).

If the District Council would like this property to be rezoned, it would be more appropriate to do so during a sectional map amendment following approval of the ongoing master plan for Bowie and Vicinity (Planning Area 74A). The District Council initiated a master plan for Planning Area 74A, including the subject property, in February 2020. The master plan update will give the Council an opportunity to comprehensively review its goals for this property and all possible issues, and plan for its future.

Text amendments are best suited to fine-tune the uses or regulations in an existing zone. CB-22-2020 does not fine-tune the R-S Zone; instead, it allows uses wholly different from those normally associated with the R-S Zone. For that reason, the Planning Board believes the on-going Bowie Master Plan update is a superior vehicle to accomplish the purposes of CB-22-2020. The Planning Department is currently evaluating the master plan area and engaging in discussions with residents, property owners, and the business community to determine the appropriate future use of land in this area.

Although the current residential zoning of the property is appropriate, there are reasons why the Council might find commercial, industrial, or institutional uses to be equally appropriate. A large amount of non-residential development in the E-I-A and I-1 zones exists directly east of the property. The railroad line to the west and Leeland Road to the south form natural boundaries between this property and adjacent residential zones, although careful buffering and design regulations would be needed to provide compatibility.

Should the text amendment move forward, the Planning Board has additional concerns regarding footnote 38:

Under (a) (iii) the words "an existing employment park" are not defined and should be clarified.

Under (c) the bill states the R-S Zone regulations shall not apply. Replacement development regulations are needed. Not adding development regulations defeats the entire purpose of zoning and denies the District Council and the Planning Board the ability to apply any objective standards to the development.

Under (d) (iii) there are concerns about the legality of the proposed conditional approval requirement that development on this property provide "a public park of at least 20 acres."

As always, Planning Department staff members are available to work with the Council and your legislative staff on any pertinent legislative matters. Please let us know if we may be of further assistance.

Should you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of the Planning Director at 301-952-3595. Thank you, again, for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth M. Hewlett
Chairman

Attachments