

## PIKESVILLE COMMUNITIES CORPORATION

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March 5, 2020

To: Councilman Izzy Patoka and the Planning Board of Baltimore County

[By Hand Delivery]

Re: PCC positions on various 2020 CZMP Issues

Dear Councilman Patoka and Members of the Planning Board of Baltimore County:

Our organization, the Pikesville Communities Corporation, (“PCC”) consists of 17 homeowner associations in the Pikesville area, representing over 2700 dwelling units. We have spent considerable time reviewing the applicable CZMP requests for the 2020 CZMP and our positions regarding those that we believe are most relevant to our area follow, however some of these will be expounded upon by testimony this evening:

1. 2-001:

Our member, Colonial Village is negotiating with the applicant looking for a means to satisfy the parties, thus we do not take a position at this time, however we intend to do so in the future. Thus, we ask that the Board take no position at this time.

2. 2-003:

We have been advised that the St. Marks on the Hill Episcopal Church is having financial problems and has entered into an agreement to sell 2.48 acres to CHAI and Episcopal Housing Corporation (“EHC”) for housing that has been characterized in different ways. Some call this housing “low-income” or “subsidized” or “affordable” and in a letter to us from the potential purchasers it has been characterized as “workforce housing apartments.” Regardless of how it is characterized, or whether for seniors, non-seniors or people in in or out of the workforce, the Pikesville area is saturated with this type of housing and that allowing more of this will have an adverse economic effect especially now that the County and State, after decades of neglect and concentration on White Marsh, Towson and Owings Mills, claim to be concerned about Pikesville’s commercial area.

We are sympathetic with St. Marks’ need for monies to help it maintain its purpose as a religious institution in Pikesville however, we are certain that the type of housing is plentiful and that there is no further need for this type of housing and the density this project requires at this location. As you may be aware, there are 3 Weinberg houses in close proximity to the Church’s land. In fact, two are diagonally located across Old Court Rd. Additionally, we understand that the McDonogh Village, Pomona, Ralston, Colonial Village, St. Charles Church, Queen Anne Village, Waterstone Apartments, Annen Woods Apartments on Hooks Lane, are communities

that either are on voucher programs or other type of subsidies, or receive lower rental amounts from lower income residents We also believe that such housing may be found as one goes further west on Old Court Rd.

Thus, at this time, we do not believe that “workforce housing apartments” are needed in the area proposed. We perceive the Pikesville area from the City Line to McDonogh Road to lack such commercial facilities that would require this type of “workforce” housing. As you are aware, Reisterstown Rd has major bus routes and is parallel to the Metro line. So, transportation for persons needed for work who do not otherwise live in the Pikesville area is abundantly available. In fact, this type of housing saturates our communities, and more will have an adverse economic effect. The County Executive’s attempt to infuse this type of housing throughout the area should recognize that Pikesville has stood silent and has more than its share.

Notwithstanding the above, there are other reasons that stand on their own and are substantial enough to warrant denial of the request for such a zoning change.

- a. As set forth in the department of public works review, the sub-interceptor is near capacity.
- b. Lack of school facilities: this area would be served by the Milbrook Elementary School which has a capacity of 322 and an enrollment of 394. Thus, it is already fully overcrowded.
- c. The traffic in the area is very dense at many hours. This zoning change would exacerbate that portion of the already heavily traveled Reisterstown Rd corridor at that location.
- d. It is also noteworthy that the Economic and Workforce Agency comments state “no comments.” How can that possibly be? How can such an agency suggest that this type of development will have no economic effect on the area?

We are sensitive to St. Marks’ plight and suggest that perhaps Baltimore County should be looking to provide sorely lacking amenities to our area, and one way to do that is to consider buying the acreage in question for use as a public park/playground. In this way Pikesville will have another amenity that is sorely needed, and St. Marks will obtain funds that its needs to continue its religious purposes. We would fully support such a venture.

3. 2-005:

We oppose this request. We believe the zoning application is an effort to forgive the past five years transgressions and approve the continued unlawful use of an illegally converted residence by a purely commercial, corporate entity in the McDonogh residential area

4. 2-006:

Suburban Club: this is a radical way to obtain RAE zoning- to seek RAE zoning on 12. + acres requiring a 50’ wide appendage going to the Reisterstown Rd corridor with BL zoning on 6+ acres that includes the Clubhouse for the commercial zone is not something that we can currently support. At this juncture, we are in negotiations with Suburban and seek support for our community efforts in some areas such as storm water management and concerns about the future

of other Suburban land, in the event any development on the parcel at issue is not sufficient to satisfy Suburban's future needs. So, at this juncture we must oppose the request and hope that we may come to terms in the near future before the June County Council hearing.

5. 2-008:

We are initially not opposed to the Planning Department's position of RO zoning depending upon the anticipated impact on traffic, however the applicant has not bothered to communicate with us and we reserve our right to change our position.

6. 2-014:

We appreciate Blue Ocean's transparency in dealing with us during its requests to the Design Review Panel. During these proceedings it has been made clear that Blue Ocean intends to place more intense commercial uses on its property. It has already added another ballroom on the land. We understand that the zoning it now requests is for the purpose of allowing 100 or so additional residential units to be built upon its property at Reisterstown Rd and the Beltway. We have considered this in light of what else is happening in this area and must, at this time oppose this request. The reasons for our opposition are as follows:

Without any restrictions, the applicant could use this already densely located property to create more problems.

We understand that directly across Reisterstown Rd, a Royal Farms facility is to go in where the motel is currently located. That facility will, we believe contain a "convenience store" and gasoline pumps. We are aware that a "convenience store" by such entities as Royal Farms, or WaWa are large, and that gasoline pumps add to the traffic at the intersection as well. We are also aware that just above the Beltway on Reisterstown Rd, the Woodholme Country Club is seeking BM AS zoning. Traffic in this immediate area is a problem at this time, and we propose that this 2020 CZMP issue be denied and that Blue Ocean look to the 2024 CZMP – a time when we all may be able to better assess what the impact has been to that intersection.

7. 2-016:

Colonial Village: We support our member Colonial Village's request for this zoning change.

8. 2-018:

Woodholme Country Club: please see our comments regarding Blue Ocean Issue 2-014. This BM AS zoning request applied to 5.5 acres of land appears to us to be for the purpose of a Royal Farms/WaWa type operation or perhaps a strip center. However, in light of our explanation regarding Issue 2-014, the current condition of the commercial area (the problems at Festival, etc.) and what else is happening on Reisterstown Rd, BM AS is not appropriate. We have recently been in communication with Woodholme. We may concede to recommending BL for a **portion** of the property fronting on Reisterstown Rd. We hope to be in further discussion with Woodholme to resolve our differences, and that may require negotiating restrictive covenants.

We are sympathetic to Woodholme's claim of financial concerns and would like to see some result that benefits Woodholme and the communities, however at this time, we cannot make any recommendation except to deny the applicant's request and we will be pleased to continue discussions with Woodholme.

9. 2-019:

We are opposed to this request by what we believe to be the Greenebaum organization. This is at Reisterstown Rd and Castleton Rd/ Keller Ave. This area is of great concern to the communities. In the past the County Council, at the behest of then Councilwoman Vicki Almond, allowed for a PUD on the property. This should not have been allowed. Greene Tree Rd has also seen the County allow another subdivision at the Trinitarians property. At the Community Input Meeting for the PUD, the developer advised the community that although it has the right to enter into Greene Tree Road "it is not our intent to enter and exit onto Greene Tree Rd." The words "not our intent" are not the same as "we will enter into a restrictive covenant to bar future ingress and egress onto Greene Tree Road." Further the layout of this entire area is abysmal, and traffic is horrendous. The developer also advised that it will be looking for a variance (under current zoning) to reduce required parking from about 350 spaces to about 150 spaces. This is in a parking area that is already overburdened.

We suggest that this area, that is contiguous to housing and contiguous to or in close proximity to the LifeBridge and Medical Building Complex not be upzoned and that it should be **downzoned** to all residential.

10. 2-026:

This issue seeks to downzone the entire Suburban Country Club. Our perception is that this issue actually allows, Suburban to reconsider where it is asking for zoning in issue 2- 006, and request it on land at or near the intersection of Sudbrook Lane and Reisterstown Rd. We are in discussion with Suburban Club about this perspective. High density zoning at this named location would help to reinvigorate the commercial corridor and may lead to greater proceeds and more future security to the Suburban Club. Our support for upzoning in this area would be *in lieu of* allowing a zoning change at the corner of Slade Ave and Park Heights Ave. Any agreement on our part, if any would be contingent on reaching terms with the Suburban Club.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Pikesville Communities Corporation

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alan P. Zukerberg, Esq. President