



**Countywide Listening Session – Central County (Sports and Learning Complex)  
Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations Rewrite: Comprehensive Review Draft  
Thursday, October 26, 2017  
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

The purpose of this discussion was to present Clarion Associates' recommendations contained in Comprehensive Review Draft for the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations and to discuss the concerns and questions of the group. Public questions and comments are identified by **bold** text. Clarion Associate's responses to questions and additional presenter comments are identified by normal text.

**Will the pre-application neighborhood meeting process be included in the application? Is there anything that deals with health impacts? There are lots of industrial and environmental racism issues in the County. The [County] Council has approved townhomes built in rural areas as a way to improve the roads. One issue now is that notification only needs to be sent to adjacent properties, while the impacts can extend well beyond that. There needs to be meaningful engagement with the community, not just sending out notice. Also, 12 years for adequacy determinations is too long.**

After the pre-application neighborhood meeting, the applicant must summarize the meeting and provide the summary in their application. The public will be able to review this summary and make comments. The health impact assessment has a process and analysis, but it does not have standards and regulations. The proposed code attempts to address some issues by additional standards that relate to health issues, such as requiring more walking, bicycling, accessibility, and rural protections.

**How do you stop factories being built next to homes? What are the mitigations, what are the community benefits offered by the developer?**

There are proposed neighborhood compatibility standards that will help reduce the impacts of new developments that are adjacent to single-family homes and townhomes.

**What is the point of a meeting and notifying the community if nothing can be done? It presents a false sense of hope. If the only thing that matters if it is a permitted use, then environmental racism has no enforcement. Look at the Johns Hopkins study for environmental justice. There is**



**I-2 (Heavy Industrial) zoning inside the Beltway. It becomes a waste of time to go to the Planning Board, because nothing can be done.**

Notification matters because the public can make a difference in many cases. Also, notification is important so that people are not surprised when development occurs.

**There are too many fitness places, dollar stores, and hair salons. Those places attract bad people.** A lot of the issue is that these projects do not have high-quality buildings. The proposed standards are an attempt to include clear standards for form and design, which will improve quality.

**You mentioned legacy zones and non-permitted uses. What is that? Is there weight given to developers who listen to the community? How do you ensure that?**

Planning by plebiscite is very problematic and is not allowed. The best approach is to let the public share their concerns with the developer before the engineering and architecture are completed.

**There are 27 municipalities in the County, but they do not have zoning authority. Have you reached out to those communities for their master plans? How do you ensure that the community's plans are incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance?**

The planning and zoning authority for the County and all the municipalities within the County (except Laurel) rests with the County. There have been some limited delegations of authorities to four municipalities, and this process remains available. The Zoning Ordinance does incorporate the general plan [2014 *Plan Prince George's 2035 Approved General Plan*] and the area master plans because it is intended to provide stronger implementation of the County's general plan. Seat Pleasant is located in Subregion 4, and the proposed Zoning Ordinance does take this into account as a result.

**There is an upcoming 7-11 gas station. There are too many gas stations and they bring down the appeal of the neighborhood. Is there a way to have gas stations better distributed?**

Gas stations are permitted uses in some zones and there are special standards that they have to follow. All gas stations need to be treated the same way. Grocery stores are going to choose where they locate. It is difficult to enforce ending food deserts by trying to regulate other uses in this manner.

**When will the new zoning maps be ready?**

Staff continues to work on preliminary draft zoning maps based on [County] Council direction, and these should be available relatively soon.



**If a proposal is before a community, how early does the outreach begin? There should be community charrettes to discuss how the community should develop. This would be an incentive to engagement. If charrettes are encouraged, the developers can learn a lot about what the community is interested in.**

There is a table that shows the notification time tables, which are dependent on the type of development project. Charrettes are a good idea, but there would need to be available resources and they are not appropriate for every application.

**The population of Seat Pleasant is comprised of 21 percent seniors. How can seniors be part of the zoning process? They may not want to attend such late meetings.**

We've had mass mailings and over 300 outreach meetings with the public and are trying to do everything we can to reach people. We would be happy to have a daytime meeting with senior citizens.

**A lot of zoning decisions are made by older people. How does this ordinance address the next generation? I want a home for a senior, not necessarily a senior living group home. Why are we not requiring this?**

It is not possible to force senior housing, but we can make it easier to provide those types of developments. We have been reaching out to County youth as well through a partnership with the County libraries. We will also be attending the STEAM-fest next week. And we attend national night out events as well.

**What are your plans for the cement plants in Forestville and on Sherriff Road? There are houses across the street and there is dust and fumes all day long. Why are cement plants allowed in established communities?**

There are standards to help reduce the impacts. There are also compatibility standards to keep these types of high-impact uses farther from residential uses and require additional mitigation, but these would only apply to new uses.

**The recycling plant in Bladensburg now wants to add concrete batching. They are already polluting too much. The Zoning Hearing Examiner is going to approve the project. We need an environmental justice tool. There should be requirements to stop so many 7-11s. A University of Maryland professor has developed an environmental justice tool.**

**“Call-up” (election to review) was added back in. How will this help with certainty?**



Including the election to review procedure is a [County] Council directive. One issue is that the state legislature has revised the requirements on who has “standing” to appeal a case, which limits the number of people that can appeal a case. The [County] Council views election to review as a way to provide additional community protections.

**We want the polluter to test for air quality. There is already too much pollution.**

**We want to preserve the historic quality of Greenbelt. We would like the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Zone (NCOZ) for Greenbelt released immediately.**

**What does the process for ensuring mixed-use development within five years in the Transit-Oriented/Activity Center zones look like?**

Honestly, we are not sure yet. It is a work in progress. It is very difficult to ensure mixed-use development.

**We are delighted to know that there will be a change to the beekeeping regulations.**

**Antennae issues seem really minor. We are interested in the use versus the impact. There is a construction company nearby that is much more than a small commercial endeavor. It is not like an industrial use. How are you addressing the role of technology? Waze now brings all of the traffic down our street.**

We have refined the definitions for zones and their purposes. The uses should better reflect the purposes, which will help keep outsized impacts from occurring in areas where they should not be.

**PG Atlas says that there are three grocery stores in Seat Pleasant. This is not true, and investors will not come to the community because of it.**

The data may need to be updated; staff will check with our Information Management Division. Staff also suggested that if investors are relying solely on PG Atlas for their decision-making, they probably are not conducting true due-diligence work.

**It seems that the Zoning Ordinance perpetuates deceptive practices that undermine community/municipal efforts to develop. I was not pleased with your response to the municipality question earlier. We do not want liquor stores, pawn shops, and the like in Seat Pleasant. We will advocate for our causes.**

We hear you loud and clear. It is very difficult to regulate what businesses are built.



**I am concerned by this shocking discussion. We are not focusing on the small business concerns. The low skilled, but entrepreneurial community. I want this community taken into account. These policies seem to only help the large developer and business owner from outside the County.**

**How does this incorporate affordable housing?**

The Department of Housing and Community Development is currently developing a countywide strategy for housing. Once that is completed, the recommendations may very well lead to further amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.