

Janis (John/JB) Bilmanis (Petition Coordinator)
12445 Potomac View Rd
Newburg, MD 20664-6309
Email: John@Bilmanis.com
Cell: 240-463-2804

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Subject: County Commissioners Legislative Session Testimony

I want to thank the Commissioners for providing me (as a representative of the Woodland Point and Potomac View Communities) the opportunity to submit a community petition concerning the proposed changes in the Swan Point Docket 250 Amendment #3 which is on your agenda for March 05, 2024. Today I would like to provide the **“Thinking Behind The Thinking”**.

1. Residents of Charles County deserve and have the right to communities that are safe and free from harm to their families as well as their homes.
2. When there are concerns by the residents about impending Charles County efforts (including development), it is crucial that the residents get the proper information as well as be heard about the potential impacts.
3. **Fear of change** (as cited by various Planning Commission members), is not the same as **“Smart Growth”** and **“Due No Harm”**.
4. There is a delicate balance between the goals of development and residents maintaining their quality of life.
5. Working as **“One Team”**, residents can get educated as to the plans, impacts, and provide insights that planners may not readily see.
6. Per **Maryland’s Planning Visions**; there is an ongoing aspiration to develop and implement sound growth and development policy. This involves **Public Participation**, Community Design, **Infrastructure**, Environmental Protection, Resource Conservation, and Stewardship.
7. A fundamental premise for sound growth is that all parties equally understand the underpinnings behind the decisions and that ultimately

- there is a **“Due No Harm”** plan for the residents, environment, and all elements of it.
8. Change is good if it is well-planned. Being good stewards of our precious resources is crucial to sound growth. **Change is not to be feared.**
 9. Change can be complicated as it affects a specific development as well as the demands on precious resources or the impacts on good neighbors.
 10. It is critical that this balance is achieved through transparency and specific/detailed exchanges between the Charles County PGM staff, the Planning Commission, and the County Commissioners in conjunction with the developers and residents. **A Unified TEAM!**
 11. Our community petition is **NOT** about stopping growth.
 12. The petition is about deep concerns for safety during floods (ingress/egress/property flooding).
 13. The petition is about deep concerns for having sufficient water from our wells to survive.
 14. Smart growth can solve the ingress/egress issues for ALL Communities and not make property flooding worse. **“Due No Harm”.**
 15. Smart growth can evolve the current issues with Charles County aquifer and not make them worse without residents losing access to water.
 16. Our communities have evaluated the complexities of Docket 250 Amendment #3, and our assessments have developed great concerns for some elements that have the potential to **“Create Harm”.**
 17. The Planning Commission on 01/09/24 made recommendations concerning Swan Point that we never received any specific findings, analyses, or conclusions concerning the plans. **Our issues were not addressed.**

18. We respectfully request via our petition, that the CHCO Commissioners develop a “unified understanding” of a joint vision that does **“No Harm”** to the residents of our communities.
19. Thank you for your time. We look forward to future detailed planning efforts.

Signed Janis Belmanis

Dated 01/30/24