

**From:** [Charles County Government](#)  
**To:** [Public Record](#)  
**Subject:** \*NEW SUBMISSION\* Submit Comments - Commissioners' Public Comment Sessions  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 23, 2024 4:19:19 PM

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**Submit Comments - Commissioners' Public Comment Sessions**

**Submission #:** 3355662  
**IP Address:** 146.75.222.188  
**Submission Date:** 07/23/2024 4:19  
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You have a new online form submission.

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**Read-Only Content**

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**Comment**

Please see comments attached regarding the PDRBs in St Charles

**Upload File(s)**

[PDRB Public Comment.pdf](#)

Thank you,

**Charles County, MD**

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My name is Matthew Neiman. In 2015, I joined the Gleneagles HOA Board at the suggestion of the Developer. In 2017, I joined the Fairway Village Council as one of the Gleneagles delegates. In 2018, I was elected Chair of the Fairway Village Council. I have served in these volunteer roles continuously since.

This evening, I come before you as the Chair of the Fairway Village Council which oversees the Fairway Village Planning and Design Review Board, aka Fairway Village PDRB, per our incorporating documents. It's my understanding today that there are as many as 6 PDRBs, but I have heard so many different opinions from various stakeholders that I no longer feel certain of this number. And when I say stakeholders, I'm talking about former and current workers for the Developer Lennar and St Charles Companies, Meredith Management, and even county government employees.

I'm here to advocate on behalf of the newer communities of St Charles. I'm here to help my County Commissioners understand the current system and give my opinion on how that has failed under the current structure.

Homeowners within the communities of St Charles know that changes to their home require approval by an architectural committee within their HOA, in addition to a permit from the county when necessary. What they often don't realize is that in order to make significant improvements requiring a permit, they need an additional approval from a PDRB.

For many in Fairway Village, that process would add months to their requests for decks or porches. Practically speaking, many homeowners complained that their bids from contractors would either expire or contractors would move on because they perceived that the customer was not serious. This was brought to the attention of the CEO of Meredith Management which operated a PDRB in 2020. Brent Quinn, CEO of Meredith Management, claimed that from the time a homeowner turns in an application to their HOA that the process could take up to 90 days; 1 month for the HOA, and 2 additional months for the PDRB (before even reaching the county's permit office).

Home sellers are not educating homeowners on these processes, especially the PDRB. The HOAs have a tenuous grasp of what PDRBs are supposed to accomplish. When we attempted to understand this structure in 2020, we came to the conclusion that the Fairway Village PDRB should have transitioned to the Fairway Village Council back in 2018.

In 2022, the Fairway Village Council came up with a strategy to manage our own PDRB and at our annual meeting we voted to create our own approval stamps and come up with our own process for managing these responsibilities.

In early 2023, I contacted county staff in hopes that they could explain why they were serving on this entity that we had come to believe was illegitimate. Instead, they consistently deferred to Meredith Management, a private company. I was shocked. How had Meredith Management achieved this level of regulatory capture? Then I was referred to the county attorney's office.

Later In 2023, upon learning that Maredith Management was continuing to misrepresent itself as the agent for the Fairway Village PDRB, I spoke to their attorney, Steve Scott, and he assured me that this activity would cease. To his credit, I do believe that they have complied with their own attorney's directive.

Today, the average Gleneagles homeowner can measure the length of time from submission of their application to the county's permit office in weeks, not months.

This story focuses on the residential side of PDRBs, but there also exist commercial and industrial elements in St Charles. These elements are not appropriate to be evaluated by the average homeowner as those building standards and codes are not common knowledge among homeowners. Fairway Village Commercial Center construction is underway and any efforts to improve the PDRB process for these newer villages should avoid causing delays to the Fairway project. Should the Commissioners make changes to the status quo, MCB and its partners need a clear understanding of how to get the required approvals to proceed with their project.

Setting aside the plethora of issues that I and many, many others have regarding Lennar, I understand the need for protection during the development period for the developer. However, the failure to transition the Fairway Village PDRB to the homeowners in a timely fashion is not acceptable. To delay the timely approval of routine applications is not acceptable. I implore the county to listen to these homeowners and place the responsibility of the PDRBs with someone they can trust. If you want my opinion, that someone should be their county government. Thanks for your time and consideration!