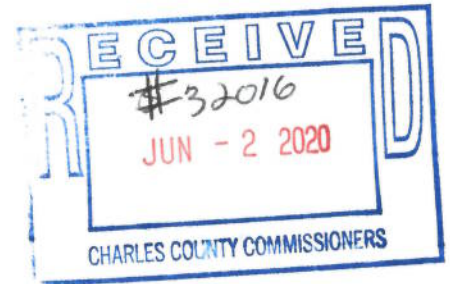


Howard Dent
14725 Banks O'Dee Road
Newburg, MD 20664

May 26, 2020

Commissioners of Charles County
Reuben Collins, President
200 Baltimore Street
LaPlata, MD 20646



Re: ZTA #19-155

Commissioners:

I have two points. The first is deadlines. I had to get this testimony to you by 5PM May 29, 2020, or you would not have considered it. Likewise, both developments affected by ZTA 19-155 had deadlines to develop 25% of their sites. Both projects failed to meet the criteria for an extension of time required by the Subdivision Regulations. These deadlines have nothing to do with the WCD. Brookwood II had an expiration date of April 19, 2017. Falcon's Ridge had an expiration date of June 6, 2017. Both expired almost 3 years ago. And both had expired before the WCD went into effect on July 21, 2017. Falcon Ridge has even been taken off the maps. What is the real reason for this ZTA if the only projects affected by it had already expired?

The second point is transparency. We heard a lot about transparency two years ago when you were all running for office. Transparency. Easy to say. Yet it is not clear what's going on here. The Planning Commission, before considering this Zoning Text Amendment, went into a closed session to seek legal advice. When it came out of the closed session, a vote was taken to recommend approval of this amendment without holding the required work session to consider public comments. There was no discussion for the public to hear.

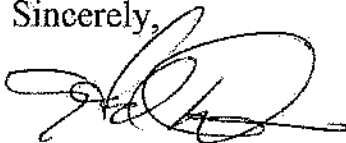
Why did the Planning Commission recommend approval of this amendment? We don't know. What was discussed in that closed session? We don't know. When a request was filed to release the minutes of that closed session, yet another closed discussion was held by the PC. The PC

declined to take action on the request. What was discussed in this closed session? We don't know. Was it the law suit Brookwood II, LLC, had filed against the county on September 15, 2016? We don't know. Again, this lawsuit was filed well before the WCD went into effect. Is there some kind of quid pro quo going on here: The County will change your zoning if you drop the lawsuit? We don't know. Why was Falcon Ridge included as justification for this ZTA when the subdivision is no longer on the maps? Was that to avoid the appearance of spot zoning? We don't know. The whole procedure certainly is not very transparent. It leads the public to believe that something is going on behind the scenes. Transparency?

Since I don't have all the facts, the only reason I can see for this ZTA is to allow two properties to get around the Subdivision Regulations. If this speculation is not the reason, it's because the lack of transparency leaves us, the public, no choice but to guess and question what we don't know. Please address all of these concerns in your discussion of ZTA 19-155.

Your choice in this matter is an easy one. In the interest of fairness, in the interest of adherence to subdivision regulations deadlines, and in the interest of transparency, you must reject this amendment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Howard Dent', written in a cursive style.

Howard Dent

(The above is essentially the three minute testimony that I had prepared for the public comment session. I had to amend it to fit the two minute limit. The two minute spoken limit is difficult to achieve. I encourage you to return to the three minute time limit, which had been in place as long as I have been commenting.)