

Friends of Harford

Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2017 (2016 - 2017)

Friends of Harford (FoH) is proud to be "The Citizens Voice for Responsible Land Use". Our goal is a fair balance between the rights of those wanting to develop a property and the rights of neighbors who might be harmed by that development.

This past year, our focus has been on the transition from the HarfordNEXT Master Plan to its implementation via the Comprehensive Zoning Review (CZR) process.

Friends of Harford has:

- Completely revised our website to make it more user-friendly and to provide even more information, pictures and links to answer the questions we were receiving from the public. It is actively providing information to support public participation in the CZR process.
- Issued FoH News & Views opposing:
 - HarfordNEXT's proposed study to expand development in the Route 543 area between I-95 and Route 1, since sufficient vacant land already exists inside the Development Envelope,
 - Harford's decision not to adequately fund stormwater remediation projects to reduce dangers of flooding, erosion, infrastructure damage and pollution of downstream properties,
 - The County Council's process that prevents public knowledge of (and ability to speak about) major amendments to legislative bills which can have major impacts on us, and
 - Enabling low-intensity B1 (neighborhood business) properties to be intensively developed with very high-impact B3, R4 and all Industrial Uses via "Mixed Use Centers". (*Requires at least 5 acres be inside the Development Envelope and be on public water and sewer.*)
- Worked with the Administration to promote awareness of and encourage public participation in CZR. We held a well-attended public meeting to describe the CZR process and opportunities for public input. Of particular importance was informing the public that each piece of property already has one (or more) zoning districts on it. We explained what "zoning districts" are and what can happen in each.
- Improved the format of, and issued, 34 "FoH Alerts" for: HarfordNEXT; CZR's Planning Advisory Board public input meetings; county budget hearings; Bill 16-029 which authorized the Magnolia Neighborhood Overlay District; and many Community Input Meetings (CIM) and Development Advisory Committee (DAC) meetings.
- Responded to individuals' queries and met with community groups.
- Visited and analyzed each of the 115 CZR issues. We provided the Department of Planning & Zoning our position on each rezoning request and our rationale for issues we oppose.

This coming year we will:

- Focus on the CZR process, advocating for our positions, explaining them, and discussing the issues with members of the Administration and County Council.
- Keep you informed via our website, FoH Alerts, and FoH News & Views.
- Review land use legislation and publish on our website the voting records of Council members on land use bills and resolutions.
- Identify needed changes in law (e.g., updating confusing zoning law, adding language to enforce protections promised in the Zoning Code, and allowing public testimony on amendments).