



Hickory Ridge Community Association

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ZB-1119M

Addendum to Community Response Statement and Planning Board Testimony

The Hickory Ridge Village Board has been considering the proposal by Kimco Realty to redevelop the Hickory Ridge Village Center for over three years. Village Board members and staff have attended all meetings held by Kimco. The Board has entertained comments and suggestions from residents multiple times. A survey was conducted by the Village in the fall of 2016 to gauge community interest and gather feedback about the Redevelopment Plan. The Village Board has opposed Kimco's Redevelopment Plan based on community input as well as the position stated in the 2011 Hickory Ridge Village Center Community Plan (VCCP).

Since the Hickory Ridge Village Board's initial position was drafted, the climate at the Village Center has changed. Two restaurants that were significant draws to the Center have closed. The Center has six shuttered stores and Kimco has not found any merchants who are interested in short-term leases to fill those storefronts. Based on information from merchants, foot traffic has decreased. For those reasons, the Village Board has reconsidered its opposition to the redevelopment of the Hickory Ridge Village Center.

The Village Board is willing to support the proposed redevelopment plan only if the five requirements below are met:

1. The number of apartment units is reduced so as not to overwhelm the other uses at the Center.
2. The height of the apartment building is reduced to comply with the 36-foot height limit specified in our Village Center Community Plan.
3. The proposed parking meets existing Howard County Parking Regulations set for commercial and residential uses.
4. The eleven points listed below which were previously negotiated between Kimco and the Village Board are included in the approval.
5. The county ensures the accuracy of the traffic study conducted by Kimco and works with Kimco to implement pedestrian safety measures and traffic calming at the Freetown Road and Quarterstaff Road intersection.

The VCCP reiterated the specific criteria stated in *Section 103: Definitions* of the Howard County Zoning Regulations:

Village Center, New Town: A Mixed-Use Development in the New Town District which is in a location designated on the New Town Preliminary Development Plan as a "Village Center", which is designed to be a community focal point and gathering place for the surrounding village neighborhoods by including the following items:

- a) *An outdoor, public, village green, plaza or square, which has both hardscape and softscape elements. This public space shall be designed to function as an accessible, primarily pedestrian-oriented promenade connecting the various Village Center buildings and shall include public seating features;*
- b) *Stores, shops, offices or other commercial uses which provide opportunities to fulfill the day-to-day needs of the village residents, such as food stores, specialty stores, service agencies, financial institutions, personal services, medical services, and restaurants;*
- c) *Space for community uses and/or institutional uses; and*
- d) *Residential uses, to the extent appropriate to support and enhance, **but not overwhelm**, other uses in the Village Center.*

The Village Board agrees that Kimco's Redevelopment Plan does meet parts a, b, and c of the definition. However, the Village Board is concerned that the 230 apartments proposed under the Redevelopment Plan would overwhelm the other uses at the Center. The proposed mix 105,100 SF of retail use and 254,636 SF of residential

use (29% retail/71% residential) would vastly subordinate retail use to residential use in area, scale, intensity, and purpose. The Village Board agrees that some residential units at the Village Center might increase foot traffic which would benefit our merchants but asks that a lower number of units be considered for approval. In addition, our Village Center Community Plan clearly indicates that the height of buildings be limited to 36 feet. The 45-55-foot height of the proposed apartment structure exceeds that limit.

Traffic safety is also a major concern for the Village Board and residents. The major roads surrounding the Center-Freetown Road, Cedar Lane, and Quarterstaff Road- are already busy particularly at peak hours. The addition of apartments will increase the traffic on these roads. The Village Board requests Howard County to thoroughly review the traffic study and ensure that any safety concerns for vehicular and pedestrian traffic regarding the intersection of Freetown Road and Quarterstaff Road are addressed as part of this Redevelopment. In addition, there are several residential projects in the pipeline for the Hickory Ridge area. Please be sure that any traffic study includes:

- 184 single-family and town homes on Grace Drive (Cedar Creek),
- 170-unit Brightview Senior Living project on Martin Road,
- 48 apartments on Grace Drive (Robinson Overlook),
- 55 senior apartments and town homes on Cedar Lane across from the Village Center (Scot's Glen II),
- 24 town homes on Harriet Tubman Lane (Joseph's Courtyard),
- 12 town homes on Owen Brown Road (Hidden Ridge),
- 6 single-family homes on Freetown Road (Atholton Overlook).

Altogether, this will add 499 units plus the 230 apartments proposed at the Village Center for a total of 729 new residences to the already busy Cedar Lane corridor.

Prior to the year-long postponement of the hearing by the Zoning Board to consider ZB-1119M, Kimco and the Village Board had negotiated eleven updates and minor revisions to the Redevelopment Plan. They were:

1. Specifically review the parking study for both the residential and retail to make sure that the numbers proposed are adequate and properly located for the uses on the site
2. Adjust the setbacks along Cedar Lane and Freetown Road by shifting the apartment building slightly to 40' on Cedar Lane and 22' on Freetown Road from the Right-of-Way.
3. Provide a roundabout at Street B terminus and coordinate with CA to provide 20 parking spaces on CA property for the eventual park.
4. Work with DPW to provide enhanced pedestrian crossing at Quarterstaff Road and Freetown Road including an island crossing similar to what is on Freetown Road near Hickory Crest.
5. Provide raised pedestrian crossings on Street A & B including a mid-block crosswalk on Street A.
6. Collaborate with the Village Board on programming and design for the village green including all items on the list submitted to the Planning Board.
7. Enhance the covered walkways along the retail frontages.
8. Update the monument sign on Cedar Lane and entrance signs to match the new design.
9. Provide recycling bins with trash receptacles as part of LEED certification.
10. Enhance the landscaping in the island between the proposed bank building and Sunrise.
11. Place short term (15 minute and 2 hour) parking along a portion of Street B.

In conclusion, the Village Board recognizes the need to collaborate with all parties to develop the best plan for our Village Center. The Village Board is requesting the Zoning Board include all five of our requirements in the Final Decision and Order if the plan is approved.

Best Regards,

Allison Sultan
Chair, Hickory Ridge Village Board