



Ban the Bag in Anne Arundel



Bill 19-23 “Ban the Bag”

This bill prohibits distribution of a plastic bag that is provided by a retail establishment to a customer at the point of sale and is not a reusable carryout bag. It incentivizes shoppers to bring their own bags with them to the store by eliminating the practice of giving out single-use plastic bags. It will minimize the scourge of plastic bags littering our trees and waterways, and sitting in landfills.

The bill will be heard at the April 3 County Council meeting. [GAN members are encouraged to support the bill by using this link to submit written testimony or sign up for oral testimony at the meeting.](#)

[Testify](#)

Bill 15-23

Zoning text

amendment



Bill 15-23 allowing certain types of business complexes as a conditional use in R1 residential zoning districts; was passed at the March 20 Council meeting. This bill appeared to be a zoning change passed as the request of a single constituent, but with

potentially much broader impact.

In response to zoning text amendments of this type, GAN Chair Matt Minahan has offered this short cautionary allegory:

Once upon a time in an earlier century a small, rural, agrarian county in the middle of Maryland created The Code.

The Code was simple. It had a few land use categories and some broad ideas about how to maintain the rural and agricultural character of the county. It provided a straight and smooth road toward the future that all wanted. And life was good -- for a while.

Over time, however, the county grew quickly, which put pressure on this small rural county. People moved in and wanted schools, houses, roads, and services that had never even been thought of at a scale much beyond what was intended originally in The Code. All of this development stressed The Code. It was asked to make changes to the rules for the whole county which would benefit just one or two users.

But changes to The Code didn't apply to just one marina, nursery, builder, park or school. They applied to the whole county, and often had unintended consequences. As a result, The Code grew topsy turvy, well-meaning citizen legislators tried to help their constituents, creating exceptions, and exceptions to exceptions and exceptions to those exceptions that circumvented the original intent of The Code. Twists, turns, and potholes appeared at just the time that development was driving faster and faster down this road. The Code was no longer simple, the road became rough, and life was no longer so good.

It is long past time to pave and straighten the road to serve the needs of a county in the second decade of the 21st century that wants to preserve its forests and trees, improve the water quality of its rivers and Bay, and address the urgent need for redevelopment and affordable housing. In the meantime, it would help if well-meaning council members would have their clients use the existing land use decision methods rather than create ever more twists, turns, and potholes that apply the rules for one person to the whole county.

GAN Meeting with Councilmember Lisa Rodvien

On March 28 the GAN Board met virtually with Councilwoman Rodvien. Topics of discussion included improving input into DRP capital projects, hybrid public meeting format, prohibiting ADU's on septic in the Critical Area, starting with a pilot program for ADU's, requiring all bills to have a work session discussion, and several other items.

All GAN members were invited to observe the meeting and submit questions through the chat function. Meeting notes will be distributed to all members.

Coming Meeting with Councilmember Amanda Fiedler

April 14, 10 am. Virtual meeting.

Logon information will be supplied to members.

GAN Dues

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