



Communicator

GREENBELT HOMES, INC. | A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

What is zoning, and how does it affect GHI?

by Paul Kapfer, GHI Board member

Zoning is the way many county and municipal governments regulate land use. In the United States, zoning began in the early 20th century in cities such as Los Angeles and New York, where urban migration and industrialization were creating new social problems. Absent any regulation, polluting industries like smelters, slaughterhouses, and leather tanneries could be located next to apartment buildings and other housing concentrations. In 1926, a realty company challenged the authority of the Village of Euclid, Ohio, to prohibit industrial uses on land the company wanted to develop, asserting that the regulation caused an unreasonable, arbitrary reduction in the land's value. The U.S. Supreme Court, however, ruled that the zoning was constitutional, an extension of the Village's police power.

Local governments across the country began designating particular land areas for specific uses, a framework that became known as "Euclidean" zoning. While Euclidean zoning solved some problems, over the years it created others. When combined with increased automobile use, "pure" zoning frameworks that completely separated residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial uses contributed to urban sprawl and the need for residents to get in a car just to visit the grocery store. By contrast, the design of Greenbelt and two other "green towns" in the 1930s was revolutionary, locating a commercial and services hub at the walkable center of a residential concentration. Intended by New Deal planners as a model for others to follow, this design became the exception rather than the rule.

Recently, Prince George's County began re-writing its zoning ordi-



nance. One objective of this "Zoning Rewrite" is to reduce the impact of sprawl by encouraging higher residential density (more dwelling units per acre) and commercial development in targeted areas with strong transportation links. Project goals are summarized at <http://zoningpgc.pgplanning.com/>:

- streamline and simplify regulations and development approval
- modernize and consolidate zones and development standards
- incentivize economic and transit-oriented, mixed-use development
- protect and enhance stable residential neighborhoods

It is this last goal that most concerns GHI's Zoning Task Force and its member-volunteers working to respond to the Zoning Rewrite, even as it is being drafted by the County's hired consultant and debated in the County Council. Because GHI is near a public transportation node (Greenbelt Metro station) and has immediate access to regional roadways, it is at risk of being included in a new zone with higher density. The GHI Board is opposed to any change in density that would undermine Old Greenbelt's unique historic layout.

GHI owns its land, so infill (adding new buildings in currently open spaces) without the Co-op's approval is highly unlikely. But if the area around the Roosevelt Center and original apartment buildings were to be re-zoned for high-density commercial/residential (mixed-use) development, rebuilding and infill with taller buildings would be a concern. Unless

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carefully regulated, such a change risks damaging the unique character of GHI, part of a National Historic Landmark.

GHI's Zoning Task Force has begun drafting a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Zone (NCOZ) – a zoning construct that would conserve GHI's architectural character and open space regardless of what underlying zone is ultimately applied by the County. The County Council, as well as the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC) would have key roles in approving such an overlay, so the Task Force is communicating with planning professionals and officials in those organizations. The City of Greenbelt and its Department of Planning and Community Development have provided essential support in this effort.

GHI has also hired a well-known local zoning attorney to represent its interests with elected officials. At this point, many outcomes are unknown, including whether Prince George's County will decide, in the end, to approve a whole new zoning ordinance. GHI is working to be out in front of any change that comes. In the future, it may be in our interest as a Co-op to request that individual members contact elected officials and advocate for a specific action, but such an effort would be premature at the moment. For now, members are invited to attend meetings of the Zoning Task Force and follow the Zoning Rewrite in the *Greenbelt News Review*. Please stay tuned!

“WALLS-IN” HO-6 Insurance Coverage

HO-6 is home insurance for owners of co-ops or condominiums. It provides personal property coverage, liability coverage and specific coverage of improvements to the owner's unit. Typically the owner's condo or co-op association provides insurance that covers the outside of the dwelling (structure).

HO-6 insurance is important to have though since your association's policy will not cover your belongings or provide you with personal liability coverage if someone is harmed inside of your residence.

An HO-6 policy will cover interior damage to your unit, improvements, additions and alterations you've made and your personal property. Additional living expenses, if your residence is not able to be lived in due to a covered peril, is usually also included. The condo or cooperative association's policy typically covers the outside building structure and commons areas, such as hallways.

HO-6 insurance is designed to coordinate coverage with your condominium or cooperative's master policy.

Consider extra coverage for valuables, such as jewelry, fine art or expensive computer equipment. Discuss with your insurance agent or insurance company your needs to make sure you purchase the right amount of coverage.

Standard coverage doesn't vary much from one company to the next for an HO-6 policy, but rates and customer service do, so it's important to shop around for home insurance quotes from at least three different companies.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held at the GHI Administration Offices on Hamilton Place, and are open to all GHI members. Dates are subject to change.

March		
1	10:00 am	Storm Water Management Task Force
1	7:45 pm	Board of Directors
3	11:00 am	Pre-Purchase Orientation
4	1:00 pm	HIP Help Session
5	6:30 pm	Executive Session
7	7:00 pm	Addition Maintenance Program Task Force
7	6:30 pm	Executive Session
8	7:00 pm	Zoning Rewrite Task Force
9	--	OFFICE CLOSED
12	6:00 pm	WSSC Proposed Sewer Main & Manhole Project– Board Room
13	7:30 pm	Audit Committee
13	6:30 pm	N&E Social (New Deal Café)
14	7:00 pm	Member Outreach Committee
14	7:00 pm	Woodlands Committee
14	7:30 pm	Architectural Review Committee
15	7:45 pm	Board of Directors
19	7:00 pm	Pre Purchase Orientation
20	7:30 pm	Legislative and Government Affairs Committee
20	7:30 pm	Companion Animal Committee
21	7:00 pm	Bicycle Task Force
22	7:00 pm	Finance Committee
23	--	OFFICE CLOSED
26	7:00 pm	Communications Committee
27	7:30 pm	Audit Committee
28	7:00 pm	Buildings Committee

Call 301-474-6011 for emergency maintenance outside of normal hours or when GHI is closed.

Member Announcements

In a special meeting on February 8, GHI members approved several contracts for work to be done in GHI.

- ACM Services, Inc., will remove asbestos from the crawlspaces of frame homes.
- Arc Environmental, Inc. will monitor the removal for safety.

The membership approved HIP contractors for 2018-2020. If the first year's work is poor, we can break the contract for future years.

- Acadia Windows and Doors, LLC, will install windows, doors, and siding.
- Bestway Electric will install new electric baseboard heaters, plus optional electrical items.
- Capps Mechanical will install optional mini-split heat pump units.
- Green Step will install attic insulation and air sealing in frame and brick units.

See the March 1 issue of the *Greenbelt News Review*, page 12, for more details.