

Howard County Housing Affordability Coalition

Howard County Council Public Hearing
June 17, 2019

Testimony: Council Resolution 97-2019

Good evening Council Chair Rigby, Co-chair Jones and Council members.

The Housing Affordability Coalition is comprised of 46 organizations and individuals. We are advocates for the preservation of existing affordable housing and expanding Howard County's inventory of affordable housing, particularly for the low and very low-income residents who would benefit from the proposed Robinson Overlook project.

The Coalition, therefore, strongly supports approval of Council Resolution 97-2019. The proposed PILOT will help enable Robinson Overlook to maintain the affordability of its units and, with the passage of the PILOT, enable consideration of the project as a Special Affordable Housing Opportunity.

The Coalition sees this project as important in several ways. It helps de-concentrate affordable housing by extending this project into an area of the County that currently has no affordable housing, thereby avoiding neighborhoods with existing affordable housing. In addition, the project proposes to serve not only low-income residents in a mixed income development, but specifically people with disabilities whose incomes are well below \$20,000—helping to address a critical housing need in our County.

It is our understanding that there are few, if any, other projects seeking this Special Affordable Housing Opportunity authorized by the APFO legislation. The requirements for a Special Affordable Housing Opportunity seem to be satisfied and reports indicate that the adjacent schools have underutilized capacity that could absorb the projected pupil yield from the Robinson Overlook project. We suggest therefore that the critical need for low-income housing and the project's overall public benefit should be viewed as an offset to school capacity concerns.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer these comments. Coalition members welcome the opportunity to discuss our concerns about housing affordability and support for CR 97-2017.

Respectfully,

Members, Howard County Housing Affordability Coalition
(Listed on back)

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