

Dennis Hays – RCA PC zMOD 1-28-21

Thank you for this opportunity to address you. I am Dennis Hays, the President of the Reston Citizens Association and a member of the Coalition for a Planned Reston.

Two years ago this week an overflow crowd of citizens appeared before you to express concern over a Staff proposal that was far reaching - and poorly thought out. We were and are very appreciative that this Commission agreed and that the proposal was eventually tabled and faded away.

Now, we are back again to express concern over another Staff proposal that is far reaching - and even more poorly thought out - the non zMOD parts of zMOD. As before, I am the first of a number of speakers who will address specific issues we strongly believe are not in the interest of the County or those of us who live and work here.

When zMOD was first introduced to the public it was billed as a technical measure to clarify, update, and de-conflict forty years of zoning and land use revisions. We recognize the periodic need for this and supported the County's efforts. However, we now find proposals that have nothing to do with clarifying, updating or de-conflicting have been added to zMOD without sufficient input- with little to no input - from the people who will be directly - and in many cases adversely - affected by these provisions.

The author and efficiency expert **Alan Lakein** has noted "**Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now.**"

That is all we wanted two years ago and it is all we want now. . We are on record as supporting development - as long as it is planned development. And by planned we mean a dialogue should take place between our elected and appointed officials and the citizens of this County who they have been empowered to represent. Unfortunately, that has not happened here. As you are aware, citizen groups and Home Owner Associations from every corner of Fairfax have spoken out loudly and in unison - the 700 + pages of zMOD as presently written contain provisions that are disasters in the making.

Thus, **We strongly encourage you to strip out the extraneous provisions from the first phase of zMOD. Should the County believe there is a need for major changes in how our established and successful residential neighborhoods exist, a full review of any proposals could be conducted during the 2nd phase of zMOD deliberations.**

A few concerns before I turn this over to my colleagues.

The County went to the trouble and expense of conducting a survey on these matters early last year yet is making proposals in direct opposition to the stated opinions of a strong majority of the citizens who responded. Why is this?

County staff state they have held over 90 meetings on zMOD. I don't doubt this but we are a County of well over a million people. Everyone I have spoken to in the past three months was unaware of zMOD and horrified to learn of what it entailed. - The County could have put informational flyers alerting citizens about these major changes into existing mailings such as property tax forms or information on bond proposals. Why wasn't this done?

What is the environmental impact of these proposals? What happens to groundwater if toxic chemicals from in-home businesses are introduced into septic systems and wells? Will the County accept liability for long term damage?

Several proposals involve major changes that are specifically forbidden by individual HOAs. We have been told the County will approve applications without consideration of instances where an application is contrary to HOA bylaws. So, in effect, the County will knowingly be creating division, chaos and legal bills in many HOA neighborhoods. Is this the County's intent? Why haven't the concerns of HOAs been given consideration?

How will the county monitor compliance with these new authorizations? What exactly is County staff going to be responsible for if this goes forward?

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of zMOD is that community input is eliminated in many instances. Is this the County's desire?

And finally, is rushing this through without community input or support, at a time when Covid restrictions limit interaction with County staff, in the best interests of the people or the government of Fairfax County?

Commissioners - Benjamin Franklin stated, "By failing to plan, you are planning to fail." Strip out the the problematic and not well thought out provisions and push them into the 2nd phase of zMOD. Your constituents have always been ready to meet with County staff and to work together to in the best interest of the County we love.

Thank you.