

The Office of Planning and Zoning (OPZ) Summary of Planning Advisory Board (PAB) Oral and Written Testimony

Region 2 PAB Draft Plan and PAB Draft Comprehensive Zoning Map

1. Overview

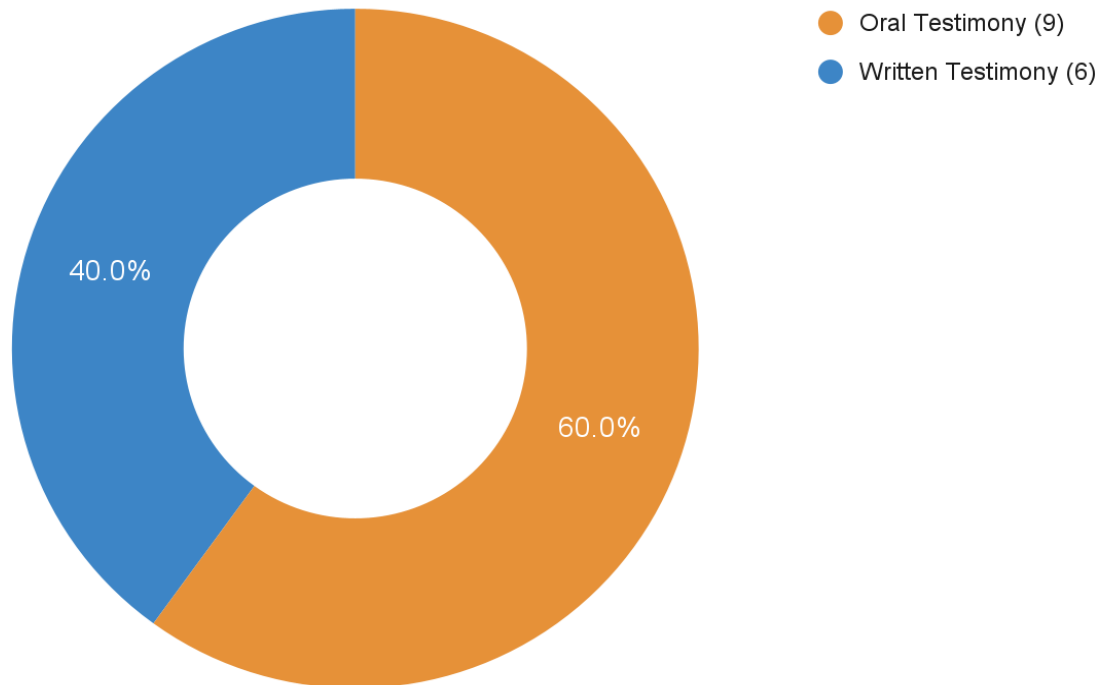
The Planning Advisory Board (PAB) met on October 18, 2023 for a presentation from The Anne Arundel County Office of Planning and Zoning (OPZ) on the PAB drafts of the Region 2 Plan (Plan) and Comprehensive Zoning Map.

The following are links to the [PAB Draft of the Region 2 Plan](#), [PAB draft of the Comprehensive Zoning Map](#), and [Recommended Comprehensive Zoning Change Table](#) which provide references to specific recommended zoning changes or sections of the draft plan.

Comments received are reviewed by OPZ as well as the PAB for consideration in developing the final draft Plan and zoning recommendations for County Council. While all comments are reviewed and considered, not all comments will result in a recommended change.

Method of Engagement

During the meeting, oral testimony on the Plan and zoning recommendations was heard from the public. The PAB accepted written testimony between Wednesday, October 18 and 11:59 PM on Wednesday, October 25, 2023. In total, the PAB received 15 public testimonies on the PAB draft Plan and Zoning Map. Please see below for a breakdown.

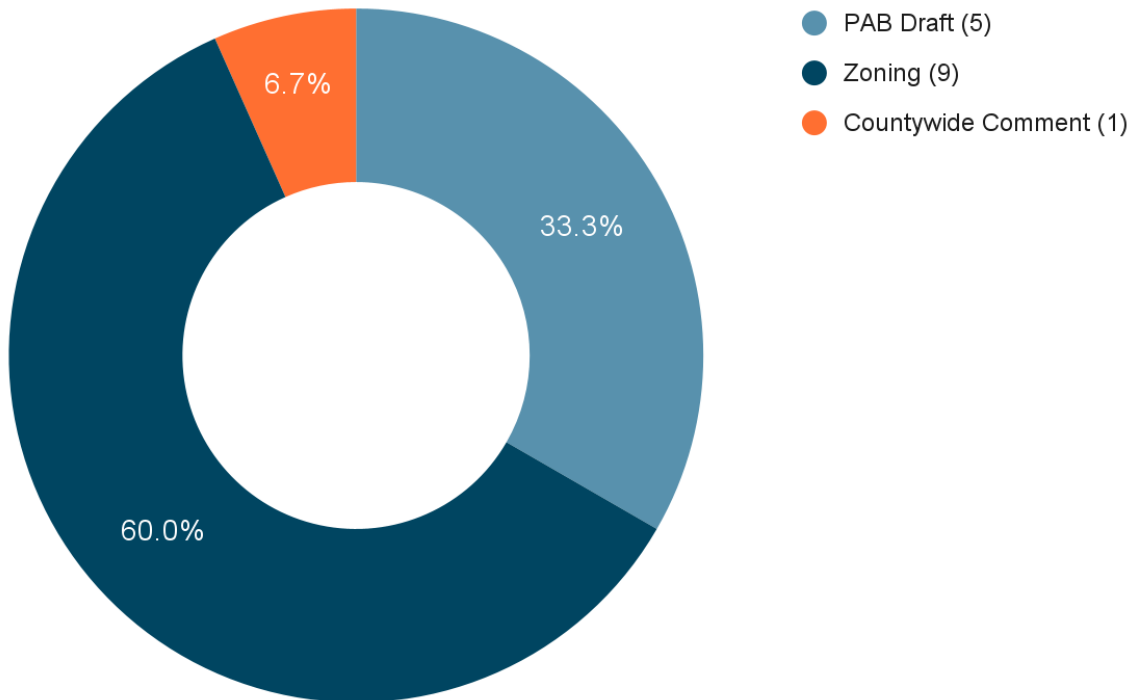


2. Summary of Comments

The public testimony fell into three main topics, each of which can be divided into a range of subtopics.

Primary Topics

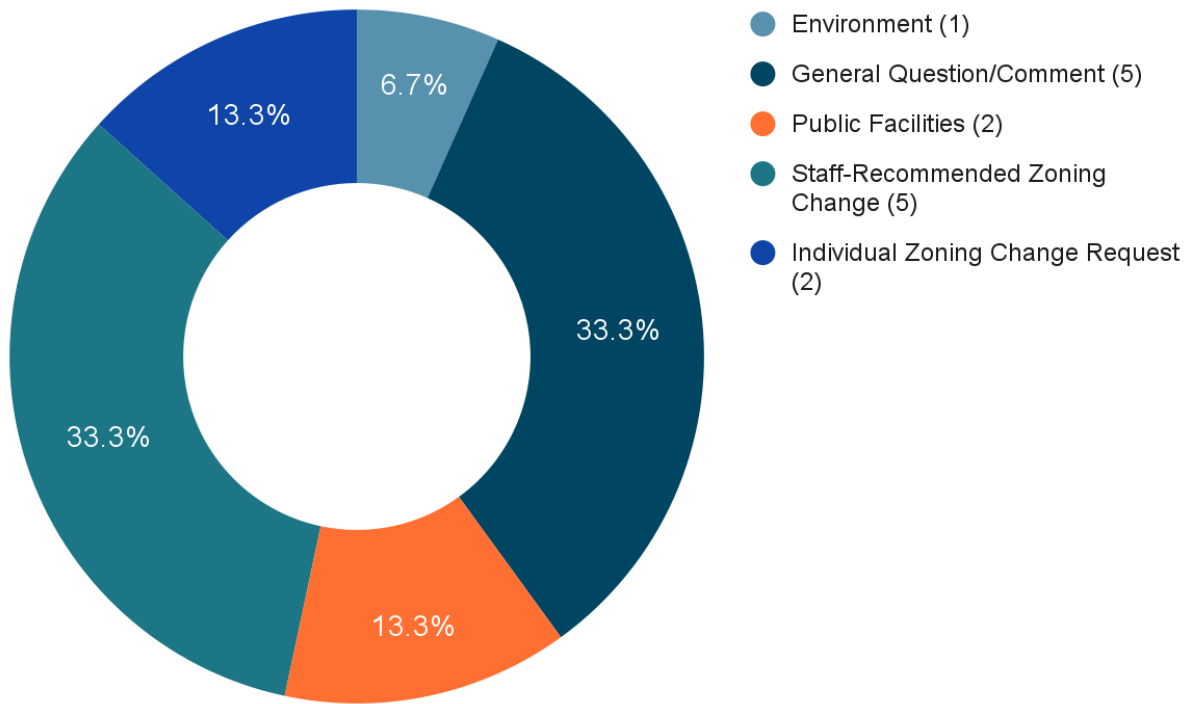
- **PAB Draft** includes all comments that address the PAB draft plan.
- **Zoning** includes all comments related to comprehensive zoning.
- **General Countywide Comment** includes any remaining comments.



Subtopic Breakdowns and Summaries

Within each of the main topics, trends emerged and comments were divided into subtopics. While specific subtopics were identified, public testimonies could have multiple subtopics. The breakdown of each subtopic can be found below.

- Individual Zoning Change Request** includes all comments that address zoning change requests by owners.
- Staff-Recommended Zoning Change** includes all comments that address zoning change recommendations initiated by staff.
- Environment** includes all comments related to the environment.
- Public Facilities** includes all comments related to public facilities such as roads or schools.
- General Question/Comment** includes any remaining comments.



Existing Individual Zoning Change Request

One of the applicants for zoning change CZ-R2-LRL-001 requested the PAB support their application to be rezoned from R1 to R15. OPZ recommended R10 to be consistent with Plan2040 Planned Land Use (PLU) and noted potential sewer capacity limitations. The applicant's testimony noted that rezoning from R1 to R15 would allow the zoning to be aligned with adjacent properties, provide additional housing in the region, and provide a transition between the existing residential developments and the eventual redevelopment of Laurel Park.

New Individual Zoning Change Request

A single new zoning change request was received for three parcels located at 7644 & 7638 Harmans Road in Hanover. The applicant requested the zoning be changed from R1 to R5. The subject parcels are designated as Low Density Residential (LDR) on the PLU Map and are located in the Neighborhood Preservation Development Policy Area (DPA). As noted in the request, the parcels located along the east side of Harmans Road opposite the subject parcels are designated Low-Medium Density Residential (LMDR) on the Plan2040 PLU map and are zoned R5. During the Region 2 mapping exercise the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) did not discuss or recommend any zoning changes in the Hanover community southeast of the Arundel Mills Mall. In addition, staff did not recommend any zoning, PLU, or DPA map changes for this area.

Staff-Recommended Zoning Changes

A total of five people submitted testimony on Staff-Recommended Zoning Changes, the majority of which were related to the MD 175 corridor in the Jessup Community. Generally community members requested that the PAB recommend retention of the Small Business (SB) zoning district and reject all recommended mapping changes to Jessup. Community members who disagreed with recommended zoning changes noted the recommended zoning changes:

- Could not be supported by existing public infrastructure.
- Would result in high density housing that is not desired by community members.
- Would reduce the opportunity to provide affordable housing.
- Would allow further industrial and commercial sprawl that would degrade community character and encroach upon the R1 zoned residential community north of MD 175.

In contrast, a property owner with frontage along Race Road (but no street number) just north of MD 175, supported OPZ's zoning recommendation changing their parcel's zoning from R1 to C1. Another Jessup resident supported the Plan and zoning recommendations noting that SAC recommendations were to protect the core Jessup residential area and restrict growth to properties that front along MD 175.

Within the Laurel Community, the PAB received a public comment supporting OPZ's zoning recommendation changing their parcel's zoning from R1 to R10. The zoning recommendation (CZ-R2-LRL-1082) was a zoning consistency change that recommended zoning be changed to be consistent with adopted Plan2040 PLU of Medium Density Residential (MDR). This would allow the parcel to be redeveloped in the future to be compatible with nearby development.

Public Facilities

A common theme throughout the Region 2 planning process was about increased traffic congestion and public infrastructure being unable to support new development. While residents were receptive to the Plan addressing topics such as affordable housing, some were skeptical about its implementation in the region given infrastructure capacity. Community members noted traffic congestion and road improvements along MD 198 and Brock Bridge Road as primary issues that need to be addressed prior to implementation of strategies in the Plan..

Environment

A primary concern heard from community members was that environmental regulations are not stringent enough to protect environmentally sensitive resources and improve quality of life. One person noted that Plan recommendations are contrary to the Forest Conservation bill passed in 2019. Plan strategies are aimed to allow flexibility to the Forest Conservation requirement which would reduce forest cover in West County. Community members requested the PAB not support Plan strategies that may further impact the environment.

One -person requested the Open Space (OS) zoning be retained for the Laurel Racetrack (CZ-R2-LRL-101). The community member stated that in their opinion, the environmental

regulations in the Code will not adequately protect the environmental resources on the site due to approval of modifications to County Code provisions to accommodate site restrictions.

General Question/Comment

Five comments that were received were classified as general questions/comments. Three members of the public were generally not in favor of the Plan and Zoning Map. They noted that recommended zoning changes and strategies would contribute to traffic congestion, adversely impact the environment and community character, and do not address community needs. The Region 2 SAC Chair and a member of the public testified in support of the Plan and recommended Zoning changes noting that the plan seeks to address affordable housing, recreation access and programming, alleviate traffic congestion, advance smart growth and development, and ensure equitable investment in Region 2.