



Proudly Serving the Hampden Community Since 1976

April 23, 2025

The Honorable Ryan Dorsey
Chair, Land Use and Transportation Committee
Baltimore City Council
City Hall
100 Holliday Street
Room 521
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: City Council Bill 25-0017 – Rezoning 3439-3549 Keswick Road – Odd Side

Chair Dorsey,

I write today on behalf of the Hampden Community Council (“HCC”) in support of City Council Bill 25-0017, which would change the zoning for the properties known as 3439 – 3549 on the odd side of Keswick Road (“Properties”) from the C-1 Zoning District to the R-7 Zoning District, with the caveat that it be amended to ensure that the Pathway Fellowship FMC Multicultural Church property located at 3439 Keswick Road remain in a C-1 Zoning District.

On October 14, 2024, shortly before 6:00 am, a fire ripped through the 3400 and 3500 blocks of Keswick Road destroying 10 homes and claiming the lives of two Hampden residents. In response the HCC, along with several local non-profits, private citizens and businesses, and elected officials, organized efforts to support those impacted by this tragedy. Through our collective efforts we provided direct financial relief to victims and their families. To this day, the HCC remains committed to supporting these individuals in any way that we can to help these families and our community pick up the pieces and move forward.

In the aftermath of the fire, the HCC learned that the properties located at 3439-3549 on the odd side of Keswick Road were all within a C-1 Zoning District. To the community this seemed like the City made a mistake when it performed its comprehensive rezoning a few years ago; the properties are bookended by single family row homes that run throughout the entirety of the 3400 and the 3500 block (save for the 33rd and Keswick Road service station) and are within a R-7 Zoning District.

The HCC moved quickly to address this matter before a developer could purchase the lots and construct a large apartment building, thereby undermining Hampden’s ability to better allow it to maintain the current scale of uses within the community. Accordingly, the HCC contacted Councilman Odette Ramos and urged her to introduce legislation to amend the zoning of the properties in question. City Council Bill



25-0017 is the direct result of that advocacy, and we fully support it with the adoption of the Baltimore City Planning Department's amendments.

The Planning Department's Amendments are reasonable, fair, and proper. Their amendments seek to exclude the Pathway Fellowship FMC Multicultural Church property located at 3439 Keswick Road from being rezoned. If rezoned to a R-7 Zoning District, the church would cease its operations. That was never the intent of the Hampden community. As such, we would request and ask that the City Council Bill 25-0017 be amended to reflect our desire that the Pathway Fellowship FMC Multicultural Church property located at 3439 Keswick remain zoned within a C-1 Zoning District.

In closing, the HCC reiterates its support of City Council Bill 25-0017, provided that the Planning Department's Amendments are included in the final draft of the legislation.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Thanks,

Thomas R. Akras
President
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