

Dear Chair Jones, Vice Chair Rigby, and Councilmembers Walsh, Jung, and Yungmann:

The members of the Howard Progressive Project urge you to approve CR29-2022, the Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) for the Patuxent Commons housing development.

The United States Supreme Court's 1999 landmark decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.* held that unjustified segregation of people with disabilities is a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act; this decision centers on the principle of ensuring that people with disabilities receive services in the most integrated setting possible. People with disabilities face unique challenges, including increased risk of homelessness, social exclusion, and discrimination. Integrated housing arrangements that provide opportunities to live, work, and play alongside people without disabilities enable them to live more independent, connected, and enriched lives. Lack of these kinds of residential models is, nationwide, one of the primary barriers to supporting individuals with disabilities to live in the community, and puts them at unnecessary risk of institutionalization.

Patuxent Commons is an innovative inclusive housing model that provides an integrated, affordable, supportive community for people with disabilities, seniors, and families. This development will be a remarkable opportunity for Howard County to offer housing options that serve our neighbors with disabilities in a way that honors not just *Olmstead*, but Jim Rouse's vision for Columbia as well.

The Patuxent Commons model is nationwide best practice for supporting individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities in the community, designed to meet federal requirements to allow the provision Medicaid funded community-based services. Simply put, if we believe that people with disabilities have the right to be included in their communities just as their non-disabled peers do, Patuxent Commons is what that inclusion looks like.

HPP wholeheartedly supports this project and its mission, and we ask that you approve CR29-2022.

Thank you,

Jennifer Solpietro  
Board of Directors  
Howard Progressive Project